

Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam in Political Economy August 2015

Instructions: Answer 3 of the following questions. Choose questions that show the depth and breadth of your knowledge.

1. Some approaches to political economy emphasize electoral politics; others emphasize organized groups. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each approach? Illustrate your answer with examples from the real world.
2. How are political “markets” like markets for goods and services? How are they not?
3. George Stigler argued that regulation transfers income from consumers to producers. Gary Becker argued that regulation can be efficient. Adjudicate their debate and critique both.
4. How does exposure to trade affect domestic politics? Discuss several competing views and show their relevance or irrelevance to contemporary cases.
5. Discuss how the political economy of immigration is similar to and different from that of trade and finance.
6. Why do women make less money than men on average? Discuss several competing arguments and judge their merits.
7. Evaluate the argument that corruption is an inevitable stage in economic development.
8. Some scholars have argued that economic development must precede democratic consolidation. Evaluate the putative mechanisms, and scenarios under which the argument is and is not true.