

## Study Guide

### Comprehensive Exams

Fall 2014

Comparative Politics

Department of International Affairs

The exam for majors and minors in Comparative Politics will include a morning session requiring students to answer one out of two general questions. The morning session will include two questions chosen from the five below. All five questions can be covered during the oral examination. Majors will also have to answer two more specific (subfield) questions during an afternoon session of the exam.

1. Some claim that, because rational choice theory was imported from economics, it embodies assumptions that cannot be applied to comparative politics. Do you agree? Why or why not? Support your answer with examples from at least two separate subfields of comparative politics.
2. State-society relations offer great promise as an approach in comparative politics. Explain this paradigm, then discuss comparatively how you would use this approach to study state-military relations, state-church relations, state-labor relations, and state-civil society relations. Cite trends and examples.
3. Corporatism has once again made a comeback in comparative politics. First define your terms and the distinct approaches to the study of corporatism. Then discuss the literature suggesting the end of corporatism. Finally, using such cases as Putin's Russia, present-day China, Egypt under the generals, or other cases that you know of, discuss corporatism's reemergence and the reasons for it.
4. 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.
5. Scholars have debated on the relationship between regime types and economic development. Do you think there is a relationship? Examine the literature and identify the strengths and limitations of existing studies. Support your argument with reference to the literature and concrete examples.