

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
2019-2020

- ❖ Major/primary fields in the history of the United States (colonial to present day) and Modern Europe
- ❖ Optional secondary or third/outside field in Public History
- ❖ Many possible topical and thematic emphases, including: African American history; Jewish and Israeli history; political history; the history of medicine and science; Russian culture and history; social and cultural history; transnational and comparative history; U.S. foreign relations; and the history of women and gender.

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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 across periods and in modern European history, the history of U.S. foreign relations, and Jewish History. Students interested in other areas of the world and other time periods will find relevant courses within the department, in other parts of the university, and through the resources of the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area.

The Department offers course work and guidance in a number of thematic fields, including African American history, Jewish and Israeli history, political history, public history, the history of medicine and science, Russian culture and history, social and cultural history, transnational and comparative history, U.S. foreign relations, and the history of women and gender.

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 each individual's 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, <http://www.american.edu/cas/history>.

For individual questions and concerns, please feel free to contact Professor Gautham Rao, Director of Graduate Studies for the Department of History, by email at grao@american.edu. Prospective applicants to the MA in Public History or to PhD with a track in Public History should contact Professor M.J. Rymsza-Pawlowska, Public History Program Director, by email at rymszapa@american.edu.

The AU Graduate Academic Regulations contain further information and is available at <http://www.american.edu/provost/grad/grad-rules-and-regulations-toc.cfm>.

THE MA PROGRAM

ADMISSION

Admission to the MA Program is at the discretion of the members of the Department's Graduate Committee and Chair, who 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 credit hours of undergraduate coursework (based on a 4.0 system);
- 3) The results of Graduate Record Examination--Verbal, Quantitative, and Analytic (Optional for the Public History MA Program);
- 4) Letters of recommendation from two professors with whom the student has done recent work;
- 5) A statement of purpose, indicating educational and career objectives;
- 6) A writing sample of ten pages or more.

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 Department's satisfaction an ability to pursue a degree program with reasonable promise of success. On the completion of 6-12 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. Applicants for the Public History concentration typically have some experience, such as an internship, with a public history organization or institution.

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 credits) 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 credits) 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 credits) with a grade of B (3.0) or better: students electing to write a master's thesis will instead register for six credits of HIST-797 *Master's Thesis Research*;
- D) Eighteen credits of elective courses at the graduate level (or twelve credits in the case of students writing a Master's thesis or taking two research seminars for their capstone). The university stipulates that graduate students must not take more than 50 percent of their course work toward the MA degree in 600-level courses that are listed at the 4xx/6xx level).
- E) 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.

Students who are using Oral History as a Tool of Research (TOR) 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 and New Media,” HIST 677, with a grade of B+ or better.

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. For more details on the Tool of Research, see the instructions included in the PhD section below.

III. MA Students must complete one of the following four options to fulfill their capstone requirement:

- a). Written MA exam in one field (e.g. US I or US II)
- b). Written MA exam in combined field (e.g. US I & II)
- c). MA Thesis (6 credits)
- d). 2 research seminars (3 credits each; the **typical** path for most MA students)

Comprehensive Exams

The exam options a. and b. are four-hour written tests of the student's factual, interpretative, and 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. MA students considering a teaching career are encouraged to consider a chronologically broader combined field (option b).

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.

Guidelines for the MA Thesis

Each M.A. thesis requires a minimum of one advisor, but normally will be advised by a committee consisting of two professors with expertise in his/her general field of inquiry: one main advisor who directs the thesis writing and one additional reader.

The preferred path to the M.A. is to take HIST 751 Graduate Research Seminar in the first semester of work on the M.A. During this semester, the student will research the thesis, write a thesis proposal, and submit a minimum of 25 pages of text in lieu of the normal requirements of HIST 751. Enrollment in the class gives the student the opportunity to learn along with grad student colleagues about issues of methodology in research and to participate in the research community of fellow grad students. The instructor for HIST 751 will grade the student's M.A. work in consultation with the student's M.A. thesis advisor(s). The following semester, the student enrolls in HIST 797 Master's Thesis Research for 3 credits. During this semester, the student completes the thesis.

Alternatively, the student may enroll in HIST 797 for two semesters and conduct all research and work on the thesis only in consultation with his/her advisor(s).

The thesis should normally be between 60-100 pages (17,500-25,000 words, including footnotes but not bibliography), based on original research (using primary documents) and analysis. The thesis must include footnotes and a full bibliography of primary and secondary works consulted. The thesis should conform to the rules in the Chicago Manual of Style, unless an alternative style is approved by the thesis director.

