Department of History

Graduate Student Handbook

2014-2015

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Director of Graduate Studies
Application Deadlines

March 1       For fall admission with application for a
              graduate assistantship
June 15      For fall admission (general)
October 15   For spring admission
April 15     For first term summer school admission
June 1       For second term summer school admission

Degree Requirements: Programs and Degrees

Master of Arts (with thesis)
33 hours of graduate-level history, or
27 hours of graduate-level history with an optional 6 hour cognate in a
discipline outside of history approved by the director of graduate
studies

3 hours—general or United States historiography
3 hours—general research seminar
6 hours thesis credit
9-15 hours in major field of
history
6-9 hours history electives
6 hours (optional) outside cognate Master's
thesis
Comprehensive examination (thesis defense)

Master of Arts (non-thesis)
36 hours of graduate-level history, or
30 hours of graduate-level history with an optional 6 hour cognate in a
discipline outside of history approved by the director of graduate
studies

3 hours—general or United States historiography
3 hours—general research seminar
15-18 hours in major field of history*
6-9 hours history electives*
6 hours (optional) outside cognate
Comprehensive examination [combination of written & oral exams]
*Note: at least 6 hours of graduate history must be taken in "research" seminars in which a formal paper based on research into "primary" sources constitutes a significant portion of the course grade.

**Master of Arts Degree with specialization in Public History (non-thesis)**

36 hours of graduate-level history, or
30 hours of graduate-level history with an optional 6 hour cognate in a discipline approved by the director of graduate studies and the director of the Public History program
- 3 hours United States historiography [5360]
- 3 hours The Practice of Public History [5371]
- 3 hours Internship [5374]
- 3 hours Public History Project [5377] (if offered)
- 9-12 hours of Elective Public History courses
- 9-15 hours of United States history seminars
- 6 hours (optional, on approval) outside cognate
- Comprehensive examination [combination of written and oral exams]

**Master of Arts Degree with specialization in Public History (thesis option)**

39 hours of graduate-level history, or
33 hours of graduate-level history with an optional 6 hour cognate in a discipline approved by the director of graduate studies and the director of the Public History program
- 3 hours United States historiography [5360]
- 3 hours The Practice of Public History [5371]
- 3 hours Internship [5374]
- 3 hours General Research Seminar
- 6 hours Thesis Credit
- 9-12 hours of Elective Public History courses
- 9 hours of United States history seminars
- 6 hours (optional, on approval) outside cognate
- Master’s Thesis
- Comprehensive examination [Thesis defense]

**Certificate in Public History**

**Program Requirements:**
Students are required to complete 15 hours of public history courses. HIST 5371, the Practice of Public History is the foundation course of our public history program and will be required of all certificate students. Students must complete four other public history courses (12 hours). Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA with no grade lower than a C; they must complete the program within four semesters, and must pass a comprehensive exit exam.
Transfer to the Master of Arts program:
Students enrolled in the certificate program may transfer to the Master of Arts public history program if they receive approval from the Public History Committee, submit an application, and meet the requirements for admission to the Public History graduate program in the Graduate College. No more than six hours of credit may be transferred.

Master of Education in History (non-thesis History Degree)
21 hours of graduate-level history and 15 hours from a discipline outside of history or 21 hours of graduate-level history, 9 graduate hours in one discipline outside of history, and six graduate hours in a second outside discipline.

- 3 hours—general or United States historiography
- 3 hours—general research seminar
- 9–12 hours in major field of history
- 3–6 hours history electives
- 15 hours outside minor(s) in one or two academic disciplines, or
- 15 hours Education (which, with student teaching hours and experience, would qualify the student for certification)

Comprehensive examination [combination of written and oral exams]

Graduate Advisor
All students should choose an advisor in their major field of study in their first or early in their second semester. Students must obtain the consent of the faculty member they would like to have serve as their advisor and, by the end of the second semester, inform the director of graduate studies of the name of their advisor once that consent has been granted. The advisor will supervise the thesis for students selecting that option. Students may change advisors upon notifying the director of graduate studies and obtaining the consent of another faculty member to serve as advisor.

Fields of Study
The Department offers four areas of graduate study: United States History, Latin American History, European History and Public History. Students in Public History will complete 18 hours in that field and 18 hours in U.S. history (including Historiography). Students with a concentration in U.S., Latin America, or Europe are required to take either American Historiography or General Historiography and 9-21 hours in their area of specialization. Students must register their major area of study with the director of graduate studies.
**Course Work**

Other than historiography and the general research seminar, all graduate level courses are classified as either colloquia or research seminars. Colloquia emphasize broad reading in a particular area and do not require a research paper. Research seminars combine topical readings with a research project.

