AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of History

A collegial department, dedicated to excellence in teaching and scholarship and to fostering close and supportive relationships between faculty and students.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS
2011-2012

- Major fields in the history of the United States (colonial to present day) and Modern Europe, including Britain and Russia
- Secondary fields in the history of Latin American and the Caribbean, Early Modern Europe, and Public History
- Thematic emphases on political history, diplomatic history, history of imperialism and post-colonialism, social and cultural history, comparative history, intellectual history, quantitative history, history of gender and sexuality, history of medicine and science, African-American culture and history, and ethnic history.

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AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
Department of History

GRADUATE PROGRAMS – AN OVERVIEW

The Department of History offers graduate work leading to the MA and PhD degrees. Its areas of greatest strength and course coverage at the graduate level are in American history and in modern European history (including Britain and Russia). Students interested in other areas of the world and other time periods will find some relevant courses in the department, in other parts of the university, and through the resources of the Washington, D. C. Consortium of Universities. Such students will find it possible to develop minor fields of study ("outside fields") other than American and modern European history, as well as (major or minor) cross-national and cross-disciplinary fields.

The Department offers course work and guidance in political history, diplomatic history, history of imperialism and post-colonialism, comparative history, intellectual history, quantitative history, social and cultural history, history of sexuality and gender, history of medicine and science, African-American culture and history, ethnic history, and public history. Both humanities students and social science students should find plenty of opportunities for course work and study.

Within the limitations of its resources, the Department is flexible in its approach to graduate work. Students are encouraged, and to some extent required, to take initiative and responsibility for shaping their programs and fulfilling program requirements. We emphasize close consultation between student and advisor in defining fields of study, tools of research, and other features of a particular program.

In the following pages you will find extensive descriptions of both the MA and the PhD programs. There is more information about our department and graduate programs on our website, www.american.edu/history.

For individual questions and concerns, please feel free to contact Professor Max Paul Friedman, Director of Graduate Studies of the Department of History, by email: friedman@american.edu. Prospective applicants for the MA with a track in Public History may contact Professor Kathy Franz by email: franz@american.edu.
THE MA PROGRAM

ADMISSION

Admission to the MA Program is at the discretion of the Department's Graduate Committee and Chair, which act within the framework of standards set by the University and the College of Arts and Sciences. Admission requirements are:

1) possession of a bachelor's degree earned at an accredited college or university;

2) a 3.2 grade point average in the undergraduate major and a 3.0 cumulative average in the last 60 hours of undergraduate course work (based on a 4.0 system);

3) The results of Graduate Record Examinations (Verbal, Quantitative, and Analytic);

4) Letters of recommendation from two professors with whom the student has done recent work;

5) A well-written statement of purpose, indicating educational and career objectives;

6) A writing sample of about ten to twelve pages.

In evaluating grades, test scores, recommendations, and other supporting documents, the Department's Graduate Committee primarily seeks evidence of promise in the field of history. No single item either qualifies or disqualifies a student for admission. Someone with high GRE scores, but indifferent college grades may have to explain convincingly why he or she is now ready for serious professional work, whereas someone with lower GREs and good grades may present samples demonstrating real research and writing ability.

Provisional admission may be extended in certain cases where students do not meet usual standards. To gain full MA candidate status, the provisional student must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Department an ability to pursue a degree program with reasonable promise of success. On the completion of 12 hours of courses taken for letter grade credit, a provisional student must then apply for full standing, using the Graduate Academic Action form.

Although an undergraduate major in history provides a desirable background for more advanced work, majors in other fields will be given full consideration. The Department recognizes that almost any major may provide an adept student with knowledge or methodologies useful in the field of history.
REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETION OF THE STANDARD MA PROGRAM

I. Thirty credit hours of approved graduate level course work, including:

A) The course HIST-744 The Historian's Craft (three hours) which is normally to be taken by all graduate students in their first fall semester; a grade of B (3.0) or better is required;

B) Two history colloquia or approved substitutes (six hours) with grades of B (3.0) or better. Unless they successfully petition for an exception, all students in Modern European History must take HIST-720 19th-Century Colloquium in Modern European History, and HIST-721 20th-Century Colloquium in Modern European History. Students in U.S. history normally take HIST-727 Colloquium in United States History I, to 1865, and HIST-728 Colloquium in United States History II, since 1865;

C) One research seminar or approved substitute (three hours) with a grade of B (3.0) or better: students electing to write a master's thesis will instead register for six hours of HIST-797 Master's Thesis Seminar;

D) At least one section of HIST-500 Studies in History, which are graduate seminars on topics which change from semester to semester;

E) Fifteen hours (or twelve hours in the case of students writing a Master's thesis) of elective courses at the graduate level. Most of these courses will be combined undergraduate/graduate courses HIST-3xx/6xx, which provide lectures, reading, and discussions for undergraduates and graduate students, but give graduate students extra work and extra attention. The university stipulates that graduate students must not take more than 50% of their course work toward the MA degree in such courses that combine undergraduate and graduate students (300/600 offerings).

