This seminar is intended to survey the major approaches and themes in comparative politics. Each week’s readings will examine one of the principal topics in the literature of the subfield. Significant methodological issues are considered in the context of the substantive and theoretical questions addressed by the literature.

The readings will be available on Reserves Direct or on the seminar Blackboard site.

You are required to write a short (4-5 pp.) paper each week analyzing a single central issue addressed in the week’s readings. The paper should succinctly address the contribution of each reading to the issue, and relate the readings to each other with respect to their treatment of the question you have identified. The issue chosen may concern a theoretical or methodological point. The paper should address the way the issue is framed, the nature of the evidence used to draw conclusions, and the implications of the discussion for the comparative politics field. The paper should not attempt to summarize the readings, but rather to address their bearing on the particular question or problem selected.

Each student will be allowed to skip two of the weekly papers. The paper is to be handed in at the beginning of each week’s seminar session.

Each student’s participation in discussion is crucial to the seminar. Accordingly, quality of participation overall will be weighted 30% in determining the final grade. The weekly papers will be weighted 70%.
Outline of topics and readings

January 19: Causal Inference in Comparative Politics


January 26: Democratization


February 2: Regimes and Regime Transitions


**February 9. Formal and Informal Political Participation**


**February 16: Political Culture and Civil Society**


**February 23: Voters and Parties in Democratic Polities**


March 2: State Administration: Delegation and Control


March 16: Federalism


March 23: Institutional Dynamics


March 30: Mobilizing Ethnicity


April 6: The Political Economy of Developing States


April 13: The Political Economy of Capitalist Democracies


April 20: The Resource Curse and Its Critics


