**HIST 2020: AMERICAN HISTORY II  
Midterm Examination Study Guide  
Spring 2014**

**Format**

The examination will comprise **TWO** parts:

1. **Multiple-Choice Part**: 25 questions (50%); and,
2. **Essay Part**: 3 questions, out of which students are required to answer **any two** (50%).

The questions will cover the reading materials from **Week 1 to Week 7**.

**Regulations**

1. The total time allowed for the examination is 75 minutes: **25 minutes** for the multiple-choice part and **50 minutes for the essay part.**
2. **No books, notes, or other materials including electronic devices (e.g. cell-phone) may be consulted during the examination.**

**Required Materials**

Students should bring to the examination:

1. Two sharpened #2 pencils for recording answers to the multiple-choice section;
2. A blue or black ballpoint pen; and
3. At least one examination booklet (i.e., blue book) for writing the essays. The blue book is available in the bookstores on both campuses.

**Examination Dates**

March 19-21

Classes meeting two days per week will complete the entire examination on **Wednesday**, **March 19**; or **Thursday**, **March 20**.  
  
Classes meeting three days per week will complete the multiple-choice section of the examination on **Wednesday**, **March 19**; and essay section on **Friday**, **March 21**.  
  
**Studying Guidelines**The examination is designed to test the learning outcomes stated in the syllabus for the course. The multiple-choice questions test your familiarity with historical persons, institutions, and events (course learning outcome 1), and the essay questions ask you to demonstrate your ability to use this knowledge in making connections, analyzing arguments, and presenting your own ideas.

The essay section of the examination will include three of the questions listed below, of which you will be required to answer two. Because the selection is not published in advance, it is important to prepare responses to all, or at least all but one, of the questions listed. Multiple-choice questions are based on the terms and concepts derived from significant people, events, and concepts presented in the text. For each term, you should know basic factual information (who, what, when, where) and recognize significance (why is the term important). If you can do this, you should be able to answer a related multiple-choice question correctly.

In responding to an essay question, it is important to think carefully about what the question is asking and what specific thinking skills you are being asked to demonstrate. Each question tests specific thinking abilities related to learning outcomes #2-5 in the syllabus. The essay questions are not asking you to recite information from lectures or the textbooks. They are asking for *your* voice, analysis, and judgments. Thorough and accurate information from the course is very important, but a good essay is not just information. It *uses* information to develop a carefully reasoned response to a specific question and to demonstrate your abilities as an original thinker.

The other skill that you are asked to demonstrate in writing your essays is learning outcome #7: the ability to "construct well-written essays using basic academic writing conventions." This means that grammar, spelling, legibility, and organization matter. Your essays should comprise five to eight paragraphs of a reasonable length, including a thoughtful and complete introduction and conclusion.

Most students achieve this quality of essay writing only by developing their responses outside of class before actually taking the examination. Although students are not allowed to consult notes or essay drafts during the examination, outlining your responses in detail or even writing complete essays and discussing them with your instructor obviously provides excellent preparation for doing your best on this part of the test. Writing drafts of your essays before the examination also allows you to use this study guide effectively as a resource.   
  
**Topics**

1. **The “New South” & the “West”**

**Readings**:

Realities of Rural America (Nash 15)

The Post-Reconstruction Era(Carson 12)

**Learning Outcomes:**

Demonstrate an understanding of regional diversity and the relationship between regions in American history.

Analyze the interrelationship of economic, social, cultural, and political change.

**Essay** **Question:**

What claims were implicit in the term "New South," and to what extent did the region fulfill this promise? To what extent did the South join the national mainstream between 1865 and 1914, and to what extent did it remain a region removed?

**Considerations:**

* the interrelationship of economics, politics, and race relations
* the comparison of the "New South" and the "Wild West" as underdeveloped regions
* long-term legacies established by the "New South" between 1865 and 1914

1. **Industrialization**

**Readings**:

The Rise of Smokestack America(Nash 16)

**Learning Outcome:**

Analyze the interrelationship of economic, social, cultural, and political change.

**Essay Question:**

Discuss the positive and negative social consequences of the "American Industrial Revolution." What benefits accrued from the rapid rise in the economic status of the United States, what were its social costs, and how do you weigh the balance between them?

