# Service Management

## Professor Elena Zuffada

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The shift toward a service-based economy in the most developed countries is a long-term trend. An initial outcome of this trend is an increased weight of the service sector within the economy, in terms of both employment and added value.

Being focused on service delivery has a significant influence on the models, logic, and management tools employed in order to ensure a company is viable and keeps a long term perspective.

The course is aimed at analysing:

* the main features of service companies and the key issues involved in running them;
* the strategic options for developing service companies.

The issue of public services is fundamental in the development of a nation's productive systems and in boosting a nation's competitiveness.

The course therefore aims to supply:

* Appropriate explanations and instruments to tackle management problems specific to service companies.
* Knowledge and criteria for evaluating different strategic options with regard to the management of public service companies and their contribution to a country’s competitiveness
* Methods and instruments for evaluating strategies and communicating results to different stakeholders, employing a logic of transparency and accountability with respect to the public administration's action

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course is sub-divided into two modules.

1. Economics and management of service companies

The first module will cover general themes as follows:

* The concept of service as a value in economic production.
* Different types of services: classification criteria.
* The peculiarities of services companies:
* organisation and management of human resources
* planning, measurement and control systems
* marketing and communications.
* The system for delivering the service and the planning variables.
* Strategies for services companies, in terms of size, location, and growth.

2. Strategic management of public services

The second module will develop following themes:

1. The strategy formulation process in public-sector businesses.

* The concept of strategy within the public administration.
* The leeway for making strategic decisions.
* The strategy formulation process.
* The analysis of the reference framework.

2. Strategic options for providing public services.

* Aggregation strategies.
* Privatisation.
* Contribution of private-sector companies in managing public services (outsourcing of activity and public-private partnerships).
* Technological innovation and e-government.
* The institutional strategy and the governance of networks for providing public services.

3. The evaluation of strategies and the communication of results to stakeholders.

* Strategic control: instruments, documents and indicators for the evaluation of policies and performance.
* The need for accountability and the social responsibility report.

The syllabus with the course timetable and the list of learning materials will be posted on Blackboard.

***READING LIST***

For the first module students need to study one of the two following books:

- E. Zuffada, *Le aziende di servizi. Caratteristiche dei processi,* *politiche di gestione ed economicità,* Giappichelli, Turin, 2011.

R. Normann, *Service Management: Strategy and Leadership in Service Business*, New York: Wiley & Sons Ed., 3rd edition, 2001.

For the second module students need to study:

E. Zuffada, *Scelte strategiche negli enti locali,* Giappichelli, Turin, 2006.

Other material prepared by the professor.

***TEACHING METHOD***

With an emphasis on developing a theoretical and practical understanding of the themes tackled, a combination of teaching methods is contemplated (lectures, class discussion of case studies, presentation of best practices and discussions with professionals in the field), so to enrich the analytical skills and the critical attitude of students.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

Grading will be based on the results of a written test, lasting 2 hours. The exam will be divided into three parts:

* multiple choice questions,
* 1-2 longer open questions.

The evaluation of the open questions will focus on the clarity of answers, their completeness, their adherence to the question asked, the use of an appropriate language.

Attending students are also required to prepare two group works (one per module). According to the evaluation of these group works, the final mark will be increased, up to 3 points.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Information on office hours available on the teacher's personal page at <http://docenti.unicatt.it/>.

Attending class is warmly advised. Students must have read basic courses in business ecoomics, organisation, accounting, management control and marketing.