

**The University of  
North Carolina at Charlotte  
History Department**

**Graduate Student Handbook**  
(Revised December 2014)

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## **Welcome to the M.A. Program in History!**

Welcome to the History Department at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte. We are very pleased to have you as one of our graduate students, and we hope that you are also excited to begin your studies with us. Since starting a graduate program can be a little scary, we have prepared this handbook to help acquaint you with the requirements of the M.A. degree and the policies and procedures you will need to know as you navigate through the program.

The faculty member in charge of the M.A. program, known as the Director of Graduate Studies, is currently Dr. Christine Haynes: 704-687-5141 or [chaynes@uncc.edu](mailto:chaynes@uncc.edu). Her office is in Garinger 203.

The Director of Public History is Dr. Aaron Shapiro: [ashapi10@uncc.edu](mailto:ashapi10@uncc.edu); 704-687-5128. His office is in Garinger 223. Please feel free to contact him with any questions you have about the program in Public History.

The central hub of the History Department is room 226 Garinger. There you will find Dr. Jurgen Buchenau, the Chair of the Department of History. He can be reached at 704-687-4646 or [jbuchenau@uncc.edu](mailto:jbuchenau@uncc.edu). The Office Staff of the History Department—Ms. Linda Smith, Administrator (704-687-4634/ [lsmith@uncc.edu](mailto:lsmith@uncc.edu)), and Ms. Leigh Robbins, Secretary (704-687-4633 / [lrobbin1@uncc.edu](mailto:lrobbin1@uncc.edu)), are vital members of the Graduate Program team. Please introduce yourselves and get to know them.

The department currently has 27 members of the graduate faculty working in all areas of the historical profession. By region, they are:

### **American History**

Benny Andres  
Christopher Cameron  
Karen Cox  
Dan Dupre  
David Goldfield  
Cheryl Hicks  
James K. Hogue  
Gregory Mixon  
Sonya Ramsey  
Aaron Shapiro  
John David Smith  
Mark Wilson

### **European History**

Christine Haynes  
David Johnson  
Jill Massino  
Heather Perry  
Amanda Pipkin  
Steve Sabol  
John Smail  
Peter Thorsheim

### **African History**

Karen Flint  
Akin Ogundiran

### **Latin American History**

Jurgen Buchenau  
Erika Edwards  
Carmen Soliz

### **Asian and Middle Eastern History**

Maren Ehlers  
David Johnson  
Ritika Prasad

The department also is affiliated by topic area to the Graduate Certificate program in the Africana Studies Department:

#### Africa and African Diaspora

Christopher Cameron  
Karen Flint  
David Johnson  
Felix Germain—Africana Studies  
Cheryl Hicks  
Gregory Mixon  
Akin Ogundiran—Chair, Africana Studies  
Sonya Ramsey

There are affiliated faculty from other University departments who teach in the History Graduate program. They are:

#### Africana Studies

Felix Germain--Caribbean  
Akin Ogundiran—Africa and African Diaspora

#### English

Alan Rauch

#### International Studies

John Cox

#### Religious Studies

Julia Harmon-Robinson

For a look at some of our graduate faculty's most recent research projects and teaching interests, you can look at their profiles online (<http://history.uncc.edu/people/faculty>) or just introduce yourself and say hello. All faculty have posted office hours each semester or would be happy to make an appointment to meet with you.

The History Department faculty have their offices in the Garinger building, most on the second floor and some on the first. The History Department office is **located at #226 Garinger**. We look forward to seeing you in the halls and in our classrooms.

## **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

To get the Master of Arts degree in History, you must complete one of the following sets of degree requirements, with an examination option, a thesis option, or a public history concentration. If you enrolled in the M.A. program before Fall 2007, you will be held to the previous requirements (not listed here). Students who take at least two courses (six credits) per semester are considered full time; those who take one at a time are considered part time.

### **M.A. in History (examination option): 30 credit hours**

Required Courses (15 total hours)

- Three colloquia (9 hours)
- HIST 6693: Historiography and Methodology (3 hours)
- HIST 6694: Writing Seminar (3 hours)

Electives (12 total hours)

- At least 3 hours must be in 6000-level history courses
- No more than 9 hours of electives can be at the 5000-level, in independent study (HIST 6894) or outside the department of History (with no more than six hours of any one of these), in any combination

HIST 6698: Examination (3 hours)

At least 6 hours (two courses) must be in fields other than United States history

### **M.A. in History (thesis option): 30 credit hours**

Required Courses (15 total hours)

- Three colloquia (9 hours)
- HIST 6693: Historiography and Methodology (3 hours)
- HIST 6694: Writing Seminar (3 hours)

Electives (9 total hours)

- At least 3 hours must be in 6000-level history courses
- No more than 6 hours of electives can be at the 5000-level, in independent study (HIST 6894) or outside the department of History, in any combination

HIST 6699: Thesis (6 hours)

At least 6 hours (two courses) must be in fields other than United States history.

