International Relations
Spring 2012

**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

Is Realism still the dominant IR paradigm? If so, why has realist theory managed to maintain its edge relative to its competitors? If not, why has realism lost its top spot in the discipline?

PART B (Question #6 on the next page or back of this page)

1. Any number of theories about international politics treat the state as a "black box." Is this a useful way of theorizing about international outcomes? If so, how does the incorporation of domestic politics into models of international relations change our understanding of international outcomes? If not, why not? In answering this question, be sure to be specific in your discussion with respect to authors and approaches.

2. Compare some of the theoretical approaches in the areas of international political economy and international security that focus on either (a) international structural factors or (b) domestic institutional influences. What are the differences, if any, concerning their analytical approaches to explanatory variables? Do they share any common theoretical premises despite their different issue areas?

3. Recent globalization literature debates the continuing salience of the state. William Robinson, for example, argues that there has emerged a transnational capitalist class that dominates the international political economy. William Tabb, on the other hand, understands the process of globalization in a way that privileges the continuing relevance of state power. Write an essay that explores this debate, drawing upon relevant literature in international political economy.

4. In recent years, constructivist research on international norms has taken a new look at the role of ideas in defining states’ interests and affecting their behavior. But do such theories underestimate the importance of power? Discuss with reference to specific authors and their research.

5. As early as 1971, Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane’s special issue of International Organization critiqued international relations theory’s state-centric paradigm and proclaimed the new importance of transnational relations. Over twenty years later, with Thomas Risse-Kappen’s Bringing Transnational Relations Back In (1995), Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink’s Activists beyond Borders (1998) and other influential works, numerous authors have turned to documenting and theorizing the influence of non-state actors in the international system. What are the strengths and weaknesses of recent efforts to bring transnational relations back in to the study of international politics? Discuss with reference to specific authors and their research.
6. You have been invited to contribute an essay to a new edited volume on key concepts and theories in international relations. Your topic is “balance of power theory.” You have been given no more than ten pages to discuss/summarize the theory’s main elements, the state of empirical research, and the major criticisms leveled against it.