

HISTORY 118
MIDTERM EXAM HANDOUT
Thursday March 1, 2018

TWO of the following FOUR questions will appear on the exam.

1. How does the story of Prince Rivers embody some of the key social and political challenges of Reconstruction? What other figures from the post-Civil War period are helpful for understanding this difficult period in American race relations?
2. Many historians now label the post-Civil War amendments to the US Constitution (13th, 14th, and 15th) as a “Second Founding.” Yet during the years between the Civil War and World War II, many supporters of those amendments felt betrayed and disappointed by their application for American blacks as well as for other minorities. Why? Make sure to describe the relevant text and context of each amendment before analyzing their contested legacies.
3. Franklin Roosevelt’s “New Deal” programs designed to overcome the Great Depression were not entirely new. Explain how populists and progressives from an earlier age pioneered at least some of the ideas and elements of FDR’s revolutionary approach to economic reform.
4. Woodrow Wilson helped lead the US into World War I claiming that the conflict was necessary to make the world “safe for democracy.” What did the president mean by that expression and how did his aspirations for a new world order represent a departure from previous American attitudes towards overseas interventions?

GENERAL ADVICE

Good essay exam answers begin by providing a clear thesis or interpretation and by defining any key terms in the question. You don’t need to restate the question, but you should address its terms directly in the opening paragraph. The best answers then proceed to support their interpretation by providing specific historical examples arranged in a logical, compelling and CHRONOLOGICAL fashion. Essays should offer a high level of detail, including the use of dates, brief quotations and striking statistics. The most persuasive essayists also take care to anticipate potential objections or alternatives to their interpretations. You do not need to provide footnotes or citations in a blue book exam, but try to make sure that the sources for your information are clear.

REMINDERS

- Students may study together but must produce their own answers
- Each essay should occupy several blue book pages and take about 30-35 minutes
- Missing an exam is only an option in an emergency or for documented sickness