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.*