

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION FOR THE Ph.D. DEGREE

There are two sections to this test. Please answer a total of three questions, with at least one question from each section.

SECTION I

1. Analyze the role of population growth on income per capita growth comparing three categories of models: the neoclassical model, models of endogenous growth based on capital (physical and human) externalities and models based on technological innovation. Discuss which empirical evidence on population growth and productivity growth is in favor of each of those.
2. The “institutional” explanation of economic development, recently developed by Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson, among others, emphasizes the role of institutions, constituted in the colonial era, to explain current levels of development. Present the theory and the evidence in favor of such hypothesis and also emphasize its strength and its limits.
3. Present the basic features of a one-sector model of endogenous growth and of a two-sector model of endogenous growth. Analyze the commonalities in the two types of models. What conditions determine the existence of endogenous growth in either model? What kind of empirical analysis has each model stimulated? What kind of externalities are at the core of each model?
4. How far can one go in explaining growth and development of countries using the Solow model? After having sketched the main implications of the Solow model on income per capita and growth analyze the empirical facts that can be reconciled with it as well as those that seem hard to reconcile with it.

SECTION II

5. Evaluate the case for the existence of poverty traps. (Hint: Start with Jeffrey D. Sachs, John W. McArthur, Guido Schmidt-Traub, Margaret Kruk, Chandrika Bahadur, Michael Faye and Gordon McCord article in BPEA 2004)

6. Review critically the findings of various growth regressions, particularly those of DeLong-Summers, Easterly-Rebelo, and King-Levine.
7. Some China scholars have identified “lessons from China” that ought to have guided the transition strategies implemented in Poland and Russia. Evaluate these “lessons from China”.
8. Economic management in the 1980s was advised to focus on "getting prices right", the slogan in the 1990s was "getting institutions right." Explain the basis of the broader approach to economic development, especially the importance of this broader approach to increasing the rate of technical innovation. How does the Washington Consensus fit into this analysis?