Comprehensive Exam
International Relations, January 2014

Instructions:

Answer one (1) question from each set of questions.

The exam is closed book and closed note, and lasts six hours (unless you have made prior arrangements). Do not consult any outside materials. Please limit each answer to 1000 words. Keep track of time.

Good answers will make cogent arguments, will use and cite scholars and scholarship liberally, will grapple with contending paradigms, theories, and explanations, and will use real world examples as needed. Very short parenthetical citations are sufficient (Waltz TIP, for example).

1. IR Theory

A. The essence of liberalism is that anarchy can be mitigated or overcome. There are a number of approaches (schools of thought, bodies of theory, theories, etc.) in international relations that offer some hope for such progress. Assess two of these approaches. How do they offer a theory of progress? What empirical support is there for each approach? How persuasive is the approach in the face of realist critiques? The more specifically you can name authors, schools of thought, and offer empirical support, the better.

B. Which level of analysis explains the most about great powers' foreign policies and international relations? For example, structuralists claim to predict outcomes, without reference to processes. What outcomes are they referring to and are they right? Are these outcomes (if any) important? What interactions exist between levels? In your answer, please cite specific authors, arguments, and historical facts and trends.

2. IPE

A. The Euro illustrates hazards and opportunities created by a common currency. Explain.

B. Does globalization inevitably lead to a ‘race to the bottom,’ defined as a cross-national and downward convergence in national economic and social policies ranging from wages to environmental regulations. Drawing on theoretical as well as empirical evidence, assess the validity of these claims. For instance, what causal mechanisms underlie the "race to the bottom" argument?
3. Security

A. What does it mean to say that war is “rational”? Are there different ways of considering it so? What are the alternatives to a rationalist theory of war? How could otherwise rational actors go to war when it is not in their interest to do so?

B. Discuss the concept of “asymmetric conflict:” What does it mean? What are the various factors that might be out of balance between two belligerents and how might they affect the outcome of conflict between them? Discuss asymmetric conflict at the nuclear, conventional, and irregular levels of warfare.
Instructions

Please answer one question from each section. The examination will last six hours; you should spend approximately two hours on each question you answer. This is a closed book and closed notes examination. Please limit each answer to 1,000 words. A good answer will make a cogent argument, make ample use of appropriate scholarship, and use empirical evidence / examples as needed. Short parenthetical citations are sufficient (example: Waltz, TIP, Keohane, AH).

Section 1: International Relations Theory

A. What can International Relations theory tell us about the implications of the increasing economic importance of countries such as Brazil, China, and India for the global system?

B. Compare and contrast definitions of the state in at least two of the traditional International Relations perspectives (i.e. Realism, Liberalism, World Systems Theory, and Constructivism). Do international terrorist organizations such as Al Qaeda require rethinking the assumptions, causal logic, or predictions of these theories?

Section 2: International Political Economy

A. Explain the nature of the “exorbitant privilege” that the US has been claimed to possess due to the dominance of the dollar as the major international currency. Is the possession of this privilege good for the US?

B. Critically examine the society-centered approach to the determination of trade policy based on the Heckscher-Ohlin-Stolper-Samuelson theory.

Section 3: International Security

A. In Wired for War, Peter Singer claims that the development of new weapons is occurring at an ever faster rate (akin to Moore’s Law whereby computing power doubles every 18 months). Please use theories about the Causes of War to assess the impact of this development. Do these theories predict more or less war?

B. At times, China seems to pride itself on its foreign policy of "peaceful rise" or "peaceful development." However, China has also been more assertive of late regarding the South China Sea, and it often increases its defense budget by double digit percentages. How can International Relations/Foreign Policy theorists explain each of these facets as well as the apparent contradiction?
Instructions

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Section 1: International Relations Theory

A. For some theorists, the behavior of states is determined primarily by their internal characteristics. By contrast, other theorists argue that state behavior is shaped primarily by their position in the international system, and especially by their relative power. Which view do you think is most accurate?

B. Does the prisoner’s dilemma capture the essence of international politics? Are other "games" just as important?

Section 2: International Political Economy

A. Briefly describe the hegemonic stability theory. Critically examine its relevance to some major questions of International Political Economy.

B. What is the role of domestic democratic politics in the study of International Political Economy (IPE)? Comparing across issue areas, across time, or both, discuss when models of domestic politics are central to IPE discussions and when they are peripheral.

Section 3: International Security

A. The term “coalition of the willing” emerged after the Cold War, and has been applied to conflicts including the Iraq War and the intervention in Libya. Does the term present challenges to traditional theories of alliance formation? Explain how traditional theories of alliance formation explain these coalitions and if new theory/ies are needed.

B. Taking into consideration issues from deterrence to causes and effects of war, explain if and how cyber war is similar to traditional war using armies.
University of Notre Dame  
Department of Political Science  

International Relations Comprehensive Exam  
May, 2006  

You are to answer three questions. You answers will be judged by (a) how well you make a well-written and reasoned answer; and (b) how well you bring the reading of the field, via citation of authors and articles/books, to bear in your answer.

1. Some suggest that the emergence of social constructivism has presented a fundamental challenge to neorealism and neoliberalism as core paradigms in international relations. Others contend that the constructivist ‘challenge’ has generally swept the social sciences and has added depth to all paradigms of most disciplines and international relations is enhanced by this trend. To which view do you subscribe? Discuss the ways in which constructivist approaches undermine, reinforce, or depart from the two traditional theoretical approaches mentioned above.

2. The theory of the democratic peace has been proposed as a verifiable empirical political theory, and would seem on its face to refute Realism, a paradigm asserting that the internal organization of states, except as it affects state capacity, is not relevant to the state's international behavior.

Depending upon how one operationalizes the concepts of democracy and peace, in some studies the number of counterexamples to the democratic peace, that is, democracies fighting other democracies, is zero, which would imply that the democratic peace thesis is amply corroborated but not really tested.

a. What tests for the thesis have been proposed, and what tests would you propose?

b. The democratic peace thesis itself is presumably deductible from some broader theory of international politics, and perhaps this broader theory is subject to test (that is, falsification if it is actually false). What explanations of the democratic peace have been offered? What other explanations might you offer? How have these explanations been tested, and how do you think they might be tested?

c. Inasmuch as Realism seems to offer persuasive explanations for at least some aspects of international politics, is there a way (or a need) to reconcile the democratic peace thesis with Realism?

3. An important strand of the IPE literature focuses on governments’ attempts to make credible commitments in regards to international and domestic economic policies. How would you characterize the current state of this literature? Offer three specific policy examples from the literature and provide both an overview and an evaluation of the different mechanisms recommended to overcome the credible commitment problem.
4. For more than a decade pundits have been declaring that “the sovereign state is just about dead” (Krasner, Stephen. 2001. “Sovereignty” Foreign Policy). How has the concept of sovereignty changed over the last 300 years? To what extent, and in which areas, has national autonomy waned, and to what extent and in which areas has national autonomy waxed?

5. In what ways might the design of international institutions enhance or impede the likelihood and extent of international cooperation in at least one substantive issue area where states plausibly share the possibility of joint gains? For example, what might be the effect of more vs. less legalized institutions? Treaties with weak obligations and compliance rules vs. those with more stringent obligations? What impact might membership rules or participation incentives within international institutions have on their ability to influence state behavior? In what ways might institutional design affect uncertainty with respect to causal relationships about how the world works and related national interests? Please illustrate your argument with reference to one or more substantive issue areas within international relations.
You are to answer three of the five questions.

1. Realists, liberals and constructivists share the belief that states still are at the center of the international system. States have dominated (though not unproblematically) the regulation of violence for at least the last two centuries, and have played the key role in creating and regulating the international economy, developing law, and creating organizations. Nevertheless, many argue that non-state actors, whether domestic or transnational, increasingly constrain states in all dimensions of international politics.

