

## MINOR EXAM IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS

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### Instructions:

- 1) Please answer each of the following questions. In crafting your answers, make sure to summarize all relevant literatures, identify their weaknesses, and offer your own analysis of their central issues. Wherever possible, support your answers with empirical evidence.
- 2) All questions are equally weighed, so allocate your time and attention to each accordingly.
- 3) Remember to have fun.

### Questions:

- 1) Scholars have studied democratization using a variety of means – from inductive and deductive theorizing to detailed case studies and large “n” quantitative studies. What examples of studies of democratization do you find most convincing and why? Which do you find least convincing and why? Generalizing from your answers to these questions, what would you say are the major methodological issues facing comparativists today?
- 2) What do we know about the institutional determinants of peace and prosperity? Given our knowledge of how properly-designed institutions can promote political stability and economic growth, why do we find so many instances of political instability and poor economic performance? What conditions are most conducive to the adoption of “good” institutional designs? Please cite examples from the literature on institutions in comparative politics to support your argument.
- 3) Explain Samuel Huntington’s claim that the most important political distinction among countries is not their *form* of government but their *degree* of government (1968). Some have alleged that Huntington’s thesis is simply a defense of authoritarianism. Others have argued that it is a call for a greater attention to the sequencing of reforms. What do you think? More generally, what lessons regarding these debates can we induce from the new democracies that have emerged over the past twenty years?

**BEST OF LUCK!**