INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Fall 2002
Preliminary Exam

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. Examinations should demonstrate knowledge of the history and development of the field. Relevant real world examples should be integrated 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 don’t 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. Sovereignty has been a core concept within the study of international relations since the inception of the discipline. Yet recently, increasing economic and political globalization, occurrences of humanitarian intervention and multilateral peacekeeping, and growing concern over the governance of global public goods such as the environment have brought into question the viability and desirability of sovereignty as a defining element in the conduct of world politics. Where does this concept originate and how has it shaped the way international relations as a discipline has historically been studied? How do the events of the past decade challenge the notion of sovereignty and its position within IR theory?

2. Hobbes once described the international state of nature as an anarchic condition in which there is a perpetual security dilemma between sovereign states. Classical and neo-realist theories asserted that such anarchy dictates continuous self-interest, distrust, and conflict between states, with little prospect for mutual cooperation. Yet neoliberal institutionalists argue that anarchy need not lead to such a dire situation. In contrast to the realist interpretation of anarchy, explain the logic under which neoliberals argue we may attain “cooperation under anarchy”.

3. Global events since September 11, 2001 have caused scholars and policymakers to try and understand the possible shape of the coming international security order. Some have argued that the U.S.’s unipolar moment might become institutionalized, others suggest that there might now develop an alliance to fight terrorism, and still others imagine a period of fluidity and flux that provides yet another opportunity for the United Nations to become more deeply involved in "threats to international peace and security."
In this essay you are to demonstrate how two different theoretical approaches offer different visions of the likely global security order. Be very clear about the theoretical claims of each approach and how those claims lead to predictions regarding the future of international security order.

4. From the perspective of theories of international behavior: To what extent was international conflict during the 20th century typical? To what extent was it atypical? Consider both sides of the question and be specific as to which theories, authors, and characteristics of conflict you are considering.

5. For years political scientists have questioned whether international law truly exists. Explain how events in the last decade have influenced this question either positively (that international law exists) or negatively (that international law does not exist).

6. Which international legal principles or questions has the international community dealt with most consistently in the last year? Explain whether and how events in the last year have further developed or retarded the international community’s understanding of these principles/issues.

7. What is the role of identity and culture in foreign policy?

8. Define international regime. Discuss at least three examples of regime change in two different issue areas (e.g., trade, security, environment).

9. Discuss the relative merits of using time series versus cross-sectional techniques in studying international behavior. Be sure to use specific examples of studies in the literature to illustrate your points.