The Politics of Nonparticipation

Jun. Prof. Dr. Endre Borbáth

Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg

Master Seminar

Summer Semester, 2026

E-mail: endre.borbath@ipw.uni-heidelberg.de   Office Hours: via Calendly (see below)
Class Room: Bergheimer Str. 58, Room 02.034   Class Hours: Tuesdays, 14:15-15:45

Description

This graduate seminar examines the politics of nonparticipation by treating withdrawal not as the simple absence of participation but as a dynamic and politically consequential process. Moving beyond stable participant types, the course focuses on how individuals and groups shift between phases of engagement, disengagement, and potential re-entry across multiple arenas of political action (electoral, protest, associational, and digital). The central premise is that nonparticipation is shaped not only by individual motivations and resources but also by the supply side of democratic politics: organizations that recruit, train, and retain participants; and institutions that structure incentives, signal responsiveness, and condition whether participation pays off.

The seminar is organized in four blocks. The first block develops a conceptual and methodological toolkit to study nonparticipation, introducing debates about definition, measurement, and research designs capable of capturing trajectories and substitution across repertoires. The second block turns to micro-level mechanisms that drive exit and re-entry, including biographical constraints, efficacy loss and disillusionment, and emotional dynamics such as burnout. The third block examines meso-level organizational dynamics, analyzing how parties, movements, unions, and civic organizations shape participation through recruitment, mobilization rhythms, gatekeeping, and demobilization strategies. The fourth block situates nonparticipation in macro-level contexts, focusing on how institutional rules, responsiveness, legitimacy beliefs, crisis experiences, and democratic backsliding alter the calculus of voice and exit.

Throughout, the seminar emphasizes empirical research and methodological pluralism, combining survey and panel evidence, survey experiments, qualitative interviews, and computational approaches to organizational communication. Students will critically evaluate competing explanations, assess measurement and identification challenges, and develop their own research questions on withdrawal, substitution, and re-entry in contemporary democracies.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the seminar, students will achieve several key learning outcomes:

1. Understand and compare key theoretical approaches to political nonparticipation, withdrawal, and re-entry.

2. Assess and discuss main mechanisms at the micro, meso, and macro levels (individual constraints, organizations, institutions).

3. Critically evaluate empirical research designs and evidence on participation trajectories.

4. Formulate a research question and argue with the analytical concepts covered in the seminar.

Course Requirements

The seminar is designed for Political Science MA students, but students from Sociology and related disciplines are also welcome. It requires no prior familiarity with the participation/ nonparticipation literature.

Weekly attendance is mandatory. If you cannot attend, please email me before the respective session. In addition, active participation includes reading the assigned texts, engaging with in-class discussions, asking questions, contributing to debates, and providing constructive peer feedback.

Reading the texts is imperative for the success of the seminar; without having read the readings, the seminar will be very difficult to follow, and over time, the material will become overwhelming.

For 2 + 2 credit points	For 2 + 6 credit points
• Active participation in class	• Active participation in class
• Reading the literature	• Reading the literature
• **In-class presentation & student-led activity**	• **In-class presentation & student-led activity**
• **Creative project (see below)**	• **Term paper (6000 words)**

Office Hours

Office hours are by appointment. Please use Calendly via this link to register for office hours: https://calendly.com/endre-borbath/office-hour.

We can meet on site in room 03.033 (Bergheimer Str. 58, 69115 Heidelberg) or online via the following Zoom link: https://eu02web.zoom-x.de/my/eborbath. If the appointment is scheduled as a face-to-face meeting on campus but you would prefer to meet online, please send me an email in addition to registering via the Calendly interface.

Online Learning

I provide the course literature in advance via Moodle (https://moodle.uni-heidelberg.de/) and also use the platform for general course information. Please contact me with any questions regarding the course literature, technical problems with Moodle, or other organizational issues.

