

**ESSAY EXAM QUESTIONS
(FINAL EXAM)
HISTORY 100**

Instructions: The procedure for the final exam is the same as it was for the earlier exams, with three notable exceptions. First, I offer three possible essay questions rather than two. As before, you should choose and write on **ONE** of them. Second, the essay for the final exam should be slightly longer than in previous cases (1000-1400 words). Finally, every essay **must** address at least two of the three cases we have considered in this course (the US, Russia, and Iran). You **may** address all three if you wish, but at a minimum you **must** address two. Consider carefully which two (at a minimum) you wish to address, since this choice will undoubtedly affect the quality of your essay. In each case, do not treat the two cases in complete isolation, as if they had nothing to do with one another. Instead, compare and contrast them as a way of producing a better answer to the question.

In writing your essay, be absolutely certain that 1) your essay actually answers the question being posed; and 2) you deploy the course's required readings, including primary sources, in making your case. The failure to answer the question has been a major weakness of earlier essays in this course. In the case of each paragraph, the topic sentence should relate the content of the paragraph to your answer to the question being posed. You may find it useful or necessary to recount a set of specific facts in your essay, but you need to be sure that the connection between those facts and your answer to the question is articulated explicitly. If your essay does not answer the question it will be downgraded substantially. A similar problem involves students' failure to use the required readings in writing their essays. No essay can be fully acceptable if it fails to incorporate and engage with the main sources for this course. The ability to deploy readings in your own written work represents one of the critical skills that the exam is designed to promote. You should be sure to consider **all** of the evidence available to you in constructing your answer, though of course only some of it will actually be included.

QUESTION #1. Crises of the Old Regime(s). New ideologies and ways of thinking were crucial to the appearance of new regimes in the United States, Bolshevik Russia, and Revolutionary Iran. But equally important in each case was the crisis facing the old regime. Addressing at least two of the three cases considered in this course (British America, Tsarist Russia, or the Shah's Iran), write an essay considering the nature of the crisis facing the old regime in the last several decades of its existence. What were the principal problems facing the regime? To what extent had the regime itself created those problems? How, specifically, was the regime's response to those problems inadequate? How did the response actually help to precipitate a crisis sufficiently great to cause *revolution*? You should avoid the temptation to conclude that the old regime was oppressive and people therefore simply became fed up and revolted. It should be clear by this point that the dynamics in each case were more complicated than that.

QUESTION #2. The Purpose of the Revolutionary State. The revolutions considered in this course resulted in new forms of government that were designed, to varying degrees, to perform new functions. Write an essay that analyzes how the leaders of the new regimes understood the purpose of the state they were creating. Whom or what purpose was the new state designed to serve? What specific functions did revolutionaries believe the state should fulfill? To what extent did the purpose of the state under the new regime depart from its purpose under the old? From what or whom did they claim to derive their power and authority? How did the constitutions they produced reflect these views? In constructing your answer, be sure to consider at least two of the cases considered in the course, focusing primarily on the new regime that came into existence because of the given revolution.

QUESTION #3. Revolutionary Leadership. The leadership provided by particular individuals in each of the cases we have considered was important for both the overthrow of the old regime and the creation of the new one. Yet it would surely be inaccurate to say that what leaders did was the same in each case or that their leadership was equally significant in each case. Considering at least two specific cases, write an essay addressing the impact of revolutionary leadership on the course and outcome of the revolutions we have considered. To what extent were particular people indispensable both to the success of the revolution and the particular direction in which the revolution went thereafter? To what extent were those leaders simply responding to or reflecting larger forces essentially beyond their control? Answering this question will almost surely involve identifying and discussing specific people who provided revolutionary leadership.

Sources in this course. For your handy reference, I have included a list of all the sources (both primary and secondary) that we have used in this course (most of them are in my textbook). It is not my expectation that all of these sources will appear in your essay or even all that pertain to one particular case. But the failure to include a source with obvious significance for the given question will be treated accordingly—i.e., harshly.

Wood, <i>American Revolution</i>	Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i>	English Declaration of Rights
Declaration of Independence	Articles of the Confederation	<i>Federalist</i> no. 41 (Madison)
Second Essay by "Brutus"	US Constitution	Abraham Lincoln documents
Douglass on 14th & 15 amend.	Michael Green, Synopsis of Nevada Constitution	Pobedonostsev (on constitution & democracy)
Program of People's Will	Marx & Engels, <i>Communist Manifesto</i>	October Manifesto (1905)
Fundamental Laws of 1906	Lenin, <i>State & Revolution</i>	Edward Carr on constitution of RSFSR
Soviet Constitutions (1918 & 1924)	Terry Martin, "Affirmative-Action Empire"	Stalin speech on 1936 constitution
Karen Petrone on Stalin Constitution	John Curry on Islam	Khomeini, <i>Islamic Government</i>
Naraghi, Conversations w/ Shah	Constitution of Iran (1979)	

General guidelines & advice. The basic idea of this exercise and the standards by which it will be assessed are the same as in previous exams. It should be immediately apparent that these questions are complex and need to be answered by including a range of factors and issues. The space allotted for your answer is nonetheless quite limited. This means that you will have to think very carefully about organization and about which issues are truly important to answering the question and which are of only secondary significance. You will also need to distill your main ideas to their quintessence, while also choosing evidence that is both succinct and effective. In short, doing this well will involve a good deal of work, so you should be sure to allot yourself an appropriate amount of time. The instructor and the TAs for this course are here to aid you, if you wish to discuss particular ideas or conjectures.

