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.
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.
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.

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**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’État. 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.

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**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

b) 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.

May 2010

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.

September 2010

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
January 2012

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

SPRING 2012

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

C. Are states still the most important actors in international politics? Make sure to illustrate your answer with empirical examples.
D. Is Asia “Ripe for Rivalry”? Why or why not?

Section 2: International Political Economy

C. 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.
D. Will the European Union weather the current crisis? Why or why not?

Section 3: International Security

C. Is great power war a fading phenomenon? Why or why not?
D. A defense dominant world is a peaceful one. Discuss.

May 2012

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

SUMMER 2012

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

E. What is anarchy and what implications, if any, does it have for international politics?
F. Are we witnessing a “retreat of the state”?

Section 2: International Political Economy
E. Explain the concept of the unholy trinity in international monetary issues. Discuss critically its relevance to the current euro crisis.
F. Discuss the conditions under which international institutions are most effective at managing issues that arise in the international political economy.

Section 3: International Security

E. What grand strategy should the United States adopt in the coming decade?
F. Do you find systemic or domestic theories of war more convincing?

September 2012

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION
FALL 2012

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

G. It has been thirty years since Kenneth Waltz wrote Theory of International Politics. What are his major contributions and how have subsequent scholars critiqued and amended it? Given these critiques and amendments, should it still be considered the foundational text in IR theory?

H. What is the constructivist challenge to neorealism and neoliberalism? Discuss the ways in which constructivism undermines, reinforces, or departs from these approaches.

Section 2: International Political Economy

A. What are the main political economy approaches for understanding the causes of free trade agreements between countries or groups of countries?

B. Consider one major financial crisis. Use levels of analysis (individual, state and systemic) approach to provide possible explanations and evaluate their relative relevance.

Section 3: International 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 we you test it, both in terms of method and evidence?

B. How should we understand ethnic conflicts? Are they the result of rational fears or irrational hatreds? Illustrate your answer with reference to recent cases.
January 2013

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

January 2013

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. 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.

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January 2014

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.

January 2015

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION
WINTER 2015

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

C. Why do liberal international relations theorists think that relations among states might be relatively pacific despite the absence of world government? Do you find their arguments persuasive?

D. Can China rise peacefully? Why or why not?
Section 2: International Political Economy

G. A main assumption of the literature on international finance is that countries lack credibility on a spectrum of economic policies. For three policies, describe why the government may lack credibility, the potential cost of the lack of credibility, and what mechanisms governments use to build credibility.

H. Discuss the conditions under which international institutions are most effective at managing issues that arise in the international political economy.

Section 3: International Security

G. Select one of the competing theories of national security affairs (realism, culture, bureaucratic politics, etc). Describe it: What is its overarching logic, what are its specific predictions (outcomes), and what are its testable propositions (causal mechanisms)? Apply the theory to a substantive national security issue either current or historical. Why would it be appropriate? What insights would it provide us?

H. Joseph Nye recently wrote an article arguing that cyber warfare constitutes a Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) and proposing that we assess its potential impact by comparison and contrast with the Nuclear Revolution. What is Nye’s specific argument? How would you assess it? What, if anything, can we glean from the Nuclear Revolution (or any other RMA) to help us understand what effect, if any, cyber warfare will have on the international security environment? Be sure to both define "RMA" and outline the details of the Nuclear Revolution.

May 2015

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

May 19, 2015

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. Civil war is often considered a state of anarchy. Explore one international relations theory which you think can or has given significant insight into the causes of civil war or civil war termination.

B. There is an extensive debate on how human rights treaties influence state behavior. Describe one theory or causal mechanism that you think best describes how such treaties have a causal impact. This can be limited to certain kinds of human rights treaties, to certain kinds of states, or to certain circumstances.

Section 2: International Political Economy

A. For more than a decade pundits have been declaring that “the sovereign state is just about dead” (Krasner, 2001). How has the concept of sovereignty changed over the last 300 years? With specific reference to IPE literature and topics, to what extent and in which areas has national autonomy waned and to what extent and in which areas has national autonomy waxed?