Presentations

Students receiving credit for the seminar are required to give a presentation in one of the sessions. Each presentation should focus on a key **concept** related to the weekly topic and the broader theme of the seminar (see the list of suggested concepts in the weekly schedule below). You may choose to focus on a single concept or combine multiple concepts, and may prioritize **theoretical**, **empirical**, or mixed approaches depending on your interest.

Your presentation **must go beyond the required readings for the week**. While the recommended readings offer a starting point, you are expected to conduct your own **literature review**, incorporating additional academic sources to contextualize and critically assess the concept and its use in political science.

Presentation slots will be allocated in the first session.

Presentations should be **no longer than 10 minutes**. **Slides must be submitted by email no later than Monday at 9:00 AM prior to your presentation**. All slides will be made available to the class via Moodle.

A strong presentation will address some of the following guiding questions:

- **Definition:** How is the concept defined? Are there competing definitions or debates around it?

- **Disciplinary use:** How is the concept used in political science? What is its intellectual or disciplinary history?

- **Relevance:** How does the concept connect to the broader themes of the seminar?

- **Operationalization:** Has the concept been measured or applied empirically? How is it operationalized in research?

- **Causal role:** What are the causes or consequences associated with this concept in the literature?

- **State of the art:** How precisely is the concept defined and used in empirical research? Are there challenges or innovations in its application?

Not all questions will apply to every concept. Focus on those most relevant to your chosen topic.

In addition to your individual 10-minute input, each student is also expected to lead a short student-led activity (approximately 5-10 minutes) immediately following their presentation. Choose one of the following formats:

1. **Small Group Discussion:** Pose a question related to your concept and have classmates break into pairs or small groups for 5 minutes. Then facilitate a brief class discussion to share insights.

2. **Mini-Debate:** Ask two volunteers to take opposing sides on a controversy or tension related to your concept, and moderate a short debate.

3. **Apply to a Scenario:** Present a real-world case or scenario and ask classmates to apply the concept. Facilitate a brief discussion on their responses.

Feel free to choose the format that best fits your concept and presentation style.

Creative Project

Students **taking the seminar for four credits** must prepare a creative project related to the seminar's theme. The goal is to communicate a clear analytical point to a non-specialist audience, while staying embedded in political-science reasoning and (where appropriate) empirical evidence. **All projects are due on September 30, 2026 and must be uploaded to Moodle.**

Permitted formats (choose one):

- **Scientific poster**

- **Short podcast**

- **Video reel**

- **Interview (plus interpretative notes)**

- **Other formats** are possible, but only if we agree on them in advance.

Language: Any of these formats may be completed in **English or German**.

Format-specific requirements

- **Scientific poster:** I expect to see **your own empirical analysis**. Typically, this should include at least one **statistical figure and/or data visualization** (e.g., descriptive statistics from a dataset, a simple comparison across parties/countries/time, a visualization of protest/event data, etc.). The poster should clearly state (i) the question, (ii) the data/material, (iii) the key finding, and (iv) the takeaway.

- **Video reel:** Aim for **45 seconds to 2 minutes**. The reel should make one clear analytical point (or answer one focused question) and support it with one piece of evidence (a stylized fact, short quote, simple visualization, or a clearly referenced empirical claim).

- **Interview (plus interpretative notes):** Potential interviewees include **activists, (local) politicians, policymakers, or experts from think tanks or academia**. The total recorded interview time must be **no more than 30 minutes** (it can be split into multiple shorter interviews, e.g., 2×15 minutes or 3×10 minutes). In addition, submit **interpretative notes** (max. **800 words**) explaining the subject choice, interpretative highlights, and what the interview suggests for understanding nonparticipation.

- **Podcast:** No more than **20 minutes**. A podcast may include selective audio inputs (e.g., short interview clips) combined with your own interpretation in a **clear narrative arc**. The podcast should make a focused argument or answer a clear question, and it should explicitly connect back to concepts or debates from the seminar.

