

## **Political participation**

Mariona Ferrer-i-Fons

**mariona.ferrer@upf.edu**

Office: 20.110

### **1. OVERVIEW**

This course focuses on the study of political participation (in particular, non-electoral political participation: membership in political groups, contacting, political consumption, and protest politics) and its consequences for democracies. Political participation is a central element of democratic systems. We will explore the meaning of political participation, the evolution of the concept and its measurement, and the micro and macro-level explanations of citizen behaviour and cross-national variation in levels of activism. Moreover, we will dedicate monographic sessions on protest and social movements, and new forms of activism such as political consumption and politics through internet.

The assignments and lectures in this course are designed to enhance your ability to think critically about citizen participation and the role of actors and political institutions to foster (or depress) political activity.

### **2, PREREQUISITES**

This course strives to give the students a thorough and careful introduction to the essential ideas and debates of the political participation literature without requiring an extensive background. The methodological prerequisites for the course include a medium knowledge of quantitative methodology, and basic research design at the level of, say, King, Keohane, and Verba's *Designing Social Inquiry* (Princeton University Press, 1994).

### **3. COMPETENCES TO BE ACHIEVED**

The objective of this course is for students to be able to understand what political participation means. I hope that students will achieve an understanding of the basic concepts of citizen activism, some knowledge of the main debates and new areas of research in the field, and the ability to write a research paper. In particular, some capacities and abilities are crucial in this course. Students should achieve or at least improve competences such as:

#### **Instrumental competences**

Ability to analyse and synthesise

Basic knowledge of the area of study: political participation

Knowledge of a second language

Planning and management of time

#### **Interpersonal competences**

Ability to study independently and in groups

Critical and self-critical ability

Team work

Interpersonal abilities

Ability to communicate with both experts and not experts in the subject

### **Systemic competences**

Research abilities and critically evaluate information

Ability to learn

Ability to generate new ideas (creativity)

Use logic and reasoning to evaluate arguments

Design and management of projects

## **4. ASSESMENT**

The course requirements include:

### **Weekly discussion of readings [20 percent of grade]:**

Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class each week and to contribute to discussion during seminars. This is a seminar course and active, thoughtful, and regular participation is required. To participate fully, you must do all the readings before class. Good participation does not presume you understand everything in the reading – in fact, good questions make for good participation. The estimated time to prepare each session should be 2 hours.

**Presentation [20 percent of grade]:** Each week, there will be two student presentations on questions that are posed on the syllabus. The basis of the presentations is the readings assigned for each session. Topics will be assigned on the first day of class. The presentations should be 20-25 minutes each. You should coordinate to share the presentation and presentation time on an equal basis. This will work best if you each prepare material that covers the whole topic, and meet beforehand to divide up the presentation to minimize repetition and overlaps. Each student must make one presentation during the course of the trimester. The estimated time to prepare each session presentation should be 2-3 hours, apart from the time invested in reading the papers.

**Original research paper [60 percent of grade].** Each student must write an original research paper on an aspect of political participation. Students should consult me during the course of the term about potential topics. During the first two weeks of February, each student should turn in 1-2 page research proposal that identifies the main research question she/he will address, why the question is important and interesting, the hypothesis you will test, and what kind of evidence you will collect to evaluate your argument (not all papers need to be empirically based, normative papers, for instance, on participatory democracy and political participation are welcomed). The estimated time to write the research paper is 25-30 hours.

## **5. CONTENTS**

1. Introduction to the study of political participation: basic concepts, main paradigms and methodological approaches, the relevance of political action on democratic regimes, normative theories of participation
2. The concept of political participation. Modes of participation and its evolution
3. Membership of voluntary organisations and the impact of the societal context on political action. Mobilisation as the central force

4. Individual explanations of political participation: from the standard SES model to the civic voluntarism model, collective actions problems and rational choice models
5. Macro-contextual explanations of political participation: the impact of institutions and the political context, modernisation theories, recent developments in the field
6. Social movements and protest politics
7. New forms of political activism: political consumption and activism through internet

## 6. METHODOLOGY

The course is based on a balance between conceptual and empirical approaches.

Session 1: Introduction The beginning of the course is designed to ensure a common basis for dealing with theoretical and conceptual issues. The professor will present the material. In this session, topics for the presentation will be assigned.

Sessions 2-8: Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class each week and to contribute to discussion during seminar. Each week, there will be two student presentations on the required readings and topics of the syllabus. The presentations should be 20-25 minutes each.

Sessions 9-10: The final part of the course will be addressed through tutorial discussions on how to draft the final paper.

