

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PRELIMINARY EXAM
Fall 2010

General Instructions and Advice:

Students must answer three (3) of the following questions. Choose questions that enable you to demonstrate a broad knowledge of international relations. Examination answers should demonstrate knowledge of the history and development of the field. Relevant real world examples should be integrated into the answer and important recently published literature should be cited.

A good exam is characterized by coherent and forceful arguments based on existing work and evidence in the field. A weak exam is one where the argument is made in isolation from the literature and/or where no argument is made. Almost all the questions are designed to allow you to take a position on an issue. Do so, and do not simply produce an annotated bibliography. In other words, use the questions to show that you both know the material and can present an argument as a scholar.

We anticipate that each question can be answered in approximately 3000 words. Please double-space your answers, provide reasonable margins, and number the pages.

Questions:

1. In recent years, a new wave of scholarship has advocated "interpretivist" and "post-positivist" methods in international relations. Discussing a few key works in this area, elaborate the case for these methods. What are the advantages and disadvantages of these methods?
2. How has contemporary IR theory addressed and integrated issues of nationalism, ethnicity, and ethnic conflict? Evaluate and assess how these issues have been addressed in recent scholarship.
3. What is the relationship between constructivist and feminist approaches to understanding international politics?
4. Which international legal principles or questions has the international community dealt with recently? Explain whether and how recent events have further developed or retarded the international community's support for these principles.
5. Is Realism dead? Where does Realism stand in current international relations theory? What has Realism contributed to the field and does it have anything left to contribute?
6. Some 20 to 25 years (respectively) after their deaths, Hans Morgenthau and Hannah Arendt continue to be relevant for the field of ethics in IR theory. Assess this continued relevance by answering the following questions: What in the study of international relations do you think explains their continued relevance to the field of ethics? Which

components of their theoretical work have been most useful for IR scholars in grappling with ethics?

7. What is the role of "ideas" in foreign policy?
8. Some scholars have argued that issues such as widespread environmental degradation, human rights violations, global health concerns, and economic well-being should be understood as aspects of "security" with consequences as far-reaching as those entailed by the traditional understanding of this term. To what extent have these scholars developed new analytical tools to understand security in this way? How effective have these efforts been?
9. What is the relationship between economics and international politics in current IR scholarship?