



GLOBAL. INNOVATIVE. MENTORSHIP.

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

HISTORY.UNL.EDU

WELCOME

Welcome Prospective and Current History Graduate Students!

With almost 30 faculty members, the University of Nebraska's Department of History provides an ideal learning environment for graduate students seeking an MA or PhD. Our faculty members have written over 100 books and hundreds of articles and won dozens of awards for research and teaching. Our diverse staff offers an array of classes that enable you to gain breadth in your education. You can also count on individual attention and mentorship from your advisor and other faculty members.

UNL's programs prepare students for teaching and research positions at the full range of higher education institutions as well as within museums, consulting firms, non-profit organizations, government agencies, and the publishing industry. We emphasize the development of professional skills and teaching experience in addition to intensive research.

We offer cutting-edge training in digital history through the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities, one of the first and strongest such programs in the nation. Students may earn a Certificate in Digital Humanities while pursuing an MA or PhD in History.

Students may also pursue interdisciplinary specializations in Ethnic Studies, Great Plains Studies, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 19th Century Studies, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, and Women's and Gender Studies.

We look forward to getting to know you and answering any questions and concerns you might have.

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CORE PRINCIPLES OF HISTORY GRADUATE EDUCATION AT UNL

We will cultivate and sustain a collaborative, positive, team-oriented approach to graduate study.

We will seek to educate the whole student and to produce thoughtful, capable, experienced historians with whom we share our passion and commitment to the highest principles of historical inquiry.

We will prepare our students for teaching and research positions at the full range of higher education institutions and in other organizations and agencies that utilize historical skills.

We will prepare our students broadly in fields and areas with a core curriculum of 900-level graduate courses regularly offered in which students gain reading and research experience before they begin the dissertation.

We will participate actively in promoting our graduate students' path toward degree completion by setting benchmarks for key milestones and encouraging students in a positive manner to meet their goals in a timely manner.

We will examine our students in a flexible yet thorough fashion, always seeking to build up their intellectual development and raise the level of their engagement with the practices of the profession.

We will support and commit ourselves to a culturally and ethnically diverse graduate student program, advising and mentoring our students to gain success in their programs of study.

We will seek every opportunity for our graduate students to gain professional skills, demonstrate professional credentials, and participate in scholarship and research opportunities.



CORE PRINCIPLES

WHICH GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK SHOULD YOU FOLLOW?

If you were admitted to the History MA or PhD program for 2015-16 or after, you will be expected to follow the new guidelines and requirements as set forth in this handbook.

If you were admitted before 2015-16, you may either switch to the new revised program as outlined in this handbook or continue under the previous requirements for the degree program in force when you were admitted (see the 2009-2014 [Graduate Handbook](#).) You should work closely to review your Program of Studies with your Advisor, your Committee, and the Graduate Chair if you decide to change to the new requirements.

UNL'S OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

UNL's Office of Graduate Studies provides general information and many helpful resources about graduate study at UNL. They are located at 1100 Seaton Hall. You should regularly consult their website at <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/home> for essential forms, deadlines, and timelines.

Graduate study in history is conducted under the regulations adopted by the faculty of the Graduate College as set forth in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Graduate Studies Bulletin (available on the Graduate Studies website). The Graduate Studies Bulletin is the formal guide that sets out requirements for all graduate degrees and so should be consulted for questions about overarching regulations concerning credit hours, thesis requirements, deadlines and other official matters. You must fulfill the requirements and procedures as specified in the Graduate Studies Bulletin, and these requirements are not unnecessarily repeated in this guide. This handbook describes the policies that apply specifically to graduate studies in the Department of History.

The information in this handbook and other University catalogs, publications, or announcements is subject to change without notice. University offices can provide current information about possible changes.

KEY CONTACTS

GRADUATE CHAIR

The chair of the History Department appoints a tenured faculty member to serve as Graduate Chair. The Chair of the Graduate Committee is responsible for the administration of all of the tasks associated with running the graduate program in the department. These duties include calling meetings of the Graduate Committee, supervising admissions, assigning advisors to incoming graduate students, assigning teaching assistants to courses, and serving as a general advisor to graduate students who have questions about the program.

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GRADUATE COMMITTEE

The Graduate Committee is appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies upon the recommendation of the chair of the department. It is responsible for reviewing graduate student applications each year, making recommendations for admission and funding, overseeing the graduate curriculum, addressing student concerns, and resolving conflicts between faculty members and graduate students. Please see the History Department Chair or Graduate Chair if you would like to raise a concern with the Graduate Committee.

GRADUATE SECRETARY

The Graduate Secretary assists new applicants with their applications through the online GAMES system, maintains current graduate student files, fields questions about graduate study, helps to administer teaching assistantship offers, assignments, and evaluations, and serves as a liaison with the Graduate Chair.

