

Ph.D. in History Program Handbook

Welcome

Each year, as the faculty and staff greet a new cohort of graduate students, we are reminded of both what we have achieved and what we want to accomplish as a department. We selected you from a strong pool of candidates, which reflects your own past successes as well as the tireless labor of many who have made the Department of History at UNLV a destination of choice for promising graduate students.

Just as you symbolize past achievement, you also embody our hope for the future. You will go on to be the teachers, the curators, and the scholars of the next generation. Over the course of your professional lives, we will take pride in your accomplishments. When graduate education is done well, a special bond develops between a student and a department. Your successes will be our successes, and we have a deeply rooted interest in helping you reach your very highest potential.

To that end, we have designed our graduate programs to be both rigorous and supportive. We want them to be the best possible preparation for whatever lies ahead of you.

We have found that graduate programs function most effectively when the faculty, the staff and the students have a clear and universal understanding of the programs' requirements and expectations. This handbook serves to clarify those requirements and expectations for everyone who is involved in your education. Please read it and refer to it often. While it does not contain the final word on every matter you may encounter during your time here, it is a valuable resource for making your graduate training the enriching experience we all want it to be.

Mission Statement

The Ph.D. Program in the Department of History at UNLV was inaugurated in 1991. The first Ph.D. was awarded in 1996. Our graduates have gone on to careers in teaching, business, law, administration, professional writing, museum work, and government service. Graduate degrees from UNLV have been especially helpful to those pursuing teaching careers. The history faculty, which includes nationally and internationally recognized scholars, offers a wide range of topical and geographical courses. The faculty is dedicated to providing each student with the individual attention necessary for a rewarding graduate experience.

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program-specific information that is not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: valarie.burke@unlv.edu or GradAssociateDean@unlv.edu.

Department Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Faculty must hold either associate or full graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up to date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the [Graduate Faculty status web page](#).

Program Information

Ph.D. in History

Tracks:

North American West

North American Culture and Society

European Culture and Society

Contact Information

Department Website

<http://www.unlv.edu/history>

Department Chair

Dr. Andrew Kirk
Office: WRI B310
Phone: 702-895-3544
Andy.kirk@unlv.edu

Graduate Coordinator

Dr. William Bauer
Office: WRI-B 316
Phone: 702-895-0918
wbauer@unlv.edu

Department Main Office

Matthew Fledderjohann
Office: WRI B329
Phone: 702-895-3349
matthew.fledderjohann@unlv.edu

Graduate College FDH (3rd Floor)

Non-Academic Advising: Valarie Burke, Executive Director of Graduate Student Services
Phone: 895-3320
valarie.burke@unlv.edu

Evaluator: Dee-dee Severin, Senior Graduate Admissions & Records Analyst
Phone: -895-3320
deedee.severin@unlv.edu

Graduate Student Professional Association Lied Library Building (LLB), 2nd floor, room 2141
Phone: 702-895-2261
Fax: 702-895-2158
gpsa@unlv.edu

UNLV POLICY REQUIRES THE USE OF REBELMAIL FOR ALL UNIVERSITY CORRESPONDENCE

Program Requirements

Program requirements regarding **admission, coursework and culminating experience** are found in the graduate catalog.

Advisory Committee Guidelines

The Faculty Advisor

At the end of the first year students should choose a Faculty Advisor and complete an **APPOINTMENT OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE** form. The Faculty Advisor, who serves as chair of the committee, assists students in shaping the intellectual parameters of their program of study by recommending courses and helping to develop their comprehensive examination fields. The Faculty Advisor is not responsible for filing Graduate College paperwork; this is the student's responsibility.

The Advisory Committee

Students, in close consultation with the Faculty Advisor, will select an advisory committee. This committee will help guide students through the comprehensive exams; its members serve as the examiners. Faculty members are under no obligation to take on new students. Students must ask the faculty member to serve on the committee.

A committee consists of five faculty members:

Major Field (Topical): The Faculty Advisor

Major Field (General): A faculty member who works in the student's chronological period. For students in the North American West and North American Culture and Society tracks, this field can be either North American History before 1877 or North American History since 1850. For students in the European Culture and Society track, the student's committee member will designate an appropriate chronological period.

Theory and Methods: A faculty member who works with the student to develop theoretical and methodological approaches for the student's dissertation research. This is often, but not exclusively, a faculty member who teaches HIST 740h or HIST 740g. Students who are not studying Public History as a minor field may choose Public History as a Theory and Methods field.

Minor Field: A faculty member with whom the student has done coursework outside the major area of study. In the North American West and North American Culture and Society tracks minor fields include: Asia, Comparative World, Europe, Latin America, and Public History. In the European Culture and Society track, minor fields include: Asia, Comparative World, Latin America, United States, and Public History.

Graduate College Representative: This faculty member must have Graduate Faculty Status in a department other than History. The Graduate College Representative ensures that the exam is rigorous, that the student is treated fairly, and that Graduate College Policy is followed.

Degree Program Benchmarks

Foreign Language Requirement

All Ph.D. students are required to have reading knowledge of at least one foreign language. Students must have reading competence of any foreign language required to do primary research in the field. It is recommended that students fulfill this requirement in the first two years of the program. The language requirement must be completed by the end of the third year. Students may not advance to candidacy until the language requirement has been fulfilled.

