

Department of History Graduate Student Guide Book

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The department Graduate Director is your advisor, and is there to help you succeed in the program. If you have questions about anything in the program, please contact the director.

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Program Requirements

General History (30 hours for Thesis track; 36 hours for non-thesis track)

<https://history.appstate.edu/academics/graduate-programs/ma-general-history>

Public History (36 hours)

<https://history.appstate.edu/academics/graduate-programs/ma-public-history/public-history-concentration>

Historic Preservation (36 hours)

<https://history.appstate.edu/academics/graduate-programs/ma-public-history/historic-preservation-concentration>

Museum Studies (36 hours)

<https://history.appstate.edu/academics/graduate-programs/ma-public-history/museum-studies-concentration>

History Teaching (36 hours)

<https://history.appstate.edu/academics/graduate-programs/ma-history-teaching>

* Students will formally declare their program of study in their second semester.

Language Proficiency

The foreign language proficiency is required **only** for General History students. If you have taken at least 12 hours of a single language (or computer science, or statistics) as an undergraduate, then you can waive the requirement. You must consult with the graduate director on taking the language exam before you graduate. We encourage you not to wait to the last minute to take these. For most exams, we contract with the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures to administer the translation exams. However, on occasion, professors do translation exams in our department (for Latin or Russian, for example).

Registration

Consult with the Graduate director before you register each semester, just to confirm you are on the correct path, and are meeting all requirements.

Students can register for all listed graduate courses in a given semester through the online portal. However, Independent Studies, HIS 5998 (Thesis Research), and HIS 5999 (Thesis Writing) require an electronic “Special Course Approval Form” for registration. The form can be found at the Graduate School website here: <https://graduate.appstate.edu/about-us/forms>. Scroll down until you see the form called “Special Course Form,” and fill out the electronic link accordingly. If you need assistance completing the form, please consult the graduate director. Students may take up to 6 hours of Independent Studies with agreeable professors. Students may also take up to 6 hours of graduate courses in another department, with the approval of the Graduate Director.

Comprehensive Exam Procedures

** Thesis writers take comp exams in their **third** semester. All others take comps in their **fourth** semester (based on full-time enrollment).*

Thesis Writers (any concentration)

The student will put together a committee of three faculty members in History. At least two of these three should also be on their planned thesis committee. If a student changes their thesis committee so that the comps committee no longer reflects the thesis committee, they **MUST** have the permission of the Graduate Director.

By the end of the student’s second semester in the program, the student should consult with each committee member to gather from each a reading list of no more than 15 books/articles for the student to read, in a field related to the student’s research. That list may or may not include books a student had already read for courses.

One week before the exam, each committee member will provide the Graduate Director with a question (or questions) for the student to answer. Exam questions may be subdivided or be combinations of shorter questions. The rule of thumb is that the question(s) should require students to write for approximately 1 to 1½ hours. The Graduate Director will **NOT** provide the questions to students before the exam. Whether or not to allow the student to use notes will be up to each committee member, who will make their policies clear when providing a question to the Graduate Director.

Non-Thesis Writers (General History and History Teaching concentrations)

The student will put together a committee of three faculty members in History. The student must have taken a class or be in a class with each committee member.

By the end of a student's third semester in the program, the student should consult with each committee member to gather from each a reading list of no more than 15 books/articles for the student to read. That list may or may not include books a student had already read for courses.

One week before the exam, each committee member will provide the Graduate Director with a question or questions for the student to answer. Exam questions may be subdivided or be combinations of shorter questions. The rule of thumb is that the question(s) should require students to write for approximately 1 to 1½ hours. The Graduate Director will **NOT** provide the questions to students before the exam. Whether or not to allow the student to use notes will be up to each committee member, who will make their policies clear when providing a question to the Graduate Director.

Non-Thesis Writers (public history, museum studies, and historic preservation concentrations)

The student will put together a committee consisting of three faculty members: one general history field; one in the student's specific concentration; one other public history faculty member.

By the end of a student's third semester in the program, the student should consult with the general history and concentration committee member to prepare a reading list of no more than 15 books/articles each for the student to read. The student must have taken a class or be in a class with these two committee members. At least one of the three committee members must be one of the Department's full-time public historians.

One month prior to the exam, the student will be provided a single question for the public history field. This question will be the same for all students in a given semester. The student will prepare a 10-12 page essay requiring that they tie in course readings, course projects, the student's internship, and any other materials required by the question. The student will hand in the completed essay to the Graduate Director at the start of the exam.

One week before the exam, the general history and concentration committee members will provide the Graduate Director with a question or questions for the student to answer. Exam questions may be subdivided or be combinations of shorter questions. The rule of thumb is that the question(s) should require students to write for approximately 1 to 1½ hours. The Graduate Director will **NOT** provide the questions to students before the exam. Whether or not to allow the student to use notes will be up to each committee member, who will make their policies clear when providing a question to the Graduate Director.

ALL comps:

The Graduate Director will schedule and administer a common session for the written comprehensive exams. Computers will be available for student use, and students will be allowed up to 8 hours to answer the exam questions. The exam will begin at 8 a.m. and conclude at 5 p.m. (with time off for lunch). On exam day, the Graduate Director will present the student with their questions.

Students will arrive with a blank flash drive. Students will submit exam answers on that flash drive to the Graduate Director before leaving the exam site.

The Graduate Director will send a copy of all exam answers to the three professors on each student's comps committee. All three professors will read the three answers. Certainly, the professor who wrote the question(s) may advise the committee about the acceptability of the answer(s) to the question(s) s/he wrote. The three professors will confer to assign a grade of pass or fail and report that decision to the Graduate Director by the specified date. The Graduate Director will notify the student of the committee's decision and file the appropriate form with the Graduate School.