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APPLYING

DEADLINE

December 1 for the following August.

MA or PhD?

Should you apply for an MA or a PhD in History? This depends on your level of preparation and your career goals. If you feel sure that you want to be a professional historian who requires a PhD and you have either a B.A. or an MA in History, the PhD program might be right for you. If you are applying to the PhD program, you should make sure that your interests correspond to one of our six focus fields (see pages 10-11). If you are not yet decided on your long-term career goals or can obtain a position in your chosen field with an MA, you may want to consider applying for an MA. Our MA program allows more flexibility; you can pursue areas of study in which faculty have expertise even if it is not one of our six focus fields. If you did not major in History as an undergraduate or feel that you need more preparation before applying for a PhD, our MA program may be appropriate for you.

ELEMENTS OF THE APPLICATION

To apply you must submit the following materials to the Office of Graduate Studies through the on-line GAMES system (<http://history.unl.edu/application-procedures>):

- Application Form.
- Unofficial transcripts from all colleges previously attended.
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) official score.
- Written statement indicating your area(s) of interest and why you want to pursue a graduate degree in history.
- Three letters of recommendation from scholars or others who are qualified to assess your potential for success in a history graduate program.
- Writing sample in the form of a paper or chapter from your previous academic work. We especially encourage you to submit a writing sample that shows your ability to conduct primary source research.
- TOEFL score of 575 or higher if you are a foreign student.

ADMISSION CATEGORIES

You may be admitted by UNL's Office of Graduate Studies, on the recommendation of the History Department's Graduate Committee, with Full Graduate Standing, Provisional Graduate Standing, or with Unclassified (Non-Degree) Status.

Full Graduate Standing may be granted to you if you have met all the prerequisites for the MA or PhD degree program in history, including two years of undergraduate study of a foreign language (or the equivalent) and a BA or MA degree in History with a GPA of 3.0 or better.

Provisional Standing may be granted to you if you have not yet fulfilled the foreign language requirements or if the Graduate Committee believes you have some problem of qualification that needs to be remedied. This may include a lack of adequate preparation, a need for supplemental information, a need for a definitive interpretation of available records for some foreign programs, or an identification of regionally unaccredited programs. Before you are granted full graduate standing, you must demonstrate a reading knowledge in at least one foreign language and address any deficiencies.

Provisional admission may be changed to full standing upon the recommendation of your Advisor, your Supervisory Committee, and the History Graduate Chair and approval by the Office of Graduate Studies. If you do not remove deficiencies from your record you will not be allowed to graduate.

Unclassified Status (Non-Degree) may be granted by the Office of Graduate Studies to you if you are considered to be working toward an advanced degree and satisfy minimal admission standards. With this status, you may enroll in graduate history courses. If you wish to be considered for admission to the MA or PhD degree program in history, you must formally apply through the Office of Graduate Studies and be recommended for admission by the departmental Graduate Committee. There is no guarantee of ultimate admission to the MA or PhD degree program from an unclassified status.



MA IN HISTORY

We offer an MA in History in several [Faculty Expertise Areas](#). (See the website for the full range of faculty interests.) You can gain specialized skills in Digital History, the Teaching and Learning of History, or pursue a dual degree with the College of Law (pending approval). You can supplement your historical study with interdisciplinary training in Women's and Gender Studies, Ethnic Studies, Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Great Plains Studies, 19th Century Studies, or Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs. The MA is especially appropriate for those who wish to gain more preparation before applying for a PhD in History. The basic MA in History does not require a thesis or a minor. This is defined as an Option III degree by the Office of Graduate Studies. Students do have the opportunity to add a minor, which is defined as an Option II degree. (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/bulletin/masters-options>).

MA Requirements

36 credits of History or approved credit outside the History Department, including:

- 3 credits HIST 900 Professional Study of History
- 3 credits HIST 950 Research and Writing History Seminar
- 6 credits/1 core sequence in Primary Field (931/933 Europe; 941/943 American; 961/963 World)
- 6 additional credits in Primary Field
- 3 credits in Secondary Field from core sequence (931/933 Europe; 941/943 American; 961/963 World)
- 3 credits 900-level thematic class: 951 or 953
- 12 credits in electives (can be taken from Optional Tracks)

The MA also requires two years of college-level coursework in a single foreign language, with a grade of B or better, or the equivalent. If students have not completed this prior to admission they must do so during the tenure of their MA program.

