



**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**

GUIDE TO GRADUATE STUDY
FOR STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A HISTORY DEPARTMENT
GRADUATE PROGRAM

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Introduction

Welcome to graduate study in the Department of History at the University of Iowa. This handbook describes all of the departmental requirements for our graduate degrees. It also covers, in more or less detail, how the Department works, from a brief description of the annual academic cycle of graduate student deadlines to advice on how to write a dissertation prospectus. There will, of course, be gaps, so our very first advice to you is clear—when you have *any* questions about procedures, decisions, due dates or protocol, please ask the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) for information and clarification. Be sure also to familiarize yourself with the departmental website at <http://clas.uiowa.edu/history/>.

You will find places in this handbook where we ask you to keep the History Department Office staff and the DGS informed about your choices of advisors, plans of study, addresses and situations that may affect progress in your program. Please help us to be able to help you, by keeping lines of communication open. (Frequent announcements to graduate students are made through the official listserv (ghs-official@list.uiowa.edu) that is managed by the Graduate History Society.) Read the memos and announcements you get; respond when we ask you to get back to us if the request applies to your case. With nearly 75 graduate students registered at any one time, it can be difficult to keep everyone's unique project and program in mind, especially as the position of DGS rotates through the faculty every three years or so.

A new DGS means a new person who needs to learn about your file. Because we try to be as flexible as we can about departmental guidelines (we hesitate to call them rules!), students often have special arrangements for something or other—an "understanding" about a prospectus date, a promise for a deferral on a Graduate Assistant(GA) position—that can simply get forgotten. If we ask you to "put it in writing" it is not out of a passion for bureaucracy and legalism, but so that a document goes into your employment or academic file to create a paper memory. If you take the responsibility to write something down that perhaps the DGS "should" remember or do, then you can help us all do a better job at making the formal details of your academic life at the University of Iowa run smoothly—and then you can concentrate on what you are really here for: a first-class graduate education in History.

Michaela Hoenicke Moore
Director of Graduate Studies

Common terms and abbreviations

DEO	Departmental Executive Officer [a.k.a. the Chair]
DGS	Director of Graduate Studies [the DGS is also the assistant DEO of the Department and fills in for him or her when necessary]
GHS	Graduate History Society to which all graduate students are eligible to belong
COGS	The union to which all graduate instructors and research assistants are eligible to belong if employed more than one-quarter time by the university (e.g. an average of 10 hours per week for the position)
Regular faculty	Tenured or tenure-track professors and lecturers. All regular faculty in History are members of the Graduate faculty.
3000-4999 level	Upper division undergraduate courses that count towards credit for graduate degrees
6000-7999 level	Courses designed for graduate students only (with occasional undergraduate majors)
Seminar	In general, a graduate seminar is a course for which the student must produce a substantial research paper.
Readings	In general, a graduate readings course concentrates on intense reading in a more or less broadly defined area of history. Such courses may or may not require research papers.
MA Terminal	A student admitted to the graduate program to complete a Master's degree only.
Doctoral Student	A student in the PhD track that has not yet passed the comprehensive exams. This student may or may not already have a Master's Degree. As of 2018, those without a master's degree (formerly known as MA/PhD track) will complete the course requirements and a qualifying exam before progressing but will not be awarded a formal master's degree.
Doctoral Candidate	Students who have successfully passed the comprehensive exams, also known as post-comp.

University of Iowa Nondiscrimination Statement

The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination in employment, educational programs, and activities on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual. The university also affirms its commitment to providing equal opportunities and equal access to university facilities. For additional information on nondiscrimination policies, contact the Director, [Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity](#), the University of Iowa, 202 Jessup Hall, Iowa City, IA 52242-1316, 319-335-0705 (voice), 319-335-0697 (TDD), diversity@uiowa.edu.

Department of History Diversity Statement

The History Department recognizes the benefits of a diverse environment and a workplace and classroom experience free of discrimination, harassment, and inadvertent exclusionary practices. The Department is committed to the maintenance of an atmosphere that is welcoming and accepting of faculty, staff, and graduate as well as undergraduate students of all backgrounds, including but not limited to race, national origin, color, creed, religion, sex, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or associational preference. By recognizing that confronting harassment, discrimination, and inadvertent exclusionary practices cannot be left to the members of underrepresented groups alone, it commits itself to taking proactive measures to discover and alleviate these practices. It provides a positive environment for members to report their experiences and to seek positive actions.

Handbook Disclaimer

The DGS tries to be as accurate as possible when composing and revising the Graduate Student Handbook. Major changes to procedures, policies, and even the "normal" guidelines must be approved by the faculty at a Department meeting. (Changes to Graduate College regulations are a great deal more formal and get publicized extensively.) As circumstances change, so do the departmental procedures, policies and guidelines. What is written here as descriptive comments on how the Department goes about its daily business **may change at any time**. Please understand this flexibility ensures the Department can act quickly and responsibly to changes in the profession, in the discipline, and in administrative re-interpretations of University procedures and policies. We inform students as soon, and as appropriately as we can about such changes, most of which are quite minor (a new form here, a different office there), but may not catch everyone at just the right moment. If any student, faculty member or staff person knows of errors or changes that need to be incorporated in future printings of this handbook, the DGS would very much appreciate a note about them.

Starting Graduate Studies at The University of Iowa

After being admitted to the graduate program in the spring or early summer, the new student's next formal step is registering for fall semester courses. Some students do this over the summer. If a student wants to take an introductory or intermediate level undergraduate foreign language class, early enrollment is recommended because sections of these can fill up during undergraduate registration. In the case of graduate history courses, early registration can help us to know which courses will meet enrollment minimums and thus be safe from cancellation. Personal reasons—such as the stress of moving to Iowa City or wanting to arrange childcare around a class schedule—can also make registering during the summer a good idea. It is quite common, nevertheless, for new students to wait until the end of August to register on campus. Graduate and 3000-4999 level classes rarely make their maximum enrollments, and even when they do professors regularly admit graduate students.

How to Register

To register for courses, a student needs to be electronically authorized to register by the DGS or an authorized History Department staff member.

Before registering, students should consult this handbook to learn what is required of entering students, which courses count as graduate credit, and the like; students then use the online *Schedule of Courses* to see what classes are offered that might fit their interests or needs. Keep in mind that course offerings can and do change after the *Schedule of Courses* is drafted. The registration system will list the current status of a course (closed, cancelled, open, or pending).

You can reach the registration system by typing <https://myui.uiowa.edu>. At the login page, you will enter your HAWKID and password. If you do not have a HAWKID and password, you will need to set them up here: <http://hawkid.uiowa.edu/>. You will also be assigned a random University ID that can be used during the registration process. The choosing of courses is fairly straightforward. For a listing of graduate classes in History, enter **HIST for the Department code**, and the course numbers will come up in numerical order for upper level undergraduate (including 3000-4999 level) and graduate (6000-7999) courses in History.

Students who do not register during the summer can complete their registrations on-campus in late August. Although it is reasonable for new students to wait to register until they arrive to campus, when done by August 1, tuition scholarships can be processed earlier. There is a **late fee** imposed on those who register after the start of classes.

HIST:6001, First-Year Graduate Colloquium

All new students (both MA Terminal and Doctoral Students) in their first year of the program take *HIST:6001:0001*, three-credit pass/fail Graduate Colloquium. Although the specific format for the colloquium may change from year to year, students will have an opportunity to get acquainted with some of the faculty and their areas of research and teaching. Directors of various library and archival programs and advanced graduate students also give presentations. Most importantly, students draft their own plans of study in order to prepare them for the various stages of their degrees, and they develop plans to begin research during their second semester.

Getting an academic advisor

Many students are assigned an academic advisor at the point of admission. For those who begin the program without an academic advisor, the DGS serves as the academic advisor for the first few weeks. Because the DGS is not an expert in all fields of history, it is important that students find an advisor in their major area of historical interest. Sometimes the ideal faculty person is away from Iowa City on a research grant or fellowship. In such cases, the student could ask a professor in the same division of history (see the section on divisions of history later in this handbook), or even the professor in the student's second area of interest, to serve as an advisor while the other is unavailable. The DGS continues to advise students until the student has developed an advising relationship with another faculty person and, if necessary for signatures or immediate advice, serves all graduate students when their advisors are away or ill.

Please inform the DGS when an academic advisor has been chosen and has agreed to supervise you on either an on-going or temporary basis. Sometimes the DGS needs to contact an advisor or all the students of an advisor on short notice.

Once a student has an academic advisor, they must discuss a draft plan of study (prepared in the Colloquium) with the advisor and make any changes that seem necessary. By the time of the meeting of the student's advisory committee (see below), the student must give the committee, the DGS, and the advisor a revised plan of study that will go into the student's academic file for consultation and revision during the rest of the program. The same form serves for the "draft" and "revised" versions; pick up a clean copy at any time from the History Department office or the DGS. If a student changes advisors, then the new advisor should be provided a copy of the most recent version of the plan of study.

Transfer Credits

This section applies specifically to students who have taken graduate courses in History at another university as part of a degree program that was not completed or who have been admitted to the UI doctoral program with a MA degree from another institution. These students often need or want credits transferred from elsewhere to apply to their UI degree requirements.

All new students automatically have the transcripts submitted as part of the application process analyzed by the Office of Graduate Admissions which specializes in interpreting University records from around the world. The staff in that office makes an official determination of the amount of graduate credit, in terms of credit hours, that are transferable to the University of Iowa from each institution a student has attended. It is this number that appears on the student's first UI transcript, which is posted online after the first semester of classes.

Students (and faculty) often assume that the number of transferable credits that appears on this transcript is the number that actually count towards a degree in History from the University of Iowa. **This assumption is not necessarily correct!** As the *Manual of Rules and Regulations of the Graduate College* (<https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/manual-part-1-section-v-credits>) states explicitly, "credit for these courses toward an advanced degree at Iowa must have the approval of the major department and the dean of the Graduate College". Without special permission, for example, credits more than ten years old do not count. Except for certain arrangements for "extramural credit", students entering the MA program **must** complete 24 of the 30 required credit hours at the University of Iowa. The Graduate College further stipulates a student **must** take at least 18 credit hours at the University of Iowa to complete the residency requirement for the doctoral degree. The History Department has determined that students entering with an MA from another University may **transfer a maximum of 30 credit hours** from that MA work, no matter how many other graduate credits have been considered acceptable graduate credit by the UI transcript service.

Early in the first semester at the University of Iowa, students wanting transfer credits to apply towards the UI degree must meet with the DGS and go through the transcripts carefully. There are two issues here: graduate credit in general, and distribution requirements for students entering the doctoral program with an MA from another institution. Graduate credit in general is usually easily dealt with; the Department allows no more than 30 credit hours from the MA degree to count towards the 72 credit hours required for the PhD distribution requirements. We require seven 6000-7999 level courses for the PhD: two seminars and five readings classes. Students who complete the MA at Iowa may use 6000-7999 level courses taken during the MA degree to count towards those distribution requirements. It is only fair, then, we allow new doctoral students to have their MA courses applied towards the distribution requirements.

But which courses at other universities are equivalent to the Department's graduate level readings classes and seminars? We need to make sure the courses were designed for graduate students, not for upper level undergraduates, and they were the equivalent of 3 or 4 credit hours. We sometimes ask the student for copies of course syllabi and research papers to decide about the course level and type, whether most like a "readings" course or "seminar." The Department has decided we **normally** allow no more than two transfer courses to count for the 6000-7999 level distribution requirements: we wish to ensure you take an adequate number of courses with Iowa faculty to gain the education in history for which you joined our program. Finally, the Department does **not** allow a student to count a graduate course in historiography (or historical methods, philosophy of history) at a previous university towards the hour requirements for the PhD degree.

If there are compelling reasons to make exceptions to our guidelines, the student needs to present these to the DGS, who may solicit the advice of others in the Department or bring the request to a faculty meeting for general discussion.

After consultation with the student, and others as needed, the DGS writes a statement about the transfer credit hours and distribution requirements for the student's file, with copies to the transfer credit analysis staff and the Graduate College. This assessment, then, not the number of hours appearing on the student's transcript, is what matters when documenting the student's plan of study.

Degree Requirements

Students are admitted to graduate work in the Department of History in one of two programs: the MA Terminal or the PhD program. After some general points that apply to both degree programs, the sections below lay out in detail the Department and Graduate College requirements for each degree. The complete list of Graduate College regulations is given in the General Catalog and in the Graduate College Guide.

Minimum Grade Point Averages

Please note that students must maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) in their graduate work per the rules of the Graduate College. For MA and PhD students, the minimum GPA is 3.0. If a student falls below these minimums after taking 8 credit hours, then they are put on probation. If the student does not raise their GPA to at or above the minimum level after a further 8 credit hours, then they are dismissed from the program. Students on probation who have not taken 8 more credit hours (but who *have* completed the required number of hours for the degree) are not allowed to graduate. Suppose, for example, a student already has 72 credit hours, but signs up for two more 3 or 4 credit hour courses because they are important for their work. Suppose further this student gets busy on the dissertation, does not complete these courses during the semester, requests extensions (for which the "I" for "Incomplete" is sent to the Registrar) and then forgets to finish the work. After a year, those "Incompletes" turn to "F" grades, lowering the student's GPA to less than 3.00. The student may complete all the requirements for the degree, including a brilliant dissertation, all the while being on probation. At the end, the student will not be allowed to graduate until the GPA is above 3.00.