If the decision of the committee is to assign a failing grade, the committee members will confer with the Graduate Director and determine what action is required of the student. Depending on how many exam answers were unacceptable, the action can range from requiring the student to answer a new question (or questions) from a single committee member, to repeating the entire process at a later date. The student must wait one full month before re-taking all or part of the exam, and comps can be re-taken only once.

*Essays will be double-spaced, with 1 inch margins and 12 point font. Only Times New Roman or Palatino may be used. Illustrations, if used, footnotes, and bibliography will not count towards the page limit

**Sample Public History Capstone Essay Question:

Briefly examine the history of public history and its methodologies and practices. How do you view the relationship between your history studies and your public history studies? Explain your answer by citing scholars, publications, and projects that you have participated in that inform your understanding of public history. In other words, synthesizing all of your coursework and projects (including your internship), how would you define public history?

Thesis

In their second semester, students writing a thesis will take HIS 5998 (Thesis Research). During this class, they will establish their thesis committee, which consists of an advisor and at least two committee members. HIS 5998 is a largely self-directed course, in which students begin conducting research on their thesis, under the supervision of their thesis advisor. They must complete a thesis committee form and submit their thesis prospectus by the end of that semester.

In their final semester, students will take HIS 5999 (Thesis Writing). For most students, this will be the only course they take, as that semester will be entirely dedicated to completing their thesis. Students can register for anywhere from 3 to 9 hours of HIS 5999, as necessary.

To register for HIS 5998 or HIS 5999, go to the Graduate School Forms page (<https://graduate.appstate.edu/about-us/forms>), and choose the “Special Course Approval Form” under the “Enrollment Forms” section. HIS 5998 is a 3-credit hour course, while HIS 5999 can be anywhere from 3 to 9 credit hours, depending on what is necessary. Consult with the graduate director if you have any questions filling out this form.

Thesis Defense

A thesis defense will be scheduled when the thesis advisor believes it is ready. An invitation will be sent to all faculty and graduate students to attend the defense if they desire. Upon successful defense of the thesis, the student must make any revisions the thesis committee requires and submit the completed thesis to the Graduate School.

Thesis Submission

You must make sure that you submit your completed thesis draft (after your successful defense) by the thesis deadline as set by the Graduate School, typically one month before the end of the semester. It can be found here:

<https://graduate.appstate.edu/enrolled-students/graduation-faqs/essential-dates#ThesisDeadlines>

Plan on 10-15 days for Graduate School review of your thesis. This review will focus on ascertaining that you followed the style required by your thesis mentor, except for those items superseded by the Graduate School thesis/dissertation manual. You can find more information about the process at: <https://graduate.appstate.edu/enrolled-students/theses-and-dissertations>

Warning: No matter how polished you think your thesis is, the Graduate School will ALWAYS find something that has to be fixed. Be prepared for this, and stay on top of it.

Internships

Graduate students seeking to obtain a degree in Public History are required to complete an internship of 6 credit hours, or approximately 240 hours total.

Internships are designed to give Public History graduate students hands-on experience in a number of professional settings: museum management, archives, publications and press, etc. These internships also provide public history students with the opportunity to network with professionals in the field.

Internships in the Public History Department (HIS 5900) are researched and chosen by individual graduate students – they are not assigned. Students are free to choose internships with any institution regardless of the institution's location. Internships may be paid or unpaid and compensation is often determined by the institution that is offering the internship.

Registering for Internships

The Internship Data Sheet must be completed and submitted to the faculty supervisor prior to starting the internship. After the data sheet is completed, we will generate an Internship Contract. You will need to sign the contract, as well as your internship site supervisor and your faculty supervisor. After all signatures are acquired and processed through the Internship

Inventory, you will be automatically registered for the internship. Please allow enough time prior to the start of the semester for all paperwork to be processed. The Internship Data Sheet and other information about potential internships opportunities can be found here:

<https://history.appstate.edu/academics/graduate-programs/ma-public-history/public-history-internships>

NOTE

- * Students are responsible for acquiring their own internships, though we help all we can
- * A lot of the top internships for summer have January or February deadlines, so shop early
- * Always check with the Public History Director before accepting or rejecting an internship

Assistantships

The department has a limited number of assistantships to offer. All students who have been awarded an assistantship work roughly 20 hours each week as either a teaching assistant, or research assistant. The assignments are made by the graduate director.

All departmental assistants are required to be registered for a full course load. This is 9 hours in every semester but your final one. In your final semester, you may register for 6 hours and still maintain your assistantship.

All departmental assistants are also required to work 2 hours in the History Lab.

For those who have been unable to secure a department assistantship, there are several opportunities elsewhere on campus. The Graduate School maintains a list of all graduate work opportunities on campus, here:

<https://graduate.appstate.edu/prospective-students/financial-support/graduate-assistantships/available-assistantship-positions>

Graduation

Students must register for Graduation with the Graduate School in the semester they expect to graduate. See this site for that information:

<https://graduate.appstate.edu/enrolled-students/graduation-faqs/graduation-app-online>

The department hosts a Graduation Hooding Ceremony every spring semester separate from the university graduation ceremonies. We do not (normally) host the ceremony in the fall semester, but every student who is scheduled to graduate in the Fall semester can attend the spring ceremony either the semester before or after they graduate.

Other

All concerns relating to Graduate Deadlines or graduation, can be found in the Graduate

Bulletin: <http://bulletin.appstate.edu/>