To: International Relations Cabal  
Fr: Schrodt  
Dt: 12 September 2005  
Re: Third Draft of prelim questions

**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. Martin Hollis and Steve Smith claim that IR theory can be separated into theories of ‘Explanation’ or ‘Understanding’. Clarify what they mean by this thesis. Identify a specific important problem in the field and provide one or more examples of ‘explanatory’ theory and one or more examples of ‘understanding’ theory. Assess the contributions of each approach.

2. How is constructivism a ‘distinct’ approach within IR theory? What assumptions do constructivists hold in common, if any? What assumptions do constructivists have in common with other approaches to international relations?

3. Joseph Nye once asked, “If nothing basic has changed in international politics since the struggle for supremacy between Athens and Sparta, will there be a new challenge leading to another world war, or is the cycle of hegemonic war over?” (Nye 2005, 12). How would you answer Nye’s question?

4. Evaluate the statement “International law has never been so discussed and so ignored” in the context of the most recent Iraq War. Ground your answer in the relevant theories and principles of international law.

5. Why do states create and delegate authority to international organizations? Provide examples and explain how international organizations have been able to capture autonomy by interpreting and expanding the scope of their own mandates and authority.
6. With expansion of the EU, the creation of CAFTA, and ongoing negotiations over the FTAA, the world economy appears to be experiencing a proliferation of regional free trade agreements. Do these regional economic agreements represent 'building blocks' or 'stumbling blocks' to a more liberalized world economy?

7. Where did the idea of “structural adjustment” originate? What kinds of policy reforms did structural adjustment usually entail? Why were structural adjustment programs (SAPs), throughout the 1980s and 1990s, subject to such strong criticism by scholars and practitioners both outside and within the international financial institutions (such as the World Bank)?

8. What are the schools of thought on the role of public opinion in foreign policy in the United States, other democracies, and non-democracies? Where do these agree and disagree?

9. What are the significant developments in the theoretical interpretation of foreign policy since the 1954 publication of the Richard C. Snyder, et al. decision making approach? Has there been any substantial accumulation in our theoretical understanding of foreign policy in the past 50 years?