Satisfaction of the foreign language requirement can be met in any of the following ways, though the chosen option must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator:

Demonstrate reading knowledge of two foreign languages. Students must take a translation exam in each language. Students are given a passage, usually 500-800 words, in the chosen language. Students may use a dictionary during the exam, but not a grammar book. No access to the internet is allowed during the exam. Students who complete SPAN 198 with a grade of B or better may fulfill one translation exam requirement.

Demonstrate reading knowledge of one foreign language, and complete SOC 604: Statistical Methods in the Social Sciences with a B or better.

Demonstrate reading knowledge of one foreign language to an advanced level. Students must take a translation exam. Students are given a passage, usually 500-800 words, in the chosen language. Students may use a dictionary during the exam, but not a grammar book. No access to the internet is allowed during the exam. Students whose language is Spanish may fulfill the translation component by completing SPAN 198 with a grade of B or better. Students must also demonstrate advanced reading knowledge in the same language by reading 3-5 scholarly articles in the language and writing a 10-15 page historiographical essay

in English based on the articles. In consultation with the Faculty Advisor, students may substitute an interpretative essay based on primary sources in the language.

Comprehensive Exams

Exams are taken in the fall semester of the third year of the Ph.D. program. There is a written and an oral component to the exams. Students must pass the written exam to be allowed to take the oral exam. Student may take up to 6 credits of HIST 788: Comprehensive Exam Preparation. This is an independent readings course taken with a member of the student's committee. This course does not count toward the minimum number of credits required for the degree.

Comprehensive exams test the knowledge that students have acquired through coursework and other study. The exams cover both historical facts and historiographical development. These exams form an essential part of a student's graduate training.

Reading Lists

Students should generate a book list for each exam field that incorporates at least 100 books/articles from the syllabi of courses they have taken and research papers they have written, and at least an equal number of additional books and articles to fill in chronological or historiographical gaps in the reading they have done in coursework. Each book list should include books and articles that help students write comprehensively about historical change over time and the major historiographical issues in the field. Students should begin to develop comprehensive exam book lists in their first semester in the program. Book lists must be in Chicago Style bibliographic format. It is also helpful to create two additional working versions of the list for each field, one organized chronologically and one organized thematically (having five major themes is a good guideline). These versions of the list help students to identify gaps in the list to be filled, and help them to articulate the main issues in the field by identifying key themes. *The American Historical Association Guide to Historical Literature* is an online annotated bibliography that is useful for developing comprehensive exam book lists. The recommended additional readings at the end of textbook chapters are also a good resource for identifying major works in the field. Students should consult with the members of their advisory committee as they compile the booklists. Students must finalize the book lists by the end of the spring semester of their second year, and submit each list to the appropriate committee member for approval.

Scheduling Comprehensive Exams

Students must schedule their exams by the end of the spring semester of their second year. Students must complete a **COMPREHENSIVE EXAM SCHEDULING** form. This form must be signed by all the members of the committee in the History Department and must be submitted with complete copies of all four book lists to **Matt Fledderjohann** before the end of April. Each list must have a title that identifies the examiner and describes the field and the scope. For example:

Major Field (General): North American History Since 1850
Examiner: Dr. David Tanenhaus

Exams may be taken between September 1 and October 31.

If students need to change the date of the exam, or request an exception to that rule, they may submit a **COMPREHENSIVE EXAM SCHEDULING PETITION**.

Preparing for Comprehensive Exams

Students should plan to spend 3-4 months preparing for the exams.

Students may take HIST 788: Comprehensive Exam Preparation. This is an optional course and does not count toward the credits for the degree. It may be repeated or taken concurrently for up to 6 credits. It is an independent study course. Students should ask one or two members of their committee for permission to take this course under their direction. In order to enroll in HIST 788, students must submit a complete reading list. This course is designed to be taken in the semester that

the comprehensive exams will be taken. Students should have already begun to prepare for their exams before they enroll in the course.

Preparation Log

Students are encouraged to keep a daily log of their progress preparing for comps. Suggested entries include number of hours spent preparing (even if it zero), ideas generated by the day's reading, possible exam questions, and additional books of interest that the student might want to read after the exam process is complete. Recording the number of hours helps students quantify their progress and budget their time realistically in relation to their other responsibilities.

Reading Notes

Beginning in the first semester, students should take brief but comprehensive reading notes on every book/article. Students should keep all of these notes in hard copy or in a folder on their hard drive, organized by field.

Meetings with Committee Members

Students should schedule regular meetings with each member of their committee during the months they are reading for their exams to discuss the books as they read/review them. Students should prepare questions about the readings that incorporate subject matter, historiography and important thematic issues. *Students are evaluated on their preparation for the exam as well as their performance in the exam.*

Practice Exams

Students are encouraged to practice writing on a question in the 2.5 hour time limit. Historiography courses (HIST 740) also provide opportunities for students to practice taking comprehensive exams.

Taking Comprehensive Exams

Students may take comprehensive exams over the course of one week. Students may choose the order of the exams. There are six 2.5 hour exam periods:

Major Field (Topical): The student answers 2 of 4 questions in two exam periods, one in the morning and one in the afternoon of the same day.

Major Field (General): The student answers 2 of 4 questions in two exam periods, one in the morning and one in the afternoon of the same day.

Theory and Methods: The student answers 1 of 2 questions in one exam period. This exam may be taken on the same day as the Minor Field exam, or on a separate day.

Minor Field: The student answers 1 of 2 questions in one exam period. This exam may be taken on the same day as the Theory and Methods exam, or on a separate day.