To what extent do non-state actors constrain states in the substantive areas of security, economics and law? Are these effects sufficiently significant that realists, liberals, and constructivists should rethink the place of the state as the primary unit of analysis?

2. Most theories about the causes of war have been developed to explain interstate war. Some of the bloodiest and most protracted wars in the 1990s, however, were intrastate wars. Scholars have developed new explanations, often described as the greed-grievance debate, to explain these wars. Compare and contrast these two sets of literature on the causes of war, in terms of their ability to explain internal wars and how wars, both inter- and intra-state, come to an end.

3. Some of the most difficult foreign policy choices facing the United States since the end of the Cold War have involved military intervention in the domestic affairs of another state. What are the general norms of international law and theories of just use of military force that the writings of scholars suggest should govern such interventions? Are the criteria for a just intervention different now from what they were during the Cold War? Why? Please support your argument with reference to empirical cases.

4. The Summer 2000 issue of *International Organization* was devoted to "legalization and world politics," and examined the causes and implications of "legalization" for international relations. What is "legalization," and how does it differ from "institutionalization"? What is the role of legalization in promoting or retarding cooperation in the areas of international trade and finance? To what extent and under what conditions, in your view, does legalization successfully promote cooperation in international economic issues?

5. Recent literature in political science, and specifically in international relations, is concerned about selection bias in empirical research. In your essay (1) define "selection bias" and state briefly why it is a methodological problem for social science research; (2) discuss at least two substantive areas in international relations in which past research has suffered from selection bias; and (3) describe the ways in which more recent work in these areas has sought to overcome this problem, as well as the extent to which these efforts have succeeded.
University of Notre Dame
Department of Political Science
Comprehensive Examination in International Relations
January 2005

You are to answer three questions. Your answers will be judged by (a) how well you make a well-written and reasoned answer; and (b) how well you bring the reading of the field, via citation of authors and articles/books, to bear in your answer.

1. From Morgenthau to Nye, power is one of the most critically reviewed variables in the international relations literature. Discuss the evolution and theoretical reach of power, both as a characteristic of states and as a structural characteristic of inter-state relations. How much weight would you give to the differences among major schools of international relations theory as an explanation for this evolution?

2. Numerous scholars in IR suggest that conflict (both military and economic) could be avoided if only actors could communicate credibly. Select criteria on which to categorize such arguments (subject, model assumptions, etc) and then within this framework describe and critique specific authors. Discuss issues of selection bias as one of the methodological problems that might arise when testing these theories.

3. The study of IPE is largely about determining actors’ preferences over different economic policy choices. How does the IPE determine (or assign) such preferences? Can we derive preferences from actors’ actions and behaviors? Are theories about preferences empirically testable?

4. Traditionally international law has set conditions upon the waging of war; typically these conditions do not permit preventive war (such as the US has argued it waged in Iraq). Discuss these conditions and contrast them with what the “causes of war” literature theorizes regarding what leads states to engage in war. What do you think each approach can contribute to the current debate about the increasing use of preventive wars? What historical examples support your argument?

5. Analysts have argued that the events of September 11th, 2001 and their aftermath (i.e., the war on terrorism, the war in Iraq, etc.) have created new issues, actors, and dynamics in international politics for which existing theories of international relations do not account very well. Others counter that September 11th changed the fundamental dynamics of the international system very little and that existing theories can account for whatever might be new. To what extent and in what ways did September 11th change international politics? How well do existing theories -- realism, liberalism, constructivism, or any others that you want to mention (e.g., clash of civilizations) -- account for the events of that day and their aftermath?
International Relations Comprehensive Exam

January, 2007

Cosmina Menghes

You are to answer **three (3)** questions. You answers will be judged by

(a) how well you make a well-written and reasoned answer; and

(b) how well you bring the reading of the field, via citation of authors and articles/books, to bear in your answer.

1. Much of the international relations literature is concerned with the causes of war. While war continues to be a major international problem and the literature continues to grow, the major form of violence in which increasing numbers of people are dying and which occupies the concerns of policy-makers is terrorism. Compare and contrast the major causes of war as described in the literature with what we know causes and sustains terrorism. What are the implications of the differences or similarities in these causes for the more general study of international relations?

2. Some would suggest that one of the more fundamental dividing lines among international relations experts lies in their foundational claims about whether the world is one where anarchy rules or where cooperation rules as a basis for our understanding the relations among actors. Choosing one of these frameworks - the anarchy OR the cooperation - discuss the guiding concepts, scholarly arguments and, to the extent to which they exist, the findings of this framework.

3. The literature on international political economy has developed a broad reach as regards both the patterns of relations among nations and the relationship between domestic forces and international relations. For one of the areas below discuss the current state of the literature in terms of its more prominent authors, its controversies or disagreements, and some specific policies (or policy debates) which provide an example of the relevance of the scholarship. The areas:
   - how actors develop (or extract) commitments with (from) other actors;
   - how actors develop their preferences regarding policies in the economic realm;
   - the relationship between trade and security;
   - the relationship between economic interdependence and peace
4. It is widely accepted by international relations scholars that their field now has a distinctive set of ‘guiding paradigms’ which posit which research questions and areas of inquiry are most important in the progress of the field. Most analysts would accept these paradigms as the realist, the liberal, (including a ‘neo-‘ designation often before each) and the more recent constructivist. By discussing the most important scholars and their ideas in one of these paradigms, make the case for why this paradigm is the more adequate framework compared to the others for describing and explaining international relations.

5. One of the contested areas of the international relations field in the past decade has been the role and reach of international law and norms (ethics) as meaningful principles for guiding the actions of nation-states and their leaders. Using one controversial area - such as what conditions should guide humanitarian intervention; or, what comprises a case for preventive war; or, whether principles embedded in earlier international agreements, such as the Geneva Conventions, are relevant in a new ‘global war on terrorism’ - discuss the specific challenges which new international situations and events pose to the traditional work of international law and institutions, and how you would recommend the debates and controversies in these areas be resolved.
IR Comprehensive Exam
January 2009

Good answers will make cogent arguments, will use and cite scholars and scholarship liberally, and will use real world examples as needed. Very short parenthetical citations are sufficient. Try to keep each answer under 1000 words.

Answer one (1) question from each set of questions.

SET 1
A) A main assumption of the IPE literature on international finance is that countries lack credibility on a spectrum of economic policies. Consider at least three policies. Describe for each why the government may lack credibility, the potential cost of the lack of credibility, and what mechanisms government’s use to build credibility.

B) Some observers see globalization as a recent process, occurring over the last few decades, and producing lasting changes in the structure of global politics; others view globalization more as a long-run historical process, one which ebbs and flows over time. Address the nature and effects of globalization in the following manner: (a) briefly define "globalization"; (b) discuss the impact of globalization on two of the following domestic policy areas - taxation; welfare state provisions; labor standards and working conditions; or macroeconomic management; and (c) discuss whether globalization, given your response in section (b), is "something new" or part of a longer-range historical process.

SET 2
A) In the contemporary era, rational choice-oriented approaches occupy a prominent position within political science, and, therefore, within international relations scholarship. To what extent does rational choice provide an appropriate lens through which to analyze international politics? What are the advantages of rationalist approaches, and what are the shortcomings? Your answer should make reference to specific bodies of literature and/or authors.

B) Imagine that you were forced to write a book about the role of ideas, norms, or culture (your choice, pick one) in international relations. Your task in this essay is to find a puzzle and set up a research design related to this overall question: "How do ideas, norms, or culture influence relations between states?" Specify your puzzle and tell us how you would structure a research project to resolve the puzzle. What methods would you use, how would you use them, and why?