### **M.A. in History, Public History Concentration: 36 credit hours**

Required Courses (21 total hours)

- Two colloquia (6 hours)
- HIST 6693: Historiography and Methodology (3 hours)
- HIST 6694: Writing Seminar (3 hours)

- HIST 6330: History in the Digital Age
- HIST 6320: Historic Preservation
- HIST 6310: Museum Studies

Electives (9 total hours)

- At least 3 hours must be a Public History elective
- No more than 6 hours of electives can be at the 5000-level, in independent study (HIST 6894), or outside the department of History, in any combination

HIST 6400: Internship (3 hours)

HIST 6999: Thesis (3 hours)

NOTE: Unless a student is required to be away from campus for a semester or more for a competitive academic opportunity, such as study abroad or public history internship, no required course, particularly the Historiography and Writing seminars, may be waived. Given that these seminars are currently offered only once per year, please plan your program of study accordingly.

### **Post-Baccalaureate or Transfer Courses**

If you took courses at UNCC as a post-baccalaureate student before applying to the M.A. program, you can count up to six hours of 5000 or 6000-level coursework in History towards your degree. The same applies to courses taken at another institution, provided they meet our standards. The Director of Graduate Studies will make that decision.

### **Grade Requirements**

All students must make “satisfactory progress” towards their degree. This means earning a grade of “A” or “B” in all of your courses. The “C” grade is not considered satisfactory in graduate work. The History Department requires that all MA students earn a grade of “B” or better in HIST 6693. Students who do not achieve this grade must repeat the course and earn at least a “B” in order to graduate.

In order to graduate, you must have a combined GPA of 3.0 or better. If you get three “C” grades or one “U” grade (the graduate equivalent of “D” or “F”), you will be automatically suspended from the program. If you are suspended, you will not be allowed to take courses.

If you are suspended due to poor grades, you can appeal the suspension, but such appeals are rarely granted. If you think you have a case, you should submit a “Suspension Appeal Form” to the Director of Graduate Studies. The department will review your appeal and make a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School about whether or not you should be allowed to continue in the MA program. You will be notified about this decision by the Dean of the Graduate School. If your request for reinstatement is rejected, you can appeal the decision (if you need details, ask the Director of Graduate Studies). If you are reinstated, you must get satisfactory grades in all of your courses. If you get another “C” or “U” grade, you will automatically be terminated from the program.

### **WHAT MAKES A COLLOQUIUM DIFFERENT FROM A SEMINAR?**

## **DEFINITIONS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF COURSES**

### **A. Colloquia** (this is plural; the singular is colloquium!)

These are reading/discussion courses that are designed to introduce graduate students to the most important scholarship in a given regional and temporal field of historical study. These courses are not meant to be comprehensive (so, you won't learn about everything), but they should cover a wide range of topics and show you what kinds of questions historians in that field are most interested in. In most colloquia, students will read the equivalent of about a book a week. Written assignments in these courses generally consist of response papers / books reviews and/or several short (5-7 page) analytical essays based on assigned reading. Students should not write research papers in these courses, though they may begin to explore a topic of particular interest, for example in an annotated bibliography. By taking three of these courses (two for Public History students), you will acquire the broad base of knowledge you will need before moving on to more specialized work.

The department offers six different colloquia: US History to 1865 (taught each fall semester); US History since 1865 (taught in the spring); Europe from the Enlightenment to the First World War (taught each fall); Europe in the Twentieth Century (taught each spring); Colonial Latin America (taught each fall); and Modern Latin America (taught each spring).

### **B. HIST 6693: Historiography and Methodology**

This course is required of all M.A. students. Full time students must take this course in the spring semester of their first year. Part time students may take this course only after they have completed at least six hours of graduate-level history courses in our department. In this course, students learn about how historians write history. We explore different methods of research and analysis, reading examples of both theoretical texts and historical writing. As part of this course, you will begin to develop a research project of your own and draft a proposal (of approximately 15 pages) for a major paper, of article length (25-40 pages), if you are pursuing the exam option, or longer (of 50-75 pages), if you want to pursue the thesis option. By the end of the course, you should defend your proposal before a committee of three faculty members (one of whom may be from outside the department), which will become your exam or thesis committee. Your committee must approve your proposal before you will be allowed to enroll in the seminar.

### **C. HIST 6694: Writing Seminar**

This research course is required of all graduate students. It will be taught each fall semester. Full time students should expect to take this course during their third semester. Part time students can take this course only upon completion of at least two courses, plus Historiography (History 6693). In the seminar, students will meet for the first few weeks to discuss common readings, but will then focus exclusively on their own independent research project in close consultation with their committee chair, who will become either their major exam field or thesis advisor. The course should culminate in a research paper or thesis chapter of between 25-40 pages (article length), based on original analysis of primary sources. During the

semester, students will meet with their committee chair to discuss their work in progress. There will also be exchanges with the seminar instructor and classmates, but the major work will be done with the committee chair.

