

**International Relations and Foreign Policy
Comprehensive Examination
Fall 2008**

Instructions:

Ph.D. students must answer the (1) mandatory and three (3) optional questions (8 hours). M.A students must answer the (1) mandatory and two (2) optional questions (4 hours). You may answer only one question from each optional category. No notes, books, internet resources or other materials may be used during this examination. All students must take this qualifying examination in the INS computer laboratory facilities in MB 303.

A. Mandatory Question:

1. Developments in the international system such as the end of the Cold War, the rise of China, the globalization of the world economy, intensification of regional integration processes (e.g., the EU, MERCOSUR, NAFTA, etc.), the ‘war on terror’, and the emergence of global civil society are said to have pushed the realist school of IR into the dustbin of history. Yet realism has remained resilient and even flourished with a proliferation of realist theorizations such as offensive, defensive, structural, and neoclassical realisms along with hegemonic stability theory. First, discuss critically the distinguishing elements provided by at least three of these variations in realist theory. Second, using one of the topics mentioned earlier as your focus of analysis, explain which of these realist theorizations provides the superior analytical lens. Finally, provide an alternative explanation of this same phenomenon drawing on at least one other international relations theory besides realism.

B. Optional Questions

IR Theory

2. Neoliberal institutionalists (NLI) emphasize the role that international institutions play in helping states to achieve cooperation under anarchy. Relying on game-theoretical tools, they argue that institutions can influence three dimensions of inter-state relations that condition the prospects for cooperation: the payoff structure; the shadow of the future; and the number of players. Drawing on these theoretical insights: (a) Select two international regimes; (b) Identify the specific problems that these regimes seek to address, and the type of game (collaboration, coordination, assurance, or persuasion) that best represents the nature of these issue-areas; (c) To what extent and in what ways have these institutions worked to promote cooperation? Does the evidence from your case studies support or contradict NLI hypotheses?

3. According to Stephen Walt, over the past two decades constructivism has largely replaced (neo-) Marxism as the third 'challenger' to realism and neo-institutional liberalism in the study of international relations. First, how and why has that change come about in the study of international relations? Second, briefly delineate the main strands of both neo-Marxism (including critical theory) and constructivism. Third, are scholars and analysts better served by the constructivist "toolbox" than they were by that of the neo-Marxists? Explain your answer with reference to the main authors and contributions to recent debates.

Integration and Foreign Policy Analysis

4. The Georgia crisis has brought to the forefront the potential and limitations present in the emergence of a unified foreign policy of the EU as a collective entity. Outline the alternatives available to the European Union in dealing with this and similar crises, comparing the European capabilities in real political and military power and in the field of "soft" power. In essence, what is the evaluation of the diplomatic compromise such as the one crafted by France (as EU president) and what are its prospects for export to other scenarios? Be sure to ground your essay analytically in the relevant theories of comparative foreign policy and IR theories of regional integration, with reference to specific authors and contributions to contemporary debates
5. The defeat in France and the Netherlands of referenda supporting the erstwhile EU constitution and the more recent defeat by Irish voters of the referendum supporting the Lisbon Treaty, as well as growing divisions within the European Union on relations with Russia, the nature of the long-term transatlantic relationship, and the strengthening of nationalist parties of the Right across much of Europe seem to have brought to a close the possibilities of further meaningful integration within the European Union. However, the EU also has a long line of candidates (headed by Turkey) to become members; it acts as an incentive mechanism for reform and preparation for possible membership (Serbia); and a number of sectors of society and politics currently in the Second Pillar are being transferred to the core of the Community. Write an essay in which you respond to this apparent contradiction, supporting your position with reference to the theoretical arguments and empirical research in the discipline.

