

**Graduate Handbook
Department of History
University of Kentucky**

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I. Introduction

The History graduate program offers the Master of Arts (M.A.) and the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees.

The department's students pursue careers both as academic historians at colleges and universities and as researchers and scholars with libraries and archives, historical societies, and other public and private institutions. Hence, the department aims to train its students as researchers, teachers, and engaged citizens. The core of the graduate program is built around graduate seminars. Students must excel in these courses to advance in the program.

Progression through the program is governed by three sets of requirements. One set is established by the Graduate School and these are explained in the **Graduate School Bulletin**, which is available at: <http://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-school-bulletin/>. (Many of these requirements are also discussed in the pages that follow.) The History Department has a second set of requirements which apply to all History graduate students. Finally, within the department's graduate program, specific concentrations have additional requirements for those students studying in these fields.

Student Responsibility

The rules, regulations, procedures, and deadlines of the graduate program may be confusing and sometimes difficult to interpret. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the **student** to be informed about policies and procedures. The Graduate School and the department will not waive a regulation because a student is unaware of it or asserts that information was not presented by advisors or other authorities. Therefore, students in the graduate program must become familiar with this handbook.

II. Administrative and Academic Structure

All University of Kentucky graduate programs operate under rules and procedures that are established by the university's Graduate Council and that are administered by the Graduate School. Each department has a Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), who is responsible for overseeing a department's graduate program and who works with the Graduate School's officials and staff. The DGS is appointed by the departmental chair.

In the History Department, the DGS chairs the department's Graduate Committee, which exercises responsibility for admissions, funding decisions, and the graduate curriculum.

The DGS and the Chair of the department also serve as mediators, and students with concerns about any aspect of the graduate program should contact them.

History's departmental manager is Tina Hagee, who assists the Chair and the DGS. She advises graduate students about departmental and Graduate School requirements, deadlines, and procedures and maintains graduate student files.

Graduate Faculty

The University of Kentucky maintains a "Graduate Faculty." Only those faculty members who have Graduate Faculty status may serve on graduate student advisory committees. They are also responsible for teaching the graduate courses at the 600- and 700-level. Full members of the Graduate Faculty are usually the department's associate and full professors. Assistant professors are usually associate members. Associate members may serve on M.A. and Ph.D. committees and may chair M.A. committees.

Faculty Advisor

The Director of Graduate Studies serves as a technical advisor for all graduate students, but each student has a faculty advisor (or major professor or committee chair) who counsels the student on the academic aspects

of the program of study. Usually, a student either selects or is assigned an advisor upon admission. Students may certainly change advisors, but to do this they should secure the approval of a new major professor and the approval of the DGS.

Advisor/Advisee Relationship

Choosing an advisor is an important decision as the advisor may have a significant bearing on student success.

Advisors should:

- maintain regular communication with advisees while in residence or on leave;
- be aware of advisee course choices;
- be mindful of departmental and Graduate School deadlines;
- check GPAs and other indicators of student performance; and
- mentor advisees about professional norms and guide them into the profession.

Advisees should:

- initiate regular communication with the advisor;
- inform the advisor of the courses in which the student plans to enroll;
- learn and comply with departmental and Graduate School deadlines; and
- explore opportunities for professional achievement and development.

M.A. and Ph.D. Advisory Committees

Students form advisory committees for both the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. M.A. committees must have three members (and may have four). One member, at least, must be a full member of the Graduate Faculty. One member may also be from outside the department.

The Ph. D. advisory committee has a core of four members. All members of the core must be members of the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kentucky and three (including the major professor) must possess full Graduate Faculty status. One member of the committee must be from outside the Department of History and must also hold Graduate Faculty status.

If it is necessary to make changes in the composition of the committee because a faculty member resigns from the university or is on leave, the student will submit a request to form another committee (see section XVIII for information on the online request form).

Petitioning the Graduate Committee

The Graduate Handbook sets forth the rules and procedures for the department's graduate program. Yet, some flexibility, we realize, is also necessary. Hence, students may petition the Graduate Committee to ask for an exemption from a specific rule. Petitions should be addressed to the Director of Graduate Studies. A letter of support (or an email message) from the student's advisor is often helpful.

III. Grading System

Grades and Grade Point Average

The following scale applies to grading in graduate courses:

A	high achievement	4 grade points per credit
B	satisfactory achievement	3 grade points per credit
C	minimum passing grade	2 grade points per credit
E	Failure	0 grade points per credit
I	Incomplete	see below
S	Satisfactory	see below
U	Unsatisfactory	see below

D grades may not be awarded to graduate students.

Incompletes

A grade of I (incomplete) may be assigned to a graduate student if part of the work of a course remains unfinished and if there is a reasonable possibility that a passing grade will result from completion of the work. Incompletes which have not been replaced by a regular letter grade within 12 months shall be changed to a grade of E by the University Registrar.

NOTE: The Graduate School requires that all I grades must be resolved to a regular letter grade before a student may sit for an MA examination, sit for the Ph.D. qualifying examination, or file for a degree.

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

Grades of S (satisfactory) or of U (unsatisfactory) are given for Residence Credit designations such as 767 or in graduate courses which carry no credit. Grades of S or U may be given in graduate seminars, independent work courses, and research courses when the work extends beyond the normal limits of a semester or summer term. The project must be substantially continuous in its progress. All S and U grades must be removed prior to the final examination (or qualifying examination for doctoral students), except for those given for Residence Credit.

IV. Probation and Termination

The Graduate School requires graduate students who have completed 12 hours or more to maintain a 3.0 cumulative GPA. Students who fall below this will be placed on scholastic probation and will have one semester or the equivalent (9 hours) to move off of probation. If probation is not removed, students will be dismissed from the Graduate School.

