Syllabus
Course description

Course title	Policy Design, Democracy, and Citizen Engagement
Course code	47216
Scientific sector	GSPS-02/A (ex SPS/04)
Degree	Master in Critical Creative Practices (LM-65) Loaned from LM-63
Semester	Winter Semester 2025/26
Year	1st
Credits	6
Modular	no

Total lecturing hours	48
Total hours of self-study and/ or other individual educational activities	102
Attendance	Recommended, but not required
Prerequisites	None

Specific educational objectives	The course refers to a "caratterizzante" educational activity and is a mandatory course in the first study year. The course develops a solid theoretical, integrating advanced research methodologies and experimental practices. Students are encouraged to explore the interconnections between art, design, technology and culture, addressing contemporary challenges with a critical and creative approach. Students will acquire an in-depth understanding of the theories and practices that intersect these disciplines, with a direct impact on the languages, practices and discourses around design and contemporary art. The course promotes critical and analytical thinking, allowing students to evaluate and interpret artistic and design practices in the context of the current sociocultural and technological dynamics. The focus is mainly (but not exclusively) theoretical with hints at the effects or policy implications of measures designed to engage citizens in political processes. The course illustrates the ways democratic concerns translate into policies, citizens' initiatives, and design features of political institutions. The course addresses, from a theoretical and normative standpoint, the merits and strengths of the recent ideational turn in political science

and public administration, focusing on the role of (creative) ideas in policymaking and on how citizens participate in knowledge co-creation for sustainability transitions.

Among the educational objectives is to show that, over and beyond the use of incentives to influence people's behavior, initiatives aimed at shaping democratic experience and "everyday politics" are tools that help citizens develop new democratic habits. A part of the course is on political communication, understood as a two-way process that links citizens with institutions.

Lecturer	Roberto Farneti
Scientific sector of the lecturer	GSPS-02/A
Teaching language	English
Office hours	Office hours are scheduled before the course starts, but in general they take place before and after each lecture (or by appointment).
List of topics covered	Design thinking in policymaking; the "ideational turn" in political science and public administration; the "European Democracy Action Plan"; patterns and strategies of citizens' engagement; "citizen engagement" in sustainability transitions research; the potential of social media for the innovation of public sector organizations; "everyday politics" and democratic experience as new frames for devising policies.
Teaching format	Lectures, group discussions, students' presentations on case studies, and in-class labs. Guest lecturers (especially from the public administration) will be occasionally invited to contribute to the course with their first-hand experience, to explain how institutions connect with citizens. In-class workshops, 'ted' presentations, and labs are tools used to engage students on practical activities, like organizing a Ted, drafting a report, making a presentation, and writing a project.

Learning outcomes	*The learning outcomes need to refer to the Dublin Descriptors:* *Knowledge and understanding* Students of the course will: - know the meaning of Policy Design, Democracy, and Citizen Engagement and will be able to contextualise them within the spatial practices in art and design, and their main techniques and methodologies; - possess specific knowledge on Policy Design,

Democracy, and Citizen Engagement and will be able to contextualise them within the interactions between space and culture and within the sociopolitical implications of spatial practices;

- understand the relevance of Policy Design, Democracy, and Citizen Engagement within the processes of transformation of space in the contemporary context, analyzing them considering the connections with other fields of knowledge, such as sociology, anthropology and urban sciences.

Applying knowledge and understanding

Students of the course will acquire the capability to apply knowledge in the field of Policy Design, Democracy, and Citizen Engagement in order to:

- design and implement spatial interventions, exhibitions, artistic installations and design projects that explore and reinterpret public and private spaces.

- use reading, analysis, mapping and visualization tools to analyze and communicate complex ideas relating to space.

- create spatial interventions that respond to the needs of communities, promoting inclusiveness and social participation.

Making judgments

Students of the course will acquire the capability to make judgments in the field of Policy Design, Democracy, and Citizen Engagement in order to:

- apply the knowledge acquired in the professional context.

- reflect and express an independent judgement, including on social, ethical and political-cultural issues.

Communication skills

Students of the course will acquire communication skills in order to:

- writing scientific and technical articles and reports with clarity and effectiveness

- presenting projects and ideas verbally in a professional and convincing manner

	Learning skills
	The course of Policy Design, Democracy, and Citizen Engagement is aimed at:
	- the strengthening of the critical and operational autonomy of students.
	- the development of their ability to choose, compare and adapt to new knowledge and technologies.

Assessment	**For Attending Students** Students can earn between 1 to 4 additional points towards their final grade by making in-class presentations. **For Attending and Non-Attending Students** The final exam consists of 22 MC questions (1 point each) plus a short (maximum 350 words) essay prompted by a choice of 2 questions (maximum 10 points).
Assessment language	English
Evaluation criteria and criteria for awarding marks	Specific instructions on the composition of the grade and the grading strategy will be uploaded in the Teams' course folder on week 3.

Required readings	Béland, D., & Cox, R. H. (2011). *Ideas and politics in social science research* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press) Vlassis, A. (2019). "The international politics of the nexus 'culture and development': four policy agendas for whom and for what?" *The Routledge Handbook of Global Cultural Policy*, pp. 417-429 Ansell, C. & Torfing, J. (2014). *Public Innovation through Collaboration and Design* (London: Routledge) Cardullo, P. (2022). *Citizens in the 'Smart City': Participation, Co-production, Governance* (London: Routledge) Huttunen, S., Ojanen, M., Ott, A., Saarikoski, H. (2022). "What about citizens? A literature review of citizen engagement in sustainability transitions research". *Energy Research & Social Science* Van de Ven, A.H. (2007). *Engaged Scholarship: A Guide for Organizational and Social Research* (Oxford: Oxford University Press)

Supplementary readings	/