Key Steps in the MA Program

Year 1

- When you apply for admission to UNL, you will be asked to specify a primary field of interest: North America, Europe, or World History. Your interests may change after studying in the program, and you may change your primary field within the first year of the program.
- Upon admission to UNL, you will be assigned an advisor based on your academic interests, as expressed in your application. As your interests develop, you may elect to change advisors within the first year.
- If you are a fulltime student, you will typically take 9 credits per semester, allowing you to finish the degree in 4 semesters.
- By the end of your second semester (or before you have received grades in more than one-half of the prescribed program), you must meet with your advisor and submit a [Memorandum of Courses](#). The Memorandum of Courses lists the courses already taken to satisfy credit hour requirements and provides a tentative list of courses you plan to take to complete the degree. The Memorandum of Courses must be approved by your advisor, the History Department Graduate Chair, the Graduate Chair in the department or program in which you are pursuing a minor or specialization, if applicable, and the Dean of Graduate Studies. A Memorandum of Courses may not be filed in the same semester (fall, spring, and summer) that the student intends to graduate.

Year 2

- By at least the third semester in the program, you need to form a Supervisory Committee of at least three graduate faculty members, including your Advisor. At least two members should be in the History Department.
- If you are admitted to the MA program with deficiencies in language and coursework, you must remove them within two calendar years after beginning the program.
- During the last semester of the program, you will compile a portfolio of work (see below) to be examined by the Supervisory Committee. You must submit this portfolio to the History Department office at least three weeks before the final oral examination.
- A final examination report form must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies at least four weeks (three weeks in summer) prior to the oral examination.
- Your Supervisory Committee will review your portfolio. If approved, the Committee will hold a final oral examination with you by the deadline required by Graduate Studies at UNL.
- You must file an Application for Graduation early in the semester in which you intend to graduate. Applications for Graduation may be submitted electronically via MyRed or by contacting the Office of the University Registrar, 107 Canfield Administration Building South. Consult the [academic calendar](#) for the deadline each semester.

Courses over ten years old may not be used as a part of a master's degree program.

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Your Advisor

Your advisor is responsible for ensuring that you complete your Memorandum of Courses in a timely manner; fulfill the requirements for your degree; and form a Supervisory Committee. Your advisor will also oversee and guide your research for HIST 950 and chair your Supervisory Committee.

The MA Portfolio

This represents the culmination of your work for the MA. It should include your final paper or digital project from the HIST 950 Research and Writing Seminar, a historiography paper or project from one of your 900-level Primary Field classes, and an additional piece of scholarship of your choosing. You should choose a project from one of your elective classes if you are pursuing one of the optional tracks (for example, Digital History, Teaching and Learning of History, or the dual degree with the College of Law).



PhD in History

We offer a distinctive PhD program in History that emphasizes both broad and focused historical knowledge as well as skills training for the 21st century historian. Our department is a leading innovator in digital history, and prepares future faculty for all levels of teaching, from research universities to community colleges. We also offer opportunities to intern in the editing and publishing industry and at museums and archives.

PhD Fields

You must pursue three distinct fields: a primary field, a secondary field, and a focus field.

Primary Field

You should choose one primary field: American, European, or World. This field provides the breadth expected for your general dissertation area. You must take the two core 900-level classes in your chosen primary field.

Secondary Field

We also offer three secondary fields: American, European, or World. Training in these fields helps you gain a broad foundation in an additional area. Generally you should choose one secondary field and take the two core 900-level classes within it. In some cases, in consultation with your advisor, you might elect to take two classes in two different secondary fields outside your primary field. If you choose World History as your primary or secondary field, you will take a World History Seminar and Topics in Non-Western Historiography, which will enable you to gain some training in Africa, Asia, Latin America, or the Middle East.

Focus Field

The focus field is a more distinctive area of study that will prepare you for dissertation research. We expect you to choose from among these six focus areas of faculty strength:

[North American West](#)

Our PhD program is a leader in new global approaches to the History of the North American West. We specialize in studying the West as an empire in transnational and comparative context. Our faculty members are particularly expert in Indigenous histories of the Americas, and

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their studies of the 19th and 20th century North American West focus on women and gender, race and ethnicity, and the role of law in American conquest.

[Race, Ethnicity, and Identity](#)

Our PhD program boasts a key strength in historical approaches to race, ethnicity, and identity in national and transnational contexts. With 11 faculty—six of whom are joint appointed with the Institute for Ethnic Studies—our concentration in Race, Ethnicity, and Identity clusters around three main groups—African Americans, Indigenous Peoples of the Americas, and Latin Americans. Our faculty also addresses race, ethnicity, and identity in Africa and the Middle East. Scholars in this focus field work from the understanding that race and ethnicity intersect with a range of other identity markers such as gender, religion, sexual orientation, and nationality. UNL History Department Graduate Studies in Race, Ethnicity and Identity offer you the opportunity to evaluate these social interactions and analyze the nature of historical social and political power.

[19th Century U.S.](#)

The History Department's faculty in the 19th Century U.S. supports an integrated curriculum in the social, cultural, economic, intellectual, political, and legal foundations of American History during this transformational period. Areas of emphasis include women and gender, race and slavery, westward expansion, sectional tensions and the Civil War, legal development, economic change, intellectual and cultural transitions, and digital history. The History Department works with the 19th Century Studies Program to award a graduate specialization in 19th Century Studies.

