

## Comparative Politics Comprehensive Exam, January 2013

*For the MAJOR: Answer 4 questions. You must answer one question in Part I and three questions in Part II. Time: 8 hours.*

*For the MINOR: Answer 3 questions. You must answer one question in Part I and two questions in Part II. Time: 6 hours.*

### Part I: Methods Questions

- 1) How useful are single-country case studies for advancing empirical and/or theoretical knowledge in comparative politics? Are some ways of conducting case studies more fruitful than others? Which works address this issue well, which ones do not?
- 2) Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba argue in their book that the logic of inference in political science is the same regardless of the type of data -- qualitative or quantitative -- on which it is based. Summarize their position. To what extent is their position defensible? Explain.
- 3) A prominent scholar recently said, "Comparative politics has moved on from quantitative methods. Everyone is doing experiments now." To what extent is this true, and does the field benefit from a shift toward experimental research?

### Part II: Substantive Questions

- 1) The dilemma of collective action arises in a variety of contexts. Why does collective action often pose a dilemma, and what can be done to overcome the obstacles to successful collective action?
- 2) What are the most important "puzzles" remaining in comparative politics? Explain briefly how you would go about researching one of them in a book-length project.
- 3) In recent years, studies of democratization have been replaced by the study of authoritarian and hybrid regimes. Why did this shift come about? What have we learned about the nature of non-democratic regimes as a result? Looking forward, what is the likely trajectory of research on regime types?
- 4) Does democracy lead to redistribution from the rich to the poor? Discuss the theory and evidence concerning the link between democracy and redistribution.
- 5) Which institutional differences (if any) do you think might have important effects on economic development? Assess the theoretical and empirical literature linking

the institutional differences you have highlighted on economic growth.

6) What are the domestic political causes and consequences of the extraordinary growth of international capital flows over the last three decades?

7) In debates over the origins of ethnic identities and nationalism, primordial explanations are contrasted with constructivist explanations. Are primordial explanations anything more than straw men?

8) What is an "ethnic party"? What are the main factors determining whether ethnicity becomes an important element of political organization in a given region, and what are the long-term political effects of parties campaigning on the basis of ethnicity?