SET 3
A) What functions do international institutions serve? After specifying what you mean by an international institution, for each function provide a concrete example and explain how and under what conditions the institution affects states’ foreign economic or military policy.

B) In a bold and counterintuitive claim, political scientist Kenneth Waltz suggests that the spread of nuclear weapons is not such a bad thing: Why might this be the case? What do you think of his argument? What are the major criticisms of it? How would you test it, both in terms of method and evidence?
C) One of the central debates regarding US foreign policy in recent years has been between those who claim that US assertion of national interest in a unilateral manner is good politics and likely to be effective in achieving its goals, and those who consider US policy most effective if it unfolds within a multilateral framework. Discuss these contending claims, highlighting normative, theoretical and empirical differences between them regarding traditional issues of international politics such as realism, power, hegemony, and alliance politics.
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION
SPRING 2011

Instructions

Please answer one question from each section. The examination will last six hours; you should spend approximately two hours on each question you answer. This is a closed book and closed note examination. Please limit each answer to 1,000 words. A good answer will make a cogent argument, make ample use of appropriate scholarship, and use empirical evidence / examples as needed. Short parenthetical citations are sufficient (example: Waltz TIP, Keohane, AIF).

Section 1: International Relations Theory

A. Why do liberal international relations theorists think that relations among states might be relatively pacific despite the absence of world government?

B. What is the social constructivist challenge to neorealism and neoliberalism? Discuss the ways in which constructivist approaches undermine, reinforce, or depart from these approaches.

Section 2: International Political Economy

A. A growing portion of the International Political Economy literature focuses on individual level explanations for foreign economic policies such as trade protection, exchange rates, and monetary policy. Under what conditions do you think such bottom-up approaches are most valid and when are they the least valid?

B. Which International Political Economy theory or set of theories has been best illustrated by the emergence, spread, and government reaction to the most recent international financial crisis? For which is the current crisis most damning?

Section 3: International Security

A. Although they share the same basic worldview, realists have come up with different theories about the causes of great power war. Lay out the structural, defensive, and offensive realist theories of war. Which do you find most convincing and why?

B. In a bold and counterintuitive claim, political scientist Kenneth Waltz suggests that the spread of nuclear weapons is not such a bad thing. Why might this be the case? What do you think of his argument? What are the major criticisms of it? How we you test it, both in terms of method and evidence?
International Relations Comprehensive Exam
Department of Political Science
University of Notre Dame
May 2004

Instructions: Please answer three of the following five questions. Cite scholarship and current and historical facts as appropriate.

1. Just war theorists debate whether the current war on terrorism, including efforts to counter or prevent the use of weapons of mass destruction, merits a revision of the traditional criterion of self-defense that allows states wider latitude in initiating force. Specifically, the definition of pre-emptive war is being revised and expanded by some to justify war in circumstances that go beyond that of states facing clear and imminent attack. In your essay, explain whether such a revision is legitimate and why or why not: What is its justification? According to your answer, under what circumstances could force be initiated? Then, use this reasoning to assess the decisional criteria of the U.S. to attack Iraq in March 2003.

2. Please assess the merits and flaws of case study and large N approaches. What are their relative strengths and weaknesses? What sorts of questions are best addressed with one, the other, or both? Limit your discussion to the context of IR. Cite examples of strong and weak scholarship to buttress your points.

3. There are many variables constituting the sources of foreign policy. Some are more manipulable than others (manipulable means subject to change by foreign policy elites, the press, academics, etc). Please identify what you feel are the three most important sources of foreign policy. Review these sources of foreign policy with respect to their manipulability. This review requires analysis of these sources’ theoretical underpinnings. Conclude with a discussion of what your review tells us about the prospects for improving wealth, rights, and security for the U.S. and the world.

4. For some, economic globalization is seen as an economic process that will produce peace and prosperity. For others, it is a source of maldevelopment which fuels structural or political violence. Please discuss and assess this debate about economic globalization and its effects on political stability and economic development. Please limit your discussion to the effects of economic, rather than other forms of, globalization.

5. Over fifteen years ago, Robert Putnam wrote that "we need to move beyond the mere observation that domestic factors influence international affairs and vice versa, and beyond simple catalogs of such influence, to seek theories that integrate both spheres, accounting for the areas of entanglement between them." In what ways has scholarship in international political economy responded to Putnam's charge? How successful, in your opinion, have these efforts been? What are the pros and cons associated with analyzing IPE at the domestic politics level?
University of Notre Dame  
Department of Political Science  
International Relations Comprehensive Exam  
May, 2007

You are to answer **three** questions. You answers will be judged by (a) how well you make a well-written and reasoned answer; and (b) how well you bring the reading of the field, via citation of authors and articles/books, to bear in your answer.

1. Describe in detail and then assess the strength and weaknesses of Kenneth Waltz’s distinction between international politics and foreign policy. Since international politics consists of the actions taken by individual states and also non-state entities, and since these actions are likely to be conditioned both by the international environment and by factors internal to those states and entities, discuss how valid Waltz’s distinction is in contemporary international politics.

2. Stephen Krasner has complained that “students of international relations have multinationalized, transnationalized, bureaucratized, and transgovernmentalized the state until it has virtually ceased to exist as an analytic construct.” Is Krasner correct? Provide a classification of International Relations based on differing analytic conceptions of the state; make sure to provide examples of work falling within each classification.

3. How do international economic issues shape the way governments thing about international security issues? How do security issues shape the way governments think about international economic issues?

4. Is great power war a fading phenomenon? Drawing on your knowledge of the literature on the causes of war, write an essay stating whether you think the danger of great power war is increasing or decreasing.

5. Define constructivism and positivism such that their similarities and differences are evident. Beyond these definitions, what are some of the major claims of constructivists about how international relations works? Are these claims about areas and arguments ones in which there are independent and dependent variables that can be measured and tested?
Comprehensive Exam
IR
May 2009
Rev 1

Answer one (1) question from each set of questions.

The exam is six hours long, closed book. Do not consult any outside materials. Please limit each answer to 1000 words.

Good answers will make cogent arguments, will use and cite scholars and scholarship liberally, and will use real world examples as needed. Very short parenthetical citations are sufficient (Waltz TIP, for example). Keep track of time.

SET 1

A. Since the end of the Cold War (roughly), IR scholarship has seen the rise of theories that stress the influence of culture, ideas, and identities on world politics. In an essay critically assess this trend through answering two questions: 1) considered in comparison to the (still) reigning theories of realism and liberalism, what aspects of global politics do these new theories succeed in explaining better? (You are free to answer none.) Explain the logic behind your answer. 2) Choose a major event in world politics during the past century -- a war, an economic crisis, a system transformation, and the like -- and show whether theories of culture, etc., offer a distinct explanation, what such an explanation accounts for that the others do not, and whether you find this explanation more persuasive than its competitors.

B. For more than a decade pundits have been declaring that “the sovereign state is just about dead” (Krasner, Stephen. 2001. “Sovereignty” Foreign Policy). How has the concept of sovereignty changed over the last 300 years? To what extent, and in which areas, has national autonomy waned, and to what extent and in which areas has national autonomy waxed?

C. Economic globalization has increased dramatically during the last two decades, with trade and financial integration reaching levels as high as, or higher than, those seem before the First World War. As a result, both scholars and activists are concerned about the extent to which economic globalization reduces state autonomy and generates a "race to the bottom" in a variety of economic and social policies. What is the specific logic of the "race to the bottom" argument? How accurate, according to the scholarly literature in IPE, is the "race to the bottom" claim? What sorts of further research might be necessary to assess this claim? Be sure to cite specific articles and/or books in your response.

