

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM OVERVIEW & PROCEDURES

Award of the M.A. in History for non-thesis and M.E.D. students requires successful completion of written and oral comprehensive exams. These should be undertaken in your last semester of graduate coursework.

Overview and Purpose

For students not writing a thesis, comprehensive examinations are intended to demonstrate your ability to synthesize historical knowledge acquired in your field of study and from a variety of material covered in regular courses. Students are expected to incorporate analysis and insights from readings into a conceptual framework that illustrates mastery of the subject.

The written and oral comprehensive exams are overseen by a committee of 3 faculty members consisting of your graduate advisor as Chair and 2 members representing your focus areas.

Procedures

1. The three members of your committee will be selected in consultation with the Graduate Director at the beginning of the semester in which you wish to graduate.
2. Once a committee has been agreed upon, the student is responsible for contacting the committee members and requesting their participation.
3. A *Comprehensive Examination Committee Form* that includes the signatures of all committee members must be completed and submitted to the Asst. to the Graduate Program in the History Office.
The form can be found at <http://www.txstate.edu/history/resources/graduate-resources.html>
4. **DEADLINE:** The form must be submitted by the third week of the semester in which you wish to complete the examinations.
5. Each committee member will provide you with no more than 2 questions to be answered in essay form. Essays must be completed and submitted to the appropriate committee member by October 15 (fall semester), March 15 (spring semester) and June 30 (summer term). Committee members are free to designate alternative deadlines based on the University calendar.
6. Committee members will review their respective essays within two weeks of receipt and inform both the student and the Committee Chair if the essays are approved as submitted. Alternately, each committee member will inform the student and the Committee Chair if revisions are required.
7. If revisions are requested, a new deadline for completion will be provided. The written essays form the content basis for the oral comprehensive exam. **NO** oral exam dates will be scheduled until all committee members have approved the written essays as submitted or revised.
8. The Committee Chair and student will coordinate the time and date of the final oral exam.
9. The oral exam consists of questions drawn from the written exam essays. Student performance is evaluated as either passing or failing. Outstanding student performance may be designated as passing with distinction.
10. Students who do not pass the oral exam may be allowed to retake the exam once. The scheduling of a second oral exam is at the discretion of the committee, but is encouraged for no earlier than the subsequent semester. The student may be requested to prepare new comprehensive exam essays should faculty membership on the committee change.
11. Exams must be completed within one year of your last semester of classes except under extraordinary circumstances.