

Texas State University San Marcos, Texas 78666
<http://www.txstate.edu/history>

Department of History

Graduate Student Handbook



2019-2020

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Director of Graduate Studies

Graduate Student Handbook

Department of History
Texas State University
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1. Programs and Degree Requirements

Fields of Study

The Department offers [five areas](#) of graduate study: Public History, Borderlands History, Race and Identity, Gender and Sexuality, Atlantic World, and Empire, Colonialism, and Postcolonial Studies. United States History, Latin American History, European History, World History, and Public History. Students in Public History will complete 18 hours in that field and 18 hours in U.S. history and related topics (including *Historiography and Methods*). Students with other concentrations are required to take *Historiography and Methods* and 9-21 hours in their area of specialization. Upon entering the program, students must register their major area of study with the director of graduate studies. 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 (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, *Historiography and Methods* [5361]
- 3 hours, *General Research Seminar* [5398]
- 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 history, **or**
30 hours of graduate history with an optional 6-hour cognate in a discipline outside of history approved by the director of graduate studies

- 3 hours, *Historiography and Methods* [5361]
- 3 hours, *General Research Seminar* [5398]
- 15-18 hours in major field of history
- 6-9 hours history electives
- 6 hours, outside cognate (optional, as indicated above)
- Comprehensive examination (combination of written and oral exams)

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

36 hours of graduate history, **or**

30 hours of graduate 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, *Historiography and Methods* [5361]

3 hours, *The Practice of Public History* [5371]

3 hours, *Internship* [5374]

3 hours, *General Research Seminar* [5398]

9-12 hours, elective Public History courses

9-15 hours, United States History seminars (or other topics with advisor approval)

6 hours, outside cognate (optional, on approval, as indicated above)

Comprehensive examination (combination of written and oral exams)

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

39 hours of graduate history, **or**

33 hours of graduate 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, *Historiography and Methods* [5361]

3 hours, *The Practice of Public History* [5371]

3 hours, *Internship* [5374]

3 hours, *General Research Seminar* [5398]

6 hours, Thesis Credit

9-12 hours, elective Public History courses

9 hours, United States History seminars (or other topics with advisor approval)

6 hours, outside cognate (optional, on approval, as indicated above)

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 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, apply, 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 Arts with concentration in History Education (non-thesis)

21 hours of graduate-level History and 15 graduate hours from a discipline outside of History **or**
21 hours of graduate-level History, 9 graduate hours in one discipline outside of history, **and** 6 hours in
a second outside discipline

3 hours, *Historiography and Methods* [5361]

3 hours, *General Research Seminar* [5398]

15 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)

2. Scholarships in History

History Department

The deadline for departmental graduate scholarships is March 10. The Department uses the BOSS system for all Departmental scholarships. For a full list of available scholarships, please visit the History Department's [website](#).

Graduate College

Scholarships available through the Graduate College include the Celebrity Classic and Graduate College Scholarships and the Graduate College Thesis Research Support Fellowship. For application information, go to [Graduate Scholarships and Fellowships at Texas State](#). **The deadline for Graduate College applications varies but it is generally February 1.**

3. Course Work

Other than *Historiography and Methods* and *General Research Seminar*, all graduate level courses are classified as either readings or research seminars. Readings seminars emphasize broad reading in a specific area and do not require a research paper. Research seminars combine topical readings with a research project.

All history graduate students are required to take *Historiography and Methods* and *General Research Seminar*. To enroll in either of these courses students must complete the [Graduate Course Wait List/Special Approval Form](#), which will allow them to register. If the class is full, they must fill out the form the next semester to gain access to registration.

Historiography and Methods

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 and Methods* class, which students should take their first or second semester of study. The course contains a methodological component and requires a formal paper designed to help students 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. All new graduate students are expected to enroll in this class during their first year.

