

Sensorveiledning for HIS2424, autumn 2019

HIS2424

Question: Between 1898 and the present, did the United States become an empire by accident or by design?

Students in this course have read numerous brief primary sources (collected in a reader edited by Jeremi Suri) covering key topics and episodes in the history of US foreign affairs between 1898 (when the US war with Spain began) and the present day. They also have read (entirely or in part) a series of secondary works by historians, with in-depth coverage of US relations with East Asia and the Western Pacific and with Latin America particularly, although they also have read about US-Europe relations, with lesser coverage of US involvement in other world regions. Class meetings have combined active learning study of documents with instructor-led discussions of texts and lectures providing background on international history and US foreign affairs.

The question for the examination focuses on a central theme of the course, one that students have studied and discussed during the semester. Their tasks in the examination are to express an interpretation, to support it in an organized, analytical and well-supported way that draws on the assigned primary and secondary works, and that demonstrates their command of this material.

Students should clarify their idea of what an empire is from their acquired knowledge. Strong answers will include a clear statement of the student's position. An introduction that concedes there is support for different views is not a problem, and if skilfully stated may strengthen the student's argument. However, what is necessary for a good answer is that the student indicates which side is more compelling, even if their view is complex.

The student responses should be organized analytically rather than narratively. Most importantly, the student's reflections must be analytically sharp, and rooted in a demonstrable understanding of the issues posed by the question and raised in the reading. They should use material and references from the required readings on the course pensum consistently, and demonstrate an ability to draw on findings from their own research. In all cases, the material cited should bear a clear relevance to the question and the student's thesis.

For an examination to be excellent, students should refer to multiple geographic regions (at least two of the following: East Asia/Western Pacific, Latin America, Europe ? three is better than two) and it should cover the entire sweep of the period between 1898 and the post-9/11 years. Formal citations of the kind and quality expected in a paper are not as mandatory here, but more specific references will make for a stronger examination. An excellent essay will have a clearly stated thesis that is well supported with evidence, and will be strongly analytical. A good essay will provide substantial support for a clear thesis and will be mostly analytical. A satisfactory essay will provide a moderate level of support for a fairly clear view, and will be partly analytical. An adequate essay will provide only a partially clear thesis, will offer less than satisfactory support for it, and have a weak analytical structure.

Sensorveiledning for HIS4424, autumn 2019

HIS4424

Question: Why was Appleman William's thesis, and the views of the New Left, disruptive to the study of US foreign policy?

Students in HIS4424 were asked to read all the required texts for HIS2424. In addition, they were assigned a set of interpretive works on the history of US foreign relations. Students in HIS4424 have attended class meetings of HIS2424 and have been exposed to all discussions and lectures for that course. Their examination question focuses on these and on the special readings assigned only to them. They may draw on both sets of readings for this examination to support the points they make.

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Students should clarify their idea of what an empire is from their acquired knowledge. Strong answers will include a clear statement of the student's position. An introduction that concedes there is support for different views is not a problem, and if skilfully stated may strengthen the student's argument. However, what is necessary for a good answer is that the student indicates which side is more compelling, even if their view is complex.

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