SET 2

A. Discuss the comparative strengths and weaknesses of Large-N and case study research. As
you discuss their general comparative dis/advantages, you are encouraged to cite works which use these techniques to good and poor effect. In addition, please offer with one or two research questions which should combine both approaches to obtain maximum leverage on the question, and explain in detail why the two approaches would be complimentary.

B. A core problem shared by rationalists and constructivists/ideationalists is the identification of preferences. Even more difficult is tracking the origins, evolution, and changes of preferences. How do rationalists and constructivists/ideationalists discuss and cope with preferences? What methodologies can be used to identify and track preferences, and which are most effective/most useful? In your answer, please refer to specific authors, research programs (debates, books, articles, etc), and issue-areas which explicitly confront preference formation and identification.

SET 3

A. The collective action problem is frequently assumed to prevent domestic and international actors from realizing their jointly preferred outcome. Describe the concept. Then for three different policy areas (for example: security, trade, and human rights), offer examples from the literature and provide both an overview and an evaluation of the different mechanisms recommended to overcome the collective action problem.

B. Assess the debate between offensive and defensive realism.
Comprehensive Exam
IR
May 2010

Answer one (1) question from each set of questions.

The exam is six hours long, closed book. Do not consult any outside materials. Please limit each answer to 1000 words.

**Good answers will make cogent arguments, will use and cite scholars and scholarship liberally, and will use real world examples as needed.** Very short parenthetical citations are sufficient (Waltz TIP, for example). Keep track of time.

**SET 1 (IPE)**

A. The rapid rise of China threatens the predominant liberal free-trade model that governs most trade between states. Assess the validity of this claim. What are the components of the free-trade model? How, if at all, do China’s trade patterns and strategy differ from this model? Spend a few words at the end assessing the real-world implications of your argument.

B. What lessons about the global financial system do the recent Greek/Spain/Portugal/Eurozone economic crisis and attempted bailout illustrate? What scholars and theoretical arguments do these developments support or undermine with reference to international financial issues, monetary policy, and so forth?

**SET 2 (general IR theory)**

A. For some theorists, the behavior of states is determined primarily by their internal characteristics. By contrast, other theorists argue that state behavior is shaped primarily by their position in the international system, and especially by their relative power. Which view do you think is most accurate?

B. Define the shadow of the future, then discuss its role in economic vs. security issues.

**SET 3 (security)**

A. In a bold and counterintuitive claim, political scientist Kenneth Waltz suggests that the spread of nuclear weapons is not such a bad thing. Why might this be the case? What do you think of his argument? What are the major criticisms of it? How do we you test it, both in terms of method and evidence?

B. From definitions to their causes, what, if anything, distinguishes ethnic/internal conflict from
interstate war? For the purposes of answering this question, please do not discuss possible differences in effects, prospects for settlement, and so forth. Please limit yourself to definitions and causes.

C. Many academic realists opposed the Iraq invasion. They argued that this opposition followed logically from their theory/theories of international relations. Some are skeptical of this. Drawing on your knowledge of realism, make the realist case against invasion and assess whether it is based on ideology or scientific theory.
University of Notre Dame
Department of Political Science
International Relations Comprehensive Exam
September 2005

You are to answer three questions. You answers will be judged by (a) how well you make a well-written and reasoned answer; and (b) how well you bring the reading of the field, via citation of authors and articles/books, to bear in your answer.

1. What is the social constructivist challenge to neorealism and neoliberalism? Discuss the ways in which constructivist approaches undermine, reinforce, or depart from these traditional theoretical approaches.

2. American grand strategy in the post-9/11 era has been labeled at different times by different observers as either realist, liberal, or idealist -- or some combination thereof. What do you think are the theoretical underpinnings of the current Bush administration's approach to international politics? What assumptions, interests, and behaviors might we arguably identify as essentially realist? As liberal? As idealist?

3. The study of international political economy is largely about determining actors' preferences over different economic policy choices. Discuss the different ways in which IPE scholarship determines (or assigns) such preferences. What are the challenges in deriving preferences based on actors' actions and behaviors? Are theories about preferences empirically testable?

4. Some scholars argue that global networks of government officials—such as regulators, bureaucrats, judges, and legislators—have transformed the nature of international relations. Other scholars include non-state actors in the mix, and argue that state-centered analyses in IR are misguided or inaccurate. Yet there is a venerable literature in IR that focuses on the state as the unit of analysis. Discuss the pros and cons of disaggregating the state in IR scholarship. How would you direct a student in IR to the appropriate level of analysis?

5. On this fourth anniversary of the September 11 attacks on the US and now 2 and ½ years into the US war in Iraq analysts may have sufficient distance and ample data to examine the claim that the “new age of terrorism demands a new ethics” for understanding international affairs and acting in the world of policy. What are the most prominent arguments of those who have postulated these new ethics and new rules of international law regarding judgments about when it is permissible to use force, to initiate war, or to depart from established treaties like the Geneva conventions? Assess the strength and weaknesses of these arguments, feeling free to make your own conclusive arguments.
University of Notre Dame
Department of Political Science
International Relations Comprehensive Exam
September 2006

You are to answer three questions. You answers will be judged by (a) how well you make a well-written and reasoned answer; and (b) how well you bring the reading of the field, via citation of authors and articles/books, to bear in your answer. Please make sure you answer each of the questions asked within a given question.

1. Kenneth Waltz emphasizes that his structural realist approach is a theory of international politics, not foreign policy. But it would seem that the world would work as Waltz says it does only if states adopt a certain kind of foreign policy. How convincing is the distinction Waltz makes? What would a theory of foreign policy look like? How might a theory of foreign policy connect to theories concerning the operation of the overall international system?

2. Focusing on the IPE literature, discuss the relationship between trade and security. Describe at least three schools of thought, including details about their main assumptions and seminal articles/books. In this new era of terrorist activity, should these theories be updated and how?

3. Using theories that IR scholars have developed to study the causes of war and the sources of foreign policy provide a framework for assessing how well the US war in Iraq is going. NOTE: you are encouraged here to discuss competing theories. Also your readers are less interested in your assessment of the Iraq war per se, but more in the theories used to assess it.

4. Probably no more central concept of international relations inquiry exists than that of sovereignty. How has the concept of sovereignty changed since its institutionalization in the Westphalian system? To what extent, and in which areas, has national autonomy been in decline, and to what extent and in which areas has national autonomy expanded? Are analysts like Stephen Krasner correct when they claim that “the sovereign state is just about dead” (Krasner, Stephen. 2001. “Sovereignty” Foreign Policy)?

5. Some analysts believe that there are many new features in international relations today. Such features include but are not limited to increasingly influential transnational actors, who range in type from NGOs to terrorists, and with the new issues ranging from transnational pollution thorough to asymmetric warfare, the prospect of WMD terrorism, proliferation, and so forth. From the perspective of a person concerned with world affairs, identify and define the characteristics of two presumably new features of international relations contrasting what is new and what may be recurrent in these features. Finally, explain how you would apply political science methodologies to help understand these two features in terms of their origins, trends, and consequences.
University of Notre Dame  
Department of Political Science  
International Relations Comprehensive Exam  
September, 2007

You are to answer three questions. You answers will be judged by (a) how well you make a well-written and reasoned answer; and (b) how well you bring the reading of the field, via citation of authors and articles/books, to bear in your answer.

(1) For some theorists, the behavior of states is determined primarily by their internal characteristics. Other theorists argue that state behavior is shaped primarily by their position in the international system, and especially by their relative power. Which view do you think is most accurate? You should assess the arguments of several important scholars in each group.

(2) Realists argue that anarchy has a number of consequences that drive and/or constrain state behavior. Describe several of the most important realist arguments about the effects of anarchy, and assess and critique their validity. In conducting these assessments, specify the counter-arguments to realist claims and evaluate their relative validity. Be specific when citing theories and authors.