General Research Seminar

The General Research Seminar meets each semester. All graduate students are required to take the General Seminar, preferably at the beginning of their second year or after accumulating at least 18 graduate hours, and after having completed *Historiography and Methods*. Thesis students participating in the General Seminar may enroll in History 5399A Thesis A [5399A] simultaneously, but only with the Graduate Advisor's authorization. The principal purpose of the seminar is to provide students the opportunity to compose a thesis chapter, a research project of thesis chapter quality, or a state of field (literature review) and to have that work read and critiqued by fellow students, the seminar director, and 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 cognate or minor

Students may take all their graduate work in history or include up to 6 hours (15 hours for students with concentration in History Education) of work in an optional field in another department, with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, and, when appropriate, the Director of the Public History program. Students may either complete only the 6-hour cognate or pursue the additional hours in another field necessary to receive an official minor from the outside department. In the latter case, the History Department will count only six hours in the outside field toward the History degree requirements. Students who choose the cognate option must ask the Graduate Advisor to add it to their degree plans.

4. Other Thesis and Non-Thesis Degree Requirements

M.A. Candidates Writing a Thesis

Enrolling in Thesis Hours

All thesis students must have three hours of credit in *Thesis A* [5399A] (taken the first semester of thesis work only), and *at least* three hours of credit in *Thesis B* [5399B] (taken during the second and subsequent semesters of thesis work), to fulfill degree requirements. Students generally should have completed at least 21 graduate hours in history before enrolling in *Thesis A*. The first semester of enrollment in thesis hours may or may not coincide with enrollment in the *General Research Seminar*. 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 thesis advisor and the proposed members of the thesis committee. To register for *Thesis B*, a student must have a completed [Thesis Proposal Form](#), to be filed with the Graduate College. It is the student's responsibility to submit a completed and signed copy to the Department as well.

Writing 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. Students are encouraged to consult the following guidelines ([MA Thesis: What is it and what does it need to do?](#)) early on. 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 thesis 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. The Department requires students to turn in the final draft to their committee members at least two weeks before the defense. The committee chair, in consultation with the student, will coordinate the time and date of the defense. The defense should be scheduled no later than one week before the Graduate College's [Final Date for Thesis Defense](#) (as post-defense revisions might be necessary). The History Department's internal deadline for the defense to occur is one business day before the Graduate College's deadline. Be sure to consult the [Graduate College Guide to Preparing and Submitting a Thesis](#) BEFORE beginning the writing process, as the guide provides templates with the proper formatting that will make the final submission a much easier process.

Completing the Comprehensive Exam for Thesis Students

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 each faculty member involved in the oral exam 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. Please note that there are two Graduate College forms that require the signatures of all committee members—the [Thesis Submission Approval Form](#) (approval of the thesis, which must be submitted at least one week before the thesis is uploaded in Vireo) and [Master's Comprehensive Exam Report Form](#) (approval of the oral thesis defense, which must be submitted no later than ten days before the anticipated date of graduation).

M.A. Candidates Opting for the Non-Thesis Degree

Purpose of Comprehensive Exams for Non-Thesis Students

For students not writing a thesis, comprehensive examinations are intended to demonstrate the ability to synthesize historical knowledge acquired in their fields 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.

Procedures

Comprehensive exams should be taken during the last semester of course work. The written and oral comprehensive exams are overseen by a committee of three faculty members, consisting of the student's graduate advisor as chair and two members representing the other focus areas of study. Students will select their committee members in consultation with the Graduate Director no later than the end of the semester prior to the semester in which they wish to graduate. Once a committee has been agreed upon, the student is responsible for contacting the committee members and requesting their participation. A [Comprehensive Examination Committee Form](#) that includes the signatures of all committee members must be completed and submitted to the History Department office by the **third week** of the semester in which the student wishes to graduate.

During the next 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. Essays must be completed and submitted to the appropriate committee member by **October 15** (for the Fall semester), **March 15** (for the Spring semester) or **June 30** (for the summer term). Committee members may designate alternative deadlines based on the University calendar.

