

Master of Arts in History Requirements, Policies, & Procedures

The Department of History offers a Master of Arts degree with concentrations in the following areas: United States, Europe, Modern Asia, Latin America (minor), and Public History (minor), or a comparative topical field (minor). The program is designed to broaden and deepen the student's understanding of the heritage of human experience. It also sharpens scholarly skills and provides for some specialization in specific fields or periods of history.

1. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students must meet the following minimum requirements to be considered for admission to graduate standing.

- I. An overall undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.00.
- II. A grade point average of at least 3.30 in history courses.
- III. Recommendations from two former instructors addressing the applicant's preparedness for graduate work in history.
- IV. A minimum of 18 credits in history.
- V. Submission of a writing sample, preferably a research paper, representative of undergraduate work.
- VI. Submission of a statement of purpose in which the applicant describes historical areas and approaches of particular interest, background and training for advanced work in history, and academic and professional goals.

Meeting these minimum requirements does not guarantee admission into the program. Decisions on admission are based on a number of factors including: strength of undergraduate GPA, letters of recommendation, writing sample, and statement of purpose, and concordance of student areas of interest and areas of faculty expertise. Decisions on admission into the MA program are made by the Graduate Committee. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, but applicants are expected to submit a complete file of materials at least three months prior to the semester they seek to begin the program in to allow for a full review of said materials by the Graduate Committee and processing of the materials by the Graduate College.

The application fee should be paid to the Graduate College and submitted with the application cover page. Transcripts should also be sent to the Graduate College:
Graduate College

University of Nevada Las Vegas
4505 Maryland Parkway, Box 451017
Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1017

The application form can also be submitted online via the Graduate College web page:
<http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/>

All other application materials: letters of recommendation, statement of purpose, and writing sample, should be sent to the History Department and should be addressed to:

Graduate Admissions
Department of History
University of Nevada Las Vegas
4505 Maryland Parkway, Box 455020
Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-5020

Materials can also be submitted in person to the History Department, Wright Hall, B329.

2. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

I. There are two plans for the master's degree in History: thesis, and non-thesis. Each requires that a student's advisor and the Graduate Coordinator approve all course work plans.

II. A field outside of history may be presented as part of a student's program.

III. Any grade below B- will not be accepted for graduate credit, but will be averaged into the student's grade point average.

IV. A minimum GPA of 3.00 must be achieved in all graduate work attempted toward the degree.

V. A minimum number of credit hours of coursework at the 700-level is required in each program (not including thesis credits):

	700-level credit hour minimum	Total Credits
Thesis Plan	16 (+ 6 thesis hrs)	31
Non-Thesis Plan	16	34
Thesis Plan w/ Public History minor	22 (+ 6 thesis hrs)	34*
Non-Thesis Plan w/ Public History minor	22	37*

For students entering the program prior to January 2005, 1 credit hour less is required in each program:

Pre-January 2005 Requirements	700-level credit hour minimum	Total Credits
Thesis Plan	16 (+ 6 thesis hrs)	30
Non-Thesis Plan	16	33
Thesis Plan w/ Public History minor	22 (+ 6 thesis hrs)	33*
Non-Thesis Plan w/ Public History minor	22	36*

*The extra three credit hours required for the Public History minor are internship credits.

VI. The student is required to have a reading knowledge of a foreign language if that language is necessary to do research in the selected field.

3. SPECIFIC PLAN REQUIREMENTS

A. Thesis Plan

I. A minimum of thirty-one graduate credits, including six credits of thesis.

II. A minimum of 16 credits in the major area of study

III. A minimum of nine credits in a minor area (the Public History minor requires an additional three credits of internship).

IV. Course requirements are: three credits of historiography (HIST 740); six credits of colloquium (724, 726, 728, 730, 732, 734, 736, or 769); and four credits of seminar (725, 727, 729, 731, 733, 735, or 737).

