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. One of the contemporary debates in IR is centered on the argument of whether the structure of international politics is undergoing a fundamental change from a unipolar to multipolar system. Does IR theory provide us with any reason to think that a multipolar order will be more stable than the unipolar order? Explain.

2. The post-Cold War international relations have seen a momentous shift in explanatory level of analysis from international system toward domestic sources of state behavior. What are some examples of this shift? Which explanations – international or domestic – provide a better understanding of global politics and international relations today?

3. What is a “security dilemma”? Does it cause wars? Is the security dilemma confined to international politics?

4. Until the end of the Cold War, students of international politics focused on wars between or among states. Since the end of the Cold War, however, the focus of attention has shifted to acts of terrorism perpetrated by non-state actors. To what extent are the ideas pertaining to interstate wars applicable to terrorist violence? Do you believe that the study of conflict in world politics is reshaped by the prominence of non-state violence?

5. Students of world politics contend that international norms may have a constitutive, prescriptive, and/or causal impact on state behavior. In what ways do you believe norms alter and shape states' foreign policy behavior? What in your opinion are the major stumbling blocks in teasing out the types of effect norms and ideas have on state behavior?
6. Military intervention is touted by some scholars of interstate conflict as a palliative to the spread of conflict beyond a state's borders. Taking into light the current empirical literature, what is the impact of intervention on conflict resolution? What are some unresolved questions pertaining to the effect of intervention on peace? How should conflict scholarship proceed in answering some of these questions?

7. According to some scholars, nuclear weapons offer ultimate deterrence and, therefore, security for state that possess them. Is there sufficient evidence for a general theory of nuclear deterrence? Why or why not?

8. In his seminal article, *The Rise and Fall of International Organization as Field of Study*, J. Martin Rochester remarked that the study of IO amounts to “the study of patterns of international cooperation and conflict, rendering it indistinguishable from the study of international politics” (1986). Do you agree? What, if anything, distinguishes the study of IO from the study of international relations?

9. Pick two of the following processes or topics widely researched in the field of international ethics: humanitarian intervention, torture, environmental degradation, accountability and responsibility, and discourse and ethics? Now, pick two theoretical/philosophical perspectives of Ethics in IR theory. How would these two perspectives treat those two topics/processes? In your answer, make sure to provide a background to each of your two perspectives, how they might overlap in particular analytical or normative ways, and briefly assess to what extent there exists intra-perspective disagreement.

10. “To aid or not to aid, that is the question.” What are some of the current arguments for and against the provision of international development aid? Should the US continue to give development aid? What are the arguments for and against the provision of aid to the developing world?