(3) How do international economic issues shape the way governments think about international security issues and vice versa?

(4) Many international institutions are involved in the world economy, at either the regional or the global level. The impact of these institutions on states’ behavior, however, remains a subject of debate. Drawing on your knowledge of the theoretical literature and the empirical record, discuss the conditions under which international institutions are most effective at managing economic issues. Do you expect international institutions to be more or less effective in the next decade?

(5) There is a vigorous debate about the causes of World War I. What are some of the most important arguments? How are they related to our theoretical understandings of the causes of war?
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION
FALL 2010

Instructions

Please answer one question from each section. The examination will last six hours; you
should spend approximately two hours on each question you answer. This is a closed
book and closed note examination. Please limit each answer to 1,000 words. A good
answer will make a cogent argument, make ample use of appropriate scholarship, and use
empirical evidence / examples as needed. Short parenthetical citations are sufficient
(example: Waltz TIP, Keohane, AH).

Section 1: International Relations Theory

A. What is anarchy and what effect, if any, does it have on international politics?
B. Has globalization eroded the power of states?

Section 2: International Political Economy

A. The impact of international institutions on state behavior and international
outcomes is the subject of substantial debate. Drawing on your knowledge of the
theoretical literature and the empirical record, discuss the conditions under which
international institutions are most effective at managing issues that arise in the
international political economy.
B. Much of the recent literature on trade policy focuses on empirical tests of both
supply-side and demand-side theories. Describe some of the main theories on both
sides of the debate and how well they have held up to empirical testing.

Section 3: International Security

A. A world of nuclear weapon-armed states is likely to be a peaceful one. Discuss.
B. John Mearsheimer recently argued that “China’s rise is likely to lead to an intense
security competition between China and the United States, with considerable
potential for war.” Do you agree? Explain your answer.
IR Comprehensive Exam
January 2009

Good answers will make cogent arguments, will use and cite scholars and scholarship liberally, and will use real world examples as needed. Very short parenthetical citations are sufficient. Try to keep each answer under 1000 words.

Answer one (1) question from each set of questions.

SET 1
A) A main assumption of the IPE literature on international finance is that countries lack credibility on a spectrum of economic policies. Consider at least three policies. Describe for each why the government may lack credibility, the potential cost of the lack of credibility, and what mechanisms government's use to build credibility.

B) Some observers see globalization as a recent process, occurring over the last few decades, and producing lasting changes in the structure of global politics; others view globalization more as a long-run historical process, one which ebbs and flows over time. Address the nature and effects of globalization in the following manner: (a) briefly define "globalization"; (b) discuss the impact of globalization on two of the following domestic policy areas - taxation; welfare state provisions; labor standards and working conditions; or macroeconomic management; and (c) discuss whether globalization, given your response in section (b), is "something new" or part of a longer-range historical process.

SET 2
A) In the contemporary era, rational choice-oriented approaches occupy a prominent position within political science, and, therefore, within international relations scholarship. To what extent does rational choice provide an appropriate lens through which to analyze international politics? What are the advantages of rationalist approaches, and what are the shortcomings? Your answer should make reference to specific bodies of literature and/or authors.

B) Imagine that you were forced to write a book about the role of ideas, norms, or culture (your choice, pick one) in international relations. Your task in this essay is to find a puzzle and set up a research design related to this overall question: "How do ideas, norms, or culture influence relations between states?" Specify your puzzle and tell us how you would structure a research project to resolve the puzzle. What methods would you use, how would you use them, and why?

SET 3
A) What functions do international institutions serve? After specifying what you mean by an international institution, for each function provide a concrete example and explain how and under what conditions the institution affects states' foreign economic or military policy.

B) In a bold and counterintuitive claim, political scientist Kenneth Waltz suggests that the spread of nuclear weapons is not such a bad thing: Why might this be the case? What do you think of his argument? What are the major criticisms of it? How would you test it, both in terms of method and evidence?
C) One of the central debates regarding US foreign policy in recent years has been between those who claim that US assertion of national interest in a unilateral manner is good politics and likely to be effective in achieving its goals, and those who consider US policy most effective if it unfolds within a multilateral framework. Discuss these contending claims, highlighting normative, theoretical and empirical differences between them regarding traditional issues of international politics such as realism, power, hegemony, and alliance politics.
Comprehensive Exam
IR
May 2009
Rev 1

Answer one (1) question from each set of questions.

The exam is six hours long, closed book. Do not consult any outside materials. Please limit each answer to 1000 words.

Good answers will make cogent arguments, will use and cite scholars and scholarship liberally, and will use real world examples as needed. Very short parenthetical citations are sufficient (Waltz TIP, for example). Keep track of time.

SET 1

A. Since the end of the Cold War (roughly), IR scholarship has seen the rise of theories that stress the influence of culture, ideas, and identities on world politics. In an essay critically assess this trend through answering two questions: 1) considered in comparison to the (still) reigning theories of realism and liberalism, what aspects of global politics do these new theories succeed in explaining better? (You are free to answer none.) Explain the logic behind your answer. 2) Choose a major event in world politics during the past century -- a war, an economic crisis, a system transformation, and the like -- and show whether theories of culture, etc., offer a distinct explanation, what such an explanation accounts for that the others do not, and whether you find this explanation more persuasive than its competitors.

B. For more than a decade pundits have been declaring that “the sovereign state is just about dead” (Krasner, Stephen. 2001. “Sovereignty” Foreign Policy). How has the concept of sovereignty changed over the last 300 years? To what extent, and in which areas, has national autonomy waned, and to what extent and in which areas has national autonomy waxed?

C. Economic globalization has increased dramatically during the last two decades, with trade and financial integration reaching levels as high as, or higher than, those seen before the First World War. As a result, both scholars and activists are concerned about the extent to which economic globalization reduces state autonomy and generates a "race to the bottom" in a variety of economic and social policies. What is the specific logic of the "race to the bottom" argument? How accurate, according to the scholarly literature in IPE, is the "race to the bottom" claim? What sorts of further research might be necessary to assess this claim? Be sure to cite specific articles and/or books in your response.

SET 2

A. Discuss the comparative strengths and weaknesses of Large-N and case study research. As
you discuss their general comparative dis/advantages, you are encouraged to cite works which use these techniques to good and poor effect. In addition, please offer with one or two research questions which should combine both approaches to obtain maximum leverage on the question, and explain in detail why the two approaches would be complimentary.

B. A core problem shared by rationalists and constructivists/ideationalists is the identification of preferences. Even more difficult is tracking the origins, evolution, and changes of preferences. How do rationalists and constructivists/ideationalists discuss and cope with preferences? What methodologies can be used to identify and track preferences, and which are most effective/most useful? In your answer, please refer to specific authors, research programs (debates, books, articles, etc), and issue-areas which explicitly confront preference formation and identification.

SET 3

A. The collective action problem is frequently assumed to prevent domestic and international actors from realizing their jointly preferred outcome. Describe the concept. Then for three different policy areas (for example: security, trade, and human rights), offer examples from the literature and provide both an overview and an evaluation of the different mechanisms recommended to overcome the collective action problem.

B. Assess the debate between offensive and defensive realism.
Comprehensive Exam
IR
Fall 2009

Answer one (1) question from each set of questions.

The exam is six hours long, closed book. Do not consult any outside materials. Please limit each answer to 1000 words.

Good answers will make cogent arguments, will use and cite scholars and scholarship liberally, and will use real world examples as needed. Very short parenthetical citations are sufficient (Waltz TIP, for example). Keep track of time.