Comprehensive Exam Policy

1. Students must arrive 15 minutes before the exam. The exam will begin at the scheduled time. If a student is late, the time required to set up the exam will be subtracted from the time allotted for the exam.
2. Students must leave all backpacks and other personal items, including cell phones, MP3 players, etc. in Matt Fledderjohann's office.
3. Students may take blank paper and writing implements into the exam room.
4. Except in cases of prearranged and documented medical emergency, students may not take a cell phone into the exam room.
5. Students who plan to cancel an exam must alert Matt Fledderjohann at least 24 hours in advance, except in the case of documented medical emergency. If a student does not cancel the exam, it may result in the failure of that exam.
6. Students may not use notes or any other materials in paper or electronic form. Use of unauthorized materials is considered Academic misconduct.

7. Student may not access the internet at any time during the exam. Use of the internet, for any reason, is considered Academic misconduct.
8. Students may not use email at any time during the exam. Students may not export the questions or the answers to the exam in paper or electronic form.
9. Unauthorized use of the computer may result in the failure of the exam.
10. Students are responsible for backing up their work during the exam. UNLV policy about computer failure applies to the use of the computer during the exam. Students will not be given extra time except in cases of hardware failure, confirmed by OIT.
11. Students should save their files onto a jump drive provided by the History Department. Please use the USB port on the computer tower, NOT the one on the monitor.
12. Students may leave the exam room to use the rest room; no extra time will be added to the exam. Students should not leave the room for any other reason.

Evaluation of the Exam

The exam essays will not be circulated to the committee members until the questions for all four fields have been written. Once the committee has received the completed exam, each member will submit an assessment of his or her question(s) to the Matt Fledderjohann within three working days. Once the Matt Fledderjohann has received all comments from History faculty, the exam will be sent to the Graduate College Representative. Once all the evaluations have been received, the Faculty Advisor will inform the student in writing of the results of the exam, and provide any comments from committee members. This process takes approximately 10 days.

Students are assessed using the following categories:

Preparation for the Exam

Mastery of Historical Events and Chronology

Mastery of Conceptual Tools, Historical Methods and Analysis

Mastery of Historiography

Organization and Clarity

Use of Critical Thinking

Oral Exam

The oral exam should be scheduled no later than one month after the written exams are completed. Students must pass all of the written exam questions to be allowed to take the oral exam. Students should meet with their committee members before the oral exam to discuss the topics that will be discussed during the exam, but students should be prepared to be able to discuss the full reading lists. The oral exam usually lasts 2 hours. Each committee member will ask questions on their field for 20-30 minutes, and ask questions as part of the discussion of the other fields. The Graduate Representative may ask questions on any of the fields. At the end of the exam, the Faculty Advisor will ask the student to leave the exam room while the committee confers. The student will be invited back into the room and told the results of the oral exam. The combined written and oral exam is ranked using the following scale:

Fail

Pass (satisfactory)

High Pass (commendable)

Honors (outstanding)

Students who successfully complete both the written and oral exams must submit a **CULMINATING RESULTS** form.

Failure of the Exam

Students who fail one or more questions may retake the failed questions. Students are not required to retake questions they have passed. Students who fail one or more exam questions will be not be

allowed to take the oral exam until all written questions have been passed. Students who fail one or more questions will be placed on Academic Probation.

The second attempt at Comprehensive Exams may be scheduled no sooner than three months after the first attempt, and no later than one calendar year after the first exam date. Students who take a leave of absence during this period will resume the time clock in the semester they return from the leave of absence.

Students may retake a failed question once. Students who fail the second attempt at one or more questions will be separated from the program. A student who does not retake the exam within one calendar year will be separated from the program.

Dissertation Prospectus

All students are required to write a prospectus and submit a **PROSPECTUS APPROVAL FORM** before they will be allowed to register for dissertation credits.

Students who have passed their comprehensive exams may register for HIST 789: Prospectus in the spring semester of their third year. This is an optional course and does not count toward the required number of credits for the degree. This course may not be repeated. It is a requirement of the course that the prospectus must be submitted and approved by the end of the semester. Students should register for this course with the permission of the Faculty Advisor. It takes the form of independent study with the Faculty Advisor. During the third year, students should work on the dissertation prospectus in consultation with their Faculty Advisor and other committee members.

Guidelines for Writing a Prospectus

A prospectus should be approximately 10 pages of writing and an additional ten pages of bibliography. It should follow the following format:

What makes this project interesting?

1. Introduce topic, issues, and span of time.
2. Introduce the key people in your study.
3. Raise main questions that your research explores, frame the issues that will organize the dissertation, and introduce the argument you will make.
4. Present the conclusions you hope to reach.

What is the contribution to the current scholarship?

5. Present the way other historians have set the stage for your project.
6. Frame the way your project fits into the relevant historiographical conversations.

What makes it possible to pursue this project this way?

7. Present the sources you will use and discuss how you will use them to explore the issues raised above.
8. Identify the archives/databases, etc. you will use.

How will the project be organized?

9. Outline the chapters and discuss the way they develop your argument.

Sources

10. Include a full bibliography.

Prospectus Colloquium

Once the committee decides that the prospectus is ready to be defended, students should schedule a Prospectus Colloquium with all the members of the dissertation committee in the History Department. The Graduate College Representative is welcome to come, but it is not required. The Prospectus Colloquium is usually an hour and consists of a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed project. Students will revise the prospectus based on this conversation and submit it to the Faculty Advisor, committee members, and Matt Fledderjohann for the History Department file; a short version (2-3 pages) should be submitted with the **PROSPECTUS APPROVAL FORM** to the graduate college. Students planning to take dissertation credits in the Summer Session or the Fall Semester must submit the prospectus by the end of the spring semester.

