Officials come to their positions of power in ways that vary over time and space. Comparativists have, historically, focused their attentions on democracies and on transitions from non-democratic regimes to democratic ones. This seminar aims to have a different, broader focus: the politics of non-democratic regimes and regime transitions of all kinds, with an emphasis on empirical analysis.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Participation & Attendance - 30%       Responses (3) - 30%       Research Paper - 40%

Participation & Attendance – The course is a seminar and so your attendance and active participation in the discussion is required. Starting in week 3, each student will be asked to take the lead in discussing the week’s readings.

Responses – Each student will write 3 responses of ~500 words each during the semester. Responses synthesize the readings of the week.

Research Note – By the date of the final session, students are expected to turn in a research note (~6000 words). On the way, a draft outline must be turned in by the end of Week 7, and a 3000+ word draft similarly electronically submitted by Week 11.

Integrity and Accommodation:

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the University’s Code of Academic Integrity. In compliance with university policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities.
Schedule of Readings

All of the readings are linked or on Blackboard, with the exception of The Net Delusion (Morozov), which is available for purchase on reputable online booksellers.

Week 01 [1/27] — Introductions

Week 02 [2/3] — On Writing and Research


Week 03 [2/10] — Measurement of Democracy


Week 04 [2/17] — Authoritarian Regime Types

Week 05 [2/24] — Development and Democracy


Week 06 [3/2] — Transitions I


Week 07 [3/9] — Transitions II

Week 08 [3/16] — Regime Survival: Control and Violence


Week 09 [3/23] — Coups and Military Rule


Spring Break [3/30] — No Class

Week 10 [4/6] — Regimes and Redistribution


Week 12 [4/20] — The Internet and Nondemocratic Politics


❖ Gary King, Jennifer Pan, & Molly Roberts. 2013. “How Censorship Allows Government Criticism but Silences Collective Expression.” *APSR.*

Week 13 [4/27] — Information, Ideology, Institutions, and Power


[2] Others

Week 15 [5/11] – Student Presentations