

Essay Questions: Respond to 2 of 3 (28 points each)

Each answer should be 3-5 paragraphs, with each paragraph consisting of about 4 sentences

Question 1:

In Reading A, circulated last week, you saw a variety of different perspectives on how to end the war in Ukraine. One perspective, by Liana Fix, focused on funding. And it included the chart attached to the end of this exam, which is a list of what each nation has been offering in support of Ukraine. The US is the biggest contributor by far.

- a. Using the logic of collective action, explain why contributions are highly unequal and why the country that is not in Europe (the US) is the biggest contributor;
- b. Suppose the United States were to adopt a new policy that ended all contributions to Ukraine, and you are an advisor to the EU trying to figure out a new strategy that will offset for the loss of US contributions. Identify at least two actions, each based on some aspect of the *Logic of Collective Action*, that you think the EU could take to increase European contributions to Ukraine.

Question 2:

In Reading B, you learned that Los Angeles had many substandard fire hydrants in the communities impacted by the fires. Had better fire hydrants been in place it is plausible that some of the fires could have been contained earlier. Before the fires, most politicians couldn't really assess whether the region was well prepared for fires, which is reminiscent of the standard problem of administrative oversight where principals don't know if their agents are doing a good job.

You are the key policy adviser for the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF), a lobbying group that advances the interests of fire fighters and fire departments.

In one short paragraph (3-4 sentences) explain why politicians who are critical of how LA handled the fires would focus on fire hydrants. In reality, of course, the root causes of the fires and the challenges in fighting fires, are very complex. What political advantage do politicians get by focusing on fire hydrants as key evidence for why the agencies responsible for protecting LA have failed to do their job?

Over two short paragraphs help explain what the IAFF should be lobbying the governments in Los Angeles to do in order to demonstrate to the public that the region is better prepared to fight fires in the future. Replacing all the fire hydrants will, in time, be part of that strategy—but doing that is extremely costly and will take at least a decade. In the meantime, firefighters and fire equipment will keep getting blamed for more fires. What other kinds of approaches might you adopt to reassure the public that governments are doing a good job and being responsive even as the public can visibly see that many of the city's fire hydrants are aged and inadequate.

Question 3

In Reading C, you learned of efforts in Shanghai and other places to allow some entities to bypass China's internet restrictions and access internet sites overseas. Those internet restrictions are often called the "Great Firewall." The governments in these locations are doing this because they think it will make it easier for businesses to grow, innovate and expand.

You are a policy strategist for a large IT company that wants to sell equipment into the region that will help local governments circumvent the great firewall. Using the Logic of Political Survival explain over 1-2 paragraphs why the Chinese government would invest heavily in creating and improving the great firewall in the first place. Your company's success depends on the ongoing stability of the government agencies that might buy your equipment. Over 2 paragraphs explain why some of the local and regional governments in China would want to evade the great firewall and some of the risks to political stability (and leadership) that might arise.

Short Answer questions: Answer ALL of the four following questions (11 points each)

Directions: limit your responses to 4-5 sentences. Overly long answers will be penalized.

Question 4

One of the central ideas in behavioral economics, as discussed by Kahneman, is that people usually make decisions using "heuristics." What is a heuristic and why do people use them rather than analyzing all the facts before making a decision? What is one factor that can lead you to choose the right heuristic when making a decision?

Question 5

All principal-agent models rest on the idea that the behavior of the agent is difficult to monitor. Thus, agents are prone to "slack"—they make decisions that reflect their interests, rather than the interests of the principle. This slack can be reduced if the interests of the agents is aligned with the interests of the principals. Identify three ways to promote that alignment and offer at least one sentence of explanation of why each of these three approaches could be effective.

Question 6

There is substantial evidence that parliamentary systems with low electoral thresholds lead to the creation of multiple political parties whereas presidential systems yield fewer parties (often just two). Identify two of the most important reasons for this outcome and offer two sentences of explanation for each of these reasons.

