FINAL EXAM STUDY QUESTIONS

Please bring this list to the exam.

You may outline your answers on the back of these study-question sheets, and on the extra attached sheet, but you will not be allowed to consult other materials.

You will be asked to answer one from a choice of three of these questions, plus nine short identifications from a choice of twelve.

You are encouraged to study together as you prepare your answers.

The exam will last 2.5 hours. The essay and the group of short identifications will each be half your grade.

1. The Cold War witnessed sharp debates over American grand strategy for national security. What strategies were proposed during the Cold War? In retrospect, which strategy seems wisest? And did the U.S. choose wisely, or would different strategic choices have produced better results? Offer an assessment of American strategy ideas and choices, using 20-20 hindsight and your knowledge of general principles of international politics.

2. Address the following two questions:
   A. How well has U.S. foreign policy over the past century upheld the ideals of national freedom, human rights, and democracy? Specifically, how hard has the U.S. tried to uphold these ideals? How well has it succeeded?
   B. Do you think that the U.S. should make the protection or propagation of these ideals a high priority? Use historical evidence to support your argument.

3. Discuss the effects of the nuclear revolution on U.S. foreign and national security policies. How have nuclear weapons affected these policies? How should they have affected these policies? What future U.S. policies do nuclear weapons call for?
4. Assess the overall quality of the U.S. foreign policy making process. Are decisions reached by a rational process, informed by careful analysis of all relevant information? Or do they reflect the snap judgments of blundering bureaucrats and ignorant voters?

5. Write a memo to the President of the United States on how the U.S. should manage its future relations with China. Consider in your answer the possibility that China's economy will continue its rapid growth and China's GNP will eventually rival America's. Use relevant history and relevant theories (if any) to support your arguments.

6. Robert Jervis outlines two contending explanations for international conflict: a "spiral" model, and a "deterrence" model. The spiral model posits that conflicts arise from belligerent policies that unintentionally provoke hostility from others. In this view conflict is a self-fulfilling prophecy--states convert others into enemies by treating them as enemies. The deterrence model contends that conflicts arise from failure to stand firm early against aggressors. In this view wars develop when status quo powers encourage aggressors to demand more by appeasing them. In the spiral view conflicts could be avoided by appeasing adversaries; in the deterrence view conflicts could be avoided by tougher policies. Which model best explains the major wars and conflicts of the United States in the 20th century? What current policy prescriptions follow from your analysis?

7. Describe and evaluate the George W. Bush Administration's current grand strategy as presented in the National Security Strategy. What are its key factual and theoretical assumptions? Are they valid? Is the strategy an appropriate response to current threats? If not please suggest an alternative.

8. What was the worst American foreign policy blunder of the past century? Explain and defend your answer with reference to relevant history and ideas. Identify a feasible and superior alternative course of action; and explain what changes--that is, in identity of U.S. policymakers, in their ideas, or in the U.S. policymaking process--might have permitted the selection of this superior alternative policy. Also mention other U.S. blunders that you consider less serious and explain why.

9. What has been the net impact of the United States on the Third World since 1900? Critics paint the U.S. as an evil empire that fostered dictatorship, sparked war, and spread poverty in the Third World. They argue the best favor the U.S. could do the Third World today is leave it alone. Others claim the U.S. has been a white knight that spread democracy, peace, prosperity and justice
in the Third World. Which view is closer to the truth? What current policy prescriptions follow from your answer? Should the U.S. pursue an active or isolationist policy toward the Third World today?