Term Paper

A term paper should be 6000 words, including references and footnotes. **All term papers are due on September 30, 2026 and must be uploaded to Moodle.** The paper is the final 'product' of the seminar, allowing you to showcase what you have learned throughout the semester. **The term paper should present a clear, central thesis and develop it through a coherent argument supported by evidence.** This is the critical requirement for assessment.

You are strongly encouraged to discuss the topic of your paper with me in advance to ensure it aligns with one of the three paper types and meets the expectations of the assignment.

There are three common types of term papers: (1) an empirical analysis, (2) a research proposal, or (3) a book review. The first type, **the empirical analysis**, provides an in-depth examination of one or more empirical cases, focusing on the politics of nonparticipation. This could take the form of a qualitative case study of a specific election, the profile of a party, or a social movement. It might also address a research question through quantitative analysis. Examples of such questions include: to what extent do radical right parties mobilize a new social strata; to what extent is polarization associated with higher levels of participation; or whether those who do not participate in politics are also economically marginalized. In this type of paper, students are expected to apply the analytical frameworks and theoretical approaches discussed in the seminar to analyze their case(s) and to formulate a clear central argument or conclusion. Even when focusing on a single case, the paper should situate it within a comparative and generalizable perspective.

In a **research proposal**, the student not only formulates a research question but also makes a theoretical proposition or a set of hypotheses based on a critical review of a relevant strand of literature. In addition to what we have discussed in the seminar, the paper should also refer to further reading. To the extent possible, it should go beyond summarizing existing studies by critically engaging with them and using the debate to frame an original argument or a set of hypotheses. In addition, the paper should formulate an appropriate research design to study the argument or hypotheses, including a brief discussion of methodology (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods), operationalization, and potential data sources.

The third type of paper is a **review of one or more peer-reviewed books** published in the last 15 years by a major university press on a topic related to the seminar. A book review is expected to summarize the central argument(s) of the book(s), review the structure through which the argument(s) are presented, and consider the extent to which the empirical evidence supports the main argument(s). A vital element of a successful review is to situate the book(s) within relevant debates and literature. Do the book(s) challenge, support, or extend previous studies? How does their approach differ from or complement other major works in the field? The purpose of this is to assess whether the contribution the book(s) claim to make is indeed new to the literature and to what extent it represents a 'breakthrough' or an incremental step in relevant debates. Reading some existing reviews to familiarize yourself with the genre may be helpful. Three journals that regularly publish book reviews are *Comparative Political Studies*, *Party Politics*, and *Social Movement Studies*.

Formatting

Please format the term paper according to the following guidelines:

- **Title page:** include the paper title, course name, semester, your name, student ID, department/institution, and email address.

- **Font & spacing:** use a 12-point serif font (e.g., Times, Palatino) with 1.5-line spacing; footnotes in 10-point font, single spacing.

- **Margins & layout:** all margins should be at least 2.5 cm.

- **Page numbers:** number all pages (except the title page) consecutively, placed at the bottom center or bottom right.

- **Structure:** include a table of contents with section and subsection titles and page numbers. Use meaningful headings (avoid merely Section 1, 2, 3). You do not need to number the sections or subsections.

- **Abstract:** all papers must include an abstract of no more than 250 words. See my recommendation on writing a suitable abstract below.

- **Sections:** the paper should consist of an *Introduction*, *Main Body*, and *Conclusion*. Use subsections as needed, but avoid over-fragmentation. Format headings as follows: level 1 - 14-point bold; level 2 - 12-point bold; level 3 - 12-point italic. Do not use more than three levels.

- **Figures and tables:** all figures and tables must have a number, a title, and a note. Each should be self-explanatory. If you use color, ensure that it remains distinguishable when printed in black and white.

- **Citations & footnotes:** mark all non-original arguments or borrowed ideas with citations, ideally using the Chicago citation style. I recommend using a reference manager such as Zotero (see below).

- **Bibliography / References:** at the end, list all sources cited in alphabetical order. Do not include works not cited in the text.