Advancement to Candidacy

Students who have completed the language requirement, comprehensive exams, and the prospectus should submit the **ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY** form.

Dissertation Credits

Students who have passed their comprehensive exams, completed their language requirement, and submitted their prospectus will be allowed to register for dissertation credits. Students must take a minimum of 12 credits of dissertation. Students should meet with their Faculty Advisor in advance of any semester in which they plan to take dissertation credits to create a research/writing plan for the semester. 3 credits of dissertation are equivalent to approximately 100 hours of research or the draft of a dissertation chapter. Students should complete a log of the hours spent working on the dissertation and submit that log to the Faculty Advisor at agreed-upon points in the semester.

Dissertation Format

The Graduate College has very strict formatting guidelines. Students should refer to the sample document provided as a template on the Graduate College website under Thesis and Dissertation Information. <http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/current/thesis/Formatting> guidelines do change. Students must use the current template. Students should review this template and format their dissertation according to these guidelines from the earliest phase of the project.

Students should attend one of the workshops offered by the Graduate College on how to format a dissertation as soon as the prospectus is approved.

The History Department does not stipulate a minimum page length for a dissertation. A Ph.D. dissertation should be a significant contribution to scholarship based on original research. Students should refer to the dissertations written by students who have completed their degree at UNLV to gauge the appropriate length and intellectual scope for their own dissertation. Dissertations range from 250- 400 pages.

Dissertation Defense

Students must offer an oral defense of the dissertation. Students may only defend the dissertation once. An unsuccessful defense will result in the failure to earn the degree and a separation from the program. Students confer with the Faculty Advisor about the timing of the defense. The Faculty Advisor must agree that the dissertation is ready to be defended. All dissertation defenses are public events and must be publicized through the Graduate College Website at least two weeks in advance. Students must submit the **DISSERTATION DEFENSE DATE** form to the History Department Administrator at least three weeks in advance of the defense date. All members of the committee must be present at the defense, by conference call if not in person. The Graduate College Representative **MUST** be present at the defense. If the Graduate College Representative is not able to attend and a new Graduate College Representative cannot be appointed, with the permission of the current Graduate College Representative, the dissertation defense must be rescheduled. Students may request a defense date between September 1 and November 1 in the fall semester and between February 1 and April 1 in the spring semester.

The dissertation defense usually lasts an hour; it is open to all faculty and graduate students in the UNLV community and invited guests. Students begin by offering a 10 minute presentation of the dissertation which is followed by questions from all the members of the committee. The Faculty Advisor presides over the defense. At the end of the defense, the student and the audience are asked to leave the room while the committee deliberates. When the committee members complete their

deliberations, the student is invited back into the room and informed of the committee's decision. Students should bring the signature page, printed on the **watermarked bond paper**, and the **CULMINATING RESULTS** form for the full committee to sign. Students are responsible for knowing the Graduate College deadlines for dissertation submission.

Circulating a Draft

Students must plan to circulate a full draft of the dissertation to the full committee well in advance of the defense.

Students planning to defend in the fall semester should submit a full draft to the committee by September 1. This should be at least a full month before the defense is scheduled.

Students planning to defend in the spring semester should submit a full draft to the committee by February 1. This should be at least a full month before the defense is scheduled.

Applying for Graduation

All students must apply for graduation in order to be granted the degree. Students are responsible for knowing the deadline to apply for graduation. It is usually early in the semester.

Scheduling the Dissertation Defense

Students are responsible for scheduling the defense. Please query the committee as early as possible in order to accommodate conflicting schedules.

Students may begin the scheduling process before they receive comments on the draft from the Faculty Advisor and other committee members, but students must be prepared to delay the defense on the advice of the Faculty Advisor.

Students should not schedule the defense of a dissertation that is still a work in progress. Although the committee may recommend changes to the dissertation to be completed after the defense, these should be minor changes. The draft of dissertation circulated to the committee should be correctly formatted, and include all the materials that will be submitted with the final version.

Dissertation Copies for the History Department

Students should submit one hard copy and one electronic copy for the History Department's library and for consideration for University prizes.

Program Timeline

First Year

Fall (10 credits)

The Professional Historian*
Historiography
Colloquium in Major Field
Colloquium in Minor Field

Spring (10 credits)

Colloquium in Major Field
Seminar in Major Field
Colloquium in Minor Field

Second Year

Fall (10 credits)

Historiography
Seminar in Major Field
Colloquium in Minor Field

Spring (9 credits)

Historiography*
Colloquium in Minor Field

Colloquium in Major Field

Total Credits: 35-39 credits

*Students who enter the Ph.D. program with an M.A. in History from UNLV are not required to take The Professional Historian; they are only required to take 6 credits of Historiography at the Ph.D. level.

Third Year

Fall (3-6 credits)

HIST 788 Comprehensive Exam Preparation or Elective Coursework

Spring (3-6 credits)

HIST 789 Prospectus or Elective Coursework

Students who hold Graduate Assistantships are expected to register for 9-10 credits. All students must be registered for a minimum of 3 credits each semester.

At the end of the Third year students should have completed the Foreign Language Requirement, Comprehensive Exams, and the Dissertation Prospectus. Once these requirements have been completed, students must file the **ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY** form.

