International Relations Preliminary Examination  
February, 2000

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 recent 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 answer, provide reasonable margins, and number the pages.

1. Which general body of research in contemporary quantitative international relations do you think to be *most* promising and which do you think to be *least* promising. Your answer should clearly define why a body of literature constitutes a common approach, and assess it with respect to the underlying theories, philosophy of science, available data and techniques, and results obtained. [Note: the objective of this question is not to provide you with an opportunity merely to say nice things about KEDS, and attempts to do that on earlier variants of this question have tended to be counter-productive.]

2. To what extent do events such as the international interventions in Somalia and Kosovo undermine interest-based theories of international politics?

3. How do differences in political systems affect foreign policy? Be sure to address both theoretical propositions and empirical research in your answer.

4. Assess the state of international law in the contemporary world. What theoretical perspective best accounts for the state of international law in the world today?

5. Using both international relations theories and any relevant empirical studies, evaluate the extent to which economic pressure against an adversary (for example, freezing of assets, boycotts, general economic sanctions) can be used to achieve the same results as the use of military force.
6. During the past several years, scholars such as John Mueller and Martin van Crevald have been arguing that war, as an international institution, has been radically transformed or, in Mueller's terminology, is "obsolete." This obviously runs against the "Everything you need to know about international relations is in Thucydides" school of thought. Address this issue with a specific focus on war as an international phenomenon and changes in the role of war in the post-WWII period.

7. Hermann and Kegley state that:

“In situations that potentially serve as preludes to war, what leaders are like becomes very important, as do their perceptions of the nature of the crisis. Indeed given the degree of support that this proposition has garnered, it-like the proposition that democratic governments do not wage war against one another-has gained the status of an empirical law in the study of foreign policy decision making” (International Studies Quarterly, 1995, p. 515).

Discuss the research that supports this proposition. Has it, as Hermann and Kegley claim, gained the status of an empirical law? If so, why is the study of leadership not given more attention in the field of international relations?

8. You have been asked to advise the government of a debt-ridden Third World country or one of the states of the former Soviet Union on economic development. (You specify the country). Using your knowledge of the international political economy literature, discuss the international factors with which you will have to contend.

9. How has the globalization of international finance affected the study of international political economy?