

Comparative Politics Comprehensive Examination January 2019

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. To what extent do quantitative and qualitative serve as complementary research designs?

Section II: Primitives

2. How have coordination games been used to advance our understanding of issues in comparative politics? Evaluate the application of coordination games to at least two unrelated research questions.
3. Under what conditions does political culture affect economic and institutional performance?

Section III: Political Structures

4. Although some political scientists argue war makes states, several conflict-affected states have low state fiscal capacity. What determines whether external wars make or erode state capacity?
5. If you were taking the American politics exam you would know that in *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups*, V. O. Key argues that modern political parties perform three distinct roles: The "party in the electorate" structures electoral choices; the "party as organization" recruits political leaders and aggregates interests; and the "party in government" organizes government and implements policies. Please bring Key's ideas into comparative politics by discussing how failures to perform each of these three roles can reduce democratic performance in established democracies.

Section IV: Outcomes I

6. What encourages a shift in electoral politics away from clientelism and toward programmatic competition between candidates/parties?
7. Although the middle class typically expresses support for liberal democracy in both authoritarian and democratic regimes, sometimes the middle class supports an existing authoritarian system or votes to undermine an existing liberal democratic system. What are the key conditions that determine the

middle class's support or non-support for liberal democracy? Your answer should include a discussion of one authoritarian case and one democratic case.

Section V: Outcomes II

8. When explaining heterogeneity in voters' policy preferences and voting behavior, is it more important to know a voter's income or ethnicity?

Section VI: Outcomes III

9. Meltzer-Richard style tax-and-transfer models are sometimes used to argue that democracies with more inequality should exhibit more redistributive taxation.
 - Describe the logic of such a tax-and-transfer model, including the core assumptions, the nature of electoral competition, and the link between inequality and redistribution.
 - Discuss two assumptions on which the model's logic depends that you feel are most problematic,
 - Should we observe increases in taxation when unequal societies democratize?

Section VII: Wild Card [Note: this is an extra section which may be answered by majors or minors instead of any other section]

10. Recently commentators have been concerned about the undermining of democracy in advanced industrialized countries. Can the factors political scientists have argued explain transitions to democracy also explain the democratic erosion in consolidated democracies? Why or why not?