This course is designed as an intensive and extensive introduction to the basic theories, concepts, and methodologies encompassing the field of comparative politics. In this respect, this class is like boot camp (only as a metaphor). As such, its basic aim is to make sure that students are aware of the paradigms and methodologies that populate comparative politics. Most, although not all, of the general literature with which a student should be acquainted in advance of the MA and Ph.d exams will be covered. Each seminar will begin with a monologue by me. Afterwards, the student designated to present a synthesis of the literature will do a twenty-minute presentation followed by a wide-ranging analysis and discussion of the material. Everyone is expected to read all assigned readings. Students who convey the impression of not having read the assigned material will be penalized with the subtraction of points. If the majority of students are not prepared for the class, it will be canceled. The canceled class will be formatted as an exam. Each student is expected to prepare a 15 page literature review essay. The topic needs to be conveyed to me just after Spring break. This is not a book review, nor a series of book notes, but a synthesis of a specified body of literature. The essay should explore the key analytical issues in the literature and provide a critical review of the findings and/or underlying theories, ending with some suggestions on directions for new research. The literature review is due on April 24 by 1:00 P.M. (No Exceptions). You are encouraged to turn this assignment in early in order to benefit from comments and suggestions on it before submitting the final draft. Also, each student will prepare a two-page research prospectus on an aspect of the literature covered in the review essay. This statement should indicate the problem to be researched; its significance in the broader literature; the methodology (ies) adopted for the study; why such an approach is appropriate and the data to be used. Finally, there will be a mid-term and a final take-home exam. They will be available on Friday at 9:00 a.m. on blackboard and are due back the following Monday by 1:00 P.M in my mailbox. There will be no class on the Wednesday following the exams. Course grading is based on regular attendance and participation in the seminar (10%), Literature Review and prospectus (30%) and two exams (30% each).
January 16 - The Study of Comparative Politics I: Epistemological Issues


Meta-Theorizing


Craig Parsons *How to Map Arguments in Political Science* (Oxford University Press 2007).

January 23 - The Study of Comparative Politics II: Methodological Issues


Qualitative Approaches


January 30 - The Study of Comparative Politics III: Theory and Model Building.


Dwayne Woods, “Patrimonialism (neo) and the Kingdom of Swaziland: employing a case study to rescale a concept,” Commonwealth and Comparative Politics, (July 2012).

Epilogue: The Art and Maybe the Science of Being a Comparativists


February 6 - From the State to New Institutionalism


**February 13 - The Empirics of (New) Institutionalism**


**Constitutions, Legislatures, Executives, Electoral and Party systems**


**February 20 - Rational Choice Theory, Formal Modeling and Comparative Politics**


How Is Game Theory and Formal Modeling Used in Comparative Politics


February 27 - Culture and Comparative Politics


Mid-Term Essay Exam, Due March 4 (no class on the 6th)

March 20 - Violence and Comparative Politics


Ravi Bhavnani, Dan Miodownik, and Hyun Jin Choi, “Violence and Control in Civil Conflict Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza,” Comparative Politics, October 2011


**March 27 - Ethnicity and Identity Politics**


**April 3 - Democratization**

Valerie Bunce, “Comparative Democratization: Big and Bounded Generalizations,” *Comparative Political Studies*, 33/6-7 (2000): 703-734.


**April 10 - Political Economy of Development: Accounting for the Gap Between Rich and Poor Nations**


**Final Exam, Due April 15 (No Class on the 17th)**