

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTH CAROLINA  
AT CHARLOTTE

HISTORY DEPARTMENT

**2023-24**

**GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

*Revised Fall 2023*

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## Welcome to the History Department at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte

We are very pleased to have you join our program. This handbook will acquaint you with the core requirements of the M.A. degree in History and the policies and procedures that you need to know as you navigate the program. Please note that relevant [university catalogs](#) apply to all students.

### CONTACTS:

- Graduate Program Director (GPD): Dr. Ritika Prasad  
(May be referred to elsewhere as Director of Graduate Studies or DGS).
- Director of Public History (DPH): Dr. Tina Shull.
- Chair of the Department of History: Dr. Amanda Pipkin
- Business Services Coordinator: Ms. Gloria Davenport
- Administrative Support Associate: Ms. Richelle Giles

The department includes regular members of the graduate faculty (who can serve as thesis and examination committee chairs) and several other members who can serve in non-chairing roles on committees. Please consult [graduate school guidelines](#) about who can serve in which capacity and the distinction between regular, associate, and emeritus members of the graduate faculty.

The History department's faculty profiles are organized by geographic and thematic focus. You should familiarize yourselves with [faculty research profiles](#), including descriptions of research specializations and teaching interests, especially as you plan your thesis or examination committee.

Faculty offices are in the [Garinger building](#), most on the second floor and some on the first. All faculty have posted office hours each semester or would be happy to make an appointment to meet with you. Email addresses are available on faculty and staff profiles.

The History department's office is in Garinger 226. If you are a graduate assistant (GA), the key to your office will open the door that leads directly to the mailroom.

Resources for all graduate students are available on the [Graduate School's website](#)

*\*In case of any discrepancies with university policies, please contact the Graduate Program Director*

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

To earn the Master of Arts degree in History, you must complete **one** of the following sets of degree requirements:

- (a) the examination option (30 credits); or
- (b) the thesis option (30 credits; 36 credits if with the public history concentration).

Students who take at least three courses (nine credits) per semester are considered full time. For more details see: [UNC Charlotte Academic Policy: Academic Load and Time Status for all Graduate Students](#). Graduate assistantships carry specific enrollment requirements. Many awards require you to enroll in nine credits per semester. The specific terms of each graduate assistantship are noted in your contract. For questions and clarifications, please contact the GPD.

Students must complete all degree requirements, including the comprehensive examination or thesis defense, within seven calendar years of first enrollment in the program.

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### M.A. IN HISTORY: EXAMINATION OPTION: 30 CREDIT HOURS

#### **Required Courses** (15 credit hours)

- Three colloquia (9 credit hours)
- HIST 6693: Historiography and Methodology (3 credit hours)
- HIST 6694: Seminar in Historical Writing (3 credit hours)

#### **Electives** (12 credit hours)

- No more than **9** hours of electives can be at the 5000-level, in independent study (HIST 6894), in HIST 6901, or outside the department of History, in any combination.

\*Courses offered by other departments, if crosslisted with a HIST prefix, are considered to be HIST courses. However, please make sure to register for the correct version (with HIST prefix) of the course.

#### **Examination preparation** (3 credit hours).

- HIST 6998: Please note that you should take your MA written examinations and complete your oral defense in the same semester in which you enroll in HIST 6998.

*N.B: At least 6 hours (two courses) must be in fields other than United States history*

## M.A. IN HISTORY: THESIS OPTION: 30 CREDIT HOURS

### **Required Courses** (15 credit hours)

- Three colloquia (9 credit hours)
- HIST 6693: Historiography and Methodology (3 credit hours)
- HIST 6694: Seminar in Historical Writing (3 credit hours)

### **Electives** (9 credit hours)

- No more than **6** hours of electives can be at the 5000-level, in independent study (HIST 6894), in HIST 6901 or outside the department of History, in any combination.  
\*Courses offered by other departments, if crosslisted with a HIST prefix, are considered to be HIST courses. However, please make sure to register for the correct version (with HIST prefix) of the course.

**Thesis Research and Writing:** (6 credit hours): HIST 6999: These can be taken separately over two semesters or together in the semester in which you will complete the thesis and defend it. Please discuss the optimal option with your thesis committee chair and/or the GPD.