Question 7

The Logic of Political Survival includes this quote at p42: "We believe...that the infinite variety of real-world institutional arrangements can be distilled into just two critical dimensions: the selectorate and the winning coalition". Why are these two dimensions the most important ones for this theory?

APPENDIX:

[READING A](#): Summary of four perspectives on how to end the war in Ukraine

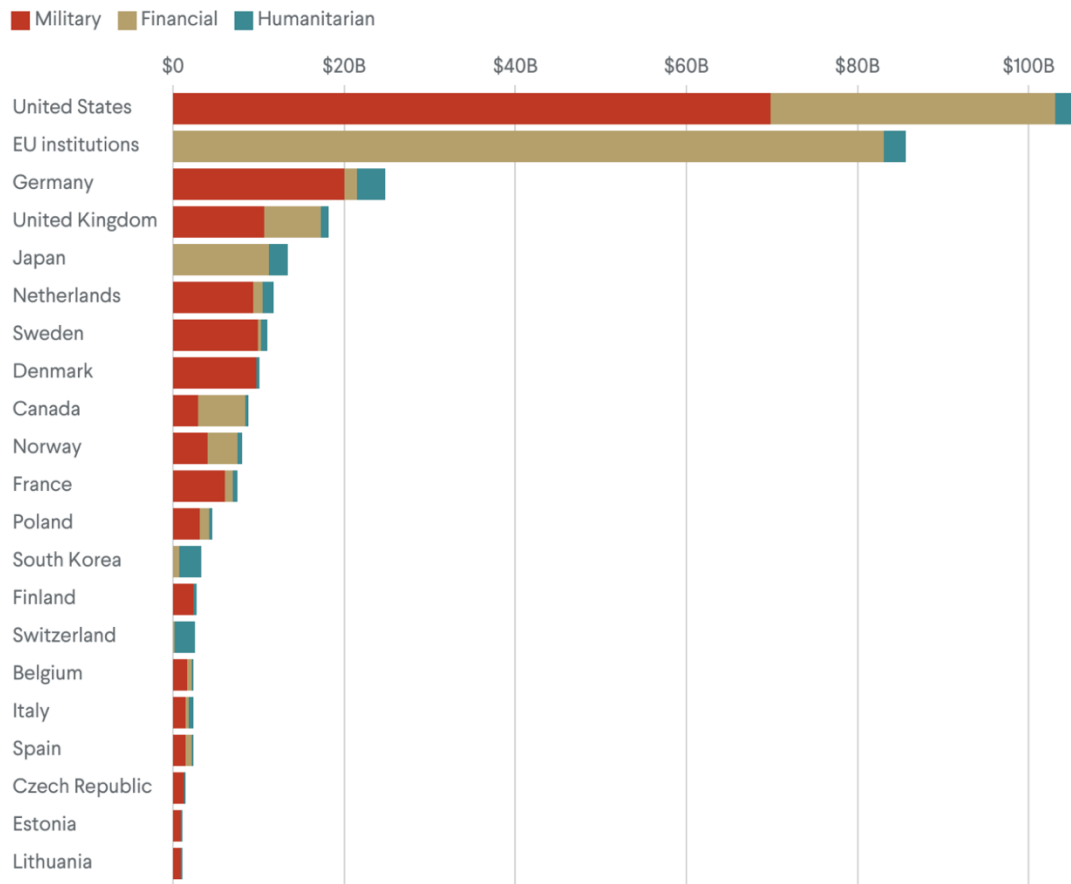
[Reading B](#): Los Angeles wasn't ready for the big fires

[Reading C](#): Shanghai and others are considering ways to let businesses evade the great firewall

IMAGE FROM READING "A" THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF QUESTION 1:

U.S. Aid to Ukraine Far Exceeds That From Other Countries

Bilateral aid commitments from the top 20 donor countries and from European Union (EU) institutions as of June 30, 2024



Note: Data source includes Australia, China, Iceland, India, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, EU member states, and members of the Group of Seven (G7).

Source: Bompreszi et al., Ukraine Support Tracker, Kiel Institute for the World Economy.

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