

Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam in Political Economy

August 2016

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

1. A premium on education and skills seems to be growing even in labor-abundant countries such as India and China, and wealth inequality is growing along with trade in those countries. How can standard trade models such as Heckscher Ohlin/Stolper Samuelson and Ricardo/Viner cope with these phenomena? Are new theories required?
2. Voters and political candidates in the US and UK in recent months have expressed considerable resentment about economic globalization. What are some of the possible explanations for the widespread populist aversion to trade agreements, increased trade openness, and globalization? Is it self-interest? Or something else?
3. How does global economic integration affect political business cycles? How do we know?
4. Adjudicate the debate between those who argue that democracy would be good for development and those who argue that political stability should come first, even at the cost of modest political repression.
5. Is the gender wage gap related to productivity? Discuss empirical strategies for answering this question.
6. What light does the financial crisis of 2008 and its aftermath shed on theories of regulation?
7. How, if at all, do domestic political institutions influence economic policy decisions? Illustrate your answer with examples from several countries.