Fourth Year

Fall (3-6 credits)

Dissertation

Spring (3-6 credits)

Dissertation

Fifth Year

Fall (3-6 credits)

Dissertation

Spring (3-6 credits)

Dissertation

Total: 12 Credits of Dissertation

Total Credits for Degree: 47-51 credits

Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines

UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the graduate catalog.

In cases of suspected academic misconduct, the faculty member will schedule a meeting with the student. The faculty member may invite the Graduate Coordinator to attend the meeting. Based on the information gathered in the meeting, the Graduate Coordinator may file an Alleged Academic Misconduct Report with the Office of Student Conduct.

To guard against plagiarism and to preserve a permanent internet record, all seminar papers, thesis chapters, and dissertation chapters are to be submitted through as Turnitin assignments in Webcampus. The Faculty Advisor and Committee members may also require additional electronic or hard copies of the paper, thesis, or dissertation.

The final draft of the thesis or dissertation must be submitted through Webcampus AT LEAST three weeks before the date of the defense. Students will not be allowed to proceed with the defense until this step has been completed. The Faculty Advisor will review the Turnitin report and submit it to the

Graduate Committee. The Graduate Coordinator will either submit the information to publicize the defense, or investigate any alleged academic misconduct.

Evidence of cheating on a comprehensive exam will result in the recommendation that the student be separated from the program.

Evidence of plagiarism in a seminar paper, thesis, or dissertation will result in the recommendation that the student be separated from the program.

Students who cheat on class exams or submit plagiarized work for other assignments will not be allowed to re-submit the work. Cheating or plagiarism of any kind will result in the failure of the course. The student will be placed on academic probation. A second instance of cheating or plagiarism will result in the recommendation that the student be separated from the program.

Students who have been separated from the program for cheating or plagiarism will not be re-admitted to the program.

Annual Review Procedures

Each spring term, graduate students are required to complete the Graduate Student Annual Review survey. This survey will be sent by the Graduate College to the student's Rebelmail account. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress while setting goals for the year ahead.

Probation

If a student fails to successfully progress in their degree program, their department/school will recommend that the student be placed on probation by the Graduate College. Students on probation may be dismissed/separated from their program for failing to successfully meet the conditions of their probation by the deadline provided. Please see the [Probation and Separation](#) section of the Graduate Catalog for more information.

The History Department Graduate Committee also conducts an annual evaluation of all graduate students in the program. The Graduate Committee and the relevant Advisory Committees review the cases of students whose satisfactory progress is in doubt. Students who have not made satisfactory progress during that academic year will be placed on academic probation. Failure to meet the conditions of probation will result in separation from the Graduate College.

Additional Program Information

Courses

The History Department offers graduate classes at the 600 and 700 levels.

600-level classes meet in conjunction with a 400-level advanced undergraduate class. Graduate students are required to do additional readings and meet with the instructor outside of class to discuss the readings. The writing and exam requirements differ from the undergraduate requirements. 600-level courses are usually content based. Only six credits will count towards the degree, but additional 600-level courses can be very useful for preparing for comprehensive exams.

700-level classes are divided into three types: Historiography, Colloquium, and Seminar. Students are encouraged to take as many courses at the 700 level as possible. The typical reading load for a 700-level course is 300 to 500 pages a week.

Historiography: These courses are designed to introduce students to the study of a particular field or subfield of history; they are the history of historical writing. Historiography courses have a methodological approach. They explore the development of schools of thought. The writing requirement for Historiography courses usually includes a series of historiographical essays or other assignments that engage the development of the field. These courses also include an in-class examination that is designed to help students assess their preparedness for comprehensive exams.

Colloquium: These courses focus on reading in a particular subject area, usually the research interest of the faculty member teaching the course. They are designed to give students an in-depth exposure to scholarly work on a particular topic. Writing assignments vary with each instructor and may include review essays, a bibliographic essay, or a research prospectus.

Colloquia are often paired with a seminar. Students can use the readings from the colloquium and the bibliographic essay, or prospectus, to lay the foundation for the research project conducted in a seminar.

Seminar: These courses are research and writing intensive. Students are expected to produce a publishable article-length research paper (30 pages). In addition to the work, students usually critique the papers of other students in the class and present their own work to the class.

Independent Study: Students may take nine credits of independent study as part of the requirements for the PhD program. Independent study courses are variably weighted from one to three credits. The requirements of an independent study are the equivalent of a colloquium: a minimum of three books per credit and appropriate writing assignments. Students, in consultation with the faculty member who will conduct the independent study, must fill out an **INDEPENDENT STUDY CONTRACT**, including a detailed discussion of the work to be completed and a full bibliography. Permission to register will not be given without a completed contract signed by student, faculty member and the Graduate Coordinator. Students who take an independent study in the summer term usually sign up for the course in the third summer session, but begin the work during the first summer session. It is customary for students to take regular coursework with a faculty member before they enroll in an independent study. Faculty will agree to direct independent study at their own discretion. These courses are offered in addition to a faculty member's regular teaching load. Independent study courses are designed to meet curricular needs not met by the regular course offerings. Whenever possible, students should enroll in the regularly scheduled courses. Full student participation in these courses is necessary to ensure that 700 level courses can be offered. Low enrollment can result in the cancellation of courses.

Reading notes

All students should take systematic reading notes to facilitate class discussion and preparation for comprehensive exams.