Academic Registration Requirement Policy

Student registration should reflect accurately the amount and kind of work undertaken in the Graduate College. The PhD is granted primarily on the basis of achievement, and engagement with one's discipline is an important part of achieving quality in a dissertation. The purpose of the registration requirement is to promote a high level of intellectual and scholarly activity at The University of Iowa. These requirements foster intensive, concentrated engagement with the faculty members and graduate students in a student's program.

- *Master's degree.* Of the minimum 30 credit hours required for the degree, at least 24 semester hours must be completed while enrolled at The University of Iowa after admission to a graduate department/program.
- *Doctoral programs.* Will contain a minimum of 72 semester hours of graduate work. Of those 72 semester hours, the Graduate College requires at least 39 must be earned while registered at The University of Iowa. The History Department requires all PhD students take a minimum of 42 of the 72 credit hours needed at the University of Iowa. In addition to the above requirements, the department also requires a student to enroll and complete two semesters of at least 9 credit hours OR three semesters of at least 6 credit hours after the first 21 credit hours are complete.

The Divisions of History

The History Department requires that each student's program concentrate in three "divisions of history" for the courses taken for a MA Terminal. The PhD student needs courses in only two "divisions of history." The doctoral student without a master's degree chooses one division for a major area of study for course work and to meet the master's essay requirements, and a different division for a second area of study. During the PhD program a student *may* work in three distinct divisions and, in some cases, *must* have three divisions. The crucial guideline here is that a student may not have one faculty person supervise two different fields.

For one of the divisions—the major area of study—the doctoral student normally develops specific **fields** of expertise for the comprehensive examinations. The third comprehensive exam **field** is in the second division of history. Please note that a field is a subset of a division, and that "field" only applies to doctoral comprehensive examinations, not to MA course requirements.

For the purposes of these requirements, the Department considers the following to be the general "divisions of history." The list of examples of fields are just that—**examples** of fields that students have prepared. In consultation with each field advisor, students tailor their fields to their plans for their dissertations and future teaching areas. **Please understand these examples are not fixed topics within the divisions.**

DIVISIONS**EXAMPLES OF FIELDS IN DIVISIONS****I. Medieval Europe:**

Medieval Church History
 Medieval Kingship
 Barbarian / Tribal Europe
 Anglo Saxon Britain
 Medieval Ireland
 Merovingian / Carolingian Gaul
 Rome and Papacy
 Medieval Legal History: Royal, Roman, Canon law
 Medievalism & Medieval Studies: Renaissance through Modern
 Reading & Interpretation / Bible in the Middle Ages
 Intellectual History (1100-1500)
 Medieval (and Early Modern) Science
 History of the Book in the Middle Ages
 Medieval Latin Paleography and Codicology
 Medieval Universities
 Medieval Philosophy
 Women and Gender 1000-1500

II. Modern Europe:

Modern Europe
 Modern France
 Modern Germany
 Modern Britain, including the Empire
 British Imperial History
 Modern Britain and India
 Women/Gender/Sexuality in Modern Europe
 Human Rights in Modern European History
 Race and Empire
 Theory and History of Culture
 Colonialism and Imperialism in the Modern World
 Religion in the Modern World

III. United States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Economic Political Labor Business Diplomatic and Transnational American Revolution Environmental Public History and Public Memory Latina/o Borderlands Civil War and Reconstruction Comparative Slavery African Diaspora Women and Gender Disability American Indian Federal Indian Law and Policy
IV. Latin America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colonial Latin America Colonial Latin America and the Atlantic World Modern Latin America Comparative borderlands in Latin America Comparative migration/immigration in Latin America US-Latin American relations Women and gender
V. East Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of Pre-modern China, 1260-Mid-Qing History of Modern China, Mid-Qing to present Social History of China, 1600-present Economic History of China, 1600-present Modern Korea Imperialism/Colonialism Nationalism Borderlands/Migration/Travel/Empire
VI. South Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social and Economic History of Colonial India, 1750-1947 Health and Environmental History of Modern India, 1750-present Food and Famine in South Asia, 1800-present
VII. Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modern North Africa Sub-Saharan Africa (may include one of more of the following periods:, Precolonial, Colonial, Post-colonial) East Africa (may include Indian Ocean) Social History of Sub-Saharan Africa Environmental History of Sub-Saharan Africa
VIII. Middle East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modern Middle East
IX. World/Global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International and Global History Slavery Borderlands, Migration and Diaspora Nationalism Imperialism/Colonialism History of Global Health Comparative/Transnational Labor History Comparative/Transnational Social and Economic History Comparative/Transnational Gender and Sexuality

X. Other	Oral History History and Memory History of Public Health History of Medicine Public History Human Rights <i>Any field in another UI department</i>
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We reserve Division X, "Other," for fields that cut across Divisions I-IX in a significant manner. Such fields are largely international and comparative in scope. It also includes fields that are devised and directed by a faculty member in another department or program, such as Religion, French, Anthropology, Art History, Women's Studies, American Studies, African American Studies (etc.). A field developed under "Other" must not concentrate on material that is limited to a student's primary division if that student is already doing two fields in that division. For example, it would not be consistent with our goal of providing students with national and chronological breadth if they were to have two fields in U.S. History (say American Social History and US 20th Century) and then propose a field with a faculty person in American Studies on 20th Century American Culture. At least half the readings must be outside the student's main division. **No more than one field can be constructed in Division X.**

A history student wishing to pursue a field in "Other" must write a short description of the field, discuss the description with the faculty person who will supervise it, and clear the proposal with the primary advisor and the DGS **before** proceeding with the meeting to define the comprehensive fields *and* the form of the examinations. A copy of the description needs to be placed in the student's file for future reference.

Degrees and Divisions – at a glance

MA Terminal	Courses in three divisions.
PhD	Three comprehensive fields in at least two divisions. While completing master's degree requirements a doctoral student should take courses in two divisions. No faculty member can supervise more than one field, which means that some students must have three fields in three different divisions.

Leaves of Absence

The Department of History and Graduate College do not require continuous registration of its degree candidates, except for those who are post-comps, who must register for at least 0 credits each fall and spring semester until they have received the PhD. Yet the Graduate College does require that **no more than a calendar year of non-registration elapse** before students are dropped from the program. Once dropped, a student can be readmitted only through an application process. The Department may require the student to submit a formal application and all relevant materials to the Department and Graduate College by the application due dates. We are bound to apply the same standards to those who reapply as we do to new applicants to the program, although we do not grant a new period of eligibility for major aid. Given that the number and quality of applicants vary over time, those who have dropped out should not expect to be readmitted automatically.

Dropping out, especially in cases where students simply seem to disappear, is more drastic than taking a leave of absence. When a student has a significant medical problem, a temporary change in personal circumstances, or important professional reasons to suspend graduate studies, then a leave of absence can usually be worked out. It is particularly vital for a student who is having a problem that is interfering with work to such a degree that very little progress can be made during a semester or a year to see the DGS **as soon as possible**. Delaying out of embarrassment for being human can compound the problem: incompletes that turn to Fs, poor performance as a TA, inability to take the comps or finish the prospectus can have consequences that are difficult to make up for, even with retrospective sympathy and understanding from the faculty. There are many resources on campus and in Iowa City for help during troubled times, and we encourage students to use them well before abandoning a degree program seems to be the only option.

The Advisory Committee

All funded graduate students have an advisory committee. In the first year, the committee consists of the DGS, advisor, and a third member chosen by the student. In subsequent years, the committee consists of the advisor and two other faculty members who supervise the student's second and third exam fields. New doctoral students must meet with their Advisory Committees by the end of their second semester. Ongoing doctoral students must meet with their Advisory Committee by the end of February until they have defended their prospectus. The Advisory Committee will report on its meeting in a form provided by the Departmental Administrator.

Students must submit the names of their committee members to the Departmental Administrator by November 1 in their first semester and update this list no later than November 1 in subsequent years.

MA Terminal

This plan is for students who only want the MA and have not applied to be considered as potential doctoral candidates. MA Terminal students come for a variety of reasons, from professional enhancement to personal enrichment. Due to the constraints on University resources, the Department is not able to offer MA Terminal students any major aid (graduate research assistantships, graduate instructorships—see below). Hence our MA Terminal program attracts only a few truly dedicated people each year, many of whom bring a rich variety of life experiences to our graduate courses.

If an MA Terminal student changes their mind about future graduate work in History at the University of Iowa, they must reapply to the Graduate College and Department's admissions committee for PhD status. During this process, the student's application is considered with those of all the people applying for admission to our PhD program.

The MA Terminal is usually a **course work** and **examination** degree. It does not require a major research essay/thesis. A student may opt to complete the master's to PhD requirement, which includes a master's essay, in consultation with the DGS, as long as there is a faculty member willing to supervise the essay. The MA in this case is still considered to be a terminal degree (i.e. it does not lead to entry into the PhD program).

Courses and Credits

A new student should plan the course of study as early as possible in the first semester at the University of Iowa, consulting initially with the DGS and then in subsequent semesters with a faculty person who has agreed to serve as an advisor. The choice of courses must fulfill these requirements:

1. MA Terminal students are expected to take HIST:6001, the first year 3 credit Graduate Colloquium; unless the DGS agrees that it isn't necessary for the student's introduction to the Department.
2. Each student must complete 30 credit hours in classes listed at the 3000-4999 level (upper level undergraduate courses) or above. Courses in the 6000-7999 are graduate level courses. The Graduate College requires that 24 of the 30 credits be taken in residence at the University of Iowa.
3. Of the required 30 credit hours, at **least 24** must be taken in the History Department at the 3000-4999 level or above. This requirement applies even if a student decides to select a division (under rule 5 below) in a related department.
4. The course work in history must include **at least 12 credit** hours at the 3000-4999 level or above in one division of history, including at least one readings course or seminar at the 6000-7999 level. This will constitute the candidate's *major division of study*.
5. The student's program must include at least 6 credit hours in *each* of two other divisions in history (or 6 hours in one other division in history and 6 hours in a related department). These 12 hours must include at least one 6000-7999 level readings course or seminar in history. Thus, an MA Terminal

student might have “US History” as a major division, “Africa” as a second division and “Political Science” as a third; the 6000-7999 level course must be in African history in this case. The MA Terminal student may count one of the Department’s courses on theories of history (“History Workshop: Theory and Interpretation,” “Historiography,” or “Philosophy of History”) as the 6000-7999 level course in the second (or third) division, even if the course contents do not relate directly to the division’s regional or chronological period.

6. The student must take a written and oral examination based on the course work in the **major** division after completing these requirements (or in the semester in which completion is expected). The exam is to be administered by **three** regular faculty members, including **at least two members of the Department**. In the event of an unsatisfactory performance, the examiners may allow one re-examination. After two failures the candidate will be excluded from further graduate work in the Department of History.

If an MA Terminal student chooses to complete a master’s essay instead of taking the recommended written and oral exam, the guidelines on page 12-13 of this guide will be followed.

Getting the MA Terminal Degree: The Paper Trail

In order to receive the MA degree, the student—through the Department’s administrative office—must complete and submit various forms. First, the student completes the “Application for Degree” on <https://myui.uiowa.edu> in the first month of the semester in which the student wants to graduate. Second, the student works with the Graduate Program Coordinator to complete a “Non-doctoral Plan of Study” form early in the semester in which the degree requirements are to be met. This form is required by the Graduate College and shows that the credit hour requirements have been satisfied. The student’s faculty advisor and the DGS must sign this form. At this point, the DGS usually reviews the student’s file again to make sure that all of the Department’s requirements (division credits, etc.) have been fulfilled. The Graduate Program Coordinator will forward this form, with the “Request for Final Examination,” to the Graduate College once the examination is scheduled. The “Plan of Study” and the “Request for Final Examination” must be sent to the Graduate College at least **two weeks** before the written examination is to be held.

At the oral examination, which is based upon a review of the written exam, the faculty advisor and committee members must complete the “Report of Final Examination: Advanced Degree” form. This is another Graduate College form, and it is prepared by the Graduate Program Coordinator prior to the examination. It is very important to have this form completed at the oral examination while all the committee members are in attendance. Once this form is forwarded to the Graduate College—assuming that the student has passed—the MA degree can be awarded.

Doctoral Students without a Master’s Degree (for individuals starting after 2018-19 academic year; formerly known as MA/PhD)

This program is for those who wish to obtain a PhD degree but have not yet earned an MA degree. The track requires a substantial research essay (but not a formal MA thesis). This essay should give the graduate student and the Department alike an indication of the candidate’s ability to do historical research, to analyze historical materials, and to write effective historical arguments. As early as possible in the first semester of MA graduate study, the student should consult with a member of the faculty who agrees to supervise the essay and, in general, to act as the student’s primary advisor during this part of the program.