[20th Century International](#)

The faculty members in 20th Century International History are among the leaders in this diverse field. Collectively, their research interests include Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the United States, focusing on such nations as Algeria, France, China, Germany, South Africa, and Turkey, and such topics as colonialism, decolonization, espionage, intelligence, race relations, and world wars. Known for their comparative approach and their wide-ranging books that cover every continent, our faculty in this focus field teach various courses on 20th century international history, including America and the world, the Ottoman Empire, the First and Second World Wars, anti-colonialism and decolonization, nationalist movements, the Holocaust, international relations, and the Cold War.

[Germany and Central Europe](#)

Our PhD program specializes in studying Germany and Central Europe in a transatlantic and comparative context. Our faculty is particularly expert in the early modern Protestant clergy and the early Reformed tradition, 19th century German science, National Socialism and the Holocaust, intelligence and espionage history, the Cold War and postwar German-American

relations.

[Early Modern Europe/Atlantic World](#)

We have a strong graduate program in early modern history and the Atlantic World. Our particular areas of strength are German/Swiss reformation and religious history, England's cultural, political, and women's history, and comparative work of Europe and colonial America, particularly with a digital history focus. Those who study Early Modern Europe and Atlantic World also have strong support from our specialist in medieval history with offerings in such areas as medieval culture. You can also do an interdisciplinary minor in Medieval and Renaissance Studies with faculty in English, Modern Languages, Classics and Religious Studies, Music History, Art History, and Theatre.

PhD Requirements

90 credits of History or approved credit outside the History Department, including:

Coursework	# of Credits
• HIST 900 Professional Study of History	3
• HIST 950 Research Seminar (to be taken twice)	6
• Two Core Courses in Primary Field	
• (941/943 American; 931/933 European; 961 World History;	
• 963 Non-Western History)	6
• Two 900-level Core Courses in Secondary Field(s)	
• (941/943 American; 931/933 European; 961 World History;	
• 963 Non-Western History)	6
• One 900-level Course in Thematic/Comparative Field (951 or 953)	3
• 2 Courses in Focus Field, one of which must be a 900-level class	
• (North American West; Race, Ethnicity, & Identity; 19th Century	
• U.S., 20th Century International; Germany and Central Europe;	
• Early Modern Europe/Atlantic World)	6
• HIST 990 Teaching History	3
• 1 Class in Digital History (HIST 895, 946, or 970)	3
• Additional classes	<u>18</u>
• Coursework total credits	54
• Dissertation credits	<u>36</u>
Total Credits	90

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You must demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language. Foreign language courses do not count toward the credits for the degree. In addition to the necessary foreign language, your Supervisory Committee may expect you to gain expertise in an additional foreign language, certain specialized research tools, such as digital media, statistics, or a computer programming language.

Optional Interdisciplinary Programs

We also encourage you to pursue an interdisciplinary graduate certificate, specialization, or minor, which supplements historical skills and knowledge and may give you greater flexibility in your future career. These programs typically require 3-4 classes outside the history department, and may add an additional semester of coursework to the PhD. Specializations are offered in:

- [Digital Humanities](#)
- [Ethnic Studies](#)
- [Great Plains Studies](#)
- [Medieval and Renaissance Studies](#)
- [19th Century Studies](#)
- [Women's and Gender Studies](#)
- [Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs](#)

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

To meet the Office of Graduate Studies residency requirements, you must complete 27 credit hours within a consecutive 18-month period. If you completed your MA at the University of Nebraska you may apply 12 hours of your MA work toward this requirement. No more than 9 credits applied towards residency may be taken during summer sessions. The graduate school provides limited exemptions from these requirements for the following:

- University staff who are engaged at least half-time in research or teaching.
- Those employed in their major field may take 24 credit hours within a consecutive 24 month period, provided that at least 12 of these credits are taken after the MA

If you have not been admitted to PhD candidacy and you have not registered for courses within the last two calendar years you will be considered terminated from the program. If you wish to finish your degree, you must submit a written petition to the History Graduate Committee requesting re-admission to the graduate program.

The time limit on granting the doctoral degree is eight years from the time of filing the student's Program of Studies in the Office of Graduate Studies.

KEY STEPS IN PHD PROGRAM:

Year 1

- Upon admission to UNL, you will be assigned an advisor based on your academic interests, as expressed in your application. As your interests develop, you may elect to change advisors within the first year.
- If you are a fulltime student, typically you will take 9 credits per semester, enabling you to finish half of your core credits in the first year.

Year 2

- If you are a fulltime student you will be able to complete the second half of the program's core credits in the second year. (See Sample Timeline below on p. 19.)

