GRADUATE STUDENT MANUAL

Department of History
California State University, Chico
Chico, California 95929-0735

Alisa Wade, Graduate Coordinator
Trinity Hall
2026-2027

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History MA Program Mission Statement

The mission of the History Department's Graduate Program is to serve the needs of students who intend to pursue doctoral studies at other institutions, teachers who wish to deepen their content knowledge, and those who simply seek a more advanced and specialized study of the past. Going substantially beyond upper-division undergraduate coursework, the graduate program will provide students with in-depth knowledge about the origins and development of peoples in the past and perfect their ability to conduct advanced research and writing. Graduates of the M.A. program will be equipped to make significant and independent contributions to the field of history and will be prepared for successful professional careers as secondary teachers, college or university professors, journalists, lawyers, and historians in government and private agencies.

History Graduate Program Learning Outcomes
1. Student's work demonstrates the ability to communicate historical knowledge, interpretations, and arguments, clearly in writing and in formal oral presentations.
2. Student's work demonstrates research and information literacy skills using scholarly resources, including the critical use of both print and electronic research tools, as well as the proper citation of both primary and secondary sources.
3. Student's work reflects the ability to identify arguments in historical scholarship and to evaluate them critically.
4. Student's work reflects an understanding of intellectual, political, economic, social, and cultural history.
5. Student's work reflects an understanding of the constructions of race, color, gender, or ethnicity in history.

GRADUATE STUDENT MANUAL
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
California State University, Chico

Purpose of This Manual

The purpose of this manual is to help students engaged in the postbaccalaureate study of History at CSU Chico to understand the process and procedures that are used by the Department. However, **this manual does not supersede the** University Catalog **and students should familiarize themselves with the section on Graduate Education in that publication.** In addition, students should also obtain a copy of A Guide to Graduate Studies: Policies, Procedures, and Format. Finally, it must be emphasized that this manual is not a substitute for graduate students consulting regularly with the Department's Graduate Coordinator. **Students should meet with the Graduate Coordinator at least once each semester during the mandatory advising period** and more frequently if questions arise.

The Nature of Graduate Education

Graduate education is advanced study in a specific program that goes substantially beyond upper-division undergraduate coursework. Graduate study requires greater independence on the part of students. It is intended to develop in-depth knowledge and introduce students to research techniques so that they can later make significant and independent contributions to their fields of study. The department offers both a Certificate in Advanced Study in History and a Master of Arts degree.

The Certificate in Advanced Study in History

The program consists of 12 units of advanced lecture coursework and seminars. The 12 units must be earned in a minimum of 9 units of 600-level courses and a maximum of 3 units of 400- or 500-level courses taken for graduate credit. A grade-point average of 3.0 is required for the entire program with at least a B- in each course and no more than 3 semester units of transfer and/or extension credit. All 12 units earned as part of the Certificate may be transferred into the History Department MA Degree Program.

Requirements for Admission into the Certificate in Advanced Study in History

There are no course prerequisites for admission to this certificate program and the GRE is not required. Applicants for admission must, however, meet all relevant University and departmental standards, policies, and procedures, including:

1. A bachelor's degree in History from an accredited institution or an acceptable bachelor's degree in another discipline with advance approval of the History Department's Graduate Coordinator.
2. An undergraduate grade point average that suggests the ability to succeed in our Certificate program.
3. An application on file with the Office of Graduate Studies.
4. Approval by the History Department Graduate Committee.

The Master of Arts in History Program

The program consists of 30 units of advanced lecture coursework, seminars, and directed individual study leading either: 1) to the completion of comprehensive examinations; or 2) to the writing of a thesis followed by its oral defense. The 30 units must be earned in a minimum of 18 units of 600-level courses and a maximum of 12 units of 400 or 500-level courses taken for graduate credit. **Note:** students intending to apply **400-level courses** to their M.A. degree programs **must make special arrangements with their instructors** to satisfy the higher workload and standards expected of a graduate student taking an undergraduate course.

Up to 3 units of relevant course work outside the Department of History may be counted towards the M.A. in History with the prior approval of the Graduate Coordinator.

Requirements for Admission into the History MA Program

1. BA in History from an accredited college or university or a BA degree in another discipline with advance approval of the History Department's Graduate Coordinator.
2. An undergraduate grade point average that clearly indicates the ability to thrive in our program.

Application Deadlines

- For fall admission, April 1
- For spring admission, November 1

Application Instructions

Students meeting the above requirements are invited to submit a graduate school application through Cal State Apply. All application materials below will be submitted through this online application:

- Transcript(s)
- Writing sample. Our strong preference is for a History research paper of between ten and twenty pages that highlights your experience working with primary sources and secondary literature as well as in making historical arguments.
- Two letters of recommendation, ideally from professors who know you well.
- Statement of Purpose (roughly 500 words), which should address the following:
    1. Your personal and professional goals in seeking an advanced degree in History and why you believe CSU Chico is a good fit for your goals.
    2. Your preparation to study History at the graduate level.
    3. Two subfields of History that interest you, chosen from the list below. One must be in a non-US subfield.
    4. Prospective students interested in the thesis option should provide an additional research statement (roughly 500 words) that describes their proposed thesis. Please indicate whether you have the relevant language

preparation to carry out this work. You should identify one History faculty member (Professor, Associate, or Assistant Professor) that you would choose to chair your Graduate Advisory Committee.

