

PhD Qualifying Exam in International Relations Spring 2021

Instructions: This field exam has two sections and you are to answer three questions in total. ONE question from the Theory and Methods section and TWO questions from the Subfield Section. Identify each answer by the section title and question number when you begin writing. Full citations are not required for the exam; however, do identify authors associated with the arguments or themes whenever possible. You have eight hours to complete the exam.

PART I**International Relations Design/Methodology**

1. Behavioral approaches based in psychology have a long tradition in international relations research. These approaches have recently gained increased attention in international relations work. How has the application of the behavioral approach to international relations evolved over time? In what ways is behavioral research complementary to rational choice-based models? How does it challenge rationalist models? What is an example of an international relations literature that has benefited from a behavioral focus? What is an example of an international relations literature that could benefit from greater behavioral work?
2. The role of domestic politics in shaping international political phenomena has drawn increased attention in recent decades. In what ways do domestic politics shape international relations? How fruitful is the focus on domestic politics as an explanation for international relations? Identify research in IR where the focus on domestic politics as an explanation for international political phenomena has been particularly useful. Are there areas in the study of IR that would benefit from a greater focus on domestic politics? Moreover, are there areas of study in IR that would benefit from renewed attention on international factors in explaining international political phenomena?

PART II**International Relations Subfield**

3. Civil wars tend to last significantly longer than interstate wars. What are some theoretical explanations for this phenomenon? Which do you find the most convincing and why? What policies have been shown to help end civil wars or prevent them from recurring? What are the limits and tradeoffs associated with these policies? What should future researchers consider to advance our understanding of civil war duration?
4. International law and international institutions do not possess strong enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance. Yet, we frequently observe state compliance with international legal commitments. What explains state compliance? Identify international and domestic sources of compliance and describe how these mechanisms generate state compliance with international legal commitments. Explain the strengths and weaknesses of these mechanisms and whether they are equally influential in ensuring compliance with international law across states, circumstances, and issue areas.

5. Discuss the competing theoretical perspectives regarding the effect of MNCs on host countries' governance, as conceptualized in terms of repression, corruption, labor rights and the political empowerment. In evaluating the theoretical and methodological strengths and limitations of these competing theoretical traditions, which of these perspectives prove to be more credible and why?
6. Write a methodological critique of the literature regarding the effects that economic globalization is said to have on civil conflict. Specifically discuss how and why issues of endogeneity and sample selection bias make it impossible to make causal inferences between the central explanatory and dependent variables used in the various statistical models utilized in the existing literature. Fully discuss how these limitations can be resolved methodologically.