

Examinator's guidance, POL2013, spring 2017

Eksamensoppgave i POL2013: *Spesialiseringsemne i statsvitenskap, Internasjonal politikk, våren 2017*

- 3000–5000 ord (ekskl. litteraturliste)
- Innlevering innen fredag 3. mars kl. 14:00
- Innlevering elektronisk (*it's learning*) og i to papirutgaver (instituttkontoret)
- Forside skal inneholde kurskode, oppgavetittel (selvvalgt) og kandidatnummer

BOKMÅL

Ta utgangspunkt i John Mearsheimers (2001) *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. Utfør følgende:

(A) Benytt Mearsheimers teori (offensiv realisme), og foreta en selvstendig analyse av utsiktene til henholdsvis stormaktsrivalisering og stormaktskriger i årene som kommer.

(B) Velg to andre teoretiske perspektiver fra pensumlitteraturen. Diskuter disse to systematisk opp mot Mearsheimers teori og forventninger (som de fremgår av analysen i (A)).

(C) Hvilket av teoretiske perspektivene mener du er mest plausibelt? Gjør din egen vurdering av utsiktene til henholdsvis stormaktsrivalisering og stormaktskriger i årene som kommer.

Teksten skal gjennomgående gjøre bruk av historiske eksempler og/eller analogier. Data i tabellene på s. 3–4 kan også benyttes.

While the exam tasks leave room for independently-crafted analyses of a fairly great variety, some key dimensions must anyway be present in texts that aspire for the grades at the upper end of the scale. Some of these dimensions are elaborated on below.

- Mearsheimer's book must form a basis for the text. The easy part of this is to review the most relevant parts of Mearshimer's theory. That can be done, *inter alia*, by briefly referring to his collection of five assumptions (states – and in particular great powers – are the key actors in an anarchic international system; all states have an offensive military capability; intentions cannot be known for certain; survival is the key goal of staters; and states are basically rational actors acting strategically. Mearsheimer proposes that three patterns of behavior follow from these assumptions: fear, self-help, and power maximization. All major states, Mearhsimer writes, have regional hegemony as a natural goal, because such hegemony more or less more or less guarantees survival. Currently, the U.S. is the only state that enjoys such a position; its security concerns revolve around the issue of opposing or containing other *potential* regional hegemons – in Europe, in the Middle East, in Northeastern or Eastern Asia, etc. States' drives for regional hegemony or dominance naturally leads to balancing efforts by other regional players – or by other great powers outside the region in question. Another thing to note is Mearsheimer's insistance that the (regional) balance or distribution of power is vital; bipolarity is relatively stable, balanced multipolarity less so, and so-called unbalanced multipolarity (i.e., one regional state has realistic prospects of becoming a regional hegemon) is prone to instability, severe security competition, and even war.
- Using Mearsheimer's theory to predict the likelihood of great-power rivalry and great-power war is more challenging. Students are expected to use Mearsheimer's theory in an *independent* way. Copying Mearsheimer's own predictions – which are found near the end of his book – won't suffice. His writings can nonetheless be used as an inspiration. Mearsheimer puts a lot of weight on the distribution of capabilities. In the 2001 version of his book the numbers analyzed were from 1999-2000 (in a later version Mearshimer focused exclusively on the current U.S.–China relationship). Students are given, as part of the exam question, two tables with data on indicators of major powers' military

power (e.g. military expenditures, number of troops, nuclear weapons), latent power (e.g. GDP, GDP growth rates, population size), and U.S. military presence (number of deployed U.S. troops). Solid texts are expected to analyze these numbers in light of offensive realist theory, and to give the reader a plausible assessment of what they mean as regard the likelihood of rivalry and war.

- Solid texts must confront definitional issues. What is a great power? In Mearsheimer's writing, the regional focus is prominent. Russia, for example, might not be a global great power – but it certainly has the military capacity to attain local (or regional) influence. Mearsheimer's theory suggests that this is what Russia will (continue to) do. But offensive realism also suggests that other powers will try and balance or contain Russia's endeavors. Will EU as a bloc do this? Or NATO? Or the U.S. alone – or in alliance with the EU and/or NATO. Or will Germany spearhead such balancing? Or will Germany, for that matter, have regional-dominance aspirations of its own? Are Great Britain and France (regional) great powers in their own right? And can the U.S. – given its heavy military (and economic and political) presence in Europe – also be considered a major part of the security competition in Europe? The point is that good texts are expected to be aware of such questions and issues – even if the analyses themselves can lead to a variety of conclusions. The same goes for other regions. Do the numbers suggest now that China is a potential hegemon in a region that can be considered one of unbalanced multipolarity? And what about the Middle East? Does the (obvious) security competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran fit squarely within Mearshimer's theory?
- Another definitional issue centers on the words rivalry and war. Both concepts must be explicitly confronted by solid texts. One can easily foresee a future with heavy great-power rivalry but with no attendant great-power war. Rivalry, as we surely know from the Cold War, can be quite severe and long-lasting, without ever spilling over into war proper between or among the great powers. Mearsheimer, for example, emphasizes 'mutual assured destruction' as a mechanism that lowers the likelihood of great-power war – but not of great-power rivalry. The role of nuclear weapons must be confronted by solid texts. But what is 'rivalry' or 'security competition'? And what is 'power'? One might argue that Mearsheimer himself is a bit ambiguous with respect to definitions of