F) Continuing status in the program every semester (not including the summer), by registration in regularly scheduled courses, taking at least one hour of credit in a Master's Thesis Seminar, or by paying a fee to maintain matriculation. If students fail to register during either fall or spring semesters, unless they have successfully petitioned in advance for a leave of absence from the program, they will be automatically removed from the program. Readmission requires a new application, and there is no guarantee that the Graduate Committee and Chair will admit the candidate.

II. Competence with one tool of research

A tool of research is a skill, technique, or methodology valuable for conducting historical research. The History Department regards foreign languages, quantitative analysis, statistics, oral history, and new information technologies as acceptable tools of research for MA students. MA students in European history, however, must select a relevant language as a tool of research.
There is further discussion of tools of research under the description of the PhD program below. The MA tool of research examination should be taken before the student takes the MA comprehensive examination. The tool of research examination must be passed before the student receives his or her degree.

III. Satisfactory or better performance on one written comprehensive examination

This exam is a four-hour test of the student's factual, interpretative, and bibliographical-historiographical knowledge in a standard or individually designed field. The standard fields, highly recommended for MA students, are American History from the colonial period to 1865, United States History since 1865, and Modern European History 1789 to the present. Students in the Public History Program also choose a first field. In rare cases, alternative first fields may be designed with permission of the faculty advisor and the Graduate Committee.

Comprehensive examinations are offered three times annually – in April, June, and January. Students who are taking a comprehensive examination are strongly encouraged to consult with the two designated exam readers, who are named approximately six weeks before an examination is administered. Students should also check with their advisors in order to discuss the best ways to prepare for the examination. For this examination students should plan to undertake the study of material that goes well beyond their course work. The topics and readings covered in the Colloquia offerings are especially significant in preparation for this examination. The Department conducts comprehensive examination workshops and provides advice on how to prepare for and write a satisfactory exam. Students are expected to take the initiative in preparing for these exams. The exam must be typed; exceptions (to accommodate a disability) require a petition to GRACOM well in advance.

*Note: A student who fails a comprehensive exam may take it a second time. A second failure is terminal.*

IV. Completion of all of the above within three academic years

For the full-time student, most of the MA course work should be completed in the first three semesters. The normal course load per semester is 9 semester hours (3 courses); after three semesters the student should have completed 27 of the 30 hours in the program. The fourth semester should have only part-time course work but additional time for study for the MA comprehensive examination. If there are no unanticipated academic or other problems, the full-time student should finish the MA program in two years. Although the university regulations permit an additional year, taking the extra time is not necessarily to the student’s advantage.

This timetable, of course, would not apply to the part-time student. The Department recognizes that some part-time students have done outstanding work in the past, and it sees a continuing place for part-time students in the program. It is, however, more difficult to set a standard timetable for such students.
V. Optional Writing of a Thesis

The MA student has the option of writing a thesis if he or she has a strong and focused research interest, or, in the view of the advisor, needs the experience of a major research and writing effort. The MA thesis does not serve as a substitute for the comprehensive exam. It may take the student writing an MA thesis longer than two years to complete the MA.

THE MA IN HISTORY WITH A CONCENTRATION IN PUBLIC HISTORY (36 CREDIT HOURS)

Students who wish to pursue the MA in history with a concentration in public history must complete all of the requirements listed above, plus:

A. Seminar-Practicum Series. Students will complete the seminar-practicum series (HIST-729 and HIST-730) in their first year with a grade of B or better.

B. Internship. An internship (HIST-691) completed anytime after they have taken the seminar-practicum series. Internships may be completed in the summer or during the fall or spring semesters. Students should work closely with their academic advisor to find an appropriate, graduate-level internship that will further their career goals.