**Historiography:**

The History Department believes that its graduate students are best prepared to undertake serious graduate study by a general introduction to the discipline of history. This introduction will be provided in the historiography classes taught each fall semester. The department offers American Historiography for students choosing U.S. History as their major area of concentration, and General Historiography for students with major fields in Europe or Latin America. All new graduate students are expected to enroll in one of these offerings. Both courses contain a methodological component and a formal paper designed to help the student prepare for future reading and research projects in other courses. The formal paper required in this course may serve as the introductory analysis of an area of history to be pursued in the student's master's thesis or major field.

**General Research Seminar:**

Students should take historiography before enrolling in the general research seminar. The general research seminar meets each spring semester. M.A. students, M. Ed. students, and Public History students who are selecting the thesis option are required to take the course, preferably in their second year or after accumulating at least 12 graduate hours. Thesis students participating in the general research seminar normally enroll in History 5399A or 5399B simultaneously. The principal purpose of the seminar is to provide students the opportunity to compose a thesis chapter or a research project of thesis chapter quality and to have that work read and critiqued by fellow students, the seminar director, and, in some cases, their advisors. The papers produced in the seminar are expected to be based on substantial research in primary source materials and to be of thesis quality. A grade of incomplete will not be issued in the general research seminar.

**Optional outside minor or cognate:**

Students may take all of their graduate work in history or include up to 6 hours (15 hours for M.Ed. students) of work in an optional minor in another department, with the approval of the director of graduate studies, and, when appropriate, the director of the public history program. Most departments require more than 6 hours to complete a minor, which means that students who wish to have the outside minor officially listed on their degree transcripts would have to take additional courses. The History Department will only count 6 hours toward a history degree. The other option is to complete a cognate, consisting of 6 hours in an outside field. This must be noted on the degree outline (the online degree audit) and so must go through the director of graduate studies and the Graduate College.
Thesis Credit:
The thesis students enroll for thesis credit, History 5399A and 5399B, usually after completing at least 15 graduate hours in history. These are required courses for students writing theses. To be eligible to register for Thesis A, a student must have completed an application for permission to write a thesis and secured the signatures of the proposed members of his/her committee. To register for Thesis B, a student must have a completed thesis proposal. Necessary forms are available online through the departmental web page.

Comprehensive Examinations

Both thesis and non-thesis M.A. candidates are required to complete comprehensive exams, although the format and purposes differ according to degree program.

M.A. Candidates Writing a Thesis:
For students completing a thesis, the comprehensive oral exam required by the Graduate College of Texas State University will consist essentially but not exclusively of a defense of the thesis presented. Students should check with the thesis committee members to determine the scope of the issues to be covered. If the examination is to cover matters beyond the student's defense of the thesis, the student must take care to discover exactly what aspects of previous course work will or will not be considered fair game for each examiner. The student's thesis supervisor and the second and third readers will administer this examination. The oral exam is generally scheduled by the thesis supervisor when all members of the committee have indicated that they find the thesis acceptable and ready to defend.

M.A. Candidates Opting for the Non-Thesis Degree:
Purpose: For students not writing a thesis, comprehensive examinations are intended to provide an opportunity to synthesize data pertaining to themes contained within their fields of study from a variety of materials covered in their regular courses. Comprehensive exams will not cover matters already addressed in exams offered within individual courses, but students will be expected to incorporate material and insights from their readings into a conceptual framework that includes readings from more than one course.

Format: Students, in consultation with their graduate advisor, will create a committee of three faculty members. Usually these are professors with whom the student has worked. One of these professors will be the student's graduate advisor. The student will take written exams for each professor in the faculty member’s area of specialization. Students will complete and submit to the Graduate Director a copy of the Comprehensive Exam form, listing the members of the committee. The necessary forms are available online through the departmental web page, or in the main office.

Scheduling Exams: You must register for your comprehensive examinations by the second week of the semester in which you wish to complete your examinations. In the following few weeks of the semester during which the exam is to be completed, each of the designated faculty will submit to the student no more than 2 questions to be answered in essay form. These questions will also serve as preparation for the oral exam. The student will complete the essays and return
them to the professors by October 15th [for the Fall semester], March 15th [for the Spring semester] or June 30th [for the summer term]. Once the written exams have been approved by the committee members, the oral exam may be scheduled. If there are serious problems with one or more essays, the professor(s) for whom the essays were written should inform the student within one week to give the student an opportunity to revise and improve the essay. The professor(s) may also choose to discuss the issues during the oral exam. If the committee finds the student’s performance less than adequate, the student may retake the oral exam once, either later in the semester or the following semester.

**The Master’s Thesis**

Students seeking an M.A. in History with thesis will complete an essay of appropriate length and depth, divided into appropriate chapters based on substantial research in primary source materials. The topic of the thesis, the research to be undertaken, and the nature of the final product will be determined through consultations between the student and the graduate advisor. The final paper will be read and critiqued by a thesis committee composed of the advisor, a second reader from the History Department, and a third reader who may be either a historian or a faculty member from another discipline (if the student took a minor outside of history). The student must successfully defend the thesis before the committee in order to receive the M.A. degree.