Formal Requirements: Make sure that your essay fulfills all the formal requirements listed below.

- * The essay should be between 1000 and 1400 words in length.
- * The text should be double-spaced, with 1-inch margins on all sides. Attempts to inflate the size of the essay artificially with triple-space, large margins, huge font, etc., will be treated accordingly (i.e. in a most savage, brutal, ruthless & uncompromising manner).
- * Pages must be **numbered**.
- * Your name, the name of your TA, and **THE NUMBER OF THE QUESTION YOU ARE ANSWERING** **must** appear in the upper right-hand corner of the essay.
- * Your essay must have an expressive title. There is no need for a title page. Simply put your title at the top of the first page.
- * Your essay must be typed or computer-printed. Handwritten documents will not be accepted.
- * As concerns citations: Page references to sources should take the shortest form possible, for example: (Werth, 75). If you refer to a text within my textbook, just make it clear in your own writing, for example: As Stalin declared in his speech on the draft constitution of 1936, “The exploitation of man by man has been abolished” (Werth, 129). If you wish to make specific reference to a piece of information related in lecture, you may write (lecture, 4/25) = lecture of April 25. The idea here is to keep citations clear without having them clutter up the body of the text.
- * Your exam essay should reflect your own thinking and writing. Discussing the issues in the question(s) with others in the class is acceptable, but the final written product should be your own. Please bear in mind that the instructors of this course take the issue of academic honesty very seriously and will keep vigilant watch for examples of plagiarism. In the case of a violation of academic honesty, you may be failed in the course and formal proceedings against you will be initiated.

Things that doom essays (pay close attention here!)

- Absence of a good, revealing title
- Failure to articulate some kind of idea or thesis at the outset.
- An attempt to retell the story of a given revolution in narrative form (this simply is not possible)
- Absence of a good topic sentence for each paragraph
- Absence of paragraphs
- Failure to include sources from which information is taken (this is plagiarism, and it will be dealt with severely)
- Failure to deploy sufficiently the required readings for this course
- Failure to proofread
- Starting the paper the night before it is due (this almost guarantees ignominious failure)

Grading Standards

Each essay will be graded on a 50-point scale (as the essay comprises 50% of the exam grade). Those 50 points will be granted based on the following standards:

Argument & evidence (25 points): Your main propositions or argument should be clearly stated and should be supported with concrete and specific evidence. Do not simply narrate or summarize the material. Show that there is thought behind your argument. If you make a claim, find an example from the readings that supports it. Next, either paraphrase or take a short quote, and cite your source properly. Often a few words or a phrase can be quoted more effectively than an entire sentence. Quotations that neither support nor advance the argument are detrimental to the essay, as are quotations unrelated to the issue at hand. Block quotes take up a lot of space and cannot replace your own analysis; avoid them altogether. A paper that contains no references to course readings is not acceptable. **THINK ABOUT HOW YOUR SOURCES ANSWER THE QUESTION EXPLICITLY.**

Accuracy/plausibility of ideas (10 pts): You cannot build a good argument with inaccurate information, so check the ideas/facts you are using to ensure they are accurate. By no means is the essay a matter of simply reciting a series of facts, but factual accuracy nonetheless remains the foundation for a good interpretive essay.

Organization and coherence (10 pts): Proper organization is monumental to any essay, at the level of both individual paragraphs and the essay as a whole. You should have a clear thesis, proper paragraph structure (topic sentence first, then supporting details, possibly with a transition sentence at the end), and a clear conclusion – not a *summary*, but a *conclusion* that articulates the vision of the issue that the reader should have at the end. What insights have you provided? How is your argument important? For a very good web page on this topic, see <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/conclusions.html>. If you need a refresher on organization: go to your TA's office hours or go to the writing center (both of which are free).

Grammar and Style (5 pts): Relatively minor and infrequent grammatical mistakes will not affect your grade substantially (though instructors are likely to draw your attention to them). Egregious and frequent errors – especially ones that begin to erode the reader's ability to understand your ideas – will have more serious consequences. For example, a grammatically incomplete sentence is almost impossible to interpret precisely because it is not complete. It needs to be stressed that your ideas are only as good as the language in which they are presented. If you need assistance with grammar issues (for example, if you do not know or understand proper comma usage) you can see your TA during office hours or go to the writing center. All the formal requirements listed above concerning length, font, margins, etc. must also be met. **DO NOT** write in colloquial language, using contractions, slang, and sports metaphors; adhere to academic standards.