End of Year 2

- In consultation with your advisor, by the end of your fourth semester, you must create a Supervisory Committee. You must fill out and submit an Appointment of Supervisory Committee for the Doctoral Degree for the Office of Graduate Studies. If any changes to the committee are made after this form is submitted to Graduate Studies, you must submit a Change of Committee form.
- At the end of the second year of the program, or after you have fulfilled 36 credits, as outlined below, your Supervisory Committee will meet to review your progress and then give you an oral examination. You must have completed:
 - 3 credits in Theory and Methodology (HIST 900)
 - 21 credits in 3 fields and comparative history
 - 6 credits in Primary Field
 - 6 credits in Secondary Field
 - 6 credits in Focus Field
 - 3 credits in Comparative Thematic History (HIST 951 or 953)
 - 12 credits in 3 skill areas:
 - 6 credits: Research and Writing (HIST 950)
 - 3 credits: Teaching (HIST 900)
 - 3 credits: Digital History

In addition to fulfilling these 36 credits, students are expected to have made progress toward the PhD foreign language requirement, if applicable. After the review of your MA portfolio (see p. 9) and the oral examination, the Supervisory Committee may recommend that the student receive the MA and continue on for the PhD, graduate with a terminal master's degree, or be dismissed from the program for lack of progress.

- If your Supervisory Committee recommends that you continue on for the PhD, you must

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meet with your Supervisory Committee, within the same semester that it was appointed, to review your Program of Studies (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/Doctoral-Program.pdf>) before submitting it to the Office of Graduate Studies. The Program of Studies lists the courses already taken to satisfy credit hour requirements and provides a tentative list of courses you plan to take to complete the degree. The Program of Studies must be approved by your advisor, the History Department Graduate Chair, the Graduate Chair in the department or program in which you are pursuing a minor or specialization, if applicable, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Year 3

- Typically during Year Three, you will finish your coursework, including any graduate specializations, and study for and complete your comprehensive exams.
- If you have any deficiencies in foreign language requirements or coursework, you must remove them before taking your comprehensive exams. You must have satisfied the language requirement through two years of college coursework with a grade of B or better or by an examination certifying language competency by an outside expert approved by the Supervisory Committee.
- When you pass your comprehensive exams, you will be advanced to candidacy after filling out and submitting the Application for Candidacy for the doctoral degree (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/Doctoral-Candidacy.pdf>).
- Following advancement to candidacy you must register in the Office of Graduate Studies during each semester of the academic year until you receive the PhD degree. If you are not in residence you may register for a minimum of one semester hour credit of dissertation. While writing your dissertation you may file a request for certification of full-time status each semester you need to be considered full-time but are not enrolled for at least 9 credits. You may do so for two consecutive calendar years from your first use of the request. Failure to register during each semester of the academic year will result in termination of the candidacy.

Year 4

- During the first semester of the fourth year, you will be expected to write a dissertation prospectus that outlines the scope and plan of your dissertation (see p. 17).
- At the end of the year, you should meet with your Advisor and/or Committee to make a plan for the completion of your dissertation in the following year or two.

Year 5 (and 6)

- Complete your dissertation. Gain approval of your Advisor to submit your dissertation to members of your Supervisory Committee, usually at least four weeks before the date set for your oral defense. Defend your dissertation in a final oral examination.
- At least two weeks before the final oral examination of the PhD dissertation, you must submit the Application for Final Oral Examination (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/Doctoral-FinalOral.pdf>) to the Office of Graduate Studies. A complete copy of the dissertation, with abstract, must also be submitted no later than this. You will be sent final instructions via email upon receipt of the Application for Final Oral Exam by Graduate Studies.
- Students must complete the form, Application for a Degree, and submit it to the Office of Graduate Studies by the deadline set at the beginning of the semester in which they expect to graduate. Consult the Graduate Studies website (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/>

[current/degrees/doctoral](#)) for the deadline each semester.

YOUR PhD ADVISOR

Your PhD advisor is a key person in your graduate career. He or she is responsible for ensuring that you complete your Program of Studies; fulfill the requirements for the degree; form a Supervisory Committee; and carry out high-quality research for your HIST 950 classes. Your advisor will also guide you through Comprehensive Exams, direct your dissertation, and help mentor you professionally to present your work at conferences, apply for grants, publish your work in appropriate venues, and secure a job. The Graduate Chair will assign you an advisor upon your admission to UNL based on your interests and stated preferences and the agreement of the professor. If your interests develop in different directions, you may elect to change advisors within the first year.

YOUR SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

The Supervisory Committee generally consists of four members of the Graduate Faculty. Your advisor serves as the chair of this committee. Three members of your committee must be from History and one must be from another department. If you are pursuing a minor in another department or a graduate specialization with an interdisciplinary program, a representative from that department or program must be on the committee. Please refer to the Graduate Bulletin (<http://www.unl.edu/grad-studies/bulletin/committee-supervisory>) for additional information on committee roles.