#### **D. Independent Study—History 6894**

On occasion, if no elective is offered in your area of interest and the faculty member is agreeable, you may pursue independent study, individually or in a small group, with a member of the graduate faculty. In this case, you will meet weekly or according to the arrangement with the faculty member to discuss a concentrated reading list of about a book a week and then develop a historiographical essay, annotated bibliography, or research paper (of at least 20 pages). To register and obtain a permit for this course the student must secure an Independent Study Form from the History Office—Ms. Leigh Robbins—or on the “Forms” section of the History Graduate Studies website and in conjunction with the supervising professor briefly outline the plan of study and final project—e.g., historiographical essay or annotated bibliography based on the readings for the semester. Both the supervising faculty member and student must sign the form and turn it into the Director of Graduate Studies to request a permit to register.

#### **E. Electives**

Each year, in addition to the required colloquia, public history core courses, and historiography / writing seminars, the department will offer one or more 5000 or 6000 level topics courses, which count as electives. These courses will examine a given theme across regional and/or temporal boundaries. Examples of themes might be nationalism, globalization, gender history, urban history, race and race relations, African Diaspora or environmental history. Courses can also be taken outside the History Department—for example, in the Africana Studies Graduate Certificate Program, Public Administration Program (Museum Administration and Nonprofit Management course/s), and Women’s Studies Certificate Program, with the permission of the Graduate Coordinator/Director of Graduate Studies in the Department offering the specific course.

#### **Public History Sequence**

All students who want to graduate with the concentration in Public History need to take this series of three courses that serve as an introduction to the discipline: History in the Digital Age (HIST 6330), Historic Preservation (HIST 6320), and Museum Studies (HIST 6310). The department will offer these courses every other year. (See <http://publichistory.uncc.edu/course-offerings> for current proposed rotation.) Each course is on a different topic, so they need not be taken in any particular order. We encourage students who do not intend to complete the concentration in Public History to consider taking one or more of these courses as electives.

#### **Public History Electives**

These courses tackle some area of Public History. Some examine fields of professional practice, like Preservation Law, Collections Management, Heritage Tourism or Documentary Editing. Others look at methodology, like Oral History or Print History. Any student can take these courses, but Public History students must take at least one of them. Also please consult with the Director of Public History and the Director of Graduate Studies for any elective courses you might pursue outside the History Department.

## **COURSE OF STUDY**

**Full Time Students.** The course of study for full time students (both Public History and regular M.A.) is fairly set for the first year, as shown in the model below. Required courses are in italics. Required courses (hence the name) **MUST** be taken during the appropriate semester. Students should plan on taking between 15-18 total hours (5-6 courses) during the fall and spring semesters (two or three courses per semester).

First Year Fall Semester:

- *Colloquium*
- *Colloquium\**
- Elective, or the first course in the Public History sequence (*required for Public History students*).

*\* All full time students are required to take a minimum of 2 colloquia in their first semester unless given special permission by the Director of Graduate Studies. Students in Public History who take 6 credits in their first semester will be granted an exemption, and will take one colloquium and the first course in the Public History sequence.*

First Year Spring Semester:

- *HIST 6693: Historiography and Methodology*
- Colloquium, elective, or Public History offering
- Elective: 5000 or 6000 level courses

## **Second year course of study**

The second year program is more individualized and depends on your own interests and degree requirements, except that each fall semester third-semester graduate students will be expected to enroll in the Writing Seminar. If you are on the thesis track, you should finish any required courses you have not yet completed (such as the third colloquium and Writing Seminar), and then take those electives that will be most useful to you as you complete your thesis. You will also take 6 hours dedicated to thesis work. If you are on the comprehensive examination track you should finish any required courses you have not yet completed and then take those colloquia or electives that will most help you develop the broad field knowledge necessary for your exam. You will also take three hours of exam preparation. If you are a Public History student, you should finish any required courses you have not yet completed, including any remaining courses in the Public History sequence, and take additional electives, colloquia, or independent study to prepare for your Public

History thesis. Use the checklists at the end of this handbook to help you plan out your own specific schedule. Also check in with the Director of Graduate Studies and Faculty Advisor/Thesis Chair to discuss the specifics of your program.

**Part Time Students.** Part time students will need to work with the Director of Graduate Studies to determine a course of study that fits their needs. Two possible programs are shown below. Note: these are only examples and you might need to modify them depending on course availability and your own curricular needs. Part time students should be particularly attentive to the placement of Historiography (after completion of six hours in graduate history courses) and Writing Seminar (after completion of Historiography). These courses must be completed before work on the thesis or exam begins.

Sample schedules for part time students, regular M.A. program, thesis track. Students on the exam track can substitute in exam preparation for three hours of thesis work and add one additional elective in place of the other three hours of thesis credit.

