**SHORT COURSE DESCRIPTION**

**Skills for Impact: Applying Psychology to Public Policy**

**Why do policy initiatives often fail and how can psychology contribute to more effective policy implementation?**

**COURSE TITEL:** Skills for Impact: Applying Psychology to Public Policy

**Instructor:** Kinga Göncz

**ECTS:** 2

**Term:** Spring

**Module:** SFI elective

**Relation to other courses:** None

**Short course description:**  
  
Psychology can inform policy makers to better anticipate behaviors in response to proposed policy initiatives and to design policy frameworks motivating people to act in ways beneficial for themselves and for society.

The course will be discussing psychological theories on how people perceive and judge situations; how they make decisions individually and in groups; what is the role of emotions and social networks in changing behavior and attitudes; why subjective well-being is a better indicator of social progress than GDP and how community psychology can contribute to empowerment.

The course – in a seminar format – will help students to create linkage between psychological theories and public policy practice. It will require participants to identify public policy problems and design interventions with the application of relevant psychological theories.

Presentations, followed by class discussions will introduce the topics and investigate their relevance to public policy. Students will be encouraged to think about biases influencing their decisions and identify public policy problems/issues they care about and design interventions to address them, using the learned psychological theories. They will be asked to present the proposal to the class. While helping each other through questions and recommendation, students will practice the consultant’s role.

**Learning outcomes:**

Students will learn how psychology can contribute to public policy issues and understand better why policy initiatives might fail and how they can be more effective.

By the end of the course students

* will be familiar with some of the main relevant psychological concepts contributing to understanding of social situations on different levels;
* will be aware of biases influencing decisions;
* will learn how to design a policy intervention taking into consideration the relevant psychological aspects;
* will have a deeper understanding of the consultant’s role.

**Assessment:**

The seminar’s credits are earned on a Pass/Fail basis.

In order to pass the module, students have to

* be present in all three days,
* participate actively in class discussions,
* complete the required assignments on time on the psychological concepts and on the designed policy interventions

According to the CEU Student Rights, Rules, and Academic Regulations (Annex 1.), in case of a 2-credit course, students are expected to spend 40 -50 hours on non-classroom, autonomous, self-directed learning (homework, consultation with the course instructor or preparing for classes).