Subfields in History at CSU Chico

US History to 1877

Dr. Robert Tinkler
Dr. Alisa Wade (currently not available for new thesis supervision)
Dr. Eran Zelnik

US History since 1877

Dr. Robin Averbeck
Dr. Gloria Lopez
Dr. Shawn Schwaller

Middle East/Islamic History

Dr. Najm al-Din Yousefi

Latin America

Dr. Steve Lewis

Europe

Dr. Dallas DeForest
Dr. Jason Nice
Dr. Tim Sistrunk

East Asia

Dr. Sinwoo Lee (currently not available for new thesis supervision)

All incoming graduate students are automatically placed on the comprehensive exam track, which requires preparing for and passing exams in two historical subfields, one of which must be in a non-U.S. subfield. Students who formally submitted a research statement for the Thesis Option will, upon application, have their material evaluated by their potential primary thesis advisor in addition to the Graduate Committee. The potential thesis advisor must sign off on the feasibility of the proposed project at the point of acceptance into the program. Admitted students who wish to write a thesis will need to form a Graduate Advisory Committee and submit a prospectus by March 1 (for fall matriculants) or October 1 (for spring matriculants) in order to officially move to the thesis track. The Graduate Committee, in conversation with the thesis advisor, will approve thesis applications based on project feasibility, the student's relevant language training, and faculty workload and availability.

Comprehensive Examinations Plan

Students may take comprehensive examinations as the culmination of their work towards the M.A. This will consist of two three-hour written examinations, completed within a two-week period, followed by a one-hour oral examination with the Graduate Advisory Committee. Candidates will present themselves for examination in two of the following subfields of History: Europe; East Asia; Latin America; the Middle East; the U.S. to 1877; the U.S. since 1877; or another subfield approved by the Department Graduate

Committee. As they prepare for their comprehensive exams, students will build reading lists in consultation with both faculty members supervising their chosen exam fields.

Normally, students pursuing the comprehensive examinations track will fill out a Master's Degree Program Plan (PDF) form by the end of their first year in the program. They will ask one faculty member from each of their chosen subfields to serve on their Graduate Advisory Committee. As they prepare for their examinations, students may ask one member of their committee to supervise an Independent Study (HIST 697) on one relevant subfield. In consultation with their committees, students will choose the two-week period during which they will take their exams. For each subfield, students will be given a written examination synthesizing the arguments and evidence from the titles on the subfield list.

The Graduate Advisory Committee members will read both exams prior to the oral examination. Immediately following the oral examination, committee members will confer with one another to determine whether both exams are of sufficient quality to be accepted as fulfilling the requirement for graduation. A candidate will qualify for an M.A. in History if both members of the Graduate Advisory Committee agree that the candidate has demonstrated competency in the subfields of History that the candidate has selected.

Thesis Plan

Once they have been admitted to the program, students in their first year may apply to the department's Graduate Committee for approval to write a thesis. Students will need to submit a prospectus, form a two-person Graduate Advisory Committee, and complete a Master's Degree Program Plan (PDF) form by March 1 (for fall matriculants) or October 1 (for spring matriculants). The prospectus should describe the student's topic and provide a working list of both secondary and primary sources (listed separately) that will be consulted. The student should demonstrate adequate knowledge of the historiographic literature in their field and should seek to demonstrate that sufficient and accessible primary materials exist so that a genuinely original work can be produced.

The Graduate Committee will approve thesis applications based on project feasibility, the student's relevant language training, faculty workload and availability, and whether the proposed thesis will make an original and significant contribution to historical knowledge. Faculty members cannot serve on more than two thesis committees at the same time.

Typically, a thesis should not exceed seventy-five pages in length.

Upon completion of the thesis and its acceptance by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee, an oral examination will be scheduled to which all members of the Department may be invited. At this oral examination the student will be asked to defend the thesis.

For information about formatting and submitting a thesis, please consult with the Office of Graduate Studies.

These recently completed theses have won the university's Outstanding Thesis Award:

"Citing Divine and Human Laws: Women of African Descent and the New Orleans Cabildo, 1769-1800" (2019)

"Proselytizing Modernity: Reexamining the Summer Institute of Linguistics' Tenure in Mexico, 1934-1979" (2021)

"'The best-kept secret': the Genesis Group's origins and influence on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1971-2018"(2023)

"Campaigning Club Women: Butte County and the Push for Women's Suffrage, 1880 to 1912" (2025)

Mandatory Advising

All graduate students must meet with the Graduate Coordinator every semester during the mandatory advising period (usually during the two-week period before preregistration). At the meeting, students will discuss progress towards the certificate or degree, including the composition of the Graduate Advisory Committee.

