

**Morning Session
Comprehensive Exam**

Fall 2016
Comparative Politics
Department of International Affairs

Please answer one of the following questions:

1. “The primary justification for conducting cross-national comparative research is to develop universal generalizations about political institutions, processes, and behavior. However, it is not possible to develop universal generalizations about politics that are valid across space and time. Therefore, the “science” of cross-national comparative research will always be weak and unsatisfying, and researchers would accomplish much more if they were to turn their attention to the study of particular, timely questions in a country or region of special interest.” To what extent, and in what specific ways, do you agree or disagree with the above statement?

2. What would you characterize as the most important theoretical or empirical contribution in comparative politics in the last decade? Why? Defend your answer with reference to the historical and recent development of the field. In explaining the strengths of this contribution, discuss any weaknesses and opportunities for further research.