Some Basic Concepts

acculturation: the modification of a culture by the adapting of traits from another culture.

acid rain: sulfur dioxide in smoke chemically reacts with the water in the atmosphere to create sulfuric acid (H2SO4), which is maintained in the clouds and falls to earth in rain.

agriculturalism: a subsistence strategy based on the exploitation of domesticated plants. The social organization of most simple agricultural societies is the tribe.

alternative perspectives: sets of interpretive ideas that determine how individuals analyze issues.

apartheid: a recently ended practice in South Africa in which the numerical majority in the state—the original inhabitants—were legally defined as inferior and had all aspects of their lives severely circumscribed.

assimilation: the adaptation of a new culture that replaces the customs and beliefs of a previous one.

autonomy: the ability to establish and enforce laws covering most governmental functions except foreign policy and defense.

balance of payments: an annual summary of all a state's international economic transactions.

balance of power: an interaction system of states, or groups, who choose not to use force because they consider the potential cost as too high.

basic needs strategy: an approach designed to enable a preponderant percentage of the population to have life's essentials; that is, adequate shelter, food, clothes, and medical care.

bilateral international interactions: two states that deal with each other on a one-to-one basis.

bipolarity: an international system with two dominant states.

Brundtland Commission: the UN-established World Commission on Environment and Development that investigated the state of the world's environment and proposed solutions in its 1987 document, "Our Common Future."

capital: the finances and facilities needed to produce wealth. There are three types of capital: (1) infrastructure, or physical capital, which includes factories, roads, farms, railroads, communication systems and machinery; (2) financial capital, including monetary investments such as bank deposits and interest, earnings from trade, and currency; and (3) human capital, including an educated, healthy, skilled population and able leadership, which are needed for self-sustaining economic development.

carbon dioxide: CO2, is a colorless, odorless, gas that is a natural part of the atmosphere, used by plants as a necessary part of their respiration.

carrying capacity: the number of people who can be supported indefinitely in a given environment with a given technology and culture.

cash crops/primary commodities: products grown or mined and sold in their unprocessed condition, such as tea leaves, cotton balls, coffee beans, and bauxite ore.

class: a category of social hierarchy that groups people based on culturally defined differences in wealth, power, or general abilities.

clines: the frequencies of particular genetic traits, such as blood type, in different parts of the world.

collective security: a strategy used by IGO members in which they act together militarily in response to an aggressor state.

the Commons: those areas of the world that are publicly owned and open for general use, such as oceans and public parks.

comparative advantage: the production of a good or service at a lower cost than the competition's.

conventional war: when states battle each other using their formally organized military forces.

cultural relativity: the concept that the actions of people within each culture should be evaluated according to the rules of that culture.

culture (human and specific): patterns of behavior and belief learned by individuals as members of society. Human culture is the basic adaptation device all people share. Specific cultures are those systems of belief and behavioral rules that members of a particular society share.

culture areas: analytic categories of geographic regions based on the similarity of ethnic groups within them.

deforestation: the rapid destruction of forests, especially tropical forests, which leads to atmospheric and soil degradation.

demographic transition: a process by which a society with a high birthrate and high death rate becomes more characteristic of economically developed societies by transitioning to low birth- and low death rates.

dependency: the unequal relationship between the industrialized and developing worlds resulting from their economic interactions.

desertification: an increase in areas of extremely and land.

deterrence: a situation in which states present a credible military threat to their potential enemy.

developing countries/world: states that have primarily agricultural-based economies and low wealth production, as reflected in macroeconomic data.

development: an economic process that enables an increasing number of people to produce enough wealth to support an acceptable quality of life.
diplomacy: direct negotiations between two or more governments or international governmental organizations.

dual economy: a characteristic of many developing countries, in which the majority of the population lives in poverty along side a small, dominant elite that lives the consumer lifestyle more typical of industrial societies.

