

History Graduate Student Handbook

Department of History and Philosophy

Welcome to the Master of Arts in History. This handbook is to provide graduate students like yourself with a comprehensive manual about the program. Please refer to it throughout your candidacy in the program to help you make informed decisions about your academic career.

We also encourage all incoming graduate students to read the Policies & Guidelines of the Graduate School of Austin Peay State University.

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Policy 6:003

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Initial Advisement:

Once admitted to the program, you need to contact the graduate program coordinator for your initial advisement to discuss your program of study and the formation of your graduate committee. Once advised, the graduate coordinator will allow you to register for your first semester of classes in the MA of History program.

Selecting Plan of Study Options

There are two plans of study options for Master of Arts in History—the thesis option and the non-thesis option. Students must also choose their primary field of study and a secondary field of study, otherwise known as guided electives. There are two concentrations to choose from: (1) Military History and (2) US History and well as one primary field (3) World History. Students must take 12 hours in their concentration field or primary field and 9 hours in guided electives.

Selecting Your Graduate Committee

During your first semester, you need to construct your graduate committee, which includes a chair and two other faculty members. The chair and one faculty member must teach classes in your primary field of guided electives, and the third faculty member must teach classes in your secondary field. You need to consult with faculty members and politely ask them to be on your committee. They have the right to turn you down. Once faculty members agree to be on your committee, get them to sign the Committee Form, which is due by the end of your first semester.

You can change your committee members throughout your time in the program. Your committee **must** consist of professors under whom you have studied (taken a class from). A comprehensive list of professors, their contact information, and their academic specialties are located on the Department of History & Philosophy's website.

Your committee chair acts as your primary graduate adviser. Your chair will clear you to register for courses, direct comprehensive your exams, and direct your thesis if you decide to write one.

Program of Study Form

For students entering the program prior to Spring 2020 Semester, a Program of Study form must be kept up to date with the Registrar's Office. If you wish to change any courses that you have taken and/or change your graduate committee members, you should complete a new program of study form and submit it to the graduate coordinator. Students admitted for Spring 2020 and later, the Program of Study Form only needs to be completed for students who need a hard copy (i.e. students who need to submit a program of study to the VA) because the program of study is now preloaded in Degree Works.

Research Plans of Study:

Non-thesis Option

Taking the non-thesis option, a student must pass 30 graduate semester hours in history, including the mandatory core courses: HIST 5001 Research Methods; HIST 5029 Graduate Seminar; and HIST 5043 Historiography. Remaining hours are electives that fulfill your concentration or primary field and guided electives that fulfill a secondary field (Military, US, or World).

HIST 5001 needs to be taken during first semester (or the first semester it is offered) in the program. Students are strongly encouraged to take HIST 5043 in their first year of graduate study. All available courses in the graduate program are listed in the Graduate Bulletin.

To complete the non-thesis option, a student needs to have a GPA of 3.0 or higher, pass a written comprehensive exam, and pass an oral comprehensive exam as well as submit an acceptable research paper to fulfill research literacy requirement. The research-literacy paper can come from any course except Research Methods. You must submit the paper for approval through the chair of your graduate committee, who will submit it to the Departmental Graduate Council no later than two weeks prior to the last day of scheduled classes before graduation.

Thesis Option – Graduate Student Thesis Procedure

The thesis option has the requirements same as the non-thesis with the addition 6 graduate hours are in Thesis Research for a total of 36 graduate semester hours as well as writing a thesis, which is often around a hundred pages in length and is based on original research. In addition to passing the written and oral comprehensive examinations, a student needs to successfully write and defend the thesis, which concurs with the oral examination.

Before writing a thesis, a graduate student must obtain approval from the Graduate Council before undertaking a thesis project. This process should be initiated as early as possible in the student's academic career, and before finishing 18 credit hours.

To undertake the thesis option, the first step is to write a successful thesis prospectus. Please follow the following steps:

1. Conference with the chair of your committee, who is your assigned adviser, about the potential of a thesis. The adviser must agree to the tentative project. If the chair rejects the potential thesis, the student needs to take the non-thesis option.
2. If the chair accepts the tentative project, then the student needs to write a thesis prospectus. The prospectus needs to include the following:
 - a. Introduction. A paragraph that summaries the project and ends with a tentative thesis statement (1/2 page to 1 page).

