

Department of History Handbook for PhD Students

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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK FOR PH.D. STUDENTS

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; global migration, slavery, and diaspora; environment, science and medicine; and religion. Whatever the student's chosen emphasis, the History Graduate Program encourages students to think across national and regional borders and to have a solid understanding of how the discipline of History contributes to debates about global and local transformation.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The doctoral program in History is designed to provide students with advanced historical research skills and a solid grounding in the theory and methodology of history. This combination reflects the Department's conviction that scholars should learn to approach significant questions about the past with rigor and conceptual sophistication. The Department requires that students develop critical abilities in dealing with primary sources, secondary syntheses, and the interrelationship of history and theory. Candidates for a Ph.D. in History are expected to gain teaching experience as an integral part of their graduate training. Ordinarily this is accomplished through service as a teaching assistant (TA).

Required Coursework in First and Second Years

Doctoral students take a **minimum of 15 courses**, usually finished during the first two years of the program. Ten courses must be taken within the History Department.

History and Theory

Required coursework in for history doctoral students includes **two courses in History and Theory** (History 200; course can be repeated as topics vary). These courses explore a variety of theoretical issues and methodological concerns that have sparked debate in the humanities and social sciences in past decades and which remain of urgent concern to twenty-first century historical writing. Topics may include the relationship between materialist approaches and cultural analysis; subjectivity and governance; gender and sexuality; ethnicity and racial formation; the politics of religion; "the archive" and archival practice; nationalism and post-colonialism; world history and transnational studies. Course readings comprise a mix of texts from different disciplines, encouraging students to think of history as a type of theory (arguments about the past) as well as to explore what other disciplinary approaches have to offer historical scholarship.

Field Emphases

Doctoral students are required to take a total of **six courses satisfying requirements for specialization in two historical fields**. Historical fields may be selected from courses with an area studies emphasis and/or courses with a thematic emphasis. Students take three courses in each field. The Department offers area studies fields in European History (History 220), World History (History 240), Latin American History (History 250), U.S. History (History 260), Middle East and African History (History 275), and Asian History (History 280). Thematic fields vary depending on demand and may include Gender and Sexuality; Global Migrations, Slavery, and Diasporas; Empire and Colonialism; Science and Medicine; Environmental History; Science and Medicine; Religion; Visual Studies. Students can also design their own, customized thematic field in cooperation with their advisor and with approval from the graduate director. *Students need to file any petition*

paperwork to Graduate Division before they advance to candidacy.

Students usually select a first field with an area studies emphasis (Latin America; Europe, etc.) and a second field based *either* on a different area (Asia; World, etc.) *or* in a thematic emphasis (Gender and Sexuality; Science and Medicine, etc.) For thematic fields, two courses must usually be taken within the History Department and one class *may* be taken in an outside Department (i.e. Feminist Theory in the Women's Studies Department may count towards the Gender and Sexuality field emphasis). For both the first and the second fields, students may take their required courses in any order; however, not all courses are offered annually. Students must confer with their advisor at the beginning of their program about their plans for completing required courses in their first and second fields, normally finished by the end of the second year. **With approval from advisors, students may count one class towards fulfillment of requirements in both fields.** (For example, a student with a first field in U.S. history may take 260 both as a "U.S. requirement" and an "Environmental History" requirement in the years that 260 is also offered as an Environmental History class. In such cases, students are still required to take a minimum of 15 courses overall, 10 in the History Department.

Research Seminars

Doctoral students are required to take a two-quarter course sequence in research and writing both their first and their second year in the Graduate Program. In the **first year**, students take a proseminar on historical methodology (History 202A), followed by a second quarter seminar (History 202B) in which they write a conference-length research paper that engages the methodologies and questions explored in the previous quarter.

Students who enter the doctoral program with an M.A. may petition to be exempted from the first year-research sequence, pending acceptance of their M.A. thesis as a research paper. In these cases, such students will take the second-year research seminar sequence (History 204A/204B).

In the **second year** of study, Ph.D. students take a two-course sequence (History 204A/204B) in which they research and write a paper on a topic of their choice. The second-year research paper is required of all doctoral students. Students who received credit for their M.A. thesis and have already taken 202B in their first year may take additional electives or field requirements in the History Department.