economic growth strategy: an approach designed to produce enough earnings to invest in machines, to purchase the fossil fuels to run them, to educate people to fix them, and to ensure the constant flow of new technology to update them; also called, industrialism.

economic sanctions: actions designed to encourage states to change their policies by cutting off trade and financial flows.

economies of scale: the economic principle that a product's per-unit cost will decrease when a company manufactures more of it because plant, personnel, and other overhead costs will remain about the same.

ecosystems: the complex interconnections of plants, animals, and physical and chemical factors that make up natural environments.

ethnic group: a category of people who share a set of cultural traits. The term is often used to refer to minority groups in large, heterogeneous nations.

ethnocentrism: the judging of another culture according to the standards of one's own culture. See also tolerance.

ethnocide: the total destruction of a culture.

European Union (EU): formerly called the European Community, the EU is the regional international governmental organization furthest along in developing of a functional plan of integration for its member states; the plan will include an integrated banking system and a common European currency called the euro, for example.

external changes: new ideas, skills, inventions, or other influences that enter a society as a result of its interactions with another society.

foreign aid: the financial capital provided by state governments and international governmental organizations to other states, usually in the form of a loan to a developing country.

foreign exchange: earnings from exports.

foreign exchange rate: the worth of a state's currency in relation to that of another state's currency.

free trade: a government policy aimed at eliminating all restrictions on imports and exports.

functional interdependence: the theory that the economic integration of states will deter or eliminate war.

gathering and hunting: a subsistence strategy that emphasizes the gathering of undomesticated plants and the hunting of undomesticated animals. The social organization associated with this strategy is egalitarian bands.

gender: a cultural definition of the different capabilities and roles of men, women, and some- times other perceived sexual categories.

General Assembly: an institution of the United Nations that serves as a forum for debating and voting on resolutions dealing with world issues; each member state has one vote.

generalized reciprocity: a form of economic exchange wherein people living in bands share with one another without the expectation of equal or immediate return.

genocide: an attempt to exterminate a specific cultural group, which was designated as a crime against humanity in the 1948 international treaty.

global warming: a small, but regular and significant, increase in the temperature of the Earth.

great powers: states whose policies can directly affect events outside of their world region.

greenhouse gases: atmospheric gases, including CO₂, methane, ozone, and chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) that decrease the energy lost into space and increase the warmth of the Earth's atmosphere.

green revolution: a development approach that focused on the transfer of high-technology farming techniques, including new seeds and chemical fertilizers, to developing countries of the world.

gross national product (GNP): the total monetary value of all goods and services produced by an economy in a given year, including international transactions. (See also per capita gross national product (GNP).

guerrilla war: the use of hit-and-run tactics by organized groups who oppose a political system and who often blend into the local population as their main defense.

hard/convertible currencies: those state currencies used in international markets because corporations and other governments accept them.

holism: the idea that all traits of a culture influence all others and, consequently, any change in one cultural trait will affect the whole culture.

human rights: the just and fair treatment by governments of their own citizens.
ideologies: a set of interrelated ideas that people use to give meaning to events.

import substitution: an economic development strategy designed to produce domestically at least some of the products imported from the industrial world.

indigenous peoples (First Nations): the original people of an area who have lost political control over their ancestral lands and do not fully recognize the moral authority of the state government to dominate them.

industrialism: a subsistence strategy that changes the productive focus of the state system to the manufacturing sector. See also economic growth strategy.

interests: the relationships and resources that persons, groups, organizations, and states can use to their benefit and to enhance their power.

internal changes: new cultural elements introduced or invented by people within a society that is undergoing change.

international anarchy: the absence of a common political rule in the international system. It is the primary characteristic of the current international system, according to international relations theory.

international governmental organization (IGO): an international organization with states as members, such as the United Nations and European Union. See also nongovernmental organization (NGO).