Coursework and Requirements

The Master's program in History consists of 30 units of 400/500/600-level courses as follows:

a. At least 27 units in the discipline of History, with a minimum of 18 units of 600-level courses in the discipline.
b. Satisfactory completion of HIST 600: *Graduate Research Seminar*. This is the writing proficiency course required of all students seeking the M.A. in History. Since it is typically offered every other spring, students should take HIST 600 at the first opportunity.
c. Satisfactory completion of HIST 690: *Historiography*. Since it is typically offered every other fall, students should take History 690 at the first opportunity.
d. No more than a total of 6 units of HIST 697: *Independent Study* and HIST 699T: *Master's Thesis*.

HIST 697: *Independent Study* is a course designated for a specific research and/or readings project supervised by a member of the faculty. Independent study projects may be undertaken for 1-3 units of credit. Graduate students can design the project in consultation with their instructors. Normally,

students will not be permitted to count more than 3 units of 697 towards the M.A. degree.

HIST 699T: *Master's Thesis* is designed for students approved to write a thesis. They may receive 1-6 units of credit for researching and writing the thesis.

To enroll in 697 and 699T courses, students must complete and submit special Supervision Course Proposal forms available from the History Department. These forms require the signature of the Graduate Coordinator.

Note: Foreign language proficiency is not a Master's degree requirement. However, students who plan further graduate study in History are encouraged to study languages since most doctoral programs require demonstrated proficiency in two languages beyond English.

MA Degree Program Recommended Two-Year Roadmap

	First semester	Second semester
Year 1	• HIST 690: Historiography (3 units) or HIST 6XX: Graduate Reading Seminar • 6XX: Graduate Reading Seminar (3 units) • 400-level elective (3 units)	• HIST 600: Graduate Research Seminar (3 units) • 6XX: Graduate Reading Seminar (3 units) • 400-level elective (3 units)
	Third semester	**Fourth semester**
Year 2	• 6XX: Graduate Reading Seminar (3 units) or HIST 690: Historiography (3 units) • 6XX: Graduate Reading Seminar (3 units) • 400-level elective (3 units)	• 400- or 600-level elective if need, which may include HIST 600: Graduate Research Seminar or HIST 6XX: Graduate Reading Seminar (3 units) • Culminating activity prep (HIST 697 or HIST 699T)

Timeline to Completion

The Master's degree is History is designed to be completed in 2 years or 4 semesters by full-time students taking 9 units of coursework per semester. Requests for extensions beyond a third year must be made in writing to the Graduate Coordinator during week 10 of the student's sixth semester in the program. The student must consult with their Graduate Advisory Committee before filing for an extension and provide a firm rationale for why additional time in the program is needed. The Graduate Coordinator, together with the student's Graduate Advisory Committee Chair, will review the application for extension and notify the student of their decision.

Role of the Department Graduate Coordinator

The function of the Department Graduate Coordinator is to supervise the day-to-day operation of the Department's M.A. program. The Coordinator reviews and makes recommendations on applications for admission to the graduate program, acts as academic adviser to those students admitted into the program, grants approval for their curricula, and makes policy recommendations to the Department Graduate Committee.

Role of the Department Graduate Committee

The Department Graduate Committee has final authority over the operation of the Department's graduate program. It makes decisions as to admission into the program and on disqualification of those not making satisfactory progress. Members of the committee also review thesis prospectuses. The Graduate Committee hears petitions from graduate students in regard to decisions made by the Graduate Coordinator and determines the Department's graduate program policies.

Jobs on Campus and Scholarship/Award Opportunities

Depending on budget, the dean of the College of Humanities and the Fine Arts will fund anywhere from one to three graduate assistantships in our department. As soon as the graduate coordinator learns this number, they will send an email to all MA students asking who is interested in this kind of work. Typically, graduate students are paired with a HIST 130 instructor.

History graduate students have also worked as writing tutors in the History Writing Cooperative, served as imbedded tutors, worked for Adelante, served at the department's front desk and have found work at the Student Learning Center.

For information on History department scholarships and awards, including the Macintosh-Hutchinson Research Fellowship, please click here.

Graduate Program Forms

Master's Degree Program Plan: This should be completed by the end of your first year in the M.A. program.

Master's Degree Graduation Clearance Form: This must be completed during the first half of your final semester in the M.A. program.

Application for Graduation Form:

Request for Final Progress Sheet: You must request that this form be sent to the chair of your Graduate Advisory Committee at least five days before your oral examination. Your committee members must complete it at the end of your oral exam; your chair will then deliver it to the Graduate School.