Global Histories Preliminary Exam
February 2013

Answer 1 (ONE) question from each section. There are 3 (THREE) sections.

Be sure each essay has a clear line of argument, addresses as many dimensions of the question as possible, and offers relevant, persuasive evidence from specific secondary sources wherever appropriate.

Section A (choose ONE)

1. How do you write global history in a way that does not ignore but indeed takes relations of power seriously? What is the proper relationship between global history and power?

2. “The global” is both a gargantuan category and a shorthand for everything from neoliberalism to transnationalism, from capitalism to imperialism. Make an argument for the best working definitions of the term for students aiming both to engage with and contest the colonial and postcolonial entanglements of the world before the 21st century. What is the proportional role of subjects like non-human history, empire and even connectivity itself in shaping global narratives?

Section B (choose ONE)

1. In your view, what overarching paradigm (empire, core/periphery, network/connectivity, transnationalism, etc.) best describes the relationship of the United States to the world? Explore how the historiography of that subject might support your view.

2. Your first teaching position is at a large public institution, with 16 week semesters, where there is a great deal of enthusiasm for the development of a course called “US and the World” at the 100 level. How would you approach this task? What themes and authors would you emphasize? What kinds of assignments would you give to the students to help them grasp the stakes of locating US history in a global context? Please note that a detailed syllabus (weekly readings, page numbers, etc.) is not required. Write a rationale for the course and enumerate 3 major sections, elaborating on your themes with 3 books and 3 articles for each.

Section C (choose ONE)

1. How are situated social identities of race, gender, sexuality, class, caste, nation, and so forth “global”? How do they enable or hinder the “global”? 
2. National histories have been cross-cut global forces and ambitions in unique ways. Industrialization, slavery, capital accumulation and nation-building itself – each of these signature themes has its global dimensions. Assess the impact of global history on national history in the last two decades, offering a diagnosis of the latter’s limits and possibilities. Is the nation over or has it been stimulated anew by the pressures of globalization?