

GRADUATE STUDENT MANUAL

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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 Student 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 seeking a master's degree in History to understand the process and procedures that are used by the Department of History in its graduate program. 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.

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 Master of Arts degree and a Certificate in Advanced Study in History.

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 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 History M.A. Program

1. A Bachelor's degree in History from an accredited college or university or a B.A. 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.

Students meeting the above requirements are invited to submit a graduate school application through [Cal State Apply](#).

All of the application materials below will be submitted through this online application.

- Transcript(s)
- Writing sample (essay, term paper or research paper)
- Two letters of recommendation, ideally from professors who know you well
- Statement of Purpose (roughly 500 words), which should address the following:
 1. Your purpose in graduate study and why you believe CSU Chico is a good fit for your goals.
 2. Your preparation for study of history at the graduate level.
 3. Three subfields of history that interest you, chosen from the list below.
 - US History to 1877
 - Prof. Michael Magliari
 - Prof. Robert Tinkler
 - Prof. Alisa Wade
 - US History since 1877
 - Prof. Jeff Livingston
 - Prof. Michael Magliari
 - Prof. James Matray
 - Middle East/Islamic History
 - Prof. Najm al-Din Yousefi
 - Latin America
 - Prof. Steve Lewis
 - Early Modern Europe
 - Prof. Jason Nice
 - Late Antiquity
 - Prof. Dallas DeForest (on leave, AY 2022-2023)
 - East Asia
 - Prof. Sinwoo Lee (on leave, AY 2022-2023)

All incoming graduate students are automatically placed on the comprehensive exam track, which requires preparing for and passing exams in three historical subfields. Students may apply to the department's Graduate Committee for approval to write a thesis after they have completed nine units in the program. The Graduate Committee will approve thesis applications based on project feasibility, the student's relevant language training, and faculty workload and availability.

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** in order to satisfy the higher workload and standards expected of a graduate student taking an undergraduate course (see *University Catalog* section on Master's Degree Courses).

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.

Comprehensive Examinations (Exam Plan)

Students may take Comprehensive Examinations as the culmination of their work towards the M.A. This will consist of three, 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 three of the following subfields of History: Late Antiquity; Medieval and Early Modern; Modern Europe; East Asia; Latin America; the Middle East; the U.S. to 1877; the U.S. 1877 to the present; or another subfield approved by the Department Graduate Committee.

Students will find lists of thirty to forty books/articles for each subfield on the [History Department M.A. program](#) website. They can expect to read some of the books/articles for each subfield in the readings seminars (HIST 610-680). As they prepare for their comprehensive exams, students will build a reading list in consultation with each of the faculty members supervising their chosen exam fields.

Normally, students pursuing the Comprehensive Examinations track should fill out a [Master's Degree Program Plan](#) form by the end of their first year in the program. In consultation with the Graduate Coordinator, they will ask one faculty member from each of the 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 at least fifteen of the books/articles on the subfield list.

The Graduate Advisory Committee members will read each of the exams prior to the oral examination. Immediately following the oral examination, committee members will confer with one another as to whether each of the three exams is of sufficient quality to be accepted as fulfilling the requirement for graduation. A candidate will qualify for an M.A. in History if all three 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

Students may apply to the department's Graduate Committee for approval to write a thesis after they have completed nine units in the program. The Graduate Committee will approve thesis applications based on project feasibility, the student's relevant language training, and faculty workload and availability, and if it can be shown that the proposed thesis will make an original and significant contribution to historical knowledge. Normally, a faculty member cannot chair more than two theses at the same time.

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

Before the end of the first academic year, the student must, therefore, constitute and consult with their Graduate Advisory Committee and prepare a thesis prospectus for submission to the Department Graduate Committee, along with a completed [Master's Degree Program Plan](#) form. The prospectus should describe the student's thesis topic and provide a working list of both secondary and primary sources (listed separately) that will be consulted. The student should seek to demonstrate adequate knowledge of the historiographic literature in their field, and that sufficient and accessible primary materials exist so that a genuinely original work can be produced.

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.

Graduate Advisory Committee

Each student in the History M.A. program, whether pursuing the Comprehensive Examinations track or the thesis track, will be responsible for selecting their Graduate Advisory Committee in consultation with the Department Graduate Coordinator. This committee will usually consist of three members of the History Department whose areas of specialty are related to the thesis topic or the subfields of History that the student chooses for their Comprehensive Examinations. When appropriate, and following consultation with the Graduate Coordinator, students may ask an outside

faculty member from a relevant field to serve on their Graduate Advisory Committee. The student's Graduate Advisory Committee will help design the student's program of study and will either conduct and evaluate the student's Comprehensive Examinations *or* supervise the research and writing of a thesis and have responsibility for granting final approval of that thesis.

Students should form their Graduate Advisory Committees as soon after entering the History M.A. program as is feasible, and should have a committee formed no later than the end of the second semester of graduate work. This is done by contacting prospective committee members from among the department faculty and determining their availability and willingness to serve on the student's committee. Once informal approval has been granted by faculty members, the student should contact the Graduate Coordinator to formalize the committee by completing a [Master's Degree Program Plan](#) form.

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.

Categories of Standing for Graduate Students

Conditionally Classified:

Students who have been granted admission into the Department's M.A. program pending the fulfillment of certain requirements specified by the Graduate Committee.

Classified:

Students who have formally been admitted to the Department's M.A. Program.

Candidacy:

Students who are cleared for graduation pending the completion of their culminating projects (i.e. their oral exams and either their thesis or three field essays) and any remaining coursework requirements. In order to be eligible for advancement candidacy in the History M.A. Program, a student must have:

1. Previously been granted classified status.
2. Completed at least 9 units of coursework towards the M.A. with a minimum GPA of 3.00.
3. Formed a Graduate Advisory Committee.
4. Submitted their [Master's Degree Program Plan](#) form to the Graduate School

Students **must be advanced to candidacy before** they may take comprehensive exams or submit their thesis.

Coursework

Normally, all coursework to be applied towards an M.A. must be completed within five years. Under special circumstances, a single extension of this five-year time limit may be granted to a maximum of no more than seven years.

Graduate Historiography course (690): This is the writing proficiency course required of all students seeking the M.A. in History. Since the course is not offered every semester, students should take History 690 at the first opportunity.

Independent Study (697): This 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.

Thesis and Supporting Research (699T): Students approved to write a thesis may receive 1-6 units of credit for researching and writing the thesis. The thesis must be completed and approved within the time limitations indicated above. A student will not be permitted to receive credit for more than a total of six units of 697 and 699T projects dealing with the same subject.

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.

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. 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.

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.