

Titel: Selected Topics in Political Sociology I: Comparative Political Participation	
Art der Veranstaltung: Hauptseminar	Angeboten im: Frühjahrssemester 2014

Kursbeschreibung:

Political participation is often described as the lifeblood of democracy. Through participation, the will of ordinary citizens is transmitted to political representatives, and the democratic system gains legitimacy. The venues through which people participate in politics have undergone dramatic changes in last 50 years. While voting has stagnated or declined in most Western democracies, other participatory activities, such as signing petitions, contacting political representatives, attending demonstrations, taking part in political blockades, and boycotting products, have experienced increase in last decades. What criteria have to be met in order to count a particular activity as political participation? Who and why participates? What is the role of mobilization and political context? Are newer forms of participation, such as consumer and internet politics, different from other types of participation? What is the role of social movements? During the course we will try to find answers to these questions. We will discuss both, related theoretical issues and empirical applications, and will put a special focus on how political participation and its determinants differ in individual Western democracies.