1. Obligatory Question: Since the 1990s, historians such as Peter Guardino, Florencia Mallon, and many others have argued that Mexico’s rural poor had “agency” in Mexican history (i.e., that their actions had influence over the terms of their social and political subordination) not only because they followed clientelistic (opportunistic?) political leaders like caudillos, but that they understood the ideological significance of their political allegiance. The rural poor adopted a “popular federalist” stance in 1850s Guerrero, for example. Please explain the historical trajectory of rural people’s political involvement in key political transformations from the era of the 1850s Reform movement to 1930s Cardenismo. In what particular ways (i.e., through what sorts of actions) did rural people express their political goals? Did their “repertoire” of practices change over the years; if so, in what ways? If not, why? In writing your answer, please make cite specific books that support your argument. Also, please explain whether you think that the argument for peasant political consciousness is compelling or whether historians have been overzealous in attributing ideology to rural people’s actions.

2. Answer one of the following two questions:
   a) How has the literature on early modern European empires in the Americas (roughly 16th – 18th centuries) changed over the past four decades or so? What have been the shifts and discussions in the historiography regarding causes, goals and modes of forming the empires, their resources and capacities of governance, the relation between the metropolis and the “colonies,” the weight of different types of actors in shaping the empires, and the phases and turning points in the waxing and waning of the empires? How have notions of sovereignty within and between these early modern empires and with other body politics shifted? Discuss these issues with a focus on the Spanish and Portuguese empires, but feel free to draw comparisons with the English and French empires. Draw examples from at least three regions (jointly) within the Spanish and Portuguese empires.

   b) How would you characterize the role and importance of colonial Latin America in the global economy between the 16th and 18th centuries? What arguments have been adduced to view certain parts of the macro region as central in the growth of commercial or early capitalism? Do you find these arguments convincing, or do you see counter-arguments that have equal or more weight? Does the development of Atlantic World approaches represent a major new contribution to the historiography of Latin America, or is it really just an elaboration of existing themes and discussions? In your answer, consider variation over the three centuries
of colonialism and between different areas within the Latin American macro-region. Also consider as many dimensions or aspects of economic development as possible.

Answer one of the following two questions:

a) How would you compare the meaning, chronology and effects of liberalism – as state policy and political organizing principle/ideology - in Spanish America between the 1820s and 1929? Discuss at least three national cases among the following: Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Colombia and the Central American republics. Discuss at least two works on each of the three nations you select. What has changed in interpretations of Latin American liberalism since the 1960s?

b) Design a syllabus for the history of race and ethnicity in Latin America during the national period (1820s – present). Indicate about fourteen weekly topics, the readings you would assign for each week, and the specific issues and problems you would want to discuss for each weekly topic. Make sure to develop a syllabus that is balanced in terms of chronology, major sub-regions (not necessarily including all of Latin America, but at least 3-4 major sub-regions/nations), and racial/ethnic groups covered. Discuss the approaches to these issues that you would privilege.