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UC IRVINE HANDBOOK FOR THE MASTERS OF ARTS

The Department of History at the University of California Irvine emphasizes graduate training in regional areas, world and transnational history, and thematic specialties such as critical theory, gender and sexuality, empire and colonialism, science and medicine, global migration, slavery, and diaspora, and history of the environment. Whatever the student’s chosen emphasis, the History Graduate Program encourages students to think across national and regional boarders and to have a solid understanding of how the discipline of History contributes to debates about global and local transformation.

Program Overview:

**Coursework:** Masters students receive similar opportunities as those offered doctoral students to train in the history of area regions, thematic emphases, and critical theory. Masters students are required to take a total of nine courses: three in a first field (either a regional area emphasis or a thematic emphasis), two courses in a second field (either area-based or thematic), a two-quarter research paper seminar (History 202AB), and two electives (taken either inside or outside the Department). Masters students are not required to take the History and Theory sequence (History 200AB) required of doctoral students, although they are encouraged to consider these as possible electives. Upon entering the program, Masters students choose a Department faculty member to serve as advisor and work closely with this mentor throughout the course of study.

**Capstone Project:** Masters students undertake a significant research or intensive readings project as part of their degree. They have two options. In Option One, students write a Master’s thesis based on a revision of the required research paper (History 202AB), equivalent to a scholarly article. The Masters thesis is supervised by a faculty advisor in the student’s major field and reviewed and approved by a three-member thesis committee, at least two of which must be Senate faculty members in the History Department. In Option Two, in lieu of a thesis, a candidate must pass a comprehensive two-hour examination administered by three faculty members covering the student’s major field. Students opting for an exam undertake an intensive readings course in their final quarter.

**Language Requirement:** Students in the M.A. program whose major field requires use of foreign language sources demonstrate competence in a foreign language in the process of writing the first-year research paper and thesis. Other M.A. students do not have to meet a foreign language or alternative skills requirement.

**Time to Degree and Time Limits:** The M.A. requires a minimum of three quarters in academic residence and can be completed during a single academic year of full-time study. Part-time enrollment is permitted to accommodate working students. Students are allowed up to three years of graduate study to complete the Masters.
COMMON QUESTIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION:

**How do I Choose an Advisor?** During your first quarter, you should make contact with the UCI faculty in your fields of interest. You will be asked to submit paperwork formally identifying your advisor no later than the beginning of your second quarter. The Graduate Director acts as your advisor until you formally identify an advisor.

- Once you have asked a faculty member to be your advisor, you fill out a Graduate Student Advising Agreement form, have your advisor sign it, and return it to the Graduate Administrator. This form is available here: [Advising Agreement](#).
- Students can change advisors during the course of their study or have co-advisors. Please consult the Graduate Director or Graduate Administrator.
- You should consult with your advisor about your plan of study: what courses to take, selecting fields, available archives, professionalization.
- Speak with your advisor or the Graduate Director about any difficulties or challenges you may be having in the program. You may also consult the History Department’s DECADE Mentor (a faculty member who oversees issues of equity, diversity, and fairness related to graduate training). All graduate student advisors and mentors are responsible for maintaining confidentiality.

**How do I sign up for courses?**

- Students enroll in classes using [WebReg](#).
- View the enrollment calendar for important dates: [http://www.reg.uci.edu/navigation/calendars.html](http://www.reg.uci.edu/navigation/calendars.html).

**How many courses should I take?**

A normal academic load for graduate students is 12 units (3 courses) per quarter. Please note that upper division undergraduate classes and language classes -100 level and above- may count for graduate course credit, while lower division language courses are taken on top of your graduate course load.

**What classes do I take to satisfy my selected fields?**

Students select a first field in a regional area and a second field in either a second regional area or a thematic emphasis.

The Department offers several three-quarter course sequences on regional area studies (often referred to as “colloquia series”): U.S. History (History 260ABC), Latin American History (History 250ABC), Asian History (History 280ABCD), Middle East and African History (History 275ABC), European History (History 220ABC), and World History (History 240ABC). These are reading courses designed to provide students with broad historiographical and teaching
knowledge of an entire geographic and temporal field. Students must take all three quarters of seminars offered in a selected first field. (In exceptional cases, students may petition the History Graduate Program to have courses from other departments or other UC campuses count towards fulfillment of their area field).

