Comprehensive Examination, 2016
Area: migration (gender, marriage, China, rural-urban)

C. Buckley. Chair

Reading list development/Procedural Steps to Examination

A. There is presently no graduate level course offering in Migration, which was a challenge in terms of developing a comprehensive core list. Matching core offerings with the themes and topics for comprehensive examinations would be useful to consider.

B. Core readings were drawn from new editions of text used in the majority of Migration seminars offered in leading Sociology programs, as researched by the committee chair. These texts were further subsidized by older versions of a seminar on international migration taught by the chair at a previous University.

C. The student was asked to review the past 5 years of core journals in the area of population and migration, pulling out articles of direct relevance to their substantive and theoretical areas of interest.

D. The committee chair, guided by the themes and topics of the student selected items, then did a search for highly cited articles and reviews on those themes originating in other Sociological journals.

E. This list was circulated to the second reader and the student’s academic advisor for comment and additions/deletions.

G. The final list was confirmed by the student, and used as the basis for the development of practice questions completed by the student (with extensive feedback) in the months prior to the official examination.

H. The Chair wrote the examination, sharing it with the second reader and advisor for comment before it was given to the student.

I. The completed examination was read by the chair and second reader. The Chair wrote a two page letter of assessment to the student. This may well be a practice worthy of consideration for both the chair and the second reader. Feedback, even in the case of a passing examination, can be instructive to students.
Student selected articles from last 5 years of central migration journals

*International Migration Review*


*International Migration*


**Demography**


**Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies**


**CJB Article add ins**


**Background/Classic Articles and Book Sections**


**Books Assigned by CJB**


**Strongly Suggested**


To help structure your answers, the questions are broken into sub-questions. In some cases examples of terms, theories or issues are mentioned to assist you. Try to answer the entire question, but feel free to emphasize the elements of each question that best reflect your perspectives on the literature. Include both summaries of the existing literature (with citations), and your own interpretations, views and perspectives (marked as such in the text) in your answers.

Choose three questions to answer, one from each of the following categories. Three essays are expected.

**Theoretical Frame and Approaches:**

1. Trace the development of standard theoretical approaches to the study of migration, from the gravity model perspective of the late 1800s (Ravenstein), to subsequent models and approaches focusing upon more individual level characteristics (Sjaastad, Lee)
   A. How do these earlier development link (lead to?) to more standard contemporary theoretical approaches (for example World Systems Theory, Neo-Classical, Human Capital, Social Capital/Networks).
   B. In your assessment of the literature, which theoretical approaches and core questions dominate within sociological approaches to the study of migration?
   C. What are the unique insights or advantages provided by the approaches and questions identified in the sociological literature in part B of your answer, in comparison to dominant approaches in other disciplines?

2. Across disciplines and over time, the debate concerning the optimum level of analysis for the study of migration persists.
   A. Identify, compare and contrast the theories and theorists associated with studies of migration at the macro, meso and micro levels.
   B. Use the literature to illustrate approaches to migrant selectivity, and how selectivity might vary across these three levels.
   C. The nature of a specific inquiry influences the utility of a specific level of assessment. Using the massive rural to urban migration observed over the past three decades in China as your theme, construct one research question suited to each of these three levels of analysis, highlighting how the question is uniquely appropriate to that level of analysis.
Contemporary Developments and Current Trends:

3. Scholars examine both the study of migration and the study of marriage from a life course perspective, with a focus on factors of selectivity. More recently, many scholars focus on the interaction between migration and marriage.

A. Drawing on your readings of the literature, what are the most pressing questions/issues surrounding the linkages between migration and marriage?

B. How can a life course perspective add to ways in which scholars address these questions/issues (listed in your answer to A above)?

C. How can the combined study of migration and marriage provide unique opportunities to understand social, cultural and economic migrant selectivity?

4. The growing literature on gender and migration lends important insights into how male and female migrants emerge from origin regions (or states) and integrate into labor markets and social settings within destination regions (or states).

A. Based on your readings, what are the current key issues and questions (select approximately 2-3) in the literature regarding the migration of women?

   What makes these questions of interest/importance?

B. How do the studies regarding these key questions inform our understanding of how female migrants emerge from origin regions (states)?

C. How do the studies regarding these key questions inform our understanding of how female migrants integrate into labor markets and social settings within destination regions?

Issues in Methods and Measurement:

5. How are migrants defined? Classified? The world is “in motion”, but how clear and consistent are our understanding of what constitutes migration?

A. Identify, compare and contrast various definitions of economic and forced migration (from NGOs, states, scholars).

B. How clearly do the factors of migration motivation differentiate economic and forced migrants? How easy are these motivations to measure?

C. How well to the traditional typologies of migration map onto our world in motion?
6. An ongoing challenge within migration studies is the systematic estimation of the number of unregistered migrants and the representative data collection from migrants who lack official registration. In many destinations, the large numbers of unregistered migrants raise serious methodological challenges to the study of migration (the Southwest US, urban China, closed cities in Russia, etc.) Please address the following issues, incorporating specific examples.

A. Describe and discuss the potential selectivity bias of excluding unregistered migrants in the examination of specific destinations (i.e. urban China).

B. Briefly summarize, compare and contrast the methodological approaches used by researchers to gather data on unregistered migrants? How effective are these approaches?

C. What are some of the specific ethical challenges involved in the estimation and identification of unregistered migrants? How are these issues addressed by migration researchers?