International Law, Organizations, Human Rights

6. Many criticize the Bush administration for merely paying lip service to the country's obligations under international law. Write a two part essay -- first attacking and then defending -- the Bush administration's record on appropriate behavior in the international legal arena. You might want to discuss, but are not limited to, issues such as the following: the "Bush Doctrine," nuclear proliferation, the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, treatment of prisoners captured in the "war on terror," and the rights of foreigners to contact their consulates when arrested in the US. Your essay should be ground analytically in the relevant theories of international law and organizations, with reference to specific authors and contributions to contemporary debates.

7. George Kennan observed that “[t]he pressure of outside opinion about human rights sustained over long periods of time can indeed produce beneficial changes in both attitudes and institutions.... Whether governments, and the U.S. government in particular, should be involved in exerting such pressures is more dubious. In this respect, governments have to take the world pretty much as they find it.” How does Kennan’s comment relate to current and recent approaches to issues of human rights as advocated by the United Nations, the United States, the European Union and various IGOs? In elaborating your response, take care to anchor your argument analytically in the relevant scholarship.
8. Scholars agree that international health governance and diplomatic efforts to control the cross border spread of diseases commenced in 1851 with the International Sanitary Conferences on cholera and plague. These efforts ultimately created a global health diplomacy framework. While the precise nature of the health threats may have changed, the need to prevent and control the spread of diseases remains a universal challenge in the 21st Century. Today, health concerns linked to globalization, trade, travel, tourism and terrorism have led to increased monitoring, surveillance and early intervention to reduce threats of newly identified diseases (e.g. SARS, Avian Flu and HIV/AIDS) and re-emerging diseases (e.g. tuberculosis, malaria, and dengue fever among others). Briefly discuss the different international actors involved in global health governance today and analyze the differences, if any, between past and present global efforts to promote international health governance. Be sure to consider if the Westphalia system has or has not had an impact on how states cooperate, report and share scientific data. Use specific examples and the scholarly literature to support your answer.

Security

9. How do you define the concept of "security"? How do Realists, Liberals and Constructivists agree/differ in terms of how they approach the conceptualization the notion of "security"? What does the term "securitization" mean? In your view, does the "securitization approach" advanced by Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde add to the scholarly debates in IR over security issues? Why or why not?
10. Analysts who focus on ethnicity and nationalism as factors that have an impact on both international and domestic conflicts have, over the years, often based their arguments on very different conceptions of ethnicity, nationality and nationalism – their natures, their origins, and the degrees to which they are “portable” across state borders, etc. Write an essay in which you outline the central issues in the debates among analysts of these topics. Which are the major “schools” in these debates? What are the key assumptions and orientations that underlie each school you identify? How do those assumptions and orientations relate to the major divisions within the broader field of International Relations? What difference does it make, in concrete terms, whether one begins one’s research with one or the other of those orientations? In your answer be sure to relate your discussion to the works of individual analysts.

International Political Economy and Globalization

11. The speed and intensity of globalization processes in recent decades have caused a wellspring of backlash -- reformist, radical, 'left', 'right', secular, religious, violent, and non-violent. First broadly describe the scope and variety of contemporary, non-state political actors now present in the global arena: Who are they, what are they against and what do they advocate? Second, what impact/efficacy/outcomes have transnational movements and activist networks achieved, in both specific, domestic milieus, as well as on the plane of global norms, practices, institutions, and governance. In answering this question, give detailed examples and evidence from at least two transnational social movements -- reformist or radical, left or right, secular or religious. Take care to anchor your assessment in the pertinent theoretical and methodological approaches.

12. Many scholars contend that globalization and the attendant acceleration of international integration of markets in goods, services, and capital have seriously eroded state power and national autonomy. In contrast, other many analysts argue that the "left vs. right" nature of partisan politics and the institutions of electoral democracies have not been fundamentally weakened by globalization. In fact, some claim that state capacity to implement pro-equity social and economic policies may have actually been strengthened by globalization. After identifying the main scholars advocating these rival positions, your job is to assess who is correct. And how do we know? How would you operationalize the hypotheses of the contending perspectives? What empirical evidence is relevant in adjudicating the issues surrounding arguments about states, democracy, and domestic institutions in the epoch of globalization?