V. A maximum of 9 credits at the 600-level can count toward degree requirements.

VI. Students must also successfully complete a written examination in the major area of study. This may be taken at the completion of 21 credits of course work, and must be taken no later than the completion of 25 credits. The examination consists of two parts, each of which is comprised of two essay questions. Students write on one essay in each part of the exam (total of two essays, two hours for each essay; four hours total). Questions are written by the student's two major field committee members.

VII. A thesis prospectus must be filed prior to enrolling in thesis credits.

VIII. An oral defense of the thesis is required.



B. Non-Thesis Plan

- i. A minimum of thirty-four graduate credits.
- ii. A minimum of twenty five credits in the major area of study
- iii. A minimum of nine credits in a minor area (the Public History minor requires an additional three credits of internship).
- iv. Course requirements are: three credits of historiography (HIST 740);

six credits of colloquium (724, 726, 728, 730, 732, 734, 736, or 769); and four credits of seminar (725, 727, 729, 731, 733, 735, or 737).

v. Students must also successfully complete a written examination in the major and minor areas of study. This may be taken at the completion of 24 credits, and must be taken no later than the completion of 34 credits. The examination consists of three parts, each of which is comprised of two essay questions. Students write on one essay in each part of the exam (total of three essays, two hours for each essay; six hours total). Questions are written by the student's two major field committee members and by the minor field committee member.

4. FIELDS OF STUDY

Students choose a major field and a minor field of study from the fields of Asia, Europe, Latin America (minor field only), Public History (minor field only) and the United States.

5. COURSES

Students design their program, including the choice of courses, in consultation with their advisor and their committee members.

Courses prepare students for comprehensive examinations. Thus, students should take as many courses as possible with the members of the examination committee. Students are also strongly encouraged to take courses at the 700-level.

Students may not earn seminar credit through independent study except in circumstances deemed extraordinary by the department chair and/or graduate coordinator.

For independent-study credit at the graduate level, a student must read a minimum of three books (or equivalent in primary research and periodical literature) per credit.

A field outside of history may be presented as part of the student's program, but no more than nine credits outside of History may be counted toward the degree.

X-courses may not be included in a Proposed Graduate Degree Program.

6. GRADES

Any grade below a B- will not be accepted for graduate credit but will be included in the student's GPA. A minimum GPA of 3.0 must be maintained in graduate work applicable toward the degree.

In accordance with the Graduate College Grading System (see the UNLV Graduate Catalog) the Department interprets letter grades at the graduate level as follows:

“A” represents excellent work

“B” indicates minimally satisfactory performance

“C” suggests work below minimum graduate standards.

Pluses and minuses should be interpreted accordingly.

The Department assumes that students should regularly perform at or near the A level on the grading scale. Students whose GPA falls below 3.0 following the completion of 12 credits in History courses may be placed on probation or separated from the program. Normally probation will be reserved for short-term contingences or problems such as an extended illness, personal problems, or personality conflict with an instructor. By contrast, separation will be recommended for serious or continuing academic problems or deficiencies deemed irremediable. In addition, students who receive one grade below a B- will automatically be placed on probation; students who receive two grades below a B- will normally be separated from the program.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Approximately four months before the comprehensive exam is given, a student taking the test submits to the entire examination committee a bibliography listing the books and articles that have been covered in course work. Individual committee members may then add more materials to fill the gaps in the student's knowledge. The reading list for the major field will be at least sixty books (30-35 books in each of the areas of the two areas of concentration within the major) and for the minor field approximately thirty to thirty-five books. Faculty may use History 760 (Advanced Studies in History) to broaden the student's knowledge before the exam. The student's examination questions will be based on these materials together with the general history (i.e. events and policies) of the student's major and minor fields.

8. THE ADVISOR (COMMITTEE CHAIR)

The Graduate Advisor advises all new students in the Master's Program. As soon as possible and no later than at the completion of 9 credits of course work, students choose a permanent advisor who chairs the student's committee. For students who are not writing a thesis, this committee is an examination committee. For students writing a thesis, this committee is both an examination committee and a thesis committee. The chair is responsible for coordinating the activities of the committee (including all scheduling and preparing of examinations and all meetings of the committee).