Students may also be terminated for failing to make satisfactory progress toward earning the doctoral degree. This includes:

- Failing to sit for qualifying exams after four years in the doctoral program;
- Failing to submit a prospectus to the dissertation advisor within six months of passing the qualifying exam;
- Failing to make sufficient progress on researching and writing the dissertation within three years of passing the qualifying exams; and
- Twice failing the M.A. final examination, the qualifying examination, or the dissertation defense.

V. Transfer of Credits for the MA Degree

The Graduate School will allow students to transfer up to 9 hours of post-baccalaureate credits earned in another graduate degree program at UK or another accredited university. The transfer requires the approval of the DGS. For more specific requirements, consult the **Graduate School Bulletin**.

VI. Course Loads and Full-Time Status

To be eligible for university services such as the student health service and library borrowing privileges, students must be enrolled in the university. Furthermore, both the Graduate School and the department expect students to pursue degrees as full-time students. The normal academic load for M.A. students and for doctoral students who have not yet taken qualifying exams is nine credit hours. The Graduate School requires dissertators (post-qualifying exam students) to register for two credits of HIS 767 each semester until the student has successfully defended the dissertation.

The department makes an exception to the nine credit-hour requirement for doctoral students who have finished their coursework and are preparing for qualifying exams. These students should consult with the DGS about their options. In addition, students who face circumstances that may require a reduced load may petition the DGS to register for fewer than nine hours.

VII. Satisfactory Progress

As students advance through the graduate program, the department expects them to make “satisfactory progress” toward their degree. Failure to make good progress will put a student at a disadvantage when the department makes annual funding decisions (see section XVII). Ultimately, students who do not progress in a timely fashion may be dropped from the program.

Definition of Satisfactory Progress

“Satisfactory progress” is measured in several ways.

- 1) Course loads:
MA students and doctoral students who are preparing for the qualifying exams ordinarily register for 9 credits each semester. Exceptions may be possible for students preparing for the qualifying exams who have finished their required coursework, but this requires DGS approval.
- 2) Incompletes:
Incompletes are sometimes necessary, but students who take more than one incomplete in a semester or who do not complete the necessary work in a timely way are not considered to be making satisfactory progress. (Exceptions include incompletes necessary for medical reasons or for difficult personal circumstances.)
- 3) Program Requirements:
The Master’s Degree – Most students should finish the MA degree requirements by the end of the fourth semester. Students in fields which require extensive language training may need more than four semesters to finish, but they should not take longer than six semesters.

Ph.D. Qualifying Examinations – Time limits for taking qualifying examinations may vary somewhat by specific fields. In brief:
 - Students concentrating in American history who have earned the M.A. degree at UK should take their exams by the end of their sixth semester (which means four semesters as an M.A. student and

two as a doctoral student). Those who have earned the M.A. in History at another institution should sit for the exams by the end of their fourth semester in the doctoral program.

- Students concentrating in Modern European History who earned the M.A. at UK should sit for the exams after three more semesters of coursework and reading. Those who have earned the M.A. in History at another institution should sit for the exams by the end of their fourth semester in the doctoral program.
- Students concentrating in Pre-Modern and Early Modern European History who earned the M.A. at UK should sit for the exams after three more semesters of coursework and reading. Those who have earned the M.A. in History at another institution should sit for the exams by the end of their fourth semester in the doctoral program.

VIII. Leave of Absence and Readmission

Students wishing to take a leave of absence should contact the DGS to seek approval for the leave prior to the beginning of the semester in question. If such leave is approved, the DGS will contact the Graduate School admissions officer who will make the necessary changes regarding the student's Graduate School status. No more than two consecutive and four total semesters in leave of absence status may be requested.

Post-qualifying doctoral students are not eligible for a leave of absence.

International students considering a leave of absence are strongly encouraged to discuss their plans with the Office of International Affairs, Department of Immigration Services.

Students who sit out for one or more semesters without receiving an approved leave of absence will need to complete a new application and pay the application fee in order to be considered for readmission.

IX. Courses

History 606 – This is a course on historical methods. It is required of all students.

Reading seminars – 600-level readings courses introduce students to the major historical problems of a field. They examine major works, conflicting interpretations, and the issues historians are currently debating. Reading seminars require written work such as book reviews, longer interpretive essays, and, often, a historiographical review essay. These seminars are designed to teach students to read, listen, and think like a historian.

Research seminars – 700-level research seminars are designed to teach students the methods of historical research and scholarly writing. Students are expected to produce a research paper of about 20-30 pages that makes an argument based on extensive research in primary sources.

Undergraduate lecture/discussion courses – The department's 500-level courses are designed primarily for advanced undergraduate students, but graduate students may take these courses for graduate credit. Graduate students in these courses will write an additional paper as part of the course requirements.

Independent study – History 695 is the department's course designation for independent study or supervised readings.

History 750 Professional Development Seminar for Doctoral Students – Entering students must take History 750, a two-semester, one-credit Professional Development seminar.

History 768 Master's Thesis Research – M.A. students who are writing an M.A. thesis or an M.A. essay may register for HIS 768. This may be repeated for up to 12 hours. (Be aware, however, that the Graduate School requires that minimum course requirements be met through regular classes and seminars other than 768 or 695 independent study credits.)

History 767 Dissertation Residency Credit – Doctoral students who are sitting for the qualifying exams or who have passed the exams register for two credits of HIS 767 each semester until they have defended their dissertation.

X. Foreign Language Requirement

M.A. Requirements

The History Department requires all M.A. students to demonstrate a basic language proficiency. Usually, this means demonstrating a reading knowledge of a modern foreign language. Some programs within the department have established additional requirements, and a student's M.A. advisory committee may also establish additional requirements.

