HIST3135 FRANCE IN THE AMERICAS, 1500-1815  
Winter 2014  
Final Exam Guide

GENERAL GUIDELINES

For studying  
i) Find a quiet place to study where you will not be distracted; cut off connection to the Internet;  

ii) Work from the general themes for each section to the specific content; and  

iii) Be an “active studier” (if that is the right word): jotting down skeletal notes as you work through the material, drawing graphs, and so on.

For the exam itself  
i) Please write double-spaced (it does not have to be beautiful prose, but try to use a formal essay-writing style);  

ii) Please try to write in readable script;  

iii) Read over the exam and instructions carefully before writing anything;  

iv) Before beginning to write one of the essays, prepare an outline and think about what you will write (be sure to keep everything relevant and to answer the question);  

v) Vague and excessively general answers are highly discouraged; try to be as specific as possible (you do not need to know every single fact in the textbooks, but you do need enough specific material and evidence to form an argument; avoid generalities! Think of your role as that of a lawyer trying to make an argument before a court, an argument that has to be convincing and based on solid evidence);  

vi) Make sure that everything in your answer is relevant;  

vii) Pace yourself and keep track of the time so that you do not spend too much time on one answer at the expense of the other answers (you will need to write quickly); and  

viii) Remember to define terms wherever necessary (e.g. diaspora).
REQUIRED MATERIALS

i) Course Textbooks


ii) The Supplementary Readings


iii) The Lectures

I provided nuance, qualification, and some further details in the lectures, while highlighting salient features of the readings. You will not be tested on the content of these lectures specifically. However, using the lectures in your essay will enhance your answer.

Rather than merely trying to reread all the textbooks and documents word for word, start first with this study guide, the lecture notes, the Power Point presentations, and the reading guidelines to help you focus your thoughts. Work with the themes first, and then move to the detail. Think too of the connections between different elements in the course.

If you had to miss a lecture or two, feel free to borrow my lecture notes. All the reading guidelines are on the course website. I will be holding regular office hours right through the exam period.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE EXAM

The exam will be composed of three parts and all of these will be essay questions. In each section, you will be given a choice of three essay questions (answer one out of three for each section). Spend about fifty minutes on each essay and write about 6-8 double-spaced pages (2-3 pages would not be sufficient to answer an essay question, not at this level anyway). You will be surprised by how much you can write in fifty minutes, but be sure to keep everything relevant. Everything that you have read for this course (textbooks, articles, and primary documents) as well as the lecture notes can be pertinent here, but be sure to maintain a good focus.

Here are some general issues and themes to consider, for each of the eight parts in the course (use these as a supplement or a kind of base to use with the reading guidelines):

Part One: Foundations: The First Attempts at Contact and Settlement
-the principle of sovereignty outlined in the Eccles text and how it was understood and applied culturally (as explained in the Seed reading: the ceremony and cultural significance of “taking possession”)
-the failure of the early attempts at colonization
-the excerpts from Jean de Léry’s text:
--the connection between the expedition and the French Wars of Religion
--de Léry’s description of the Tupinamba and the link between that description and his French Calvinism and his Christian humanism
--de Léry as an “early modern ethnographer” and how his observations fit into the greater picture of French-aboriginal relations
--de Léry, Montaigne, and the French Wars of Religion

Part Two: French-Aboriginal Relations in North America
-start with Moogk’s chapter on this subject (the French attempt to acculturate the native peoples and the lackluster success that they achieved in this regard)
- French perceptions of the aboriginals
- the link between the Jesuit missions in North America and the Catholic Resurgence in France
- how the Jesuits were different from de Léry; differences among the Jesuits
- what had changed in the historical context
- chronological change over time
- the difference between the hunter-gatherer peoples and the sedentary peoples, and the different experiences of the Jesuits among them
- the differences between the Huron and the Iroquois and the different experiences of the Jesuits among them
- the attitudes towards the environment; differences between Jesuit and native belief regarding the environment

