**INTERNATIONAL POLITICS COMPREHENSIVE EXAM, MAY 22, 2015**

Majors answer four questions. Non-majors answer three.

Major comprehensive exam candidates should answer one question from *each* of the three sections (international political economy, security, and general), as well as one further question from a section of their choosing. Minor comprehensive exam candidates should just answer one question from each of the three sections. Majors have 8 hours; minors have 6 to complete the exam.

**Section I - International Political Economy**

1) To what extent are the “-isms” (realism, liberalism, and constructivism) relevant for the analysis of IPE? In your discussion be sure to provide examples of each and at least one non-“isms” based approach.

 2) To what extent is the Bretton Woods system relevant today? Does it still shape significant trends in the global economy? If so, how? If not, why not?

3) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Open Economy Politics approach to international political economy.

4) Discuss and assess two examples of IPE scholarship that seek to link domestic and international politics. What are the promises and potential pitfalls of linking these?

**Section II - International Security**

5) Since 1945, civil wars have broken out more frequently and lasted longer (on average) than interstate wars. Does this trend present a challenge to IR scholarship? Does the filed need to expand to encompass studies of intrastate conflict in order to remain relevant?

6) Discuss the key assumptions behind theories of “deterrence.” Does deterrence operate differently when neither a challenger nor defender, either the challenger or defender, or both the challenger and defender possess nuclear weapons?

7) How well does the US fight against global terrorism fit with traditional realist thinking about state-centered international relations?

8) Discuss two examples of US humanitarian intervention. What lessons do these examples offer for understanding the role of international institutions, norms, and laws in the state pursuit of security?

**Section III – General**

9)Are international organizations best understood as channels through which states exercise power in pursuit of their national interests, or do they exert an independent impact on international relations?

10) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the concept of strategic interaction as applied to international politics. Discuss the application of the concept to either war or trade.

11) Much of IR theory is built on the assumption of anarchy, but if anarchy is a basic feature of the international system that never changes, how useful it for explaining *variation* in state behavior?

12) Is the Westphalian system of states still robust? Identify examples of its continuing relevance and the most important challenges facing the state system. Is the international system fundamentally changing? Why or why not?

13) What are the strengths and limitations of focusing on the role of non-state actors in international politics?