Here are the formal course and essay requirements for the MA portion of the PhD program:

Courses and Credit hours

1. Students are required to take the following courses. The first two must be completed before finalizing the—research essay; the third must be completed for the PhD
 - a. HIST:6001, First-Year Graduate Colloquium

- b. HIST:6002, History Research Methods
 - c. HIST:6003, History Theory and Interpretation
2. Each student must complete 30 credit hours in classes listed at the 3000-4999 level (upper level undergraduate courses) or above. Courses in the 6000-7999 are graduate level courses. The Graduate College requires 24 of the 30 credits be taken in residence at the University of Iowa.
 3. The student must complete at least 24 of the 30 required credit hours of course work in the History Department at the 3000-level and above.
 4. Of the 24 credit hours of coursework in the History Department, the student must take at least two courses (3 or 4 credit hours each) at the 6000-7999 level. At least one of the 6000-7999 level courses must be a seminar. The student must take a 6000-7999 level course in each of the first two semesters of residence. We strongly recommend that students cover as much of their coursework as possible with 6000-7999 level courses.
 5. The student must select one division in history to be the major division of study. At least 12 credit hours must be completed in this division, with 3 or 4 of those hours in a 6000-7999 level class. The research essay should be on a topic within this division.
 6. The candidate must earn at least 6 credit hours—including either a seminar or a readings course—in a different division of history. This becomes the student's second division of study.

The Research Essay:

The research essay must be on a topic in the student's major division of study. The research topic normally grows out of work done in the second semester of study in a 6000-7999 level seminar or readings course in the student's major division of study, an "open topic" writing seminar HIST:7192, or when there is no suitable graduate course being offered, out of work in a directed Individual Study HIST:7190 arranged with a faculty member (who usually becomes the essay supervisor) in place of a seminar. This essay must be prepared under the close scrutiny of a faculty supervisor. It must draw on primary sources (archival and/or printed) in the language of study, demonstrate the ability of the student to locate, evaluate and use primary sources, and develop a clear, sustained argument. The research essay should be 25-35 pages in length.

The deadline for defending the research essay is the second week of the fourth semester of study. The project should not involve research materials or languages that make completion on this schedule unrealistic. This term may be extended only in exceptional cases of severe personal emergency. Such extensions are made by the advisor and the DGS upon a written request by the student. This should be submitted by the first day of classes of the fourth semester outlining the reasons for the extension and making a commitment to an appropriate defense date during the fourth semester. A student who does not complete these requirements in a timely fashion can face serious consequences, including not being approved for renewal of aid beyond the fourth semester and not being continued in the PhD program.

In order to maintain this schedule, students should begin planning their research essay during the first semester, in the First-Year Graduate Colloquium HIST:6001 and in consultation with their advisors. During their second semester, students should register for a 6000-7999 level seminar in their field of specialization or the "open topic" writing seminar HIST:7192.

The Research Essay Qualifying Exam:

Once completed, two faculty members—in addition to the essay supervisor—read and appraise the essay. The student chooses the essay committee in consultation with the faculty supervisor. This committee must have **at least two members of the regular faculty of the History Department. The third reader may, if appropriate, come from the regular faculty of another department, or non-tenure track professor in history. A visiting faculty member or lecturer may be on the committee with the approval of the Graduate College.** (Please see the section on "Continuation in the PhD program" below.) The committee examines the candidate orally over the essay and, in light of all the candidate's work, decides whether to pass

the candidate. If a candidate fails the oral examination, the examiners may allow one re-examination. After two failures the student is excluded from further graduate work in the Department of History.

Process for scheduling the oral qualifying exam

The Graduate Program Coordinator must complete and submit various forms to the Graduate College. A "Non-doctoral Plan of Study" form is completed early in the semester in which the student will defend the research essay, to review and confirm course and credit hour requirements have been satisfied. The form is signed by the student's faculty advisor and the DGS. The Graduate Program Coordinator will forward this form, with the "Request for Final Examination: Advanced Degree," to the Graduate College once the oral exam is scheduled and **at least two weeks before** the oral exam is to be held.

At the oral examination, the faculty advisor and committee members must sign the "Report of Final Examination: Advanced Degree" form. The Graduate Program Coordinator will send the form to the Graduate College if the student has passed.

Continuation in the doctoral program (PhD track)

The committee usually makes the decision about recommending a student be continued in the doctoral program at the time of the oral examination. We require this important decision be made by three regular faculty members of the department. Continuation in the doctoral program does not automatically follow a positive decision on the oral exam. The faculty must perceive the student as having the potential and discipline to complete a PhD dissertation, and a member of the faculty must be willing to serve as the student's doctoral supervisor. There are three possible outcomes at the oral exam in regards to recommending continuation in the program, one of which is to be noted on the Department's "Report of Qualifying Exam Committee":

1. Decision to **recommend continuation in the PhD track** at that moment. If three regular faculty members are present, one of whom will be the student's supervisor, and they all agree that the student is ready; a recommendation to admit the student goes forward to the History Department faculty at this time. If a faculty member has passed the essay without requiring revisions and has agreed to be the student's doctoral supervisor, but is out of Iowa City for an extended period, then a recommendation to admit can be made with the supervisor absent if the three faculty members present agree.
2. Decision to **recommend the student not be continued in the PhD track**. If the decision is negative, a "Change of Status" form will be submitted online by the Graduate Program Coordinator to change the program of study from the PhD program to the terminal MA program. Any paid graduate assistantship would be terminated at the end of the academic session.
 - a. If the student fails the oral qualifying exam, the decision to recommend termination of the student's program can be deferred to a second examination, or decided at this point.
 - b. If the student has written an adequate research essay but, in the judgment of the faculty members, will not be able to produce the high level work required for the PhD degree, the committee may grant the terminal MA degree but recommend the student not be continued in the program.

The recommendation of the examining committee about the student's continuation in the doctoral program is forwarded by the DGS, through consultation with other members of the department and the DEO as appropriate. If a question remains about the appropriateness of the admission, the case is discussed at the next faculty meeting. The student will be kept informed of the status at every step of the process. Continuation in the PhD track begins when the DGS signs off on the recommendation. The next stage of the student's training begins.

Doctor of Philosophy

The PhD is the highest academic degree. Unlike the master's program, which is still primarily course based, the doctoral degree requires the student to produce an extensive piece of original research, coherently presented and meticulously argued. We expect our doctoral students to write dissertations that lead directly to articles published in peer-reviewed journals or to publication as full-length books. We also expect our doctoral students to teach within the department and, in the process, to become effective and stimulating instructors of college undergraduates.

The doctoral degree has three major requirements that lead up to the dissertation itself: course work, comprehensive examinations and the dissertation prospectus. At the very end, when the dissertation is finished, lies the PhD oral examination, or thesis defense. The Graduate College regulates the number of credit hours required for graduate degrees, sets the basic requirements for the doctoral comprehensive exams, and oversees the final thesis defense. The Department thus specifies its requirements for courses and for the comprehensive exams under the umbrella of the Graduate College's rules. The prospectus, on the other hand, is a departmental requirement and hence—while equally important to our doctoral program—tends to be administered a bit less formally.

The following sections describe each of these requirements in turn.

Courses and Credit hours

1. **Total number of credit hours.** According to the Graduate College rules, a doctoral student must complete at least 72 hours of graduate level credits. This number includes credits from graduate work done in a master's program. With a UI MA (30 credits), the PhD student needs to finish 42 more credit hours in courses at the 3000-4999 level or above in order to graduate. Students who enter with an MA or non-degree graduate course work from another university need to consult the section on "Transfer Hours" above.
2. **Residency requirement.** The History Department requires that doctoral students be in residence at the University of Iowa, completing their **first 21 credit hours**, followed by two semesters of at least 9 credit hours OR three semesters of at least 6 credit hours. Students with at least a one-third time graduate assistantship may prefer the second option (three 6-credit hour semesters).
3. **Distribution requirements.** Of the 72 hours needed for the PhD degree, the Department requires all students take:
 - a. HIST:6001, the First-Year Graduate Colloquium (3 credit hour) during the first fall semester of study at the University of Iowa. This course introduces graduate students to the Department and its faculty.
 - b. HIST:6002, History Research Methods
 - c. HIST:6003, History Theory and Interpretation
 - d. An additional 7 courses (of 3 or 4 credit hours each) at the 6000-7999 level in the History Department. Of these courses, at least **two** should be research seminars and **five** should be readings courses. Exceptions to the requirement of two research seminars may be made only in fields where there are few seminar offerings, and then only with the permission of the major advisor.
 - e. Students with a MA from another university must take a research seminar within their first two semesters in residence.

The Department does not require a certain number of courses be taken in different divisions at the PhD level. But it is a very good idea for each student to know their major division of study, and to plan for one or two fields of study in that division. The student should also have a second and, if appropriate, third, division in mind as fields for the comprehensive examinations. Normally, students who enter the department without an MA degree continue on in the two divisions they chose for the MA requirements. Students who enter with an MA from another University may not have had as much graduate level work in a second division, and so may need to consider these requirements from the very start of their doctoral work with us—see the section on the comprehensive examinations below.

4. **Substitutions.** If an appropriate seminar or readings course is not available for a student in a particular field, then students should first see whether a closely related or general course (such as the “open topic” writing seminar) may be appropriate. The course instructor, student, and advisor may agree on special adaptations to the course (including expectations for readings, written assignments, and attendance) to make the course helpful for the student’s progress toward degree. In addition to aiding the student, this option helps the department maintain enrollment in graduate level classes, resulting in fewer cancellations.

If such arrangements are impossible, then an individual study course HIST:7190 of 3 or 4 credit hours may be substituted. Such arrangements, however, **must** be approved by the student’s advisor and the DGS, preferably early in the semester when the individual study is being done. The Department has a “Substitution” form that needs to be filled out for each course substitution, and the form must be signed by the advisor, the individual study professor, and the DGS. While we do not have a limit on the number of seminars and readings courses that a student can substitute with individual studies, these should be kept to a minimum.

Students may also receive credit for up to two upper level undergraduate courses (3000-5999). In order to receive graduate credit (and have such courses count as a readings course), the student must make special arrangements with the course instructor to do additional readings and writing assignments to bring the course up to the level of a graduate course.

5. **The supervisor’s requirements.** A supervisor may, and in many cases will, require a doctoral student to demonstrate knowledge and skills necessary for dissertation level work. Such expectations may require the student to take extra courses, attend workshops, or study independently. The student and the supervisor should agree on these supplementary requirements as early as possible in the student’s relationship with the supervisor. Some of these expectations have included:
 - a. A reading knowledge of one or more foreign languages
 - b. Proficiency in statistics, or certain computer methods, or paleography
 - c. Courses in political science, literature, economics, anthropology, sociology, or other fields with important bearing on the candidate’s area of research.

Comprehensive Examinations:

Students should begin to plan for comprehensive examinations the moment they enter the program and make preliminary choices of fields by the end of their first semester. Doing so will help them to plan coursework and to begin cultivating relationships with potential field examiners.

The comprehensive examination has three parts:

1. A written exam or assignment in the student’s major field. The dissertation advisor will set the reading and writing requirements for this field. Examples of formats include take-home exams, synthetic essays and timed exams.
2. The second and third field each consists of two courses designated in advance as fulfilling a field requirement.
3. An oral exam in all three fields.

The three fields must be chosen from at least two different divisions. If the third field is thematically defined (i.e. appears under “Other” in the outline of Divisions), at least half of the material for the field must be outside of the student’s primary Division.

In preparation for the oral exam the student will submit a portfolio which includes all written materials from all three fields: the exam(s) or essay(s) for the major field; the syllabi and the student’s written work from the four courses constituting the second and third fields; and any additional assignments (such as literature reviews, bibliographies or student-created syllabi).

Regarding part #2, coursework constituting the second and third field:

- The four courses, two for each of the second and third fields, should be graduate level courses. Courses numbered 3000-4999 are eligible for consideration, but must include an additional significant reading and writing component. For courses numbered 6000 and above, either the instructor or field director may require additional work to ensure appropriate coverage.
- The second or third field may be completed under the supervision of a faculty member in another department, with the advisor's approval.
- With the advisor's approval, a Graduate Certificate may substitute for the third field.

The Department expects doctoral students without an MA degree to take their comprehensive examinations by their sixth semester of study; students with a completed MA degree should take their exams by their fourth semester of study. Students who qualify for an extra semester of eligibility due to language study also qualify for a one-semester extension on the timing of their exams. If there is a significant reason for delay other than language study, students should discuss this with their advisors, field examiners and the DGS. Delays can affect the Department's assessment of a student's progress when it comes time to decide about major aid for the coming year and should be requested only in cases of unusual personal hardship.

Steps leading to the comprehensive examination: By the end of the first semester of study, doctoral students without the MA degree should make a preliminary determination of fields, all others should have a firm sense of their fields.