The student's entire graduate program is a product of discussion between student and advisor. A student should consult regularly with the advisor on all aspects of the program in order to achieve coherence and quality.



9. THE EXAMINATION COMMITTEE

In consultation with the permanent advisor, the student selects the other members of the committee. The student consults with committee members to plan the student's program. The committee sets and evaluates the written comprehensive examination and, where applicable, the thesis and the thesis defense.

The Master's committee has four members, three from the History Department and one drawn from outside the History Department. All committee members must be members of the UNLV Graduate Faculty. For students writing a thesis, all members of the committee may be Americanists or Europeanists. For students not writing a thesis, one member of the committee must represent the minor field. Faculty who agree to serve on a master's committee are obligated to fulfill their duties while they are on leave. Temporary faculty have no obligation to assume graduate committee duties.

10. FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Students writing a thesis must have reading competence of any foreign language required to do primary research in the student's field.

11. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

The History Department administers M.A. comprehensive examinations three times a year, in September, February and April. A comprehensive examination must be held at least three weeks before the last day of instruction of any given term.

Students preparing for examination may ask to see sample exam questions.

The examination committee drafts and approves all questions for the examination. The exam questions strive to place specialized knowledge in a larger conceptual framework. All examination questions remain confidential. The precise definitions of the examination fields are determined by the student's coursework and the bibliographies created by the committee members. Students tested in United States history generally choose between two time spans: "To 1877" and "From 1865," though there is some flexibility in determining the chronological parameters of the program.

All committee members grade all essays. To pass the exam as a whole, the student must pass all of the essays by a two-thirds vote of the History committee members. If one committee member fails the student on two essays, the student does not pass the exam as a whole. The Graduate College representative has veto power. When a student fails an exam, the committee drafts written comments on the student's performance on all essays; these comments are filed with the exam and available to the student.

If a student fails an essay, that essay may be retaken once not sooner than three months after the first attempt; passed essays need not be retaken.

Thesis Plan Exam Structure

Students who are writing a thesis take a two-part examination over four hours.

Part I. One essay in the student's major field from a choice of two questions, set by the chair of the student's committee.

Part II. One essay in the student's major field from a choice of two questions, set by the second member of the student's committee in the major field.

When filing the Notification of Examination form, thesis plan students must schedule the major area exam (Parts I and II) for four hours on one day (with an optional one-hour break between the two parts).

Non Thesis Plan Exam Structure

Students who are not writing a thesis take a three-part examination over six hours.

1. Part I. One essay in the student's major field from a choice of two questions, set by the chair of the student's committee.
2. Part II. One essay in the student's major field from a choice of two questions, set by the second member of the student's committee in the major field.
3. Part III. One essay in the student's minor field from a choice of two questions, set by the member of the student's committee in the minor field.

In the case of a major field in Asian history, the Department's specialist prepares all four questions in Parts I and II of the examination.

When filing the Notification of Examination form, non-thesis plan students must schedule the major area exam (Parts I and II) for four hours on one day (with an optional one-hour break between the two parts), and the minor area exam (part III) for two hours on either the next day or the day after.

12. THE THESIS

The Thesis Prospectus must be filed by the term preceding the comprehensive exam, or the first registration for thesis credit, whichever occurs first.

After completing all course work, the student must register for three thesis credits each regular semester until graduation. A student may not graduate until a minimum of six thesis credits have been completed.

Each member of the thesis committee reads the thesis and may require revisions. The thesis must be approved by the entire membership of the thesis committee. Once a suitable final draft has been accepted and the major suggestions of committee members have been addressed, an oral defense of the thesis can be held.

The oral defense will be a minimum of one hour in length and a maximum of two. The thesis defense is “open to all graduate faculty and administrators” of the university community. Other guests may attend with the permission of the student’s advisory committee.

13. CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

In a calendar year, a student must complete at least six credits in course or thesis work applicable to the History degree program. A student who does not plan to do so must request approval for a leave of absence from the History Department. Upon returning, the student must file an Application for Registration for a Former Student Returning.