The following options satisfy the basic language requirement:

- Completion of one of the accelerated graduate level language courses (011 courses) with a grade of B or better.
- Completion of the fourth semester of a foreign language with a grade of B or better at an accredited college or university.
- Completion of a more advanced foreign language course (beyond the fourth semester level, with all coursework and readings in the target language) with a grade of B or better at an accredited college or university.
- Completion of an accelerated graduate level language course for reading knowledge with a grade of B or better, at another accredited university.
- Transfer of a language taken to satisfy the requirements for an M.A. degree at another accredited university.
- Completion of special examinations given for graduate reading courses with a grade of B or better. Forms may be obtained from the Office of the Registrar, Funkhouser Building. Other types of special examinations are scheduled in the Graduate School.
- Completion of a placement test administered by the foreign language programs of the University, and testing to a level beyond the fourth semester of foreign language study, which is the equivalent of a grade of B or better. This method may be appropriate for students with significant life experience in the foreign language culture, and requires the approval and recommendation of the Director of Graduate Studies.
- Non-native speakers of English may satisfy the foreign language requirement by presenting a TOEFL score of 550 or above (the equivalent score on the computer version of the TOEFL is 213 and on the internet-based test is 79) or a IELTS score of 6.5 or above.

Additional M.A. Language Requirements for Specific Fields

Pre-Modern Europe – one modern language and one primary source language (either Latin or Greek). Proficiency in the primary source language will be determined by a language exam administered by a member of the Classics Department or by a satisfactory score on the Toronto Latin Exam.

Early Modern Europe – one modern language unless the student's committee establishes additional requirements.

Modern Europe – one modern language unless the student’s committee establishes additional requirements.

Ph.D. Language Requirement

Doctoral students must also satisfy the basic language proficiency. All students who have earned the M.A. degree in History at UK will have met this requirement. Students entering the program with an M.A. from another institution may satisfy the requirement in the ways listed above.

Additional Ph.D. Language Requirements for Specific Fields

Pre-Modern Europe – demonstrate competency in two modern research languages as well as all relevant primary source languages. Proficiency in the primary source language will be determined by a language exam administered by a member of the Classics Department or by a satisfactory score on the Toronto Latin Exam.

Early Modern Europe – demonstrate competency in two modern languages as well as all relevant primary source languages that the student’s committee requires.

Modern Europe – demonstrate competency in one modern language unless the student’s committee establishes additional requirements.

XI. The M.A. Program

The M.A. program offers study of historical scholarship in a field of history (or fields of history), training in research methods, and acquisition of research skills. It culminates in a major effort at original research and writing. The History Department offers three options for obtaining the M.A. degree. Students interested in a terminal M.A. degree may select any of the three options, but students who hope to be admitted to the doctoral program **must pursue** either Option 1 or Option 2.

Option 1 is the **thesis option** which requires a formal M.A. thesis. Please note that the Graduate School defines this option as “Plan A”. Options 2 and 3 are defined as “Plan B” or **non-thesis options** by the Graduate School. Option 2 requires an M.A. essay. Option 3 requires three major papers produced in graduate seminars. The specific requirements are discussed below.

Option 1:

- Complete at least 30 semester credit hours of graduate course work (or 10 courses) with a standing of 3.0 (B) or higher.
- Take History 606.
- Take at least fifteen hours at the 600 or 700 level.
- Take at least one 700-level research seminar.
- Take at least two-thirds of the credit hours in Department of History courses.
- Take at least two-thirds of the credit hours in regular courses (i.e. not independent study courses or HIS 768).
- Write an M.A. thesis under the supervision of the M.A. advisor. The thesis should be about 60-100 pages in length with Chicago-style citations and a formal bibliography. It should aim to be an original work of scholarship based heavily on research in primary sources.
- Defend the thesis in an oral examination before an advisory committee that will consist of the M.A. advisor and two other faculty members. The exam will focus on the thesis but the student may also be examined over the M.A. coursework.
- Meet all language requirements.

Option 2:

- Complete 30 hours of graduate coursework (or 10 courses) with a standing of 3.0 (B) or better.
- Take a minimum of 21 hours of courses at the 600- and 700-level.
- Take History 606.
- Take a minimum of two 700-level research seminars.
- Take a minimum of 21 hours in regular courses (i.e. not independent study courses or HIS 768).
- Write an M.A. essay under the supervision of the M.A. advisor. The M.A. essay should be about 45- 60 pages in length with Chicago-style citations and a formal bibliography. It should aim to be an original work of scholarship based heavily on research in primary sources.
- Defend the M.A. essay in an oral examination. The exam will focus on the essay but the faculty advisory committee may also examine the student over the M.A. coursework.
- Meet all language requirements.

Option 3:

- Complete 36 hours of graduate coursework (or 12 courses) with a standing of 3.0 (B) or better.
- Take a minimum of 24 hours at the 600 and 700 level.
- Take History 606.
- Take a minimum of two 700-level research seminars.
- Take a minimum of 24 hours in regular courses (i.e. not independent study courses or HIS 768).
- Submit three papers to the advisory committee. The papers must have been written for graduate credit classes that were taken as part of the student's M.A. program in History at the University of Kentucky. Two of the papers must be research papers that demonstrate competence in historical research and writing and the third should be a historiographical review essay of at least twenty pages (the M.A. advisor must approve the papers in advance of scheduling the oral examination).
- Pass an oral examination over the papers and the student's coursework.
- Meet all language requirements.

