

POLS 321 Final Exam Study Questions - The final exam on March 15, 2010 will consist of 3 of the following 6 questions. You will be required to answer 2 of the 3 selected questions.

1. While client states can handle their own problems and require only routine maintenance almost all the time, sometimes clients cannot and the US intervenes in a variety of ways. Indeed as we noted about half of US clients have experienced a serious threat to their survival by a military rebellion or prolonged terrorist campaign and the US intervened militarily in half of those cases. While most of the interventions were successful (with some flagrant exceptions), often success came with a high price in terms of lives and treasure. Has this method been worth it? If so, then support your argument with historical examples to support its continued function at present. If not, then illustrate what went wrong in the past and propose a feasible change at present to fix it?

2. In the readings and lectures regarding the path to war in Iraq, we have a story painted about how the Bush Administration took the US to war against Iraq. How would you account for this process and its outcome -- a decision to go to war? Is it consistent with traditional US objectives of political stability and order, and economic openness? Is it typical of how cold war and post cold war Presidential administrations have employed US military force?

3. US interventions on behalf of clients are numerous (68) and the types of interventions (economic, political, and military) are varied. Yet even though the US has tremendous capabilities and power, it does seem to resort to a relatively limited number of types of interventions time and time again. How do you account for this phenomenon?

4. The readings from Bacevich and Johnson suggest (in different ways) that U.S. foreign policy is both imperial in nature (characterized as based on the development of some form of empire) and has become quite militarized. Does this make sense? Does it square with the evidence? Is it consistent with "traditional" US foreign policy articulated and practiced during the Cold War? In your response please illustrate with examples from both client and enemy interventions.

5. The U.S. has frequently carried out hostile interventions against its enemies. Indeed, almost every US enemy has experienced one or more hostile interventions – some up to three or four. A significant number have failed. How do you account for the continuation of these efforts? Also, why do you think intervention on behalf of clients has been far more successful than intervention to overthrow enemies?

6. Estimates of the economic costs of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan vary but all are very high. The economic recovery is painfully slow and the federal deficit continues to grow. Yet the Washington establishment (both republican and democratic) for the most part talks about a continued presence in Iraq and expansion of activities in Afghanistan. Is this sustainable?