C. Electives. Public history students will complete twelve rather than fifteen hours of elective courses and will work closely with their advisor to choose electives that enhance their particular focus within public history. Students are encouraged to develop a mix of academic and professional courses, including courses offered in other public history programs throughout the Washington Consortium. For instance, students interested in archival management should take selected courses at the University of Maryland and Catholic University. Those interested in museum studies can complete some of their elective courses through George Washington’s museum studies program.

MA ADVISING

The Director of Graduate Studies will usually make the initial appointment of a faculty advisor for an incoming MA student based on the principle of an equitable distribution of advisees among the entire graduate faculty. MA students likely to continue on to the PhD degree are to be assigned an advisor in their main field of interest. Any time in his or her MA program a student may request the assignment of another academic advisor.
STRUCTURE OF THE MA PROGRAM

MA students should, in conjunction with an advisor, decide early in their first year on the basic configuration of a program, particularly the number of fields, the choice of a tool of research, and the writing of a thesis. The student and advisor should also work out a tentative timetable for the completion of course work, tool of research exam, and comprehensive examination.

Most students choose one field of study without writing a thesis. In this format most of the course work falls within the confines of a particular historical field (e.g., History of the U. S., 1607-1865 or History of Modern Europe Since 1789) and is partly designed to help students prepare for the comprehensive exam in that field. Although the colloquia provide particularly important information and methods, students should use their elective courses to help them cover important areas within the field, and they should also expect to do additional reading on their own.

An alternative structure for the MA involves work in two separate historical fields. This arrangement is designed for someone who has, for example, an interest in both American and European history, an interest in American history and public history, or a need for an interdisciplinary field.

In the first field (the major field) the student takes at least one colloquium and one research seminar, and at the end of study, the comprehensive examination. The second field is not subject to a comprehensive examination, but it is covered by 12 semester hours of approved course work, completed with grades of B (3.0) or better. The definition of fields and the apportioning of courses should be done in careful consultation with the advisor. The Department has created a cluster of courses and internships for those who wish to do a minor field in public history.

A separate option is the MA thesis, which involves a longer and more intensively researched work than the research seminar papers.

Another choice for the student to make, in consultation with an advisor, is the designation of a tool of research. The tool of research should be related to the student's research interests and options. A student who enters the program without necessary techniques in his or her field will need to devote time, and perhaps also course work, to acquiring them.

The students, in consultation with their advisors, are responsible for successful program planning.
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Department receives from the university a limited amount of financial assistance which it is required to use to support students in its doctoral program. On rare occasions, an exceptionally well qualified student with the B. A. is admitted directly into the PhD program.

There are a limited number of college awards for which the department nominates outstanding applicants to the MA program:

• **Special Opportunity Assistantships and Fellowships.** Designated for members of groups under-represented in higher education, they consist of both tuition remission only and tuition remission plus a stipend.

• **Hall of Nations Awards.** Designated for international students, they provide remitted tuition. Foreign nationals who are permanent residents of the United States are not eligible for these awards.

• **Massey Awards.** Designated for Canadian citizens, they provide remitted tuition.

• **United Methodist Awards.** Designated for members in good standing of the Methodist Church, they provide remitted tuition and require documentation of membership by a pastor.

Almost all MA students will have to finance their study from a variety of potential sources: personal resources, loans secured personally or through the University’s Office of Financial Aid, external scholarships, and employment. Students should consider the option of taking a full-time job at American University whose employment benefits include six hours of remitted tuition per semester and during the summer, after the four-month probationary period has been satisfactorily completed; employment opportunities can be found on the University’s website on the Human Resources page. Financial constraints may require some students to do part-time academic work throughout their program or at some point in the program.

Students should also explore sources of funding outside the university. The American Historical Association publishes *Grants, Fellowships, and Prizes of Interest to Historians* (www.theaha.org/pubs/directories.htm#grants; available only on-line and only to members of the AHA). Members of Phi Alpha Theta can apply for a limited number of small awards provided by this history honor society. Some students have found funding through religious and civic organizations with which they are affiliated.
The PhD PROGRAM

ADMISSION

Admission to the PhD program is at the discretion of the Department's Graduate Committee and Chair, which act within the framework of university and College of Arts and Sciences standards. Admission is normally contingent upon the student's prior achievement of an MA degree, but on occasion some exceptionally well-qualified students may be admitted directly to the PhD program, although they must fulfill MA requirements on the way to the PhD.

The student's MA need not necessarily be in the discipline of history, provided that he or she has good background in history and a strong record of course work in history at the undergraduate and graduate level. The holder of an MA degree in another field who has a limited background in history is better off applying to the History Department's MA program.