- b. Historiography that explains the significance of the thesis statement (2 pages). This should be specific to the thesis's argument and not a general historiography on the subject.
 - c. Bibliography (3+ pages) that should include an annotated bibliography of major secondary sources. It also needs reveal major primary sources. If the primary sources are not in English, the student needs to reveal competency in that language.
 - d. Timeline for completion with set goals and the potential resources need to travel to necessary archives.
3. The student's chair must approve of this prospectus. If prospectus is not approved, the student needs to take non-thesis option.
4. Upon approval of the chair, the prospectus is sent to the graduate coordinator. If the prospectus does not meet the prospectus guidelines, then the coordinator will ask for it be rewritten to meet the guidelines. The coordinator will seek the approval the graduate council's approval of thesis. If the council rejects the proposal, then the student needs to take the non-thesis option.
5. If the prospectus is accepted by the graduate council, then the graduate student will be able to take six credits of thesis research.

According to *Field Study, Thesis, and Dissertation Manual*, a thesis must be submitted to ProQuest at least 3 weeks prior to graduation.

CHECKLIST FOR THE MA IN HISTORY

Thesis Track (36 hours)

Required Core Courses (9 hours)

☐ HIST 5001 Research Methods
☐ HIST 5043 Historiography
☐ HIST 5029 Graduate Seminar

Non-Thesis Track (30 hours)

Required Core Courses (9 hours)

☐ HIST 5001 Research Methods
☐ HIST 5043 Historiography
☐ HIST 5029 Graduate Seminar

Required core courses should be taken within the first two semesters, excluding summer terms

Electives:

Primary Field/Concentration (12 hours)

☐ HIST _____
☐ HIST _____
☐ HIST _____
☐ HIST _____

Secondary Field (9 hours)

☐ HIST _____
☐ HIST _____
☐ HIST _____

Electives:

Primary Field/Concentration (12 hours)

☐ HIST _____
☐ HIST _____
☐ HIST _____
☐ HIST _____

Secondary Field (9 hours)

☐ HIST _____
☐ HIST _____
☐ HIST _____

Concentrations and Fields to choose from: __Military History__ U.S. History__ World History

☐ Thesis Research (6 hours)

Comprehensive Examinations

☐ Thesis
☐ Oral Examination/Thesis Defense

Comprehensive Examinations

☐ Written Examination
☐ Oral Examination

Security Studies Certificate:

All program candidates have the opportunity to earn an optional Security Studies Certificate. In order to qualify for the certificate, students must complete four of the following security studies courses:

HIST 5011- Cold War Political-Diplomatic Issues

HIST 5017- The Military in Nontraditional Roles

HIST 5019- Unconventional Warfare in History

HIST 5022- American Foreign Policy in the 20th Century

HIST 5028- American Military History since 1919

HIST 5033- History of Airpower

HIST 5034- The Economy and Modern Warfare

HIST 5037- The Vietnam War

HIST 5076 – The Modern Middle East

Comprehensive Exams:

You must pass your comprehensive exams to be granted a Master of Arts in History. Your comprehensive exams are divided into two parts: written and oral exams. These exams are administered by your graduate committee under the supervision of its chair. At the beginning of your final semester of completing your course work, you need to discuss with your graduate committee chair about taking your comprehensive exams. The chair will work with you on scheduling both your written and your oral examinations. You are required to wait at least 24 hours between submission of your written exam responses and the oral examinations. However, it is a good idea to allow at least a week between your written exam and your oral examination so that professors have time to review your written answers and provide feedback prior to your oral examination.

Part I – Written Examinations

When your written exam date draws near, the chair will ask you to contact your graduate committee members submit questions for the written exam to your committee chair. Your Graduate Committee Chair supervises your comprehensive exam, and its form is at his/her discretion. The exam may consist of questions from any course you have taken. The written exam is administered via email or conducted on-site at the discretion of your graduate committee. If you are taking the exam via email, you have 24 hours from the time you open and view the questions to complete and return exam answers to your chair. If taken onsite, you will be given a single, three-hour session to complete the exam. If you follow the thesis track, then your thesis will act

as your written exam and your oral exam will be the defense of your thesis.

After submitting your written responses, your committee will review your responses and provide feedback. Review this feedback in preparation for your oral examination.

Part II – Oral Examinations

The oral exam will be conducted within a single, two-hour session. During this session, you will be questioned by any faculty member within the department who attends the session. The oral exam tests content mastery, general knowledge and historiography appropriate for a developing scholar. The oral exam may be conducted via telephone/conference call at your request. Your committee may allow you to correct minor portions of the written exam if deemed appropriate. Therefore, it is important that you review the feedback provided about your written exam responses. If you follow the thesis track, then the oral examination will include a defense of your thesis.

Students who entered the program prior to Spring 2020 must complete the “Verification of Thesis/Field Study Research and/or Written-Oral Exam Completion Form” provided by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The completed form must be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies no later than two weeks prior to the last day of scheduled classes before graduation.

Students who entered the program in Spring 2020 and after need to fill out the department Verification Form. The form needs to be completed two weeks prior to the last day of scheduled classes before graduation and submitted to the department graduate coordinator or chair.

