

## **Comparative Politics Comprehensive Examination January 2020**

**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. Scholars frequently make claims that phenomenon in the distant past influence contemporary outcomes of interest to scholars of comparative politics. Please analyze two works that adopt this strategy and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of this approach.

### **Section II: Primitives**

2. How do cultural theories differ from institutional theories of long-run economic or social development? If the two have been distinguished empirically, which is a more important driver of development? If not, how might you design a study to distinguish between them?

3. Under what conditions does identity become a politically salient cleavage?

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

4. Why have left wing parties in advanced democracies recently struggled to find election-winning strategies that address the issue of immigration?

5. Have “wars made states” since the 1970s?

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

6. What arguments best explain why a large number of people in a democracy may come to prefer to be ruled by an autocrat?

## **Section V: Outcomes II**

7. Under what conditions do politicians use positive inducements like vote-buying or negative inducements like coercion to get voters to the polls? Critically examine at least two arguments that scholars have put forward in comparative politics that purport to answer this question.

## **Section VI: Outcomes III**

8. Describe at least two theories that lead us to different expectations regarding redistribution? What are the conditions that explain redistribution in each case and could you assess the explanatory power of each of them? Are the implications for each of them the same for democratic and authoritarian regimes? Please refer to some cases for illustration.

9. Why does clientelism persist in some contexts and not others? Identify and critically assess two explanations for the persistence of clientelism.

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

10. Rates of urbanization have been increasing rapidly across all regions, and by 2050, projections suggest that two-thirds of the world's population will live in cities. What do theories of revolution or regime change suggest about whether this trend will be good for democratic stability?