*A. Student begins in August*

Fall (Semester 1)  
Colloquium #1                      3 credits  
credits

Spring (Semester 2)  
Colloquium #2                      3 credits  
credits

Fall (Semester 3)  
Colloquium #3                      3 credits  
credits

Spring (Semester 4)  
Historiography                      3 credits  
credits

Fall (Semester 5)  
Writing Seminar                      3 credits  
credits

Spring (Semester 6)  
Elective                              3 credits  
credits

Fall (Semester 7)  
Elective or IStudy                      3 credits

Spring (Semester 8)  
Elective or IStudy                      3 credits

Summer (Semester 9)  
Thesis                                  3 credits

*B. Student begins in January*

Spring (Semester 1)  
Colloquium #1                      3

Fall (Semester 2)  
Colloquium #2                      3

Spring (Semester 3)  
Historiography                      3

Fall (Semester 4)  
Writing Seminar                      3

Spring (Semester 5)  
Elective                                  3

Fall (Semester 6)  
Colloquium #3                      3

Spring (Semester 7)  
Elective                                  3 credits

Fall (Semester 8)  
Elective or IStudy                      3 credits

Spring (Semester 9)  
Thesis                                  3 credits

Fall (Semester 10)

Thesis

3 credits

Summer/Fall (Semester 10)

Thesis

3 credits

## **IStudy=Independent Study**

### **HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR COURSES?**

You register for classes online using 49er express. For questions on this, contact the UNCC Registrar (<http://www.registrar.uncc.edu/students/register.htm>).

To register for all History graduate courses, you need to get a permit. To receive a permit, send an email to the Director of Graduate Studies that contains your name, your student ID number, your email address, and the names and complete numbers of the courses you want to take (e.g., HIST 6693 A01, Historiography and Methodology). This information will then be forwarded to the History office staff: Ms. Leigh Robbins (you might keep this in mind when composing your email). The office staff will issue the permit for you and confirm this via email. Once you have the permit, you can register for the course. Note: Receiving a permit does NOT register you for a class; it merely enables you to register yourself online. This system, while somewhat cumbersome, is meant to protect you, so that the Director of Graduate Studies may check that your courses meet the program requirements and that no students from outside the program may take seats in our courses before our own students have had a chance to register.

To register for any independent work — this includes thesis hours, exam preparation, an independent study, or an internship — you must fill out a form available in the History Office from Ms. Leigh Robbins or from the “Forms” section of the History Graduate Studies website. This form must be signed by the supervising faculty member and the student and then given to the Director of Graduate Studies before you can receive your permit to sign up for these courses.

We try to issue permits within 24-48 hours after they are requested, but you should not always expect to get an immediate response, especially in the summer. We restrict fall registration to History M.A. students only until August 1. Registration for spring semester courses is limited to History M.A. students until January 1. After those dates, students from other programs can register for our courses. To ensure yourself a space in the courses you want, you should try to register as early as possible.

## **ADVISING**

### **Faculty Advisor (not the thesis/examination chair):**

A Faculty Advisor will be assigned to you upon entrance to the Program. Your faculty advisor will assist you in developing as a historian. The advisor will also work with you on planning your course of study, deciding on a thesis or comprehensive examination as your capstone project, and developing a thesis proposal. The faculty

advisor may or may not become your thesis chair/comprehensive examination chair. Once you have chosen your own thesis or exam advisor, please inform both your original assigned faculty advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

### **General Advising:**

Consult with your faculty advisor about potential courses to take, progress to degree, thesis/comprehensive examination committee formation, research questions, and teaching questions. For advice about your thesis or exam, you should speak primarily with your thesis advisor or exam committee chair and also with your other committee members.

You should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies regarding courses, requirements, issues, permits, and overall guidance about the overall program.

Public History students should also feel free to contact the Director of Public History, with any questions about Public History requirements, internships or course offerings..

In the back of this handbook, there are also checklists that can help you keep track of those courses you have taken and those that you still need to take. Use them well!

### **Grievances**

If you feel you have a serious and justified grievance of any sort with a faculty member in the department, you should consult with the Chair of the History Department, Dr. Jurgen Buchenau ([jbuchenau@uncc.edu](mailto:jbuchenau@uncc.edu)) about the issue.

## **WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE EXAM AND WHY SHOULD I TAKE IT?**

The exam is useful for people who want to gain broad expertise rather than concentrate on a very specific subject in the way a thesis project requires. The exam is generally the best option for students who are or plan on becoming high school or community college teachers, for example, or are pursuing the M.A. for enrichment purposes.

If you take the exam, you will register for three hours of exam preparation credit. This means you have to take one more class than students on the thesis track to accumulate the 30 hours you need to graduate.

The Comprehensive Examination will test your knowledge of the existing historical literature in three fields (one major field and two minor fields). Each field is supervised by a different faculty member and has its own separate written examination consisting of one to three essay questions per examiner, with the major field examiner asking up to three written examination questions. You will have three hours for the written exam in your major field and two or three hours for each of the minor fields. You cannot use any books, notes or other materials while you take your exam. If you wish, you can arrange (in advance) to use one of the department's laptops to take your exam; you cannot use your own computer for this purpose. You must take all three of your written exams within the space of one

week, which means that you should plan carefully your schedule of exams. After you have completed the written examination for each examiner the 3 person committee will individually read their specific written examination. You will then meet with your entire exam committee for an oral defense of your written answers one week after completing the written examination. The comprehensive examination defense should last about an hour. To the comprehensive examination defense, be sure to bring the required forms described at the bottom of this section.