B. International relations is often considered the study of conflict. However, IPE frequently focuses on the gains from cooperation. Describe how different IR theories conceive of cooperation, focusing on their assumptions in particular. Then, with respect to the 2008 Global Economic crisis or subsequent Euro Crisis, discuss the benefits, conditions, and challenges of international cooperation in light of these assumptions.
Section 3: International Security

I. Assess the proposition that the domestic character of the regime in a particular state is crucial for understanding its strategic behavior: what particular aspects of the regime might matter and how? What is the argument that domestic factors are not that important? Which argument do you buy? How might such domestic factors affect U.S. national security policy toward various regimes? Illustrate with reference to a contemporary case.

J. 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? What do you think should be American policy on the proliferation of nuclear weapons?

September 2015

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION
September 12, 2015
Instructions

Please answer one question from each section. The examination will last six hours (or 7.5 for ESL); 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. Please explain how the explanatory power of structural realism is undermined and/or reinforced by globalization. Begin by defining structural realism and globalization.

B. Geoffrey Blainey’s classic work "The Causes of War" says: “War and peace appear to share the same framework of causes … The same set of factors should appear in explanations of the outbreak of war [and the] outbreak of peace” (1973: 293). This book is often cited as the precursor to the bargaining theory of international war. Can you use the bargaining theory of war to produce a theory of interstate conflict resolution.

C. The large-N quantitative study of human rights often, e.g., Hathaway, finds in general that that signing of international human rights treaties is not significantly correlated with human rights performance. There might be various reasons why this is so. For example, international treaties might only influences certain kinds of countries. Explore theories of domestic politics (which includes variables like regime type) that might explain this result. If you wish you can also explore methodological and/or research design reasons for this large-N result.

Section 2: International Political Economy

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

2. Greece has a high level of foreign debt, which it is having great difficulty repaying, and a high level of unemployment. Most observers relate these problems to Greece's membership of the Euro zone. Drawing on your knowledge of International Political Economy, examine what possible reasons Greece had in joining the Euro zone, and how doing so may explain its current problems. (No specific knowledge of the Greek case is required for answering this question).
Section 3: International Security
A. Please explain the causes of a war of your choice using two or three causes of war. What are the counterarguments to your argument? What evidence would you seek if this were an in-depth study?

B. Assess the argument that internal conflict is often caused by the emergence of anarchy (Posen 93). Spend most of your time making arguments about why you agree and/or disagree. Conclude by explaining how well Posen’s theory applies (or doesn’t) to transnational organizations such as IS/ISIL, Boko Haram, and the like.

January 2016

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

January 16, 2016

Instructions

Please answer one question from each section. The examination will last six hours (or 7.5 for ESL); 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. Social constructivists often provide several mechanisms by which international norms influence state behavior. Use an example from the social constructivist literature on security, such as international norms about nuclear weapons, chemical-biological weapons, land-mines, etc. to discuss the key mechanisms by which international norms influence state behavior.

B. Liberal institutionalism is a key framework for exploring international institutions. Give what you think is a good liberal institutionalist explanation for why human rights treaties influence behavior. Define liberal institutionalism. Explain why the theory is liberal institutionalist and why it does a good job on human rights.

C. Assess the democratic peace theory. According to scholars, what are it’s strengths and weaknesses? What is your view?

Section 2: International Political Economy

1. Recent turbulence in financial markets around the world has been widely attributed to the slowdown of economic growth in China. Use your knowledge of the international political economy literature (no specific knowledge of the Chinese economy is needed) to explain the broad contours what is going on and the likely future consequences of these events in terms of both economic and political factors.

2. What are the main determinants of who are the winners and losers of trade liberalization within a country? What are the likely effects of this on trade policy pursued by that country?

3. Using your knowledge of the IPE literature, please assess the following excerpt from President Obama’s State of the Union speech:

   “Today, technology doesn’t just replace jobs on the assembly line, but any job where work can be automated. Companies in a global economy can locate anywhere, and they face tougher competition. As a result, workers have less leverage for a raise. Companies have less loyalty to their communities. And
more and more wealth and income is concentrated at the very top.”