Summary of History M.A. Options

Required Hours	Option 1 Thesis	Option 2 Essay	Option 3 Three Papers
Course work and final project	30 + Thesis	30 + Essay	36 + 3 papers
Minimum History Courses	15	21	24
Minimum 600 and 700 Seminars	16	21	24
Minimum Regular Courses*	16	21	24

*A “regular course” is a course or seminar offered at 500, 600, or 700 level. HIS 695, HIS 768 do not qualify as regular courses.

M.A. Progress Meeting

At the end of the second semester, all M.A. students must meet with their advisor to discuss their progress in the program, what remaining requirements the student must meet to graduate, and which M.A. option the student will pursue. The student and the advisor must complete the M.A. Progress Review Form.

M.A. Written Work

All three M.A. options require a substantial piece of written work that will be presented to the M.A. committee for the final examination. For all three options, this work shall contain a title page, consecutive pagination, and other standard parts of formal research papers. It will also follow an accepted academic style such as The Chicago Manual of Style or A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations.

Other guidelines include:

Thesis – Students writing an M.A. thesis must work with their advisor to arrive at an acceptable thesis topic. The thesis:

- Should be based on primary research, while demonstrating a command of relevant secondary sources.
- Should demonstrate the ability of the student to pursue historical research.
- Should demonstrate an ability to render sound historical judgments.
- Should be written in clear, well-organized prose.
- Should be about 60 to 100 pages in length.

The thesis will be prepared under the supervision of the advisor, and once an acceptable draft has been completed, it should be submitted to the other members of the M.A. committee for comments, suggestions, and revisions. The student will then defend the thesis in an oral examination with the M.A. committee.

Once approved, the final copy of the thesis must adhere to the Graduate School rules, which are explained in the guide “Instructions for the Preparation of a Master’s Thesis” (<http://gradschool.uky.edu/thesis-dissertation-preparation/>).

Essay – Students writing an M.A. essay must also work with their advisor to arrive at an acceptable essay topic. Ideally, the essay should be an expansion of a research paper produced for a 700-level research seminar. The essay:

- Should be based on primary research, while demonstrating a command of relevant secondary sources.
- Should demonstrate the ability of the student to pursue historical research.
- Should demonstrate an ability to render sound historical judgments.
- Should be written in clear, well-organized prose.
- Should be about 45-60 pages in length.

Three Papers – Students seeking a terminal M.A. degree may demonstrate research proficiencies by submitting three papers produced in their 600- and 700-level History seminars while in the M.A. program. Two of the papers must be research papers. The third may be a substantial historiographical essay. The selections must be approved by the M.A. advisor and the advisor (or other committee members) may ask for revisions to the papers before the final examination. The papers:

- Should demonstrate an ability to work with primary sources and to discuss historiographical debates.
- Should be well written and well-organized.
- Should demonstrate an ability to render sound historical judgments.

The Oral Examination

M.A. advisory committees will decide at the end of the exam whether to pass or fail the candidate. The majority opinion of the committee prevails. If the committee is evenly divided, the candidate fails. A second examination is possible. A third is not allowed. Committees may also request changes and revisions to the M.A. thesis, the M.A. essay, or the three M.A. papers. Students have 60 days to make the changes.

Copies of Thesis, Essay, or Papers

The student must supply the departmental manager with an electronic copy of the thesis or essay or copies of the three papers.

Time Limit for Master's Degree

M.A. students have up to six years to complete all requirements for the degree. (Extensions are possible, but must be approved by the DGS and the Dean of the Graduate School.) Students hoping to enter the Ph.D. program or who are applying for funding assistance should be aware that the department expects most M.A. students to finish their M.A. degrees in four semesters. Students who need to satisfy language proficiencies may take up to six semesters.

XII. Admission from Master's to Ph.D. Program

M.A. students who wish to be admitted to the Ph.D. program must:

- 1) successfully defend the M.A. thesis or the M.A. research essay;
- 2) have a 3.5 GPA in the 500-, 600-, and 700-level classes and seminars taken as part of the M.A. program.
- 3) finish the M.A. degree in a timely manner.
- 4) submit a letter to the DGS requesting admission to the Ph.D. program that indicates which field of study the student plans to concentrate on in the doctoral program. The letter should explain if the student has developed new interests since entering the M.A. program and it should present a tentative timetable for moving to the qualifying exams.

The Graduate Committee will decide whether to grant admission based on:

- 1) The recommendation of the student's MA advisor and committee members.
- 2) The student's performance in 600- and 700-level seminars. Has the student demonstrated an ability to listen, think, read, and discuss like a historian? Can the student offer a cogent and accurate explanation of a book's argument and fit it into the larger historiography? Can the student work with primary sources to construct an original argument or examine a major research question? Can the student produce work written in reasonably polished, or even elegant, prose?
- 3) The quality of the written work presented for the M.A. exam.
- 4) How well the student's research interests fit the department's strengths.
- 5) The availability of funding support.

XIII. The Doctoral Program

The Ph.D. degree is granted after the student has demonstrated an extensive knowledge of specialized and general fields of history or related disciplines and a capacity to pursue research in these fields. The department seeks to train outstanding students who will gain a firm base of historical knowledge, become skilled researchers and writers of historical prose, and master both traditional and newer methods of historical inquiry.

In broad terms, the doctoral program consists of two stages. One involves meeting specific requirements leading to the qualifying examinations. These requirements include:

- Complete History 606 (unless the student has taken it for the M.A. degree).
- Meet the Graduate School's residency requirement. This stipulates that students with a master's degree in History from the University of Kentucky or from another accredited school need 18 hours of coursework before they may sit for the qualifying exams.
- Complete the one-credit Professional Development Seminar (HIS750).

