POSC 450: Political Development
(Fall 2017 Course Description)

In this course we will analyze the process of political development, with an emphasis on less-industrialized states (e.g., countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia). We will explore the causes and consequences of the state, political institutions, and democracy. Topics will include the origins of the modern state, state failure, revolutions, the role of political parties and legislatures in dictatorships and democracies, and democracy’s social and economic causes and effects. In addition to learning major theories in the literature and examining historical and modern empirical cross-national patterns, students will conduct their own research into specific countries for case studies and a comparative analysis group project. Along the way, students will also acquire some skills in game theory, and utilize those skills to analyze the political and economic dynamics associated with political development.