United States Ph.D. Written Qualifying Examination
Fall 2016
Wednesday, September 13, 8:00am-5:00pm

This exam is designed to take eight hours to complete. Answer one question from each section (three questions in all). The questions in Parts I and Parts II should each require about three hours each to answer. The question in Part III, dealing with historiography, should require about two hours. You may not use any notes, books, articles or other reference materials during the eight-hour period.

Remember
- Make sure that all pages are numbered and that your identification number is on each page
- Please include a cover page that indicates which questions you are answering
- You are expected to demonstrate that you have a familiarity with a range of topics and periods. It is important that you keep this in mind as you select your questions and formulate your answers. Avoid answering questions that cover the same material.
- Aim to be concrete and specific rather than relying only on generalization in your responses
- Return your completed exam to the history graduate office by 5:00 PM on September 13 in PDF form.

As the Code of Conduct points out:
(http://www.studentgroups.ucla.edu/dos/students/integrity/)

With its status as a world-class research institution, it is critical that the University uphold the highest standards of integrity both inside and outside the classroom. As a student and member of the UCLA community, you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic endeavors. Accordingly, when accusations of academic dishonesty occur, The Office of the Dean of Students is charged with investigating and adjudicating suspected violations. Academic dishonesty, includes, but is not limited to, cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, multiple submissions or facilitating academic misconduct.

Part I: Broad interpretive synthesis of four centuries.
Select ONE out of the following three questions. Time: approximately three hours. Worth: 50%

1. How has the American experience been shaped by the tension between market capitalism and political democracy? Develop your own narrative over four centuries, examining causes and consequences, and highlighting major change over time.

2. It is a common refrain in contemporary politics that the US is "a nation of immigrants." However, historians have emphasized the modern origins of the social and legal status we identify with "immigrants," and have linked these statuses closely to the modern politics of race in the US. How have migration, race, and citizenship interacted over the 400 years we surveyed in History 246? Does the idea of a "nation of immigrants" make any sense in this longer context? Identify at least three distinct periods of policy and social experience to make your case. At least one period must include the years before the national period.
3. One powerful interpretation of early America holds that the freedoms enjoyed by the white male settlers depended on a legal regime that rendered others (servants, women, slaves, Native Americans) unfree. To what extent does this interpretation explain the development of politics and society in America from the founding of English colonies in the seventeenth century to the present?

**Part II: Topics.**
Select ONE out of the following three questions. Time: approximately three hours. Worth: 25%.

1. Early Americanists no longer think that their job is to explain the origins of the nation. Instead, they have come to view early America as enmeshed in wider worlds – Atlantic, Continental, and imperial – none of which necessarily led to the formation of the United States. How has this transnational turn altered our understanding of early American history? And has it made scholarship on the connections between colonies and nation obsolete?

2. Many recent scholars have described the Civil War and Reconstruction Era as representing a “lost moment” for the U.S. in terms of fulfilling the war’s promise of emancipation and equality for the 4 million freed people. Analyze this position by providing concrete examples from the breakdown of slavery, the impact of the Union victory, Reconstruction, and the creation of the Jim Crow system in the 1890s.

3. Which had a more significant impact on the American state, the Progressive Era (1900-1925), the New Deal (1933-39) or World War II (1941-45)? Whichever period you choose, be sure to support your argument in reference to developments from the 1890s to the present.

**Part III: Historiography.**
Answer ONE question out of the following three questions. Be sure to engage from six to eight texts in your essay. Time: approximately two hours. Worth: 25%.

1. What have been the main schools of thought that have shaped early American history since the Second World War? How do they differ methodologically? What explains the transition from one school to another?

2. Select one historian you judge to have made a significant impact on the field of U.S. history in the 20th and 21st century, analyzing and assessing her/his scholarly profile and legacy.

3. What is the history of “popular culture” in the United States? Drawing on historical accounts from the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th century, discuss the changing theoretical approaches to popular culture, the most important scholarly interventions, and the prospects for future work.