**Considerations:**

* the interrelationship of the rise of heavy industry, rapid urbanization, immigration, and the expansion of the industrial workforce
* widening economic disparity between classes in American society
* worker unrest and the rise of labor unions
* Social Darwinism's emphasis on individualism and competition

1. **Urbanization**

**Readings**:

The New Metropolis (Nash 17)

The Post-Reconstruction Era (Carson 12)

**Learning Outcome:**

Understand the dynamics of economic, social, cultural, and political change, and analyze regional diversity.

**Essay Question:**

Discuss the character of the late nineteenth century industrial city paying particular attention to population, transportation, politics, and neighborhood life and living conditions. Also, discuss the reform movement for social and political change during the period in question and show the extent to which it was successful.

**Considerations:**

* Growth of the city: rising urban population from immigration and migration
* The character of the city: transportation systems, neighborhoods, and the environment
* The dynamics of urban politics: political machines, party bosses, and graft
* The city and the reformist movement
* Jim Crow and the nature of racial segregation

1. **Imperialism**

**Readings**:

Becoming a World Power (Nash 18)

**Learning Outcomes:**

Demonstrate an understanding of the international context of American history.

Analyze multiple causes of historical developments and events.

**Essay Question:**

The Spanish-American War of 1898, in which the United States expanded into overseas territories, arguably marked a turning point in the relationship of the United States with the rest of the world. What factors motivated this new form of American expansion, and to what extent did those factors make American imperialism distinct from that of European empires during this period?

**Considerations:**

* the founding of the United States in an anti-colonial war and its anti-colonial political traditions
* the ideological roots and ramifications of Manifest Destiny
* the interrelationship of politics, economics, foreign policy, religion, racism, and nationalism
* domestic opposition to colonial expansion

1. **Progressivism**

**Readings**:

The Progressives Confront Industrial Capitalism (Nash 19)

The Great War (Nash 20)

“Colored” Becomes “Negro” in the Progressive Era (Carson 13)

**Learning Outcomes:**

Assess the impact of ideas in American history.

Analyze the interrelationship of economic, social, cultural, and political change.

Demonstrate an understanding of the international context of American history.

**Essay Question:**

What assumptions and goals characterized progressivism as a philosophy, and how did it influence American society and politics domestically and internationally? How did progressive reformers confront the social, political, economic, and moral problems of their age, and to what extent were they successful?

**Considerations:**

* broad areas of progressive reform: social justice, government efficiency and activism, inclusive democracy, regulation of big business
* the influence of middle-class values and assumptions in progressive thought
* tensions and contradictions within progressivism
* the goal of exporting American conceptions of democracy and freedom to the world

1. **The Roaring Twenties**

**Readings**:

Affluence and Anxiety (Nash 21)

“The Making of a “New Negro” (Carson 14)

**Learning Outcome:**

Analyze the interrelationship of economic, social, cultural, and political change.

**Essay Question:**

Although the decade of the 1920s is often imagined as the "Jazz Age," a time of prosperity and lighthearted leisure, this period was also characterized by significant social and cultural conflicts. What were the most important conflicts of the "Jazz Age," and why did they emerge at this juncture in American history?

**Considerations:**

* race, ethnicity, gender, religion, science, technology, morality, and popular culture
* transitions from tradition to modernity and from rural to urban ways of life
* the birth of a national popular culture
* the 1920s as the beginning of our "modern age" or "modern times"

**7. THE GREAT DEPRESSION**

**Readings:**

Nash 22: **The Great Depression and the New Deal**

Carson 15: **The New Politics of the Great Depression**

**Learning Outcome:**

Analyze the historical development of the American political system, including government, the party system, and agents of political change.

**Considerations:**

* the economic and political philosophies of Roosevelt and Hoover
* specific New Deal programs
* the New Deal's impact on African Americans, Native Americans, women, the elderly, and organized labor
* the effect of the New Deal on the Democratic Party
* the role of Eleanor Roosevelt in her husband's presidential administration

**Essay Question:**

Discuss President Herbert Hoover's approach to the Great Depression. How did this approach differ from that of his successor, Franklin D. Roosevelt? Discuss the impact of the New Deal program on America's racial minorities in the 1930s. Lastly, assess Roosevelt’s attitude towards African Americans during the New Deal years.