

IR Comprehensive Exam Spring 2010

Majors answer four of the following questions.

Minors answer three.

Watch the time; all questions count equally

1. To what extent does the current international environment influence IR theorizing? Is this influence—or non-influence—a good thing? Be sure to justify your answer with specific examples.
2. Is the study of foreign policy decision-making doomed to be the study of idiosyncratic policymaking in different states, or are there generalizations we can make across states?
3. Many scholars have bemoaned the unusual development of the subfield of international relations and have argued that it does not resemble the rest of political science. Have the so-called “great debates” helped the field or hurt it? Overall, how constructive has this approach to theory development been?
4. Under what circumstances might multi-method work be preferable to single-method research in international relations? Under what circumstances might multi-method work *not* be preferable?
5. Is anarchy still a useful starting point for studies in IR? Why or why not?
6. How have international political economy scholars sought to integrate domestic and international factors in their explanations? Do current approaches do a good job at integrating these two levels of explanation?
7. What are the promises and pitfalls of strategic choice perspectives for the analysis international politics? Be sure to provide some empirical examples that these approaches seem best and least-suited to explain.