An exam field is a broad area of historical research. It can be defined thematically, regionally, and/or temporally. Examples include: modern European gender history, American military history, Soviet history, the New South, nationalism, modern China, the Second World War and its aftermath, labor in modern America, the Progressive Era, the Habsburg Empire from 1848-1918, African Americans in a specific time period or a specific event/theme such as lynching or gender. For each field, you will develop a reading list in consultation with the supervising faculty member. For the major field, the lists will consist of approximately 20 books. The two minor field committee members will assign you about 10 books each, but not exceeding 14. You should choose exam fields that build on your knowledge from the courses you have already taken. The exam is not the place to study something completely new to you, but a chance to deepen, expand, and reflect on your existing knowledge.

Once you have chosen your exam fields and committee members (by the end of the Historiography Seminar or, at the latest, the Writing Seminar), you should draw up a reading list for each field, in conjunction with the committee member supervising that field. Copies of these lists should be given to all committee members, as well as to the Director of Graduate Studies, for your file. As you prepare for the exam, you should plan to meet at least once or twice (more, if you have not yet had a course or independent study with the faculty member) with each committee member, to discuss the readings and potential exam questions. It is up to you to schedule these meetings.

It is also up to you, in conjunction with the members of your committee, to schedule each written exam and the oral defense. Remember that you will need to reserve a room for each of these activities. You or your exam committee chair should do this and work closely with Ms. Leigh Robbins.

### **Required forms for the Comprehensive Examination**

Before you can register for the three hours of exam preparation, you must have your Comprehensive Examination Committee members sign the **Comprehensive Examination check-sheet (same as with the Thesis Committee Check-Sheet, you obtain this sheet from the History Department Office or on the History Graduate Studies website)** and give it to the Director of Graduate Studies.

After you have taken your Comprehensive Examination, you must inform the Graduate School that your exam has been successfully completed by submitting the **Report of Exam or Thesis form**, signed by all members of the committee, to the Graduate School. **This form is available at the UNC Charlotte Graduate School website.** In addition, your major field advisor must fill out a change-of-

grade form to change your incomplete in exam preparation hours to an actual grade. You should remind him or her of this.

Note: additional forms beyond those necessary for the exam are needed to graduate. See the section on “Forms for Graduation” for details.

## **WHAT IS A THESIS AND WHY SHOULD I WRITE ONE?**

A thesis is your chance to write history on your own, based on primary source research. A thesis is not just a retelling of what other historians have said, but adds something new to the state of historical knowledge. You might research something no one else has written about, or provide an entirely new interpretation of an event or process. Writing a thesis gives you the opportunity to experience how professional historians work. Any student thinking of pursuing a Ph.D in history should plan on writing a thesis, since this is good preparation for doctoral work. Students who do the Comprehensive Examination are not precluded from advancing to doctoral level work, but writing a thesis is helpful in preparing a student for the dissertation process and in producing a writing sample for the application to Ph.D. programs.

There is no typical M.A. thesis because individual projects can vary a great deal. You can see past examples of History M.A. theses on the bookshelves in Garinger 239. (For the length of a thesis, consult with your Thesis Committee Chair, keeping in mind that an average range is 50-100 pages.) One thing you need to remember when thinking about potential thesis topics is the availability of sources. Your thesis must be based on your own research. This means you must pick a topic that has sources that are available locally or with limited travel, and the material must be in a language that you can read. Students who want to write theses in Latin American or European history should be particularly careful to consider how they will acquire the necessary language skills if they do not have them already. If this applies to you, you should begin or continue language training as soon as possible.

### **The Thesis Committee**

You do not write a thesis on your own. You will choose a thesis committee chair to guide you through the process. The person you choose should be the member of the History Department graduate faculty whose research interests are closest to your own. It should not simply be the faculty member you know best. The most important factor here is their area of expertise. It does not matter if you have taken a class with this person. Simply go to see them, explain your ideas and ask for their help.

Your thesis chair will typically help you define your research questions, point you to useful primary and secondary sources, push you to analyze the results of your research more critically, and read drafts of your chapters as you write them. Every faculty member has a different style, so your thesis chair may not operate in the exact same way as your friend's chair.

Once you have found a thesis chair, this person will help you choose two other graduate faculty members to be on your thesis committee. This committee should be finalized by the end of the historiography course, when you will defend your thesis proposal. At the proposal defense, the committee will decide whether you may proceed with the thesis project.

Your thesis committee will also read and comment on your thesis and help decide your final grade. One of these readers can come from outside the History Department. The first reader will typically read drafts of the chapters as they are written, while the second reader will usually only read the final version before your thesis defense if that is the arrangement that faculty member makes with you and the thesis advisor. Some second readers will want to be involved in reading the thesis chapters from the first draft onward to completion of the project. Again, you should meet with all of your readers to clarify what they expect of you and how extensive they want their involvement to be.