Always read with comprehensive exams in mind. Students should develop an accessible and comprehensive bibliographic resource that will not only be helpful for exams but also for any subsequent teaching or research. Include the following categories:

Historiography – How does the author position the book in the field? Is the book a departure from conventional scholarship? Is it a revisionist argument? Is it in dialogue with another book or set of books? In addition to the introduction and the footnotes, the acknowledgments are a good place to look for clues.

Argument – Read the introduction and conclusion together. Assess not only whether the author has successfully presented the argument, but also what some of the larger implications of the argument might be. The index is a very helpful tool for identifying the author's key terms.

Methodology – Is this book a new look at familiar evidence or does it introduce new evidence? Is it a work of interdisciplinary scholarship, if so in what disciplines? What lens of historical analysis does the author put at the center of the inquiry: race, class, gender, politics, diplomacy, military affairs, culture, intellectual thought, community life, economics, etc.? How does this shape the study? What theoretical approaches shape the intellectual project: Marxism, postmodernism, post-structuralism, psychology, new historicism, etc.? Is there a particular theoretician whose ideas are particularly salient?

Sources – How contemporary (to the publication of the book) are the secondary sources? What kind of primary evidence does the author use? How is this evidence analyzed?

Examples – It is always a good idea to choose three key examples from the text that raise

particularly important points in the argument or generate questions about the author's argument. Include key details as well as brief discussion of the importance of each example.

Critique – Include a brief discussion of any elements of the argument or other elements of presentation that are troubling.

Connection to Comprehensive Exams

Students should begin to compile reading notes for comprehensive exams from the beginning of their course work and to create the core of their comprehensive exam reading lists from the books and articles on the syllabi of the courses they take. These core lists will be augmented, in consultation with the student’s advisory committee members to create the final comprehensive exam lists. This is a collaborative process and students should plan to complete these lists the semester before they take their comprehensive exams.

Class Discussion

All students should participate in class discussion weekly. Failure to participate in class discussion is an indication that a student is not fulfilling the minimum requirements of intellectual work at the graduate level. A Ph.D. is a professional degree; scholarly discussion is a professional requirement.

Minimum Degree Requirements

Although the Graduate College will grant a degree to students who fulfill the minimum requirements, the Graduate Faculty of the History Department advises students to take the most comprehensive curriculum possible. Fulfilling the bare minimum requirements does not necessarily prepare a student for comprehensive exams.

Grades

A Excellent work, original ideas, well researched and clearly expressed with the potential to be publishable with minimal revision.

A- Work with promise and potential for publication with significant revision.

B+ Work that shows potential, but needs additional research, or stronger analysis. A “B+” is the lowest grade that indicates acceptable work at the graduate level.

B Weak work based on insufficient research or analysis, or that fails to engage the broader historiographical issues. A “B” should be considered an indication of serious concern on the part of the faculty member about the quality of a student’s work.

B- Barely acceptable. Students who receive a B- may be placed on academic probation.

C-D No graduate credit. Students will be put on academic probation. A student already on academic probation will be recommended for separation from the Graduate College.

Students must maintain a minimum G.P.A of 3.0 in all semesters. Students with a G.P.A. below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. Students who do not fulfill the terms of the probation will be separated from the program.

Incomplete Courses

An incomplete will only be given in the case of a documented personal or medical emergency.

Although the Graduate College allows one year for the completion of the course work, students should expect that the faculty member will require a much shorter time frame for completion of the work, usually before the beginning of the next semester.

Graduate Assistants who fail to complete course work before the next semester of their Graduate Assistantship may have their Assistantship rescinded. Please also note that incomplete credits do not count toward the nine-unit total required by the financial aid office and may interfere with financial aid disbursements.

A faculty member who gives an incomplete must notify the Graduate Committee.

Students with more than one incomplete in a semester may be placed on academic probation.

Registering for Classes

Registration begins in April for the fall semester and October for the spring semester.

All first year students must take HIST 710 The Professional Historian.

Ph.D. students are expected to register for a minimum of 9 credits. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator.

First year Ph.D. students should schedule an advising appointment with the Graduate Coordinator before registering for classes. Continuing students should schedule an appointment with their Faculty Advisors. Students are responsible for keeping their advising sheets up to date. Advising sheets are available on the History Department website. Students will not be given permission to register without email confirmation from the Graduate Coordinator.

Students are encouraged to register as soon as possible. Classes fill up quickly. After the first two weeks of registration, the Graduate Coordinator will allow non-degree seeking students to register.

Students must register for a minimum of six credits per year to remain in the program. Students who do not plan to register for classes or dissertation credits must file a **LEAVE OF ABSENCE** form. Students who do not register for classes or request a leave of absence will be separated from the program.

Overload

Students wishing to take more than 13 credit hours (10 credit hours if the student is a graduate assistant) in a regular semester, more than six credits in one five-week summer session, or more than 12 credits in two summer sessions, must file an Authorization for Overload with the Graduate College. The Graduate Committee strongly discourages overloads.

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible for reading the Graduate Catalog, familiarizing themselves with the requirements, and making regular advising appointments. **This is a self-managed process.**

Students are also responsible for filling out Graduate College paperwork at the appropriate time throughout the degree process. Students should familiarize themselves with the deadlines for this paperwork. The Graduate Coordinator will advise students on the completion of Graduate College forms, but the students themselves will be responsible for meeting the Graduate College deadlines throughout their tenure in the program.

The Graduate Coordinator may advocate for the students, assisting with petitions and other Graduate College correspondence, but each individual student is responsible for filing the appropriate forms with the Graduate College. A copy of every form filed with the Graduate College must be given to Matt Fledderjohann.

