

## Comprehensive Exams Spring 2017

### International Relations Theory questions (all students)

#### CHOOSE ONE OF FOUR

1. A recent trend in Ph.D. dissertations in International Relations has been towards 'mixed-methods' dissertations. Is this a fad, is it a sign of intellectual progress in the field, or do you have some other assessment? What are any challenges and downsides of any emerging expectation of mixed-methods dissertations as a standard?
2. In recent times, there seems to be numerous challenges to what some commentators depict as liberal norms and institutions of the international order. Identify at least two such norms or institutions, and discuss the reasons why you think it is a better bet that (a) these norms are likely to significantly erode or (b) withstand such challenges. What conditions and/or mechanisms are relevant to consider that could enable such norms to be viable in the face of illiberal challenges?
3. On the one hand, theory seems to be highly prized and rewarded in the field of International Relations. On the other hand, there have been a number of criticisms of the pathologies of privileging theories - 'isms' – and instead advocacy for middle-range and/or eclectic approaches. Discuss and assess these propositions in order to make an argument about what you think ought to be the proper place and value of theory in international relations scholarship.
4. As China has increasingly emerged as one of the world's most influential states, do you expect it to decreasingly abide by international norms and the rulings of international organizations like the WTO (or any others you wish to analyze)? Why or why not?