REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PLAN B EXAMINATION
IN U.S. HISTORY – 2019
Department of History
San José State University

COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS

Students must take all three courses in the 210 sequence, although the courses need not be taken in chronological order: 210A (Colonial America), 210B (Nineteenth-century America) and 210C (Twentieth-century America).

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAN B EXAMINATION

Candidates taking the Plan B exams will be examined on books and articles either in U.S. History though the Civil War (part I) or in U.S. History from Reconstruction onward (part II). The exam will be given toward the end of the spring and fall semesters. The exam will be a four-hour, closed book exam with three questions. Students wishing to take the Plan B exams should contact the graduate advisor no later than the fourth week of the semester in which they plan to take them.

Candidates are expected to demonstrate mastery of two areas: a basic factual knowledge of the period of American history in which they are being examined, and a grasp of the major historiographical debates in those periods. A candidate writing an essay about the New Deal and its impact on America in the 1930s, for example, would cover in depth and detail key pieces of New Deal legislation (the date, basic provisions, and deficiencies of the Social Security Act, for example) and would also name the historians and the arguments associated with particular interpretations of the New Deal. Factual information is readily available in the reading list for the Plan B exams, and students will also have been exposed to historiography (its definition and practices) in the 210 series, as well as in 102 and 200.

READINGS FOR THE PLAN B EXAMINATION

There are two required reading lists for the Plan B examination, one for part I and another for part II. Each includes 75-80 works. All of the works appearing on these lists are required for the Plan B examination. In other words, if you are taking part I of the U.S. History examination, you will be expected to be familiar with all of the books and articles on the part I list. If you are taking part II of the U.S. History examination, you will be expected to be familiar with all of the books and articles on the part II list. Please note that the Plan B lists in U.S. History list were revised in 2019. The new lists are applicable to candidates entering the program in 2019 and afterward. The older lists apply to students who entered before 2019. Both lists are available in the history department office (DMH 134).
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE REQUIRED READING LISTS AND THE 210 COURSE SERIES

In the 210 series, 70% of books assigned by the faculty will be drawn from the Plan B exam list. This means that many, but not all, works will be covered in the 210 sequence. Students should familiarize themselves with the skill of reading a historical work rapidly yet carefully for the author's thesis, main arguments, historiographical position, use of sources/evidence, and methodology.

Although the Department of History sees the 210 sequence as part of the preparation process for the Plan B exam, students must study on their own as well. Not all topics, or readings on a particular topic, will be covered in the 210 series. The faculty members teaching in the 210 sequence reserve the right to introduce and require important books or articles that do not appear on the examination reading lists as a part of their teaching. Graduate students taking the Plan B exams are expected to read required books not "taught" in class just as students writing a thesis do much work on their own outside the context of a formal class. In courses that are not part of the 210 sequence, instructors will assign works of their own choosing.

Central to the goals of those who teach the 210 series is imparting to graduate students the methods and skills of professional historians. This includes learning to assimilate both factual information about a historical time period, and also learning to understand and critique historiographical arguments in the assigned readings. The Plan B examinations are designed to demonstrate students' mastery of these skills.
PLAN B READING LIST
PART I: EARLY AMERICA THROUGH THE CIVIL WAR

OVERVIEW


1. EMPIRES & CONTACT OF CULTURES


2. COLONIES


3. SLAVERY


4. RELIGION; CULTURE, COMMERCE, POLITICAL THOUGHT


5. EMPIRES, FRONTIERS, AND BORDERS


Mapp, Paul W., Mapp, Paul W. *The Elusive West and the Contest for Empire, 1713-1763*. University of North Carolina Press ; Published for the Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 2011.


6. THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION & THE EARLY REPUBLIC


7. THE MARKET REVOLUTION & JACKSONIAN DEMOCRACY


8. WESTWARD EXPANSION, MANIFEST DESTINY, AND EMPIRE


9. ANTEBELLUM SLAVERY


10. REVIVALISM AND REFORM


11. GENDER


12. SECTIONALISM AND THE CAUSES OF THE CIVIL WAR


13. THE CIVIL WAR AND EMANCIPATION


SJSU HISTORY DEPARTMENT

PLAN B READING LIST – 2019 EDITION

PART II: THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1865

GENERAL HISTORIOGRAPHY


1. RECONSTRUCTION


2. BUSINESS & LABOR


3. THE WEST


4. POLITICS & CULTURE IN THE “GILDED AGE”


5. CITIES & IMMIGRATION


6. AMERICAN IMPERIALISM


7. PROGRESSIVISM


8. WOMEN, SUFFRAGE & SEXUALITY


9. RACE & ETHNICITY


Kelley, Robin D. G. “'We Are Not What We Seem': Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South.” *Journal of American History* 80 (June 1993): 75-112.


10. WORLD WAR I


11. THE TWENTIES


12. THE GREAT DEPRESSION & THE NEW DEAL


13. WORLD WAR II


14. POSTWAR GENDER & SEXUALITY


15. THE COLD WAR


16. THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT


17. POSTWAR SOCIETY & CULTURE


18. POSTWAR POLITICS