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 or if revisions are required. If revisions are requested, a new deadline for completion will be provided. Once the essays meet with the approval of the committee members, an oral exam based on the content of the written exams will be scheduled. The committee chair, in consultation with the student, will coordinate the time and date of the final oral exam. As with the thesis,

The committee chair, in consultation with the student, will coordinate the time and date of the defense. The exam should be scheduled no later than one week before the Graduate College's [Final Date for Thesis Defense](#). The History Department's internal deadline for the oral exam to occur is one business day before the Graduate College's deadline.

Student performance on the oral exam is evaluated as either passing or failing. Outstanding student performance may be designated as passing with distinction. Students who do not pass the oral exam may be allowed to retake the exam once. The scheduling of the second oral exam is at the discretion of the committee but is encouraged for no earlier than the subsequent semester. The student may be required to prepare new comprehensive exam essays should the faculty membership of the committee change. Exams must be completed within one year of the student's last semester of classes except under extraordinary circumstances. Students do not have to be enrolled in the University to take their comprehensive exams.

Foreign Language Requirement

Students working in areas outside of U.S. or British history may be required to pass a foreign language reading examination. 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.

Applying for Graduation

Graduate students must apply online for graduation by clicking [here](#) and logging into the [Self-Service Banner system](#). Current and future graduation application deadlines are found [here](#). Students should submit their applications by the appropriate deadline as the Graduate College does not accept late applications. There is no cost associated with the graduation application, and there is no penalty for not completing degree requirements as anticipated after submitting the application; in those instances, students would submit another application for graduation before the deadline for the next session.

5. History Department Expectations of Graduate History Majors

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

- Students in the Public History Program will demonstrate advanced ability to undertake the practice of history in the context of the general public.
- Students in the Master of Arts program will demonstrate an advanced ability to undertake the explanation of historical subject matter in oral form.

Academic Misconduct

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) Per Policy 02.02, academic misconduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Submitting plagiarized work for credit. Plagiarism is the appropriation of someone else’s work and the inadequately or inappropriately acknowledged incorporation of that work in one’s own work that is offered for credit. It includes the unacknowledged word-for-word use or paraphrasing of another person’s work or the inappropriately acknowledged use of another person’s ideas.
2. Falsification, fabrication or dishonesty in reporting research results.
3. Cheating. Using unauthorized materials in examinations, submitting as one’s own work any research paper or other assignment prepared by another individual, or submitting the same essay without substantial revision or expansion of work to obtain credit for work submitted in another course.
4. Collaboration/Collusion by engaging in unauthorized collaboration with another person on work submitted for credit.
5. Facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally aiding or attempting to aid in the violation of Texas State’s Honor Code.

Students are expected to produce their own work and support academic honesty. For the first offense, faculty members will refer cases of academic misconduct to the Graduate Studies Director and the Honor Code Council, which will result in the student automatically being placed on academic probation. A second violation will result in expulsion from the History Department’s MA program.

For a full list of expectations and the university’s honor code, click [here](#).

Grade Requirements

Incompletes

Students with two or more incomplete grades in history will not be allowed to enroll in any graduate course in history. For instructional assistants, 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. No second-year student with an incomplete grade at the beginning of the fall semester will be eligible for an assistantship for that semester.

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 History degrees. 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 program. Students who have been dismissed may petition for reenrollment after a six-month absence. 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 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.

6. 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 [Application for Instructional Assistantship](#) form and submit it to the department office. 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, based on the recommendation of the Graduate Studies Committee.

To maintain an assistantship:

1. Students must enroll in *Instructional Methods Practicum for History Assistants* [5301], during the first semester in which they hold an assistantship. Although this course will count toward the nine-hour load, it will not count as credit toward the degree. The university pays the tuition for 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. In addition, students must have completed satisfactorily 15 graduate hours by the beginning of their third long semester.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. No second-year student with an incomplete grade at the beginning of the fall semester will be eligible for an assistantship for that semester.

7. Requests for Exceptions to History Graduate Policies

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 main office.