- **Appendices:** appendices (if needed) do not count toward the main text length; label them clearly (Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.).

- **Declaration of originality:** include a short statement (on the title page or at the end) confirming that you have written the paper independently and used only the stated sources.

Academic Writing and Reading

On Writing Research Papers

Minkoff, Scott L. 2012. "A Guide to Developing and Writing Research Papers in Political Science," https://kevinlyles.digital.uic.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/minkoff_researchpaper_guide_v4.pdf.

On Writing a Good Abstract

Gilardi, Fabrizio. 2021. "Good Abstracts: A Template," https://fabriziogilardi.org/media/files/good-abstracts.pdf.

Templates for Writing

Graff, Gerald, and Cathy Birkenstein. 2018. *They Say, I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing.* Fourth edition. New York: W. W. Norton. ISBN: 0-393-63167-2. https://tinyurl.com/bdec4eex.

General Tips for Writing

Catherine de Vries' Substack: Respect the Marble (https://catherineeunicedevries.substack.com)

On Reading Efficiently

Pacheco-Vega, Raul. 2020. "Reading Strategies," http://www.raulpacheco.org/resources/reading-strategies.

Note: Raul Pacheco-Vega's blog is a valuable resource for academic writing in general!

Software Recommendations

I use Google Scholar and Zotero (both freely available) for literature search. For note-taking, I use Obsidian (also freely available). I recommend that you learn how to use these software tools (or their alternatives), as the investment pays off later during your studies. YouTube has many tutorial videos, and I am also happy to help if you have questions.

Academic Integrity and Mental Health

Plagiarism

Students must comply with the university policy on academic integrity found at https://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/en/service/detecting-plagiarism. In addition, please also familiarize yourself with the Study Guide https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/politikwissenschaften/master_recht.html. Not knowing the rules is no excuse for plagiarism!

Use of AI

If you use AI (ChatGPT, Claude, etc.) to write your term paper, you are required to be transparent about it. More specifically, list the prompts and answers in a separate appendix at the end of the term paper. This appendix does not count towards the word count.
You do not need to list the use of AI for grammar corrections (e.g., DeepL Write, Grammarly, etc.). You are also allowed to use AI for coding, data analysis, and programming, but remember to critically evaluate AI-generated content and use it as a supportive tool rather than as a primary author.
Please remember always to respect the rules of academic integrity and honesty! Plagiarism will be handled according to university policy.

Mental Health

Many students feel overwhelmed by the tasks and responsibilities during their studies, especially if they are new to Germany and Heidelberg. This is normal! If you feel that you are not able to cope alone, please consider approaching the psychosocial counselling service offered free of charge by the student services at https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/en/study/advisory-services/psychosocial-counselling-for-students-pcs. If you are having difficulties, e.g., with the term paper, please do not hesitate to approach me.

Schedule and Readings

Block I: Concepts and Measurements

Session 1, 14.04.2026 - Introducing the Seminar

- Getting to know each other

- Introduction to the syllabus

- Clarifying expectations

Session 2, 21.04.2026 - Exit, Voice, Loyalty, and the Hollowing-Out of Representation

- How do exit and voice interact over time?

- What changes when organizations or parties become less representative and more "responsible"?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Exit; Voice; Loyalty; Collective Action Problem of Voice; Responsiveness vs. Responsibility; Instrumental and Expressive Voting; Inequality in Political Representation*

Required:

Hirschman, Albert O. 1970. "Introduction and Doctrinal Background." In *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States*, 1–20. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Mair, Peter. 2009. "Representative versus Responsible Government." *MPIfG Working Paper* 09 (8). https://edoc.vifapol.de/opus/volltexte/2010/2121/pdf/wp09_8.pdf.

Recommended:

Schoppa, Leonard J. 2023. "Taking Voice Seriously." *Perspectives on Politics* 21 (4): 1406–1416. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592722001128.

