

**INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY
QUALIFYING EXAMINATION
Department of International Studies
Fall 2010**

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME OR STUDENT NUMBER ON YOUR EXAM

Ph.D. students have eight (8) hours to complete the exam and must answer the mandatory and three (3) optional questions. M.A. students have four (4) hours and must answer the mandatory and two (2) optional questions. Note: you may answer only one (1) question from any optional group.

Mandatory Question

1. A recent survey of International Political Economy (IPE) by Jeffrey Frieden and Lisa Martin argues that the field has approached a “consensus on theories, methods, analytical frameworks and important questions.” By contrast, others have pointed to a significant “theoretical broadening” in IPE, especially outside of the United States (US). They argue that far from being “an offshoot” of US Political Science, IPE has evolved into an interdisciplinary field in its own right. Which perspective is, in your view, more accurate? Write an essay discussing the origins and evolution of IPE as a scholarly field and the nature of its links to other social science disciplines. How have these links evolved over time and in different countries/regions of the world? Do you agree with claims that there are “multiple versions” of the field of IPE and that there is scope for a “global conversation” among these different traditions?

Optional Questions

Globalization and the State

2. Scholars in International and Comparative Political Economy disagree on whether and to what extent globalization has affected the autonomy and capacity of states to pursue independent fiscal and monetary policies. While early research focused on advanced industrialized economies, more recent work has explored the consequences of globalization on welfare policies in developing countries. Write an essay summarizing the competing theoretical arguments put forward by this body of literature as well the main findings of the empirical research on the welfare state in the developing world. To what extent has globalization constrained the national autonomy of developing country governments? What mechanisms or aspects of global economic integration have been more constraining in this group of countries? How have economic pressures influenced (if at all) partisan politics and the quality of democratic governance? Be sure to carefully define your concepts, cite the relevant literature and provide specific examples.

Trade

3. The past two decades have seen an impressive surge in the number of regional trade agreements (RTAs) in the international trading system. This proliferation of overlapping RTAs has given rise to substantial scholarly interest in both their sources and their consequences. Drawing on this work, discuss the main economic, political and security factors explaining the recent spread of this type of preferential trading arrangements. Discuss also the complex interrelationship

between the emerging “spaghetti bowl” of RTAs and the multilateral trading system. Do RTAs complement or hamper multilateral trade liberalization? To what extent and in what ways have recent developments in the multilateral trading system contributed to the proliferation of regional trade institutions? In your answer, cite the relevant literature and provide specific examples.

4. The recent summit of the European Union with Latin America and the Caribbean held in Madrid has offered mixed results. On the one hand, negotiations for a strategic agreement between the EU and Central America have advanced considerably, as well as the decision to continue with the process of an ambitious deal with MERCOSUR, long time stalled. However, the EU seems to be inclined to sign individual agreements with single countries (Perú, Colombia, Brazil). Is the EU abandoning its standard policy of framing bloc to bloc alliances? Is the new mode an answer to the US-style negotiation process based on free-trade? What are the economic (and political) obstacles for the crafting of EU-LA arrangements? In your answer please be sure to cite the most influential authors and discuss the relevant theoretical and empirical literature.

Money & Finance

5. The creation of the Bretton Woods monetary regime in 1944 has been viewed as “history’s first example of a fully negotiated order intended to govern monetary relations among sovereign states.” Discuss the origins and main features of the Bretton Woods system and explain the confluence of factors contributing to the collapse of the gold convertibility and of the fixed exchange rate system in the early 1970s. How has global monetary governance and order evolved since then? According to some, what has evolved since the 1970s is “little more than a non-system bordering on anarchy if not chaos.” Do you agree? What are the main advantages and shortcoming of this non-system? How effective has the current framework of global monetary governance been in promoting international coordination and cooperation? Discuss in reference to recent events in the international monetary system, including the 2008 global financial meltdown, and recent calls for a new global standard in response to emerging tensions over currency values.
6. In the 1990s, many countries in the developing world relied on fixed exchange rate regimes to achieve macroeconomic stabilization and enhance external credibility. While these policies were successful in correcting inflation and in expanding economic activity in the short-term, they have also been associated with undesirable outcomes in the medium to long-term. In particular, as some economists have argued, fixed exchange rates tend to result in “boom-bust cycles,” thus contributing centrally to the occurrence of currency and financial crises. The political economy literature on exchange rate and monetary policy proposes a number of alternative hypotheses to explain the appeal of these policies despite their significant economic costs. Write an essay summarizing the main theoretical arguments put forward by this body of literature. Discuss their relative usefulness in explaining the high reliance on fixed exchange rate regimes in the developing world during the 1990s as well as the recent shift to more flexible arrangements.
7. The 1970s witnessed the ascent of financial markets (e.g. currency flows), intensifying cultural interconnectedness (e.g. diasporic communities), transnationalization of production, and political-economic systems influenced by one another (e.g. shock therapy). In what ways, if any, has the relationship between finance, culture, production, and political systems been changed in this era of intensifying globalization? To the extent that financial globalization explains

something real, what are the sources of and possibilities for international/global regulation? What social forces could be harnessed to resist the current trajectory of financial globalization? Has the current financial downturn fundamentally altered the system? If so how? If not, why not? In your answer please be sure to cite the most influential authors and discuss the relevant theoretical and empirical literature.

Development

8. A central debate in the field of development has focused on aid effectiveness, that is, on the extent to which foreign aid dollars actually contribute to the goals of reducing poverty and promoting economic growth. Some scholars argue that foreign assistance is essential to help least developed countries escape their "poverty trap." In contrast, others have been highly skeptical of such solutions, pointing to the limited effectiveness of foreign aid programs in the past four decades. Write an essay explaining the main theoretical arguments put forward by those against and in favor of an expansion of foreign aid. Discuss the main empirical findings of recent research on the effects of foreign aid and growth, and its implications for international policy debates. Be sure to cite the relevant literature and provide specific examples.

Organized Crime

9. "States determine the types of organized crime that emerge and flourish in given national territories; Organized crime groups do not determine the type of state." Do you agree or disagree? Why? What is the nature of state-organized crime relationships in the "weak states" of Latin America. Does it matter whether the regime is authoritarian, democratic, or in the process of transition from authoritarianism to democracy? Why or why not? Explain with reference to the relevant literature.

Public Health

10. The political economy of health perspective first emerged in the 19th Century to examine the social, economic and political factors as the underlying problems of disease and death in England, Wales and the United States. Today, there is a growing interest to use this approach to examine health inequities in both wealthy and poor countries. Clearly, the study of globalizations' impact on population health has encouraged some social scientists and public health scholars to seek out better research methods to analyze current international health inequities. Some of these scholars contend that traditional biomedical and lifestyle models to study communicable (infectious) and non-communicable (chronic) global disease inequities are inadequate. Albeit, there have been great advances to reduce deaths and increase life expectancy, these successes have not been equally distributed within and across states. Based upon this information, discuss how the political economy of health approach contributes to the study of global public health issues and policies in the 21st century. Identify some of the scholarly work on the political economy of health and describe how it is associated with the wider discussion of the international political economy. Use at least one example to support your answer.