No later than the second week of the second semester (for new PhD students) or spring break (for new PhD students without an MA), the student, in consultation with the advisor (major area), asks two other faculty members to serve as field examiners. The student may not complete more than one field with a single faculty member. The advisor and the two additional field examiners constitute the "advisory committee." (See also the discussion of the advisory committee elsewhere in this Handbook.) Doctoral students who have not yet finalized their fields may, in their first year, have an advisory committee consisting of their advisor, the likely director of one comps field, and the DGS. Any subsequent changes in the composition of the advisory committee after its initial composition must be registered with the Departmental Administrator.

No later than the end of the second semester (for new PhD students without an MA) or the last week in February (for continuing doctoral students, including new PhD students who have an MA) in the second semester, the advisory committee and the student meet to draw up the "preliminary comps plan." This document names the three fields and the anticipated format for each field. As far as possible, it lists the courses to qualify for the second and third fields. (In preparation for the meeting, students should contact faculty members in all three fields—not just the field examiners—to find out as much as possible about their teaching plans for the next year or two.) The "anticipated format" will include the courses and a reasonable estimation of any additional work that will be expected (e.g. a synthetic essay based on a defined number of books). In preparing the description of additional work (for fields completed largely via coursework), field directors should keep in mind that additional work should not exceed the typical expectations of one course.

Advisory committees of doctoral students without an MA will have a second "preliminary" meeting by the last week in February of the fourth semester. This advisory committee will consist of the three field examiners. During this meeting, the advisory committee and student will check on progress towards completing comps requirements and make—in writing—any adjustments necessary (e.g. to account for a reassessment of course offerings).

Early in the fall of the third semester (PhD students with an MA) or fifth semester (for students without an MA) the student and the advisory committee hold a "comps contract meeting." Students who qualify for a one-semester extension of eligibility for aid due to foreign language study may take a one-semester deferral of the comps contract meeting. At the comps contract meeting, those in attendance will draw up the "comps contract," formally known as the "Comprehensive Examinations: Planning, Terms and Conditions." The contract will constitute the final agreement on the requirements for the three fields as well as a projected date for the oral exam. The completed "contract" must be submitted to the DGS for review; after review and signature by the DGS, copies are made for the candidate, the candidate's file, and each of the field examiners.

If a faculty examiner should leave the student's committee after the "contract" has been completed, the portion of the contract which pertains to the departed examiner is dissolved. The student must then hold a new contract meeting with a committee consisting not only of a new examiner, but also of the other examiners. At this meeting the committee draws up a new contract. Making a new contract does not require the student to negotiate new agreements with all of the examiners, only with the new examiner. Unless a student wishes to make changes in the agreements with the remaining members of his former committee, the new contract affects only the agreement with the new examiner. Committees may not dispense with contract meetings because a faculty member is on leave; the meeting may be postponed until the absent member returns to campus, or may be conducted by having the absent member participate by telephone or video conference.

The "contract" specifies:

1. The seven 6000-7999 level seminar and readings courses to be used to satisfy the requirement that the candidate will have completed a total of ten graduate -level courses including HIST:6001, HIST:6002 and HIST:6003. Prior to taking the comprehensive exams, the student should have completed HIST:6001, HIST:6002, HIST:6003, and four additional 6000-7999 level classes. However, we strongly discourage students from taking additional readings courses post-comps. Subsequent courses should be in the form of research seminars that will focus on the production of chapters for the dissertation.
2. The supplementary skills and studies in which the candidate will be required to demonstrate proficiency (such as language skills).
3. the three fields which will comprise the comprehensive examinations
4. the format of the examination in the primary field for which the student will be responsible
5. the coursework and any additional requirements to be completed for the second and third fields
6. the contents of the portfolios for all fields
7. the approximate date of the oral exam
8. the approximate date on which the student will complete all requirements for the written examinations (two weeks before the oral exam)
9. the names of all five committee members

The oral exam must be completed by the end of the fourth semester or sixth semester (students without an MA). Students who qualify for a one-semester extension of eligibility for aid due to foreign language study qualify for a one-semester deferral of the oral exam. The deadline for submitting all written materials is two weeks before the oral exam. Be aware that schedules in the last few weeks of classes can get very busy. You will find it easier to convene your committee for the oral exam if you do not leave it until the last two weeks of the semester.

The oral examination: The oral examination committee includes the three field examiners as well as two additional committee members. The student should consult with the advisor about which faculty members to ask to serve in this role. During the semester preceding the oral exam, the student should confirm all committee members' availability.

When the five faculty members have been contacted and have agreed to serve on the oral examination, and at least two weeks before the student expects to turn in the portfolio, two forms must be filled out. Students should work with the Graduate Program Coordinator to ensure these forms are filled out correctly. The two forms must be completed and submitted to the Graduate College. One is the "Doctoral Plan of Study Summary Sheet." This form summarizes the number of graduate credit hours the student already has, the number on the current registration, and the title of courses the student plans to take to complete the graduate credit requirements (72 hours) if not already complete. This form is signed by the student's advisor and the DGS. The other form is the "Request for Doctoral Comprehensive Examination," and it is signed by the DGS. The Graduate Program Coordinator will submit both to the Graduate College once the comprehensive oral exam is scheduled, **no less than two weeks before the Comps written exam**. It is the student's responsibility to see that the forms get filled out at an appropriate time before the comps begin.

Because it is often difficult to get five faculty members and a student to agree on a meeting time, students must consult the Graduate Program Coordinator about scheduling the oral exam at least six weeks before it is

to take place. Once faculty responses are received, a time and location is set for the exam; a message informing the entire committee when the exam will take place is sent.

Once the portfolio and written exam has been submitted, the Graduate Program Coordinator sees that copies are made for each member of the examination committee and distributed to them promptly. All members of the committee read both, and at the oral exam faculty regularly ask questions about exams not in their particular area, field or even division.

Substitutions for examiners: Because History faculty regularly get research grants, as well as invitations to join other institutions and research centers for a semester or a year, it may be impossible for a field examiner to be present for the written and oral comps when it is time for a student to take examinations. Faculty regularly prepare comprehensive examination questions while away from the University and read the student's written answers, sent by email. The faculty member may participate in the exam by telephone or video conference, or another professor may be chosen (in consultation with the student) to stand in for the absent professor during the oral part of the examination. The Graduate College will not allow more than one faculty member to participate via telephone or video conference; four faculty members must be in the room for the oral examination.

What happens at the oral examination: The oral exam is scheduled for two hours. The oral starts with the faculty asking the student to step out of the room for a few minutes. During that time, the advisor—who serves as the chair of the committee—asks for general feedback about the overall quality of the written comps exam/portfolio. The committee then decides how it wants to organize the question period before inviting the student back into the room. Sometimes the student is asked to start with any comments about the portfolio. Faculty might take turns asking questions about all three fields, or a field examiner might start with questions on their field with the other faculty joining in with questions that they have. Most faculty ask questions that are designed to let the student expand upon questions raised by the materials in the portfolio, to help the student explore the implications of ideas beyond the specific literature, and to encourage the student to respond freely about the complexities of understanding historical events and processes. Towards the end of the session, the student is again asked to leave the room while the committee consults. After the consultation, the student is invited back into the room to learn the results of the exam.

There are three possible outcomes:

“Satisfactory” by all members of the committee. If one committee member decides that the exam was “unsatisfactory” the student still passes the examination.

“Satisfactory with reservations.” Two or more of the examiners are not quite satisfied with the student's performance. In this case, immediately after the oral the examiners specify in writing exactly what the student needs to do on rewriting the exam or by writing additional essays to satisfy the examiners. The examiners must state clearly how much time the student has to do the additional work. A copy of this stipulation goes to the Graduate College with the report on the examination. When the student completes the work, the field examiners write to the DGS (or DEO) and the Graduate Program Coordinator saying that the reservation has been lifted. Then the Graduate Program Coordinator writes to the Graduate College with this information, giving the date of the removal of the reservations. At that time, the Graduate College considers that the student has passed the comprehensive examination.

“Unsatisfactory.” If two or more examiners decide that the student did not fulfill academic expectations, then the student does not pass. The student may take the exam again and does so by discussing the exam with the DGS, who will then consult with the DEO and other faculty as appropriate to decide whether or not the student should be given this opportunity. If so, the student has to wait at least four months before trying again.

Whatever the outcome of the examination, it is **very important** that the examiners initial the “Report on Doctoral Comprehensive Examination” form at the end of the oral. The chair of the committee normally brings this form (which the Graduate Program Coordinator prepares) to the exam, and all goes well. Sometimes, the meeting breaks up with one or more examiners leaving without initialing the form and then the student and the

Graduate Program Coordinators have the awkward task of getting the faculty back to the office to do so. Since the report is due to the Graduate College no later than 14 days after the oral exam, finishing the form at the end of the examination is preferred, especially if the oral takes place right before an academic break.

Schedule

	PhD (without an MA)	PhD
Make preliminary choice of fields	By end of 1st semester	By end of 1st semester
Designate advisory committee	By spring break, 2nd semester	By end of January, 2nd semester
Advisory committee and student draw up "preliminary comps plan"	By end of 2nd semester	By end of February, 2nd semester
Advisory committee and student revise "preliminary comps plan"	By end of February, 4th semester	N/A
Advisory committee and student draw up "comps contract"	By end of September, 5th semester (end of February, 6th semester for students who qualify for extended eligibility for aid due to language study)	By end of September, 3rd semester (end of February, 4th semester for students who qualify for extended eligibility for aid due to language study)
Completion of portfolio and oral exam	By end of 6th semester (7th semester for students who qualify for extended eligibility for aid due to language study)	By end of 4th semester (5th semester for students who qualify for extended eligibility for aid due to language study)
Defend prospectus	By end of 7th semester (8th semester for students who qualify for extended eligibility for aid due to language study)	By end of 5th semester (6th semester for students who qualify for extended eligibility for aid due to language study)

Post-comprehensive status

Once a student has completed the full number of required course credits and has passed the comprehensive examination, "post-comp" status is acquired. There is a special registration category for post-comp students who have completed all of their credit hours for the degree. This registration category requires a fairly small fee compared to regular tuition. A post-comps student **must** register every fall and spring semester. Students do forget, of course, or think about dropping out and then change their minds, so it is possible to register retroactively. If a student disappears for more than a few semesters it can be awkward to just reappear. To be considered a student again, the student must pay all the fees for the missed semesters. Once a student has gone three consecutive academic sessions (including spring, summer, and fall sessions but excluding the winter session) without registering, special permission is required to be re-admitted without applying to the doctoral program all over again.

Open Topic Writing Seminar: The Open Topic Writing/Pre-dissertation seminar—HIST:7192—provides an opportunity for students at all levels—from MA to post-comps—to engage in critical discussion of their research. We recommend students attend the seminar at some point after completing the preliminary comp steps; some students attend it more than once. Because post-comps students often travel for research, the instructor is flexible about attendance requirements in such cases. Note: this option is usually available but is dependent on faculty availability.

Dissertation Prospectus:

After the comprehensive exams comes the prospectus. The prospectus serves as a proposal for the doctoral dissertation. Unlike the case with preliminary comps plans, there are no Graduate College regulations for the format and defense of the prospectus. The prospectus is a departmental requirement, nevertheless, and completing the prospectus promptly is important in making satisfactory progress through the program. We expect the student to have the prospectus finished and passed by the committee **by the end of the semester following the completed comprehensive examinations.**

The primary purpose of the prospectus is to present a coherent account of a very large research project, even if the final form cannot be known. Indeed, if the final form and arguments were already quite clear, then it is likely the dissertation would not be particularly original. It is most useful to think of the prospectus both as an extended proposal for a grant application (which the student can actually use to prepare shorter versions for real grant applications) and as an opportunity to think in the broadest possible terms about work that will literally take years to complete. Submitting the written prospectus to faculty readers who then meet to discuss it, moreover, provides a crucial opportunity to get scholarly advice about the scope of the project, specific research methods, tips for finding other useful sources, suggestions for more effective organization, and comments on the plan's overall strengths and weaknesses. Going through the process of preparing the prospectus and opening it to critical evaluation; in short, is a *constructive* task. No one expects the final dissertation will actually follow the prospectus to the letter, either in content or in argumentation. Students usually find that research opens up new questions and ideas that are much more interesting (as well as better documented!) than the plans suggested in the prospectus.