*N.B.: At least 6 hours (two courses) must be in fields other than United States history*

## M.A. IN HISTORY: THESIS OPTION WITH PUBLIC HISTORY CONCENTRATION: 36 CREDIT HOURS

### **Required Courses** (21 credit hours: 12+9)

- Two colloquia (6 credit hours)
- HIST 6693: Historiography and Methodology (3 credit hours)
- HIST 6694: Seminar in Historical Writing (3 credit hours)
- HIST 6310: Museum Studies (3 credit hours)
- HIST 6320: Historic Preservation (3 credit hours)
- HIST 6330: History in the Digital Age (3 credit hours)

### **Electives** (9 credit hours)

- At least 3 hours must be a Public History elective
- No more than **6** hours of electives can be at the 5000-level, in independent study (HIST 6894), in HIST 6901, or outside the department of History, in any combination.  
\*Courses offered by other departments, if crosslisted with a HIST prefix, are considered to be HIST courses. However, please make sure to register for the correct version (with HIST prefix) of the course.

**Internship:** (3 credit hours): HIST 6400

**Thesis Research and Writing** (3 credit hours): HIST 6999

*NB: No required course, particularly the Historiography (HIST 6693) and Writing (HIST 6694) seminars, may be waived unless a student is required to be away from campus for a semester or more for a competitive academic opportunity, such as study abroad or public history internship.*

## POST-BACCALAUREATE COURSES

If you took courses at UNC Charlotte as a [post-baccalaureate student](#) before applying to the M.A. program, you can count up to six hours of 5000 or 6000-level coursework in History towards your degree. The GPD makes the final decision.

## TRANSFER COURSES/CREDITS

The department allows transfer credits based on university regulations. *Currently* this is up to 30 per cent of credits required for an M.A. The decision is based on assessing how transferred courses align with the curriculum needs and classes required of History M.A. students. This assessment is made by the GPD in consultation with the Graduate Committee.

## EARLY ENTRY STUDENTS

Exceptional undergraduate students at UNC Charlotte may apply to the [Early Entry Program](#) to begin work toward a graduate degree before completion of the baccalaureate degree.

## GRADE REQUIREMENTS

- All students must make “satisfactory progress” towards their degree. This means earning a grade of “A” or “B” in all of your courses. The “C” grade is not considered satisfactory in graduate work. See here for [UNC Charlotte Academic Policy: Grading \(Graduate\)](#).
- For satisfactory progress to degree, the Department of History has specific grade requirements in excess of these listed above. Thus, the department requires that all M.A. students earn a grade of “B” or higher in HIST 6693. This is necessary to enroll in the next *required* course in the M.A. sequence, Hist 6694.
- In order to graduate, you must have a combined GPA of 3.0 or higher. If you get three “C” grades or one “U” grade (the graduate equivalent of “D” or “F”), you are automatically suspended from the program.
- A student suspended due to poor grades can appeal this using the [Suspension Appeal Form](#). The department will review your appeal and make a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School about whether or not you should be allowed to continue in the M.A. program. You will be notified about this decision by the Dean of the Graduate School. If your request for reinstatement is rejected, you can appeal the decision (if you need details, ask the GPD). If you are reinstated, you must get satisfactory grades in all of your courses. If you get another “C” or “U” grade, you will automatically be terminated from the program.

## DESCRIPTION OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF COURSES

**Colloquia (this is plural; the singular is colloquium):** These are reading and discussion courses designed to introduce graduate students to the most important scholarship in a given regional and temporal field of historical study. They examine a wide range of topics and introduce students to significant questions in the field.

In most colloquia, students read the equivalent of about a book a week. Written assignments generally consist of response papers, book reviews, and/or several short (5-7 page) analytical essays based on assigned readings. Students generally do not write research papers in these courses, though they can begin to explore a topic of particular interest. By taking three of these courses (two for Public History students), students acquire the broad base of knowledge necessary before moving on to more specialized work.

The department offers six colloquia (all at the HIST 6xxx level)

Fall	Spring
US History to 1865	US History since 1865
Europe from Enlightenment to First World War	Europe in the Twentieth Century
Colonial Latin America	Modern Latin America

**HIST 6693: Historiography and Methodology:** This course is required of all M.A. students. Students should take this course as soon as they have completed at least six hours of graduate-level courses in our department. This course is taught in the spring semester and occasionally in fall. Students explore different methods of research and analysis, reading examples of both theoretical texts and historical writing. As part of this course, students begin to develop a research plan and draft a proposal (of approximately 15 pages), to write either a research paper (of article length, 25-40 pages), if pursuing the exam option, or else for a thesis chapter of similar length, if pursuing the thesis option.