The thesis project culminates in an oral defense with the student's advisory committee. Thesis projects that meet the above requirements will receive a grade of "Pass." Theses that are exceptional in terms of their research, analysis, historical intervention, and writing style can receive a grade of "Distinction." If the two committee members do not agree upon the final grade, a third reader will be assigned by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Students considering an M.A. thesis are strongly encouraged to begin planning for the project as soon as possible in their graduate career.

For information on formatting and submitting the thesis, see:

<http://www.american.edu/provost/grad/etd/templates.cfm>. Please be sure to check college-level submission deadlines that must be met in order to graduate:

<http://www.american.edu/provost/grad/etd/submission.cfm>. Note that the initial submission is required a full month before the end of the semester. At this stage, a staff member of the dean's office (currently Lauren Tabbara) will perform a quick check to see if there are any major formatting issues and will respond with a list of things to change, usually within a week. The student may continue to work on the thesis until the final deadline, around the last day of classes.

IV. Time to degree

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 credits (3 courses); after three semesters the student should have completed 27 of the 30 credits in the program. The fourth semester should have only part-time course work but additional time for study for the MA comprehensive examination or completion of the MA thesis, if pursued, or enrollment in the second research seminar. If there are no unanticipated academic or other problems, the full-time student should finish the MA program in two years. With summer courses, it is possible to finish the degree in three semesters, and, in exceptional cases, in two semesters and two summers.

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. University regulations require all students, whether full- or part-time, to complete the MA within six years.

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 (HIST729 and HIST-730) in their first year with a grade of B or better.
- B. Internship. An internship (HIST-691) any time after completion of 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 credits 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 throughout the Washington Consortium. For instance, students interested in archival management might 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 as well as considerations of field. The Public History Program Director serves as the advisor to MAPH students.

STRUCTURE OF THE MA PROGRAM

MA students should, in conjunction with an advisor, decide early in their first year the basic configuration of the individual's program, particularly concerning the number of fields, the choice of a tool of research, and the capstone of choice (exam, two research seminars, or MA thesis). The student and advisor should also work out a tentative timetable for the completion of course work, tool of research, and capstone.

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 or to research and write successful papers for their research seminars. Although the colloquia provide particularly important information and methods, students should use their elective courses to help them cover important areas within their 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, a second research seminar, the MA thesis, or the comprehensive examination. The second field is covered by 12 semester credit 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.

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.

Students, in consultation with their advisors, are responsible for successful program planning.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

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

- *Massey Awards*. The Massey awards cover tuition costs and are designated for Canadian citizens.
- *United Methodist Awards*. Designated for members in good standing of the Methodist Church, these generous awards 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 may explore the option of taking a full-time job at American University. American University offers tuition remission for eligible employees. For details of AU employee's educational benefits please see the American University Human Resources Education Benefits webpage at <https://www.american.edu/hr/benefits/EducationBenefits.cfm> . Employment opportunities can be found on the University's website on the Human Resources page. Students often work part-time while enrolled in the MA program.

Students should also explore sources of funding outside the university. The American Historical Association publishes *Grants, Fellowships, and Prizes of Interest to Historians* (<http://www.historians.org/members/Grants/index.cfm> ; available only online 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 also 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, who act within the framework of American 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 from their undergraduate work, 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 a 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) 3 Letters of recommendation, preferably from three 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), which should be sent electronically to both the College of Arts and Sciences Graduate Admissions office and to the Department of History;
- 4) a 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 ultimately write a well-organized doctoral dissertation based upon that research.

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 request the assignment of another academic advisor at any time in their graduate career.

SUBJECT AREAS

The Department will supervise PhD dissertations in the history of Modern Europe (normally for the period 1789 to the present), United States history (including the colonial period), U.S. Foreign Relations, and modern Jewish 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 topic 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 credits, specific courses, tools of research, etc.) follow the completion of the MA requirements, except where specifically noted. PhD students entering the program with an MA in History from AU or from another university begin with the requirements below. Students without an MA who are admitted to the PhD program must first complete the MA requirements above before beginning the PhD requirements below. Students with some graduate courses or an MA in a field other than History may work with the Director of Graduate Studies to count graduate-level history courses toward the MA requirements.

I. Forty-two credits of approved graduate level course work including:

- A) The course HIST-744 *The Historian's Craft* (three credits) which is 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 (HIST 751) 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. Students who took two research seminars in the MA program need take only one at the PhD level.
- C) One or two colloquia or substitutes 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, only one additional colloquium is required.
- D) HIST-898 *Doctoral Continuing Enrollment Course* (pre-ABD) may be taken by doctoral students who are completing coursework, exams, or proposals in preparation for advancement to candidacy. It is a 1 to 9 credit course that can be repeated once and it may be taken with or without regular coursework. Tuition is assessed at the 1 credit rate per semester regardless of the number of credits taken. The course is graded UP/SP and students must register with the approval of their Doctoral Program Director
- E) HIST-899, *Doctoral Dissertation Seminar* (ABD) may be taken by doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy with the approval of the faculty member supervising the dissertation. It is a 9 credit course, but tuition is assessed at the 1 credit rate. The course is graded UP/SP and students in 899 Doctoral Dissertation are deemed full-time students. ABD students must enroll in HIST-899 every semester until the dissertation is defended.