What parts, if any, do you agree with and why?

**Section 3: International Security**

A. Use realism to construct two *contending* interpretations of the rise of China and the future of great power politics.

B. Security studies has many strands, but core elements include balancing vs. bandwagoning, offense/defense theory, perceptions and misperceptions, credibility, effects of anarchy, and causes of war. Assess the rise and status of ISIS and international reactions to ISIS using these theories.

C. 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'état. 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.

May 2016

IR Comprehensive Exam Spring 2016

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).

**Section 1: IR Theory:**

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) Do social constructivists offer a fundamentally new way of looking at international politics, as they claim, or are they really positivists who simply think that ideas matter?

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

**Section 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?
Section 3: International Security

A) 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'état. 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.

B) Assuming China’s rise continues, will this rise lead to conflict with the U.S.?

Section 4: Tailored Question from Global Politics and Human Rights (applies to both students):

A) To what extent, and how, have international normative and legal changes in the past century created or reconciled tension between state sovereignty and human rights? If you believe that there is tension between state sovereignty and human rights doctrine currently, do you think this tension can be reconciled, and why? If you believe that there is not tension between state sovereignty and human rights doctrine currently, under what conditions (if any) do you think such tension could emerge in future, and why?

September 2016

International Relations Comprehensive Exam

Fall 2016

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).

Note that only xxxx has to answer a Specialty Course Question. Allot time accordingly.

1. IR Theory

A. Civil war is often considered a state of anarchy. Explore how international relations theories developed in the context in interstate relations can or have given significant insight into the causes of civil war or civil war termination.

B. Does the prisoner’s dilemma capture the essence of international politics?

C. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of Kenneth Waltz’s Theory of International Politics. What are the most important amendments made by subsequent scholars?

2. IPE

A. Using IPE theories and concepts, discuss the causes and consequences of Brexit.

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.

3. Security

A. Briefly define traditional theories of alliance formation, bandwagoning, balancing, and the like. Then discuss how well these theories apply to intrastate conflict as well as hybrid conflicts involving states, substates, and transnational actors.

B. What will be the main threats the US will face in twenty years? How should the US respond to those threats? Your answer should be supported by relevant theories.

4. Specialty Course Question for xxxx only. You took two of these courses, but only answer 1 (ONE) of the following questions:

A. Does international human rights law's current focus on individual accountability improve or decrease long-term respect for human rights? Why/why not?

B. The International Criminal Court incorporates principles from civil as well as common legal traditions. Provide a brief overview of the "legal-hybrid" nature of this international adjudicator, contrasting it with at least one more international tribunal.

C. The civil and common legal traditions rest on a fundamentally divergent legal logic from the Islamic legal tradition. Elaborate on these differences focusing in particular on the relationship between law and religion. Does this relationship shape Islamic law states' views of international law and international courts?
B. Describe what can happen in a 'trade war.' What are the economic and political effects?

3. Security

A. How well do traditional IR security theories such as deterrence, the security dilemma, balancing, and so forth apply to conflict and competition in the cyber realm?

B. The study of grand strategy is clearly relevant to foreign policy and national security studies. How is it relevant to international relations? Specifically, where does it fit within in extant theories? What would be a theory of grand strategy? Is grand strategy best thought of as a dependent or an independent variable?

C. Explain the motivations for, causes, and consequences of NATO expansion in theoretical terms.

4. Specialty Course Question

A. xxxxx:

1. (Indep reading): Define honor. How can one tell or measure whether it is influencing politics? With what IR theories and concepts does honor compete or overlap?

B. xxxxx (pick one)

1. (Comp. Law): How does the study of comparative law, with its focus on domestic legal traditions, contribute to our understanding of states' international behavior? Elaborate on this issue in the context of international adjudication and other methods of peaceful resolution of disputes.

2. (Global politics and HR): Under what conditions are transnational advocacy networks and international non-governmental organizations most likely to achieve policy change?

C. xxxxx

1. (Global politics and HR): Under what conditions are transnational advocacy networks and international non-governmental organizations most likely to achieve policy change?

The End