SET 1 (rationalism)

A) Realism has traditionally been regarded as the rationalist theory, par excellence. But the status of the rational actor assumption in the most recent articulation of the paradigm -- Kenneth Waltz's Neo- or Structural Realism -- is unclear at best. Where and how does Neorealism diverge from Realism on the rational actor assumption? How and why can Neorealism eschew the rational actor assumption? What are the major advantages and disadvantages of this move? You may disagree with the premises of some of these questions, but you must still address them and explain your views.

B) Scholarship on the causes of war may be divided into two camps. On one side are those who argue that war is a rational pursuit that states engage in for Clausewitzian purposes and raison d'etat. On the other hand, a significant number of scholars find that war is caused mostly by miscalculation and misperception. Who are the most prominent scholars in each camp and what are their arguments? Whose arguments do you find most persuasive and why? Support your views with case study, large N, or other empirical evidence.

SET 2 (essence of IR)

A. Some years ago Notre Dame decided not to teach area-specific courses in international relations--with, of course, the exception of American foreign policy--and does not include area-specific courses on the comprehensive examination. Is the implicit assumption here that the United States is the only country that has a foreign policy that matters and the rest of the world is pretty much of a piece? Or that international relations is international relations and to understand it requires no particular historical, cultural, historical, linguistic, or other competence? Or what? Develop a rationalization for Notre Dame's curricular choice. What might explain how this came about?

B) What is the social constructivist challenge to neorealism and neoliberalism? Discuss the ways
in which constructivist approaches undermine, reinforce, or depart from these approaches.

C) Does the prisoner's dilemma capture the essence of international politics?

SET 3 (issue areas)

A) Some observers, both scholars and pundits, claim that economic globalization generates a "race to the bottom," a cross-national and downward convergence in national economic and social policies. As a result of this convergence, nation-states lose much of their contemporary relevance. Drawing on theoretical as well as empirical evidence, assess the validity of these claims. For instance, what causal mechanisms underlie the "race to the bottom" argument? What is the role of domestic politics and institutions in the argument? Does the argument apply more to some groups of nations than to others?

B) In what ways has the potential of multilateral institutions to facilitate cooperation in areas such as the war in Afghanistan, the effort to mitigate climate change, or the attempts to revive the global economy been fundamentally altered for better or worse by
a) American military supremacy since the end of the Cold War?
b) the rise of terrorist organizations or other organized non-state transnational actors? and
c) the change of philosophies about foreign policy among US administrations?
Note that you do not have to address all the issue areas in the first part. You do have to address all three influences on cooperation, ie a), b), and c). Your answer must be theoretically grounded. What theories of IR/FP can you bring to bear on the issue area/s you select, and on the three identified influences on cooperation?

C) There are at least two competing views on China's future role in the Asia-Pacific region. According to one interpretation, China is a cautious regional power whose leadership is mostly interested in keeping the country together and consolidating its own position. According to the opposite view, the rapid growth in China's economic and military capabilities suggests that it has expansive regional and even global ambitions. Discuss various factors/theories that can be used to account for China's future international position and outline the key differences between the competing views.
University of Notre Dame
Department of Political Science
Comprehensive Examination in International Relations
May 2003

Please answer 3 of the following 5 questions:

1. One commentator, noticing the frequent instances of military intervention that have been sanctioned by an international organization since the end of the Cold War, argued that "sovereignty is no longer sacrosanct." On the basis of what norms is sovereignty being challenged? Does the rise of these norms as a justification for the use of force amount to a new global consensus that sovereignty can be legitimately compromised under certain conditions? Or is this merely a new rationale for traditional great power intervention? Or, does the answer lie somewhere in between (i.e., the consensus is partial, some occasions have been more normatively guided than others, etc.)? In you answer, refer to at least three occasions when force has been used.

2. Alexander Wendt argues that "anarchy is what states make of it." How does Wendt's approach -- and social constructivism, in general -- pose a challenge to realism and liberalism in international relations theory? How are the approaches similar? On what specific conceptual grounds do they differ? Be sure to offer your opinion of the constructivist challenge. Use empirical examples from more than one substantive subfield of international relations to illustrate your argument.

3. Some observers see globalization as a recent process, occurring over the last few decades, and producing lasting changes in the structure of global politics; others view globalization more as a long-run historical process, one which ebbs and flows over time. Address the nature and effects of globalization in the following manner: (a) briefly define "globalization"; (b) discuss the impact of globalization on two of the following domestic policy areas -- taxation; welfare state provisions; labor standards and working conditions; or macroeconomic management; and (c) discuss whether globalization, given your response in section (b), is "something new" or part of a longer-range historical process.

4. Liberal institutionalists have argued over the last 25-odd years that international institutions play the important role of facilitating cooperation despite the constraints of anarchy. Yet in recent policy challenges as diverse as efforts to slow climate change, the "war on terrorism", state-building in places such as Afghanistan, Haiti and East Timor, and actions to prevent "global contagion" by national balance of payments crises, international institutions seem to play a secondary role and ad hoc coalitions of the willing seem to be of greater importance. To what extent are international institutions really necessary for international cooperation, and what are some of the important implications of relying on coalitions of the willing to bring about international cooperation in these issue areas as opposed to channeling cooperation through multilateral institutions?
5. One of the central debates regarding US foreign policy in recent years has been between those who claim that US assertion of national interest in a unilateral manner is good politics and likely to be effective in achieving its goals, and those who consider US policy most effective if it unfolds within a multilateral framework. Discuss these contending claims, highlighting normative, theoretical and empirical differences between them regarding traditional issues of international politics such as realism, power, hegemony, and alliance politics.
Government & International Studies
IR Comprehensive Exam
January 2001

A. Please answer one of the following two questions:

1. Robert Gilpin and Kenneth Waltz recently have argued that, without the continuing involvement and mutual cooperation of major powers, the international economic system would face the risk of a collapse. They also have suggested that even though international economic interdependence has increased somewhat in recent years, perhaps due to a shift towards systemic multipolarity, the global economy continues to be governed by political actors and structures (instead of market forces). Elaborate this (neo)realist argument and point out its potential weak points.

2. In the contemporary era, rational choice-oriented approaches occupy a prominent position within political science, and therefore, within international relations scholarship. To what extent does rational choice provide an appropriate lens through which to analyze international politics? What are the advantages of rationalist approaches, and what are the shortcomings? Your answer should make reference to specific bodies of literature and/or authors.

B. Please answer two of the following six questions:

1. Many international institutions are involved in the world economy, at either the regional or the global level. The impact of these institutions on states’ behavior, however, remains a subject of debate. Drawing on your knowledge of the theoretical literature and the empirical record, discuss the conditions under which international institutions are most effective at managing economic issues. Do you expect international institutions to be more or less effective in the next decade?

2. In recent humanitarian operations, the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has significantly increased. For instance, in areas of crises such as Bosnia, Burundi and Kosovo, more than 200 NGOs have been active. Discuss the various causes of this trend, and assess its consequences for humanitarian relief and conflict resolution.

3. NATO is an institution and alliance in a time of transition. What is the future of NATO? An excellent answer will use arguments based on relevant institutional and alliance theories and contain references to the main recent current events that bear on the issue (as well as to any relevant more long-term history). We recognize that the answer involves speculation, but make the most persuasive argument you can.

4. A notable feature of President Bush's defense plans is a push to deploy national missile defense. Please assess the plans to deploy NMD. What are the pros and cons? What are the tradeoffs between these pros and cons? If you were President, what would you do about NMD? A thorough answer will discuss technological issues, the nature of the relevant threats faced by the U.S. and other interested parties, and the views and interests of the U.S.' major allies and
relevant adversaries. An excellent answer will contain solid real-world empirics and the arguments will be theoretically informed.