14. OVERLOAD

A student wishing to take more than 13 credit hours (or 10 credit hours if the student is a graduate assistant) in a regular semester, or more than six credits in one five-week summer session or twelve credits in two, must file an Authorization for Overload with the Graduate College. Overloads are strongly discouraged by the Graduate Committee.

15. ANNUAL EVALUATION

The History Department's Graduate Committee conducts an annual evaluation of all graduate students in the program. The Graduate College requires all students to complete a minimum of six credits each calendar year. The Department expects all students to make continuous progress toward their degree. The cases of students whose satisfactory progress is in doubt are reviewed by the Graduate Committee and the student’s Advisory Committee. Students are then notified as to whether they remain in good standing in the program.

16. FORMS AND DEADLINES

The student and student's advisor are responsible for the paper work required by the Graduate College.

The Appointment of Examination Committee and the Proposed Graduate Degree Program forms must be submitted after the completion of 9 credits. All changes in the composition of the committee must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator.

Any change in a student's Proposed Graduate Degree Program (including thesis topic) must be filed on the Change in Proposed Degree Program. Changes in committee members are made by a memo to the Graduate College, copied to the Department; however, a change in committee chair requires the submission of a new Appointment of Examination Committee form.

The Notification of Oral or Written Examination form must be submitted each time an examination is scheduled.

17. **SUMMARY OF GRADUATE PROCEDURES AND DEADLINES

Applying for Admission

What To Do	Deadline
Submit application and supporting documents to the History Department and Graduate College. Ph.D admits only for the fall semester	June 1 for Fall; November 1 for Spring; April 1 for Summer

If applying for Graduate Assistantship February 1

After Admission

Confer with Graduate Coordinator	ASAP and regularly
Choose a permanent advisor	During first year of coursework
Choose exam committee and submit Appointment of Examination Committee and Proposed Degree Program forms	Before completing 16 credits

Completing the Thesis Plan

Pass written comprehensive exams	By the last term of coursework
Submit Thesis Prospectus	In term preceding exams or prior to registration for thesis credits, whichever comes first
Submit thesis draft to committee	At least two months before planned graduation date
Apply for graduation and pay fee	See class schedule
Schedule Thesis Defense (notify Graduate College)	At least two weeks before Defense
Submit final thesis version to committee	At least one week before Defense
Pass Thesis Defense	At least three weeks prior to end of semester of graduation
Deposit thesis with Graduate College	At least two weeks before end of semester

Completing the Non-Thesis Plan

Submit bibliographies to committee	Four months prior to comprehensive exams
Apply for graduation and pay fee	See class schedule
Pass written comprehensive exams	At least three weeks prior to end of semester of graduation

**Please note that this is not an exhaustive list. Please consult the Graduate Catalog early and often and meet regularly with your advisor

18: GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

Graduate Assistants (GA's) in the MA program receive a stipend of \$10,000 per year (payable in 10 monthly installments), and a tuition credit that covers 87½ % of in-state or out-of-state tuition and fees.

GA's are responsible for 20 hours work, as a teaching assistant (discussion leader and grader, or grader), or research assistant.

Each spring semester the department selects a number of Graduate Assistantships and Part Time Instructor Graduate Assistantships for the next academic year. All students in the program are eligible for these awards and are encouraged to apply. Applications should include:

1. Application Cover Sheet (downloadable from the Graduate College website); submit to Graduate College
2. Two letters of recommendation, preferably from university faculty. For new students (these letters have already been submitted to the History Department as part of the application for admission. Continuing students, including current GA's and PTIGA's should request letters of support from the faculty.

These materials should be submitted by February 1 for applicants to receive full consideration for GA and PTIGA positions.

All current GA's are required to apply for renewal of their assistantships. For assistantships to be renewed, current GA's need to be performing well in their coursework and need to be performing their GA assignments well.

Occasionally, assistantships do become available for the spring semester. To be eligible for these awards, students need to have submitted the required application materials by November 1 of the preceding fall semester. Students who submit materials by February 1, for consideration for the following fall, and do not receive a GA award, will automatically be placed in the pool of eligible applicants for spring semester awards.