Language Requirement

Normally students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of one foreign language prior to taking the Ph.D. candidacy qualifying examination. Competency in a language may be established either by passing a departmental examination (proctored in the department office) or through extensive language use in one of the research seminars. The specific languages that may be used to satisfy this requirement depend on the students' first fields, subject to their advisors' approval.

First-Year Review

To be admitted formally into the doctoral program, students must satisfactorily pass a departmental **evaluation at the end of their first year** of study; this includes students who entered with an M.A. from another institution. The first-year review committee consists of the professors who have taught the student and his/her advisor. Faculty write short evaluations of first year students after each seminar has concluded. (Students receive copies of these reports). At the first-year review, the committee discusses the student's work and preparation for doctoral work. In conjunction with the Graduate Director, the committee makes a recommendation regarding formal admission to the Ph.D. program. This review is held in June and students will be notified of their status no later than July 1.

First Year M.A.

Doctoral students can be awarded an M.A. from UCI after fulfilling requirements for residence and successfully completing 36 units, including 27 units in required courses.

Third Year Qualifying Exams and Dissertation Prospectus

In the third year of the doctoral program, students **prepare for their oral qualifying exams and write the dissertation prospectus**. Some students may complete outstanding course requirements during the third year. Most third-year students enroll in History 298 (“Experimental Group Study”) overseen by the Graduate Program Chair or take directed readings with individual faculty (History 291). The third year is devoted to working closely with faculty in preparing for exams and writing the dissertation prospectus. History 298 includes periodic workshops on time-management, orals exam preparation, dissertation prospectus writing, and grant writing. Students may enroll in History 298 for up to 12 credits per quarter.

Orals

The oral qualifying exam is a two-hour meeting during which a student is **examined in his/her first and second fields by a committee of five faculty**, including the student’s advisor and one faculty member from outside the Department who serves as an exam referee. Faculty must be full time and members of the Academic Senate. A majority of committee members need to come from the home department.

Students select their exam committee members in consultation with their advisor. The oral exam is normally held at the end of winter term or beginning of spring term in the third year. *Students must notify their advisor and committee members at least one quarter before the date on which they intend to take the exam.* Students advance to Ph.D. candidacy and are considered ABD (“all but dissertation”) once they complete the oral exam.

Reading Lists for Orals

In consultation with advisors and committee members, students prepare a list of books and articles for each field in which they will be examined. Normally, a student prepares a list with each member of the committee, except the outside referee. Reading lists for fields may be divided up temporally (early-modern, 19th century, modern, etc.) or thematically (tropical disease, medicine and the body, etc.). The Graduate Committee recommends a maximum of 160 new books for all four lists combined, or a maximum of 120 books and 40 articles for all four lists combined. The total amount of reading on all lists should not exceed that which a student can reasonably cover in a six-month intensive reading period. The goal of reading for orals is to familiarize the student with the major debates and issues in a given field, in preparation for teaching. Normally, students work with advisors to prepare general questions on the fields. These questions, or key debates, might or might not be raised during the actual exam, but students will have a strong sense of what is expected of them in the exam prior to examination.

Dissertation Prospectus

After passing the orals qualifying exam, a student presents his/her **dissertation prospectus for formal approval in a colloquium including all members of the dissertation committee**. Normally the colloquium meets for one and a half hours. Students **usually select three faculty members** to serve on the dissertation committee. *(The dissertation committee need not be composed of the same faculty who examined the student in orals.)* The principle dissertation advisor must be a member of the History Department and the Academic Senate. Under the advice of the student’s advisor, one faculty member of the dissertation committee may be from outside the university.

The prospectus is a concise discussion of the student's planned project of research. It should be no more than **15 pages, double-spaced**, and slightly longer than a grant proposal. The prose should identify the major themes and questions the project will engage, briefly discuss existing historiography and other research on this topic, and explain why this is a valuable project of study. A good prospectus usually includes brief discussion of planned chapters and planned archival research.

Both oral exams and the prospectus colloquia should be completed by the end of spring quarter of the third year. Exceptions may be granted through petition to the Graduate Program Committee and Department Chair. (Students who fail to complete their oral exams and prospectus colloquia before the end of spring quarter of the third year will lose their eligibility for 5 + 2 funding, if applicable.)

