

California State University Stanislaus

Graduate Program in History

Student Handbook

Welcome to the graduate program in History! This handbook will help guide you through the process of successfully obtaining an MA in History. To graduate, you must complete at least 30 units. The only required course is History 5930: History of Historical Writing. You will complete the remaining requirements with elective units. In addition to completing 30 units, you will take a series of three comprehensive exams. The writing of a thesis is not required, but optional. These options and requirements are summarized below and detailed in the attached Appendix of Documents.

Advising

You should plan to meet periodically with the Graduate Program Director to ensure that you understand the all of the degree requirements outlined in this handbook. In addition to the advising from the Program Director, you should seek out advising from faculty with expertise in your area of scholarly interest.

Unit Requirements

At least 21 of the required 30 units must be satisfied with graduate (5000-level) coursework. A maximum of 6 units Individual Study (HIST 5980) may be applied to the degree. A maximum of 6 units of Thesis writing (HIST 5990) may be applied to the degree. A maximum of 9 units of undergraduate (4000-level) coursework may be applied towards the degree. Units taken at the 4000-level will include extra graduate-level work, as specified by the instructor. Additional conditions apply. See the [Program Requirements](#) in the Appendix of Documents for details.

Non-Thesis Option

The table below summarizes requirements for the non-thesis option, which is the most time-efficient manner in which you can complete the program. Students not choosing the thesis option must submit at least two substantial papers, written during graduate classes, for his/her file prior to graduation.

Summary of Course Requirements (Non-Thesis Option):

Course	Units	Description
HIST 5930	4	Required course in Historiography, offered every other year.
HIST 5000s	8	Two 5000-level seminars in any subject area.
HIST 4000s	9	Three 4000-level courses taken with additional grad-level work as determined by the instructor.*
HIST 5980	6	Individual Study : Directed reading and writing as determined by the instructor.*
Total	30	

*Note that you are not REQUIRED to take any 4000-level coursework. Nor are you REQUIRED to take any units of 5980: Individual Study. You MAY complete all 30 units at the 5000-level seminar courses. But given the frequency of graduate course offerings, students have the option of applying a maximum of 9 units of 4000-level work toward their MA degree. Conditions apply. See the [Program Requirements](#) in the Appendix of Documents for details.

Thesis Option:

Once you have earned at least 21 units at the 5000-level you will form a thesis committee by completing the attached Thesis Proposal form. Once you have earned 24 units (with at least 15 of those units at the 5000-level), you will 1) take comprehensive exams (described below), and 2) enroll in [5990](#) to begin earning a maximum of 6 units for writing the thesis. Generally these 6 units of 5990 are spread over two semesters, but the exact parameters of the thesis are determined entirely by the thesis committee.

Summary of Course Requirements (Thesis Option):

Course	Units	Description
HIST 5930	4	Required course in Historiography, offered every other year.
HIST 5000s	11	Either three 5000-level seminars in any subject area (for 12 units), or two 5000-level seminars and 3 units of HIST 5980 Individual Study for (11 units).
HIST 4000s	9	Three 4000-level courses taken with additional grad-level work as determined by the instructor.
HIST 5990	6	Research and writing units supervised by the thesis committee.
Total	30	

Comprehensive Exams

All students, whether or not they choose the thesis option, will take a series of three 90-minute comprehensive exams. Students choosing the thesis option will take their exams after completing 24 units. Students not writing a thesis will take their exams after completing 30 units. Comprehensive exams must be completed within one year of completing coursework.

If you are taking comps in a semester in which you are not enrolled in any other classes, you can enroll in [7006](#) for \$25. This allows you to maintain your enrollment status without having to pay full tuition. If you are taking comprehensive exams in a semester in which you are taking thesis units, no special registration is required.

To complete your exams, you must submit the Comprehensive Exam Registration form directly to the Graduate Director before the start of the semester in which you plan to take exams. To complete the registration, you will contact three professors with whom you have taken at least one 5000-level seminar to request that each serve on your examination committee. If they agree, you will confer with each to determine a general field in which you will be examined and establish a date and time for the exam. Fall semester exams must be scheduled between September 1 and

October 15. Spring semester exams must be scheduled between March 1 and April 15. You are advised against taking all three exams on the same day. It is rather advisable to spread the three exams out over a 3-4 week period.

On the day of each of your scheduled exams, you will come into the office and receive your exam question. You will then have 90 minutes to answer the question in a bluebook. If emergency conditions force a suspension of in-person classes and services, comprehensive exams will be administered electronically.

Comprehensive exams are graded pass/fail. If you fail an individual exam, you will need to consult with the professor before attempting the exam a second time. You will be offered only one opportunity to retake any portion of the comprehensive exam. If you fail one individual exam, you will be permitted to retake that exam later in the same semester, after you have completed all three exams. If you fail two or more individual exams, you will not be permitted to retake the exams until the next comprehensive exam period. Retake exams will consist of new questions. If you fail any exam a second time, you will not receive your degree.

All exams are retained in your graduate file indefinitely. You may request a photocopy for your own records.

Graduation

Once you have completed 30 units and your three comprehensive exams, you will be ready to graduate. To graduate you will need to complete the attached [Application to Graduate](#) in the first two weeks of the semester in which you plan to graduate. See the [Enrollment Services](#) website for complete instructions.

Appendix of Documents

1. [Program Requirements](#)
2. [Statement of Professional Ethics](#)
3. [Individual Study](#)
4. Comprehensive Exam Registration (Attached)
5. Thesis Proposal (Attached)
6. HIST 5990: [Thesis Special Registration](#)
7. HIST 7005: [Thesis Continuing Registration](#)
8. HIST 7006: [Comprehensive Exam Continuing Registration](#)
9. [Application to Graduate](#)

Department of History MA Comprehensive Exam Registration

Instructions: Complete this form before the start of the semester in which you plan to take exams. Fall semester exams must be scheduled between September 1 and October 15. Spring semester exams must be scheduled between March 1 and April 15. Please return this form to the Graduate Director by email.

Student: _____

Academic Term _____

Committee Member (print and sign)	Examination Field	Exam Date & Time

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
STANISLAUS STATE
HISTORY M.A. PROGRAM – THESIS AND COMMITTEE**

Name of candidate _____

Thesis topic and/or proposed title

Thesis statement

Committee members:

1. _____, Committee Chair, Dept. of History _____
(please print name) *(signature)*
2. _____, Dept. of History _____
3. _____, Dept. of _____ *

*The third committee member may be from outside the Department of History.

RETURN TO COMMITTEE CHAIR

<p>Do not write in this box</p> <p>Date from completed _____ Committee chair _____ <i>(initials)</i></p>
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Cc: Committee members

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