Political Economy Exam
August 2019

Please answer one question from each part. Choose questions that show the depth and breadth of your knowledge. You may refer to the Political Economy reading list for author's names and titles but not other material.

Part 1

1. The Median Voter Theorem is a workhorse theory in political economy. What are its strengths and limitations? What new areas of empirical research do you think are necessary to gain a deeper theoretical understanding of voter choice and its consequences?

2. Which type of political regime can be expected to engage in more land redistribution? In your answer consider several mechanisms that may link regimes to land redistribution, and propose a research design to evaluate them.

3. Are democracies in low- and middle- income countries more effective at fighting poverty than autocracies? Discuss the theoretical arguments, any evidence that specifically supports your answer, and propose an avenue for future research in identifying the effect of democracy on poverty alleviation.

Part 2

4. How do you square interest group theories of trade protection with micro-founded analyses that, for example, often focus on loss aversion of individuals?

5. Has the increasing integration of world markets affected immigration policy in the United States? Discuss some mechanism that theoretically link globalization with immigration policy, and the empirical evidence at hand.

Part 3

6. Some accounts of the rise of populist politics (including the 2016 U.S. presidential election) blame the rise of capital-intensive production in rich democracies. At the same time, the increasing demand for human capital does not necessarily predict net job loss. Adjudicate this debate.

7. Is inequality harmful for growth? Discuss the theoretical arguments, any evidence that specifically supports your answer, and propose an avenue for future research in identifying the effect of inequality on growth.