

Spring 2009

MA Comprehensive Examination: International Relations

Answer any **THREE** of the following questions. You have **SIX** hours to do so. All answers will be given equal weight.

1. To what extent is trying to synthesize realism and constructivism fruitful? Illustrate your points with specific examples.
2. Would the world be different if international organizations did not exist? If so, how? If not, why not?
3. Some IR theorists draw a distinction between theories of international relations and theories of foreign policy. Do you believe that this distinction is helpful?
4. Through what mechanisms can non-state actors influence world politics? Give at least two concrete examples. Then discuss the theoretical implications of these modes of influence. What implications do they have for IR theory?
5. Is the “balance of power” a useful concept for understanding contemporary global politics? Why or why not?
6. Many political scientists use work from other disciplines (e.g., history, economics, sociology, anthropology, psychology) to enrich our understanding of international relations and foreign policy. Choose two disciplines other than political science and show how these have influenced scholarship in IR/foreign policy. What are the pros and cons of working with these other disciplinary approaches?
7. Has the definition and role of “security” issues changed with the end of the Cold War? Explain.