

**International Relations Preliminary Examination for Doctoral Students**  
**February 16, 2009**  
**University of Kansas**  
**Department of Political Science**

**Instructions:** Students must answer three (3) of the following questions.

**Advice to the student:** 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.

1. Compared on ontological and epistemological grounds, are rationalism and constructivism opposing approaches to the study of international relations?
2. Examine critical approaches in IR theory in general (which theories/authors would you consider 'critical', and why) and also focus upon two or three specific *traditions* of critical theory and what it is that they are 'critical of.' Also describe what they have in common, if anything, with other 'mainstream IR' approaches.
3. Assess the Just War Tradition in both IR theory and the sub-field of international ethics. How does this tradition implicate some of the broader perspectives/paradigms in IR theory? Which factors have had an impact on the tradition's development over the past 2500 years? Finally, characterize some of the most recent debates over the development of a *jus post bellum*, and also the application of Just War to terrorism.
4. Over the past two decades, scholars such as John Mueller and Martin van Creveld have been arguing that war, as an international institution, has been radically transformed or, in Mueller's terminology, is 'obsolete.' This claim seems to run against the "Everything you need to know about international relations is in Thucydides" school of thought. Address this issue with a specific focus on war as an international phenomenon and changes in the role of war in the post-WWII period.

5. “Marxism is dead. Long live Marxism.” *The Economist* (2002). To what extent are the essential ideas of Marxism, as opposed to the contending theories of economic liberalism and economic nationalism (realism), still relevant for contemporary IPE theory and practice today? How might Marxism reclaim its relevance in the wake of the current global financial crisis?
6. To what extent does the current stalemate in the WTO across several issue areas in the Doha negotiation round provide support to structural theories of development, such as dependency and world systems theory? Is economic liberalism as a theory weakened by the failure of its institutional practice?
7. What, if anything, does the study of leaders’ beliefs and perceptions contribute to our understanding of foreign policy?
8. The democratic peace literature in international relations implies certain propositions about foreign policy and foreign policy making. Discuss these propositions and place them in the context of research in foreign policy analysis.
9. What explains the deviant, pathological or hypocritical behavior of international organizations? Discuss both rationalist- and constructivist-based explanations and illustrate using brief examples from at least two different international organizations.