

# SOSGEO4801 – Social Movements

**Level**

Master

**Credits**

10

**Teaching**

Every spring

**Teaching language**

English

## Course description

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## Course content

Social movements play an important role in social, cultural, and political change and there is a rich tradition for social movement studies within social science. In this course, we take a closer look at what social movements are, how they develop, what they do and how they make a difference. We will both study key concepts and theories of social movements, and examine the development and strategies of key contemporary movements.

How do actors mobilize around diverse identities and grievances? Do we see an increase in intersectional frames and mobilization efforts in feminist, nationalist and anti-racist movements? How have new movements and identities emerged as a result of greater global connectedness and increased attention to global inequalities and decolonization? And, how do local and national mobilizations relate to transnational movements and political protest?

These, and similar questions, are central in this course, which presents sociological and geographical theories about social movements and empirical research on collective action and protest. The first part of the course examines the development of social movement theory over time and different perspectives within the field. This provides a basis for empirical analyses of specific movements in the second part of the course. Here, we will especially focus on mobilizations around post-colonialism, anti-racism, climate change, right-wing populism, anti-autocratization and queer activism. Although most of the research texts in the second part of the course will deal with these selected movements, the course is also relevant and open to students who want to focus on other issues, identities and forms of collective action. Both organized and more spontaneous forms of cultural and political contention and communication via different media will be covered in the course.

Students will learn about democratization and political protest in a sociological and geographical perspective, based in the international social movement and mobilization literature.

## Learning outcome

### Knowledge

- Get insight in central concepts in social movement studies, such as grievances, resources, opportunity structures, emotions, identity dilemmas, frames and spatialities.
- Get insight in different concrete social movements related to post-colonialism, racism, climate change, right-wing populism, autocratization and queer activism.
- Get some insight in transnational social movements and in how social media platforms are essential for movements themselves and for the academic study of movements.

- Understand how the concepts of identity dilemma, emotions and intersectionality relate to social movements, and be able to describe concrete examples of this.
- Get insight in how scholars use different methodological designs in movement studies.
- Get insight in how activists themselves see the main objectives and strategies in movements.

#### **Skills**

- Critically read and discuss academic studies of how different statuses and identities relate to collective action and political contention before and today.
- Use different theories related to mobilization, post-colonialism and group difference when discussing concrete empirical cases of movements and their members.
- Develop general skills and competencies for oral and written presentation of knowledge related to social movements in theory and practice.

#### **Competences**

- Capacity to understand complex issues related to collective action and politics from multiple perspectives
- Improved capacity for reflection and awareness of movement members and their political goals and aspirations and how these affect all members of society more broadly
- Understanding of how to engage with migration and diversity related politics from a knowledge-based perspective

### Teaching

- The course will be organized as 12 seminars including lectures and discussions
- The lectures are given in English

### Examination

School exam (6 hours)

Assessment is based on a school exam. Grades are awarded on a scale from A to F, where A is the best grade and F is a fail.

You must complete a mandatory seminar presentation in order to take the exam.

**Formatted:** English (United States)