Re-Comping Guidelines

If you fail any part of the comprehensive written and/or oral examinations, you will be re-examined after a minimum of three months and before a maximum of twelve months, unless otherwise approved by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

Types of Failures and Re-comping Guidelines: Written and Oral Examinations

- Passed all three written questions, but failed orals = Oral exam must be retaken without restrictions on areas of testing by the examiners.
- Failed one written question, but passed the orals = Retake the topic of the written portion that you failed on the exam. The retest will be limited to the subject area for which the student's knowledge was deficient. It is up to the discretion of the student's committee as to whether the student must repeat the oral portion of the exam.
- Failed one written question, failed oral = Must retake the written part of the exam that the student failed, but the written portion of the test will be limited to the subject area for which the student's knowledge was deficient. However, the student must retake the oral examination without restriction on areas of testing by the examiners.
- Failed two written questions (by policy, exam does not proceed to the oral part of the exam) = Must retake the entire exam without restrictions on areas of testing by the examiners.

- Failed three written questions (by policy, exam does not proceed to the oral part of the exam) = Must retake the entire exam without restrictions on areas of testing by the examiners.
- Passed all three written questions, failed orals = Must repeat the oral examination without restrictions on areas of testing by the examiners.

Types of Failures and Re-comping Guidelines: Thesis Defense

- Written thesis accepted, failed oral portion of the exam, but successfully defends thesis = Must repeat the oral portion of the examination, but the oral exam will be limited to course content and mastery of relevant historiography (i.e. the thesis is not subject to further examination).
- Written thesis rejected (By policy, exam does not proceed to the oral part of the exam) = Must repeat the entire exam to include both written and oral portions without restrictions on areas of testing by the examiners. At the discretion of the committee the student may be required to change to the non-thesis track.

Failure after Retesting a Second Time

For both thesis track and non-thesis track, if a student fails the comprehensive written and oral examination a second time, he or she shall be dismissed from the graduate program without a degree as per University

Addenda:

Minimum Grade Requirements

In order to successfully graduate from the program, students must earn at least a 3.0 GPA and pass a comprehensive examination that is both written and oral.

Policy on Incompletes

In certain cases, students may earn an incomplete, or “I,” which temporarily takes the place of a letter grade for a course. The purpose of the “I” is to give good students more time to complete course work. An “I” cannot remain on a student’s record indefinitely, however, and students are expected to complete the necessary assignments in order to remove any incompletes from their records in a timely manner. If a student feels that he or she will need an “I” in a course, they are responsible for communicating their situation effectively with their professors. The issuing of an “I” is up to the discretion of the professor, and professors are not required to allow students to take an “I.”

Students will not be allowed to carry more than two incompletes unless approved in advance by the Graduate Council. Before issuing an incomplete, all graduate faculty must verify that the student is carrying no more than one “I.” If the student already has two incompletes on his/her record, the student must get permission from the Graduate Council before the faculty member can issue the third incomplete.

Directed Independent Readings

Independent readings are offered to students so that they can pursue more detailed study about a topic of interest under the direction of a faculty member. If a student has an idea for an independent study, he or she must discuss this with the faculty member the student would like to work under. If the faculty member agrees to work with the student on an independent study, students must then petition their committee chair and the department chair or graduate coordinator in order to take a section of HIST 5023 – Directed Independent Readings. A student may only take two HIST 5023 Directed Independent Readings, unless they receive written permission from their committee.

Changing from Thesis Track to Non-Thesis Track

A student may choose to switch from thesis track to non-thesis track as late as one month prior to graduation if unable to complete the thesis in a timely manner, provided all other criteria for graduation are met in time for graduation.

Graduate Assistantships:

There are a limited number of 20-hour graduate assistantship positions.

General Description of the Graduate Assistantship

A graduate assistant (GA) assists an assigned graduate faculty member with course preparation and with grading survey and core course exams, quizzes and research papers. Graduate faculty will provide supervision.

Duties of Graduate Assistants

- Attend class and discussion sections and act as the professor's representative before, during and after class.
- Locate and retrieve materials required for teaching and grading students.
- Hold office hours at least three days per week for a total of six hours minimum. Office hours should accommodate students with both MWF and TR schedules.
- Hold review sessions for exams, quizzes and required course projects/assignments.
- Grade exams, quizzes and required course projects/assignments.
- Assist professor with minor clerical work, such as photocopying.

Secondary (Voluntary) GA Duties

- Teach, as a learning opportunity, no more than one survey course class-meeting per semester.
- May be asked on occasion to proctor exams for the department.
- Graduate assistants are not obligated under any circumstances to support the professor's research and scholarly activities.