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Dr. Lütjen's research interests include American politics, comparative party politics and the sociology of knowledge. He is currently working on an analysis of ideological conflict in the United States from a comparative perspective. In particular, he is trying to explain why ideological polarization in the US has become intensively sharp, whereas most European party systems are converging on ideological terms, a fact that challenges a number of well-established theories of modernization. Torben Lütjen's research is funded by the Volkswagen Foundation that supports him with a 5-year grant until 2014 (Schumpeter-Fellowship).