

Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination in International Relations  
Spring 2015  
Morning Exam

Answer *one* of the following questions.

1. IR scholars have traditionally justified separating international and domestic politics by asserting that international politics take place in an anarchic setting, while domestic politics take place in a hierarchical or ordered setting.

- Are there good reasons to doubt either part of this assertion? That is, is there reason to doubt that international politics are clearly anarchic, or that domestic politics are clearly not?
- Should the two fields be treated completely separate? Can insights from one inform the other? Why or why not?

2. What are the most significant theoretical and empirical contributions to the study of international relations over the past twenty years?

- Discuss at least one theoretical contribution and one empirical contribution, citing specific examples from the literature. Why have these contributions advanced the state of the field?
- What are some existing weaknesses in the field of international relations that offer particularly attractive opportunities for further research?

Answer *two* of the following questions.

1. When it comes to questions of American foreign policy and intelligence activities, constitutionally based executive-legislative tensions come into play. Please discuss, with references to the scholarly literature, in what circumstances these tensions are likely to arise and how they have played out over the years. In your answer, be sensitive to the doctrine of the separation of powers, as well as the so-called “military-industrial-intelligence complex.”
2. The nuclear nonproliferation regime has as its cornerstone the Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and is comprised of a range of other international institutions. What are some of the principle challenges to these institutions? Please give examples of challenges facing the NPT. What are some of the other challenges facing additional nuclear non-proliferation institutions (Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, Nuclear Suppliers Group, etc.)?
3. What evidence is there to suggest that international institutions have an independent effect on government behavior? What are the difficulties in identifying the effects of international institutions on state behavior? Discuss how these difficulties can be addressed and cite relevant studies. On balance, does the evidence weigh in favor of or against claims that institutions are important determinants of behavior in IR? Cite relevant studies for at least two policy areas (e.g., security, trade, finance, environmental policy, human rights, humanitarian law, etc.).
4. Assume that explicit assumptions about human decision making are required for effective theories of international relations. Evaluate rational and cognitive assumptions in terms of their capacity to provide a foundation for building international relations theory and for conducting foreign policy analysis.
5. The bargaining model of war dominates contemporary discussions of international conflict. What does this theory uniquely contribute to our understanding of international conflict (i.e., what does it add that others do not)? Does the bargaining model succeed or fail at fully explaining international conflict? What, if anything, might it be missing that other work can/should address?
6. Some experts maintain that international conflict and cooperation are two sides of the same coin. That is, international conflict occurs when states fight and cooperation occurs when they don't. Do you agree with this position? Why or why not?
  - Note: This answer should draw off of all of your graduate seminars, and does not require that you took an international conflict class. Think about international organizations/law, human rights, conflict/conflict management, pre-seminars, etc.
7. How do individual grievances grow into large-scale, violent conflict (i.e., civil war)? In your answer, be sure to discuss the strategic and tactical considerations of the aggrieved, problems of collective action, etc. Include also a discussion of the state's response to grievances, and how this may contribute to or help prevent violent conflict.

8. Why do state actors violate their citizens' physical integrity rights? Answer by developing and applying YOUR preferred theory of government respect for physical integrity. Based on that theory, what can be done to prevent violations of physical integrity rights?