Dissertation Research and Writing

The dissertation is the most important part of the Department's doctoral program. The dissertation is an **original piece of historical scholarship, involving extensive primary research and original analysis of secondary source material**. Normally, the student spends a year or more engaged in intensive research, and another year or more writing the dissertation. Throughout this period, students work closely with advisors and other faculty members serving on the dissertation committee. The finished dissertation must be approved by all dissertation committee members and is normally the approximate length of a book manuscript. The normal time for researching and writing the dissertation is two years for all 5+2 students and three years for all other students. Students are encouraged to apply for external funding to support their dissertation research and writing. The Department holds periodic workshops to assist students in writing grant applications.

Teaching

Most graduate students begin working as teaching assistants in Department or School courses during their second year and continue throughout their tenure in the program, except when dissertation research or writing require their residency away from the university. Students have the opportunity to apply to teach their own courses during summer session when they are A.B.D. Third and fourth year students are expected to also apply for TA appointments outside of the History Department.

Time to Degree

The normal time to degree for the entire doctoral program—including course work, exams, and the dissertation—is six to seven years. Students should plan to complete their dissertation within three years of advancing to candidacy to be available for UCI TAships and other funding. 5 + 2 students are expected to complete their degree within 5 years.

DOCTORAL COURSE OF STUDY: TASKS AND PROCEDURES

First Year

- **Nine courses, three per quarter.**
- History and Theory (two quarters of History 200)
- First Year Research Seminar (History 202A & 202B) Seminars in chosen fields (three to five seminars, total) Electives (one or two, optional)
- Foreign language exam (normally by the end of the first year, but can be taken up to qualifying exam)
- Choose an Advisor
- Establish California Residency

Individual Development Plan

Students are required to complete the **Individual Development Plan (IDP)** form ([available on the Department website](#)) **at the beginning of each year**. First-year students will meet with their advisor and fill out the relevant sections of the form together; students in subsequent years will fill out the form *before* scheduling a meeting with their advisor. The IDP is designed to foster communication in a variety of areas to ensure the student is receiving comprehensive feedback about his/her progress to date and future expectations. Accomplishments, challenges and goals should be addresses as well as any concerns about performance and progress.

Choosing an Advisor

Throughout your first year, 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 end of the third quarter of the first year** (beginning of second quarter for M.A. students).

- The Graduate Director acts as your advisor during your first year in the program 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 on the Department website.
- 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 short and long-term graduate school plans such as: what courses to take during the first two years (keep in mind many seminars are offered in two-year cycles), how to best fulfill your language requirements, when to take your comprehensive oral exam, who to have on your oral exam and dissertation committees, possible dissertation topics, archives, professionalization, funding, etc.
- Speak with your advisor about career options, including but not limited to the academic job market.
- 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.

International Students

- The International Center is the authority on campus in regard to immigration, student visas, and other issues pertaining to international residents of the UCI community. Visit the International Center website or contact International Center staff at: <http://www.ic.uci.edu/>. For a list of tasks to accomplish once arriving at UCI as an international student, please visit: https://ic.uci.edu/forms/IC_Handbook_2018.pdf.

Second Year

- **Six courses, two per quarter.**
- **TA work** each quarter.
- Second Year Research Seminar (History 204A & 204B)
- Seminars in chosen fields (three to four, total)
- Electives (one or two, optional)
- History 399 University Teaching (only if you are a TA)

Third Year

- **Orals preparation and dissertation prospectus writing.**
- TA work each quarter. Finish remaining courses in field requirements.
- History 298 (up to 12 credits/quarter) or History 291 (Independent Study)
History 298 is organized as an independent study in which students read for orals and draft their dissertation prospectus. The seminar meets occasionally for workshops related to preparing for orals and writing the prospectus and related grant proposals. (Students are required to be registered as full-time students during their third year even though most students are no longer taking formal seminars. History 298 allows the student to register for credit for the intensive reading and writing of the third year.)
- Meet with faculty advisor and select orals committee members
- Meet regularly with advisor and committee members to prepare reading lists and study questions
- Meet with advisor and select dissertation committee
- Schedule orals exam and prospectus colloquia with committee members.
- Submit Petition to Take the Ph.D. Qualifying Exam to Graduate Administrator (two weeks prior) Write Dissertation Prospectus
- Oral Exam & Prospectus Colloquium (usually taken at the end of winter quarter or beginning of spring quarter)
- Submit Ph.D. Form I-Advancement to Candidacy Ph.D. Degree to the Graduate Director.

