

CHAPTER 1: THE COMPARATIVE APPROACH: AN INTRODUCTION

Multiple Choice Questions

Question Types

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Factual									x			x						
Conceptual	x					x	x			x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Applied		x	x	x	x			x										
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Factual			x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x		x	x	
Conceptual								x										
Applied	x	x									x				x			x

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- 1) Why are *why questions* most effective for studying comparative politics?
 - a. *Why questions* go beyond simple facts.
 - b. *Why questions* require argumentation and reasoning.
 - c. *Why questions* allow room for debate.
 - d. **All of the above**

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- 2) Which of the following would be the best example of a good comparative politics question?
 - a. Who makes up the Electoral College?
 - b. What are the flaws of the Electoral College?
 - c. **Why is the Electoral College used in the United States?**
 - d. What is the job of the Electoral College?

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- 3) Which of the following is not a good comparative politics question?
 - a. **When did the Iranian Revolution happen?**
 - b. Why did the Iranian Revolution happen?
 - c. Why was the Iranian Revolution unlike the Russian Revolution in some key respects?
 - d. Why did the Iranian Revolution not lead to liberal democracy?

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- 4) Which of the following would be an example of a “leading” question?
 - a. Why did the New World colonies revolt against the British?
 - b. **Why did the British unfairly tax the New World colonies?**
 - c. Why did the British colonize the New World?
 - d. When did the British colonize the New World?

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- 5) Which type of question most easily lends itself to being an open-ended question?
 - a. *Who* questions
 - b. *What* questions
 - c. ***Why* questions**

- d. *Where* questions

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- 6) Why are “leading” questions not considered good social-scientific questions?
- a. **Leading questions can lead to a biased argument.**
 - b. Leading questions evoke an emotional response.
 - c. Leading questions steer the researcher in a specific direction.
 - d. Leading questions lack creativity.

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- 7) Which of the following is not a good comparative politics question?
- a. Why do some states adopt religious fundamentalism?
 - b. **Why should religious fundamentalism not be involved in politics?**
 - c. Why do some parties embrace religious rhetoric?
 - d. Why are religious actors politically successful in some societies and not in others?

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- 8) Which of the following is the most empirical question?
- a. Isn't American democracy the best in the world?
 - b. Isn't French democracy the best in the world?
 - c. **Which societies are the most democratic?**
 - d. Shouldn't all societies be democratic?

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- 9) Which type of arguments do scholars of comparative politics usually make?
- a. Political arguments
 - b. Ethical arguments
 - c. Normative arguments
 - d. **Empirical arguments**

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- 10) *Why* questions may be poor questions if they _____.
- a. Do not lead to easily attainable answers
 - b. **Do not lead to attempted explanations of cause and effect**
 - c. Steer the researcher towards a specific answer
 - d. Are open-ended

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- 11) Which of the following is a correct statement regarding empirical arguments?
- e. Empirical arguments are concerned with right and wrong.
 - f. **Empirical arguments are drawn from actual observations of the world.**
 - g. Empirical arguments are largely emotional.
 - h. Empirical arguments are used only in empires.

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- 12) Which of the following marks good scholarship?
- a. **Seeking evidence, testing hypotheses, making arguments, contributing to theoretical debates**
 - b. Seeking evidence, following the scientific method, reporting and publishing findings, staying true to yourself and your political goals

- c. Proposing research, collecting materials, seeking outside sources, analyzing the information, never giving up on what you believe
- d. Gathering facts, developing theories, testing the theories, analyzing the information, rejecting complex ideas

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13) What is a concept?

- a. An individual's opinion on a subject
- b. A theory in science that has been tested and vetted
- c. An abstract idea that we attempt to define and measure**
- d. An indisputable fact

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14) What features define good concepts?

- a. Innovation, newness, insight, and unpredictability
- b. Clarity, coherence, consistency, and usefulness**
- c. Foundations, facts, follow-through, and utility
- d. Conscience, capability, clarity, and meaning

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15) Which of the following is not typically considered a key feature of good concepts in comparative politics?

- a. Shocking**
- b. Coherent
- c. Useful
- d. Clear

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16) Which of the following is true of social scientific concepts?

- a. Some concepts are very general, and some are very specific.**
- b. They are usually wrong.
- c. Concepts don't matter ... facts do.
- d. Concepts and operational definitions are the same thing.

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17) The process through which we create and select social-scientific concepts is called _____.

- a. Categorization
- b. Conceptualization**
- c. Comparative questioning
- d. Conceptination

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18) In what way does "Sartori's ladder of abstraction" organize concepts?

- a. On the basis of the concept's factual evidence or proof
- b. On the basis of the concept's likelihood or feasibility
- c. On the basis of the concept's merit or value
- d. On the basis of the concept's specificity or generality**

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19) To make a concept measurable, researchers would use _____.

- a. Operationalization**

- b. Organization
- c. Conceptualization
- d. Coordination

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- 20) Why is operationalization key to the study of comparative politics?
- a. Operationalization organizes concepts on the basis of their specificity or generality.
 - b. Operationalization allows for researchers to see many sides to the story.
 - c. **Operationalization makes a concept measureable.**
 - d. Operationalization guarantees an unbiased study.

