

MIDTERM Exam Questions – Spring 2016 – POLI 12 International Relations

Review the questions below and develop answers for each using course materials, current events, news sources (newspapers, magazines, websites) and your own knowledge and experience. You should prepare an outline for each question. At the Midterm Exam I will pick two of these questions at random and you will be able to choose one question to answer. Come to the exam prepared! Those who prepare are going to do better work.

1. Describe the bargaining theory of war. Draw a diagram and use it to explain how bargains should occur. Next, detail the three major causes of bargaining failure. Finally, provide two real world examples of bargaining failures that led to armed conflict. Explain how bargaining theory applies to your examples.
2. What is the role of peacekeeping in international relations? Explain how peacekeeping can function using the concepts you have learned in this course. What are the potential and limitations of peacekeeping? Use at least two real-world examples to describe both peacekeeping's effectiveness and its limitations.
3. In July 2015, Iran and the P5+1 group - the US, UK, France, China, Russia, and Germany, reached an agreement on Iran's nuclear program after a long period of sanctions and diplomatic friction. Why was it so difficult for them reach the deal? Discuss what interests and goals each actor sought and attained. Was this coercive bargaining? Use the concepts discussed in class and in the textbook to explain.
4. Leaders are often criticized for prioritizing domestic politics over "the national interest." For example, President Obama has been accused of choosing a foreign policy intended to aid the Democratic Party in the upcoming presidential election. In crafting foreign policy, when should democratic leaders follow or ignore the wishes of those who elected them to public office? Support your argument with examples and use the theoretical concepts discussed in class and in the textbook.
5. Pundits argue that Russia is a growing security threat to the U.S. Do you agree with this assessment? Should the U.S. engage in coercive diplomacy towards Russia? What risks might this pose? What foreign policy strategies or goals can the U.S. achieve through coercive diplomacy? Support your argument with examples. Use the theoretical concepts discussed in class and in the textbook.
6. Democracies seldom or never go to war with other democracies. This empirical pattern is known as the Democratic Peace. Detail three explanations for why this is the case. Why does this not apply to autocracies? Discuss the role of interests, institutions and interactions in your answer. Use examples from past wars and from negotiations that resulted in peaceful outcomes to illustrate the explanations.