COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION IN POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY
FALL 2007

I. General Section. Day 1

Answer the first question. Then answer either 2 or 3, and either 4 or 5.

1. Within political sociology there are a number of different conceptualizations of power. Outline at least three approaches to power – especially with regard to the definition of power, sources of power, types of power (economic, political etc.), and distribution and exercise of power. Then, using an issue of your choice in political sociology, tell us which model or models you find more convincing to address that issue and why.

2. The US welfare state is regarded as lagging behind that of other industrialized nation states. Discuss how three theories of welfare state development explain the difference and indicate which theory or theories you find more compelling and why.

3. How and to what extent are states autonomous from social classes, capitalism, civil society, and global forces? Discuss both the main accounts of state autonomy in political sociology and the things which would make a given state more or less autonomous?

4. Are the concepts of civil society and the public sphere analytically useful for political sociologists? How might an appreciation of the role of civic engagement in history change research in political sociology and its typical focus on administrative-bureaucratic states and capitalist social relations?

5. T.H. Marshall typifies citizenship as having three sets of rights— civil rights, political rights, and social rights. Explain what each of these sets of rights includes. For Marshall, why does the evolution of citizenship ameliorate the inequalities wrought by capitalism? What evidence (from your readings) can you present to agree or disagree with T.H. Marshall? Also, some authors claim that citizenship issues have become more significant than those of class in giving rise to social movements in developing countries. Do you think this is true?