Lindqvist, Jesper, Jennifer Oser, Ruth Dassonneville, Mikael Persson, and Anders Sundell. 2026. "Are the Politically Active Better Represented?" *Political Behavior* online first. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-025-10101-y.

Session 3, 28.04.2026 - Bystanders and the Scope of Conflict

- What does it mean to expand vs contain the scope of conflict? Who is typically trying to expand it?

- Who is likely to select in/ out of explicitly political discussions?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Politicization; Agenda Setting; Framing; Deliberative Democracy; Political Discussions*

Required:

Schattschneider, Elmer E. 1960a. "The Contagiousness of Conflict." In *The semisovereign people: A realists view of democracy in America*, 1–19. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

———. 1960b. "The Scope and Bias of the Pressure System." In *The semisovereign people: A realists view of democracy in America*, 20–35. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Groenendyk, Eric, Yanna Krupnikov, John Barry Ryan, and Elizabeth C. Connors. 2025. "Selecting Out of Politics: The Self-Fulfilling Role of Conflict Expectation." *American Political Science Review* 119 (1): 40–55. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055423001417.

Recommended:

Wolfe, Michelle, Bryan D. Jones, and Frank R. Baumgartner. 2013. "A Failure to Communicate: Agenda Setting in Media and Policy Studies." *Political Communication* 30 (2): 175–192. https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2012.737419.

Kollman, Ken. 1998. *Outside Lobbying: Public Opinion and Interest Group Strategies.* Princeton University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv173f02b.

Session 4, 05.05.2026 - Resources, Skills, Recruitment, and Participatory Inequality

- What is the causal chain in the resource model and where does nonparticipation enter that chain?

- What exactly are civic skills, and how are they acquired?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Resources; Civic Skills; Recruitment/Mobilization; Participatory Inequality; Turnout Bias; Compulsory Voting*

Required:

Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 89 (2): 271–294. https://doi.org/10.2307/2082425.

Lijphart, Arend. 1997. "Unequal Participation: Democracys Unresolved Dilemma." *The American Political Science Review* 91 (1): 1–14. https://doi.org/10.2307/2952255.

Recommended:

Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and equality: civic voluntarism in American politics.* Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. ISBN: 978-0-674-94292-9.

Teorell, Jan, Paul Sum, and Mette Tobiasen. 2007. "Participation and political equality. An assessment of large-scale democracy." In *Citizenship and Involvement in European Democracies: A Comparative Analysis,* edited by Jan W. Van Deth, Jose Ramon Montero, and Anders Westholm, 384–414. London; New York: Routledge. ISBN: 978-0-415-47960-8.

Session 5, 12.05.2026 - Changing Repertoires and Dynamic Engagement

- How do "duty-based" vs "engaged" citizenship norms change and what we should count as participation (and nonparticipation)?

- When people move between different forms of participation over time, what kinds of trajectories do we observe?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Repertoires of Participation; Participation Trajectories; Conventional vs. Unconventional Participation; Spillover vs. Substitution Across Arenas*

Required:

Dalton, Russell J. 2008. "Citizenship Norms and the Expansion of Political Participation." *Political Studies* 56:76–98. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00718.x.

Ohme, Jakob, Rachid Azrout, Franziska Marquart, and Judith Möller. 2025. "Cascades or salmons? Longitudinal upstream and downstream effects of political participation." *Acta Politica* 60 (2): 307–327. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41269-023-00325-3.

Recommended:

Dalton, Russell J. 2019. *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Industrial Democracies.* 7th edition. Los Angeles London: CQ Press. ISBN: 978-1-5443-5178-0.

Theocharis, Yannis, and Jan W. van Deth. 2019. *Political Participation in a Changing World: Conceptual and Empirical Challenges in the Study of Citizen Engagement.* New York London: Routledge. ISBN: 978-0-367-89140-4.

Block II: Micro-Level Mechanisms

Session 6, 19.05.2026 - Life-Course Constraints and Biographical Availability

- How do life-course changes and constraints structure who can enter, and sustain political engagement?