Conferences

Academic conferences offer very valuable opportunities for young scholars. First, conferences bring together people of shared intellectual interest, and the exchange of ideas in such a setting can be a powerful catalyst for students' scholarly development. Second, conferences are an incomparable setting for learning more about the state of one's field. Third, conferences allow students to network with people who may be helpful as mentors, colleagues, editors and employers.

Finally, conferences provide students with opportunities to formally present their work. Presenting a conference paper can greatly accelerate the rate of scholarly progress through both the process of preparation and through the feedback the students receive.

If students have research projects which they would like to present at a conference, they should consult with their respective advisors to determine whether the work is ready for such a presentation, what must be done to get it ready, which conference would offer the best venue, and how best to submit a paper proposal (note that every conference has its own submission guidelines). Usually

submission requires a paper abstract, which is a brief synopsis of what the paper contains and why that content is valuable.

External Grants and Fellowships

One of the realities of professional life for historians is the regular search for funding to support one's research. That process can and should begin in graduate school. A track record of successfully securing outside funding sources will both facilitate students' work and impress potential employers. The Department often posts funding opportunities on the bulletin board in A-wing of Wright Hall. The best single source for such things is the American Historical Association's *Guide to Grants, Fellowships and Prizes of Interest to Historians*, which can be purchased in hardcopy or viewed online by members of the AHA.

Professional Memberships

Students should join the leading professional association in their fields. Membership offers access to conferences and resources that are essential for scholarly development. It is a way to know and be known. Most professional associations offer reduced membership rates to students.

Graduate Assistantships

Application and Eligibility

All full-time graduate students in good academic standing are eligible to apply for a Graduate Assistantship. Graduate Assistants are expected to work a maximum of 20 hours per week, but students cannot expect the work to be evenly distributed throughout the semester and should expect some work-intensive weeks at exam time and paper deadlines that are balanced by the lighter workload at the beginning of the semester.

Applications must be filed by February 1 for the following academic year. Applications should be submitted through MyUNLV. Applications submitted after this date will not be considered. *Previously funded students seeking continuing funding must reapply each year.*

Ph.D. students are eligible for three years of Graduate Assistant funding with the possibility of renewal for two additional years. Students must be in good standing. No Graduate Assistants may have an outstanding incomplete during the semesters they serve. Students with incomplete work may not be renewed as Graduate Assistants until they receive an acceptable grade. Students on Academic Probation are not eligible to be a Graduate Assistant. Students must have advanced to candidacy by the end of the spring semester of the third year to be eligible for renewal. Students must have completed all coursework, completed the language requirement, passed written and oral comprehensive exams, and submitted and approved prospectus to advance to candidacy. A few Graduate Assistantships may become available in the spring semester. Students who were not awarded a Graduate Assistantship, or who were awarded a fall semester appointment, should apply by November 1 to be considered for the spring semester.

The Graduate College requires Graduate Assistants to take a minimum of six credits each semester. The History Department expects students with a Graduate Assistantship to take 9-10 credits. Students who fail to maintain a minimum G.P.A. of 3.0 will be put on academic probation and will have their Graduate Assistantship rescinded.

Additional Employment

Additional employment outside of the Graduate Assistantship is not to exceed 10 hours per week. International students can only work up to 20 hours per week and therefore cannot work outside of their assistantship. Students must fill out an Additional Employment form. This form is not required in order to work additional hours during the winter holiday or during spring break.

The Guidelines for Getting an Academic Job in History

First, read the American Historical Association's *Perspectives*. This publication includes regular reports on the state of the field. The history job market is extremely competitive. There is no boom and bust cycle in history—it is a finite job market that is always very tight. Start reading the job postings on the [H-Net Job Guide](#), and in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. It is helpful to see how jobs in your sub-field are described. The average history position will attract between 150-300 applicants. Of these, the vast majority will be qualified. You must understand what differentiates the candidates that ultimately get the jobs from those who do not. Be realistic—not pessimistic. One of things that all successful job candidates have in common is a clear understanding of their field and the requirements for getting a job. Do your homework and start NOW! Ignorance will cost you in the end.

For statistics on the state of the field and the job market in particular see the following sites:

H-Net <http://www.h-net.org/>

American Historical Association <http://www.historians.org/>

Organization of American Historians <http://www.oah.org/>

National Council on Public History <http://www.ncph.org/>

Chronicle of Higher Ed. <http://chronicle.com/>

Western History Association <http://history.unm.edu/>

American Studies Association <http://crossroads.georgetown.edu/>

Overview of profession <http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2003/0305/0305aha2.cfm>

Job Crisis? <http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2004/0405/0405vie2.cfm>