Other prerequisites for admission are:

1) Results of the Graduate Record Examination (Verbal, Quantitative, and Analytical);
2) Letters of recommendation from two professors with whom the student has done recent work;
3) A sample of recent written work of substantial length (e.g., MA thesis, research paper, or interpretive essay). This paper should be sent directly to the Department of History;
4) A well written statement of purpose indicating educational and career objectives, areas of interest within history, and relevant academic or practical experience.

In evaluating grades, test scores, recommendations, and other supporting documents, the Department's Graduate Committee ordinarily gives greater weight to graduate work than undergraduate work. Primarily it will seek evidence of promise in the discipline of history, which means at a minimum, the capability to pass rigorous examinations in several fields, carry out independent research for a number of years, and write a well-organized doctoral dissertation based upon that research.

Provisional admission may be extended in certain cases where normal standards are not met. To obtain full status as a PhD candidate, the provisional student must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the department an ability to pursue a PhD program with reasonable promise of success. After completing 12 hours of approved course work taken for letter grade credit, the provisional student must then apply for full standing, using the Graduate Academic Action Form.

Assignment of Faculty Advisor

The Director of Graduate Studies will usually make the initial appointment of a faculty advisor for incoming PhD students based on the student's primary area of research interest.
Students may at any time in their graduate career request the assignment of another academic advisor.

**Subject Areas**

The Department will supervise PhD dissertations in the History of Modern Europe (normally for the period 1789 to the present, including Britain and Russia); in United States History (including the colonial period); and sometimes Modern Asian History. This array of coverage is based on the range of the current full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty. It is also based on the view that two or more members of the regular faculty should have command of a field before a student can choose a dissertation within it. If the Department is able to expand the number of faculty, it may make other subject areas eligible for dissertation work.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETION OF THE PhD PROGRAM**

All the following requirements (total hours, specific courses, tools of research, etc.) are in addition to the MA requirements, except where specifically noted. The PhD student who enters the program without an MA must complete both the requirements for the MA (listed above) and those listed here. Those who enter with an MA in history from American University or from another university need complete only the course requirements listed immediately below. There are some variations for those who went through the MA program in history at American University.

**I. Forty-two credit hours of approved graduate level course work including:**

A) The course HIST-744 *The Historian's Craft* (three hours) which is normally to be taken by all graduate students their first fall semester; a grade of B (3.0) or better is required. (This course need not be repeated by students with an MA from American University);

B) Two research seminars or approved substitutes with grades of B (3.0) or better. One of these seminars must be used to develop the student's dissertation proposal or to work on a portion of the dissertation itself;

C) One or two colloquia with grade(s) of B (3.0) or better. If the student has an MA from another university, two colloquia are required. If the student has an MA in history from American University and has already taken two colloquia in the department as part of the master's program, only one additional colloquium or colloquium substitute is required;

D) One or two courses in HIST-500 *Studies in History* which are seminars with topics that change from semester to semester, with grade(s) of B (3.0) or better. If the student has an MA from another university, two of these courses are required. If the student has an MA in history from American University, one such course is required;
E) At least twelve and no more than 24 hours of HIST-799 *Doctoral Dissertation Seminar*;

F) Completion of enough elective graduate level courses to make the required total of 42 credit hours above and beyond MA work. The student may add elective courses at the 500 or 600 level in the History Department at American University. With the approval of his or her advisor, the student may also select graduate level courses at other universities in the Washington D. C. area consortium of universities, or graduate level courses in other departments at American University;

G) Continuous status in the program every semester from the time of first registration until the receipt of the PhD degree. Students may register in courses or register for at least one hour of Doctoral Dissertation Seminar to preserve their status. If a student fails to register for either fall or spring semester, he or she will automatically be dropped from the program unless he or she has arranged for a leave of absence. One-year leaves of absence are available.

II. Competence with two tools of research

PhD students must demonstrate competence with two tools of research, with competence measured by written examinations or projects. Those students who already have an MA in history and have demonstrated competence with a tool of research are required only to pass an exam or do a project for the second tool of research.

The tools of research are designed to help students with course work and dissertation work in the PhD program, and throughout their careers. Therefore, in consultation with their advisors, students should at the start of their PhD program select tools of research that are related to projected research interests, and students should get to work on mastering these tools early in the PhD program.

The Department accepts languages, statistics, computer science, oral history, and new information technologies as standard tools of research. PhD students in American history may select any two of these tools. Students in European history, however, must select at least one language as a tool of research and, upon the determination of the advisor, present two foreign languages.