Fourth Year

Dissertation Research. TA work for quarters in residence. 5 + 2 students may take a fellowship year.

Fifth Year

Dissertation Research and Writing. TA work for quarters in residence. 5 + students may take a fellowship year if they have not done so already.

Sixth/Seventh Years

Finish Dissertation. TA work, subject to availability.

Filing the dissertation

- Along with your doctoral committee, complete the Report on Final Exam Form (Ph.D. Form II). **Please note that this form requires original signatures from all of your Dissertation Committee members.** If any of your committee members will be out of town or unavailable when you'll be filing, please collect their signature ahead of time.
- For information, forms and check-lists for filing your dissertation, go to

<https://www.grad.uci.edu/forms/index.php>

COMMON QUESTIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

What kind of funding is available for research?

Funding for research is available from multiple sources both on-campus and off-campus.

- UCI's Grad Division has listings of internal, diversity, extramural, and international grants: <http://www.grad.uci.edu/funding/fellowships-awards/index.html>
- UCI's School of Humanities offers funding for current graduate students: see <http://www.humanities.uci.edu/graduate/current/funding.php>
- Humanities Commons awards grants to graduate students to support research, conference travel, publication subvention and conference planning: http://www.humanities.uci.edu/commons/grad_resources/index.php
- The Department of History offers funding for current graduate students: see <http://www.humanities.uci.edu/history/graduate/funding.php>

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>.

How many courses should I take?

A normal academic load for graduate students is 12 units (3 courses) per quarter. Teaching assistants who hold 25% or 50% teaching positions may enroll in University Teaching (History 399), along with two regular graduate courses, to maintain the required 12 units for full-time enrollment. (Please note that upper division language classes—100 level and above—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 region-specific courses, including European History (History 220), World History (History 240), Latin American History (History 250), U.S. History (History 260), Middle East and African History (History 275), and Asian History (History 280). (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).

Thematic fields are comprised of three courses on a particular conceptual or topical area of history. Examples include Gender and Sexuality; Science and Medicine; Empire and Colonialism; Global Migrations, Slavery, and Diasporas; History of the Environment; Religion. Courses offered in thematic fields vary yearly and may be doubled-up with a seminar being offered in an area studies colloquium. For example, in a given year, History 250 (Latin America) may be offered simultaneously as “Histories of Gender and Sexuality in Latin America”; or History 220 (Europe) might be simultaneously offered as a “History of Medicine and the Body in Early Modern Europe.”

Students may double-count only *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 (220, 240, 230, 265, 270, 275) need to be aware that these colloquia are generally offered every other year.

Work in Colloquia 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 a research seminar?

The **First-Year Research Seminar (202A/B)** is designed to introduce students to the methodology of historical research. The goal is to produce a conference-length research paper of publishable quality. Assignments include summarizing the existent secondary literature on their topic of choice, compiling bibliographies, identifying accessible primary sources, and submitting periodical progress reports. Students will additionally be expected to read and *constructively* comment on one another's work. A second but interrelated goal of this course is to introduce students to debates on what it means to be a historian and do historical work. To that end, students read and discuss articles that speak to such topics as: historical methodology; the politics of the archive; the relationship between history, narrative, truth, and power; and historical analysis.

Ph.D. students who arrive at UCI with an M.A. in history may petition the Graduate Program Committee for exemption from the First Year Research Seminar (202A/B) requirement. The M.A. thesis or equivalent should be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies with an exemption request by October 1 for consideration.

The **Second Year Research Seminar (204A/B)** is a two-quarter course required of all second-year students. This course allows students to begin to plan their dissertation topics and do research in their field of interest. It also introduces professional issues such as grant writing, conference presentations, and the publication process. This seminar is not a thematic readings course, but there are class meetings as a group, as well as required individual conferences to discuss in depth the progress of students' research and writing. The goal is for students to produce a research paper that is of publishable quality.