By the end of the course, students pursuing the thesis track are expected to defend their proposal before a committee of three members of the graduate faculty (one of whom may be from outside the department). This becomes the student's thesis committee. Students on the examination track complete all the assignments required in Hist 6693, developing their proposal for a research paper that they will write in Hist 6694. Students who do not successfully complete a thesis defense by the end of the semester in which they take HIST 6693 automatically shift to the examination track. Currently, the concentration in Public History is only available with the thesis track.

Please note that the Department of History requires students to receive a grade of **B or higher** to enroll in the next required course in the M.A. sequence, Hist 6694.



**HIST 6694: Seminar in Historical Writing:** This research course is required of all graduate students. It is taught each fall semester and sometimes in the spring. Students should expect to take this course upon completing Historiography (History 6693). The main objective of this class is for students to (a) develop and improve skills in historical writing and (b) develop a formal, scholarly, research-based, journal-length article submission. Students will meet for the first few weeks to discuss common readings, but will then focus exclusively on their own independent research project in close consultation with their committee chair (i.e., their major examination field or thesis chair) as well as the Hist 6694 instructor and classmates. The course should culminate in a research paper (of article length, 25-40 pages) for examination track students or a thesis chapter of between 25-40 pages (for thesis track students), based on original analysis of primary sources.

*Hist 6694 must be completed prior to the semester in which a student defends their thesis or sits the comprehensive exam.*

**Electives:** Each semester, the department offers one or more 5000 or 6000 level topics courses that count as electives. These courses examine given themes across regional and/or temporal boundaries. Relevant courses taken outside the History Department can also count as electives, subject to the permission of the department offering the specific course.

**Independent Study Courses:** If no elective is offered in your area of interest and a member of the graduate faculty is agreeable, you may design an independent study course. Two options exist:

- **HIST 6894: Readings in History:** This is taken only in rare cases because of the extensive time it requires of the supervising faculty member. In this course the student meets regularly (by arrangement) with the faculty member to discuss a concentrated reading list of about a book a week and then develop a historiographical essay, annotated bibliography, or research paper (of at least 20 pages). Students must complete an [Independent Study Form](#) and in conjunction with the supervising instructor briefly outline the plan of study and final project. Both the faculty member and student must sign the form, and the student must submit it to the GPD to request authorization to register.
- **HIST 6901: Directed Readings/Research (paired with an undergraduate course):** If there is a 3000-level course taught by a member of the graduate faculty that interests you, you can ask the instructor for permission to use the course as the foundation for an independent study course under their supervision. You will attend the course and act as a full participant, and you will also do additional work as assigned by the faculty member to allow you to earn graduate credit for it.

**Note:** You should not register for the undergraduate version of the course, because it would not count toward your degree. Students must complete an [Independent Study Form](#) and in conjunction with the supervising instructor briefly outline the plan of study and final project. Both the faculty member and student must sign the form, and the student must submit it to the GPD to request authorization to register. *Hist 6901 cannot be repeated for credit.*

## PUBLIC HISTORY SEQUENCE

All students who want to graduate with a concentration in Public History must complete the following series of three courses that serve as an introduction to the discipline:

- Museum Studies (HIST 6310)
- Historic Preservation (HIST 6320)
- History in the Digital Age (HIST 6330)

The department offers these courses in a three-semester rotation. Each course is on a different topic, so they need not be taken in any particular order. Students who do not intend to complete the concentration in Public History can take one or more of these courses as electives.

### **Public History Electives**

These courses tackle specific areas of Public History. Some examine fields of professional practice, like Collections Management, Heritage Tourism or Documentary Editing. Others look at methodology, like Oral History or Print History. Any student can take these courses, but Public History students must take at least one of them. Please consult with the DPH and the GPD for any elective courses you wish to pursue outside the History Department.

## COURSE OF STUDY

### Full Time Students.

The recommended course of study for full time students is fairly set for the first year, as shown in the [Course of Study Grid](#). Required courses must be taken during the appropriate semester and in the correct sequence.

Thus, students should take Hist 6693 in the second semester of the program, after completing at least six graduate credits in the first semester. The second-year program is more individualized and depends on your own interests and degree requirements. However, graduate students in their third semester are expected to enroll in the Hist 6694 (Writing Seminar).

If you are on the thesis track, you will also take 6 hours dedicated to thesis work (Hist 6999). If you are on the comprehensive examination track you will also take three hours of exam preparation (Hist 6998). You should take Hist 6998 in the semester in which you plan to sit your comprehensive examinations and schedule your defense.

Use [DegreeWorks](#) to follow your progress and to see which course requirements remain. Also check in with the GPD and your faculty advisor/thesis committee chair to discuss the specifics of your progress to degree. Public History students must also consult the DPH.

For financial aid eligibility, graduate students must enroll in at least 9 credits per semester to be considered full-time, and 5 credit hours to be considered part-time. Graduate assistantships carry specific enrollment requirements. Thus, [GASP awards](#) require you to enroll in nine credits per semester. The specific terms of each graduate assistantship are noted in your contract. For questions and clarifications, please contact the GPD.

**Part Time Students.** Part time students, as well as Early Entry students and those who begin in the spring semester, will need to work with the GPD to determine a course of study that fits their needs. Part time students should be particularly attentive to the placement of Historiography (after completion of six hours in graduate history courses) and Writing Seminar (after completion of Historiography).

### How do I sign up for courses?

To enroll in all History graduate courses, you need to obtain advance authorization by responding to an authorization form that the GPD will send via email prior to registration. Please adhere to the submission deadline to prevent delays in processing. After the GPD approves your request, staff in the office will issue your authorizations and confirm this via email. You can then register for these courses, provided that registration is open and a seat remains.

*Note: Receiving an authorization does NOT register you for a class or guarantee you a place in it; it only allows you to register.*

To register for any independent work, you must fill out the [Independent Study Form](#). This form must be signed by the supervising faculty member and the student and then given to the GPD before you can receive authorization to sign up for these courses.

To ensure yourself a space in the courses you want, please register as early as possible. If you change your mind and drop a course (or decide not to register in the first place), please let the GPD know.

## ADVISING

A faculty Advisor will be assigned to you when you start the program. Your faculty advisor will assist you in developing your program and career plans as a historian. The advisor will work with you on planning your course of study, deciding on a thesis or comprehensive examination as your capstone project, and developing a thesis proposal. The faculty advisor may or may not become your thesis committee chair/comprehensive examination chair. Once you have chosen your own thesis or exam chair, that person will become your academic advisor. As a mark of professional courtesy, please inform your original faculty advisor when this occurs.

For questions regarding courses, requirements, registration authorizations, and guidance about the overall program, you should consult with the GPD. Public History students must consult with the DPH on any questions about Public History requirements, internships, or course offerings.

## EXAMINATIONS AND THESES: PROCESS AND FORMS

The culminating project for the History M.A. degree is either a comprehensive exam or a thesis. Each is described in detail below. Both involve you working closely with a committee of members of the graduate faculty.

The various [required milestone forms](#) for all aspects of the examination and thesis process and submission are available at the Graduate School Website (please scroll to “Master’s Student Forms” to access the appropriate forms). All these forms are completed using docuSign. You must ensure that you enter all required email addresses correctly to ensure that it is processed and must follow up with signing members in the case of unusual delays.

- Graduate Academic Petitions  
<https://graduateschool.charlotte.edu/current-students/academic-petitions>
- Graduation clearance:  
<https://graduateschool.charlotte.edu/current-students/graduation-clearance>
- Checking progress to degree, please use Degree works (using your ninenet login):  
<https://graduateschool.charlotte.edu/current-students/academic-progressdegreeworks>
- Master’s thesis checklist  
<https://graduateschool.charlotte.edu/current-students/graduation-clearance/masters-thesis-checklist>
- All Master's Student Forms: <https://graduateschool.charlotte.edu/current-students/forms>  
Scroll to: "Master's Student Forms". These are submitted electronically through DocuSign unless otherwise noted

As a guide to the process, please review our Best Practices.