Part Three: French Government, Institutions, and Authority
- Colbert’s vision for the colony of New France when it became a royal province and the degree of his success (see the Eccles chapter on this)
- the concept of authority in New France: absolutism, state paternalism, patriarchy in the family (see the Moogk chapter on this)
- the particular character of French civil law in the colony (very important for understanding Moogk’s concluding chapter)

Part Four: The Anglo-French Struggle, Part One
- the first phase of the “Second Hundred Years’ War”
- the reasons for Louis XIV’s wars and how they came to involve the colonies (in the struggle with England)
- the importance of the military in the colony
- the extension of the French presence into the North American interior (development of an “empire”)
- the overall French strategy for the continent and the connection with the fur trade
- the influence of the native peoples in this regard (e.g. la petite guerre)

Part Five: France and the Slave Trade
- the connection between the slave trade and the “shrinking of the Atlantic corridor”
- as the colony developed, the relationship between metropole and colony changed
- some of the differences between this colony and the Anglo-American colonies (see Eccles on this)
- the development of the French presence in the West Indies and Louisiana
  -- the emergence of slave plantation societies
  -- slavery in Canada and the French slave trade
- the dilemma of religion and slavery (the missionaries working among the slave populations)
- the connection between the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the abolition of the slave trade
  -- the link between the revolt in Saint-Dominique and the geography of the French slave trade
--the abolition of the slave trade and the development of the idea of human rights (cf. the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen)

Part Six: The Anglo-French Struggle, Part Two
-the second phase of the “Second Hundred Years’ War”
-the reasons for the French defeat in the 1750s and 1760s
--the “disconnect” between metropole and colony
-the involvement of the French government in the War of American Independence and the dilemmas of that involvement
--that chapter in the relationship in the course “France in the Americas” (France, the American Revolution, and the French Revolution)
--the connection between that War and the “shrinking of the Atlantic Corridor”

Part Seven: The French in Eastern North America
-the differences between Acadiens and Canadiens and the difficulties involved in trying to assess those differences
-the Golden Age of Acadia and the link between, on the one hand, that gestation of a colonial society and distinct Acadian identity, and, on the other, the Second Hundred Years’ War (the effects of a war on a people)
-the role played by Louisbourg in the French “empire”
--how “multi-coloured” was the society of Louisbourg
-the French presence in Newfoundland: the connection with the fisheries, the training of French seamen, and the Second Hundred Years’ War
-the differences and similarities: the St. Lawrence Valley, Acadia, Louisbourg, Newfoundland
-a focus on the Acadian Diaspora
--the development of Acadian society before the expulsion and diaspora
--the difference between expulsion and diaspora
--the visceral, flesh-and-blood experience of the diaspora; individual life histories
--the connection between the Diaspora and the Anglo-French struggle and the redefinition of French colonialism
--the unique development of individual French colonies
--the varying reception of the Acadians broad
--the connections between the Acadian presence in France, the Enlightenment attempt to reconfigure France, and the social structures of the Ancien Régime

Part Eight: Religion, Society, and Gender
-the weakness of some institutions in New France (like guilds and confraternities) and the reasons for that fact
-the character of the colonial élite and the relationship between that élite with the mother metropole
-the importance of the family as the chief source of allegiance and solidarity for the people of New France
-the role of women in the colony, with a particular focus on widowhood
--the legal status of women (connect this to the theme of patriarchy and paternalism discussed in an earlier chapter in this book)
-religion in New France
--contrast between the metropole and the colony
--contrast between laity and clergy
--contrast over time

Typical essay exam question:
“In the absence of guilds, municipal corporations, village communes, and other private institutions, apart from the church, which was already under the monarch’s sway, the family assumed a dominant role in early French Canada. This social institution received the colonists’ ultimate loyalty.” Discuss this quotation, focusing on artisanal associations, the parish, and the “sovereign family.”