

Guideline for Graduate Student Progress American History

Progress through the program will vary depending on funding, language needs, and course availability. The timelines below offer a general guide for students concentrating in American history.

Please note that the department offers few graduate courses in the summer sessions. The department expects, however, that the summer break will be used for language training, qualifying exam preparation, research on the MA thesis, and preliminary research for the dissertation.

1) Students entering with BA and intending to earn only the MA:

First year of graduate training:

- Take History 606
- Take one 700-level research seminar
- Take at least four 600- and 700-level seminars
- Satisfy the language requirement
- Ask a member of the department to serve as the MA advisor
- Meet with the advisor for a first-year review (in April) to discuss: course choices for the second year and whether to pursue the thesis or non-thesis option.
- Thesis-option students should begin discussing possible topics with the advisor; non-thesis students should begin discussing what papers they will present for the MA defense. One of these must be a substantial historiographical essay and two must be research papers produced in 700-level seminars.

Second year of graduate training:

- In the fall term, students should take additional 600- and 700-level seminars or, when necessary, 500-level classes. Thesis students should commence research and writing the thesis. Non-thesis students should be accumulating the necessary papers for the MA portfolio.
- In the spring term, thesis students should finish writing the thesis and they should do this by submitting drafts of chapters and, eventually, drafts of the entire thesis to the MA advisor and other committee members. Non-thesis students should meet with the advisor to determine what revisions may be necessary for the portfolio papers.
- In the spring term, students should arrange with the staff assistant to schedule the MA examination and to file an application for the degree.

2) Students entering with BA and intending to pursue MA/Ph.D. at UK:

First year of MA program:

- Take History 606
- Take one 700-level research seminar
- Take at least four 600- and 700-level seminars
- Satisfy the language requirement
- Ask a member of the department to serve as the MA advisor
- Meet with the advisor for a first-year review (in April) to discuss: course choices for the second year and whether to pursue the thesis or non-thesis option.
- Thesis-option students should begin discussing possible topics with the advisor; non-thesis students should begin discussing what papers they will present for the MA defense. One of these must be a substantial historiographical essay and two must be research papers produced in 700-level seminars.

Second year:

- Take History 640 and 641 and additional 600- and 700-level seminars or, when necessary, 500-level classes. Thesis students should commence research and writing the thesis. Non-thesis students should be accumulating the necessary papers for the MA portfolio.
- In the spring term, thesis students should finish writing the thesis and they should do this by submitting drafts of chapters and of the thesis to the MA advisor and possibly other committee members. Non-thesis students should meet with the advisor to determine what revisions may be necessary for the portfolio papers.
- In the spring term, students should arrange with the staff assistant to schedule the MA examination and to file an application for the degree.

Third year (if admitted to Ph.D. program):

- In the fall term, identify a major advisor, and, working with the advisor, begin constructing the qualifying exam committee and defining the specialty field and the allied or non-U.S. field for the exams.
- Meet with the qualifying exam committee in the fall term to prepare the qualifying exam contract.
- Take a 700-level research seminar and additional 600-level seminars. Students who have earned the MA degree at UK should already have taken History 640 and 641.
- Schedule qualifying exams for either the March-April or August-September exam periods.

Fourth Year:

- Create a dissertation committee.
- Working closely with the dissertation advisor, write the dissertation prospectus.
- Apply for external grants to support dissertation research.
- Commence dissertation research.

Fifth and Sixth Years:

- Dissertation research
- Begin drafting and revising chapters. Work closely with the advisor and at least one other committee member on the chapters.

Sixth and Seventh Years:

- Write, revise, and polish the dissertation.
- Submit for defense.
- Graduate.
- Apply for jobs.

Eighth Year:

- Start job!

3) Students entering with the MA from an institution other than UK:**First year:**

- Take History 606.
- Satisfy the language requirement.
- Take History 640 and 641.
- Take at least one 700-level seminar
- Take additional 600- and 700-level seminars to meet the department's eight-seminar requirement.
- Identify a major advisor, and working with the advisor, begin constructing the qualifying exam committee and defining the specialty field and the allied or non-U.S. field for the exams.
- Meet with the qualifying exam committee by the end of the second semester to prepare the qualifying exam contract.

Second year:

- Take additional 600- and 700-level seminars as may be necessary to meet the department's requirements or the recommendations of the qualifying exam committee.
- Arrange with the staff assistant to schedule exams for either August-September or January.

Third year:

- Take qualifying exams (either August-September or January).
- Create a dissertation committee.
- Working with the dissertation advisor, write a dissertation prospectus to present to the committee.
- Apply for external grants to underwrite research expenses.
- Launch dissertation research.

Fourth year:

- Continue dissertation research.

Fifth and sixth years:

- Continue research.
- Commence drafting and revising chapters.
- Work with dissertation advisor and at least one additional member of the committee to revise and polish dissertation chapters.

Seventh year:

- Write, revise, and polish the dissertation.
- Submit for defense.
- Graduate.
- Apply for jobs.

Eighth year:

- Find job!