## What is a comprehensive exam and why should I take it?

- The examination option is ideal for students who want to gain broad expertise in multiple fields of history rather than concentrate on a very specific subject in the way that a thesis project requires. For example, the examination is generally a good option for students who are or plan to become high school or community college teachers.
- An exam field represents a broad area of historical research. It can be defined thematically, regionally, and/or temporally. Some examples include: modern European gender history, American military history, Soviet history, the New South, nationalism, modern China, the Second World War and its aftermath, labor in modern America, the Progressive Era, the Habsburg Empire from 1848-1918, African Americans in a specific time period or a specific event/theme such as lynching or gender.
- The examination track offers an opportunity to deepen, expand, and reflect on your existing knowledge. Once you have chosen your examination fields and committee members (by the end of the Historiography Seminar or, at the latest, during the Writing Seminar), you should draw up a reading list for each field, in conjunction with the committee member supervising that field. For the major field, the list usually consists of approximately 20 books or the equivalent (you can substitute 5-6 articles for a book). The two minor field committee members will each assign you about 10 books or the equivalent. You should choose exam fields that build on your knowledge from the courses you have already taken. Copies of these lists should be given to all committee members, as well as to the GPD.
- As you prepare for the exam, you should plan to meet at least once or twice (more, if you have not yet had a course or independent study with the faculty member) with each committee member, to discuss the readings and hypothetical examination questions. It is up to you to schedule these meetings. It is also up to you, in conjunction with the members of your committee, to schedule each written examination and the oral defense. You or your committee chair will need to reserve a room for your defense by contacting the office staff.
- The Comprehensive Examination will test your knowledge of the existing historical literature in three fields (one major field and two minor fields). Each field is supervised by a different faculty member and has its own separate written examination consisting of one to three essay questions per examiner. You will have three hours for the written exam in your major field and two or three hours for each of the minor fields. Your examining faculty determines whether or not you can consult your notes while taking the exams; the essays that you submit digitally (to canvas) will be subject to screening for the prevention and detection of plagiarism.
- You must take all three of your written exams within the space of one week, which means that you should plan carefully your schedule of exams. After you have completed all three exams, each committee member will read the exam in their area of expertise. You will then meet with your entire exam committee for an oral defense of your written answers one week after completing the written examination. The comprehensive examination defense should last about an hour. After the defense, please make sure you report the outcome using the appropriate form.

### *Required forms for the Comprehensive Examination*

- Before you can register for the three hours of exam preparation (Hist 6998), you must have your Comprehensive Examination Committee members sign the *Graduate Comprehensive Exam Committee Form* (available on the [History Graduate Studies website](#)) and submit it to the GPD.
- After you have taken your Comprehensive Examination, you must inform the Graduate School that your exam has been successfully completed by submitting the *Master's Capstone Report for Comprehensive Exam, Portfolio Presentation, Study Report, and Project* ([available online on the Graduate School website](#)), signed by all members of the committee, to the GPD, who will sign it and forward it to the Graduate School.

### **What is a thesis and why should I write one?**

- A thesis is your chance to write history on your own, based on primary source research. A thesis is not just a retelling of what other historians have said, but adds something new to the state of historical knowledge. You might research something no one else has written about, or provide an entirely new interpretation of an event or process. Writing a thesis gives you the opportunity to experience how professional historians work. Often writing a thesis is helpful in preparing for the dissertation process and in producing a writing sample for PhD applications.
- Individual projects can vary a great deal. A [list of recent theses](#) are available on the department's website. You can see past History M.A. theses on the bookshelves in the department and download electronic versions from the library. Theses typically range between 50 and 100 pages; however, each student's committee determines what a viable thesis submission is and students should consult with their committee chairs to learn their expectations.
- A graduate thesis includes asking legitimate historical questions, mobilizing primary (original research) and secondary sources, engaging with relevant scholarship on the topic, and has a discernible argument. When thinking about potential thesis topics, students must think carefully about the availability of sources. Your thesis must be based on your own research. This means you must pick a topic for which sources are available locally or with feasible travel, and the material must be in a language that you can read. Students who want to write theses that involve languages other than English should be careful to consider how they will acquire the necessary language skills if they do not have them already. If this applies to you, you should begin or continue language training as soon as possible.

