International Relations

M.A. Qualifying Exam

Fall 2015

Directions:

- Please put your 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, as well as the semester in which you are taking the exam.

- 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 Majors – please answer the question in Part A and **two** questions from Part B.

MA Minors – please answer the question in Part A and **one** question from Part B.
Part A

There is general agreement that the international system in "anarchic" in the sense that it lacks a central political authority. There is, however, much less agreement about the significance of anarchy for understanding the behavior of states. Explain. Be sure to discuss with reference to specific literature citations and theoretical traditions in international relations.

Part B

1. Though realism is often seen as more applicable to security issues and questions, there is a long history of realist thinking about international political economy. What are the hallmarks of a realist approach to international political economy and how does it differ from competing perspectives such as liberalism and Marxism?

2. According to Bruce Russet, if democratic peace theory is proven correct, "the theoretical edifice of realism will come crashing to the ground." Is he right? Why or why not?

3. Since the collapse of the former Soviet Union and the “bipolar world” scholars and pundits have written about a new era based upon “globalization.” What do theorists say globalization is? What do theorists say are its root causes? What are its implications for issues of war and peace and development and underdevelopment.

4. Write an essay that would be entitled “Theories of War: Causes and Cures.” Refer to relevant literature from the past and present.

5. Using the Greek economic crisis and the migrant crisis confronting the European Union as illustrations, what would realism, liberalism, and historical materialism tell us about international institutions in solving shared problems?

6. Within policy and academic circles, there is a debate about the absoluteness of sovereignty. Discuss the conceptualization of sovereignty as being absolute or conditional from the realist and liberal perspectives and implications for inter-state conflict as a result of the varying conceptualizations.

7. Is state sovereignty challenged by the principle of human rights? Please make the realist case for a negative answer to the question, and choose one other IR paradigm of your choice to make a case for a positive answer. Cite the relevant literature for each, and conclude by explaining which answer you find most compelling and why.

8. Some theorists of global justice see the nation-state as the primary “container” (or institution) for resolving questions about justice, while others see justice as something to be achieved by transcending state boundaries and loyalties. Briefly describe the nature of this debate. Which do you find more convincing? In your answer, specifically address whether you think it is possible or practical to expect international institutions to address justice issues. Use examples of specific thinkers and arguments from the literature on global justice and international politics to support your position.