Syllabus for 260A: Comparative economics.
Fall 2014.
Instructor: Gérard Roland

The course will introduce students to the new and evolving field of comparative economics that has emerged from the transition experience and the economics of transition. Before the economics of transition, comparative economics was devoted mostly to the comparison of capitalism and socialism, and in practice mostly to the study of socialist economic systems (central planning, Yugoslav self-management, market socialism…). The transition experience and the economics of transition has shown the importance of the institutions underlying the capitalist system. Comparative economics is now concerned with the comparative analysis of institutions of existing capitalist systems, the historical evolution of those institutions and their effects on economic performance.

This year, there will be more emphasis than in previous years on institutions and culture. Also, one third of the course will be devoted to understand the success of the growth process in China.

Lecture 1. Introduction.

Review of the issues covered by the new comparative economics.

Readings:

Other readings:

PART I. COMPARATIVE INSTITUTIONAL ANALYSIS

Lecture 2. Different coordination mechanisms.
Readings:

Other readings:
Lectures 3 and 4.

Institutions and Growth.

Readings:

Other readings:


Readings:

Other readings:

Lecture 6-8. The role of culture.

Readings:


Other readings:

- Grosjean
Lecture 9: Capitalism under democracy and dictatorship and processes of democratization.
Readings:

Other Readings:

PART II. UNDERSTANDING CHINA’S DEVELOPMENT

Lecture 10: The gradual approach to reform and the flexibility of China’s administrative organization.

Readings:

Lecture 11: Dual-track liberalization and its properties.
Readings:
Lecture 12: Fiscal decentralization and the incentives of bureaucrats.


Lecture 13: Meritocracy and yardstick competition in the Chinese administration.

Readings:

