United States Ph.D. Written Qualifying Examination
Fall 2017
Thursday, September 14 8:00am-9:00pm

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.
- 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 14 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 four hours. Worth: 50%

1. Thomas Jefferson famously declared that the United States would be an “empire of liberty.” In so doing, he both acknowledged the central role that empire has played in American history and framed American empire in a way pleasing to national self-understanding. Some recent historians, on the other hand, have taken a more critical stance on the implications of empire. With these debates in mind, analyze the importance of the role of empire in American History. Write an essay that considers the relationship between “empire” and “liberty” over the course of American history. Your essay should engage with the country’s own heritage of European colonization, domestic expansion within the continental US, and with foreign intervention and overseas territorial control. Please be certain to avoid caricature. **Your essay must discuss 4 centuries.**
2. Capitalism has played a major role in shaping the contours of American history. But the nature of capitalism, and the historiography of capitalism, has changed over time as the analysis of capitalism has intersected with the study of race, gender, geography and environment, technology, culture, and the law. Pick two of these categories and trace how they have intersected with, and helped transform the shape and trajectory of capitalism. **Your essay must discuss 4 centuries.**

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

1. Unfree labor has been a continuing aspect of American society. Slavery, of course, was the most prominent example of unfree labor but it was not the only one. What were other forms of unfree labor underlying American economic growth? Situate the history of slavery within the longer and wider problem of unfree labor: how did slavery emerge, what other forms of unfree labor existed with it, how did slavery change over time, what forms of unfree labor followed it. Be sure that you discuss at least two separate centuries in the history of unfree labor.

2. US historians place particular emphasis on what are called “reform” movements. Using one example from at least two of the periods, discuss social movements for change and discuss whether reform, revolution (or radicalism) is a more appropriate designation. Be certain to address both the concept of “reform” and the concrete history of the movements you chose to analyze.

3. The nature, status, and identity of the immigrant has been a contested one within US history. How has this nature, status, and identity--especially in relation to the “native” citizen --changed as it is refracted through the prisms of labor, law, and race in US history? Write an essay examining this question. You should write on two separate centuries (but not the twenty-first).

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

1. One of the most challenging problems facing scholars of early America is the multiplicity of transitions; unlike later periods which have the advantage of relatively clear (and relatively agreed upon) points of crisis and transition (e.g. the Civil War, the New Deal, the Cold War), early America is too disparate and intertwined with too many histories to allow this sort of consensus. What are the most promising ways that scholars have attempted to give coherence to the problem of early American history.

2. Considering the following fundamental issues of nineteenth century history, examine how a gendered historical perspective has led to crucial changes of coverage and interpretation: industrialization, slavery, reconstruction.

3. The role, size, and function of the U.S. state has been a subject of debate among historians over the course of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. Write an essay describing the nature of the arguments and debates over the state during this period, especially as it pertains to interventions into American economy and/or society (including questions of gender, sexuality, and race).