such concepts. But students anyway need to discuss them. Is power maximization and hegemony all about revising borders and conquering territory? Or can they be about more subtle forms of influence – such as demanding the deference of neighbors, or acquiring economic or ideological leadership in one's own region?

- The second main part of the exam tasks requires the student to choose two additional theoretical points of view from the literature. There are plenty to choose from. The text book (Nye & Welch) reviews a lot of theories. Some students would want to settle on the overarching paradigms – perhaps IR liberalism and IR constructivism. That is fine. It would also be OK to single out more specific, narrower theories, both within such paradigms (e.g. democratic peace theory or commercial peace theory) or outside of them (for example, the Clash of Civilizations thesis is on the required readings, as are versions of hegemonic stability theory). Some students would perhaps want to go 'all realist'; that is, to supplement offensive realism with defensive realism (in Walt's conception) and (neo-)classical realism (Morgenthau). That would also be perfectly fine, so long as students show that they understand the theories, and that they understand how to employ them in light of the task given (i.e. the scope for great-power rivalry and great-power war).
- Regarding the above, solid texts must discuss the additional theories up against Mearsheimer's theory *in a systematic way*. It does not suffice to produce a general description of the additional theories in isolated sub-sections; students must use the arguments and expectations from (A) as a basis for a structured analysis in (B).
- Note that the task(s) explicitly highlight and demand the use of texts from the required readings (the reading list is presented below). The literature list and references might, of course, contain papers and books from outside the course as well. But the core of the literature foundation must be formed by course-specific texts. If, say, Morgenthau's expectations are chosen, students are expected to have read (and understood) the relevant chapters of Morgenthau's book, with proper references being given. For example, it does not suffice to draw solely on introductory textbooks from the POL1000 level.
- The last main task explicitly demands an independent assessment by the students. Solid texts must do far more than merely present a brief afterthought.

(C) is as important as (A) and (B) – and *plausibility* and *independence* (and, within reasonable limits: *originality*) should be rewarded.

- Students must also consistently make use of historical examples and analogies to beef up their arguments and analysis. The required readings are rife with such things (both Nye & Welch and Mearsheimer devote major parts to analyses of historical developments, from the French Revolutionary Wars to the Cold War. Texts that merely mention a couple of historical examples cannot obtain a top grade.
- For my own grading a made use of a scheme (found herein on the last page) to assist with the evaluation of particular sub-dimensions. No specific weighting of the individual points is assumed.

Tabell 1

Country, ranked by military expenditures, 2015	Military expenditures (bn. US\$), 2015	Military expenditures as a share of GDP (%), 2015	Armed forces personnel, active (1000's of troops), 2014	Nuclear weapons (estimated number of), 2013
United States	596.0	3.3	1,381	4,650
China	214.8	1.9	2,993	250
Saudi Arabia	87.2	13.7	252	0
Russia	66.4	5.4	1,287	4,480
United Kingdom	55.5	2.0	155	225
India	51.3	2.3	2,750	110
France	50.9	2.1	312	300
Japan	40.9	1.0	260	0
Germany	39.4	1.2	179	0
South Korea	36.4	2.6	633	0
Brazil	24.6	1.4	730	0
Italy	23.8	1.3	357	0
Australia	23.6	1.9	57	0
Utd Arab Emirates	22.8	5.5	63	0
Israel	16.1	5.4	185	80
Turkey	15.3	2.1	613	0
Canada	15.0	1.0	70	0
Spain	14.1	1.2	200	0
Iraq	13.1	9.1	209	0
Poland	10.5	2.2	173	0
Algeria	10.4	6.2	317	0
Iran	10.3	2.5	563	0
Oman	9.9	16.2	47	0
Colombia	9.9	3.5	456	0
Taiwan	9.8	1.9	N/A	0
Pakistan	9.5	3.4	926	120

Notes: Military-expenditures data are from Stockholm Peace Research Institute (SIPRI); data on armed forces personnel are from the World Bank's World Development Indicators; data on nuclear weapons are from Kristensen & Norris (2013) 'Global Nuclear Weapons Inventories, 1945-2013', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 69(5): 75-81.