Students who are using Oral History as a Tool of Research qualify by passing the Oral History course, HIST 667, with a grade of B+ or better. Students who are using Digital History as a TOR qualify by passing the course “History in the Digital Age,” HIST 677, with a grade of B+ or better.

A PhD student who has passed a tool of research exam in a language, statistics, computer science, oral history, or new information technologies at another institution will be considered to
have demonstrated competence with that tool of research if the exam or project is comparable to the Department's exam or project.

Foreign Languages

Through the Language Resource Center in the Department of Language and Foreign Studies (LFS), the University provides multiple choice standardized examinations – the TOR (tool of research) – that test grammar and reading comprehension in a limited number of languages: French, German, Spanish, and Russian. Students must demonstrate a language reading fluency equivalent to two years of formal instruction in the particular language. Graduate students in history are exempted from the CAPE portion of the exam and take only the reading comprehension section of the exam. The TOR exams are given several times each semester and two or three times during the summer. Information about the TOR exam can be found through the University’s website, Language and Foreign Studies, Language Resource Center.

Alternatively, students may request translation examinations in any of these languages, or in modern Hebrew or in Latin and ancient Greek from a suitable History Department faculty member. Students selecting other languages as tools of research must find multiple choice examinations comparable to LFS’s language exams, or they must find faculty members willing to give them translation examinations in their selected languages.

With consent of the advisor, non-native speakers of English may petition the Director of Graduate Studies to waive the foreign language examination requirement for one Tool of Research if the student’s native language is germane to his or her graduate study.

Statistics, Computer Science, Oral History, and New Information Technologies

Competence with these tools normally consists of taking a graduate level course offered by the History Department or another department in the University and then doing a satisfactory project using the tool. The History Department regularly offers courses in oral history and new information technologies; the ensuing project is usually supervised and evaluated by the instructors of these courses. For quantitative analysis tools (statistics and computer science), students should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies.

Alternative Tools
With the support of his or her advisor, a PhD student may petition the Graduate Committee to approve an alternative tool of research, a methodology applicable to his or her specific area of history, as one tool. Past examples of tools approved after petitions include linguistic analysis and feminist methods. The Graduate Committee will approve petitions for alternative tools of research only if they are directly related to students' work. It will not approve petitions submitted after students' course work is completed. Students are not allowed to satisfy the tool of research requirement with two alternative tools; one must be a standard tool.

PhD students must also have demonstrated competence with at least one tool of research before they may take their second comprehensive examination, and competence with both tools of research before they may take the dissertation comprehensive.

III. Completion of requirements and examinations for four subject fields.

The University Academic Regulations require each PhD student to master four subject fields selected by the student within limitations set by the Department. The fields together must both (1) be chronologically and topically broad and (2) fit together in some logical fashion. Students should make a tentative selection of fields as early as possible in their PhD programs. Graduate students and their advisors should use the form titled “PhD in History requirements Checksheet” to plan their courses and fields.

The student may select fields from among the list of Standard Comprehensive Examination Fields in the appendix here, or may try to define new fields. For any individually designed field, students must prepare a statement providing the title of the field, showing how the field is related to the student’s whole program of study, describing the field and its subject matter, setting forth the method of preparation (course work, major works read, etc.), and naming the faculty members who have agreed to prepare and read the examination. Individually defined fields must be approved by the advisor and the Graduate Committee. The Department conducts comprehensive examination workshops and provides advice on how to prepare for and write a satisfactory exam. Students are expected to take the initiative in preparing for these exams. Exams must be typed; exceptions (to accommodate a disability) require a petition to GRACOM well in advance.

NOTE: Students may retake any comprehensive exam once, but a second failure is terminal.

A. First Comprehensive Examination Field (Broad Field)

If the student has an MA in history from American University, then he or she has already passed a written comprehensive examination in one relatively broad historical field. A student with an MA in history from another university will normally not have to take the MA comp at American University.
A student without an MA in history must normally proceed through the steps outlined in Structure of the MA Program above, before completing the remaining requirements listed here.

**B. Second Comprehensive Examination Field (Complementary Field)**

The student will select a second field that complements work in the first, broad field. Thus, a student whose first, broad field was United States history from 1865 to the present would likely select a field in American history from colonial times to 1865. Other options, however, might be a thematic second field extending from colonial times to the present: e.g., women and gender in America, African-American history, American diplomatic history.

