The Political Science Department   
and  
the College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Present the

**GORDON SANDISON MEMORIAL LECTURE**

# Jake Grumbach, PhD

**"**Understanding the Democratic Crisis**"**

# Tuesday, May 10, 2022

# 3:00 pm, Academic West 210

In recent years, scholars and observers have grown increasingly concerned about the fate of American democracy. But while much of the attention has been focused on Washington, D.C., the U.S. has a decentralized form of federalism that administers democratic institutions at the state level. We must look to the *state level* to understand the current crisis of American democracy. State governments have been central to battles over democracy throughout American history. Yet unlike earlier periods, today's it is *national* conflicts over race, labor, and democracy that are playing out through the *subnational* institutions of state governments. This talk concludes with lessons that social science research teaches us about how to reinvigorate American democracy.

About the Speaker: Jake Grumbach is Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Washington.  His research and teaching interests center on democratic institutions (including voting rules) across states and the intersection of labor politics and racial attitudes. He also explores the causes and consequences of the nationalization of state politics since the 1970s. Grumbach has developed a State Democracy Index to measure the health of democratic institutions across all 50 states and was a moderator for the recent webinar: *Voting Rights Under Attack*, sponsored by the Washington Institute for the Study of Inequality and Race. His work has appeared in the *Boston Review* and *The Hill*; he has been cited in the *Economist* and the *New York Times*.

*AA/EO. For disability accommodation, please contact Political Science at 360-650-2505 or* [*politicalscience@wwu.edu*](mailto:politicalscience@wwu.edu)*.*