International Monetary Fund (IMF): an international governmental organization that provides loans to member states to stabilize their currency.

international rule of law: the commonly accepted rules of behavior and orderly processes that states follow for peacefully working out conflicting interests.

international system: the organizations and processes that people and states use to interact across state borders.

invention: a new idea or technique that is constructed from the mass of collected knowledge and adopted as valuable by members of the society.

involuntary changes: a form of external change wherein members of a weak society are forced to adapt some traits of a more powerful society.

just war: military action that is taken in self-defense and that abides by accepted rules of warfare, such as preventing the slaughter of civilians and prisoners of war.

labor-intensive technologies: the use of simple tools powered by wind, water, sunshine, and muscles, in contrast with capital-intensive technologies that rely on complex machinery powered by fossil fuels.

Law of the Sea: the UN-sponsored treaty of 1984, which established general rules for conduct in the oceans.

legitimacy: the acceptance by citizens and other states that a government is justified and its laws should be obeyed.

malnutrition: a medical condition caused by insufficient caloric intake and a poor diet.

most-favored nation status: an agreement between two states to lower their tariffs with each other to match the lowest that each charges any trading partner on a specific product category.

multilateral international interactions: states' negotiations and actions within the framework of international governmental organizations.

multinational corporations (MNCs): private businesses with subsidiaries or operations in two or more countries. See also private investment.

multipolarity: an international system with several states as centers of power.

national identity: the primary affiliation of a group of people who see themselves unified as forming a unique culture.

nationalism: an individual's feeling of identity with an ethnic group based on several shared characteristics, such as language, history, and religion.

negotiation: communications among state officials, performed directly through face to face discussion or indirectly through a designated intermediary.

neoimperialism/neocolonialism: often used as a synonym for dependency, the unequal relationship between industrial states (the colonizers), and developing states (their ex-colonies).

new epidemics: contagious diseases, including AIDS, which have spread widely in recent years.

New International Economic Order (NIEO): the series of UN resolutions made in the 1970s that was favorable to the developing world but never went into effect.

nongovernmental organization (NGO): an international organization with individuals or private groups as members, such as the World Council of Churches and the Red Cross. See also international governmental organization (IGO).
nuclear war: the use of weapons produced by the splitting apart, or fission, of uranium or plutonium atoms (atomic weapons) or by the fusion of atoms made possible by the heat generated in a fission explosion (hydrogen or thermonuclear weapons).

pastoralism: a subsistence strategy based on the use of domesticated animals. The social organization of most pastoralists is the tribe.

paternalism: literally "acting as a father," or more broadly, taking a superior position over others and trying to control their actions.

patriotism: the placing of one's primary identity and loyalty in the state.

peace: when conflicts are handled without the use of violence.

per capita gross national product (GNP): a statistic derived by dividing a state's GNP by its total population. See also gross national product (GNP).

perceptions: those attitudes and points of view resulting from one's particular cultural, historical, philosophical, ideological, or religious preconceptions. See also perceptual selectivity.

perceptual selectivity: the process of ignoring or misinterpreting information because of one's preconceptions. See also perceptions.

politics: a decision-making process characterized by negotiation and bargaining.

power: a quality possessed by a person, group, organization, or state that is used in relationships with others to influence their actions.

primitive states: a social system based on a centralized political organization. The economic system is elaborated to include complex economic specialization and market exchange built on an agricultural base.

private investment: the financial and physical capital provided by multinational corporations (MNCS) in the states in which they operate.

productivity: an economic calculation that measures the output of goods and services in relation to the number of work hours used to produce them.

propaganda: emotional appeals that attempt to affect the opinions of others in some specific way and that often use the mass communications media as a means to doing so.

protectionism: a government policy using tariffs and other regulations to restrict imports and thus keep out foreign competition.

race (biological): a subspecies designation of animals. The only surviving human race is Homo sapiens.

race (social): a culturally defined classification of people into categories that are based on perceived physical differences.

racism: the judging of groups or individuals based on culturally defined understandings of biological differences.

regional powers: states whose policies can directly affect neighboring states.

revisionist states: those seeking more power, usually by adopting a policy that will increase their military forces. See also status quo states.