A student in European history will normally have a first, broad field of Europe 1789 to the present. A complementary second field might be a national or regional history for at least one hundred years (e.g., France 1789-1945, Germany 1848 to the present, eastern Europe 1867 to the present), or Early Modern Europe (15th century to 1789), or a sufficiently broad thematic second field (Holocaust Studies, History of Imperialism, Women and Gender in Modern Europe).

In close consultation with their advisors, students need to consider which complementary field will prove most useful in the completion of the dissertation and/or in their subsequent career.

The Second, Complementary Field, as well as the First, Broad Field, will be tested by a four-hour written comprehensive examination. Within the time constraints of the PhD program, students decide when they are ready to take an exam, but must register for it before the deadline set by the History Department. Students are urged to consult with exam readers and with their advisors about the means of preparation for these exams. Individually-defined fields shall be tested by an examination. The student must find two members of the History Department and/or outside faculty members willing to prepare and evaluate this examination.

**C. Third Comprehensive Examination Field (Outside Field)**

The History Department requires PhD students to select a third or “outside” field that is:

1) a historical field outside the student's main subject area; or

2) a comparative or interdisciplinary field; or

3) a field in another discipline.

For example, a student in Modern European History 1789 to the present might study an outside field in United States History, Middle Eastern History, Latin American History, Asian
History, African History, or Public History, or in another discipline such as Anthropology, Sociology, or Political Science, or in an individually-defined field using an interdisciplinary approach such as the ideology and practice of Communist movements, economic development, or Holocaust Studies. A student in U.S. History might take an outside field in European, Middle Eastern, Latin American, Asian, African, or Public History, or in another discipline, or in an individually-defined field. Before commencing course work on the Outside Field, students must obtain the approval of their faculty advisors.

Outside fields should contribute toward training that will serve students in completing the dissertation and/or in their subsequent career. Outside fields should not duplicate the content of the first or second field.

To complete work in the Outside Field, the student has two options:

1. The student must take six hours of graduate level course work with grades of B or better, and must write a paper demonstrating grasp of both the theoretical foundation of the field and practical application, with suitable papers written during course work eligible for selection. The course work and paper will together constitute the comprehensive examination in the outside field.

   The student's advisor, in consultation with an expert in the field, will rate the quality of the paper as distinction, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory. The outside reader shall be supplied with the form “History Department Outside Field Paper Evaluation,” available from the office or on the departmental website. In the event that the advisor and expert are uncertain whether the student has sufficient knowledge of the field, the student may be asked to discuss the paper and related questions with them. After such a conference the advisor and expert will determine the grade for the field.

2. The student may take a four-hour written comprehensive examination in the outside field. The student must find two members of the History Department and/or outside faculty members willing to prepare and evaluate this examination.

D. Fourth Comprehensive Examination Field (Dissertation Field)

Each PhD student must write a dissertation and successfully defend it before a dissertation committee. The dissertation is an original work of substantial scholarship that expands the frontiers of historical knowledge in some way. The History Department encourages dissertations on a variety of historical subjects and interdisciplinary topics, within constraints set only by the available expertise of the faculty.

The Dissertation Field is the immediate preparation for the writing of a doctoral dissertation. The student needs to develop a suitable topic, find faculty competent to judge his or her work on that topic, locate and explore the published literature on that topic, and identify an opportunity for original research and findings. Some of this work may be done through research
seminars. A good strategy is to use the research seminars to test potential dissertation topics or to conduct research on a portion of the dissertation topic.

Between the third and fourth comprehensive examinations the doctoral student has the responsibility of designating the members of his or her Dissertation Committee. The chair of the Dissertation Committee need not be the same person as the student's faculty advisor.

The Dissertation Field comprehensive exam, the fourth and last of the student's field exams, is an examination about the student's projected dissertation. In consultation with the student's faculty advisor or dissertation advisor (should they be different people), the student prepares for the dissertation examination by submitting to all prospective members of the dissertation committee a full-fledged dissertation proposal, including a bibliography. If the projected dissertation committee does not meet the requirements specified below, the student must obtain the approval of the Graduate Committee.

The student and his or her advisor will determine between themselves how much consultation there will be in the preparation of a dissertation proposal. The fundamental purpose of the oral dissertation field examination will be to allow faculty to question the student thoroughly about the proposal they have been given. The student must fill out a form to register for the dissertation field comprehensive, as with the other field examinations. The appropriate numbers for the field are listed in the Appendix, pp. 20-21 below (normally HIST-100 for a dissertation in Modern European history and HIST-200 for a dissertation in the history of the United States.

