History Department
Global Indigeneity Exam Questions

Part I. Required Question

1. What is indigeneity, how does it function in relation to the global, and what are the stakes for comparative studies across cultural, historical, political, and national distinctions? What methodological challenges might global indigeneity pose to the discipline of history? What are the possibilities and challenges of a category such as global indigeneity for interdisciplinary methodologies or dialogues? Explain your definitions of each of these terms, situating yourself within relevant scholarly discussions.

Part II. Answer three (3) of the following five questions. Use your time carefully so that you can respond adequately to all of the questions you select.

1. Patrick Wolfe has defined settler colonialism as a “structure, not an event” that “destroys to replace” (388). How has settler colonialism circulated within the larger field of indigenous studies? How does it compare to other forms of colonialism? How is the concept of settler colonialism useful in relation to Pacific Studies? What are challenges or limitations to the concept as it circulates across continents and Oceans?

2. In *Namoluk Beyond the Reef: The Transformation of a Micronesian Community*, Mac Marshall suggests that the “rethinking of the culture concept is part of a response to the congeries of intertwined processes variously called ‘globalism’ or ‘transnationalism’” (13). Focusing on how carriers of “one ‘local culture’...have moved with increased alacrity and adventuresomeness,” Marshall considers how place and movement have shaped identity, history, space, and connectedness. How have such cultural turns in Pacific Studies made the Pacific intelligible to academic audiences? What are the assumptions, key concepts, regionalisms, and definitions that have shaped such intelligibility? What alternatives or other modes of inquiry have been lost in that intelligibility? Finally, how should new scholarship, attuned to issues of indigeneity, intervene?

3. From the beginning, Indigenous studies has focused critical attention on gender and sexuality as a necessary site of engagement, from Beatrice Medicine and Paula Gunn Allen to Christina DeLisle and Teresia Teaiwa. As more and more scholars take up feminist and queer studies at the intersection of indigenous studies more broadly and Pacific Island studies more specifically, how do the categories of gender, sexuality, masculinities, and erotics function as critical concepts? How do such categories intervene in the kinds of questions researchers ask about indigenous peoples and what are the stakes of including these questions in the field?
4. You’ve been asked to design a global indigeneity course at the 300 level in a large public university in the Midwest. While your department chair has given you a great deal of flexibility in terms of how to structure the course, she would like to see histories of gender/sexuality, mobility, and sovereignty fully incorporated into the survey’s approach and into as many of its central themes as possible. In a carefully constructed course proposal, identify the three major pedagogical goals for the course and then go on to discuss the central themes that will be addressed over the weeks. Discuss three or four key readings that you will require of your undergraduate students and explain their significance to the intellectual architecture of the course.

5. In “Our Sea of Islands,” Epeli Hau‘ofa confronts the belittling, orientalizing discourses of Western historiographies that look to explain and narrate the Pacific, writing that, “according to this view, the small island states and territories, that is, all of Polynesia and Micronesia, are much too small, too poorly endowed with resources, and too isolated from the centers of economic growth for their inhabitants ever to be able to rise above their present condition of dependence on the largesse of wealthy nations” (150). What does Hau‘ofa propose as alternative and how has that alternative influenced Pacific scholarship? What are the stakes of Hau‘ofa’s intervention for addressing indigeneity in the Pacific? Finally, what is the reach of such a model as a method for articulating indigeneity more broadly?