

KU REPRESENTATION INITIATIVE & KU POLITICAL SCIENCE SPEAKER EVENT:

How Political and Social Constituent Traits Affect The Responsiveness of Legislators: A Comparative Field Experiment

Tuesday, March 7th, 2023 at 2:30 PM
Blake Hall, Rm.114



Dr. Thomas Zittel is a Professor of Comparative Politics at Goethe-University Frankfurt, External Fellow at the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research (MZES) at the University of Mannheim, and the Max Weber Chair in German and European Studies at New York University. He will be hosted by the University of Kansas Representation Initiative (KUREP) to share his study titled: *How Political and Social Constituent Traits Affect the Responsiveness of Legislators: A Comparative Field Experiment*. See abstract below:

“In the past decade, various studies have investigated whether legislators show biases in their constituency communication on the basis of constituents’ traits. However, we know little about whether and how findings of unequal responsiveness generalize across countries (beyond the United States) and across different traits. We address both issues using a pre-registered field experiment conducted in Germany, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, in which fictitious citizens (varied in ethnicity, social class and partisan affiliation) inquired about legislators’ policy priorities regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Our analysis reveals that copartisanship and class both increase the responsiveness of legislators, though the latter is context-dependent, while ethnicity has no effect. Exploratory analyses suggest no clear interactions between these factors in predicting elite responsiveness. In sum, while political identities generally matter in the interactions between citizens and elites, the role of social biases appears to be less general.”