

# Comparative Politics Comprehensive Examination September 2015

**Majors:** Please answer three questions from at least two different sections.

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

In each essay, you should:

- Answer the question that is asked. Refine if necessary but do not expand.
- 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 literatures that you discuss.

## Section I: Approaches

1. “Quantitative approaches are good at estimating relationships but they do not **explain** social phenomena.”  
*Provide arguments in favor or against the proposition with illustrations from comparative politics theory and empirical research.*

## Section II: Building Blocks

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. What is an **institution** and what causes institutional change?  
*Feel free to focus on a particular type of institution.*

## Section III: Political Structures

4. Where do strong **states** come from?
5. Do **electoral rules** matter?

## Section IV: Outcomes I

6. Why do **authoritarian** regimes survive in some places but not others?

## Section V: Outcomes II

7. Can greater transparency reduce **corruption**?

## Section VI: Outcomes III

8. What accounts for variation across states in the amount of **redistribution** of risk and/or income within them? (*You can answer with respect to risk, or income, or both*)

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

9. Why did Syriza call a referendum in the middle of the bailout negotiations?  
*Remember to use theory and evidence from the study of Comparative Politics.*