Normally, members of your Supervisory Committee are professors with whom you have taken a class or pursued independent study. A History faculty member who represents each of your three fields (Primary, Secondary, and Focus) should be on your committee, as these faculty members will be responsible for testing you for your PhD Comprehensive Examinations. Your Supervisory Committee is also responsible for reading, commenting upon, and approving the dissertation. Members of the Supervisory Committee should therefore have some expertise and/or interest in the area of your dissertation research. You may find it necessary to make changes to your Supervisory Committee after your comprehensive exams in order to include more faculty members on it with strength in your area of interest.

PHD COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

Purpose: The purpose of comprehensive examinations is to assess your preparedness for research and teaching in your chosen fields. Successful completion of the exams is required before you will be admitted to candidacy.

Format: Comprehensive examinations are normally three distinct take-home written exams for each field, as described above. Individual exams should normally consist of no more than three questions.

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You have 72 hours to complete each field examination. You usually must complete all three examinations within a two-week period. Any exceptions to these guidelines must be worked out in advance with the agreement of the Graduate Chair, your Advisor, and your Supervisory Committee. You must pass all three written examinations before advancing to the oral examination. You must take a two-hour oral examination with your Supervisory Committee within two weeks of passing your written exams.

Timing: You will normally take comprehensive examinations during the second semester of the third year of doctoral study. If you are in European or World History, your advisor may require two or more languages, and it may take up to an additional year to take your comprehensive exams.

Results: You will receive notification of the written exam results by the faculty member who supervises each field within one week of the exam date. Each evaluation is given as high pass, pass, or fail. Your three examiners will complete Comprehensive Examination forms for each of your exams at the end of the oral examination. If you pass your comprehensive exams, you will fill out and submit the Advancement to Candidacy form (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/Doctoral-Candidacy.pdf>) to the Office of Graduate Studies. Should you fail any part of the comprehensive examination, you may attempt another examination, or a part thereof, during the following academic term only on the recommendations of your Supervisory Committee and the Graduate Chair. Failure to pass the second attempt will result in a recommendation for termination from the program.

THE DISSERTATION

DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS OR PROPOSAL

No more than six months after having successfully completed comprehensive examinations you need to write and defend a formal dissertation prospectus or proposal with all of your available dissertation committee members. This document is typically 15-20 pages in length and should:

1. Define your dissertation topic, explain its significance, and describe how it will represent original research in the field;
2. Situate the proposed research in the broader historical debates and the relevant secondary literature;
3. Describe your primary sources and research methodology.



WRITING AND DEFENDING YOUR DISSERTATION

The dissertation will normally comprise 36 semester hours of credit out of the 90 hours in the PhD program. It is usually about 300 pages. It may be either entirely or in part produced as digital scholarship of a scope and significance appropriate to the dissertation. Whether in print form or digitally produced, the dissertation should show the technical mastery of the field and advance or modify former knowledge; that is, it should treat new material, or find new results, or draw new conclusions, or interpret old material in a new light. You must submit an abstract, not exceeding 350 words in length including the title, with your dissertation. Students should follow the Chicago Manual of Style.

Once your PhD advisor has approved it, you will submit your dissertation manuscript to other members of your committee. This must be done at least three weeks before you plan to defend your dissertation in the final oral examination. The Office of Graduate Studies also requires that you submit an Application for Final Oral Examination at least three weeks before your defense date along with a copy of the dissertation and abstract. Your advisor and two "readers" on your Supervisory Committee must sign the Application for Final Oral Examination before your defense can occur.

The final oral examination for the PhD will not be scheduled unless a majority of your Supervisory Committee, including the chair(s), is available for the examination. Exceptions may be made only by permission of the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Your Supervisory Committee will conduct the final oral examination. It is usually about two hours and is typically devoted to the special field of the dissertation.

You will be approved for the degree if all but one of your committee members agree. However, in each case, the dissenting member of the committee will be expected to file a letter of explanation in the Office of Graduate Studies.

If you fail to pass the final oral examination, your Supervisory Committee must file a report on the failure in the Office of Graduate Studies and indicate what you must do before taking another examination. Another examination may not be held during the same semester or the same summer session in which you failed.

Following the successful completion of the oral examination, you should follow the instructions given by Graduate Studies to upload an electronic copy of your dissertation and deposit your dissertation materials with the library and Graduate Studies. In addition you must submit a bound copy to the History Department. The first page of the dissertation bound copy must bear the signatures of all members of the Supervisory Committee. Before the PhD degree is granted, you must pay a processing fee and/or a fee to cover the cost of registering a copyright (if desired) by ProQuest/University Microfilms, Inc.