- Complete a minimum of eight 600- and 700-level seminars. (History 606 counts toward this requirement; HIS750 does not; HIS 695 independent study courses do not unless approved by the DGS.) Students who have completed their M.A. degrees at UK may apply all 600- and 700-level seminars completed as an M.A. student toward this requirement.
- Achieve a grade point average in the 600- and 700-level seminars of 3.6 or higher.
- Meet specific field requirements. Students specializing in U.S. history must take History 640 and 641, an additional readings seminar in the pre-1877 period, and an additional readings seminar in the post-1877 period; students specializing in pre-modern and early modern European history must take a minimum of one semester of History 705, the Pre-Modern European Colloquium (unless is not offered).
- Take two 700-level research seminars. Students who have completed two 700-level seminars while earning the M.A. at UK need take only one additional research seminar. Students who have written an M.A. thesis in History at another institution may petition to take only one 700-level research seminar.

A second set of requirements pertains to the post-qualifying examination stage of doctoral study. These requirements include:

- Prepare and defend a dissertation prospectus;
- Enroll in HIS 767 for two credit hours each semester until finishing the dissertation;
- Research, write, and defend a dissertation.

The Advisor

Throughout all stages of the doctoral program, the student must work closely with the faculty advisor. If the advisor retires or leaves the university, the advisor may continue to serve on the advisory committee (with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School) but may not serve as the committee's sole chair.

The Advisory Committee

The advisory committee should be formed during second semester or at the start of the third semester of doctoral study. Committees will consist of four or five faculty members and one member of the committee must be from outside the History Department (and must hold Graduate Faculty status). The student will submit an online request to form the committee (see section XVII).

XIV. Qualifying Examinations

All Ph.D. students take a qualifying examination comprised of written and oral components. The qualifying examination is intended to test the ability of graduate students to think historically, that is, to use the knowledge they have mastered to fashion historical arguments. The student's advisory committee will create, administer, and evaluate the written and oral examinations. Different concentrations within the doctoral program such as U.S. or Modern Europe have specific field requirements for the written examinations, but in all cases the fields should be broadly constructed. It is the responsibility of the chair of the advisory committee to ensure that the fields meet this requirement.

Qualifying Examination Contract

Once formed, the advisory committee should meet with the student to complete the qualify examination contract (contract forms are available at the graduate page of the department's website). At the meeting, the advisory committee should define the written examination fields, make recommendations on courses necessary to prepare for the fields, designate how the reading lists will be prepared, and discuss faculty expectations about what will constitute satisfactory answers.

The advisor, the student, and the DGS must sign the contract.

Qualifying Examination Periods

There are two preferred qualifying exam periods: August 15-September 15 and January 5-31, but students may petition the DGS to take the exams at some other time.

Preparing for the Qualifying Examination

Students prepare for the exam fields by taking courses and by extensive reading on their own. Students must work with the faculty examiners to prepare reading lists for the exams, and this should be done well in advance of the exam. In addition, some faculty members will help students prepare by making available sample questions, holding mock exams, or requiring written work such as book reviews or historiographical essays. Students sometimes also form study groups to help prepare for the exams.

Qualifying Examination Procedures and Requirements

1. The first steps, as already noted, are to select an advisor and form an advisory committee, hold the contract meeting, and determine the appropriate exam period.
2. Formal authorization to hold the qualifying examination must be granted by **both** the DGS and by the Graduate School. The DGS will consult with the advisor and possibly other members of the committee as to whether the student should be allowed to proceed with the exams. If the DGS approves, the student may then complete the Graduate School's online request form. Usually, this is approved (unless the student is carrying an incomplete grade, has not satisfied the language requirement, has not met the Graduate School's residency requirement, or has not met the department's eight-seminar requirement with a GPA of 3.6 or higher).
3. The written examinations consist of essay questions designed to ascertain the student's ability to analyze and synthesize information and to participate in a range of historiographical interpretations and debates. Exams may be a minimum of four hours and a maximum of seven hours. Students concentrating in American history have the option of writing a more extensive essay (or essays) in an exam period of 48 to 72 hours.
4. All written exams must be taken within a ten-day period. Students must work with the departmental manager to determine the dates they will take the written examinations. Students also arrange with the departmental manager about when to pick up the examination questions and when to deliver the completed exam.
5. The oral portion of the examination may last from two to three hours. Ideally, the oral exam should follow within five days of the last written exam. It must be held within 14 days of the last written examination. The oral exam will usually focus on the answers to the written examinations, but faculty examiners may also ask about questions that a student did not choose to answer.
6. If in advance of the oral examination a majority of the examining professors determine that the written examinations are not acceptable, the committee may elect to cancel the oral examination.
7. Students **must pass all fields** in order to pass the examination.
8. The advisory committee may make one of four possible decisions. These are: 1) pass, 2) pass with distinction (in the case of an exceptional performance), 3) fail the entire exam, or 4) fail one of the fields. Should a student fail one of the fields, the committee must decide whether the student will re-take all of the written examinations or simply the examination that the student did not pass.

A student who wishes to challenge the committee's decision may appeal to the DGS.

Should there be a second examination, the student, with the approval of the DGS and the Dean of the Graduate School, may reconstitute the committee. The second examination must be scheduled no sooner than four months after the first oral exam and no longer than twelve months afterward.