The Rules

1. PhD from a school with a highly rated program or prominent person in your area of interest. You need to be 98% done before you apply. (Few places hire ABDs).
2. 3.8-4.0 for all graduate work.
3. Awards—home, regional, national.
4. Publications—books, articles, book reviews (at the very least book reviews).
5. Inside/Outside fellowships.
6. Inside/Outside Research grants.
7. Professional memberships in all appropriate general and specific organizations.
8. Join a list-serve on H-Net in your field & contribute when you can (don't just lurk).
9. Attend conferences and meet the leaders in your field.
10. Present papers at major national/international conferences.
11. Build networking connections—you must be known nationally in your area of research.
12. An innovative dissertation topic that you have discussed with a major academic press in your field. (Major presses set up booths at academic meetings and send acquisitions editors to meet with potential authors. When you are ready you can make your pitch.)
13. Total mastery of your dissertation topic—i.e. you could talk about it with confidence for an hour in front of 100 people with no notes or give a concise version in 5 minutes.
14. Teach both halves of the survey course in your field at least once with good/excellent student evaluations.
15. Excellent letters of recommendation from within and outside your department.
16. You must have established yourself as a promising scholar outside the requirements of your program. Remember, no one cares about your GPA unless it is low. At least 50 percent of getting an academic job involves you working your way into a nationally based profession that evaluates people on a national scale. Local accomplishments are critical, but they are only the first step. Being a star in your home program does not guarantee success on a national job market.
17. Personality—you need to have one and a sense of humor won't hurt either.
18. Temperament—you need to be self-motivated and really be able to convey that sense of initiative. Keep in mind that the people hiring you know that if you can't get your work done you will not get tenure, which will result in a significant disruption in their department.

Sound impossible? It is not. Anyone who has gotten an academic job in the last fifteen years has met most or all of these requirements and many have far exceeded them. How do you eat an elephant?

One bite at a time. To have a record that looks like this you need to be doing these things as you go. Think about blending course and internal responsibilities with larger professional goals. Make a one-year plan that includes at least two accomplishments outside of your department (i.e. attend a national conference, publish a book review, write a letter to a leading figure in your field, get an internship). Keep a running CV and compare it to those of your peers. Meet graduate students from other programs and pick their brains—are they doing things that you are not? Be enthusiastic in your quest for professional status. Everybody loves an enthusiastic student and most will be willing to help you. A friendly chat at a conference could lead to a job years later. By the time you graduate with your MA or Ph.D. you should BE a historian not just the holder of a degree in history—there is a big difference and interviewers know it!

The Guidelines for Getting a Job in Public History

Not much different really from academic history.

1. Temperament—you need to be self-motivated and really be able to convey that sense of initiative. Even more than academic history, public history work often requires you to work completely without direction. If you like someone holding your hand or a tightly organized work environment maybe public history is not for you. If you can't look someone in the eye and honestly tell them that you "can do it" even though you've never done "it" before then maybe public history is not for you. You need to be confident in your intellectual tool chest and willing to dive right into projects to test your skills.
2. M.A. or Ph.D. from a school that matches your intellectual interests and gives you the best chance at professional success.
3. A GPA of 3.8-4.0.
4. Experience. Internships, small contracts, consulting experiences are mandatory for you to move out on your own or qualify for a career position.
5. Excellent letters of recommendation from within and outside your department.
6. You must have established yourself as a promising scholar beyond the requirements of your program. At least 50 percent of getting a public history job involves you working your way into a nationally based profession that evaluates people on a national scale. Local accomplishments are critical, but are only the first step. Being a star in your home program does not guarantee success on a national job market.
7. Awards—home, regional, national.
8. Publications—books, articles, book reviews (at the very least book reviews).
9. Inside/Outside fellowships.
10. Inside/Outside Research grants.
11. Professional memberships in all appropriate general and specific organizations.
12. Join H-Public & contribute when you can.
13. Attend NCPH conferences and meet the leaders of your field.
14. Present papers at major national/international conferences.
15. Build networking connections—you must be known nationally in your area of research.
16. Personality—you need to have one and a sense of humor won't hurt either.

Conclusions

Always keep in mind that if you want to work in history you should look far beyond the walls of your institution. The truth is that no matter how supportive your institution is, once you graduate and attempt to get a job you and your CV must stand alone. To compete with confidence you need to take your act on the road and see how it plays to a national audience. Usually the professional historians you meet along the way will help you as you move from apprentice to master. Few will have any sympathy later, however, if you hit the job market with degree in hand but no clear understanding of professional realities.

University Resources

Academic Success Center

The goal of the Academic Success Center is to help students do well academically and complete their

studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

Alumni Association

With an alumni base 90,000 strong, the UNLV Alumni Association offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

Commencement Office

Located in the UNLV Registrar's Office, the commencement office is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma. For all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College.

Office of Diversity Initiatives

The vision of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV's diversity mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment*. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The DRC is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

Office of International Student and Scholars

International Students and Scholars (ISS) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist with and advise on employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

Jean Nidetch Women's Center

The Jean Nidetch Women's Center is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

UNLV Libraries

UNLV Libraries have always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)

The Graduate & Professional Student Association serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library, room 2141. The facility includes a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small

kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

Office of Student Conduct

The Office of Student Conduct is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

Office of Veteran Services

The UNLV Office of Veteran Services is staffed with veterans and GI Bill-experienced staff to assist more than 1,000 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

Writing Center

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumés, and can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the Online Writing Lab (OWL) page.

University Policies and Procedures

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Activation for Military Service](#)
- [FERPA/Privacy Rights](#)
- [Health Insurance - Mandatory](#)
- [Jeanne Clery Campus Safety and Security Report](#)
- [Proof of Immunization](#)
- [Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects](#)
- [Rebelmail Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Code](#)
- [Student Computer Use Policy](#)
- [Title IX](#)

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the [Graduate Catalog](#):

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Academic Policies](#)
- [Admission and Registration Information](#)
- [Degree Progression Policies & Procedures](#)

In addition, the [Graduate College website](#) contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.

Handbook Information

Last revised	Revised by	Changes summary
12/19/2014	Elizabeth Nelson	