PHD IN HISTORY

SAMPLE TIMELINE

PhD Year 1

Semester 1

HIST 900
Primary Field Core Course 1
HIST 970 Digital History

Semester 2

HIST 950 Research Seminar 1
Focus Field Course 1
Secondary Field Course 1

PhD Year 2

Semester 1

HIST 950 Research Seminar 2
Primary Field Core Course 2
Focus Field Course 2

Semester 2

HIST 990 Teaching History
Secondary Field Course 2
Comparative Thematic Class: HIST 951 or 953

End of Year 2: Oral Exam and Review

PhD Year 3

Semester 1

Students pursuing a graduate specialization take remaining courses.
Other students prepare for Comprehensive Exams (usually by taking 9 elective credits).

Semester 2

Comprehensive Exams may be taken near the beginning of the semester or at the end of the semester.

For students who are required to learn two or more languages, comprehensive exams might be extended into the fourth year.

PhD Year 4

Semester 1

Submit and defend a dissertation prospectus.

Semester 2

Research & Writing in consultation with PhD advisor and committee.

End of Year 4 Checkpoint

Students should meet with their Advisor and/or Supervisory Committee to make a plan for their final year of the program.

PhD Year 5 (and Year 6)

Semester 1

Draft of Dissertation done by December

Semester 2

Revisions of Dissertation
Defense of Dissertation
Graduation

GRADUATE COURSES IN HISTORY

Theory and Methodology

HIST 900: The Professional Study of History

This course introduces incoming graduate students to the culture, expectations, and practices of professional historians. It exposes students to some of the most significant historical theories, approaches, and methodologies in the field. This class is offered every fall and required of each student during her/his first year in the program.

Historical Content Classes

1) Core Historiography Seminars

These core seminars introduce students to major historiographical interpretations and debates in each of these broad fields. They emphasize critical reading, analysis, and discussion of significant books and articles of broad geographical and chronological scope. Students will gain familiarity with writing book reviews and historiographical papers. These classes will also lay the foundation for comprehensive exams by providing extensive recommended reading lists.

For students who plan to pursue an academic position at a college or university, these seminars provide a foundation for teaching in the broad fields of U.S. History, European History, or World History.

Europe

- HIST 931: European Historiography before 1700
- HIST 933: European Historiography since 1700

United States

- HIST 941: U.S. Historiography to 1877
- HIST 943: U.S. Historiography since 1877



GRADUATE COURSES

World

- HIST 961: World Historiography
- HIST 963: Topics in Non-Western Historiography (rotates between faculty specializing in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East)

2) Thematic and Comparative Classes

Our thematic and comparative classes offer students the opportunity to explore particular topics or approaches to history across multiple time frames and geographical areas. Approach-oriented courses include Transnational History, Intellectual History, Legal History, and Cultural History. More thematic-oriented courses include Revolutions, Slavery, Urban History, Global Environmental History, and the History of Science.

- HIST/WMNS 951: Comparative Readings Seminar in Women and Gender
- HIST 953: Comparative Topics and Approaches (rotates among various faculty with different areas of interest and expertise)

3) Focus Field Classes

Focus field classes enable students to develop expertise in particular content areas related to their planned dissertation research. Currently the UNL History Program offers focus fields in North American West; Race, Ethnicity, and Identity; 19th Century U.S.; 20th Century International; Germany and Central Europe; and Early Modern Europe/Atlantic World.

900-level focus field classes are:

- HIST/ENGL/MODL 918: Interdisciplinary Seminar in 19th Century Studies
- HIST/ENGL/MODL 919: Interdisciplinary Approaches to the 19th Century
- HIST/ETHN 983: Race, Ethnicity, and Identity
- HIST/GERM 985: Germany and Central Europe
- HIST/POLS 987: 20th Century International History
- HIST/AHIS/ENGL/MODL/MUSC 988: Intro to Interdisciplinary Study of Middle Ages
- HIST/AHIS/ENGL/MODL/MUSC 989: Intro to Interdisciplinary Study of the Renaissance
- HIST/GPSP 991: Readings and Problems in North American West

Skills Based Classes

These classes offer students training in particular skills that historians will use in a variety of professional positions in the 21st century, including primary-source research, writing, digital history, teaching history, editing and publishing, and working in museums and archives.

HIST 950: Seminar in Researching and Writing History

This broad-based research and writing seminar is suitable for any PhD student in any field. Students will consult with their advisors regarding topics and sources. The class will provide a guided research and writing experience, culminating in a substantial research paper or digital project based on primary sources and modeled on articles published in professional historical journals or digital projects of a similar scope. Students will take two of these courses in the first two years of the PhD program.

HIST 990: Seminar in Teaching History

This course introduces students to the theoretical literature on teaching and learning, familiarizes them with a variety of approaches to classroom instruction, and provides opportunities to work on course design and effective discussion and lecture techniques. This course is required of all doctoral students.

