Foundations of Political Science is an overview of the intimate relationship between theory and data. It explores ways in which political philosophy and empirical theories structure the questions political scientists ask, the cases they choose to compare, the dependent and independent variables they link in hypotheses, and the answers they are likely to find when analyzing empirical data.

I. What is Empirical Political Theory?

II. Four Alternative Axiomatic Foundations for Empirical Political Theory
   A. Political Realism
   B. Positive Political Economy
   C. Marxian (Structural) Political Economy
   D. Political Sociology

III. Contending Approaches Applied to Four Recurring Issues
   A. Micro-Behavior: Vote Choice
   B. Levels of Analysis: Political Violence
   C. Macro-Outcomes: Institutions as Consequences and Constraints

Instructor: Philip G. Roeder
Office: Social Sciences Building 382
Telephone: 534-6000 (Office)
Office Hours: Mondays, 1:30-2:30 p.m. and by appointment.

Readings and Participation. Please come prepared each week to discuss all of the readings. All assigned readings are available on a closed course web-site. The web-site address will be provided in class.

Writing Assignment. You should complete a ten-page paper that represents the first half of a prospectus, sketching the theoretical development that supports an empirical research project. This assignment is described in a separate document. You should present verbally a ten-minute overview of the paper during the tenth-week meeting of the seminar. The paper is due on the Monday of finals week.

Week 1. What is Empirical Political Theory?
Week 2. Political Realism


Week 3. Positive Political Economy


Week 4. Marxian (Structural) Political Economy


Gabriel Palma. 1978. “Dependency: A Formal Theory of Underdevelopment or a Methodology for the Analysis of Concrete Situations of Underdevelopment?” *World Development* 6 (July-August), 881-924. (Do not get bogged down in the details of ideological differences in this article.)


Week 5. Political Sociology


Week 6. Micro-Behaviors: Vote Choice

Week 7. Levels of Analysis: Political Violence
Samuel P. Huntington. 1996. The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order. New York: Simon & Schuster. Chapter 1 §1-2; Chapter 2 §1; and Chapter 6. (In particular, pp. 19-29, 40-5, 125-30.)

Week 8. Macro-Outcomes: Institutions/The Origins of Democracy


Week 10. Presentations of Projects