

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Political Science 12
International Relations

Fall Quarter 2008
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FINAL EXAMINATION ESSAY

Write a concise essay responding to the following:

President-elect Obama has asked you, as one of his chief advisors on foreign policy, to help him in the initial stages of designing a grand strategy that will create a world in which the United States is most likely to retain its leadership role. Specifically, he has asked, “I know that the United States faces challenges from resurgent powers like Russia, from newly rising powers like China, from rogue states with the potential to become nuclear powers like Iran and North Korea, from the stalled process of democratization around the world, from complex interdependence that seems to produce problems greater than the capabilities of any one country to solve, and from non-state actors associated with international terrorism. As a first step in the process of developing a new grand strategy, I want you to identify which of these developments presents the most likely and greatest challenge to American leadership in the world.”

What would you write to the President-elect? Explain the reasons for emphasizing one threat to American leadership over the others. Also explain why you think the others are less threatening to American leadership in the world. You might even want to offer a notional ranking of the likelihood and magnitude of each threat to American leadership in the world.

A few caveats

- (a) Your essay will not be graded on whether you take the “correct” stand, but on your skill in developing an argument to support your stance and *in using the materials covered in the course to support your argument*.
- (b) The prompt begins by making a statement about developments that may only culminate in the future, but political scientists cannot study the future. Usually political scientists look to evidence from the past—to what has happened so far—in order to project developments into the future.
- (c) Be sure to assess the relative threat of each development not only by the magnitude of the threat to American leadership, but also by the likelihood of that development in the future.

Instructions

1. You should write an essay of no more than **five typewritten (double-spaced) pages**.
2. Your essay should show **good expository style**: A **thesis statement** opens the essay. Subsequent paragraphs **develop this proposition logically**. **Evidence** supports major assertions in the logical development of your thesis.
3. Your answer to this question cannot be found by dredging up more facts beyond what is contained in the lectures and readings. Instead, your answer to this question should draw upon **theoretical and factual** materials found in the **lectures** and the **readings**. Your essay should demonstrate that you have actively engaged in critical analysis of some major arguments in this course and you know how to use them to analyze the “real” world.
4. You may discuss your answer with other students, your TA, or me. Your final paper, however, must be your own work. If it is not your own work, this constitutes plagiarism—a violation of academic regulations at this university. Please do not jeopardize your academic career by plagiarism.
5. You will probably win the undying gratitude of your TA if your paper does *not* have a fancy cover. Simply staple the pages at the upper left-hand corner. Remember to put your name, your teaching assistant’s name, and your discussion section number in the upper-right corner of the first page.
6. Please turn in your essay no later than the end of the final examination. **(The final is scheduled for Tuesday, December 9, at 11:30 a.m.)**

Please bring a bluebook to the in-class examination.

DATE AND TIME FOR FINAL EXAMINATION

The final examination is scheduled as follows:

▶ Regular Time:	Tuesday.	December 9.	11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	York 2722
▶ Alternative Time:	Sunday.	December 7.	2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	SSB 104

If you are unable to take the examination at the regular time, please contact your TA for permission to take the alternative final examination. There are only a limited number of seats in SSB 104, so we can only accommodate a limited number of students at the alternative examination time. *Note:* The examination at the alternative time will be comparable to, but not identical to, the examination at the regular time.

WHAT IN THE #@!!

WILL HE WANT ON THE IN-CLASS PART OF THE FINAL EXAMINATION?

- ▶ The in-class part of the final examination will last **one hour**.
- ▶ It will consist of **two parts**; you should devote equal time to each.
- ▶ **In each part** you will be asked to identify and to explain the significance of **four out of five terms**; so you will write a total of eight answers in an hour.
- ▶ The terms in **Part I** will be taken from the lectures and readings **since the mid-term examination**.
- ▶ The terms in **Part II** will be taken from lectures and readings throughout the course.

Reminder (from instructions for the mid-term examination)

The identification questions will be *major* terms taken from lectures and readings. Those from lectures will have appeared on the outlines. Those from the readings often (although not always) appear as section headings and are always discussed at some length by the author.

Before writing, you should quickly ask yourself five questions about a term:

- (1) **Definition.** What is it? This is the most important.
- (2) **Context.** Where does this term come from (e.g., author, one of a larger set of concepts, historical context)?
- (3) **Alternatives.** Were alternative concepts considered?
- (4) **Causes.** Why?
- (5) **Consequences.** So what?

Of course, not all of these questions will be relevant to every term. Part of your task is to decide which questions are important to an individual term.

Your teaching assistants will score your ID answers as follows:

- If you offer a precise definition of the term. *2 points*
- If you define the term *and* include some answers to questions 2-5, above. *3-4 points*
- If you do not define the term, *but* include some information relevant to questions 2-5, above. *1-2 points*