

International Relations
Fall 2008

Directions:

- Please put your NEW Student ID number at the top of each page of your examination. **DO NOT** write your name anywhere on the examination.
- Number your pages consecutively for the entire examination.
- Submit a cover page with your responses that lists the following: ID number, type of exam completed (e.g. MA major, MA minor) and examination area. Please list the semester the examination is taken as well.
- Cite sources throughout your essay, where appropriate, using standard format and provide a single bibliography that includes all the materials used in preparing your answers.
- Clearly label each answer with the number of question you are answering.
- Budget your time carefully, including time to think and organize while preparing and writing the answers. Focus on preparing coherent, well-organized essays that not only demonstrate your mastery of the literature, but also indicate how the literature expands our collective knowledge.
- Students are expected to work independently on this examination and not discuss the essay items and responses with others. Any questions about exam procedures should be directed to the convener.

MA Minor – Answer the question in Part A and one question from Part B.

Part A.

The intellectual history of International Relations is often defined in terms of "great debates" that have been fought over things like the value of quantification in international studies, epistemology, and "absolute versus relative gains." Recently, however, big disciplinary debates that divide scholars either along paradigmatic (e.g. Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism, Historical Materialism) or methodological lines have been less prominent. What, then, do you think is the most important theoretical controversy in international relations today? Why is this controversy so important? What are the positions in the debate? Finally, what position on the controversy do you take and why? In answering, be sure to refer to specific authors and theories that are important for understanding the disagreement you outline.

Part B.

1. Neorealism/structural realism and neoliberal institutionalism suggest very different prospects for international cooperation. How do these different predictions follow from the assumptions of the each theory? What are the internal weaknesses and limitations of these arguments?
2. Over the past 25 years, neorealism has emerged as a major theoretical innovation within the realist paradigm. Drawing on theoretical and empirical work reflecting a neorealist perspective, explain what is new (that is, "neo") about neorealism and what is realist about neorealism.
3. Theorists of international relations, international political economy, and diplomatic history analyze United States foreign policy behavior from a variety of points of view. Some develop causal explanations of the behavior of the United States in the international system from the vantage points of realist and neo-realist theory. Others explain United States foreign policy behavior from the perspective of the theory of imperialism. Write an essay that describes these competing perspectives, illustrating the theory using the history of U.S. foreign policy as data, and concluding with your own assessment of the relative utility of each perspective for understanding U.S. foreign policy.
4. In matters of both peace and justice, there is a growing gap between the expectations of international law and actual state practice. (1) What, exactly, are these expectations in codified and customary international law? (2) What are three major current examples of state noncompliance with these legal norms? Can anything be done to reduce this gap? Do the promising remedies lie in

changing the *behaviors* of individual human beings, or rather in changing the *institutional structures* of world politics? In your answer, be sure to begin with precise definitions of both peace and justice.

5. Does international relations theory do an adequate job of accounting for the influence of non-state actors in international politics, be they nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), terrorist groups, corporations, or international governmental organizations (IGOs)? Explain your answer, referring to specific authors and theories.

6. Some international relations analysts regard the era of "globalization" as qualitatively different from the international system that preceded it. Others argue that the 21st century international system, in fact, is not very different from the 20th century structure and dynamics of international relations. Write an essay that defines "globalization" as reflected in the international relations literature and evaluate the claim that it constitutes a new system of international relations.

7. In his article, "Rigor or Rigor Mortis," Stephen Walt argues that good theories should be (1) logically consistent and precise, (2) original, and (3) empirically valid, with the best theories being those that score highest on originality and predictive capacity. In your view, are originality and predictive capacity the most important dimensions of "good theory"? If yes, why are originality and predictive accuracy more important than logical consistency? If no, explain why originality and predictive capacity are not more important than logical consistency. Be sure to illustrate your argument with reference to specific authors and theories and to discuss objections to your argument that appear in the IR literature.

8. Discuss J. Ann Tickner's statement that "by more clearly illuminating aspects of gender inequality that contribute to militarism, structural violence, and violence against nature, feminist perspectives can enrich our understanding of the interrelationships of these various forms of insecurity." Drawing on a variety of writings and examples that may support or contradict Tickner's position, explain her statement and discuss its validity.

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Spring, 2008

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MA Minors – please answer Part A and one question from Part B

MA Majors – please answer Part A and two questions from Part B.

Part A

Perspectives on international relations disagree about the importance and role of ideas (as opposed to material forces) in international relations. Compare and contrast how three of the following perspectives deal with the role of ideas in international relations: realism, liberalism, Marxism, and constructivism.

Part B

1. What is the levels-of-analysis problem in International Relations and how are scholars resolving it? Are efforts to bridge the levels of analysis useful? If so, explain why and discuss the advantages of the most fruitful approach to this problem. If not, explain the reasons you think the effort is misguided making sure to explain the disadvantages of what is assumed to be the most fruitful approach to this problem. Make sure to include references to specific scholars and theories in your answer.

2. Rationalists and constructivists differ in their approaches to understanding regularities of behavior in the international system, but how much do they differ? Discuss how each strain of international relations thinking explains behavioral regularities, including norms. Evaluate whether there is potential for agreement, actual agreement, or fundamental disagreement between rationalists and constructivists on the role of norms and their importance in international politics. Be sure to refer to specific authors and their works in your answer.

3. The editors of the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of International Relations* have asked you to submit a 1500-2000 word entry (i.e., 6-8 double-spaced pages) on "Balance of Power Theory." What would you write? They have also asked you to attach a brief bibliography listing 5 or 6 suggestions for further reading, each accompanied by a 3 or 4 sentence annotation explaining why the reading is important.

4. Chalmers Johnson has revisited the idea of "empire," arguing that the United States is an empire in the way that Rome, Great Britain and other powers in history were empires. The concept of empire is closely connected to the concept of "imperialism." Write an essay that describes "empire" and "imperialism" drawing upon relevant literature and assesses whether the United States is and has been an empire that comports with the theory of imperialism.

5. In all pertinent areas of concern-especially matters of peace and *justice* –there exists a growing gap between the expectations of international law and actual state practice. With this in mind, 1) identify these expectations in codified and customary international law; and 2) identify three major current examples of state noncompliance. What can be done to reduce the gap between normative expectations of international law and actual state behavior? Do the answers lie primarily in changing the behaviors of individual human beings, or rather in changing the institutional structures of world politics (e.g. creating more centralized arrangements for managing global power)? *Be sure to begin with precise definitions of both peace and justice.*

6. Neorealism/structural realism and neoliberal institutionalism suggest very different prospects for international cooperation. 1) How do these different predictions follow from the assumptions of each theory? In addition 2) how might the absolute-relative gains debate be reformulated into a single analytical framework?

7. Jan Jindy Pettman writes, in *WORLDING WOMEN: A FEMINIST INTERNATIONAL POLITICS* (Routledge, 1996): "'Security' means very different things for most women than the meanings given to it by IR.... Women are located in particular and dangerous ways, both in discourses about war and in war politics on the ground. Violence, including state violence, is often sexualized. Feminist understandings and revisions of security are by no means monolithic, but they do reveal war and peace as gendered processes, and suggest strategies for a more secure world." Drawing on readings and examples that may support or contradict these claims, explain the statement and discuss its validity.