

## **Comparative Politics Comprehensive Examination January 2018**

**Majors:** Please answer three questions from three different sections.

**Minors:** Please answer two questions from two different sections.

In each essay, you should:

- Answer the question asked. Refine if necessary but do not expand.
- Unless directed otherwise, discuss at least two theoretical accounts and at least two bodies of evidence as they relate to the theories (a “body of evidence” is a study or related set of studies that address a problem empirically).
- Include critical assessments of the theoretical and empirical literature you discuss.

### **Section I: Approaches**

1. In thinking about multi-methods research design, what would be the added value of both qualitative and quantitative components if you seek to study political preferences?

### **Section II: Building Blocks**

2. Political scientists often emphasize the importance of understanding the "mechanisms" underpinning causal effects. Drawing from two major literatures in comparative politics, evaluate the extent to which research has accumulated to yield (or could in future yield) valuable insights about the underlying mechanisms.

3. Though the institutional arrangements used for making decisions would seem to obviously affect political outcomes, understanding these effects empirically is challenging because the institutions themselves are endogenous. Discuss two issues in comparative politics where institutions are central but where the endogeneity problem is fundamental. What is the way forward?

### **Section III: Political Structures**

4. Under what conditions do autocrats allow greater respect for property rights? Examine at least two works that explore this issue.

5. Federalism has often been advocated as means to achieve responsible fiscal outcomes. What specific federal institutions are helpful to this end? Where can things go wrong?

### **Section IV: Outcomes I**

6. What are the conditions that explain the outbreak and success of revolutions? Can you illustrate your argument with both successful and unsuccessful revolutionary experiences?

### **Section V: Outcomes II**

7. Reducing corruption within the state is largely a matter of information. Do you agree? In your answer, please critically examine at least two works that explore this issue.

**Section VI: Outcomes III**

8. What accounts for variation in bureaucratic performance? Examine at least two works that explore this issue.