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- 21) Which of the following statement best describes the relationship between facts and evidence in comparative politics?
- a. Facts are easily accessible, and evidence is not.
 - b. Facts are hard to find, and evidence is hard to prove.
 - c. **Facts are information, but evidence is explanation.**
 - d. Facts are subjective, but evidence is objective.

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- 22) What is necessary for a good argument?
- a. Emphatic elocution of the argument
 - b. **Evidence to support the argument**
 - c. Strong belief in the argument
 - d. Loud voices to state the argument

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- 23) Which of the following is not a necessary feature of strong evidence?
- a. **Multiple case studies**
 - b. Relevance to the question at hand
 - c. Statistical data
 - d. Appropriate level of analysis

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- 24) Which of the following would not be an example of a case?
- a. A country
 - b. A historical episode
 - c. A region
 - d. **A theory**

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- 25) Which of the following might be cases in a study of comparative politics?
- a. Social revolutions
 - b. Countries
 - c. Political parties
 - d. **All of the above**

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- 26) Which of the following would be unlikely to be cases in a study of comparative politics?
- a. Political parties
 - b. Social movements

- c. **Freedom**
- d. None of the above

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- 27) An element or factor that is liable to change, or vary, from case to case is:
- a. An outcome
 - b. A theory
 - c. A study
 - d. **A variable**

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- 29) In an analysis of cause and effect, the _____ is outcome, and the _____ is the cause.
- a. **Dependent variable, Independent variable**
 - b. Independent variable, Dependent variable
 - c. Sine, Cosine
 - d. Similarity, Difference

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- 30) Which of the following is not a variable as presented?
- a. Degree of democracy
 - b. Type of regime
 - c. **French Revolution**
 - d. Type of Revolution

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- 31) Which of the following is *not* an approach used by comparative politics scholars under ordinary circumstances?
- a. **Guestimating the answer**
 - b. Most Similar Systems Design
 - c. Most Different Systems Design
 - d. Comparative Checking

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- 28) Which of the following is true about the cases Most-Different-Systems designs?
- a. The outcomes should differ
 - b. **The outcomes should be similar**
 - c. All variables in the analysis are similar
 - d. All variables in the analysis are constant

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- 32) The Most Similar Systems Design is used when which of the following is true?
- a. Two or more cases have similar outcomes.
 - b. **Two or more cases have different outcomes.**
 - c. Two or more cases have similar hypotheses.
 - d. Two or more cases have different independent variables.

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- 33) Which of the following factors is a feature unique to within-case comparison?
- a. Analysis of probability in the case
 - b. Analysis of more than one variable in the case
 - c. **Analysis of variation over time in the case**

- d. Analysis of similarities between cases

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34) How do findings in the social sciences differ from those in the physical sciences?

- a. Findings in the social sciences are constant and stable, while findings in the physical sciences are not.
- b. Findings in the social sciences are intuitive, while findings in the physical sciences are scholastic.
- c. Findings in the social sciences are variable, while findings in the physical sciences are specific.
- d. **Findings in the social sciences rarely result in “laws,” while findings in the physical sciences more often do so.**

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35) The process of checking the conclusions of a research study by analyzing additional cases.

- a. Most-Similar-Systems
- b. Most-Different-Systems
- c. **Comparative Checking**
- d. Differential Analysis

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36) Both France and China endured social revolutions, but they are/were very different countries. The type of analysis that should be used is:

- a. Most-Similar-Systems
- b. **Most-Different-Systems**
- c. Comparative Checking
- d. Differential Analysis

Short Answer Questions

- 1) Explain the difference between the most similar systems design and the most different systems design.
- 2) Under what circumstances would you use one or the other?
- 3) Explain why scholars of comparative politics think it is important to try to answer why questions rather than just offering descriptions (answering “how” questions) or providing facts (answering “who” or “what” questions).
- 4) Under what circumstances might a scholar make use of within-case comparison(s)?
- 5) Under what circumstances might a scholar engage in comparative checking?
- 6) Can comparative politics sometimes focus on a single case? Why or why not?
- 7) Under what circumstances or for what reason(s) might a comparative political analyst want to add additional cases to his or her study?
- 8) Describe the most important features of good concepts in comparative politics.
- 9) What do we want to avoid in concept selection and formation?
- 10) What is the most important way that comparative politics is different from the physical sciences?
- 11) What is the difference between conceptualization and operationalization?
- 12) What makes something a “case” in comparative politics?

Essay Questions

- 1) Articulate *your* view on whether comparative politics is a science akin to physics and chemistry. If you think that it is not, clearly explain how you think it is different. If you think that it is, anticipate and answer objections from proponents of the alternative view.
- 2) Conceptualize either the idea of democracy, nationalism, or social revolution. Describe the meaning of the concept and its various dimensions. Explain why you focus on those features of the concept that you do, and how your approach to conceptualization might be useful for a comparative project. Then explain how one might “operationalize” your concept for the sake of measurement. What sorts of advantages does your approach offer? What, if anything, would be difficult to measure?
- 3) Think of something that varies between three or more countries (in terms of their institutions, their level of development, or any other major issue). What question could you ask about the observed variation? How might you use the three countries (or others) to begin to gain leverage over your question?

