

International Relations

Candidates choosing International Relations (IR) as one of their two Major Field requirements are expected, for purposes of the written and oral examinations, to demonstrate knowledge of the core readings in the sub-discipline in both theoretical and empirical domains.

The comprehensive examination will be comprised of three sections: (1) General; (2) Security/Conflict, Crisis, War; and (3) International Political Economy (IPE).

All students should take courses in both the subfields of Security and IPE, even if only one is your specific interest, in order to prepare thoroughly for the exams. Expertise in both is useful for obtaining a well-rounded graduate education and a future teaching career in IR.

To prepare for these examinations:

1. Students should obtain reading lists to be made available by the IR Field Coordinator for the most important international politics literature. A more comprehensive coverage of the literature in each of the three areas should be available in the most recent course syllabi of IR faculty. Students can supplement these lists by looking through recent issues of key IR journals and recent books published by major academic presses. The APSA publication *Perspectives on Politics* contains reviews of important IR books.
2. **Students must take POLI 671 (IR Theory course) in addition to 1-2 courses from the security and IPE subfields from different instructors. Students who transfer credits from other universities are also encouraged to take this minimum number of courses and actively audit others to gain comprehensive knowledge of the field.**
3. Where appropriate, students should consider attending undergraduate courses to fill in gaps in their background preparation. Working as teaching assistants for the intro IR classes will be particularly useful.
4. Students are encouraged to collect copies of past exams from the administrative officer as soon as they begin their program.
5. Students should plan to take courses from the beginning taking into account the comprehensive examination requirements.
6. Students must consult with the Field Coordinator of International Relations at least six months prior to the written examination to specify their programs and fill out the required forms.

The topics that will be covered in each of the three areas are:

1. General

This section focuses on the general theoretical approaches and paradigms in International Relations in

addition to methodological/epistemological issues. Particular attention should be paid to theories at the systemic, state and decision-maker levels of analysis. Also important is knowledge of major empirical and foreign policy issues and their understanding with the aid of IR theories and approaches. Students should be well-versed in both classical and more modern IR literature and their criticisms.

2. Security/Conflict, Crisis and War

This subfield focuses on the analyses and explanations of international security questions, conflict, crisis and war at the international level. Among the topics that are covered are the following:

- a) security issues, both traditional and non-traditional;
- b) theoretical approaches pertaining to conflict, crisis and war, with an interdisciplinary emphasis, including sociological, economic and other perspectives;
- c) conflict studies, ranging from peace research in general to more specific treatments of protracted conflict;
- d) crisis research, including both case-oriented and aggregate investigations of causes, processes and consequences;
- e) the causes and impact of war, encompassing historical and contemporary cases.

3. International Political Economy

Political economy is the study of the mutual relations of authority systems (for example, states) and market systems. International political economy is the study of these interacting systems both as they affect international relations and as they constitute the structures and processes of the world political economy. It encompasses:

- a) the political and economic causes and effects of market economies, the relationship between economic and political change, the significance of the world economy for domestic political economies, and the effects of domestic political economies for the foreign economic policies of states;
- b) the political analysis of issues such as trade, money, debt, resources, the behavior of multinational firms and international economic institutions, North-South and North-North economic relations, changes in the international division of labor and the responses of states and industries to them;
- c) alternative perspectives on the relationship between economics and politics, including economic globalization;
- d) the application of the perspective of microeconomics to the analysis of (a) and (b) above.