### *Your thesis committee*

- You do not write a thesis on your own. You will choose a thesis committee chair to guide you through the process. The person you choose must be a regular (not associate) member of the History graduate faculty whose research interests are closest to your own. It should not simply be the faculty member you know best. The most important factor here is their area of expertise. To learn more about faculty areas of expertise, please see the [department's webpage](#). Please contact them either by email or else by visiting them in their office hours to discuss your proposed research or examination topics.
- Your thesis chair will help you define your research questions, point you to useful primary and secondary sources, encourage you to analyze the results of your research more critically, and read

drafts of your chapters as you write them.

- Once you have found a thesis chair, this person will help you choose two other graduate faculty members to be on your thesis committee. This committee should be finalized by the end of HIST 6693, when you will defend your thesis proposal. At the proposal defense, the committee will decide whether or not you may proceed with the thesis project.
- Your thesis committee will also read and comment on your thesis and help decide your final grade. One of these readers can come from outside the History Department. The first reader will typically read drafts of the chapters as they are written, while the second reader may only read the final version before your thesis defense if that is the arrangement that faculty member makes with you and the thesis advisor. However, some second readers will want to be involved in reading the thesis chapters from the first draft onward to completion of the project. You must meet with all of your readers to clarify what they expect of you and how extensively they wish to be involved.
- Please note that the *Appointment of Master's Thesis Committee* form ([available online](#)) must be completed at least one week prior to the proposal defense. All committee members must hold [graduate faculty appointments](#). One chair must hold regular graduate faculty membership in the student's program or department. Co-chairs should be listed on the committee form and on the title page.

### *Writing your Thesis Proposal*

- You will write a first draft of this proposal (of about 15 pages) in HIST 6693, but your thesis chair may have their own requirements and may ask you to substantially alter what you have done in class. When the final version is ready, it should clearly state the issues or questions you want to examine. The final draft of the thesis proposal also explains how you will go about researching the primary questions, identifying the kinds of sources to be used, and where the materials are located. This document should additionally situate your project in the appropriate historiography. When these standards are met and your thesis chair agrees that you are ready to defend the thesis proposal, you should give it to all the members of your thesis committee.
- To pursue the thesis option, you must successfully defend your thesis proposal in the semester in which you complete HIST 6693.

### *Proposal Defense*

- After your three (or four)-person thesis committee reads your proposal, you will meet with them for about an hour to discuss your project. This is your proposal defense. At the end of that hour your committee will decide whether your proposed project is viable. If you have been granted permission to write a thesis, you must submit the *Proposal Defense Report for Master's Thesis* form ([available online](#)) which allows you to report the outcome of a proposed master's thesis.
- You should check [DegreeWorks](#) a week after your proposal defense. If it doesn't indicate that you have passed your proposal defense, please inform the GPD.

### *Research and Writing.*

- You should register for 3 to 6 hours of thesis credit while you are researching and writing your thesis. You can take all 6 hours in one semester or split it over two semesters. Please note that the Graduate School requires your thesis adviser to register a grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory for each Hist 6999 class. (please see “[Grade of SP/UP \(Satisfactory Progress/ Unsatisfactory Progress\) Option](#)”)
- The research for a thesis project is not something you can do in a few weeks. It will take many months to find, read, digest and analyze your sources. Typically, the first step is gaining a deep familiarity with the secondary literature on your topic. Once you have this background, you will need to dig for primary sources. This might involve traveling to an archive and reading through months or years of a newspaper or periodical. You should remember that finding and getting your sources can take time, especially if you need to travel or order them through Interlibrary Loan.
- Writing the thesis is also a long process. Your ideas will develop and change as you write. You will definitely need to write multiple drafts of each chapter, so make sure to leave enough time to write, get feedback, rewrite, get more feedback and then perhaps rewrite again. Some people like to do most of their research and then start writing, others prefer to research and write each chapter in turn. However you choose to do it, you should – in consultation with the thesis committee chair – come up with a reasonable schedule very early on (right after your proposal defense if not before) that has due dates for first and second drafts of each chapter. Stick to your schedule.
- Locate more resources and [Get Research Help](#) at the J. Murray Atkins Library and writing help at the [Writing Resources Center](#)