If the student passes, he or she will have the basic text of a dissertation proposal (and supporting bibliography) to submit to the College of Arts and Sciences for approval. As in the case with other forms of comprehensive exams, students may resubmit and retake the dissertation comprehensive exam once, but a second failure is terminal.

IV. Completion of a doctoral dissertation and successful oral defense of it;

V. Completion of requirements I-IV within five academic years of registration as a doctoral student.

Nothing is more difficult than to lay out a timetable for doctoral work (unless it is the completion of the work itself). Some fields take longer than others to master, some students take more course work than others, some dissertation topics are larger, some students have more time than others to concentrate on academic work, and part-time students belong in a separate category. Let us consider a reasonable pace for a full-time student who already has an MA in history.

• PhD course work (usually 10 courses/30 credit hours) and satisfactory completion of the complementary field, outside field, and second tool of research – 2 years;
• most of the *Doctoral Dissertation Seminar* credit hours, dissertation proposal and generally, research for the dissertation – 1.5 years;

• remaining Doctoral Dissertation Seminar credit hours (a total of at least 12 hours is required), writing the dissertation itself and defense – 1 to 1½ years.

Total of about 4½ to 5 years.

Things do not always go smoothly, and financial considerations can certainly slow things down, but these are reasonable targets for the full-time student to aim at. Taking longer is not necessarily an advantage, and it may well be a disadvantage.

**CRITICAL POINTS IN THE PROGRAM**

For most PhD students, preparation for the second comprehensive examination, the complementary field, and the accompanying requirements, will be a crucial early step. Before they take that exam, they must have passed the second tool of research exam and worked out an approved coherent package of four comprehensive fields.

Passage of the fourth comprehensive examination (the dissertation field) means that students have completed all requirements except those directly connected with the writing of the dissertation. At this point, PhD students are commonly designated as ABD (all but dissertation) students. Most full-time students who are preparing a doctoral dissertation proposal should also be exploring options for funding to support additional research for and the writing of the dissertation. See Financial Aid below.

**THE DISSERTATION**

After the student has worked out a detailed subject and a sensible path for exploring it through the oral dissertation field examination, he or she must write and file a formal dissertation proposal that conforms to guidelines issued by the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies in the College of Arts and Sciences. All members of the dissertation committee must sign off on this proposal, which is then filed in the Dean's Office.

The dissertation committee has three to five members (three is most common), one of whom serves as the chair and as the student’s main reader and critic during the writing. The chair of the dissertation committee should have a grasp of the subject of the dissertation and must be a full-time faculty member in the History Department. Other members of the dissertation committee may come from the rest of the History faculty, including faculty in fields in which dissertation work is not available (e.g., early modern Europe, Latin America); other units of the
university; or from outside the university. Every committee member must hold a doctoral degree or the equivalent.

To help assure completion of the dissertation, the student should meet with the dissertation committee around the midpoint of his or her writing of the dissertation. This "midstream" conference provides an opportunity for assessment of progress and focuses on existing or remaining problems. A written summary of the recommendations of the dissertation committee, prepared by the chair of the committee, is to be given to the student and placed in the student's file.

Once the committee has read the dissertation and deemed that it is in suitable condition, the committee and candidate schedule a dissertation defense, which may be open to the public. At this defense the committee members may require the candidate to defend the validity of his or her research and significance of his or her topic, as well as place the dissertation in a broader context. The committee may accept the dissertation without revision, accept it pending major or minor revisions, or reject it entirely.

When the dissertation is fully and finally approved, it is signed by the committee members. Two typed copies conforming to guidelines issued by the CAS Graduate Dean's Office must be submitted to the Dean's Office. The final editing and proofreading of the typescript are entirely the responsibility of the candidate.

Deadlines for the submission of dissertations to the Dean's Office are well in advance of graduation dates; they are listed in the published American University calendar. The candidate is responsible for knowing and meeting these deadlines.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Department receives from the university a limited amount of financial assistance which it awards according to merit and only to students when they enter the PhD program. Annual renewal of the fellowship depends on maintaining a 3.5 GPA and satisfactory completion of each year’s courses.

The Department also offers two supplementary stipends: the Richard and Carol Breitman Fellowship is awarded to an outstanding PhD student, preferably in European history; and, when funding is available, the Roger H. Brown Fellowship supports an outstanding ABD student for writing the dissertation and provides an opportunity to teach a course.