## 7. THE PROGRAMING OF ACTIVITIES

<i>Week</i>	<i>Classroom activity</i>	<i>Activity outside the classroom</i>	<i>Results that are object of assessment</i>
<b>Week 1</b>	Lecture		Participation
<b>Week 2</b>	Seminar session	Required readings 1	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 3</b>	Seminar session	Required readings 2	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 4</b>	Seminar session	Required readings 3	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 5</b>	Seminar session	Required readings 4	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 6</b>	Seminar session	Required readings 5	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 7</b>	Seminar session	Required readings 6	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 8</b>	Seminar session	Required readings 7	Presentation/Participation
<b>Week 9</b>	Individual tutorial session		
<b>Week 10</b>	Individual tutorial session		Paper (to present in April)

## 8. STRUCTURE OF PROGRAMMING OF ACTIVITIES

Week	Activity in the classroom			Activity outside the classroom			Assessment activities	
	Learning activities	Didactic resources	Time scheduled	Learning activities	Didactic resources	Estimated time	Items for assessment	Estimated time
1	Lecture: Introduction to the field of political participation		3 hours*				Participation	
2	Seminar. Readings 1	Readings 1	3 hours*		Readings 1	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
3	Seminar. Readings 2	Readings 2	3 hours*		Readings 2	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
4	Seminar. Readings 3	Readings 3	3 hours*		Readings 3	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
5	Seminar. Readings 4	Readings 4	3 hours*		Readings 4	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
6	Seminar. Readings 5	Readings 5	3 hours*		Readings 5	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
7	Seminar. Readings 6	Readings 6	3 hours*		Readings 6	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
8	Seminar. Readings 7	Readings 7	3 hours*		Readings 7	2 hours	Presentation/Participation	
9	Individual tutorial sessions		15 min				Paper	25 hours
10	Individual tutorial sessions		15 min				Paper	

\*Break. 15 min.

## 9. SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READINGS

Classes will take place on Thursdays from 15h to 18h with a break of 15 minutes. **Attendance is compulsory.**

### **January 10: 1.** Introduction: Concepts, main paradigms and methodological approaches

I will outline the course and give an overview of the topics. I will give an introduction to the study of political participation: basic concepts, main paradigms and methodological approaches, the relevance of political action on democratic regimes, and normative theories of participation

### **January 17: 2.** The concept of political participation and its dimensions. Modes of participation and its evolution

#### *Readings:*

Teorell, J., M.Torcal and J.R. Montero. 2007. "Political participation. Mapping the terrain". In: van Deth, J., J.R. Montero and A. Westholm (eds.) *Citizenship and Involvement in European Democracies*. London: Routledge.

van Deth, J.W. 2001. "Studying Political Participation: Towards a Theory of Everything?" Paper delivered at the Joint Sessions of Workshops of the ECPR, Grenoble, April 6-11, 2001.

#### *Additional Readings:*

Brady, H. E. 1999. "Political Participation." In: Robinson, J.P., P.R. Shaver and L.S. Wrightsman (eds.) *Measures of Political Attitudes*. San Diego: Academic Press.

Bennett, S.E. and L.M. Bennett. 1986. "Political Participation." In: S. Long (ed.) *Annual Review of Political Science* (vol. I).

Inglehart, R. and G. Catterberg. 2002 "Trends in Political Action: the Developmental Trend and the Post-Honeymoon Decline." *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 43: 300-316.

Marsh, A. and M. Kaase.1979. "Measuring Political Action." In: Barnes, S. and M. Kaase et al. *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Topf, R. 1995. "Beyond electoral participation." In: Klingemann, H.-D. and D. Fuchs (eds.) *Citizens and the State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Verba, S., N.H. Nie, and J.-O. Kim. 1978. *Participation and Political Equality: a Seven-Nation Comparison*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**January 24: 3.** Membership of voluntary organisations and the impact of the societal context on political action. Mobilisation as the central force

*Readings:*

Dekker, P. R. Koopmans and A. van den Broek 1997. "Voluntary associations, social movements and individual political behaviour in Western Europe". In: van Deth, J.W. (ed.). *Private Groups and Public Life. Social Participation, Voluntary Associations and Political Involvement in Representative Democracies*. London: Routledge.

Pollock, P.H.I. 1982. "Organisations as Agents of Mobilisation: How does Group Activity Affect Political Participation." *American Journal of Political Science* 26: 485-503.

*Additional Readings:*

Armingeon. 2007. "Political Participation and Associational Involvement". In: van Deth, J., J.R. Montero and A. Westholm (eds.) *Citizenship and Involvement in European Democracies*. London: Routledge.

Leighley, J.E. 1996. "Group Membership and the Mobilization of Political Participation." *The Journal of Politics* 58: 447-63.

Skocpol, T. and M. Fiorina (eds.). 1999. *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institute.

Rosenstone, S.J. and J.M. Hansen. 1993. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

van Deth, J.W., 1997. "Introduction: social involvement and democratic associations." In: van Deth, J.W. (ed.). *Private Groups and Public Life. Social Participation, Voluntary Associations and Political Involvement in Representative Democracies*. London: Routledge.

**January 31: 4.** Individual explanations of political participation: From the standard SES model and to the civic voluntarism model, collective actions problems and rational choice models

*Readings:*

Brady, H.E., S. Verba, and K.L. Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond SES: a Resource Model of Political Participation." *American Political Science Review* 89: 271-294.

Leighley, J.E. 1995. "Attitudes, opportunities and incentives: a field essay on Political Participation" *Political Research Quarterly* 48/1: 181-209.