F) Completion of elective graduate level courses as determined necessary by advisor and student to meet the requirements for the Tool(s) of Research, Outside Field, or broad knowledge in chosen fields. With the approval of his or her advisor, the student may also select graduate level courses at other universities in the Consortium, or graduate level courses in other departments at American University.

G) Continuous enrollment in the program every semester from the time of first registration until the receipt of the PhD degree. Students may register for courses or at least one credit of HIST 898 or HIST 899 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. Leaves of absence are available on a semester-by-semester basis.

II. Competence with tools of research

The PhD student's faculty advisor will determine whether the student must complete one or two "tools of research" (TORs). 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 select one or two tools of research at the start of their PhD program that are related to 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 of these tools. Students in European history, however, must select at least one language as a tool of research.

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 and New Media," 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 World Languages and Cultures, the university provides standardized examinations that test grammar and reading comprehension in a limited number of languages including French, German, Spanish, Arabic,

Italian, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian. Students must demonstrate a language reading fluency equivalent to two years of formal instruction in the particular language to meet the tool of research requirement. Graduate students in history 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 at <http://www.american.edu/cas/clear/tor.cfm>.

Alternatively, students may request translation examinations in any of these languages from a suitable History Department faculty member. Students selecting other languages as tools of research must find examinations comparable to WLC's language exams, or they must find faculty members willing to provide translation examinations in their selected languages.

With consent of the advisor, native speakers of languages other than 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 completing a satisfactory project using the tool. The History Department regularly offers courses in oral history and new information technologies; the final 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, and typically involve graduate-level study of 3 credits or more. 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.

PhD students must demonstrate competence in at least one tool of research *before* they may take their comprehensive examination, and *before* they may defend their dissertation proposal.

III. Comprehensive examination.

PhD students take two written comprehensive exams, in primary and secondary fields, and a follow-up oral comprehensive exam. The requirement for the third (outside) field, is normally

met by taking two courses in the field and submitting a paper demonstrating grasp of both the theoretical foundation of the field and practical application (see below for details).

Early in the PhD program, students should identify their field supervisors and develop reading lists in close consultation with these supervisors. Lists can vary in length depending on the type of books and articles included. As a rough guide, major fields generally include 50-100 books and minor fields 35-70 books, plus articles. The field supervisors then become the examiners. Students may opt to enroll in HIST 690 Independent Study Project in History in the semester before their examinations in order to work closely with their examiners to prepare for their exams.

The student will be given 12 hours to write each field exam. The exam will be take-home and you may use notes, but must cite your sources. Each exam will consist of two to three essay questions from a choice of more than that. All the answers for one exam, added together, will amount to 6,000-9,000 words. The two written exams must be taken within a seven-day period. If both exams pass, the student then proceeds to the oral comprehensive, which must be taken within 21 days of the first written exam. The oral exam is given by the two field supervisors, with a third examiner added primarily to observe and contribute a vote on the outcome of the oral exam. The third examiner is chosen by the student in consultation with his or her advisor and will ideally be someone with expertise in one or both of the fields. Each field supervisor is given 30 minutes to test the candidate's knowledge of the field, understanding of the books in the lists submitted by the candidate, and, chiefly, to follow up on issues raised in the written exams. At the end of the exam, a majority vote of the examiners determines a grade of satisfactory, distinction, or failure. Distinction will only be awarded for extraordinary performances on the written and oral components and requires a unanimous vote of the examiners.

A failed written comprehensive must be retaken within four months. A second failure is terminal.

Field Choices:

A. First Comprehensive Examination Field (Major/Primary Field)

The first field will cover a relatively broad chronological and topical scope, and will typically be one of the following:

Modern Europe, 1789- present
History of North America before 1865
United States History Since 1865
History of North America (colonial era - present)

B. Second Comprehensive Examination Field (Complementary/Secondary Field)

The student will select a second field that complements work in the first, broader field.

Thus, a student whose major/primary field was United States History from 1865 to the present would likely select a field in North American history to 1865. Other options, however, might be a thematic second field extending from the colonial era to the present: e.g., women and gender in America, African-American history, or 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, Russia from 1689 to the present), Early Modern Europe (15th century to 1789), or a sufficiently broad thematic second field: e.g. Holocaust Studies, History of Imperialism, or Women and Gender in Modern Europe.