9. Graduate School rules permit two opportunities to pass the qualifying exam. A third attempt is not allowed.

Specific Field Requirements

Pre-Modern and Early Modern Europe: Students will prepare for exams in three fields (either the first or the second field can be the “major field”):

- 1) A field that is chronologically defined.
- 2) A field that is chronological or thematic with chronological breadth. This field may be defined comparatively.
- 3) A third (outside) field that can be defined in one of the following ways:
 - (a) Geographically outside Europe.
 - (b) Europe, but significantly outside the chronological range of the first two fields.
 - (c) Comparatively, with the understanding that substantial aspects of the readings will be in non-European areas.
 - (d) In a discipline outside of History, or in a methodology that is not practiced by all historians.

Reading lists will vary in length, and in the balance of monographs, periodical literature, and primary sources. These exams are intended to test whether students have gained a good understanding of the historiographic foundations of a field, are familiar with the scholarly works that have had a notable impact, and are familiar with the significant debates among scholars in the field. Qualifying fields also are an opportunity to consider the range of methodologies practiced in a field, and the primary sources with which most scholars in the field will normally be familiar.

Modern Europe: Students in Modern European history will be examined in three fields:

- 1) A major field that is chronologically defined.
- 2) A second field that has chronological and topical breadth. This field may be defined comparatively.
- 3) A third (outside) field that can be defined in one of the following ways:
 - (a) Geographically outside Europe.
 - (b) Chronologically before 1700 but within Europe.
 - (c) Comparatively, with the understanding that substantial aspects of the readings will be in non-European areas.
 - (d) In a discipline outside of History.

For a major field, students should read approximately 100 books and/or equivalent articles and book chapters. For the two additional fields, students should expect to read approximately 50 books or equivalent articles/book chapters. Students will work with members of the faculty to determine reading lists that best suit their intellectual goals and objectives.

American history: Students concentrating in American history will be examined in three fields. They may also be asked to write a historiographical essay as part of the qualifying exam.

The exam fields include:

- 1) A General field that covers American history either from the Colonial period to 1877 or from 1865 to the present. This field may have one or two faculty examiners. The student and the examiners may decide on a conventional 7-hour exam period or an examination written over 48- or 72 hours.
- 2) A Specialty field, which may be constructed chronologically or thematically, but it should be defined broadly and should be supervised by the major professor. A thematic field such as diplomatic or African American should encompass the chronological span of American history. This field may have one or two faculty examiners.
- 3) A third field must be a non-U.S. field and it should also be broadly constructed. Students may elect to do a comparative field as long as the focus is not largely U.S. history.

The historiographical essay, if the committee requires it, should be a 20-30 page paper that examines the major literature and scholarly debates pertaining to the student's dissertation topic. The research and writing of the paper will be supervised by the major professor, but the paper (once it has been approved by the major professor) is to be distributed to all members of the qualifying committee at least two weeks in advance of the start of the written examinations.

XV. The Dissertation

Students finish doctoral study by researching and writing a dissertation. Ideally, students should have a topic in hand before the examinations and might even have begun writing a prospectus. If possible, students should be aware of what manuscript and archival resources are available for a dissertation project and what grants and fellowships might be available to assist their research. Whatever the topic, it must be one that the advisor has special competence to direct and has agreed to supervise.

Some guidelines for the dissertation include:

- The dissertation should be based upon primary research.
- The dissertation should be an original contribution to a larger debate or field of study.
- The dissertation should demonstrate the student's ability to carry out historical research.
- The dissertation should be written in clear prose and organized in a coherent manner.
- The citations and bibliography must adhere to Chicago-style standards.
- Dissertations are generally about 200 to 400 pages in length, though they can be shorter or longer.

The Prospectus

After deciding on a dissertation topic with the graduate advisor, the first step is to write and defend a dissertation prospectus. This should be presented to the advisory committee for its approval within two months of completing the qualifying examination.

NOTE: students who have not submitted a prospectus to their advisor within six months after passing the qualifying examinations may be dropped from the program.

The prospectus should define the topic, explain the contribution of the dissertation to historical knowledge, and propose a strategy for research. It should include the following:

- Brief description of the project.
- Research questions and problems the dissertation will examine.
- Relationship of the project to the relevant historiography.
- Contribution the work will make and its significance.
- The extent and nature of the manuscript collections and research sources available for researching the dissertation.
- Tentative chapter outline of work planned.
- Methodology (analytical and interpretative strategies).
- Possible external funding sources.
- Bibliography divided into primary and secondary sources.

The prospectus is preliminary and its approval does not preclude alterations of topic or research design during the course of the research and writing of the dissertation.

The prospectus approval sheet must be signed by the student, the advisor, and the DGS and it **must** be accompanied by a copy of the prospectus.

The Role of the Advisor

A dissertation is a work of independent research but one carried out under the direction of a faculty advisor. It is the advisor's role to mentor, supervise, question, and criticize. Advisors may recommend or insist on changes. They may recommend or insist on additional research. The dissertation advisor also decides when the draft is ready to be distributed to other members of the committee. The other members of the committee may recommend revisions as well.

The Role of the Dissertator

The dissertator must work closely with the advisor and be willing to listen to and accept criticisms. Some advisors prefer to see each individual chapter. Still others like to see a few chapters at a time. Whatever the case, students should present the advisor with clearly written chapters that are paginated and that contain the necessary scholarly apparatus. A bibliography may not be necessary for early drafts, but no student should submit drafted chapters for review without complete citations.

Students should expect that the advisor (and also other committee members) will be available to meet with them to discuss their research. They should also expect to have written materials returned in a timely manner with clearly articulated comments. Students who find it difficult to contact an advisor or who must wait an inordinate amount of time for comments on written drafts should bring these problems to the attention of the DGS.

Time Limit for Finishing the Dissertation

The Graduate School stipulates that a dissertation must be completed and defended within five years of the qualifying examination. Students who fail to complete the dissertation within the five-year period may be dropped from the program or granted an extension. Extensions require the approval of the advisor, the DGS, and the Graduate School. Oftentimes, the granting of the extension may be contingent upon the student re-taking the qualifying examination.