**Sources of Funding:** The Graduate College provides Thesis Research Support Fellowships to support graduate student research at the master’s level. Each award of up to $2,000 is to be used to cover expenses directly related to conducting thesis research. There are two rounds of applications, one in the fall and one in the spring. Please see the Graduate College web site for more information and the application form.

**Foreign Language Requirement**

Students working in areas outside of U.S. or British history may be required to pass a foreign language reading examination. Students should consult with the thesis or research paper supervisor to determine if there are any foreign language competency requirements. All students planning to pursue a Ph.D. are encouraged to pass a foreign language reading examination as this competency will be required of them in their doctoral programs.
**Expectations of Graduate History Majors (HIST 5000s)**

1. Students completing the history graduate program will have a critical understanding of historiographical trends in the student's major field.

2. Students completing the Master of Arts program will demonstrate the ability to undertake the writing of a major research paper combining primary and secondary sources.

3. Students in the Public History Program will demonstrate advanced ability to undertake the practice of history in the context of the general public.

4. Students in the Master of Arts program will demonstrate an advanced ability to undertake the explanation of historical subject matter in oral form.

**Student Performance Requirements**

**Incomplete:**
Students with two or more incomplete grades in history will not be allowed to enroll in any graduate course in history.

**History Graduate Program Grade Policy:**
Only graduate History course work for which students have received a final grade of B or higher will count toward graduate degrees in History. Upon the first instance of receiving a final grade of C or lower in a History graduate course, students will be placed on departmental probation and must meet with the Graduate Advisor to discuss the issue. If a student receives a second final grade of C or lower in a History graduate course, he or she will be dismissed from the History graduate program. Students who have been dismissed may petition for reenrollment after an absence of six months. In deciding whether to grant permission for reenrollment, the Department will consider any extenuating circumstances affecting student performance and the number of graduate history courses for which students have received a final grade of C or lower. These rules regarding probation, suspension, and reenrollment pertain only to the History graduate program; Graduate College regulations regarding probation and suspension will continue to regulate admission to the university and enrollment in course work outside the History Department.

**Honor Code:**
Texas State University “expects students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach. Students found in violation of the Honor Code are subject to disciplinary action.” (Policy 01.02) This includes (as taken from Policy 02.02) cheating, copying from another student’s test or paper, purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one’s own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm and plagiarism or using another’s work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one’s own written work offered for credit. Students are expected to produce their own work and support academic honesty. For a full list of expectations and the university’s honor code, please see [http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html](http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html).
Graduate Assistantships

The History Department offers a limited number of assistantships to graduate students to help fund their graduate education. These assistantships normally require the recipient to serve as an instructional assistant to faculty members teaching large sections of the introductory courses. Duties include—but are not necessarily limited to—attending all classes, taking attendance, holding office hours, meeting with students, preparing class materials, and grading papers. Students who wish to be considered for a position must complete an IA application form and submit it to the department office or the Graduate Advisor.

Assistantships will normally be awarded for one full academic year assuming competent performance of assigned duties and acceptable progress toward completion of the degree. Assistantships, which may be renewed for one additional year on the same basis, will be awarded by the graduate faculty, with the chair’s approval, on the basis of the recommendation of the Graduate Committee.

To maintain an assistantship:

1. Students must enroll in History 5301, Instructional Methods Practicum for History Assistants, during the first semester in which they hold an assistantship. Although this course will count toward the 9 hour load, it will not count as credit toward the degree. The university will subsidize this course.

2. The student must enroll in at least 9 hours of graduate course work during each long semester until all course work is completed; at least three of those hours must be in history. Students may not take more than 9 hours of graduate work in any long semester without the approval of the director of graduate studies and the department chair.

3. Students on assistantships must maintain at least a 9 hour load for the entire semester. Failure to do so will result in the loss of the assistantship the following semester.

4. Students wishing to receive an assistantship for their second year must submit a form to the director of graduate studies requesting a renewal by March 31. In addition such students must have completed satisfactorily 15 graduate hours by the beginning of their third long semester.

5. No student who receives a final grade of C or lower in a History graduate course will be eligible for an assistantship the following semester.

6. No student with more than one incomplete grade at the beginning of the spring semester will be eligible to retain their assistantship for that semester.

7. No second year student with an incomplete grade at the beginning of the fall semester will be eligible for an assistantship for that semester.

In extraordinary individual circumstances the student may request from the graduate committee specific variances to any of the History Department’s internal policies relating to the graduate program. Such requests should be addressed to the director of graduate studies, who will convene the Graduate Committee to rule on such requests. Necessary forms are available online through the departmental web page, or in the main office.