- When people do not participate, how can we distinguish between different motives?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Biographical Availability; Opportunity Costs of Participation; Life-Course Research; Participation as "Offered" vs. "Self-Initiated"*

Required:

McAdam, Doug. 1986. "Recruitment to High-Risk Activism: The Case of Freedom Summer." *American Journal of Sociology* 92 (1): 64–90. https://doi.org/10.1086/228463.

Jacquet, Vincent. 2017. "Explaining nonparticipation in deliberative minipublics." *European Journal of Political Research* 56 (3): 640–659. https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12195.

Recommended:

Serrat, Rodrigo, and Feliciano Villar. 2020. "Lifecourse transitions and participation in political organisations in older Spanish men and women." *Ageing & Society* 40 (10): 2174–2190. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X19000618.

Schussman, Alan, and Sarah A. Soule. 2005. "Process and Protest: Accounting for Individual Protest Participation." *Social Forces* 84 (2): 1083–1108. https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2006.0034.

Session 7, 26.05.2026 - Efficacy, Disillusionment, and Responsiveness Beliefs

- How do perceptions of efficacy and trust shape whether citizens invest in voice, withdraw into exit, or redirect effort into other arenas?

- When does disillusionment produce political withdrawal, and when does it instead fuel protest?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Political Efficacy; Political Trust; Conceptions of Democracy; Responsiveness Beliefs*

Required:

Grande, Edgar, and Daniel Saldivia Gonzatti. 2025. "A revolt of the distrustful? Political trust, political protest and the democratic deficit." *Journal of European Public Policy* 32 (8): 1986–2014. https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2024.2447457.

Oser, Jennifer, Amit Grinson, Shelley Boulianne, and Eran Halperin. 2022. "How Political Efficacy Relates to Online and Offline Political Participation: A Multilevel Meta-analysis." *Political Communication* 39 (5): 607–633. https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2022.2086329.

Recommended:

Devine, Daniel. 2024. "Does Political Trust Matter? A Meta-analysis on the Consequences of Trust." *Political Behavior* 46 (4): 2241–2262. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-024-09916-y.

Borbáth, Endre. 2024. "Differentiation in Protest Politics: Participation by Political Insiders and Outsiders." *Political Behavior* 46 (2): 727–750. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-022-09846-7.

Session 8, 02.06.2026 - Emotions, Identity, Burnout, and Sustaining Commitment

- How do different emotional experiences of politics push people toward withdrawal, persistence, or renewed engagement?

- How can we treat emotions as causal mechanisms rather than correlates of political participation?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Activist Burnout; Emotional Labor in Political Engagement; Anger vs. Anxiety; Habit of Participation; Loneliness and Political Participation*

Required:

Gorski, Paul C. 2019. "Racial battle fatigue and activist burnout in racial justice activists of color at predominately White colleges and universities." *Race Ethnicity and Education* 22 (1): 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2018.1497966.

Valentino, Nicholas A., Krysha Gregorowicz, and Eric W. Groenendyk. 2009. "Efficacy, Emotions and the Habit of Participation." *Political Behavior* 31 (3): 307–330. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-008-9076-7.

Recommended:

Langenkamp, Alexander. 2021. "Enhancing, suppressing or something in between – loneliness and five forms of political participation across Europe." *European Societies* 23 (3): 311–332. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2021.1916554.

Valentino, Nicholas A., Ted Brader, Eric W. Groenendyk, Krysha Gregorowicz, and Vincent L. Hutchings. 2011. "Election Nights Alright for Fighting: The Role of Emotions in Political Participation." *The Journal of Politics* 73 (1): 156–170. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0022381610000939.

Block III: Meso-Level Organizational Dynamics

Session 9, 09.06.2026 - Organizations as Participation Infrastructures

- How do organizations convert potential participants into sustained actors?