There are a limited number of other college awards for which the department nominates outstanding applicants to the PhD program:
• **Special Opportunity Assistantships and Fellowships.** Designated for members of groups under-represented in higher education, they consist of both tuition remission only and tuition remission plus a stipend.

• **Hall of Nations Awards.** Designated for international students, they provide remitted tuition. Foreign nationals who are permanent residents of the United States are not eligible for these awards.

• **Massey Awards.** Designated for Canadian citizens, they provide remitted tuition.

• **United Methodist Awards.** Designated for members in good standing of the Methodist church, they provide remitted tuition and require documentation of membership by a pastor.

Students who receive financial assistance that includes a stipend from the University must perform service within the Department, usually as a teaching assistant or teaching fellow in a large undergraduate course.

Students who do not receive financial assistance from the University will have to finance their study from a variety of potential sources: personal resources, loans secured personally or through the University’s Office of Financial Aid, external scholarships, and employment. Students might consider the option of taking a full-time job at American University whose employment benefits include six hours of remitted tuition per semester and during the summer, after the four-month probationary period has been satisfactorily completed; employment opportunities can be found on the University’s website on the Human Resources page. Financial constraints may require some students to do part-time academic work throughout their program or at some point in the program.

Students should also explore sources of funding outside the university. The American Historical Association publishes *Grants, Fellowships, and Prizes of Interest to Historians* (www.theaha.org/pubs/directories.htm#grants; available only on-line and only to members of the AHA). Members of Phi Alpha Theta can apply for a limited number of small awards provided by the history honor society. Some students have found funding through religious and civic organizations with which they are affiliated.

As students begin to reach the dissertation stage, they should consult with their advisors about potential external grants and fellowships that can support their research and writing. For example, the Council for European Studies sponsors a number of grants open to students in European history (www.europanet.org). In recent years, our students have been successful in obtaining both small and substantial grants and fellowships.
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION FIELDS

Standard Fields

Fields chosen from the following list must conform to graduate program planning procedures but do not require detailed description or approval by the examining faculty. A field composed of two or more fields from the list will be identified by combining appropriate numbers, e.g., HIST 056/057, History of the British Isles since 1688. Because a master’s level field must meet minimum requirements for chronological coverage, not all standard fields qualify as master’s level examinations.

Europe (including the British Isles and Russia)

010 History of Modern Europe Since 1789
011 History of Modern France
012 History of Early Modern Europe, 1500-1800 (PhD only)
014 History of Europe, 1815-1914 (PhD only)
015 History of Europe, Since 1914 (PhD only)
016 European Diplomatic History (PhD only)
017 European Intellectual History (PhD only)
018 European Social History (PhD only)
019 History of Modern Germany

020 History of the US (including Colonial)
021 History of the United States, 1607-1865
022 Recent United States History Since 1865
023 The United States: Colonial Period, Revolution and Constitution (PhD only)
024 The Middle Period in US History, 1789-1877 (PhD only)
025 US Diplomatic History (PhD only)
026 US Intellectual History (PhD only)

Latin American (only as outside field at PhD level)

030 History of Latin American
031 The Colonial Origins of Latin America

032 Latin America Since Independence

Russia (available only at PhD level)

040 History of Russia, 1462-1954
041 History of Russia Prior to Peter the Great
042 History of Imperial Russia
043 History of Russia in the 20th Century
044 Russian Intellectual History Since 1700
045 Russian Social History

British Isles (available only at PhD level)

050 History of the British Isles to 1689
051 History of the British Isles Since 1689
052 History of Britain and the Empire to 1783
053 History of Britain, the Empire, and Commonwealth Since 1783
055 History of the British Isles, 1485-1688
056 History of the British Isles, 1688-1815
057 History of the British Isles Since 1815

Asia (available only at PhD level)

060 History of Modern Asia Since 1815
061 History of South Asia Since 1815
Individually Defined Fields

Individually defined fields must comply in full with program planning procedures stated above. The student may select from:

100 Individual Field in the History of Modern Europe
200 Individual Field in the History of the United States
300 Individual Field in the History of Latin America
400 Individual Field in the History of Russia
500 Individual Field in the History of Britain and Empire
600 Individual Field in the History of Asia
700 Individual Field in the Ancient Mediterranean History (only as outside field at PhD level)
800 Individual Field in the History of a Single Country
900 Individual Field in Comparative History
1000 Individual Field in Interdisciplinary Study