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. Exam should return by 5pm on Tuesday, with an additional 24 hours for the completed bibliography.

Questions:

1) How can we go about knowing the differences and similarities between IR theories? Of all the different ways to do so, what is the best method for organizing what many consider to be a fragmenting field of International Relations theory?

2) In a 1999 article in International Security, Stephen Walt argued that rational choice approaches had contributed little to the field of security studies that was not already obvious. Referring in detail to specific works (other than those cited by Walt), and especially those produced since that article’s publication, evaluate Walt’s position.

3) International relations scholarship has devoted considerable attention to the triad of economic interdependence, democracy, and international institutions as a platform for peace. Do you agree with the findings of this body of literature? What are some of the unresolved issues and caveats confronting the proponents of the Kantian triad argument?

4) Evaluate the causal impact of system polarity in the outbreak of war. Do you believe that bipolar systems are more stable than multipolar systems? Discuss with reference to either US foreign policy or international conflict since World War I.
5) The rise of transnational terrorist groups has reshaped the security environment. Some contend that this has reshaped our understanding of international violence. Pick either deterrence or democratic peace and explain whether you believe existing arguments within each literature need to be modified in light of transnational terrorism. Are there any core arguments within the literature that remain relevant to understanding terrorist actors?

6) 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?

7) 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?

8) Scholars of international politics are increasingly rejecting materialist approaches for what are variously labeled "constructivist," "reflectivist," or "interpretevist" approaches. What explains this change? How significant is the contribution of these new approaches s likely to be and in what way?

9) Scholars have been concerned with the "power paradox," the fact that sometimes "weak" states are able to get what they want from "strong" states. Develop two contradictory explanations of this phenomenon. Illustrate each from the literature and with historical examples. Which explanation seems the most useful to you? Explain.

10) "Marxism is dead. Long live Marxism." *The Economist* (2002). To what extent are the essential ideas of Marxism still relevant for contemporary IR theory and practice today? Demonstrate the continued (ir)relevance of Marxist or Marxist-inspired theory through an empirical discussion of the pertinent recent examples.