

FINAL EXAMINATION, PART I:  
TAKE-HOME ESSAY

*You are free to discuss the topic with fellow students, and you can come to me or the leader of your discussion section with questions. However, I expect the submitted paper to reflect solely your own work. Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course. Good luck!*

***The essay is due in class on March 21. Late essays earn zero credit.***

**A. Purpose**

This paper is designed to provide you with an opportunity to discuss in reasonable depth several events from the Cold War, applying the formal tools and insights learned in this class. The paper will account for 40% of your final examination grade. Do not take this lightly, and do not wait until the day before the essay is due to begin writing it.

**B. The Question**

Compare and contrast two of the crises over Berlin: the Airlift of 1947-48 and the Crisis of 1961. Describe the actors, their beliefs, and the structure of the environment (their options). Explain how the strategies pursued by the U.S. and the USSR were designed to further their bargaining positions.

Use what you have learned about credible commitments, costly signaling, audience costs, domestic politics, deterrence/compellence, and alliances to motivate your explanation. You may sketch a simple game to illustrate your points, but it is not necessary. Feel free to refer to other events when describing the beliefs of the players (past history) or their expectations about possible outcomes to different actions. Note that you must both compare the two events and contrast them!

**C. Requirements**

The essay should be typed, and at most 5 double-spaced pages in length. The length restriction will make it really hard to include all the information you want, so be judicious and only include the most relevant materials. You must endnote major sources of information and provide a bibliography. These do not count toward the page limit. Make your essay readable—use font size of least 11 pt, and set margins to 1 inch all around. Submit a cleanly printed copy and do not forget to proof-read. We will take points off for bad spelling and grammar.

Your essay must have *all* of the following components, clearly separated into sections:

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Write this section last. Here you will summarize in several brief paragraphs what you're doing and the conclusions you have reached. This section will allow you to "frame the problem" in a way that will make it easy to address in the following sections.

*Suggested length: 1/2 page*

#### II. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Once you decide how you are going to approach the analysis of the two events, you need to give a brief overview of the theoretical issues that will be relevant for that analysis. This section must be brief but sufficient to show a person who is vaguely familiar with the topics what your logic is. You should only mention the most important points; do not restate the information from the lecture notes.

*Suggested length: 1 page*

#### III. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

This is the core of the paper, and its longest component. What parts of the event can we understand better from this theoretical perspective? How do the strategies of the involved parties differ between the two crises? Why do you think they adopted such different strategies? How did the tactics influence the outcomes? Think in terms of bargaining strengths, and all the attendant problems we have discussed.

Note that you are *not* testing the theory, you are using it to make an informed analysis of these events. However, if you notice behavior that drastically contradicts what the theory says about behavior in such situations, do not hesitate to note it. However, if you argue that the theory is not at all helpful in analyzing the events, you have made a poor choice of theory and will not get a good grade.

*Suggested length: 3 pages*

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This is the last section, and it will be as brief as the introduction. Conclude with remarks about applicability of this theoretical perspective to cases outside the two you analyzed. That is, surmise whether it is generalizable to common classes of events. If so, what would they be. Do not restate your findings! They are already in the introduction.

*Suggested length: 1/2 page*