### **The Thesis Process/Required Forms**

**Pursuit of a Master's Degree in History** also requires submitting several forms (in bold below) in a timely fashion. It is your responsibility to make sure that this is done. All forms are available in the department office and on the Graduate Studies section of the website. Those required by the Graduate School are also available online: <http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/academics/forms.html>

**I. Thesis Proposal Defense:** You will write a first draft of this proposal (of about 15 pages) in your Historiography class, but each faculty member (specifically your thesis chair) may have their own requirements and your thesis chair may ask you to substantially alter what you have done in class. When the final version is ready, it should clearly state the issues or questions you want to examine. The final draft of the thesis proposal also explains how you will go about researching the primary questions, identifying the kinds of sources to be used and where the materials are located. This document should additionally situate your project in the appropriate historiography. When these standards are met and your thesis chair agrees that you are ready to defend the thesis proposal (no later than the beginning of the Writing Seminar, in the fall semester of your second year), you should give it to all the members of your thesis committee. This three-person committee will evaluate your proposal and you will then all meet for about an hour to discuss your project. At the end of that hour your committee will decide whether your proposed project is viable. However, not until the end of the Writing Seminar will final approval be granted (by your advisor as well as the Writing Seminar instructor) for your thesis project.

**II. Permission to Write the Thesis:** Once you have been granted permission to write a thesis at the end of the one hour Thesis Proposal Defense, you must complete two forms. Both need to be signed by all of your committee members. The first (which is for the History Department) is the "Thesis Committee Check-Off Sheet." You will not be able to register for your thesis work until the thesis committee has signed off on your proposal. The second is the "Petition for Topic Approval" which you obtain from the Graduate School and return to the Graduate School, but of which you should also keep a copy for yourself. This informs the Grad

School what you are working on and whether or not you are using “human subjects.” For historians, this is an issue only if you are doing oral history (conducting interviews with real, live people).

If you are doing oral history, you must also complete the simple **On-Line Tutorial for using Human Subjects** at [Human Subjects in Research website](http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/academics/forms.html) (obtained at the <http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/academics/forms.html> website) as well as the **Protocol Application Form**, also available at this website. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) typically takes about 2 weeks to process this form.

**II. Research and Writing.** You should register for 3 to 6 hours of thesis credit while you are researching and writing your thesis. You can take this in one semester or spread the two three-hour courses over two semesters. In general, you can count on your thesis taking longer to research and write than you think it will. It really is a big endeavor. Do not think you will be able to do all the work at the last minute!

The research for a thesis project is not something you can do in a few weeks. It will take many months to find, read, digest and analyze your sources. Typically, the first step is gaining a deep familiarity with the secondary literature on your topic. Once you have this background, you will need to dig for your own primary sources. This might involve traveling to an archive and/or reading over months or years of a newspaper or periodical online or microfilm. You should remember that even finding or getting your sources can take time, especially if you need to travel or order them through Interlibrary Loan.

Writing the thesis is also a long process. Thoughts are not usually as easy to put on paper as you wish, and your ideas will develop and change as you write. You will definitely need to write multiple drafts of each chapter, so make sure to leave enough time to write, get feedback, rewrite, get more feedback and then perhaps rewrite again. Some people like to do most of their research and then start writing, others prefer to research and write each chapter in turn. How you proceed is really up to you and your thesis chair. However you choose to do it, you should come up with a reasonable schedule very early on (right after your proposal defense if not before) that has due dates for first and second drafts of each chapter. Stick to your schedule and you will be fine!

### **III. The Thesis Defense**

When your thesis is complete, you will “defend” it before your committee. You are responsible for setting the defense date and time with your committee. To graduate in a given semester, you must defend your thesis by the last day of classes and submit it to the Graduate School by the deadline during exam week (a few days before graduation), so plan carefully to make sure you have enough time. You should be sure to give your completed thesis to your committee members at least 14 days **before** the defense date (they have to read it, remember). Your defense will take approximately an hour. During the defense, your committee will ask you questions about your thesis and its larger significance. Although you might be required to make some minor revisions after the defense, you will know whether or not you passed (with a grade of A or B) immediately after it is over.

In order for you to get your degree, the Graduate School must receive formal notification that you have done the thesis. They get this when you submit **the Report of Thesis form** (<http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/academics/forms.html>) signed by all members of the committee. In addition, your thesis adviser must fill out a change-of-grade form to change your incompletes in thesis hours to actual grades. They must be sure to assign grades for each three-hour thesis course, whether spread out over two semesters or both in the same semester. Remind your thesis director that she/he needs to do this.

**IV. Submitting your Thesis.** The Graduate School requires all theses to be in a specific format and has a number of procedures with which all students must comply. Go to <http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/graduation/manual.html> for their complete thesis manual online. One of their requirements is that each student set up a formal preliminary review of their thesis by the Graduate School to address formatting issues. This review should occur as early as possible prior to the thesis defense but must be completed by the posted deadline, usually two to three weeks before the end of the semester. The defended, completed, properly formatted, signed thesis is then due to the Graduate School by the posted deadline (now a few days after the end of the semester). This date is posted at: <http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/graduation/information.html>.

Note: additional forms beyond those necessary for the thesis are needed to graduate. These forms are due at the beginning of the semester that you intend to graduate (late August for the fall semester/early January for the spring semester). Keep in mind that the deadline dates are always published on the Graduate School website: See the section on “Forms” for graduation details: <http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/graduation/information.htm>.

