INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS FIELD OF STUDY EXAMINATION

I. STRUCTURE OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS POLITICS FOS EXAMINATION

The International Relations FoS examination has three sections. Each section will have a number of questions that the student may choose from. Students will be expected to answer one question per section in a three-hour period.

Section 1. General International Relations Theory

Section 2. Four Thematic Areas: For Section 2, students will read in all four of the following sub-sections:

a. Foreign Policy.
b. Strategic Studies.
c. International Law and Organizations.
d. International Political Economy.

Section 3. Area of Specialization: Section 3 focuses more specifically on a student’s particular area of specialization through consultation with the Supervisor and the Supervisory Committee.

II. RECOMMENDED PREPARATORY COURSE WORK

The International Relations Field Caucus does not formally tie particular courses to particular sections of the FoS written examination. Students should consult with their Supervisor and look at the reading list below when selecting courses as preparation for the IR FoS written examination.

III. ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE IR FOS EXAMINATION

As part of the preparation process, students, the Supervisor and the Supervisory Committee should reach a written agreement on the specific focus on the third section, and the Supervisor and Supervisory Committee should develop the necessary reading list for the student. That
agreement, this list, and the list for the third section should be passed on to other members of the examining committee and to the IR caucus more generally when the exam is being developed.

ANTHOLOGIES, JOURNALS AND MISCELLANEOUS COLLECTIONS

This is a brief list of additional and supplementary sources that students might wish to consult, but it is not an obligatory part of the list. Some specific readings on the list may none the less be drawn from these sources.

Scott Burchill et al., Theories of International Relations, New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2013.

Walter Carlsnaes et al., Handbook of International Relations. (NB 2002 and 2012 editions).


Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal, The Oxford Handbook of International Relations.


In addition, students should be aware of the wide range of journals in the field. International Organization, International Studies Review, World Politics, International Security and International Studies Quarterly are leading North American journals. The American Political Science Review and other broader Political Science journals in North America will also be significant. A more European perspective will be found in journals such as Millennium, Review of International Studies, European Journal of International Relations, and Review of International Political Economy.

Students should also be aware of Columbia International Affairs Online (www.ciaonet.org), which links to a vast array of research institutes, papers and journals. It is updated monthly. Papers presented at the International Studies Association annual meetings are available on their website (www.isanet.org). As well, the Library menu of the United States Institute for Peace (www.usip.org) also provides links to a huge array of research institutes internationally. The International Studies Association Compendium, a set of 400+ bibliographic and survey essays, plus databases, etc., is now available through the University of Calgary Library. Go to the Catalogue and click on “Search Databases.” Go to Political Science and find “International Studies
Online.” As well, some material relevant to IR, directly or indirectly, may be found in another (free) collection available online, The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, at http://plato.stanford.edu.

SECTION 1: GENERAL IR THEORY

A. Survey, History, General Debates


B. Science, Methods, and Related Debates


C: Major Approaches: Rational Action and Constructivism


D: MAJOR MODERN THEORY GROUPS

Until the period of the 1980s, it was common to present IR theory – especially in North America – in terms of three major groups: Realism (especially Waltzian Neo-Realism), Liberalism (including Keohane’s Neoliberal Institutionalism and the Keohane-Grieco and Liberal Institutionalist-Mearsheimer debates) and – a poor third in North America – Marxian theories (imperialism, dependency theory and world-system theory). Thereafter, the North American triplet commonly became Realism, Liberalism and Constructivism. This, of course, tended to ignore other groups of theories, and also tended to focus especially on the most recent version of specific groups (e.g., neorealism and neoliberal institutionalism). The overall state of the field was thus significantly compressed and simplified. There was another problem, specifically with the Realist-Liberal-Constructivist triplet: while there may be Constructivist theories of IR, such as Wendt’s theory (especially significant in North America), Constructivism in itself is not actually a substantive IR theory in the same sense as Realism, Liberalism, or even Marxian theories. That is why Constructivism and Rational Choice/Rational Action are treated separately in this list: they are not in themselves substantive theories of IR, though they may be employed in certain substantive theories of IR.
Since particularly the 1990s, the range of theories and schools on offer has exploded: there are more general schools of theories, and more variation available within individual schools as well. Further, some schools – such as Hedley Bull and the English School – which could indeed date back to the 1980s or earlier now seem to have emerged to some degree from the obscurity imposed on them by the Triplet, which now seems to be breaking down.

