Please note that IMESS students are not required to use a particular set of methods (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, or comparative) in their dissertation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student:</th>
<th>Adam Lewis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation title:</td>
<td>Preserving Peace: Iraq, Chechnya and the U.S.-Russian Relationship</td>
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**MARKING GUIDELINES**

A (UCL mark 70+): Note: marks of over 80 are given rarely and only for truly exceptional pieces of work.
Distinctively sophisticated and focused analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research. 

A = výborně = 1

B/C (UCL mark 60-69): 
A high level of analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research. 65 or over equates to a B grade. 

B/C = velmi dobře = 2

D/E (UCL mark 50-59): 
Demonstration of a critical use of sources and ability to engage in systematic inquiry. An ability to engage in sustained research work, demonstrating methodological awareness. 55 or over equates to a D grade. 

D/E = dobře = 3

F (UCL mark less than 50): 
Demonstrates failure to use sources and an inadequate ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Inadequate evidence of ability to engage in sustained research work and poor understanding of appropriate research techniques. 

F = neprospěl = 4

CONTINUES OVERLEAF

PLEASE PROVIDE SUBSTANTIVE AND
DETAILED FEEDBACK!
Constructive comments, explaining strengths and weaknesses (at least 300 words):

It is not entirely clear what theoretical and methodological approach is used by the author. In the initial part of the study, the author singles out certain elements of the English School of IR; he also details the concept of security community. Showing both strong and weak sides of the latter concept, he mention of Thomas Risse's theory of security, introducing the three I's upon which his understanding of security communities are built, notably, identity, economic interdependence, and institutions, just to mention Mattern's theory of representational force on subsequent pages. In the same chapter, however, the author problematizes the „classic“ concept of security community because of its focus on the notion of (common) identity. At the same time, in the abstract of the study, „theorisation of force as a necessary tool in the maintenance of community“ is mentioned as a theoretical underpinning from which the author has borrowed. This lack of clearness in a study that (over)theoretized might be quite misleading when it comes to laying down comprehensive theoretical foundation. Similarly, I was not able to find any mention of the method used by the author in his study.

Apart from that, the author seeks to „assess how the crises that emerge between America and Russia, when either one side or the other is notable ‘to have its own way’, are resolved without restoring the adversarial balance of power logic of the Cold War era.“ At the outset of the study, he defines non-adversarial as „continued assurance that crises between the two states would be solved by diplomatic means without the threat of physical force“. He then utilizes Pouliot’s somewhat narrow definition of diplomacy as ‘the peaceful resolution of conflicts’. In this regards, one is left wondering what is the dependent variable in the present study: the lack of restoring the adversarial balance of power logic of the Cold War era, problem-solving in a peaceful way that is void of threat of physical force, or anything else? If the former variable is the case, then what are the tools that allow for the measurement of that „logic“? Moreover, even though the time span selected by the author for his study was - with episodic exceptions - rather characterized by the lack of adversarial balance of power logic of the Cold War era, the years that followed rather proved the contrary, since at least in Russia, enemy images centered on America (and its foreign policies, as well as its alleged role in inspiring Russian opposition to protest) have been widely restored by elites.

However, if the latter case holds, then is the ability of states (in this case, Russia and the USA) to resolve their problems peacefully (necessarily) an outcome of the existence of a security community? Intuitively, one could assert that the rationale behind the lack of cold war–style confrontation (in itself quite a debatable assertion given the attitude of current Russian elites toward America) rather stems from the lack of substantial problems in the relationship between both nuclear powers: notwithstanding any official rhetoric, one could hardly regard the crises in Iraq and Chechnya as such. The explanation might be uncomfortably banal: balance of power (neither economic cooperation; after all, unlike some EU member states, USA belongs to Moscow’s rather less important economic partners, nor institutions, let alone common identity) seems to be the prevailing factor in that regard.

Overall, the study is well-researched and well-structured. Therefore, I give it a good „B“.
Specific questions you would like addressing at the oral defence *(at least 3 questions)*:

1. How do you assess the current state of affairs between Russia and America – what helps the two countries “preserve peace” nowadays?

2. How would you explain the distinct ways in which the crises in Iraq and Syria have featured in Russo-American relations?

3. Is the more confrontational policies conducted by Moscow in and around Syria an outcome of the fact that Syria matters more to Russia?

4. And does your explanation hold in the case of the Syria crisis?

5. What method have you used in your dissertation?