Answer **one** question from each part. Each answer will count equally.

“Comprehensives” assess both breadth and depth of knowledge. Keep this in mind as you choose questions and prepare answers. The exam will be judged as a whole in addition to the sum of its parts.

Think before you answer. Clearly identify the issues and develop a strategy for advancing your own argument before you begin writing. Time invested in preparation is usually the best-used time in such an exam.

Although it should go without saying, answer the question asked (not the one that you hoped would be asked – and certainly do not just ritualistically reproduce largely disconnected notes vaguely relevant to what you imagine might be the topic of the question you are not addressing).

Note also that each part of the exam seeks a different type of answer, requiring you to draw on different skills and bodies of knowledge and demonstrate different kinds of reasoning.

**Part One. Answer one question from this part.**

1. “We should stop assuming that we can explain world politics by focusing on international relations.” Discuss.

2. Selection effects are key barriers to causal inference. Discuss the role that selection effects have played in two different research programs in international relations, the ways that scholars have tried to overcome selection effects, and whether you find such efforts convincing.

3. What role(s) do national leaders play in international relations?

4. "For several decades, states have taken International Organizations more seriously than have scholars. Whereas formal IOs have been seriously neglected in the theoretical study of international regimes, they have played a major role in many, if not most, instances of interstate collaboration." (Kenneth Abbott and Duncan Snidal) Discuss.

5. "The great distinction between the international system prevailing in Niebuhr and Morgenthau's day and the system in our own time is that the chances of attaining some form of world government have been radically enhanced.” (Campbell Craig) Discuss.

6. “A generation ago, some form of positivism was widely seen as essential to sound international theory. Today scientific realism is increasingly presented as the essential metatheory for sound substantive theory. In fact, however, philosophy of social science does not legislate substantive theorizing, except in limited, essentially negative ways. Sound international theory is equally possible under positivism, realism, pragmatism, constructivism, and just about any other metatheoretical perspective – including no metatheory at all.” Discuss, including significant discussion of actual substantive theorizing.

7. “The only form of realist theory that continues to have much empirical application in the twenty-first century is power transition theory.” Discuss.

8. “The United States and China, each in its own way, demonstrates the continuing robust health of the sovereign territorial state as the organizing principle of international relations.” Discuss. You may, if you wish, restrict your answer to just one of these countries.
Part Two.

Read these instructions carefully – and follow them!

Select one of the following relationships: a) domestic politics and international security; b) international trade and international conflict, c) globalization and democratization, d) nuclear proliferation and regional conflict, e) religion and terrorism.

1) Define the concepts/variables/phenomena, both conceptually and operationally.

2) Outline an approach, perspective, or theoretical framework that generates hypotheses worthy of investigation.

3) Evaluate this framework/interpretation and one or two of its resulting hypotheses. (You may choose instead to focus only on the hypotheses. In either case, the hypothesis or hypotheses should be your focus in the remainder of the answer.) In doing so, indicate the extent of our knowledge about the evidence relevant to the hypotheses being investigated.

4) Outline a research agenda for further progress in understanding this relationship.

(Note. We are less concerned with your knowledge of the particular literature on these topics – although that is not unimportant, especially in orals – than your capacity to think conceptually and critically about important theoretical and empirical relationships. Many good answers take a form that is intermediate between a research design and a conventional “answer” or “argument”. Also, be careful to keep focused on the concepts and relationships, which are the focus of this question, not the broader explanatory frameworks, which are a more central focus of the other parts of this exam.)

Part Three. Answer one question from this part.

These questions focus on applying bodies of theory and research to contemporary policy issues. Although it important to identify and respond to the theoretical position identified in the question, your answer should focus on the analysis of the empirical case at hand.

1. “Modern international society organized the use of force through the institution of war. Post-modern, “global” (or at least globalizing) international society has yet to figure out just how to organize the legitimate use of force, as both the rise of terrorism and the prevalence of violent “internal” conflict strikingly illustrate.” Discuss, focusing on the “post-modern” era.

2. “Russia’s armed acquisition of Crimea has often been presented as a classic example of ‘power politics’. It may indeed be that. But it is clearly not an example of political realism in action, in either Morgenthau’s ‘national interest defined in terms of power’ sense or Waltz’s ‘states in anarchy engage in self-help balancing and pursue relative gains’ sense.” Discuss.

3. “In Syria today, all that IR theory can do is help us to understand why the suffering of the last two years is likely to persist.” Discuss.

4. Assess the utility of just war theory for understanding one of the following ongoing conflicts: Afghanistan, the Great Lakes region, or Syria.

5. “Cyber warfare represents a major new dimension of international conflict that fits uncomfortably within both established strategic doctrines and mainstream IR theories.” Discuss.