The History Department will seek an extension only if the student has drafted approximately one-half of the dissertation and if the advisor deems the drafted portions acceptable work.

Annual Progress Reports

Dissertators are asked to submit annual progress reports on their research and writing to their advisor and the DGS. The reports are usually only a half-page or so in length, but students who do not submit them may not be allowed to register for HIS 767.

Third-year review

Three years following the qualifying examination, students must meet with their advisor for a review of the dissertation project. At this meeting, the student should explain what research has been completed, what research remains to be completed, and what portions of the dissertation have been drafted. The student should also present an anticipated time-line for finishing the dissertation. If the advisor and other committee members believe that this progress is inadequate and that the student is not likely to finish the dissertation within the five-year time-to-degree window, they may recommend to the DGS that the student be dropped from the program.

The Dissertation Defense

The final step in winning approval of the dissertation is the dissertation defense (or final examination). Arranging for and scheduling the defense requires advance notice and multiple approvals. The steps include:

- 1) First, the advisor and two committee members must approve the scheduling of the defense. This requires that they have read the dissertation and have agreed that it is “defensible.” If they ask for substantial revisions, the student should first make the necessary changes and then schedule the defense (again, with approval of the advisor and the two committee members).
- 2) Once a student has three approvals, the student will meet with the departmental manager to discuss the deadlines and procedures for scheduling the defense (see information below at section XVIII).
- 3) The student then submits the online request to schedule the defense. Once this is approved, the Graduate Dean will appoint an additional voting member of the advisory committee (referred to as the Outside Examiner or Graduate School Examiner). With the appointment of the additional member, the student will work with the committee members to establish a date and time for the exam. The exam date must also be approved by the Graduate School.
- 4) At least two weeks in advance of the defense, all members of the committee must be presented with a completed draft of the dissertation (i.e. a draft with a title page, full citations, a complete bibliography).
- 5) All committee members – except the Outside Examiner – may request revisions to the dissertation.
- 6) Defenses are public events and must take place while the University is in session. They must also take place at least eight days before the last day of classes of the semester.
- 7) At the dissertation defense, the advisory committee may accept or reject the dissertation. The decision will be based on a majority vote of the committee. If the committee is evenly divided, the candidate fails.
- 8) In the event of failure, the advisory committee recommends to the Dean of the Graduate School conditions under which the candidate may be reexamined, if reexamination is deemed appropriate. When conditions set by the Dean of the Graduate School have been met, the candidate may be reexamined. The minimum time between examinations is four months. A second examination must be taken within one year after the first examination. A third examination is not permitted.
- 9) The committee may also ask for revisions to be completed within 60 days.

- 10) The final draft must be approved by the committee members, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Graduate School. It must also conform to Graduate School instructions, which are available at <http://gradschool.uky.edu/thesis-dissertation-preparation/>.

XVI. Funding Support

The University and the History Department make available several forms of financial support, including dissertation travel grants, fellowships, and teaching assistantships. The various forms of support are described below.

Students generally are eligible for up to five years of financial assistance in the form of university or department assistantships and fellowships which include a stipend and a tuition scholarship. Students who receive extramural grants and fellowships will retain eligibility for their maximum intramural assistance.

Fellowships – The History Department and the College of Arts and Sciences award on a competitive basis one-semester and full-year non-service fellowships. These include the department's one-semester Bryan Dissertation Fellowships, which are awarded each year to post-qualifying exam students who are researching or writing the doctoral dissertation.

Travel and Research Support – The History Department and the College of Arts and Sciences make available extensive travel support to graduate students who are participating in professional conferences or conducting doctoral dissertation research in domestic and foreign archives and libraries. All students are eligible for these awards, but generally the department seeks to support students who have passed the qualifying examinations and are making timely progress toward finishing the doctoral dissertation. Funding decisions are based on the number of students who are applying, the importance of the request to a student's program of study, and the quality of the applicant's previous work.

Research Assistantships -The Department of History does not have renewable research assistantship positions, but frequently faculty grants make possible some type of research assistantship, and often the department will supplement the stipend with a tuition scholarship.

Teaching Assistantships – These positions are the Department of History's major form of financial support. They cover tuition and the student health fee and carry a stipend of roughly \$16,000 per academic year. TAs work with faculty members in the introductory courses such as American history (HIS 108 and 109) or European history (HIS 104 and 105). They conduct discussion groups and grade papers and exams.

Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) Graduate Editorial Assistantship – The department annually names one post-qualifying exam student concentrating in American history to hold the KHS Graduate Editorial Assistantship. This is an eleven-month, twenty-hour per week appointment with an annual stipend of from \$18,000 to \$20,000.

XVII. Funding Selection Process

Funding selections are made by the department's Graduate Committee. The committee evaluates students who are in one of four categories. They are:

- 1) **New applicants:** Usually, the department will devote some of its assistantships to making offers to new students. These applicants are evaluated on the basis of their GPAs, GRE scores, preparation in necessary languages, the quality of the writing samples, and letters of recommendation in support of the applicant. In addition, the Graduate Committee also weighs how well a prospective applicant's research interests fit the department's scholarly strengths.