Security Council: an institution of the United Nations that the UN Charter has given the important role of responding to issues of peace and war.

security dilemma: a policy problem faced by a state that wants to build up its military strength. If the increase in military forces is perceived as a threat by other states, and they in turn increase their forces, the result can be the same or less security than existed previously.

sex: physical categories among animals based on differences in reproductive biology.

sexism: the judging of groups or individuals based on culturally defined understandings of the differences among men, women, and any other perceived gender category. See also gender.

show of force: occurs when a state deploys its military forces as an implied threat.

small powers: states whose policies affect their own people but have very little impact on other states.

social cohesion: when people in a society share a common identity, value system, and commitment to an established political system and thus have achieved stable economic and political decision-making processes.

sovereignty: the key characteristic of states in the international system, meaning they accept no authority as superseding their own.

state: a complex political structure that may include citizens from a variety of nations. Considered the most powerful institution in the international system, states have four characteristics; territory, a central government, a loyal population, and the recognition by other states.

status: a social position defined by a particular culture. In some cases status is ascribed, or determined by birth, whereas in others it is achieved, or earned by an individual's actions or accomplishments.

status quo states: those satisfied with their existing level of power. See also revisionist states.

subjugation: the control of people in a weaker culture by those from a stronger culture.

subsistence: in economics terms, an agricultural-based lifestyle wherein people produce enough to live on and very little more.

superpowers: states whose policies directly affect events in most areas of the world simultaneously.

sustainability: the idea that development projects should be designed for long-term success.

syncretism: the mixing of cultural ideas from different sources to create a new reality.

tacit negotiations (signaling): sending a message to another government without telling it directly or using an intermediary.
**technical assistance**: specialists from outside a country brought in usually to work on a specific development project for a short period of time.

**terrorism**: a military tactic using violent incidents perpetrated by small numbers of people for the purpose of calling into question or destabilizing an existing political system.

**tolerance**: the acceptance of cultural differences without ethnocentric judgment. See also ethnocentrism.

**United Nations**: an international governmental organization whose members include almost all of the world's states.

**United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)**: a UN agency that monitors the world's environment.

**Universal Declaration of Human Rights**: adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948, the document designates individual freedoms for all humans, including the right to economic well-being, and religious and political freedoms.

**voluntary changes**: a form of external change wherein members of a society choose to adapt innovations from another area of the world. See also external changes.

**world order**: a means for achieving peace through the development of international laws and institutions.

**World Bank**: an international governmental organization that provides loans to member states for specific development projects.

**World Court**: a tribunal with jurisdiction only in cases involving states.

**World Health Organization (WHO)**: an international governmental organization that is mandated to promote health throughout the world.

**World Trade Organization (WTO)**: the successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), this international governmental organization works to foster free trade.
Possible Research Topics: Introduction to Global Issues

Global warming
Bio diversity and ecosystem losses
Fisheries depletion
Deforestation
Water deficits
Maritime safety and pollution
Massive step-up in the fight against poverty
Peacekeeping and conflict prevention
Combating terrorism
Education for all
Global infectious diseases
Digital divide
National disaster prevention and mitigation
Biotechnology rules
Global financial architecture
Illegal drugs
Intellectual property rights
E-Commerce rules
International labor and migration rules
Child labor
Weapons of Mass Destruction
Military- led Humanitarian Intervention
U.S. Built National Missile Defense System
The Role of International Financial Institutions in globalization
The gap between rich and poor countries
Accountability for war crimes and Human Rights Violations
Aspirations for self-determination
Refugees
AIDS pandemic
Fighting Corruption, strategies
Trafficking and the global sex industry
Money Laundering
Offshore centres
The demise of the Nation-State
Cultural globalization: The Role of Media
Cultural Imperialism
Fundamentalist responses of globalization
Political globalization
Democracy
Explaining globalization
Debating globalization
Development Aid
Accountability in International Development Aid
Population Explosion
Globalization or Empire
International Trade
Small Arms
Global Backlash
Global Energy (e.g. Oil)
Global Rule of Law
Global Disaster
Coordination Among States
International Organizations and The Management of Global Issues
International Conferences
Regional Groups of States
Global Justice Issues
Right to Food
Introduction To Global Issues: Study Guide Examination #1