### *The Thesis Defense*

- When your thesis is complete, you will “defend” it before your committee. You are responsible for setting the defense date and time with your committee. The university requires that you be registered during the semester in which you graduate. To graduate in a given semester, you must (a) apply to graduate by the deadline posted in the [university’s academic calendar](#) for the relevant semester using the [Application to Graduate petition](#). *You must also* defend your thesis and submit it by the deadline posted in the [university’s academic calendar](#) for the relevant semester.
- You should be sure to give your completed thesis to your committee members at least 14 days before the defense date (they have to read it, remember). Your defense will take approximately an hour. During the defense, your committee will ask you questions about your thesis and its larger significance. Although you might be required to make some minor revisions after the defense, you will know whether or not you passed immediately after it is over.
- To graduate, you and your thesis committee must sign three documents: All are [available online](#)
  1. Thesis title page (hard copy)
  2. *Final Defense Report for Master’s Thesis*: For reporting the outcome of a master’s thesis.
  3. *Master’s Thesis Submission and ETD Form*: This form should be submitted to the Graduate School when the student submits his/her thesis to ProQuest. Payment for the Submission Fee and optional Copyright must be made through the online [Payment Portal](#).



You can also submit a fourth form.

4. *Master's Thesis Embargo Request Form*: This form must be submitted and approved in order to withhold public release of a thesis. Students may request an embargo or delayed submission of their thesis or dissertation when a patent is pending or when submission of the work could jeopardize intellectual property. Future publication is not an acceptable reason for an embargo, with rare exceptions.
- It is your responsibility to ensure that all documents are completed. In addition, your thesis chair must inform the GPD of the grade to report for your thesis hours. Remind them to do this.

### *Submitting your Thesis*

- The Graduate School requires theses to be in a specific format and has various required procedures. For details, see <https://graduateschool.uncc.edu/current-students/thesis-and-dissertation>
- One of their requirements is that each student set up a formal preliminary review of their thesis by the Graduate School to address formatting issues. This review should occur as early as possible prior to the thesis defense but must be completed by the posted deadline, usually two to three weeks before the end of the semester.

### **Public History Thesis/Internship**

- The PH concentration requires two components: (i) a written thesis component (minimum of 40-45 pages); and (ii) a public history project in conjunction with their thesis topic or primary field of study. The content, length, and format of each thesis is determined in consultation with the student's committee.
- The Director of Public History (DPH) may or may not serve on student thesis or exam committees, but in either case, the DPH provides guidance on student projects at three stages of their development:
  1. Thesis proposal (at the conclusion of HIST 6693): students who are defending a thesis proposal must include a 250-word description of their project plans.
  2. At the conclusion of HIST 6694, and
  3. A brief assessment of projects provided to committees ahead of a student's final thesis defense. Students may develop a historic preservation project, an exhibit for a museum or historic site, a website or online resource for an organization, or a documentary film (though students are not limited to these choices). This project, which must be made available to the public, provides students with valuable experience in the practical application of scholarship, and prepares them to better serve the general public as they interpret that knowledge for a broad audience. For examples of past student projects, see <https://history.charlotte.edu/graduate-studies/public-history/projects>.
- Public History students are also required to complete a *public history internship* before graduation. This must be done after completing 12 hours of coursework, including Historiography and Methodology and one of the three required Public History core courses. Most full-time students opt to complete internships over the summer after their first year of coursework, but other arrangements can be made in consultation with the DPH and host institution. Students

work with the DPH, a faculty adviser on campus, and a professional mentor at the internship site to develop goals for the internship. Students write a 3-4 page proposal at the start of the internship, sign a contract, and complete 140 hours of work (paid or unpaid), culminating in a 10-page report at the internship's conclusion. Internship opportunities are posted for enrolled graduate students. Additionally, public history internships can be found online at a number of websites and students are encouraged to create their own internship opportunities.

- Oral history projects no longer require approval by the university's Institutional Review Board. See: <https://research.uncc.edu/departments/office-research-protections-and-integrity-orpi/human-subjects/guidelines-research>

However, they must involve informed consent and follow the principles and practices developed by the Oral History Association. See <https://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices-revised-2009/>

- For more details on both Public History thesis and internship requirements, see <https://history.charlotte.edu/graduate-studies/public-history> and <https://history.charlotte.edu/graduate-studies/public-history/internships-and-jobs>
- You should also communicate with the DPH.