### **Public History Thesis/Internship**

All students in the Public History concentration are required to do an M.A. thesis. In addition to writing a slightly shorter thesis, students will develop a public history project in conjunction with their thesis topic. Students may develop a historic preservation project, an exhibit for a museum or historic site, a website or online resource for an organization, or a documentary film (though students are not limited to these choices). This project, which must be made available to the public, provides students with valuable experience in the practical application of scholarship, and prepares them to better serve the general public as they interpret that knowledge for a broad audience. For more details on both thesis and internship, contact the Director of Public History or see the requirements for the concentration in Public History on the program's website: <http://publichistory.uncc.edu/degree-requirements/thesis-and-thesis-project>.

Despite the differences in their thesis project, Public History students still need to follow the basic steps above, including the thesis proposal defense, research and writing, thesis defense, and completing all of the same forms and meeting all of the same deadlines for submitting their thesis.

## **HOW DO I KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE DEPARTMENT?**

We often rely on email to communicate essential information to students. As a rule, we send messages to your UNCC email account (@uncc.edu). The Graduate School also sends messages to this account. You cannot expect faculty to keep track of whatever other email addresses you have (aol, gmail, or yahoo accounts and so on). Therefore, you **MUST** make sure to check your UNCC email frequently (or set it to automatically forward messages to another account). We are not responsible if you miss deadlines, meetings, or anything else because you did not check your email in time. All graduate students in History should be signed on to our listserv, the GHA-L. If you are not, please contact the Director of Graduate Studies and ask to be put on the list. History Department faculty and staff use this listserv to communicate with students. You may also post messages to the list by sending them to gha-l@listserv.uncc.edu.

Please only use the list to send messages of a professional nature like announcing meetings, conferences, and so on.

## **THE GRADUATE HISTORY ASSOCIATION**

All graduate students in the Master's Program in History are expected to become members of the Graduate History Association (GHA). It is a professional obligation that you need to take seriously as an active member. Membership requires paying annual dues of \$20 that allow participation in GHA sponsored events and the Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG). The GHA sponsors a number of professional development events throughout the year, including workshops, panel discussions, meetings with professionals, and social gatherings, with and without faculty members. The current GHA website is: <http://www.history.uncc.edu/gha.htm>. You can reach the officers of the GHA by sending email to [GHA@uncc.edu](mailto:GHA@uncc.edu).

The GHA's largest project each year is to organize a graduate student history conference, the Graduate History Forum. The Forum has been a proud tradition at UNCC for over 25 years and has achieved wide recognition, attracting student presenters from across the South and even across the country. It is a mark of distinction for our students to run such a longstanding and well-regarded conference. At the Forum, UNCC students join with their peers from other institutions to present their original research in a collegial and constructive atmosphere. UNCC faculty serve as panel discussants. One UNCC professor gives an opening lecture on Friday night and a distinguished scholar from outside UNCC gives a keynote lecture on Saturday. The Forum usually takes place in March on the first weekend after spring break. All UNCC M.A. students should plan on presenting a paper at the Forum at least once (if not several times) during their graduate career.

## **HOW DO I APPLY FOR A GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP?**

The History Department currently has at least eight teaching assistantships per year. We also provide two students with the opportunity to serve as editorial assistants on one of two journals currently housed at UNCC: *World War One Studies*

and the *Journal of Urban History*. These assistantships carry a stipend of \$9000/yr and may also include some tuition assistance. All graduate assistants are required to be registered as full time students (six hours) and must maintain a GPA of at least 3.0. You must agree not to take additional paid employment while you are a GA. Graduate Assistants are expected to be active members of the GHA in implementing all of its programs.

To apply for a graduate assistantship, you need to fill out a simple form available from the Graduate School <http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/funding/assistantships-a-employment.html> and submit it to the History Department. All applications are due by February 1 for the following academic year. Assistantships are generally awarded for a full academic year, although we will occasionally have a vacancy, in which case we will issue a call for new applications from current students. Students can hold an assistantship for up to two years, assuming satisfactory academic and professional work during the first year of the assistantship.

The responsibilities of teaching assistants vary according to the needs of the faculty member to whom they are assigned. Generally, a TA will be expected to attend all class sessions and have excellent mastery of the course material, hold office hours and advise students on their coursework, assist with grading quizzes, papers and exams, and lead discussion sessions or exam preparation workshops.

## **TIME TO DEGREE, LEAVES OF ABSENCE AND CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION**

Full time students should be able to complete their program in two years, depending upon their progress on either the Thesis or Comprehensive Examination. Part time students can complete the degree in four to five years, at a rate of one course per semester and Thesis or Comprehensive Examination preparation during at least one or more summers. Taking longer to finish is fine, although you should keep a few things in mind when planning out your program. First, the Graduate School requires that all coursework for an MA be completed within six years. Coursework from more than six years before graduation must either be retaken or revalidated (this means you need to show you still have some familiarity with the material, like retaking an exam or writing a paper reviewing the literature). This includes courses taken as a post-baccalaureate student at UNCC and courses transferred from elsewhere. Second, you must be formally registered in the semester in which you graduate.

