

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION: COMPARATIVE POLITICS
MINOR FIELD
4 HOURS

Friday 14, 2014

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You must answer a total of three (3) questions for this examination. You have four (4) hours to do so. You must answer one question from the core section, one question from your subfield section, and a third question from either section.

In your answers to any of the questions below, please be sure to present an argument and to refer to relevant readings and empirical examples.

SECTION 1. CORE QUESTIONS

1. Do "institutions matter"? That is, do institutions have an independent effect on political processes and outcomes? In answering this question, you should discuss how the main approaches to understanding institutions in political science shed light on this question.
2. A previous editor of *Comparative Political Studies* (a leading journal in comparative politics) had an informal policy of rejecting single-country studies on the grounds that such studies were not intrinsically comparative and thus out of place in a journal of comparative politics. Do you accept the editor's proposition that single-country studies are not comparative in nature and hence not really part and parcel of comparative politics? Explain why you agree or disagree with this proposition, making clear what qualities identify a piece of research as part and parcel of comparative politics.
3. What is the relationship between state development and regime development?
4. Thinking about recent regime changes (e.g., Latin America in the 1980s, Eastern Europe in the 1990s, the Middle East today), why is regime change so hard to predict? What are some of the major theories of political regime change? Assess their strengths and limitations.

SECTION 2. CHINA QUESTIONS

1. Do you think that the Chinese case proves or disproves the contention that authoritarian governments are better at industrial transformation and economic development than democratic governments, and why do you think that?
2. Explain why has the Chinese regime moved to increase the degree of public deliberation and consultation in its policy process, and consider whether such deliberation is ultimately compatible with a stable one-party authoritarian state.
3. Have global forces started to erode China's authoritarian institutions, or have China's authoritarian institutions shown their resilience in the face of globalization? In answering this

question, use the Chinese case to assess whether or not authoritarian governance is fundamentally (in)compatible with a deep engagement with globalization.

4. Why has the Chinese regime been able to ride out the huge number of annual protests (over 100,000) without collapsing? Please be sure to have a causal explanation and to consider alternatives.