

IR Comp Spring 2022

Morning Questions

*Please answer **one** of the following questions.*

1. 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 and one empirical contribution, citing specific examples from the literature.
 - What are some existing weaknesses in the field of international relations that offer particularly attractive opportunities for further research?

2. Plan and outline a graduate seminar that would serve as an appropriate introduction to international relations for all political science graduate students.
 - What topics would you cover? Are there any common topics you would omit?
 - Which works are the essential readings for the course? Are there any “canonical” readings you would omit?
 - Offer detailed justifications for the topics and works included/excluded.

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Afternoon Questions

Please answer **two** of the following questions.

1. Do international institutions play an important role in international relations or not? If so, how? If not, why not? Is the role of international institutions sensitive to the issue area? And where do you think the most promising breakthrough in the study of international institutions is likely to occur? Address these questions based on previous theoretical and empirical research in both international conflict and cooperation.
2. 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?
3. Assume that explicit assumptions about human decision making are necessary to construct coherent explanations of state behavior. Evaluate rational and cognitive assumptions in terms of their usefulness for building international relations theory and/or for conducting foreign policy analysis.
4. Many contend that non-state actors have grown in their numbers and influence in the last twenty years. How have non-state actors been incorporated into IR theory? Are the growth of these actors in society influencing IR in lasting ways? Focusing on any one type of non-state actor (firms, terrorist organizations, NGOs, etc), what are a few of the big questions left for scholars to understand?
5. How do individual grievances grow into large-scale, violent, internal conflicts (civil wars)? In your answer discuss the strategic and tactical considerations of the aggrieved in organizing resistance.
6. The study of colonialism and empire was foundational to the contemporary (ie Post-WWI) discipline of international relations. Has imperialism always been a driving force of world politics? What are some ways we see the influence of colonialism and racism in international relations today?
7. The bargaining model of war is ubiquitous in contemporary studies of international conflict. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this analytical framework. What important insights has it yielded, if any?
8. Much of the research in the field of human security concerns how international actors can or cannot influence human security outcomes in specific countries. In your opinion, what are the two most promising avenues for how international actors can influence human security outcomes? Please evaluate the quality of the evidence in this area. What questions remain?
9. Scholars have theorized several preconditions and precipitants of political violence. Describe the arguments that you find the most convincing and the empirical evidence that supports them. In your response, you should also discuss factors that drive political violence at different levels of analysis (e.g., individual, group, state).