

**Written Qualifying Examination in Political Theory
August 2015**

Instructions

All students should answer **one** question from Part I of this examination.

For the **minor**, students should also answer **one** question from **any other** part of this examination (Part II, III, or IV).

For the **major**, students should answer **two** additional questions, one each from **any two** additional parts of this examination (e.g. one question from Part II and one from Part IV).

You should incorporate into your answers discussion of the theories you deem most relevant to the question. Make sure, however, to answer the question directly as well as you are able; do not simply offer a literature review.

Part I: Core

1. According to Alexis de Tocqueville, equality not liberty is at the core of democracy. Discuss.
2. How have political thinkers in the republican tradition (classical and modern) conceived of the relationship between property ownership, labor, and political freedom? How do these connections affect the relevance of republican political theories for the contemporary world?
3. Marx asserted that, "The idea of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas", Discuss.

Part II: Justice

1. Considerations of justice require that public officials justify public law and policy in terms of public reasons that everyone can understand. Discuss.
2. Is "critique" as a mode of political theorizing possible without a commitment to the European Enlightenment's ideals of reason, autonomy, and progress?
3. Are issues of global justice (and injustice) best addressed by extending a Rawlsian approach to social justice to a global scale?

PART III: Constitutionalism and Democracy

1. Is constitutionalism possible on the supranational level for polities or entities that are not states?

2. Does conflict (amongst individuals, factions, classes, ethnic groups, states, etc.) tend to promote or threaten political freedom?

3. Is there a human right to Democracy?

Party IV: Ideology and Identity

1. Is a commitment to universal human rights possible in a world characterized by “the fact of pluralism”?

2. Is toleration an anachronism once the state bases its legitimacy on democracy, respect for individual rights and the equal consideration of all under the law?

3. What sort of recognition and accommodation should a liberal democracy accord to—religious, cultural, gender or sexuality-based “identity groups”?