

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 your answers into an organized, typed or legibly written version in good English. Also be sure that you answer all the parts of each question and that you refer to the appropriate scholarly literature in each answer. This is a “closed book” exam. Students may not use notes or books, nor may they discuss the examination with anyone while taking it.

Important: Be sure that you choose your questions in order to demonstrate the breadth as well as the depth of your knowledge. It is your responsibility to ensure that your selection of questions and answers to them are distinctive and do not contain undue overlap and repetition.

Please answer one question from Part I, and two questions from Part II.

THEMATIC QUESTIONS

PART I:

Write one (1) of the following essays.

1. Obviously political science is the study of social behavior, including individual behavior, collective behavior, etc. How can a deductive mathematical approach be used to understand social phenomena? What is a justification for the appropriateness of mathematical and formal approaches in your view?
2. In your view, can formal theory apply to any political question, or is it more successful with some topics than with others? Do you perceive “categories” or “boundaries” to the application of formal theory? If so, what are they?
3. What is the level of analysis problem. Illustrate its seriousness. What can be done to solve it?

SEMINAR QUESTIONS

PART II:

Answer a total of two questions, but do not answer 1 *and* 2.

1. Using Robert Groves' (1989) conceptual structure of sources of error in surveys, describe how you would design as "error proof" of a survey as possible, while keeping in mind time and cost constraints (i.e., don't assume unlimited resources to conduct the survey). Describe each type of error, why it is a problem for surveys, what you would do to reduce the error, and why your approach would be effective (with citation to the survey research literature).
2. Based on theories of attitude formation and theories of survey response, how would design a survey questionnaire to enable respondents to report their attitudes as easily and accurately as possible (i.e., with as little measurement error as possible)?
3. Defend or refute the following statement: Logit or probit is always the best way to estimate a regression model with a dichotomous dependent variable. Be sure to explain the pros and cons of using logit/probit relative to competing models.
4. Debates between institutional review boards and practitioners of qualitative methods in the social sciences are more bitter now than at any time in the past. Is it possible today to carry out qualitative research on controversial topics within IRB guidelines, or has protection of human subjects crossed the line into prior censorship? Please assess the main contentions from defenders and detractors of institutional review boards and cite specific cases to make your argument.
5. A common critique of game theory is that its assumptions about individual level behavior are too restrictive. Focusing on one specific area of application (eg Congress, the courts, mass behavior), do you think this is a fair critique? If so, which particular assumptions are problematic? What are the implications for game theoretic applications?