1. Globalization: a contested concept
2. Core theses on globalization
3. Basic tenets of globalization
4. Forms of globalization
5. Advantages and disadvantages of globalization
6. Who wants globalization and why?
7. What is state sovereignty? Effects of globalization on state sovereignty?
8. What are non-state actors?
9. Factors that have contributed to the growth of non-state actors.
10. Role of non-state actors in the globalization process.
11. Causes of globalization
12. Waves of globalization
13. The political dimensions of globalization
14. Technology and globalization
15. Interdependence and globalization
16. International relations and international studies
17. Globalization as American hegemony
18. Approaches to international studies
19. Resistance to globalization
20. Global cities

Introduction to Global Issues: Study Guide Examination #2

1. Weapons of mass destruction: Nuclear weapons; Biological Weapons; Biological Warfare Agent; Chemical Weapons; Radiological Weapons.
2. World Nuclear Arsenals
3. Nuclear weapon states
4. Countries that have abandoned nuclear programs
5. Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
6. Countries suspected of developing nuclear weapons
7. Countries suspected of retaining nuclear weapons
8. Bioterrorism
9. Ballistic Missiles
10. 21st Century Proliferation
11. Why do some states want to acquire WMD?
12. International Treaties of WMD
13. Definition of Terrorism and Guerrilla Warfare
14. Factors conducive to terrorism
15. Goals, strategies and weapons of terrorism
16. The cost of terrorism
17. The financing of terrorism
18. Kinds of terrorism
19. Responding to terrorism
20. Ethnic conflicts

Introduction to Global Issues: Study Guide Examination 3

1. Globalization and Democracy
2. Concept of Democracy
3. Criteria for Democracy
4. Political participation and Democracy
5. Women’s political participation and Democracy.
6. Women in national Parliaments
7. Women Leaders
8. Factors conducive to democracy
9. Promotion of democracy
10. Promotion of democracy by the USA
11. Imposing democracy by force in Iraq
12. Global governance and democracy
13. Obstacles to USA commitment to building democracy abroad.
14. Global Inequality, Inequality between developed and developing countries
15. The globalization and inequality debate
16. Causes of Inequality between rich and poor countries
17. Inequality within rich countries, Inequality within poor countries.
18. Definition of poverty. Dimensions of poverty
19. Why is poverty a Global problem? Why talk about global poverty?
20. Who is poor? Where are they?
21. Why are there more poor people?
22. Poverty as capability deprivation
23. Poverty, powerlessness, and ill-being
24. Relationships between Poverty and War
25. Poverty Reduction
26. International Organizations and Poverty Reduction
27. What programs and projects work effectively in reducing poverty?
28. Definition of corruption
29. Corruption and nepotism, cronyism and insider trading
30. The cost of corruption
31. The roots of corruption
32. Where is corruption most prevalent (countries and sectors)
33. In what kind of environment does corruption thrive?
34. How does corruption affect peoples’ lives?
35. Combating corruption
36. Why it is that anti-corruption law are not always enforced?
37. Why can’t government contain corruption effectively without the help of others?
40. Concept of child labor
41. Poverty and child labor
42. Ruralization and child law
43. Foster care and child labor
44. Trafficking (sexual) and child labor
45. Is child labor a necessary evil?
46. History of the exploitation of child labor
47. Various forms of child labor
48. The worst forms of child labor
49. Causes and justification of child labor
50. Consequences of child labor
51. Some possible cures. Attempts to curb abusive child labor.
52. Food insecurity and its magnitude
53. What is food security?
54. What happens when people do not have food security?
55. Why is there food insecurity?
56. When does food security happen?