Elements of the prospectus:

1. **The thesis.** What do you think **at this time** the main arguments of your dissertation will be? (These arguments may change, but you have to start with something beyond a descriptive topic.)
2. **Why will this thesis be of any interest?** That is, why is your dissertation topic important? This can be addressed on several levels, but the key for all of them is to write for historians in general, not just for experts (that is, your advisor). Most often, a central part of claiming interest for your project is to place it in its current historiographical context. This part becomes a mini-historiographical essay. Who has written on your topic, and from what perspectives? How is what you are planning to do any different? Do you offer a new possible interpretation of known events? Are you going to provide new evidence for a different view? Beware the common pitfall: "this dissertation will fill the void in our knowledge about..." or "this has never been done and so will be a contribution...." These observations may be true, but that does not make the research itself particularly urgent or exciting. Lots of things haven't been done—so why should yours be done now? Do not go to the other extreme either, and analyze every secondary source for the past four decades (or more) on exactly what was said and what is missing. You need to demonstrate your mastery of the central issues, not your extensive note taking, in the prospectus. Lastly, be specific about why your project is original. Are you hoping that your approach and your evidence will prod historians to consider a well-known event or issue in a new way? How might this new interpretation have broader consequences for similar analyses? Are you perhaps "testing" a historical method or theory by applying it to a new case study? If, to take a simplistic example, you are working on the introduction of a new prison system in British Kenya, will you examine how Foucault's analysis of the shifting sites and displays of penal power (*Discipline and Punish*) apply to this colonial context? Why will that be of interest to other historians?
3. **What is your evidence?** Here you need to demonstrate that at least some possible evidence exists for you to base your argument on. Have you done a thorough search of reference materials? Have you written to archives and libraries with special collections? You may know that an archive exists, but do you know whether you can get access to it? All sources—pictures, diaries, committee reports, government sponsored inquires, etc.—have strengths and limitations. Have you thought about how can build on argument on fragmentary evidence? If you are claiming a belief was "widespread," for instance, how do you plan to support that? Here, in short, you need to convince others (and yourself) that you might be able to support the arguments that are central to your thesis.
4. **Is your research program feasible?** Points 1-3 ask you to consider the intellectual feasibility of your research project. But you also need to take time, travel needs, and costs into account. Some advisors recommend the student prepare a time-table that lays out a schedule for applying for grants, research travel and writing, which may be included in the prospectus or kept as a separate document. When thinking about both the dissertation topic and the time-table, it can help to prepare an outline of possible chapters for a 300-350 page manuscript. Break this down into about six 40-50 page chapters, plus bibliography, preface, etc., and think of each of these as the length of a substantial seminar paper. Is it realistic to think you can cover all you want to do in that number of pages? How long do you think it will take you to write—and rewrite and edit—that much? Conversely, is your

argument—and the evidence you know that you can find—a bit thin? If so, how might you be able to broaden your project? Once again, you won't know for sure at this stage, yet your prospectus might not be ready if you haven't thought about these possibilities.

The prospectus should be about 20 pages long, including a bibliography of secondary sources, primary materials, and archival references to be consulted. Some also include a section on a possible organization of the dissertation, with chapter titles and brief summaries of what each chapter will cover.

The Prospectus Defense:

During, or shortly after, the comprehensive examination, the student and advisor need to decide who would best serve to be the core of the dissertation committee. It is this committee that examines the prospectus and normally sits for the final examination of the dissertation. The prospectus committee must include the dissertation supervisor and the person who will serve as second reader of the thesis. The second reader—as the name implies—reads several or all of the dissertation chapters as the student writes them and provides important feedback before the student prepares the near-final draft. The prospectus committee must have at least one more member, normally a faculty member who has already worked with the student in courses and for the comprehensive examinations. Ideally the prospectus committee is the dissertation committee that will serve at the final defense, having a total of five members, one of whom is a regular UI faculty member not in the History Department. For practical reasons, however, the Department requires only three faculty examine the prospectus, so students are not unnecessarily delayed by faculty on leave or otherwise unavailable for a prospectus examination.

Scheduling the prospectus defense is just like scheduling the comps. Work with the Graduate Program Coordinator to find a time for all three to five faculty can meet. These meetings normally take place during fall and spring semesters, and not during academic breaks or over the summer, unless it is clear that these times are convenient for the committee and the student. The prospectus meetings usually last an hour or so. Sometimes the student is asked to step outside for a few minutes at the start while the advisor (who is the chair of the committee) canvasses opinions and the faculty members decide how to proceed with questions and comments; in other cases the student remains in the room and the advisor simply starts the conversation. Usually prospectus meetings quickly become stimulating discussions about the student's project, with the faculty providing useful information on further contacts, resources, cautions—and ideas for improvements—about methodology, and general encouragement for the student scholar. Students are encouraged to use this forum to ask faculty questions about particular concerns they have about the intellectual merit and feasibility of their plans. If a member of the prospectus committee is away from Iowa City, they can participate by telephone or video conference.

At the end of the meeting, the student may be asked to step outside while the faculty deliberates. The committee can come to three decisions about the prospectus: acceptance, request revisions, or rejection. If the committee requires revisions, these are usually discussed with the student, and the committee decides when they need to be made and who will approve them so the prospectus can be passed. If the prospectus is rejected, the committee discusses the reasons with the student and decides when a new prospectus needs to be submitted to the existing committee or, if necessary, a new committee.

The Paperwork for the Prospectus:

There is a departmental form that records the results of the prospectus meeting; we ask the student and committee members fill it out promptly and completely. This often is the only document that gives the DGS the working title of the dissertation. The form also has a place for the committee to designate the second reader of the dissertation, which should be decided upon at the end of the prospectus discussion (if not long before!). The second reader is the faculty member who, along with the advisor, is most responsible for reading all or some of the student's chapters as they go through various drafts. In some instances we expect second readers to serve as the student's advisor if the advisor is on leave, particularly for on-site assistance with grant applications or letters of reference. The DGS may also need to rely on the second reader for timely information on a student's progress if the advisor is away from Iowa City.

All But Dissertation (ABD) status

Once the prospectus is passed, all that remains is actually researching and writing the dissertation. Some students move away from Iowa City during this period of the program for a variety of personal and professional reasons. Experience shows that continued contact with your faculty and graduate peers can be helpful in making good progress through this stage of the process. For that reason, we encourage you to remain in Iowa if possible (with the exception of absences dictated by the research program). Whether in Iowa City or elsewhere, every ABD student needs to:

1. Review the Graduate College's Thesis Manual online (<https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/theses-and-dissertations>). This will give formatting rules and style requirements for the final version. Knowing this information in advance can make the last stages much less painful, no matter how versatile word processing software is now. (At least realize the larger margins required by the Graduate College mean fewer words per page and hence can make a rather long dissertation grow to very large proportions). The Graduate College requires electronic submission of the dissertation.
2. Register every fall and spring semester with post-comp status in order to remain in good standing with the Graduate College and the Department. A current registration is required for normal library privileges and for any teaching as a Graduate Assistant. Actually getting the PhD degree, moreover, requires the student have had continuous registration at the University. It is possible to register (and pay fees) retroactively if some periods have been missed, but this takes extra time and effort.
3. Consult regularly with the advisor. At the very least, the student must keep the advisor informed on progress on the dissertation, including submitting draft chapters for timely advice to both the advisor and second reader. Students may find it useful to prepare a "semester plan" in conjunction with their advisors every semester in order to establish what will constitute satisfactory progress for a grade of "S" for registered thesis hours.
4. Keep the History Department office up to date with a current mailing address, telephone number and email address. We need to know this information in order to send out important information on changes in departmental policies and deadlines for aid and grant applications.

With only infrequent departmental mailings, GHS-official notices, and often irregular contact between students and their dissertation advisors, life as an ABD student can start to feel fairly isolated: just the scholar, the texts and notes, and the seemingly endless sheets of blank paper or blank computer screens. Students vary enormously, of course, in work habits and degree of confidence in their abilities. The main takeaway here is to maintain ties with the academic community by subscribing to History email discussion lists, attending talks and academic meetings, giving papers at conferences and subscribing to a few journals directly connected to the dissertation research. ABDs can also benefit by keeping in touch with their graduate school peers no matter what their fields. Exchange draft chapters, discuss mutual problems with methods or sources and observe how other students manage to complete their dissertations. ABDs often find it beneficial to attend the open topic writing seminar or a topic appropriate seminar; we can adjust the number of credit hours so ABD students do not incur extra charges. Lastly, if stuck (writer's block, feeling the overpowering need to do more and more research) try not to wait too long before seeking advice on how others got past similar points in the dissertation process. Many of your mentors have faced similar challenges and will have useful advice, and the Graduate College organizes support groups and writing groups for students working on dissertations.

Time to Degree—The "Five Years Beyond Comprehensives" Rule:

A student cannot stay an ABD in good standing in perpetuity. According to the regulations of the Graduate College, if a student has not defended the dissertation within five years from the date of the comprehensive examinations, then they must **re-take the comprehensive exams**. This policy is designed to make sure a person getting a doctoral degree is really up-to-date in the literature and methods of the field and discipline. When a student reaches this point, the Graduate College sends a letter reminding the student about the time that has elapsed since the comprehensives. (A copy of these letters are also sent to the DGS.) Only with the request of the Department can the Graduate College consider waiving the requirement to retake the comps, and then for only one year at a time.

By the time the student has received the letter from the Graduate College, the DGS is already working on the files of the students who are five years' plus. Twice a year, once in the early fall and again in the spring (if necessary), the DGS compiles a list of all these students and writes to them asking for an update on their progress to the degree. The DGS also consults with the students' advisors about their progress. According to the History Department's usual practice, if the student is less than eight years beyond comps, the DGS, in consultation with the advisor, can make the decision about whether or not to recommend a waiver of the comps retake requirement to the Graduate College, and reports this to the faculty. If the student is more than seven years, but less than 10 years, beyond comps, the DGS presents this student's case to the faculty at the Department meeting in October for the faculty's decision about recommending a waiver. If neither the DGS nor the advisor hears anything at all from the student, and the advisor has seen no new work during the previous year, the DGS will usually **not** recommend a waiver. If a student has been working on a dissertation and has not defended by 10 years after comps, the student **must** retake the comprehensive examinations. **No waivers will be recommended for students 10 years beyond comps.**

The Department recommends waivers to the Graduate College, but it is up to the Associate Dean of the College to make the final decision. When the College approves a waiver for a student in the five-year plus category, it is only for one year. If, for example, the DGS recommended a waiver for a student who had one more chapter to write, and the request went forward in October 2018, then—if approved—the student had until December 2019 to defend the dissertation. If, in October 2019, the student had finished the draft of the dissertation but would not be able to complete all the revisions the advisor required for a fall defense, the student would be wise to request another waiver to extend the time to December 2020.

Sometimes ABD students disappear for a while: they stop registering, they don't answer the DGS's letters or the Graduate College's letters when they reach five years' plus, and they don't communicate with their advisors. In some cases, these are instances of really dropping out, and we never find out just why. In other cases, students reappear after having been through a particularly stressful period. When such students have made progress on the dissertation, or at least have finally resolved situations that have made progress difficult, the Department does its best to get the student reinstated into the Graduate College and back on track towards the degree.

The longer a student takes to complete the dissertation, the harder it might be to retain a thesis advisor and the original core of the dissertation committee. If at any time a student cannot find a member of the Department who is prepared to serve as supervisor, then they will not be able to continue as a graduate student in the Department.

The Final Examination: The PhD defense

When the student, advisor and second reader agree the dissertation is finished and ready to defend, the last hurdles are getting the examination scheduled, taking the examination and making the single thesis deposit (as of Fall 2018, there is only one single deposit vs. the first/final deposits previously required). Then comes much celebration!

Initial Paperwork: In the first six weeks of the semester, if the student wishes to defend the dissertation, the candidate must complete an "Application for Degree" on <https://myui.uiowa.edu>.

Forming the full examining committee: In consultation with the advisor, the student makes sure the second reader, the third "core" member of the earlier prospectus committee and two other faculty members can serve on the final examination committee. One of the faculty members must come from another department. If previous members of the committee are on leave or no longer at the University of Iowa, or have decided to withdraw from the committee, other appropriate regular faculty must be asked to join the committee. (If four faculty members plus an advisor cannot be found who are willing to serve on the doctoral committee, the student will not be able to complete the degree.) It is courteous to ask each professor—given the approximate date of the defense—how soon before the exam they need a copy of the thesis in order to be able to read it carefully. The Graduate College guideline is a minimum of two weeks before the exam. This simply may not be enough time for a faculty person with numerous commitments facing a 400+ page thesis unless ample notice has been given that it is coming. Once the exam has begun, no faculty member can resign or be dismissed from the committee.

Two questions regularly come up about the constitution of the dissertation committee:

1. *What if the advisor is no longer a UI faculty member?* When members of the department take posts at other universities, some continue to supervise their doctoral students who have finished the prospectus and are well into research and writing. This is an extremely generous commitment on their part, and both the Department and Graduate College deeply appreciate this opportunity for students to continue on already developed projects. Unfortunately, the Department and Graduate College do not have the funds available to assist these individuals in payment for coming to campus for the defense. Most often these committee members participate in the defense by telephone or video conference.

The Graduate College policy states a former faculty member up to 2 years after leaving the University of Iowa can be on a dissertation committee. If it is longer than 2 years, the DGS, DEO, or Graduate Program Coordinator can appeal in writing to the Graduate College requesting consideration of the former faculty member for the committee. Reasons may include involvement in previous committees for the student, expertise in the dissertation topic, etc.