Digital History

Our department is a leading innovator in the new methodology of digital history. Students should take at least one class from the following options:

- HIST 870: Digital History introduces students to analysis of the theory, methods, and readings in humanities computing and digital history.
- HIST 895: Digital Humanities Practicum offers active participation in an ongoing digital humanities project in the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities.
- HIST 946: Interdisciplinary Readings in Digital Humanities.
- HIST 970: Digital History Research Seminar enables students to develop digital projects based on their research interests.

Other skills based classes

In cases where students wish to develop alternative skills, a student may substitute one class from below for the digital history class.

- HIST 993: Press Internship. Students work with the History Acquisitions editor at the University of Nebraska Press.
- HIST 995: History Practicum. Students work at a museum, historical society, or archive with the supervision of a history faculty member.

800-level graduate classes

The department also offers a number of 800-level graduate classes. Normally these classes are offered as advanced undergraduate 400-level seminars with a graduate component. These classes may

be useful in helping students to fill in gaps in their knowledge in their fields of interest and in preparing for PhD comprehensive exams. For a list of these classes, see the Graduate Bulletin [<http://bulletin.unl.edu/courses/HIST.html>].

Typical Rotation of Graduate Classes

Every Fall Semester

- HIST 900: The Professional Study of History
- HIST 941: U.S. Historiography to 1877
- HIST 931 or 933: European Historiography (rotates between 931 and 933 each year)
- HIST 950: Seminar in Researching and Writing History
- HIST 970: Digital History
- Focus Field Class: HIST 918 or 919; HIST 988 OR 989; HIST 983; HIST 985; HIST 987; or HIST 991

Every Spring Semester

- HIST 950: Seminar in Researching and Writing History
- HIST 943: U.S. Historiography since 1877
- HIST 961 or 963: World Historiography or Topics in Non-Western History (rotates each year)
- Thematic class: HIST 951 or 953
- HIST 990: Seminar in Teaching History (every other year)
- Focus Field Class: HIST 918 or 919; HIST 988 OR 989; HIST 983; HIST 985; HIST 987; or HIST 991



GRADUATE FUNDING

Unless you indicate otherwise, you will be considered automatically for a Graduate Teaching Assistantship or a Research Assistantship when you apply for admission to the History Graduate Program. Both MA and PhD applicants are considered for funding although the Department is more likely to provide multi-year funding packages for PhD applicants.

Students who are currently enrolled in the graduate program in History who have not already been appointed as Graduate Teaching Assistants may apply for a Graduate Teaching Assistantship for the following year by December 1. These applications require three letters of recommendation, a statement of interest, and a current curriculum vita.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

These are normally a one-third time appointment, equivalent to a workload of 12-15 hours per week. Students with a continuous appointment as a graduate assistant for the academic year will receive a stipend and a waiver of resident or non-resident tuition for up to 12 hours of credit per semester.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships are both a means to fund graduate education and an opportunity to develop and hone teaching skills. The Graduate Chair typically assigns Teaching Assistants, or TAs, to large lecture classes. The bulk of the work performed by a TA consists of grading tests, quizzes, papers, and exams; attending all class meetings; holding regular office hours; and counseling students in the course, both in person and by email. In some courses, TAs also lead one or two weekly discussion sections and present occasional lectures.

Typically a TA should not be responsible for grading more than 75 essay exams or papers for each exam or assignment.

An instructor usually meets with her or his TA before the beginning of the semester to discuss and clarify expectations of the TA's role in a given course. Instructors usually introduce their TAs at the beginning of the first class meeting of the semester and include TAs in classroom interactions whenever possible. TA names, office numbers, and office hours are usually included in the course syllabus.

In a typical semester, if assigned to a class in which he or she has some expertise, a TA will have at least one opportunity, if not two, to give a lecture in the course. The instructor should provide guidance ahead of the TA's lecture and constructive feedback afterwards.

GRADUATE FUNDING

Research Assistantships

The Department has a limited number of Research Assistantships, usually as part of grants that professors have obtained from outside sources. These involve a one-third time appointment, equivalent to a workload of 12-15 hours per week.

Department Fellowships

For advanced PhD students who have passed their comprehensive exams, the Department has a limited number of competitive fellowships. These help support students while they conduct research for and write their dissertations. Eligible students may apply for these in the spring semester by [applying for university-wide fellowships](#) by the deadline set by Graduate Studies.

Travel Support

The Graduate Chair puts out a call for funding for travel for graduate students twice a year. Students can apply for funding to travel to archives and museums for research purposes or to present at academic conferences. Students can usually count on receiving funding at least once a year for travel purposes.

Other Forms of Support

For more funding opportunities see [Graduate Studies](#).

It is the policy of University of Nebraska-Lincoln not to discriminate based on age, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, gender, sex, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran's status, marital status, religion or political affiliation.

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