POL268 – Introduction to Comparative Politics Spring 2023 Midterm Examination Due Date: March 27, 11:59 pm. SECTION I Please answer two questions from the following list with at a full a page response for each question. 1. Discuss the role of institutions in the trajectory of political and economic development of states. Why are the quality and legacy of institutions so important for long-term economic growth, and how can institutions help account for differences in the levels of development seen across the globe? What are alternative explanations for this variation, and how do institutionalists counter these arguments? 2. From a historic point of view, what has been the role of war-preparation and war-making in the rise and consolidation of nation-states, and how has war-making facilitated the transition from feudalism to the modern state? Moreover, how has the different history and nature of war in the developing world contributed to their comparatively weak national political and economic institutions? 3. How does a meritocratic system differ from a clientelist system? What features distinguish the two from one another, and how and why do they correlate with democratic vs. authoritarian regimes. 4. Social capital has been found by many scholars to be responsible for the disparities in wealth across many countries. Explain the concept of social capital as well as why is social capital such an intrinsic and essential component of democratic regimes? 5. Design a natural or quasi natural experiment, along the lines described in the King, Keohane, and Verba chapter, to answer a research question relevant to comparative politics. Remember, the value of a and experiment/quasi-experiment is that you can hold all other variables constant so that you can isolate and identity the causal variables of interest. You are encouraged to conduct use the many research designs that have been used in the literature as a guide to thinking of the type of research design that you would like to do if you had the time and resources to do so. Section II Write at least a two-page response to the following statement, providing at least three plausible alternative explanations. Present your argument clearly, using an introduction and a conclusion, and providing empirical examples when relevant. “Teachers' salaries should be based on their students' academic performance. If students do not perform well in a class, it is clearly an indication of the teacher’s inability to effectively perform his or her job. By tying teacher’s salaries to the performance of their students, we will incentivize teachers to work harder and make sure their students are better understanding the material.”