Tabell 2

Country, ranked by military expenditures	U.S. troops deployment, 2014 (if >25 troops)	GDP (nominal, current bn. US\$)	GDP per-capita growth, avg. yearly % change, 2011-2015	Population, total (millions), 2015
United States	N/A	18,037	1.32	321
China		11,008	7.34	1,371
Saudi Arabia	322	646	2.62	32
Russia		1,326	0.72	144
Great Britain	9,175	2,858	1.25	65
India		2,095	5.40	1,311
France	53	2,419	0.41	67
Japan	48,485	4,123	1.16	127
Germany	39,408	3,363	1.69	81
South Korea	29,051	1,378	2.47	51
Brazil		1,775	0.10	208
Italy	11,330	1,821	-1.13	61
Australia	132	1,340	1.08	24
Utd Arab Emirates	4,235	370	2.75	9
Israel	27	296	1.56	8
Turkey	1,714	718	2.67	79
Canada	105	1,551	1.06	36
Spain	1,443	1,199	-0.07	46
Iraq	N/A	169	2.77	36
Poland		475	3.07	38
Algeria		167	1.39	40
Iran		425	-1.37	79
Oman		70	-4.27	4
Colombia	45	292	3.57	48
Taiwan		519	N/A	24
Pakistan		270	1.84	189

Notes: Data on GDP and population are from the World Bank's World Development Indicators; data on U.S. troops are from the U.S. Department of Defense *Base Structure Report 2014*.

Required Readings

POL2013, *Internasjonal politikk (International Relations)*, V2017

Books

Nye, Joseph S., Jr. and David A. Welch (2013). *Understanding Global Conflict and Cooperation: An Introduction to Theory and History* (9th ed.). Boston: Pearson Longman. [You may also use previous editions of the book (including Nye's *Understanding International Conflicts*).]

Mearsheimer, John J. (2001). *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: Norton.

Journal articles and book chapters

Axelrod, Robert and Robert O. Keohane (1985). Achieving Cooperation under Anarchy: Strategies and Institutions. *World Politics* 38(1): 226–254.

Boyle, Michael J. (2016). The Coming Illiberal Order.” *Survival* 58(2): 35–66.

Chong, Ja Ian and Todd H. Hall (2014). The Lessons of 1914 for East Asia Today: Missing the Trees for the Forest. *International Security* 39(1): 7–43.

Gaddis, John Lewis (1986). “The Long Peace: Elements of Stability in the Postwar International System.” *International Security* 10(4): 99–142.

Gaddis, John Lewis (1997). *We Now Know: Rethinking Cold War History*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Chs. 1–2.

Holsti, K. J. (1995). *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*. (7th ed.). Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall. Ch. 4.

Huntington, Samuel P. (1993). The Clash of Civilizations. *Foreign Affairs* 72(3): 22–49.

Ikenberry, G. John, Michael Mastanduno and William C. Wohlforth (2009). Introduction: Unipolarity, State Behavior, and Systemic Consequences. *World Politics* 61(1): 1–27.

Jakobsen, Jo, Tor G. Jakobsen and Eirin Rande Ekevold (2016). Democratic Peace and the Norms of the Public: A Multilevel Analysis of the Relationship between

Regime Type and Citizens' Bellicosity, 1981–2008. *Review of International Studies* 42(5): 968–991.

Joll, James and Gordon Martel (2007 [1984]). *The Origins of the First World War* (3rd. ed.). Harlow: Pearson Longman. Ch. 3.

Mandelbaum, Michael (1998–1999). Is Major War Obsolete? *Survival* 40(4): 20–38.

Morgenthau, Hans J. (2006 [1948]). *Politics among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (7th ed.; revised by Kenneth W. Thompson and W. David Clinton). Boston: McGraw-Hill. Chs. 1–2, 11–12.

Snyder, Jack (2004). One World, Rival Theories. *Foreign Policy* 145(Nov./Dec.): 52–62.

Waltz, Kenneth N. (2000). Structural Realism after the Cold War. *International Security* 25(1): 5–41.

Kandidatnr.:

Tittel:

Antall ord:

	Særde- les godt	Meget godt	Godt	Nokså godt	Tilstrek- kelig	Ikke tilstrek- kelig
Organisering av teksten						
Språk						
Formaliteter (inkl. ref.)						
Pensumgrunnlag						
Litteraturgrunnlag						
Besvares oppgaven?						
Definisjoner (fex. stormakt)						
Rivalisering vs. krig						
Empiri (bruk av)						
Mearsheimer – forståelse						
Teori – forståelse						
Teori – bruk av						
Systematikk teoridiskusj.						
Historiske eks./analogier						
Selvstendighet						
Refleksjonsnivå						
Presisjonsnivå						
Plausibilitet						
Deloppgave A - helhet						
Deloppgave B – helhet						
Deloppgave C – helhet						
Helhetsinntrykk						

Karakter: