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. It would be to your advantage to avoid excessive overlap across your answers.

A good exam is characterized by coherent and forceful arguments based on existing work and evidence in the field, with justifications for perspectives and concepts chosen. 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. 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 have brought into question the viability and desirability of sovereignty as a defining element in the conduct of world politics. How has sovereignty traditionally been defined? Where does this concept originate and how has it shaped the way international relations as a discipline has historically been studied? Specifically, how have older theoretical approaches, such as realism and neorealism, defined and explained sovereignty as opposed to newer approaches such as constructivism? How do the events of the past decade and new theoretical approaches challenge the traditional notion of sovereignty and its position within IR theory?

2. Some contemporary IR students complain or worry that the field of International Relations, as currently constituted, is increasingly fragmented. What are the sources of this fragmentation? Is there any remaining “core” in the field, and, if so, of what does it consist? Are there any resources in the long tradition of philosophical thought regarding international relations that might help to identify such a “core”? If so, what are they? If not, why does this tradition not provide the kind of direction many of its contributors believed it could?
3. In his *Leviathan* and elsewhere, Thomas Hobbes — using as his basis a theorization of individual human beings in a “state of nature”— described the international state of nature as an anachronic condition, in which there is a perpetual security dilemma between sovereign states. Classical and neo-realist theories have asserted that such anarchy dictates continuous self-interest, distrust and conflict between states, with little prospect for mutual cooperation. Neoliberal institutionalists argue, however, that anarchy need not lead to such a dire situation. In contrast to the realist interpretation of anarchy, what is the logic under which neoliberalists argue that we may attain “cooperation under anarchy”? If neo-liberals are correct in their argument, was Hobbes wrong? If so, in what specific ways?

4. The past decade has seen international relations scholarship focus increasingly on the impact of domestic political variables on foreign policy behavior. In particular, many scholars have explored the impact of democracy on militarized conflict behavior. In your view, what are the most important empirical findings regarding the impact of democracy on military conflict? What argument — if any — draws these findings together into the most persuasive theoretical account of democracy and military conflict? What do you view as the most significant questions that remain unanswered by this literature?

5. Until the end of the Cold War, international relations scholarship had by and large focused on war between and among states. More recently, attention has turned to incidents of transnational terrorism perpetrated by non-state actors. To what extent are the theories of international conflict relevant to understanding violence perpetrated by non-state actors? Has the emergence of transnational terrorism altered the scholarship's understanding of violence and if so how?

6. Discuss the background to and development of the “human security paradigm.” What do its proponents note and what do its critics point out? How can it be distinguished within a broader field of international security studies? Finally, where do you stand on the benefits or limitations of human security?

7. In a widely noted article that followed from his 1996 book, Mervyn Frost critiqued the field of Ethics in International Relations. Noting that while everyday people talk about ethics, the field of International Relations had not yet taken a “turn” towards useful and meaningful discussions of normative positions. Assess what the “field” of International Ethics was at that time, and what it has been in the time that has passed since Frost’s provocation in 1998. How would you characterize Ethics as a subfield of IR now to a first-year graduate student? Finally, what should the field of Ethics entail and include?

8. IR theorists disagree on whether international organizations have autonomy and power. How can we tell whether IOs do or not? Why does it matter, especially with regards to IOs’ ability to make a difference in how the world addresses global and regional problems? In your answer, discuss whether IOs have autonomy and power drawing on at least two relevant theoretical approaches to IOs in making your arguments.

9. What do various political economists mean by the term "hegemony”? How does one measures hegemony? What, if anything, is new in the articles about "hegemonic stability” that have been published in the past decade? Is hegemonic stability more than a special case of international cooperation?