5. Imagine that you were forced to write a book about the role of ideas, norms, or culture (your choice, pick one) in international relations. Your task in this essay is to find a puzzle and set up a research design related to this overall question: "How do ideas, norms, or culture influence relations between states?" Specify your puzzle and tell us how you would structure a research project to resolve the puzzle. What methods would you use, how would you use them, and why?

6. During the last decade, several scholars and policy-makers have called for a “new approach to” or a “new conceptualization of” international security. What factors motivate these calls, what sorts of new conceptualizations are possible, and what is the intellectual utility (if any) of redefining security? Your answer should specify how new notions of security might differ from old notions, and should focus on the intellectual utility of these new notions. This is a fairly open-ended question, so part of the challenge is to be as specific as possible.

C. Please answer one of the following two questions:

1. There are at least two competing views on China's future role in the Asia-Pacific region. According to one interpretation, China is a cautious regional power whose leadership is mostly interested in keeping the country together and consolidating its own position. According to the opposite view, the rapid growth in China's economic and military capabilities suggests that it has expansive regional and perhaps even global ambitions. Discuss various factors/theories that can be used to account for China's future international position and outline the key differences between the competing views.

2. Contemporary Chinese commentary contains at least two, somewhat different views of the structure of the world. In one version, the international system has become multipolar and globalization, if properly handled, is producing a situation where all can benefit from international interactions. According to another view, the unique economic, technological, and military position of the United States suggests that the U.S. has expansionist ambitions, including even aspirations for global domination. Some commentary seeks to synthesize these two interpretations.

Making as much reference as possible to Chinese official and academic sources, or secondary studies and summaries of them, outline some current Chinese interpretations of the general structure of world politics and, particularly, the role of China and the United States in that structure. Compare this with the dominant vision in earlier times: the Cultural Revolution era (1965-1969); the late Mao era (1970-1976); the first reform era (1976-1989). Attempt to relate these Chinese interpretations to whatever relevant academic approaches to the study of international politics that you may be familiar with.
Government & International Studies
International Relations Comprehensive Exam
May 2001

A. Please answer one of the following two theory questions:

1. Many contemporary international relations theories, including those dealing with international institutions and deterrence, are based on rational choice approaches to the study of politics. While rational choice-oriented approaches to international relations have always attracted some criticism, recent constructivist critiques are among the strongest. Using specific examples and authors, summarize the advantages of rationalist approaches, as well as the constructivist critique. To what extent is this critique a compelling one?

2. Critics assert that realism is a degenerative paradigm. Often citing Lakatos, they argue that realism is not predictive, can not be falsified, is trying to repair itself on a post-hoc basis, and that realist scholars are no longer finding or predicting new facts. According to other critics, realism is degenerating in a second way. They argue that many of the newer realists (including the neo-classical realists) import so many concepts from liberalism, constructivism, and other paradigms that they are diluting core assumptions of realism. On the other hand, one might argue that realism is alive and dynamic. Debates about misperceptions of power, offensive realism and defensive positionalism, balancing vs. bandwagoning, and about offense/defense theory involve constructive intra-paradigm critiques and a general search for a better-honed, more fine-grained realism.

Please assess the current state of realism. Is it degenerating or is it progressive? You must identify specific debates and specific arguments and authors within those debates.

B. Please answer two of the following six general questions:

1. A core problem shared by rationalists and constructivists/ideationalists is the identification of preferences. Even more difficult is tracking the origins, evolution, and changes of preferences, and weighing their relative strengths when two or more compete. How do rationalists and constructivists/ideationalists discuss and cope with preferences? What methodologies can be used to identify and track preferences, and which are most effective/most useful? In your answer, refer to specific authors, research programs (debates, books, articles, etc), and issue-areas which explicitly confront preference formation and identification.

2. Marxism seems so dead few on the left mention the term. But could the two core elements of Marxism still animate USFP? The two core arguments of Marxism are that economics is a key driver of politics, and that class struggle is a key driver of political change. Looked at this way, which current academic debates and theories have at least some roots in this Marxist core? Apply insights from these debates and theories to current IR/USFP developments in such areas as trade policy, energy policy, China policy, the environment, drug policy, and/or international development. Although you may choose to discuss domestic roots of foreign policy, this is not a question about solely domestic outcomes. Be specific about substantive issues, as well as academic debates, authors, theories, and arguments.
3. Even with the Cold War over, apparently the United States and Russia still engage in espionage. Some have argued that espionage was, in fact, helpful in the Cold War period because it allowed Russia to understand that the United States was not about to attack and that, conversely, the western powers (except perhaps for some figures in the Reagan administration) understood that Russia was not acting with a coordinated master plan to conquer the world. Discuss how espionage since World War II may have contributed to an escalation of tensions or helped states behave more rationally. One may want to discriminate between various types of information generated by espionage. Considerable Cold War and arms control history should be relevant, as should informational, institutional, causes of war, and realist theories.

4. Scholars posit a number of ways in which domestic politics, broadly defined, influence international politics. Mechanisms range from two-level games, public opinion, the media, transnational networks, and idea entrepreneurs to domestic institutional structures, organizational, and bureaucratic politics. Putting aside debates about the utility of assuming that states are unified actors, discuss the merits of the various approaches that ‘open the black box’ of the state. Which of these approaches explain important outcomes in international politics and which do not? If you were President, which of these approaches would best help you learn about and predict the foreign policies of other states? What are the information requirements for the approaches you favor? Explain. Be specific about substantive issues as well as academic debates, authors, theories, and arguments.

5. Some observers, both scholars and pundits, claim that economic globalization generates a "race to the bottom," a cross-national and downward convergence in national economic and social policies. As a result of this convergence, nation-states lose much of their contemporary relevance. Drawing on theoretical as well as empirical evidence, assess the validity of these claims. For instance, what causal mechanisms underlie the "race to the bottom" argument? What is the role of economic politics and institutions in the argument? Does the argument apply more to some groups of nations than to others?

6. Prior to World War II, one of the foundation stones of international law was that it applied to states in their dealings with other states and did not deal with the behavior of individuals. Discuss some of the major ways in which the behavior of individuals have become a proper consideration of international law. There are a number of relevant debates, cases, and issue areas in the policy community and in academic literatures. Be specific when citing case studies, historical developments, authors, and theories.

C. Please answer one of the following two area questions:

1. In the European Union, there is an intense political debate on the best strategy to promote integration. On the one hand, there are federalists who want to create new EU-wide political institutions to complement the European Central Bank. On the other hand, some support the development of the EU as the union of sovereign states whose cooperation is based on mutual contracts and conventions. In the middle are those who advocate a so-called community method, i.e. the position of the Commission should be strengthened and the individual member states
should interact in the community framework provided by it. Please, discuss the basis of these approaches in various theories of regional integration, assess their support among different kinds of EU member states, and consider the future likelihood of these different options. Cite specific, authors, arguments, theories, states, relevant history, and other empirics. Be specific in your predictions.

2. During the last forty years, political scientists have relied on one of two theoretical frameworks -- neofunctional spillover and intergovernmentalism -- to explain the process of economic integration in Europe. Briefly summarize each of these approaches to understanding regional integration. Drawing on Europe’s experience in different substantive areas, possibly including trade policy, monetary policy, and fiscal policy, evaluate the merits of each approach. Which theoretical approach do you find more compelling? Be empirically detailed in your substantive areas, and cite specific, authors, arguments, and theories as appropriate.
Please answer 3 of the following 5 questions:

1. Although some analysts provide empirical accounts in which ideas or culture play a role, others argue that such accounts are not theoretically useful. The basis for this criticism is twofold: first, arguments focusing on ideas and culture have difficulty separating these from material interests; second, such arguments are difficult to state and assess in rigorous social-scientific (testable) terms. What is your assessment of these criticisms? How, if at all, should ideas and culture be integrated into the study of international relations?

