

Timeline and Checklist for Ph.D. Students

Students entering the doctoral program should in the first year map out a pathway to finishing the Ph.D. in five years, or, if they have earned the M.A. degree at UK, possibly in four years. Graduate study is highly individualized and not all students move through the program on the same schedule. But early planning will facilitate steady progress-to-degree. The guidelines below provide a framework while also listing basic requirements.

Year One

- 1) Accumulate the necessary hours of coursework to meet the Graduate School's pre-qualifying exam residency requirement. This requirement is usually an MA degree plus 18-hours of graduate level credit hours.
- 2) Take History 606 (unless you have done so as a UK MA student).
- 3) Fulfill the History 750 requirement.
- 4) Take at least one 700-level research seminar.
- 5) Discuss with your advisor what other courses might be best-suited for preparing for qualifying exams and specialized training.
- 6) Foreign language requirement (if not previously fulfilled as an MA student):
 - a) if you need to satisfy only the minimum requirement, review the options listed in the Graduate Handbook on how to do this;
 - b) if your advisor requires additional language training, consult with your advisor on how this should be done.
- 7) By the end of the second semester, form a Ph.D. advisory committee that includes your advisor, at least two other History faculty members, and one non-History faculty member. This committee must be approved by the Graduate School and the DGS. Forming the committee requires submission of an online request to the Graduate School.
- 8) Students who have earned the M.A. degree at the University of Kentucky should also complete the qualifying exam contract with the advisory committee by the end of the second semester.

Year Two

- 1) Complete the qualifying exam contract with members of the advisory committee (unless, of course, you did this in year one).
- 2) Continue specialized coursework and, if necessary, language training.
- 3) Begin discussing with your advisor possible dissertation topics.
- 4) Schedule qualifying exams. This requires completing an online request with the Graduate School, which will authorize scheduling the exams only with DGS approval.
- 5) Prepare for qualifying exams and, if possible, take the exams.

Year Three

- 1) Take qualifying exams (unless you have done this in year two).

- 2) In consultation with your advisor, draft the dissertation prospectus, circulate this to your committee members, and then defend the prospectus. Aim to defend it within two months off passing the qualifying exams.
- 3) Apply for internal and external grants and fellowships.
- 4) Commence dissertation research.

Year Four

- 1) Continue dissertation research and start writing. Meet with your advisor to determine when the advisor should begin reviewing drafted chapters.
- 2) Consider applying to teach a summer school class or possibly a special topics course pertaining to your research specialization. These opportunities are contingent upon the department's instructional needs.

Year Five

- 1) Write, revise, and finish the dissertation!
- 2) Consult with your advisor about when the other members of the advisory committee should review and critique the dissertation.
- 3) Work with the departmental manager to schedule the dissertation defense.
- 4) Consult with the departmental manager about deadlines for filing the application to graduate.
- 5) Consider applying to teach a summer school class or possibly a special topics course pertaining to your research specialization. These opportunities are contingent upon the department's instructional needs.
- 6) Discuss with the department's Placement Officer and your advisor how to construct a job placement file.