2. *What if a person from another University would be wonderful to have on the examining committee?* Normally, a student must select a committee from among UI faculty members. However, students sometimes develop important intellectual relationships with scholars in other institutions who are close to their dissertation research. Such people seem obvious choices to participate in examining the thesis. Under unusual circumstances such a scholar may be invited to join the committee. To make this happen, the student must first get the full approval and support of the advisor. Then the student (or advisor) must submit a request to the DGS or Graduate Program Coordinator to have this scholar on the committee and provide supporting evidence (usually a c.v.) that they hold an academic position equivalent to one for regular faculty at the University of Iowa (e.g. tenure-track assistant professor, associate professor, full professor), and has appropriate scholarly credentials. The DGS, consulting with other members of the Department if necessary, passes this request to the Graduate College recommending approval using the online "Committee Member Approval Request" form. This is usually a very straightforward process. Unfortunately the Graduate College does **not** have funds to bring non UI examiners to campus. Most often, such faculty members participate in the defense by telephone or video conference. *It is not appropriate for a candidate to pay for the outside person to come to the examination.*

Thesis Deposit: The Graduate College has strict rules about the format of the finished dissertation, which are explained in its Thesis Manual online (<https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/theses-and-dissertations>). Students should review this manual right after finishing the prospectus in order to be prepared for the College's requirements. An electronic copy of the dissertation must be submitted before the thesis deposit deadline. The Graduate College no longer requires a hard copy of the dissertation. A 350-word public abstract must be deposited with the thesis; it is this abstract that will be published in the journal of *Dissertation Abstracts International* in due course. The student needs to make sure that the dissertation is ready for deposit by the deadline before scheduling the examination.

Scheduling the Final Examination: Confer with the Graduate Program Coordinator on scheduling the final examination. The defense usually takes two hours. The Graduate Program Coordinator prepares the "Request for Final Examination: Advanced Degree" form, which includes the names of all the people on the committee, and is signed by the DGS or DEO. This form, along with a statement of the full title of the doctoral dissertation, needs to reach the Graduate College **at least four weeks** before the exam is to take place.

The Final Examination: The dissertation defense schedule is added to the Graduate College calendar of Upcoming Defenses (<http://www.grad.uiowa.edu/upcoming-thesis-defenses>). The exam is open to the public, although non-committee attendees may not participate in the questioning unless they are regular UI faculty and have been invited by the chair of the committee to do so. No one but the committee members may vote, of course.

In format, the defense resembles the oral comprehensive examination. The candidate and any visitors are normally asked to step outside while the committee makes an overall assessment of the dissertation and

decides how to proceed with questioning. Similarly, after the discussion, the candidate and visitors are usually asked to leave while the committee makes its decision and, once again, there are three possible outcomes, two of which are noted on a form, "Report of the Final Examination: Advanced Degree":

"Satisfactory." If four of the five faculty decide the dissertation and the defense qualify for the doctoral degree, the candidate has passed.

"Satisfactory with revisions." This is not a formal category for the result of the examination, but occurs when the committee wants relatively minor changes to the dissertation before the final deposit. It is usually up to the supervisor to see these are completed; the committee does not meet again.

"Unsatisfactory." If two or more members of the committee do not approve the thesis, then the report is "unsatisfactory." If the student wishes to repeat the defense, they need to request a second examination in a letter to the DEO. The DEO, in consultation with the DGS, with individual members of the faculty or with the faculty in a department meeting, makes this decision. If the second examination is approved, the candidate must wait at least until the next academic session to schedule a new defense. Only two examinations are allowed.

Before the defense adjourns, all of the committee members **must complete the paperwork**. First, the examiners must initial the "Report of the Final Examination: Advanced Degree" in the proper column (satisfactory or unsatisfactory) by their typed names. Second, all must sign—**black ink preferred**—the signature page of the "Report of Thesis Approval" form (replaced the previously used certificate of approval).. It is a good idea to have two copies of the "Report of Thesis Approval" at the defense in case one gets spilled or marked up. The student will submit this form along with the thesis deposit, so it will be given to the Graduate Program Coordinator following the defense to scan and email to the student. Both forms will be sent to the Graduate College within 48 hours of the defense, which allows very little time to track down the examiners if this form is forgotten at the end of the meeting.

Thesis deposit: In many cases the dissertation may be ready for deposit immediately after the defense. In others, however, the committee may have required minor revisions, including correcting typographical errors. The candidate must correct these prior to submitting the dissertation deposit electronically to the Graduate College. The thesis deposit deadline is approximately ten days prior to conferral date each semester. **Please verify the deadlines and do not wait until the last day in case there are issues with the electronic submission.** It is customary for the candidate to give the dissertation advisor a copy of the final version of the thesis, both as a gesture of thanks for the help given over the years and as a foundation for the advisor's most up-to-date letters of recommendation.

Convocation: The Graduate College will send out information about the convocation ceremony to each candidate for the degree. If a student is planning to attend convocation, it helps to let the advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator know as soon as possible. Many faculty advisors or other faculty mentors participate in the ceremony by "hooding" their students when the degree is awarded. Since the Graduate College staff prefers to give faculty plenty of time (usually two months) to request rental of appropriate University gowns and hoods to wear during convocation, it can be awkward to invite advisors to participate at the last minute. If the primary advisor is unavailable, the Department will do our best to make sure a faculty member is there to honor our graduates.

Publication in ProQuest

All dissertations deposited at UI are automatically published in electronic form by ProQuest. This can make subsequent publication of books or articles based on the same research difficult, as presses may object to publishing material that is already easily available. For this reason, it is possible to request a temporary embargo of the publication of your dissertation on ProQuest. Consult with your advisor and/or the DGS for details.

Public History and Engaged Scholarship and Teaching

First theorized by Ernest Boyer in 1996 as “scholarship of engagement,” engaged scholarship unites academics and community-based non-academics in mutually beneficial projects that aim to answer questions and solve problems through collaborative relationships. Engaged scholarship is not synonymous with applied research; rather it calls for sharing of knowledge, collective problem solving, and making connections to large scholarly questions. It is an interdisciplinary approach that is integrated into research, teaching, and service.

Publicly engaged history takes place both inside and outside the academy. The big tent of public humanists includes public artists, oral historians, museum people, archivists, non-profit workers, historical consultants, government historians, oral historians, cultural resource managers, curators, film and media producers, historical interpreters, historic preservationists, policy advisers, local historians and community activists. Numerous polls and think pieces on public humanities tell us most employers of public humanists are consistent in the top skills they seek in a new hire including, good writing and research skills; appreciation for history (or field specific to their institution); understanding of audience; an ability to work well with others; good communication skills; and organizational skills. Any student of history should have those skills by the time they defend a master’s essay or dissertation. Additional skills that can be acquired in class or on the job include comfort with technology, production skills, business skills, project management skills, and marketing. The best endeavors are based on rigorous research and critical analysis and in the core principles of public humanities work—collaboration and mutual benefit to scholars and the public.

The graduate program in History offers both coursework and GA assignments (History Corps) for students interested in exploring public history. In addition, the Obermann Center’s Graduate Institute on Engagement and the Academy offers an intensive funded course for graduate students across the Humanities.

Training as Teachers

The Department is committed to training good teachers as well as good scholars. Students’ success in teaching, which is as important as the three academic fields expected of PhD candidates, becomes the basis for strong recommendations to potential employers. There are several stages to training in teaching:

1. Newly admitted graduate students in PhD programs meet with the DGS in the fall of their first year to discuss possible next teaching assignments. The DGS initiates a conversation assessing a student’s interest and background preparation as well as plans for further development in fields of interest. Assignments will be made on a semester-by-semester basis and will be subject to considerations of enrollment, scheduling, and ensuring as many students as possible gain experience in their desired fields. In some cases the DGS will suggest specific steps to a first year student, such as taking a 3000-4999 level course or attending the lectures in an undergraduate survey, in preparation for a particular teaching assignment.
2. All newly appointed TAs are required to participate in a two-day Graduate Orientation held in the fall during the week before classes begin. The Workshop is organized by the TA Advisor (a senior TA in the department) with faculty and departmental staff providing support, and it incorporates presentations, discussions, simulations, syllabi reviews, and instructional videos that prepare students for their first teaching experiences. Above all, experienced History TAs describe in detail their own teaching experiences and lessons learned. The orientation also draws on The Center for Teaching, an institutional resource on pedagogy that assists faculty and students campus wide with teaching methods and problems.
3. Students entering the program with no teaching experience may be assigned as a shadow TA—without classroom responsibilities. They will be expected to attend staff meetings for the course, attend selected lectures and discussion section meetings, and assist at the History Writing Center.
4. TAs with classroom responsibility in survey courses are required to participate in weekly staff meetings for their courses. Some survey courses have numerous sections (e.g. the variants of West

and the World or Civilizations of Asia) and thus numerous TAs; for these courses the staff meetings are formalized as “teaching proseminars” for which students obtain credit by arrangement. In others (e.g. Civil War & Emancipation) there is usually only a single TA, and staff discussions of pedagogical matters are less formal if no less intense.

5. In addition to the “teaching proseminars” associated with particular courses, the Department offers a course HIST:6120, “Teaching Seminar: Graduate Instructors” (*credit hours arranged*). This examines a range of theoretical and practical issues associated with instruction of undergraduates. TAs should take this seminar during their first semester in the classroom, if offered. They may find it useful to repeat it when they teach independently for the first time (see below).
6. All new TAs are visited in the classroom at least once per semester while conducting discussion sections by regular faculty members (or by the TA Advisor on request). These visits are to enhance personal and professional growth that leads to improved performance. As a follow-up to these visits, the faculty visitors meet with TAs to discuss with them impressions of their teaching capabilities. This discussion is usually relatively brief because most TAs have been well-prepared and have few difficulties conducting effective discussions. However, the Department reserves the right to pull a new TA out of class for more training if there are problems of a serious nature.
7. TAs are required to administer a departmental course evaluation questionnaire at mid-semester and end of semester. These provide direct feedback from students in the discussion sections. The mid-semester evaluation forms are still in paper form and should be given to students, with a short time to complete them without the instructor present. An assigned student delivers the completed forms to the History Department Office. Evaluations are used as a source of information on TA’s teaching success. The answers on the mid-semester forms are summarized and discussed in a private meeting with the survey course lecturers or the Issues Coordinator. Hence there are various means for TAs to receive feedback on their teaching efforts from experienced instructors. The end of semester evaluations are available through the ICON Student Evaluations tool and students are to fill them out without the instructor present. The evaluations are maintained in the Department Office, in paper or electronic format.
8. After a period of assisting in multi-section courses, TAs will be assigned full responsibility for a single-section course under the rubric “Issues” or “Diversity” courses. More detail on Issues and Diversity courses appears later in this document.
9. It is beneficial for TAs to develop “teaching portfolios” to document their teaching instruction and achievements by collecting in one place the: (a) syllabus for the Teaching Workshop, (b) result of an interview with the DGS about teaching duties, (c) information on any background training assignment required to prepare for teaching a survey section, (d) memos prepared by faculty members or the Issues Coordinator after visiting a TA’s discussion sections or courses, (e) results of course evaluation questionnaires and (f) any other information likely to be useful to a student to demonstrate teaching capability.

The portfolio, to be kept by the TA, should be helpful when students begin to apply for teaching positions; hence students should encourage faculty members to place their favorable impressions on paper into the portfolio.

Support for Graduate Study

Funding a graduate education in History, can be a considerable challenge. As a Department, we understand graduate students' concerns about funding and try to do the best we can with our available resources.

This section details financial aid and how we distribute it. Several steps in the process of allocating aid take place behind closed doors, where students' work is talked about, evaluated, judged and ranked. That is the reality of academic life (and certainly does not stop with the award of a PhD degree). This section contains explicit comments about “expected progress” (prominent above in the discussions of degree requirements).

This section also discusses the opportunities for additional funding available through Departmental and Graduate College fellowships and grants, as well as teaching in other units.

The Principle of Eligibility and Aid upon Program Entry

All entering students start our program in one of two categories: with an offer of major aid (a Fellowship or Assistantship) or without. At this time, the only students whom we admit normally without aid are MA Terminal students. This program takes one to two years to complete and ends with the MA degree. These students have no guaranteed "eligibility" for departmental support. Such students may apply for Assistantships in other departments or other jobs around the university. From time to time, if additional funding becomes available in the History Department, and no doctoral student needs the aid, MA Terminal students may be offered Teaching Assistantships (TAs) in the Department.

All new PhD students enter the UI History Department with major aid. We keep our admissions process tightly tied to the funding we receive for graduate student support each year and our hopes for this funding in future years. All students must understand that **changing economic conditions, university policies and collegiate priorities may affect graduate student funding**. There are no absolute guarantees beyond the year-to-year allocations we receive from the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences (for TAs) and from the Graduate College (tuition fellowships). Aid is distributed to students each year on the basis of priority lists for categories of students. The lists are finalized in March at the time of the annual aid allocation meeting in the Department.