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.
 - Students normally may enroll in no more than three 291s for a letter grade (A-F) from any single professor. Exceptions may be granted in special circumstances upon petition to the Graduate Program Director.
 - Students may usually take no more than two 291s on an S/U basis (4 units each) during their graduate careers. Exceptions may be granted in special circumstances upon petition to the Graduate Program Director.
 - All Directed Readings being used to fulfill field requirements must be taken for a letter grade.
 - Students may take no more than **a total of six 291s**.

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. In exceptional circumstances, students may petition the Graduate Director to count an upper-division lecture course towards a graduate field requirement.

Can courses taken before I matriculated in the UCI graduate program count towards my degree?

- Normally, students must complete their coursework at UCI after matriculation.
- Students who have completed an M.A. in History at another institution may petition the Graduate Program Committee (GPC) for exemption from the First Year Research Seminar (202A/202B) requirement. The M.A. thesis or equivalent should be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies via petition by October 1 of your first year for consideration. Please contact the Graduate Administrator if you are interested in this option.
- Students may petition the Graduate Director to count up to three graduate courses taken at UCI before matriculation in the graduate program toward their requirements. (These three classes can be listed on the student's graduate transcript without grades.)

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) and all 299s (Dissertation Research).
- 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.
- Acceptable grades for Ph.D. students in History department classes are A and A-. Any final course grade lower than an A- (3.7) is an indication that the student is not performing up to History department standards. You should immediately speak with your advisor(s) about such grades.

Resources and Services for Ph.D. Students

- For general graduate student resources, visit: <http://www.grad.uci.edu/services/grc/index.html>
- For resources for graduate students in the School of Humanities, visit: <https://www.humanities.uci.edu/graduate/resources/student.php>
- UCI Graduate Student and Family Housing: <https://housing.uci.edu/grad/index.html>
- Humanities Graduate Student Association (HGSA, student-run): <http://sites.uci.edu/historygraduates/>
- UCI DECADE (Diversity and Equity): <https://grad.uci.edu/about-us/diversity/decade/index.php>

UC Policies

- **Academic dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty is unacceptable, and will not be tolerated in the Department of History. Please visit <https://aisc.uci.edu/policies/academic-integrity/index.php> for more information.
- **Annual progress review/dismissal:** The History Department reviews Ph.D. candidates' progress on their degree annually and expects students to be making satisfactory progress while enrolled in the program. If a student is not making satisfactory progress, they may be placed on probation or asked to leave the program.
- **In absentia registration:** For more information on registering in absentia, please contact the Graduate Administrator.
- **Incompletes:** Students must resolve all incompletes before August 31st before they can be considered for a TA-ship that academic year. You must resolve all incompletes within 1 year, or the Incomplete will become an "F." The Graduate Incomplete form is available here: [Incomplete \(I\) Grade Agreement Form](#)
- **Lapse of Candidacy:** Candidacy for the Ph.D. will lapse automatically if the student loses graduate standing by academic disqualification or failure to comply with the University policy on continuous registration. A readmitted student who was a candidate for the Ph.D. must again advance to candidacy and thereafter enroll as a candidate for at least one academic quarter before the Ph.D. will be conferred.
- **Leave of absence:** Students may apply for a leave of absence, preferably during their work on their dissertation. (Students who are awarded external full-year research fellowships such as an SSRC or Fulbright often take a leave of absence during this research year to avoid university fees.) Applications are submitted to the Graduate Director during the enrollment period for the quarter in which enrollment and registration are not planned. Normally, no more than three quarters of leave will be allowed, and then only according to strict guidelines. The deadline to submit an approved Leave of Absence petition to Graduate Division is Friday of the third week of classes. Please contact the Graduate Administrator for help in petitioning for a leave of absence.
- **Non-resident tuition:** Students who are on leave for three consecutive quarters during which they live outside of California will be assessed non-resident tuition upon return to enrolled status.
- **Part-time student status:** Ph.D. candidates, especially those in the advanced stages of dissertation writing, may be eligible for approved part-time status, which allows students to take a lighter course load at reduced fees for a maximum of three consecutive quarters. Please contact the Graduate Administrator if you'd like to request part-time status.