- 2) **Current students who are not funded:** These students will be evaluated based on:
- a) Grades – particularly in 600- and 700-level seminars in which students are expected to achieve a GPA of 3.6 or higher.
 - b) Performance in 600- and 700-level seminars. These seminars constitute the core of the department's training and students who perform well will demonstrate an ability to grasp and explain arguments of scholarly works, understand historiographical debates, situate works within these debates, and read and think like an historian. They will take an active part in seminar discussions; they will listen to their peers; they will seek to make the seminar a conversation focused on historical problems. In research seminars, they will demonstrate a zeal for digging into primary sources, an ability to construct an argument that explores a meaningful historical question, and a clear understanding of the relevant secondary sources. Additionally, they will present written work that is carefully proofread, appropriately documented, and written in clear, well-organized prose.
 - c) The quality of the MA thesis or the MA essay.
 - d) Timely progress, which is defined in a variety of ways:
 1. Completing the M.A. degree in four semesters. The committee makes exceptions for students who require extensive language training, but all students who hope to be competitive for funding are expected to finish the M.A. within six semesters.
 2. Sitting for the qualifying exams at the end of two semesters in the doctoral program if the student has earned an M.A. degree in History at UK or within three semesters if the M.A. was earned at another institution. Exceptions include the need to achieve language proficiencies required by a student's committee.
 3. Assembling an advisory committee and completing the qualifying exam contract by the end of their first year of the Ph.D. program or the beginning of the second year.

3. Students who are funded but have not passed qualifying exams: The department attempts to support students for the maximum number of semesters for which they are eligible for funding, but it cannot guarantee this. Furthermore, reappointment is contingent upon student achievement and progress to degree. Applicants who seek reappointment but who have not yet passed qualifying exams are evaluated based on the following criteria:

- a) Satisfactory performance as a TA, as evaluated by faculty supervisors.
- b) Grades – particularly in 600- and 700-level seminars in which students are expected to achieve a 3.6 GPA or higher.
- c) Performance in 600- and 700-level seminars (see 2b above).
- d) For those students who have recently finished the MA degree, the committee may assess the MA thesis or MA essay.
- e) Timely progress toward degrees, which is defined in a variety of ways:
 1. Completing the M.A. degree in four semesters. The committee makes exceptions for students who require extensive language training, but all students who hope to be competitive for funding are expected to finish the M.A. within six semesters.

2. Sitting for the qualifying exams at the end of two semesters in the doctoral program if the student has earned an M.A. degree in History at UK or within four semesters if the M.A. was earned the M.A. at another institution. Exceptions include the need to achieve language proficiencies required by a student's committee.
3. Assembling an advisory committee and completing the qualifying exam contract by the end of their first year of the Ph.D. program or the beginning of the second year.

4) Funded students who have passed the qualifying exams:

Dissertators are evaluated on criteria such as:

- a) Satisfactory performance as a TA, as evaluated by faculty supervisors.
- b) Submitting and defending a dissertation prospectus within 60 days of the qualifying exam.
- c) Completion of dissertation research.
- d) Applications for fellowships and grants.
- e) Number and quality of chapters submitted for review.

Applying for the Teaching Assistantship

Newly admitted students do not complete a separate application for funding. Current TAs must reapply for the teaching assistantship each year. Students who are currently enrolled but not funded are also welcome to apply for the TA positions. Usually the DGS will ask for applications early in the Spring term. The application consists of: 1) a cover sheet; 2) a c.v.; and 3) a brief "status report" indicating at what stage of the program the student is and what the student expects to accomplish in the following year.

Continuous funding: Normally, funding will be continuous, but this contingent on funding resources, satisfactory progress toward the degree, and prior performance as a teaching assistant.

Terms of appointment: Students who have been awarded an assistantship or fellowship may obtain additional employment or forms of financial support only with approval of the DGS and the Graduate School.

XVIII. Procedures for Scheduling Final Examinations, Forming Doctoral Advisory Committees, and Filing for a Degree

The Graduate School oversees and approves the scheduling of final examinations, qualifying examinations, the formation of doctoral advisory committees, and filing for a degree. It requires students to file an online request and these must be completed within the Graduate School's specified deadlines. Before completing the online request form, students must first meet with the departmental manager to review procedures and deadlines.

Scheduling the M.A. Final Examination

Students who wish to schedule the M.A. final examination must first have the approval of the M.A. advisor. The advisor and the M.A. committee members should have the thesis, essay, or three papers at least three weeks in advance of the exam date. The student should submit online request at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination (and the examination must be held no more than eight days before the end of the semester in which the degree is to be awarded).

The online request form for a final examination can be accessed via:

https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/MastersCommittee/Student/Selection_Screen.cfm .

Applying for the M.A. Degree/Ph.D. Degree

Students must file for the M.A./Ph.D. degree within thirty days after the beginning of the semester in which the degree will be taken. The appropriate forms are available at: <https://gradschool.uky.edu/studentforms>

Forming the Doctoral Advisory Committee

In order to create a committee, doctoral students submit the on-line "Doctoral Advisory Committee Request" at https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm

Scheduling the Qualifying Examination

The request to schedule the qualifying examination must be submitted at least two months in advance of the exams. The online form may be found at:

https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm

Scheduling the Dissertation Defense

- 1) Once three members of the committee have notified the DGS that the dissertation is suitable for a defense, the student may complete the online Notification of Intent to examine request (via: https://ris.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)
This must happen eight weeks in advance of the defense.
- 2) After the Dean of the Graduate School has appointed an Outside Examiner, the student will make available to all members of the advisory committee a copy of the dissertation that contains a title page, continuous pagination, a full bibliography, and otherwise conforms to the Graduate School rules.
- 3) The student will work with the departmental manager to establish a date and time for the dissertation defense. The date and time must be approved by the Graduate School at least two weeks in advance of the defense. The student must submit the request via: <https://gradschool.uky.edu/studentforms>
- 4) The final examinations are public events and must take place while the University is officially in session, but at least eight days before the last day of classes of the semester in which the student expects to graduate.