### **Leaves of Absence**

If you need to interrupt your program for good cause (health problems, etc.), you should apply for a leave of absence. Leaves of absence are generally granted for a period of up to one year. To request a leave of absence, use the "Special Request form" available in the department office or online from the Graduate School at: <http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/academics/forms.html>

NOTE: If you do not apply for a leave of absence and you do not register for courses for 12 consecutive months (spring, summer, and fall semester), you will be required to reapply for admission to the program before you can register for classes again.

## **Continuous Registration**

The Graduate School requires that all students who have completed 18 or more credits maintain “continuous registration.” This means that once you turn in the “Application for Candidacy” form to the Graduate School (around the time you defend your exam or thesis committee), you must register in both the Fall and Spring semesters (not in the summer) until you complete all requirements and graduate. If you have finished your coursework, already registered for your exam or thesis hours and still not have not completed your exam or thesis, you may continue to register for three credits of exam or thesis prep as many semesters as necessary, as long as you do not exceed six years total in the program. To register for these hours, you must complete an independent study form and have it signed by your thesis advisor, each semester.

## **FORMS AND PROCEDURES FOR GRADUATION**

As if doing all your coursework and completing your thesis or taking your exam were not enough, UNCC requires you to submit all kinds of paperwork months ahead of time just to graduate. They also charge you a fee (\$70 in Fall 2015) and require that you be registered during the semester in which you graduate. It may not be ideal, but it is the way it is. So, do not get caught unawares! Turn in what you need to turn in before it is due, and you’ll be fine. The deadlines for all forms required by the Graduate School are posted on the Academic Calendar at

<http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/academics/forms.html>

To make it easier, follow the checklist below, which includes all the required forms in roughly the order you need to complete them.

**Thesis Committee or Comprehensive Exam check sheet:** This one is for the History Department, not the Graduate School. It must be turned in at the time of your proposal defense at the end of the Historiography Seminar, as you form your exam or thesis committee. You cannot register for your thesis or exam hours if you have not turned in this form.

**Petition for Topic Approval: This one is for thesis writers only.** Submit this to the Graduate School after your thesis proposal defense. It must be signed by all of your committee members. This form is available from the Graduate School online at <http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/academics/forms.html>.

**Admission to Candidacy:** to be filed after you form your thesis or exam committee and after you have completed at least 18 semester hours of graduate work (six courses). This form is typically due about a semester before graduation. Check the Academic Calendar to be sure of the deadlines that apply to you! This form is available from the Graduate School online at <http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/academics/forms.html>.

**Application for Degree:** This is the form from which they prepare your diploma. It is typically due at the same time as the “Admission to Candidacy” form, which means about a semester before you want to graduate—at the latest, at the beginning of the semester in which you intend to graduate. Check the Academic

Calendar to be sure! This form is submitted online via Banner Self-Service. To do this:

1. Log-on to Banner Self Service Account
2. Click on "Student Services/Financial Aid/Student Accounts" option
3. Click on "Student Records" option
4. Click on "Online Graduation Application" option
5. Read instructions and complete the "Online Graduation Application"

**Report of Comprehensive Exam or Thesis Defense:** Submit this to the Graduate School after your exam or thesis defense. This must also be signed by all members of your committee. This form is available from the Graduate School online at [http://www.uncc.edu/gradmiss/gd\\_forms.html](http://www.uncc.edu/gradmiss/gd_forms.html).

Also remember to submit your thesis and get a grade for your thesis hours or exam!

## Degree Requirements Checklist M.A. in History, Thesis Option

course name/number		semester(s) taken	Hours
HIST 6693	Historiography and Methodology	_____	3
Colloquium #1 3	_____	_____	
Colloquium #2 3	_____	_____	
Colloquium #3 3	_____	_____	
HIST 6694	Writing Seminar	_____	3
Elective	_____	_____	3
Elective	_____	_____	3
Elective	_____	_____	3
HIST 6699	Thesis	_____	6

\*\*At least 6 hours (two courses) from the above must be in fields other than United States history. List those here:

Non US #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Non US #2 \_\_\_\_\_

## Degree Requirements Checklist M.A. in History, Exam Option

	course name/number Hours	semester taken	
HIST 6693	Historiography and Methodology	_____	3
Colloquium #1	_____	_____	3
Colloquium #2	_____	_____	3
Colloquium #3	_____	_____	3
HIST 6694	Writing Seminar	_____	3
Elective	_____	_____	3
Elective	_____	_____	3
Elective	_____	_____	3
Elective	_____	_____	3
HIST 6698	Exam	_____	3

\*\*At least 6 hours (two courses) from the above must be in fields other than United States history. List those here:

Non US #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Non US #2 \_\_\_\_\_

**Degree Requirements Checklist**  
**M.A. in History, Public History Concentration**

	course name/number	semester taken	Hours
	HIST 6693	Historiography and Methodology _____	3
	HIST 6310	Museum Studies _____	3
	HIST 6320	Historic Preservation _____	3
	HIST 6330	History in the Digital Age _____	3
	Colloquium #1 3	_____	_____
	Colloquium #2 3	_____	_____
	HIST 6694	Writing Seminar _____	3
	Pub Hist Elective	_____	3
	Elective	_____	3
	Elective	_____	3
	Internship	_____	3
	HIST 6999	Thesis _____	3