MODERN SCIENCE EXAM

Write an essay on one topic from Part I and one from Part II (2 hours per question). Be specific about historical episodes and evidence and include reflections on the relevant historiography of the topic. Take care to avoid overlap in your choice of examples and evidence for your two essays.

Part I

1. How should we understand (and how have historians understood) the relations between the development of the biological and the social sciences since 1800?

2. How have historians explained, and how would you explain, the growing role of quantification and statistics in science, social science, and technology in the modern period?

Part II

1 Much research in modern biology and biomedicine has been centered on a small group of model organisms yet historians have only fairly recently started paying attention to model organisms as objects of historical inquiry. How can we explain this fact and what can be gained by studying the history of model organisms or laboratory tools and experimental practices more generally?

2 Discuss along some examples how biologists and historians have dealt with the laboratory – field boundary in modern biology.