## TIME TO DEGREE

- Full time students should be able to complete their program in two years. Taking longer to finish is fine, although you should keep a few things in mind when planning your program. First, the Graduate School requires that all coursework for an M.A. be completed within six years. Thus, coursework from more than six years before graduation must either be retaken or revalidated (this means you need to show you still have some familiarity with the material, like retaking an exam or writing a paper reviewing the literature). This includes courses taken as a post-baccalaureate student at UNC Charlotte and courses transferred from elsewhere. Second, you must be formally registered in the semester in which you graduate.

## LEAVES OF ABSENCE

- You must enroll in at least one course each fall and spring to remain in the graduate program, unless you have been granted a leave of absence. Leaves of absence are generally granted for a period of up to one year. To request a leave of absence, please complete the [Leave of Absence petition](#).
- If you do not apply for a leave of absence, or if more than 12 consecutive months elapse without you being enrolled, you will be required to reapply for admission to the Graduate School before you can register for classes again.
- The university requires that you be registered during the semester in which you graduate. You are required to apply to graduate early in that semester, before the deadline posted for that semester using the [Application to Graduate petition](#).
- For the deadline before which you must apply, please consult the [University's academic calendar](#) for that semester.

## GRIEVANCES

If you feel you have a serious grievance of any sort with a faculty member in the department, you can consult with the GPD and/or the Chair of the History Department. You also have access to the [Office of Civil Rights and Title IX](#)

## HOW DO I KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE DEPARTMENT?

We generally use email to communicate essential information to students. *We use your UNC Charlotte email account to communicate with you, as does the Graduate School.* You **MUST** make sure to check your UNC Charlotte email frequently (or set it to automatically forward messages to another account). If you wish to share information of a professional nature, like announcing meetings, conferences, and so on, please forward it to the GPD for posting on the GHA Google Group.

## THE GRADUATE HISTORY ASSOCIATION

All graduate students in program are expected to become members of the Graduate History Association (GHA). It is a professional obligation that you need to take seriously as an active member. Membership requires paying annual dues that allow participation in GHA sponsored events and the Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG). The GHA sponsors a number of professional development events throughout the year, including workshops, panel discussions, meetings with professionals, and social gatherings, with and without faculty members. You can learn more about the GHA @ <https://history.charlotte.edu/graduate-studies/graduate-history-association-gha>

The GHA's largest project each year is to organize a graduate student history conference, the Graduate History Forum. The Forum has been a proud tradition at UNC Charlotte for many years and has achieved wide recognition, attracting student presenters from across the country, and even the world. It is a mark of distinction for our students to run such a longstanding and well-regarded conference. At the Forum, UNC Charlotte students join with their peers from other institutions to present their original research in a collegial and constructive atmosphere. UNC Charlotte faculty serve as panel discussants, and it includes addresses by one professor from our department and a distinguished scholar from another institution. The Forum usually takes place early in the spring semester. All UNC Charlotte History M.A. students should plan on presenting a paper at the Forum at least once.

## GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Please see here for UNCC [Graduate Assistants information](#) (Human Resources)

Please also see: [Graduate School Funding Information](#) and [Policy on Graduate School compensation](#)

The History Department offers graduate assistantships that include both GTA (Graduate Teaching Assistant) and GRA (Graduate Research Assistant) positions. All graduate assistants are required to be registered as full-time students (a minimum of six credit hours per semester but often nine depending on the conditions of your contract). Thus, [GASP awards](#) require you to enroll in nine credits per semester. The specific terms of each graduate assistantship are noted in your contract. For questions and clarifications, please contact the GPD.

Graduate assistants must maintain a GPA of at least 3.0. Graduate assistants cannot take additional paid employment while holding assistantships. All graduate assistants in the department are required to be members of the GHA and are expected to take part in its meetings and events.

Most assistantships are awarded during the admission process for fall applicants who apply by the deadline (usually) of 1 March. Assistantships are generally awarded for two academic years (assuming satisfactory academic and professional work), although we will occasionally have a vacancy, in which case we will issue a call for applications from current students.

Assistantships occasionally become available in other units on campus. To search for them and for other employment, go to <https://hireaniner.uncc.edu/>

The responsibilities of graduate assistants vary according to the needs of the faculty member to whom they are assigned. Generally, a GTA will be expected to attend all class sessions and have excellent mastery of the course material, hold office hours and advise students on their coursework, assist with grading quizzes, papers and exams, and lead discussion sessions or exam preparation workshops. Please also consult the department's [Best Practices for GTAs](#).