Admission with aid brings with it a period of "eligibility" for continuing aid, and this period is explicitly given in the formal offer of admission letter that the student receives from the DGS. Students entering the PhD program with or without an MA, are currently given five years of eligibility. Students need to understand that even if it takes longer than one year for them to finish the MA requirements, they do **not** get any additional years of eligibility upon starting the doctoral program.

"Eligibility" is a priority category for TA assignments. In the March aid meeting the first level of priority goes to students with Graduate College Fellowships that come in "packages" (more on that later); the second level of priority is for students with eligibility. All students with eligibility are considered for an assignment for the following academic year. However, **any student may have aid denied if not making adequate progress through their program**. Please note this restriction applies to **all** aid assignments within the control of the department. Information about each student's progress is collected by the DGS in advance of the March aid meeting; in addition, each student's supervisor or advisor is expected to present information about the student's progress in writing or orally at the time of the aid meeting.

In some cases, eligibility can be extended for one or more semesters. Students who serve on a search committee or who devote at least two semesters to studying a new foreign language required for their dissertation are eligible for an extra semester of major aid.

Recruitment Fellowships for Incoming UI Graduate Students

The Graduate College Iowa Recruitment Fellowship Program enhances departmental recruitment packages by offering our most accomplished new doctoral students a stipend supplement (\$2,000 per year) for up to five years and fellowship support for up to four summer terms (\$4,000 per summer). Tuition scholarships are to be paid during the academic years (fall, spring) by the appointing unit, while the Graduate College will provide up to 2 credit hours tuition and benefits for the summer terms. Up to four nominations for consideration of two possible Graduate College Iowa Recruitment Fellowships must be submitted by the DGS.

The Lulu Merle Johnson Fellowship is the highest award conferred by the University of Iowa, and provides a year service-free in the first year of the doctoral program (\$20,000 plus tuition and 50% mandatory fees) and four summers of support (\$4,500 plus tuition/fees). For years two through five of the program, fellows are appointed in History as a 50% TA. Fellows are also eligible for other Graduate College post-comp or dissertation fellowships. The DGS nominates on behalf of the Department for this fellowship.

Research Assistantships (RAships)

Depending on available funding, graduate RAships may be available. Students will receive notification if this opportunity becomes available.

Teaching Assistantships (TAships)

The staple item of graduate student support is teaching. Graduate Assistantships, span two categories that can seem, at times, to conflict with each other: *employment* governed rules that apply to UI employees and *graduate aid* subject to faculty expectations about academic progress that have, nothing to do with an employer/employee relationship.

On the employment side, graduate students are represented by a union, COGS Local 896, which negotiates with the University—not with departments—on employment issues. The History Department may have Union Stewards. Please consult with them on any questions or comments that concern employment. Alternatively, contact the COGS office. Students may talk with the DGS at any time about employment issues as well, but we encourage our graduate students to be fully informed about both COGS and Departmental/University perspectives on their positions.

Technically, Graduate Assistants work for the University (the source of funding), not for the History Department, although the department makes the employment assignments and oversees TA teaching effectiveness. Like other employees who teach, TAs are obliged to abide by the policies laid out by the University and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. More Information is available on the College's website. Additionally, it is University policy that graduate students may be employed **by the University** for a maximum of 20 hours per week during the academic year. A full work load may be made up of a combination of duties assigned by the Department. A breakdown of those duties are located on the Department of History's Expected TA Effort Chart included with the offer letter.

All teaching assistants have their teaching skills evaluated by the Department. We use mandatory student evaluations at mid-semester and at the end of the semester for all TAs. In addition, faculty members visit TA classrooms to observe them teach. Usually the lecturer in charge of the survey course visits the TAs, while the Issues Coordinator observes the Issues instructors. TAs may ask other faculty at any time to observe their teaching. If a TA is not able to teach effectively, and problems persist after discussions with the TA and individual work with the TA advisor on teaching skills, the Department has an obligation to UI undergraduates to remove the TA from the classroom or to deny further teaching assignments to the graduate student. All students must realize **teaching performance is considered when reassigning TA positions to graduate students each year.**

On the aid side, the Department sees TAships as a vital way to support graduate students through the PhD program. The fundamental duty of graduate students is to learn their discipline and to complete their degrees. The focus for these goals is mastering sophisticated critical thinking, research skills and steady productivity. Teaching is of central importance in academic life and we value it highly. If graduate students perform poorly in the classroom, we cannot allow them to continue to teach. Yet students need to learn to balance teaching with research, and to appreciate the close connections between the two. As time-consuming as good teaching is, students must understand a devotion to their students is never considered a valid excuse for not making sufficient progress towards their own degrees.

Survey Courses: Students may be assigned a TAship with or without direct classroom responsibilities. One TA position is discussion section leader for one of our large survey classes: *West and the World: Ancient*; *West and the World: Medieval*; *West and the World: Modern*; *Civilizations of Africa*; and *Civilizations of Asia* in one of its incarnations—China, Japan, Korea, and South Asia. All of these courses fill the "General Education Requirement" (GER) in "Historical Perspectives," "Values and Culture," or "International and Global Issues" for undergraduates. Such GER courses enroll a large number of students who have no intention of becoming History majors (and who may not be interested in history at all) and so provide a number of challenges to the lecturer and TAs. The Department will assign both new and experienced TAs to *West and the World* courses. The "lead TA" in *West and the World* provides mentoring to the less experienced TAs.

Issues Courses: After teaching discussion sections in a survey course, our graduate students usually move on to teach sections of "Issues"—with a few exceptions discussed below. Issues classes fulfill undergraduate

GER requirements in "Historical Perspectives." Like the large introductory lecture courses, they attract a wide range of students; however, they work quite differently from the large surveys. The Issues courses are all clustered around general topics and content criteria, within which graduate assistants design their own syllabi, including specific topics, reading assignments, written assignments and examinations. Issues sections are usually limited to 30 students and are promoted as discussion, not lecture, courses. During the first year of teaching Issues, we tend to assign the TA one section in the fall and two in the spring, so a TA new to having full responsibility for their own class can get used to the experience.

The "Issues Coordinator," a faculty person other than the DGS, oversees administration of the Issues classes, including the preparation of syllabi, distribution of teaching times, reviewing the mid-semester TA course evaluations and discussing them with each TA, attending sections to provide feedback about teaching skills, and acting as the administrative liaison between the Department, the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, and the individual TA.

Other Courses: Several courses in the History Department regularly use more senior students for leading discussion sections. These include the two American History survey courses as well as some other courses that employ a TA either to teach multiple sections or to develop and teach a special "capstone" section for junior and senior history majors and minors.

Writing Center TA Positions: TAs in the Department's Writing and Teaching Center assists undergraduates—primarily students in GER courses—with writing history assignments. The Writing and Teaching Center is **not** an editing service, and other TAs and undergraduates alike must understand this. The Writing Center TAs may produce handouts on how TAs can compose effective assignments (from "thought papers" and book reviews to essays) and examination questions; they offer mini-workshops during the semester for groups of undergraduates to learn how to write more effective essays on examinations; and they work with individual students (targeted, we hope, by TAs early in the semester) who make a commitment to improve their history writing over a series of appointments.

Graderships: Faculty teaching a large number of undergraduates in courses not otherwise supported by a TA may request a grader. In some cases, graders may be assigned to courses where there is also a TA. Graderships are typically very small assignments of 2-6 hours per week, although the work is typically clustered around intensive weeks of grading (separated by weeks during which there may be no work at all). Graders are not expected to attend lectures and faculty may not require this, although graders may opt to attend lectures as an opportunity to review a field in preparation for comps or to take notes in preparation for their own teaching careers.

TA Advisor: The TA Advisor is a senior graduate student, one who has already taught Issues classes, with a dedication to improving graduate students' teaching skills. This person fills a vital role in the Department, responsible for developing the TA orientation we hold every August for graduate students new to teaching. The TA Advisor works closely with the DGS over the entire year to develop resources for improving teaching, and to schedule meetings where resources from around campus (Student Disability Services, etc) give presentations to TAs. The TA Advisor also directs the History Writing Center.

Summer Session Teaching: Teaching during the summer is most often done by regular faculty members, and the number of courses available is limited. Still, graduate students who have exhausted major aid and are making satisfactory progress towards the PhD, or those who have recently received their PhD in the Department, may be considered for teaching in the Summer Session. Requests for consideration for such teaching should be directed to the DEO early in the fall semester for the following summer. Assignments are limited by the perceived needs of the Summer Session, and all assignments are subject to minimum enrollments.

History Corps: A group of dedicated graduate students, a faculty advisor, and collaborators from the across the UI and Iowa City are working to take the student-managed oral and digital history project—known as History Corps (HC) (<http://thestudio.uiowa.edu/historycorps/>)—to a publicly engaged intellectual and interpretative digital project. Established in 2011 as the "UI Humanities Story Corps" and based on the model of an oral history exhibit, HC has expanded its pedagogical and collaborative reach (university, local, and state entities) through more complex and collaborative undertakings. (See 2008 Flood photographic essay at <http://thestudio.uiowa.edu/historycorps/exhibits/show/flood>)

Graduate students working with History Corps, recently designated as a Working Group of the Obermann Center for Advanced Studies, can expect to meet regularly with the group, conduct oral interviews, edit and upload interviews to the HC website, work on specific parts of long-term projects, consult with faculty who incorporate public humanities assignments into their courses, and make public presentations.

Other opportunities for employment: Students who have exhausted their aid in the History Department or who wish to gain experience outside the History Department might apply for TAs in other units in the University. These include (but aren't limited to) the Department of Gender, Women's and Sexuality Studies; the Rhetoric Department; the Labor Center; the Iowa Women's Archives; and Student Services. These 20 hour per week assistantships are open to advanced graduate students at the same pay as graduate instructorships. Announcements of such opportunities are posted on the GHS-Official listserv and on the GHS ICON site. Many hire in late spring for the following fall. The Department is happy to support the applications of its advanced students in applying for such positions, which can provide useful career experience.

Students can check with Human Resources (102-21 USB) in person, by using their recorded messages system or by consulting their web site, to learn about positions open around campus for other forms of work, such as clerical services.

Kirkwood Community College, Cornell College, Coe College, and a number of other nearby institutions also sometimes hire UI ABDs for teaching history courses. We place announcements about such opportunities on the GHS ICON site and send notices through the GHS-official listserv.

The Annual Assignment of Major Aid

Each spring the Department reviews the progress of every graduate student in the program who applies to be considered for major aid. This review process culminates at a Department meeting, usually scheduled for early March, where the faculty discuss a comprehensive report presented by the DGS. It starts, however, in mid-January when the DGS announces the availability of **Major Aid application forms** and sets a due date, which is usually in early February. We use these forms for several overlapping purposes. First, they establish the actual list of students who are seeking a TAs in History. Because students get fellowships or travel grants for research trips, or for other reasons plan to be away from Iowa City for all or part of the next year, we simply do not know who needs a teaching appointment each academic year. Even if a student is fairly confident they will be away for research, if the slightest possibility of staying and teaching exists, the student should apply. Second, these forms provide specific information on how much support the student is seeking—full year, one semester, etc. Third, the form requests a great deal of information about the student's progress towards the degree. Filling this out helps the student see how the academic schedule is going. We also use it to double check the data we have on each student—a way of catching errors in the database we now have to assist the DGS in managing graduate student information.

In addition to the application form, which the student fills out, we require the advisor to write a brief statement about the non-quantitative aspects of a student's progress. Finally, for all students other than new students, we consider the report of the Advisory Committee meeting.

The Order of Priority in Aid Allocations: When the DGS presents the report on aid assignments, it includes a list of all the graduate students who have applied, grouped according to priority categories. The DGS starts with the number of TAs allocated to the Department by the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. This number, determined in December or January, is based upon the existing enrollments in History courses taught with or by TAs (with some other considerations taken into account). If enrollments decline, we face a cut; if they climb, we get more.

Given the initial number, the DGS orders all the graduate students who have applied for major aid according to **priority category**. Within each category, students are then ranked according to degree program, alphabetically, or by some other conventional means. In addition to the categories below, our TA allocation must cover students newly admitted to the program. In order to maintain a healthy graduate program, we must admit and fund a reasonable number of new students each year.

Here are the priority categories. The first three categories fall under the category “eligible,” and so continued aid is assumed unless the student is not making adequate progress towards degree or such serious problems have arisen with the TA’s teaching that we can no longer support a teaching role for that student.