In close consultation with their advisors, who must approve, students need to consider which complementary field will prove most useful in the completion of the dissertation, but also in terms of their overall preparation as historians and in their subsequent career.

C. Third Comprehensive Examination Field (Outside Field)

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

- 1) an 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, public history, another discipline such as Anthropology, Sociology, or Political Science, or 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 a different discipline, or in an individually defined field. Before commencing course work in 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 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 credits of graduate level coursework 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 or revised afterward

eligible for selection. The course work and paper will together constitute the comprehensive examination in the outside field.

A faculty 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 expert is uncertain whether the student has sufficient knowledge of the field, the student may be asked to discuss the paper and related questions. After such a conference, the expert will determine the grade for the field.

2. The student may opt to be tested on the outside field as part of the written and oral comprehensive examination

D. Dissertation Proposal Defense

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 Proposal 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 relevant published literature, 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.

Before defending the proposal, the doctoral student has the responsibility of designating the members of his or her Dissertation Committee and submitting them for approval to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. The form for Committee Approval must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies well in advance of defending the proposal.

The Proposal Defense 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 proposal defense will be to allow faculty to question the student thoroughly about the proposal they have been given. The student must bring to the proposal defense a copy of the

proposal, two copies of the signature page formatted per AU style, and documentation of having completed the Responsible Conduct of Research on-line training exercise
<http://www.american.edu/research/rcr.cfm>

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 and will acquire the status of ABD (all but dissertation). The student may resubmit and retake the proposal defense once; a second failure is terminal.

IV. Completion of a doctoral dissertation and successful oral defense

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

It is challenging to create a timetable for doctoral work. 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. What follows constitutes a reasonable pace for a full-time student who already holds an MA in history.

- PhD course work (usually 30 credit hours) and satisfactory completion of the complementary field, outside field, and tool(s) of research – 2 years;
- Research and writing of the dissertation, teaching assistance and research assistance work. 2.5-3 years.

Total of about 4½ to 5 years.

Things do not always go as planned, and financial considerations can certainly slow things down, but these are reasonable targets for the full-time student who enters the program with an MA in history. Taking longer is not necessarily an advantage, and it may well be a disadvantage. The Department recommends that students aim to finish within five to six years. University regulations set a maximum of nine years for the PhD program. Any extensions must be approved by the dean's office.

THE DISSERTATION

The Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee has three to five members, 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, tenured faculty member in the History Department. Pre-tenure faculty members may co-chair with a tenured faculty member. A second committee member must be a full-time, tenure-line faculty member at AU. Other members of the dissertation committee may come from the rest of the History faculty, other units of the university, or from outside the university. Every committee member must hold a doctoral degree or the equivalent, but may serve at any rank.

If a student submits chapters to the advisor along the way, which is highly recommended, s/he may expect regular and timely feedback. To help ensure completion of the dissertation, the student might meet with the dissertation committee around the midpoint of his or her writing of the dissertation, which provides an opportunity for assessment of progress and focuses on existing or remaining problems. If held, 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 is open to the public and posted at least seven days prior to the event. At this defense the student will give an opening summary of 10-20 minutes. 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. Dissertations that display outstanding research, writing, significance, and contribution to existing scholarship may receive the award of Distinction. The conferral of Distinction proceeds by unanimous agreement and vote of the committee, including the outside reader, either after the defense or upon reviewing the final version.

At the time of the final examination of the dissertation, at least one additional member will join the core of the dissertation committee as an outside reader for the final examination. The purpose of the outside reader is to provide a review of the dissertation by a colleague with the appropriate terminal degree who is an expert in the subject matter of the dissertation. The outside reader should have no direct association with the student. An outside reader serves an advisory role, and the charge to the outside reader is to determine if the dissertation meets general standards in the field, not necessarily to critique the work in detail.

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 must be submitted to the Dean's Office. 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 academic calendar. The candidate is responsible for knowing and meeting these deadlines.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Department receives a limited amount of financial assistance from the university that it awards according to merit to students only 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 three supplementary stipends: the Richard and Carol Breitman Endowed Scholarship, awarded to an outstanding PhD student, preferably in European history; the Roger Brown Dissertation Fellowship, which supports an outstanding ABD student for writing the dissertation; and the Patrick Clendenen Dissertation Fellowship, intended to support work by women in history.

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

- *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 or as a research assistant.

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. American University offers tuition remission for eligible employees. For details, please see the Education Benefits page at AU HR: <https://www.american.edu/hr/benefits/EducationBenefits.cfm>. 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* (<http://www.historians.org/members/Grants/index.cfm>); available only online 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.