**Some study Questions for Exam 1 Essays**

I will potentially post questions on this sheet up through Sunday night.

Note that there will also be open note questions, so bring all of your notes to the exam.

1. Explain why Europeans were able to reach and conquer the Americas, rather than vice versa. Skim Chapter 18 of Guns, Germs, and Steel. (Hemispheres Colliding) <http://sivakodali.net/info/Books/PDF%20Full%20Books/Jared%20Diamond%20-%20Guns%20Germs%20and%20Steel.pdf> Focus on the ultimate factors, and how they explain why the Europeans had the advantages that they had in the way of germs, steel, guns, horses, etc.
2. Explain where in Central America you can find coral reefs, seagrass beds, and mangroves in the same general environment, and where you cannot. Explain why.
3. Identify the key successful migrating vertebrates that went north from South America, and some that went south. How does Coates define success, and its causes?
4. Describe how annual rainfall is geographically patterned in Mexico and Central America. Identify key factors that shape the geography of rainfall in the region.
5. Using plate tectonic theory, explain what causes earthquakes and volcanoes in the Mexico/Central American region.
6. Describe the seasonality of rainfall in Mexico and Central America on the east and west sides. Where is the general seasonal pattern reversed in Mexico?
7. Summarize the account by Gonzalez about the early settling of South Texas by Mexicans. Then address the questions: to what forces does Gonzalez attribute the eventual success of the US Anglos over the Mexicans?
8. Describe the story of the building of the Panama Canal, and of Panama becoming a country, primarily from the perspective of Latin Americans, especially those living in the region or nearby.
9. Compare the resources, territorial extent, and population size of the Spanish colonies as they entered their independence movements – with that of the United States. How do historians tend to explain why subsequently there was such a large reversal of fortunes? Gonzalez offers an alternative view, one that adds to the historical narrative rather than contradicting it per se. Describe that narrative, based mostly on Chapter 2.
10. Describe the biodiversity of the Sierra Madre Occidental and its causes, and identify what that biodiversity and the cultural diversity of the region offer to humanity in general, from Nabhan.

This update was posted just before 10 am Saturday. All red ink typeface indicates updates from the original posting made Tuesday evening.

I may post a few more possible questions by Sunday evening. Check back Monday morning.