Thus, in Realism, there are not only variations on Neorealism (defensive positionalist [Waltzian] and offensive [Mearsheimer]), but also a revival of interest in the Classical Realists such as Morgenthau (and not necessarily simply by Realists!), and the development of Neoclassical Realism (which is not simply a return to the Classical Realists). There are other Realist theories around, as well. In Liberalism, Democratic Peace Theory has developed, while Liberal Institutionalism (or Neoliberal Institutionalism) has continued, and Liberals have drawn to some degree on Constructivist lines of approach. The classic group of Marxist theories have not strongly revived, but Marxist thinking is evident in some aspects of Critical Theory and Historical Sociology, for example. Other groups of theory – the English School, Feminism, Postmodernism/Poststructuralism, Historical Institutionalism, and a revival of systems theory in the form of complex adaptive systems – have also emerged and developed.

This being the case, no reading list of reasonable length can hope to encompass all the possibilities on offer. This section will indicate some places to start, but students wishing or needing to focus further on specific sets of theories should do so in the context of PART THREE of this reading list. In general, students might find an introduction to the broad sets of theories noted here in works such as:


*International Organization*. Special Issue 52, 4 (1998) “Exploration and Contestation in the Study of World Politics”. (This may now be out as a separate volume.)


Various issues of *The International Studies Review* in particular may also be of value for overview purposes.
1. Realisms

General


Classical


Neorealist


Kenneth N. Waltz, Theory of International Politics. Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979


**Neoclassical**

Steven E. Lobell et al, Neoclassical Realism, The State, and Foreign Policy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009)


**Other**


2. Liberalisms

**General**


**Neoliberal Institutionalism**

Democratic Peace Theory


Other


3. Critical Theory and Others

General


Critical Theory and Postmodernism/Poststructuralism


English School


Institutionalism, Historical Institutionalism and Historical Sociology


Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson (eds.) Historical Sociology of International Relations (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

Feminism


4. Critiques, Debates and Challenges


**Section 2: FOUR THEMATIC AREAS**

**A. Foreign Policy**


**B. Strategic Studies**


Terry Terriff, Stuart Croft, Lucy James and Patrick Morgan, Security Studies Today (1999) comprehensive look at the changes up to 1999 (focus on new security issues, includes IR connection)

Barry Buzan and Lene Hansen, The Evolution of International Security (overview of the field in 2009)

C. International Law and Organizations


*International Organization* 54, 3 (2000) entire special issue on “Legalization and World Politics”


**D. International Political Economy**


Susan Strange, *States and Markets*. (Pinter, 1994)


Wolfgang Mommsen, *Theories of Imperialism*. (Random House, 1980)

**Section 3: SPECIFIC TOPICS**

Section 3 will consist of specific topical foci for students, to be selected in consultation with the Supervisor, and with appropriate reading lists to be developed with the Supervisor. This could reflect additional topic specializations, or a further development of specific sectors from Sections 1 and 2 above. The topic areas listed below are meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. The
student should work out the focus and the reading list for this section in consultation with the Supervisor and the Supervisory Committee.

Some possible areas of specialization (examples only):

a. Regime theory
b. Culture and identity
c. Normative and ethical theories, and theories about norms.
d. Institutionalism (historical and other)
e. Historical sociology.
f. Other theories: feminism, post-modernism/post-structuralism, evolutionary/biological, English School, etc.
g. Regional foci.

As well, specific topics in Foreign Policy and in Strategic Studies could be developed: for example, foreign policy issues for specific states and regions.