

University of California, Irvine
Department of History

Masters Student Handbook

This handbook is a compilation of requirements and advice made for reference purposes only. Please visit catalogue.uci.edu for the most up-to-date official requirements.

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Program Overview

The Graduate Program in History at UCI offers students an exciting intellectual community most clearly defined by its commitment to cross-field dialogue among faculty and graduate students around shared research interests in the following topics or themes:

- Transnational, colonial, and imperial histories
- World History
- Histories of science, technology, medicine, and the environment
- The history of gender and sexuality
- The history of religion

Graduate reading and research seminars foster cross-field dialogue by bringing together students from different areas of geographical and temporal expertise to learn a distinctive approach to graduate study. This approach combines rigorous theoretical study with the careful examination of documents, texts, interviews, and material evidence.

Course Requirements

Masters students receive opportunities to train in the history of area regions and thematic emphases. A total of nine courses are required:

- Three Courses in a **First Field** (either area-based or thematic)
- Two Courses in a **Second Field** (area-based or thematic)
- HIST 202A & HIST 202B (the two-quarter **first-year research seminar**)
- Two additional **elective** courses
 - It is strongly recommended that at least one of these electives be a directed readings course (HISTORY 291) with the advisor to work on the capstone project
 - Elective courses may be taken outside of the department

Language Requirement

Masters students whose major field required use of foreign language sources should demonstrate competence in that language in the process of completing the capstone project. Other M.A. students do not have to meet a foreign language or alternative skills requirement.

Capstone Project

Masters students must complete a capstone project to graduate. They have two options, both of which require significant research or intensive readings:

Degree Conferral Plan I – Thesis: The master’s thesis represents a revision of the first-year research paper, equivalent to a scholarly article, under the supervision of the faculty advisor. The project is reviewed and approved by the advisor and the thesis committee. The thesis committee consists of three members (including the advisor) – at least two of which must be Senate Faculty members in the History Department.]

Degree Conferral Plan II – Comprehensive Exam: At the end of the final quarter, the M.A. candidate must pass a comprehensive oral exam administered by the faculty advisor and one other faculty member. Students are examined on their first field.

Advancing to Candidacy & Filing for Your Degree

Students must “advance” one quarter before they intend to graduate. For most MA students, this is by the end of their first Winter Quarter. To advance, complete the form titled “Advancement to Candidacy/Final Degree Report – Master’s Degree Comp Exam” available at <https://www.grad.uci.edu/forms/index.php>. Submit before the quarter’s advancement deadline (deadlines available at <https://www.grad.uci.edu/academics/filing-deadlines.php>).

For a comprehensive and updated guide to filing degree paperwork, visit <https://www.grad.uci.edu/academics/degree-completion/index.php>

Time to Degree and Time Limits

The M.A. is a one-year program in academic residence as a full-time student. However, it is understood that many M.A. students are employed and need to enroll on a part-time basis. Students are allowed up to three years of graduate study to complete the degree.

Choosing an Advisor

You will be assigned an advisor upon admission. 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 end of your first quarter.

- To officially choose your advisor, submit the Advising Agreement (available on our website “Graduate” > “Forms and Petitions”) by the end of your first quarter.
- Students can change advisors during the course of their study or have co-advisors. Please consult the Graduate Director or Graduate Program Coordinator.
- 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.

Coursework

Enrolling in Courses

- Enroll in classes using WebReg reg.uci.edu
- For information on adding, dropping, and changing classes, visit: http://www.humanities.uci.edu/undergrad/current/add_drop.php.
- 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.

What classes do I take to satisfy my selected fields?

Students choose two area-based or thematic fields for their coursework requirements.

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 (offered as History 290), 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 courses on a particular conceptual or topical area of history. Examples include but are not limited to 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.”

What is the 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.

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.

It is strongly recommended that at least one of these electives be a directed readings course (HISTORY 291) with the advisor to either work on the thesis or prepare for the comprehensive exam.

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. Directed Readings cover a subject 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. Directed Readings taken to satisfy field requirements must be taken for a letter grade. If a Directed Reading is taken to satisfy a field requirement, the student will need to complete a Graduate Division "General Petition" before filing for their degree.

To register for a directed reading, complete the Directed Reading Contract found under "Forms & Petitions" on the Department website and submit it with a reading list to the Graduate Program Coordinator one week before the financial deadline (Fall: September 15, Winter: December 15, Spring: March 15).

Grades

All graduate classes must be taken for a grade (A-F). S/U can be used for 291s (Directed Reading) being taken for an elective.

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 & Services

- For comprehensive guides on filing for your degree, visit <https://www.grad.uci.edu/academics/degree-completion/index.php>
- 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): www.ucihsa.com
- 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. All academic integrity cases will be processed through the Office of Academic Integrity & Student Conduct. Please visit <https://aisc.uci.edu/policies/academic-integrity/index.php> for more information.
- For Graduate Division policies such as Leave of Absences or Part-Time Status visit <https://www.grad.uci.edu/academics/academic-policies.php>
- Find the full Graduate Policies & Procedures at <https://www.grad.uci.edu/forms/academics/Graduate-Policies-and-Procedures.pdf>