wcm240 - Planning Methods and Evaluation

Module label: Planning Methods and Evaluation
Module code: wcm240
Credit points: 5.0 KP
Workload: 150 h
Used in course of study: Master’s Programme Water and Coastal Management > Area of specialisation

Skills to be acquired in this module:
- Planning Methods for Smart Governance
  After successfully completing the course unit, students are able to:
  1. Explain different theoretical perspectives on the role of planning methods.
  2. Apply a selection of planning methods in a specific case and translate the method's outcomes in a spatial policy advice.
  3. Reflect on the value, use and performance of planning methods in smart policy design.
  4. Clearly present the outcomes of the planning methods as well as the knowledge and motives behind these methods to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

- Project and Programme Management
  After following this course students will be able to:
  1. describe general characteristics of project, process, multi-project and programme management strategies
  2. describe and explain the differences in context the different management strategies require;
  3. analyse the success and failure of each management strategy;
  4. evaluate under which circumstances which of the management strategies is appropriate;

Module contents:
- Planning Methods for Smart Governance
  Complexity and uncertainties are intrinsically part of spatial design problems. By applying planning support and evaluation methods, planners try to deal with these uncertainties and, often, reduce complexity. Worldwide, a wide-ranging assortment of planning methods is applied in policy-design practice. Some generic functions of these methods include complex problem structuring ('problems first'), generating and defining scenarios, analysing and visualizing impacts, and selecting and comparing alternative solutions for these problems. The format of the methods and the way their performance is perceived strongly depends on underlying theoretical views on policy design. (e.g., goal-oriented, interactive, institutional). This course provides students with knowledge about the smart use of planning methods in governance from different theoretical perspectives. The meaning of 'smart' relates to (1) high performance of methods in governance, (2) the use of innovative methods and (3) increase in available open data and crowdsourced data. More in detail, the conditions for successful application of methods based on problem structuring, scenario development and GIS-based Multi Criteria Analysis will be discussed. Students reflect on the value, use and performance of these methods in policy design. Part of the course is a group assignment on a self-chosen spatial design question. The aim of this assignment is to write a spatial policy advice. This will be based on the findings produced by using and integrating several planning methods related to problem solving, scenario development and GIS-based MCA. The students will complete a portfolio that – stepwise – builds up to the final policy advice. Critical reflection on the contribution of planning methods in smart governance will be part of the assignment.

- Project and Programme Management
  This course focuses on the different management strategies that are used in planning practice. We use a framework which distinguishes both between output and outcome-oriented management strategies as well as between internal and external orientation. Output can be seen as specific products that are produced: for example, the number of highway miles built and repaired. Outcomes are the difference made by the output: better traffic flow, shorter travel times, and fewer accidents. An internal orientation is reflected in management strategies that are defensive towards their context, while this is the other way around with an external orientation. On the basis of this framework we discuss four management strategies: project, process, multi-project and programme management. Each of the management strategies is not only discussed in theory, but also planning practitioners are invited to reflect on how these strategies work in practice. An assignment is also part of the course. In the assignment, students are required to read a business novel – which might need to be purchased – and reflect in groups on the management strategies that can be found in these books. In this way, students are both trained to understand the theoretical principals of the different approaches, as well as gain an understanding how these strategies work in practice and what are important elements to take into account.

Reader's advisory

Links

Language of instruction: English
Duration (semesters): 1 Semester
Module frequency: unlimited
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### Course type

Seminar

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