PS12: STUDY GUIDE FOR THE MIDTERM

This list does not include historical events. You should know at least the ones discussed in lecture, especially the major conflicts.

I. SCIENTIFIC METHOD
- what is a theory?
- why do we need theories?
- what are explanatory, dependent variables?
- what is a causal mechanism?
- what is the role of assumptions?
- what are necessary and sufficient conditions?
- what is logical consistency?
- what is empirical validity?
- what is falsifiability?
- how do we select among theories?
- what is a hypothesis?
- what is a normative theory?

II. STATE AND ANARCHY
- what is realism, liberalism, radicalism?
- what are the levels of analysis?
- what is the modern state system?
- what is nationalism?
- what is Social Darwinism?
- what is Marxism/Leninism?
- what are enabling and constraining forces?
- what is anarchy and what are its two features?
- what is hierarchy?
- what is sovereignty?
- how far does sovereignty extend?
- what is the state?
- what is security?
- how does authority differ from coercion?
- what was Milgram’s experiment?
- what was Zimbardo’s experiment?
- what are intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)?
- what are nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)?
- what are transgovernmental organizations?
- what is geopolitics?
- what is technology?
- what are the spheres of influence?
- what are alliances, nonalignment?
- what is polarity and how does it affect system stability?
- what is hegemony?
- what is the balance of power?
- what is power transition?
- what is preponderance of power?
- what is balancing, bandwagoning?
- what is unilateralism, multilateralism?

III. RATIONAL DECISION-MAKING
- how do we define rationality?
- what is the rational actor model?
- what is game theory?
- what is misperception?
- what is the individual limitation critique?
- what is the organizational critique?
- what is the principal-agent problem?
- what is the social aggregation critique?
- what is strategic choice?
- what defines actors?
- what defines the environment?
- what is strategic interaction?

IV. BARGAINING AND DYNAMIC COMMITMENT
- what is international cooperation, conflict?
- what is distributional conflict?
- what is pure conflict/pure cooperation?
- what is a mixed-motive situation?
- what is bargaining power?
- what is tacit bargaining?
- what is soft power?
- what determines national capabilities?
- what is strategic coercion?
- what is a commitment?
- what is the dynamic commitment problem?
- what is credibility?
- what is one problem with common measures of power?
- what is the hurt-more criterion?
- what is the tactic of reducing freedom of action?
- what is a commitment device?
- what is the tactic of relinquishing initiative?
- what is signaling, costly signaling?
- what is signal-jamming?
- what is cheap talk?
- what is screening?

V. DOMESTIC POLITICS AND SOCIAL CHOICE
- what are international/domestic constraints?
- what is foreign policy?
- what is the national interest?
- what is preference aggregation?
- what is Condorcet’s Paradox?
• what is Arrow’s Impossibility Theorem?
• what is the importance of the agenda-setter?
• what is McKelvey’s Chaos Theorem?
• what is a cycling problem?
• what is intransitivity?
• what is mass public opinion?

VI. MILITARY CONFLICT
• who was von Clausewitz and what was his contribution?
• what does “war is an instrument of policy” mean?
• what was the impact of the French and Industrial Revolutions?
• what is total war?
• what are the three images of war?
• what is competition for scarce resources?
• what was the Pax Romana?
• what is relative deprivation?
• why is violence unlikely to disappear?
• what is a just war?
• what is colonialism?
• what is imperialism?
• what is mercantilism?
• what are the imperialist wars?
• what is the democratic peace?
• what is the distribution of power?
• what is nuclear proliferation?
• what is the dynamics of mutual alarm?
• what is the reciprocal fear of surprise attack?
• what is first-strike capability?
• what is mutually assured destruction (MAD)?
• what is second-strike capability?
• what is a preemptive strike/war?
• what is a preventive war?
• what is crisis stability?

VII. CAUSES OF WAR
• why study rationalist explanations for war?
• what is the puzzle of war?
• why is war inefficient ex post?
• what is a bargaining range?
• what is an implicit use of force?
• what is issue indivisibility?
• what are side payments?
• what is strategically induced indivisibility?
• what is asymmetric information?
• what is a reservation value?
• what is the risk-return trade-off?
• what are the incentives to misrepresent?
• what is the time inconsistency problem?

VIII. DETERRENCE AND COMPELLENCE
• what is brute force?
• what is strategic coercion?
• what is deterrence?
• what is compellence?
• what are threats/promises?
• what is a trip-wire/glass plate?
• what are the salami tactics?
• what is direct/extended deterrence?
• what is general/mediate deterrence?
• what is the problem of entrapment?
• what is a policy of strategic ambiguity?
• what are the components of a strategic calculation?
• how can one reduce the opponent’s value of conflict?
• what is a punishment strategy?
• what is a risk strategy?
• what is a denial strategy?
• what is a decapitation strategy?
• how can one reduce the opponent’s value of unopposed gain?
• how can one improve the opponent’s value of the status quo?
• what is an arms race?
• what is arms control?
• what is disarmament?

IX. BRINKMANSHIP
• what are nuclear weapons?
• what are weapons of mass destruction (WMD)?
• what is the nuclear revolution?
• what is massive retaliation?
• what is the credibility problem?
• what is a crisis?
• what is crisis bargaining?
• what is the Game of Chicken?
• what is the final clear chance to prevent disaster?
• what is the tactic of severing communications?
• what is the preemption syndrome?
• what is strategic irrationality?
• what is brinkmanship?
• what is the threat that leaves something to chance?
• what is the shared risk of disaster?
• what is limited retaliation?
• what is the No-Cities doctrine?
• what an autonomous risk?