- Which organizational experiences make political engagement more likely, and for whom?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Party Membership; Recruitment/"Being Asked"; Organizational Embeddedness; Professionalization*

Required:

Han, Hahrie. 2014. "Introduction." In *How Organizations Develop Activists: Civic Associations and Leadership in the 21st Century,* 1–28. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0-19-933676-0.

Kosiara-Pedersen, Karina, Susan E. Scarrow, and Emilie van Haute. 2017. "Rules of Engagement? Party Membership Costs, New Forms of Party Affiliation, and Partisan Participation." In *Organizing Political Parties: Representation, Participation, and Power,* edited by Susan E. Scarrow, Paul D. Webb, and Thomas Poguntke, 234–258. Comparative Politics. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0-19-875863-1.

Recommended:

Han, Hahrie. 2014. *How Organizations Develop Activists: Civic Associations and Leadership in the 21st Century.* New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0-19-933676-0.

Kosiara-Pedersen, Karina, Emilie van Haute, and Susan E. Scarrow. 2026. "Social media partisans vs. party members: political affiliation in a digital age." *West European Politics* 49 (2): 435–456. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2025.2450581.

Session 10, 16.06.2026 - Party-Movement Interactions and Cross-Arena Participation

- How do parties and partisan alignments shape when collective actors mobilize, sustain contention, or demobilize?

- When do episodes of contention translate into electoral change (new challengers, new alignments), and when do they dissipate despite broad sympathy?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Political Opportunity Structure; Movement-Party Alignment and Brokerage; "Party Movementization"; Party Membership vs. Movement Activism*

Required:

Schürmann, Lennart, Endre Borbáth, and Swen Hutter. 2026. "Protest and the rise of left-nationalist challengers: evidence from Germany." *Social Movement Studies* online first. https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2025.2530410.

Heaney, Michael, and Fabio Rojas. 2011. "The Partisan Dynamics of Contention: Demobilization of the Antiwar Movement in the United States, 2007-2009." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 16 (1): 45–64. https://doi.org/10.17813/maiq.16.1.y8327n3nk0740677.

Recommended:

Butzlaff, Felix. 2024. "When Parties Become Movements: the Movement-ization of Established Party Organizations in Austria, Germany, and the UK." *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 65 (4): 645–666. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11615-023-00524-9.

Giugni, Marco, and Maria Grasso. 2021. "Party membership and social movement activism: A macromicro analysis." *Party Politics* 27 (1): 92–102. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068818823446.

Session 11, 23.06.2026 - Demobilization and Organizational Strategies Over Cycles

- Why do waves of contention rise and decline, and what role do organizations play in driving escalation, or demobilization?

- When mobilization ebbs, how do activists and organizations adapt, and what does this imply for exit and later re-entry?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Abeyance; Cycles of Contention; Scale Shift; Arena Shifting*

Required:

Tarrow, Sidney. 2011. "Cycles of Contention." In *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics,* 3rd ed., 195–214. Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-0-521-19890-5. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511813245.011.

Zihniolu, Özge. 2023. "Strategizing post-protest activism in abeyance: retaining activist capital under political constraint." *Social Movement Studies* 22 (1): 122–137. https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2021.2003193.

Recommended:

Taylor, Verta. 1989. "Social Movement Continuity: The Womens Movement in Abeyance." *American Sociological Review* 54 (5): 761–775. https://doi.org/10.2307/2117752.

Grimm, Jannis Julien. 2026. "Revolutionary burnout: Subjective crisis responses and the demobilization of mass protest in Lebanon." *Mediterranean Politics* online first. https://doi.org/10.1080/13629395.2025.2459553.

Block IV: Macro-Level Contexts

Session 12, 30.06.2026 - Polarization & Populism: Mobilization vs. Alienation

- When party competition becomes more polarized, under what conditions does it draw citizens into participation, and when does it instead fuel withdrawal?

