

International Politics Comprehensive Exam: May 2011

Majors answer four questions. Minors answer three. Watch the time. Each question counts equally.

1) What is at stake in the levels-of-analysis debate? Waltz famously identified three levels and other scholars have offered different divisions of the debate. Briefly describe the levels-of-analysis debate. Discuss how these levels relate (or do not relate) to one another and whether they are best envisioned as competitors or, instead, complementary explanations for conflict.

2) The security dilemma plays a central role in structural theories of international competition. Explain the basics of the security dilemma, including factors that influence its magnitude. Discuss the role it plays in structural theories of IR. Then discuss some of the following: its relationship to the spiral model (and if you like the deterrence model), its role in contributing to divisions among various realists, and policies that may be available to states for reducing its negative impact.

3) How do concerns about the central issues of contemporary international politics influence developments in international relations theorizing?

4) Some IR theorists draw a distinction between theories of international relations and theories of foreign policy. Do you believe that this distinction is valid?

5) The field of economics has seen the rise of "behavioral economics," which incorporates insights about human behavior at odds with more traditional rational choice approaches. Do you believe the development of a field of "behavioral IR" would be valuable for political science?

6) What are the pros and cons of methodological pluralism?

7) Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of OEP approaches to international political economy.

8) To what extent do non-state actors matter in international politics?