

**Comparative Politics
Preliminary Examination
Fall 2005**

GENERAL RULES AND DIRECTIONS: You will have eight hours in which to answer the required questions. **The exam must be handed in no later than 4:00 p.m.** Be sure to save some of your time for putting the answers into an organized, typed or legibly written version in good English. This is an OPEN book exam. Students MAY use notes or books, BUT they may NOT discuss the examination with anyone while taking it.

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer ONE question from Section I and ONE question from Section II. Be careful to write two distinct essays, avoiding substantial overlap between your answers.

Section I: General Questions (Answer ONE)

1. Scholars of comparative politics are often expected to be generalists, seeking to build theory that can travel across time and space. To the extent that they specialize in any one country, or even a region, their theoretical claims are often met with skepticism. Discuss the merits and limits of country or regional specialization in terms of the goals of political science. In your answer, be sure to specify what you understand “the goals of political science” to be, and draw on specific examples from at least two subject areas in the comparative literature to support your answer. Note that there is room for a discussion of method in this question.
2. International relations and comparative politics are separated into two distinct sub-fields in our discipline, each with its own specific premises, debates, and specialized journals. How useful is this division of labor in terms of advancing our understanding of politics? Could greater cross-fertilization between these two sub-fields improve the quality of the debates in each, or would this only serve to “muddy the waters” theoretically? In your answer, be sure to offer specific examples of work which you feel has been or could be enriched by incorporating insights from the other sub-field, and be very clear about what those insights are and how they serve/would serve to enhance theory-building.

(SECTION I CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

3. The concept of the state is key to many of the sub-topics of comparative politics including discussions of economic development, advanced industrial societies, democracy and democratization, and rebellion and revolution. Drawing on the literature on the state as well as material from at least one of these other topics, discuss:

(1) How does the concept of the state help theorists of comparative politics?

(2) What are the limitations of the concept?

NOTE: IN YOUR ANSWER, YOU MUST REFER TO THE LITERATURE IN GENERAL, NOT JUST THAT ON A SINGLE COUNTRY.

Section II: Personalized Questions (Answer ONE)

1. Although economic growth rates and levels of prosperity vary widely between developing countries, few have successfully climbed from the status of "underdeveloped" to "developed" country. China, although still poor, has recently posted stunning economic growth rates. How does the CPE of development literature shed light (or not) on China's recent experience? If the existing literature is of limited utility, be specific about how it provides few insights into China's experience and offer an explanation about why (i.e. go beyond stating that the theories do not fit China well). Be sure to consider the literature that stresses the difficulty of moving up in the international hierarchy, that on the importance of regime type to economic performance, and that which deals with East Asian exceptionalism.
2. According to some theorists, the rule of the law plays a significant role in the development of democracy. Drawing primarily, but not exclusively, on the literature on the Chinese case, discuss the progress of and prospects for the rule of law in both the economic and political realms. Is it possible to establish the rule of law, economically and/or politically, under one-party rule? And can the rule of law be an engine of democratization? Be sure to define your terms.