- Do populist radical right parties expand democratic inclusion by mobilizing the disaffected and previous nonvoters, or do they intensify participatory inequality?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Party System Polarization; Affective vs. Ideological Polarization; Populist Radical Right as a Democratic Corrective; Political Interest*

Required:

Krupnikov, Yanna, and John Barry Ryan. 2022. "Beyond Political Interest." In *The Other Divide,* 52–76. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 978-1-108-83112-3. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108923323.004.

Ellger, Fabio. 2024. "The Mobilizing Effect of Party System Polarization. Evidence From Europe." *Comparative Political Studies* 57 (8): 1310–1338. https://doi.org/10.1177/00104140231194059.

Recommended:

Schulte-Cloos, Julia, and Arndt Leininger. 2022. "Electoral participation, political disaffection, and the rise of the populist radical right." *Party Politics* 28 (3): 431–443. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068820985186.

Koczyska, Marta. 2025. "Does polarization increase participation? A systematic literature review and meta-analysis." *European Political Science Review* 17 (4): 553–568. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1755773925000116.

Klein, Ezra. 2024. "The Biggest Political Divide Is Not Left vs. Right." *The New York Times,* https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/18/opinion/ezra-klein-podcast-yanna-krupnikov.html.

Session 13, 07.07.2026 - Crisis Episodes and Political Engagement

- How do crises reshape the interaction between governments and challengers, and what determines whether contention escalates into broad participation or remains contained among a few organized actors?

- Why can major crises generate both mobilization and withdrawal at the same time?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Contentious Episode; Politicization Under Crisis; Repression vs. Concession; Government Response Repertoires (concession, repression, co-optation); Past Participation*

Required:

Rüdig, Wolfgang, and Georgios Karyotis. 2014. "Who Protests in Greece? Mass Opposition to Austerity." *British Journal of Political Science* 44 (3): 487–513. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123413000112.

Kriesi, Hanspeter, Swen Hutter, and Abel Bojar. 2019. "Contentious Episode Analysis." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 24 (3): 251–273. https://doi.org/10.17813/1086-671X-24-3-251.

Recommended:

Altiparmakis, Argyrios. 2021. "The Greek Case." In *Contentious episodes in the age of austerity. Studying the dynamics of government-challenger interactions.* Edited by Ábel Bojár, Theresa Gessler, Swen Hutter, and Hanspeter Kriesi. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Vidal, Guillem. 2018. "Challenging business as usual? The rise of new parties in Spain in times of crisis." *West European Politics* 41 (2): 261–286. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2017.1376272.

Session 14, 14.07.2026 - Repression and Participation: Mobilization Under Threat

- When and why does repression reduce participation, and when can it instead trigger higher levels of participation (backlash, radicalization, or "nothing left to lose" dynamics)?

- How do different forms of repression, especially surveillance, reshape participation by altering perceived risk, and the ability to coordinate through networks?

Possible Concepts for Presentations:

- *Repression Effectiveness; Social Networks and Threshold Aggregation; Selective Censorship; Online Participation Under Threat; Emotional Appeals*

Required:

Young, Lauren E. 2023. "Mobilization Under Threat: Emotional Appeals and Pro-Opposition Political Participation Online." *Political Behavior* 45 (2): 445–468. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-021-09711-z.

Hager, Anselm, and Krzysztof Krakowski. 2022. "Does State Repression Spark Protests? Evidence from Secret Police Surveillance in Communist Poland." *American Political Science Review* 116 (2): 564–579. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055421000770.

Recommended:

Kostadinova, Tatiana, and Timothy J. Power. 2007. "Does Democratization Depress Participation?: Voter Turnout in the Latin American and Eastern European Transitional Democracies." *Political Research Quarterly* 60 (3): 363. https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912907304154.

Opp, Karl-Dieter, and Wolfgang Roehl. 1990. "Repression, Micromobilization, and Political Protest." *Social Forces* 69 (2): 521–547. https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/69.2.521.

Session 15, 21.07.2026 - Concluding Discussion and Feedback Session

- Feedback session on the content and organization of the seminar, with an open discussion on what you learned, liked, or found challenging.