

The ideational dimension in policy and politics analyses: theoretical frameworks and methodological issues

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Presentation:

The analysis of the ideational dimension has a long tradition in the political science and permeates different theoretical approaches. In recent years, there is a renewed interest on this dimension, especially in studies exploring the processes of institutional change, of social learning, policy diffusion, and norm diffusion from international arenas into domestic ones.

The discipline analyses different contemporary approaches exploring the explanation value of the ideational dimension for understanding policy and politics processes. Besides presenting the more relevant theoretical frameworks in the field, the discipline also revises the main methodological challenges posed by the study of ideas in the political process.

Contents:

- Ideas and interests: the ideational dimension in the analysis (and production) of policies.
- Classical approaches: multiple streams, sociological institutionalism
- Ideational dimensions and rational choice:
 - Multiple equilibria games: the ideational dimension promoting convergence of preferences
 - Bounded rationality
- Policy diffusion and social learning: analytical models
 - Advocacy coalitions
 - Policy paradigms
 - Epistemic communities
- Ideas and institutional change
 - Discursive institutionalism
 - Dynamics of institutional change and ideas: conversion, layering and institutional drift
- Norms and values diffusion: the interface between the international and domestic political environment
 - The process of norm diffusion.
 - Norm localization and the differential permeability of national spaces
 - Policy entrepreneurs in domestic and international arenas
- Policy arenas, public forums and the argumentative analysis:
 - Narratives, frames and political rhetoric
 - Deliberative policy, argumentation and participation
- Methodological issues in the research of the ideational dimension



Evaluation

The student's performance will be assessed considering her commitment to the class discussions in the seminars, and the evaluation of a written essay presented at the end of the term. Students are encouraged to develop this essay applying the content of the program to address the research that informs their project for thesis or dissertation. Otherwise, the essay could also focus on one or more topics explored by the program.

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OBS: lectures are given in Portuguese. Students may present their essays either in Portuguese, Spanish or English.