A second field may be chosen from the above listed area studies courses. (Masters students take two courses in the second field.) OR a second field may be chosen from a thematic emphasis on a particular conceptual or topical area of history. Thematic fields vary yearly and may include Gender and Sexuality; Science and Medicine; Empire and Colonialism; Global Migrations, Slavery, and Diasporas, History of the Environment. Students must take course in at least two different regional areas related to this thematic emphasis. Courses offered in thematic fields vary yearly and are usually doubled-up with a seminar being offered in an area studies colloquium. For example, in a given year, History 250C (Modern Latin America) may be offered simultaneously as “Histories of Gender and Sexuality in Latin America”; or History 220B (Early Modern Europe) might be simultaneously offered as a “History of Medicine and the Body in Early Modern Europe.” See the planned graduate course offerings for the current two-year cycle of classes. Students may double-count one class as satisfying requirements in both their first and second fields. Courses taken outside the History Department may count for one class in a thematic field. (Outside courses for field requirements must be approved by the Graduate Director. To qualify, such courses must devote at least 50% of their reading material to the chosen thematic emphasis.) Students planning a first or second field in Early Modern Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, Modern Europe or East Asia (220ABC, 240ABC, 230ABC, 265ABC, 270ABCD, 275ABC) need to be aware that these colloquia are generally offered every other year.

Work in fields not offered every year can sometimes be done in Directed Reading courses (291) under special circumstances (forms required). Contact the appropriate faculty member(s) for guidance in course selection.

**What is the Proseminar/Research Seminar (History 202AB)?**
The Proseminar/Research Seminar (202/203) sequence is designed to give students historiographical and research expertise in a particular topical area. Together, they fulfill the first year research paper requirement for doctoral students as well as that for MA students. The Proseminar is a readings course organized around the historiography of a particular topic. During the subsequent Research Seminar, students write individual research papers -- usually 25-pages in length-- based on primary and secondary sources related to themes discussed in the Proseminar.

**What are electives?**
Electives are courses that are not used to fulfill requirements in History and Theory, first and second fields, and research seminars. They include special topics courses offered within the History Department (History 290s) as well as area studies and thematic emphasis courses beyond the student’s chosen first and second fields. Students may also take Independent Directed Readings (History 291) with individual UCI faculty that count as electives. (Directed Readings
must be formally approved by the Graduate Director and require written submission of planned reading and writing assignments in the 291.) Electives may also be taken outside the History Department and at other UC Campuses. Students should consult advisors when planning electives.

**What are directed readings?**
Directed Readings are individual reading courses that students arrange with faculty members.

- Up to three students can participate in the same directed reading. (If more than three students enroll, the course becomes a scheduled Special Topics Course, History 290).
- Directed Readings cover an area not currently taught in a regularly scheduled course or can focus on a student's particular interests.
- These courses most often count as electives, but upon petition to the Graduate Program Director may be part of a first or second field.
- Students may take 291s for either a letter grade (A-F) or a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade. Students taking a 291 must sign a contract with the professor detailing the content and requirements of the course. The [Directed Reading Form](#) should be turned in to the Graduate Administrator by the second week of the quarter.
- Masters students normally may enroll in no more than one 291 for a letter grade (A-F) from any single professor. Exceptions may be granted in special circumstances upon petition to the Graduate Program Director. Exceptions may be petitioned from the Graduate Director.
- Masters students usually take no more than one 291s on an S/U basis (4 units each) during their graduate careers.
- All Directed Readings being used to fulfill field requirements must be taken for a letter grade.

**Can I take undergraduate courses that interest me?**
- Upper division undergraduate classes, including languages classes (courses #100 and above), can count for graduate course credit. Usually these courses are taken as electives.

**What grades should I expect?**
- All graduate classes must be taken for a grade (A-F or S/U).
- S/U can be used for 291s (Directed Reading).
- Do not enroll in any graduate course for a P/NP (Pass/Not Pass) grade. A P/NP grade given in a graduate class automatically becomes an "NR" (no record) which then turns into an "F" after one quarter.

**Resources and Services for Ph.D. Students:**
For general graduate student resources, visit: [http://www.grad.uci.edu/services/grc/index.html](http://www.grad.uci.edu/services/grc/index.html)

For resources for graduate students in the School of Humanities, visit: [http://www.humanities.uci.edu/graduate/current/resources.php](http://www.humanities.uci.edu/graduate/current/resources.php)

UCI Graduate Student and Family Housing
http://housing.uci.edu/grad/index.html

Humanities Graduate Student Association (HGSA, student-run)-
http://www.hnet.uci.edu/hgsa/

UCI DECADE Student Council-- http://www.grad.uci.edu/ (Diversity and Equity)

**UC Policies:**

- **Academic dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty is unacceptable, and will not be tolerated in the Department of History. Please read UCI’s [Academic Honesty](#) policy.

- **Incompletes:** Students must resolve all incompletes before August 31. You must resolves all incompletes within 1 year, or the Incomplete will become an “F.” The Graduate Incomplete form is available here: [Incomplete (I) Grade Agreement Form](#)