*Additional Readings:*

Hirschman, A.O. 1970. *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

Verba, S., K.L. Schlozman, and H.E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Pattie, Ch., P. Seyd, and P.Whiteley. 2004 “Alternative theories of citizenship”. In: Pattie, Ch., P. Seyd, and P.Whiteley. *Citizenship in Britain. Values, Participation and Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Whiteley, P. F. 1995. “Rational Choice and Political Participation. Evaluating the Debate.” *Political Research Quarterly* 48/1: 211-278.

**February 7: 5.** Macro-contextual explanations of political participation: the impact of institutions, modernisation theories, recent developments in the field (I): contextual explanations on cross-national variation in associational involvement

*Readings:*

Morales L. 2001. Citizens in Polities: The Individual and Contextual Determinants of Political Membership in Western Countries, Estudio/working paper 2001/164, CEACS, Fundación Juan March.

Schofer, E. and M. Fourcade-Gourinchas. 2001. “The Structural Contexts of Civic Engagement: Voluntary Association Membership in Comparative Perspective.” *American Sociological Review* 66(6): 806-829.

*Additional Readings:*

Rothstein, B. and D. Stolle. 2003. “Social Capital, Impartiality and the Welfare State: an Institutional Approach.” In: Hooghe, M. and D. Stolle (eds.) *Generating Social Capital. Civil Society and Institutions in Comparative Perspective*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Wessels, B. 1997. “Organizing Capacity of Societies and Modernity.” In: van Deth, J. W. (ed.). *Private Groups and Public Life. Social Participation, Voluntary Associations and Political Involvement in Representative Democracies*. London: Routledge.

**February 14: 6.** Macro-contextual explanations of political participation: the impact of institutions, modernisation theories, recent developments in the field (II)

*Readings:*

Kriesi, H. 1996. “The Organizational Structure of New Social Movements in a Political Context.” In: McAdam, D., J.D. McCarthy and M.N. Zald (eds.) *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*. New York: Cambridge University Press

Mettler, S. and J. Soss. 2004. “The Consequences of Public Policy for Democratic Citizenship: Bridging Policy Studies and Mass Politics.” *Perspective on Politics* 2/1: 55-73.

*Additional Readings:*

Kitschelt, H. 1986. "Political Opportunity Structures and Political Protest: Anti-nuclear Movements in Four Democracies." *British Journal of Political Science* 16: 57-85.

Kriesi, H., R. Koopmans, J.W. Duyvendak and M.G. Giugni. 1992. "New Social Movements and Political Opportunities in Western Europe." *European Journal of Political Research* 22: 219-244.

Mettler, S. 2002. "Bringing the State Back in to Civic Engagement: Policy Feedback Effects of the G.I. Bill for World War II Veterans." *American Political Science Review* 96: 351-365.

Soss, J. 1999. "Lessons of Welfare: Policy Design, Political Learning, and Political Action." *American Political Science Review* 93: 363-380.

**February 21: 7.** Social movements and protest politics.

*Readings:*

Norris, P., S. Walgrave, S., and p. van Aelst. 2005. "Antistate Rebels, Conventional Participants, or Everyone?". *Comparative Politics* 37: 189-205.

McAdam, D., J.D. McCarthy and M.N. Zald. 1996. "Introduction: opportunities, mobilizing structures, and framing processes –toward a synthetic, comparative perspective on social movements. In: McAdam, D., J.D. McCarthy and M.N. Zald (eds.) *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

*Additional readings:*

Della Porta, D. and S. Tarrow. 2005. *Transnational Protest and Global Activism*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher.

Gundelach, P. 1995. "Grass-Roots Activity." In: Klingemann, H.-D. and D. Fuchs (eds.) *Citizens and the State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Klandermans, B. and D. Oegema. 1987. "Potentials, Networks, Motivations, and Barriers: Steps towards Participation in Social Movements." *American Sociological Review* 52: 519-31.

van Aelst, P. and S. Walgrave. 2001. "Who is that (wo)man in the street? From the normalisation of protest to the normalisation of the protester." *European Journal of Political Research* 39: 461-486..

Tarrow, S.1998. *Power in Movement*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**February 28: 8.** New forms of political activism: political consumption and activism through internet

*Readings:*

Jennings, M.K. and Zeitner, V. 2003 "Internet use and civic engagement: a longitudinal analysis." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 67: 311-334.

Stolle, D., M. Hooghe, and M. Micheletti. 2005 "Politics in the Supermarket: Political Consumerism as a Form of Political Participation." *International Political Science Review* 26/3: 245-269.

*Additional readings:*

Micheletti, M., A. Follesdal and D.Stolle (eds.) 2004. *Politics, Products, and Markets*. New Brunswick/London: Transaction Publishers.

Norris, P. 2001. "The Digital divide (chapter 1) "Civic Engagement" (Chapter 11). In: Norris, P. 2001. *Digital Divide: Civic Engagement, Information Poverty, and the Internet Worldwide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**March 6, 13: 9 and 10.** Tutorial sessions

Students must discuss their research paper with me in an individual tutorial session. These sessions will be from 15h to 18h or by appointment.