2. In what ways do realist, liberal, and constructivist theory advance or impede our understanding of the interactions between states, power, interests, and international institutions? Please use empirical examples from more than one subfield of international relations to illustrate your arguments.

3. The current war against terrorism and Samuel Huntington's writings on the clash of civilizations seem to undermine, in the eyes of some, explanations of international conflict that are based primarily on the behavior of states. Do such things as terrorism or ethnic conflicts undermine the primary importance of the nation state's role in understanding international politics? What are the implications for competing theories of international relations?

4. Some have suggested the contemporary reality of international relations has forced the Bush administration, which came to office with a starkly unilateralist perspective, to have become a convert to multilateral cooperation in order to carry out the "war on terrorism." Analyze this situation with an eye toward what Bush's apparent reversal signals about the importance of power and institutions in the 21st century.

5. In his 1988 two-level games article, Robert Putnam argued that "we need to move beyond the mere observation that domestic factors influence international affairs and vice versa, and beyond simple catalogs of such influence, to seek theories that integrate both spheres accounting for the areas of entanglement between them." How well has IPE scholarship accomplished this task? Are these sorts of theories more or less important in IPE than in other fields of international relations?
Theory section (answer one)

1. The conventional wisdom is that the separation between comparative politics and international relations is a highly artificial distinction. Discuss some of the reasons for this statement and discuss some of the theoretical attempts to bridge that gap. Which of these attempts do you feel is the most useful and why?

2. One of the main theoretical traditions of international relations is so-called liberal tradition. What are the core tenets of such a liberal theory (or liberal theories) and what is their intellectual background? Specify two important theoretical propositions that have come out of the liberal tradition and assess how well they have stood up under the historical evidence and the criticism of alternative perspectives, especially so-called realism.

Integrative section (answer two)

3. Recently the United States has adopted several new policies at odds with its allies; e.g. Washington has rejected the Kyoto protocol, opposed the Rome statute of a permanent international criminal court, threatened to walk away from the ABM treaty, promised to develop and deploy a strategic anti-missile system, and refused to ratify the CTBT. What theories about foreign policy process and decision-making are at work that seem to explain the most about important outcomes? Are there any anomalous policies and debates which theories are helpful in explaining or which would create a need to revise these theories?

4. Scholars and pundits frequently use the term “globalization” to refer to the contemporary international economic environment and its implications for a variety of national policies. Underlying many of discussions of globalization is a claim that it is “something new,” a historically unprecedented phenomenon. Using empirical evidence and theoretical approaches to international relations, assess the extent to which globalization is “something new.” Your answer might consider levels of political and economic integration in earlier periods and previous theories of international integration.

5. Although some analysts of international relations provide empirical accounts in which ideas or culture play a role, others argue that such accounts are not theoretically useful. The basis for this criticism is twofold: first, arguments focusing on ideas and culture have difficulty separating these from material interests; second, such arguments are difficult to state and assess in rigorous social-scientific (testable) terms. What is your assessment of these criticisms?
Discuss a concrete case, such as French-US relations, in which the relative status of cultural and material accounts can be compared and assessed.

6. During the past decade or so, the role of the United Nations in international intervention has changed compared with its previous peacekeeping and other missions. How would you describe this change in relation to the objectives, capabilities, and outcomes of the UN interventions? Explore the argument that a new political and legal doctrine of humanitarian intervention is emerging and assess its potential impact on state sovereignty.

Area section (answer one)

7. During the last forty years, political scientists have relied on one of two theoretical frameworks -- neofunctional spillover and intergovernmentalism -- to explain the process of integration in Europe. Intergovernmentalism gained the upper hand during the 1970s and 1980s; in the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, the Single European Act, plans for EMU, and the activities of ECJ suggested that the spillover argument had merit. What do the spillover and neofunctional theories tell us about the possibility for EU-wide cooperation in non-economic areas? To what extent, and in what ways, is the EU's earlier experience instructive for future activity relating to common foreign policy, defense cooperation, and immigration policy?

8. President Putin has expressed Russia's interest in becoming a member of NATO and referred to similar (Soviet) proposals in the mid-1950s. In the West this idea has been received skeptically and considered primarily a political trick to derail the enlargement of NATO. Discuss both the real and imagined reasons for Putin's initiative and the impact of its potential acceptance on NATO. How counterfactual reasoning can be used to explore problems like this?
Please answer 3 of the following 5 questions

1. Some scholars note that the proposition that democracies do not go to war with other democracies is the closest we have to a law-like theory in international relations. Discuss the validity of this assertion. Discuss the theoretical and empirical criticisms of the democratic peace theory.

2. Economic globalization has increased dramatically during the last two decades, with trade and financial integration reaching levels as high as, or higher than, those seen before the First World War. As a result, both scholars and activists are concerned about the extent to which economic globalization reduces state autonomy and generates a "race to the bottom" in a variety of economic and social policies. What is the specific logic of the "race to the bottom" argument? How accurate, according to the scholarly literature in IPE, is the "race to the bottom" claim? What sorts of further research might be necessary to assess this claim? Be sure to cite specific articles and/or books in your response.

3. Discuss the intersection of constructivism with liberal institutionalism. How do these theoretical approaches overlap and differ with respect to the outcomes they are trying to explain, and with respect to the causal mechanisms that produce these outcomes? Does constructivism tend to support or undermine liberal institutionalism? Why? Cite relevant scholarship, and use examples from current events and/or history to illustrate your arguments.

4. There are many debates about the sources of foreign policy, ranging across levels of analysis and across the liberal-realism continuum. What theories best explain why the US initiated the 2003 Iraq war? Using this war as a case study, which IR theories would be bolstered by your assessment and why? Do any theories come close but need modification in order to provide a better explanation? Explain. Focus your answer primarily on IR theory, and do not spend too much time discussing the war itself.

5. Many believe that we now live in a world of one great superpower - or what IR experts would call a time of unipolarity. Assuming this is true, describe and discuss the implications of unipolarity for the role of international institutions, such as the United Nations or the European Union, and for stability and power balancing in the international system.
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Answer three of the following questions. You answers will be judged by (a) how well you make a well-written and reasoned answer; and (b) how well you bring the reading of the field, via citation of authors and articles and books, to bear in your answer.

(1) Chinese spokesmen have claimed that their country is embarked on a "peaceful rise." That is, China will emerge as a major world power in a peaceful manner, without major disruption to the international system. Some scholars think, however, that a change in the general distribution of power in the international system occasions major war, or comes about through major war. Without necessarily discussing the specifics of the Chinese case, survey the relevant international relations and foreign policy literature and speculate on whether "peaceful rise" is a theoretically plausible concept.

(2) Some scholars suggest that economic globalization limits the autonomy of the state. Other scholars, however, suggest that the constraining effect of economic globalization on state policy-making autonomy is minimal. Critically evaluate both claims. Has globalization tightly restricted the flexibility of national economic policy making? Be sure to discuss the literature from both schools of thought and expose the assumptions of various analysts who argue one way or the other.

(3) Ethnic conflict is a subject of major interest for IR scholars. How different is ethnic conflict from interstate conflict? Do the two forms of conflict share similar causes? If so, which? If not, how are they different? Compare and contrast these two forms of conflict using major theories found in the causes of war and conflict prevention and resolution literatures. Be specific when citing theories, arguments, authors, and when marshaling empirical evidence.

(4) Alexander Wendt argues that "anarchy is what states make of it." How does Wendt's approach -- and social constructivism, in general -- pose a challenge to realism and liberalism in international relations theory? How are the approaches similar? On what specific conceptual grounds do they differ? Be sure to offer your opinion of the constructivist challenge. Use empirical examples from more than one substantive subfield of international relations to illustrate your argument.

(5) A world of defensively-armed states would be a peaceful one. Discuss.