1. **First year students.** With first-year students, we have at most one semester of completed courses by which to judge their progress towards the degree. The presumption is that first year students are on track and can be assigned a TA position. We still know very little about each student’s overall capabilities to sustain graduate level work in our department, much less to work relatively independently on original projects; hence faculty observations about these students’ accomplishments are crucial.
2. **All students with eligibility remaining.** As mentioned previously, all students accepted into the PhD program are given five years of eligibility.
3. **Students beyond eligibility.** We turn to this list after completing all discussions and decisions about allocations to students with eligibility as well as new admits. It is not uncommon that departmental teaching assignments are made to students in this category but these assignments are often made in late spring or even in summertime. As in other categories, this is a ranked list based upon student’s progress toward the degree and past teaching success.
4. **Students who forgot to apply for major aid and appear in May - August hoping for an assignment.** This is a DGS category, not one that can be considered at the Department meeting. Because it has too often been a category with real students in it, it is here as a warning that once assignments are made, no student is dismissed from a position to make room for a late-comer, no matter how much eligibility one may have.

Progress and Ranking: Being in a priority category—any priority category—does not guarantee major aid support. Faculty reserve the right to remove any student from the aid list if that student is **not making satisfactory progress** to the degree. The faculty also considers any report the DGS offers about poor teaching performance for individual students, which is based upon review of teaching evaluations and classroom visits. A student unable to teach effectively cannot be given another teaching assignment.

These criteria mean the first task the faculty have at the spring aid meeting is to review the entire list and to see which, if any, students are not keeping up with their peers. Because expectations about progress vary according to field (number of new languages to learn, access to research materials delayed, etc.), the faculty are sensitive to the many nuances that affect “progress.” Examples of potential problems include, but are not limited to:

- Incompletes in courses, especially if an incomplete has turned to an F (it does automatically after a full semester has passed without a grade change being sent in by the professor)
- Grade point average concerns/probation—graduate students must maintain a 3.0 GPA
- Excessive delay in completing the MA courses or research essay
- Excessive delay in taking the comprehensive examinations
- Excessive delay in completing the prospectus after taking the comps
- Excessive delay in completing dissertation chapters

At the spring aid meeting the assembled faculty listens carefully to the advisor’s assessment, the advisory committee’s report, and the comments of those who have had the student in class. The faculty discuss whether enough has been done to encourage the student and to make sure the Department’s standards and consequences of poor performance are understood.

Students who are not making progress may get contingent offers or reduction of a full load to a partial one. Contingent offers include making the fall (or following spring) assignment depend upon the successful completion of the research essay or upon passing comprehensive exams. We have reduced offers from a full load to half or one-third time for a semester because of poor progress. All of these steps are taken with full communication to the student about why the faculty made such a painful decision and what is necessary to get back on track.

Beyond Eligibility

The distribution of any remaining assignments to students beyond eligibility is among the most difficult tasks the faculty face when distributing major aid assignments each year. The ranking of students without eligibility depends almost entirely on progress towards the degree, length of time in the program, and teaching effectiveness. Quite simply, the longer a student works on a dissertation, the less likely it is they will be given a teaching assignment. A very explicit rank-order list is developed at the department meeting. The DGS uses this list when offering assignments that come up during the late spring and summer, as TAs resign their positions for various reasons. When a special need/circumstance arises, the faculty grants the DGS the authority to make appointments without strict consideration of the rank order.

Teaching for Newly Graduated PhDs

Occasionally students remain in Iowa City for a semester or more for various professional and personal reasons after receiving their PhD degrees. It is extremely rare for a UI graduate to be appointed to a regular faculty position in the Department; at the University level, hiring one's own product has long been seen as a good way to foster stagnation and provincialism (whether true or not). Yet we do try to provide teaching opportunities for recent graduates when possible, such as teaching a specific course for a faculty person on leave.

Preference goes to the most recent graduates, depending upon area qualifications and teaching skills.

Research and Dissertation Fellowships

In addition to TAs for supporting graduate education, there are a number of grants and fellowships available for graduate students to fund research travel and dissertation writing. This section covers only the awards funded by the Graduate College and the Department. We urge students to apply for outside aid. Information on external grants is available from the Division of Sponsored Programs (an office under the Vice President for Research), the Study Abroad Program (applications for Fulbright, Stanley Foundation Travel Awards, etc.), and other University resources. Often the student's academic advisor will be the best source of information on external awards, since these can vary by specialty. As an incentive and recognition of the honor, the Graduate College adds a 5% bonus to the value of major external fellowships.

Fellowships, travel grants, and dissertation awards have **no connection to eligibility**. That is, students with or without remaining eligibility may apply. If awarded, time spent on a fellowship or other award **does not count** towards eligibility for major aid in the Department. Any remaining eligibility can be applied for upon the student's return. Many full time awards (including the Ballard and Seashore) prohibit a student from being employed at the same time. Part-time awards, particularly the Department's awards to help with research travel, can be combined in the same year as a TAship. Many students use these awards for summer research; others use them for spring semester travel after a full teaching load in the fall. Finally, Departmental awards can be held with external fellowships and grants. Some external grants do not allow for such doubling up: always check the fine print.

Graduate College Awards: The Graduate College awards a number of Ballard and Seashore dissertation writing Fellowships each year (the exact number is determined by available resources). These are prestigious competitive awards open to applicants from all humanities and social science departments. Their purpose is to fund full-time work on the **final writing semester of the dissertation**; they are not intended for continuing research work or for travel. Students who cannot make a plausible case that they will be able to finish the dissertation during the fellowship semester will not be nominated. The Graduate College enforces its expectation of completion by reducing the number of awards eligible to departments whose Ballard-Seashore recipients did not finish in the prescribed time.

In early February, the Graduate College announces the number of Ballard and Seashore fellowships available, specifies the amount of support (normally the equivalent of a full TAship), distributes criteria for applications and seeks nominations from departments. Recent Ballard and Seashore application files have required a cover letter from the student, a vita, two letters of recommendation from faculty, and evidence of substantial progress on the dissertation. At a minimum, the Department expects a polished prospectus; a stronger case can be made when the student provides copies of one or more dissertation chapters. Usually,

departments may nominate a limited number of students. *A student may be nominated only once.* The Department has a Fellowships and Awards Committee that reads all of the applications and makes its recommendations for the college and departmental nominations to the faculty at a faculty meeting in March. For the Ballard and Seashore fellowships the Chair of the Fellowships and Awards Committee then writes cover letters for the students' files summarizing the Committee's enthusiastic remarks. The DGS signs those letters and forwards them, with the required supporting materials, to the Graduate College.

Graduate College Post Comprehensive Research Awards: This award program provides an opportunity for advanced doctoral students to benefit from protected and supported time to pursue their scholarly research activities. The award is intended to recognize students with distinguished academic achievement during their early graduate training. These achievements should be evident from a combination of outstanding academic performance in coursework, as well as early scholarly research activities. Students who have held teaching assistantships in the previous two semesters will have priority.

To be eligible, nominees must have passed comprehensive exams during the prior semester or prior to the deadline in the same semester as when the nomination is made. Awardees will receive an academic semester of protected and supported time to fully engage in their scholarly research activities. This award cannot be used in combination with any other source of semester support (e.g., fellowship/scholarship, grant, graduate assistantship.)

Awardees will receive a one semester stipend. The Graduate College will also support up to 2 credit hours of tuition (at the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Graduate rate) and health benefits for the semester. Students are responsible for payment of mandatory fees.

Recipients may also be considered for Graduate College's Summer Research Fellowships or Dissertation Fellowships; however, a minimum of one year must elapse following the Post-Comp Research Award period. Graduate College Recruitment Fellowship recipients are not eligible for this award.

Departments may nominate (in rank order) up to two students by the deadline in the fall and spring semesters.

Internal or Departmental Awards: In order to make applying for both the Graduate College fellowships and History Department awards a reasonably coherent process, we link the application process for Departmental awards to the Ballard and Seashore timetable. Thus applications for Departmental awards are due to the DGS (via the Graduate Program Coordinator) **on the same day** as those for the Ballard and Seashore fellowships. Students may not apply for the History Department awards until after they have passed their comprehensive examinations. Detailed instructions and information about specific fellowships and awards will be distributed through the GHS-Official listserv well in advance of the deadlines.

The Departmental Fellowships and Awards Committee reviews all submitted applications, but gives first priority to students who have not held a Departmental award previously; if there are no suitable first-time candidates for the awards, previous awardees can receive a second one. This eligibility restriction applies only to Departmental awards, **not** to students who have previously held other Fellowships (such as Graduate College or external grants). Students who are nominated for the Ballard and Seashore Fellowships are also ranked for Departmental awards unless they explicitly state in the cover letter that they do not wish to be considered for them. Because the Graduate College nominations and the Departmental awards proceed at the same time, Departmental awards are announced after the Graduate College has decided upon the Ballard and Seashore Fellowships. These announcements may not be made until mid-April.

Other Academic Opportunities for Graduate Students

There are many opportunities for academic study and experience available to History graduate students outside of the Department. We encourage students to take courses in other departments, for work in a related area can provide important breadth for graduate work. Faculty in the History Department regularly have students from other department in their classes, and serve on comprehensive and dissertation committees in many other areas. Such faculty can be important sources for advice about what to take and whom to work

with in other departments and programs. Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies; American Studies; African American Studies; International Studies; the Project on the Rhetoric of Inquiry (POROI) are just a few examples of places that foster interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research and teaching.

In addition to the exciting programs available on campus, graduate students should also be aware of the CIC exchange program. The University of Iowa participates in this program, in which students from the UI can take a course or courses at another participating university. History students have found these exchanges particularly helpful when the faculty member who covers their major area of study goes on leave for a year: moving to another university to take advantage of professors who teach in that area can be both timely and stimulating. CIC exchanges are arranged through the Graduate College, which can provide the current information on how to apply.

The Academic Calendar for Graduate Student Business

This section contains an outline of the approximate times items of concern to graduate students come up during the year. Specific due dates for most events and tasks are set by the Graduate College, the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, and the central administration. The Department sets its own internal due dates to allow for the time we need to make decisions, fill out forms and juggle competing work.

August (before classes start)	<p>The DGS meets with new students who have arrived and made appointments for individual advising sessions.</p> <p>Contracts begin the Wednesday before classes start.</p> <p>The Graduate College holds an orientation session and other welcoming events for new graduate students.</p> <p>The department holds an orientation session for new graduate students/TAs. GHS holds a meeting to welcome new and returning graduate students.</p> <p>Gradership assignments for fall semester are made and last-minute adjustment to TA assignments are made.</p>
Classes start	<p>The DGS hosts a Department party for all graduate students and faculty on the first Friday of classes. The aim of the party is to welcome new graduate students and renew ties between returning ones. Spouses and partners are normally not invited to this party, except for the spouses and partners of new grad students.</p>
Mid- September	<p>By mid-September, the Department must submit the copy for the Schedule of Courses for Summer Sessions.</p> <p>Any students with assignments for spring semester who have changed their plans and will not be a TA need to inform the DGS and Department Administrator as soon as possible so these positions may be reassigned.</p>
Early October	<p>Information arrives about course enrollments in our fall semester classes. The DEO, DGS and Department Administrator meet to start reviewing assignments for spring semester courses. Based on previous years' experience, current enrollments, Liberal Arts requirements, and remaining TA eligibility the department estimates the number of Issues courses and Survey discussion sections.</p> <p>The Department Administrator distributes a memo to all faculty asking for details on the courses we want to offer for fall and for spring semesters of the next academic year.</p>

The number and kind of survey courses affects how many discussion sections we will have to offer TAs in the next academic year.

Early
November

The Issues Coordinator meets with all of the students teaching Issues sections in spring semester. At this meeting, students choose specific Issues courses and section times. All of the **other** section times listed in the printed schedule of course then must be closed (via the Department Administrator) before early registration starts. Similarly, discussion section times for all of the survey courses must be chosen by students assigned to these classes, in consultation with the course instructor. All of the **other** section times must then be closed to students.

As students await word of their assignments to specific discussion sections, the DGS receives the budget update about the actual TA funds available to the Department for spring. Final word (it is hoped) has come in from graduate students **not** teaching in the spring. We compute the number of Issues sections we would like to fill and contact all students (if any) with eligibility who did not receive a full assignment, and then, if need be, post-eligibility students, to fill these sections.

The Department Administrator has final discussions with the Registrar's office and facilities planning about the sections we have closed and, in rare cases, sections we have added, to be ready for spring registration.

Early
December

The copy for courses to be given during fall semester of next year is due to the administration. This list must be as accurate as possible, both for the courses we will give and the times and rooms in which they will be given. Planning for the next fall goes on during the finalization of spring teaching. At this point we schedule a large number of Issues sections and survey discussion sections in order to get room and time assignments reserved with facilities planning and the registrar's office.

January –
February

GA admissions begin to be considered; fall semester courses and TA needs begin to take shape.

The department receives notice of our preliminary budget allocation for GAs from the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences for the next academic year. The College determines this amount based on previous course offerings and enrollments, *not* on the number of graduate students we have with eligibility for teaching in the Department.

The Admissions committee starts to meet in mid-January to review all the completed applications for our graduate degrees. We identify the top applicants, some of whom will be admitted immediately, and some of whom will be placed on a waiting list. The DGS, based upon the on-going work of the admissions committee, makes cases for fellowships at the Graduate College level.

The application process for Graduate College dissertation fellowships and Departmental awards takes place. Notice goes out to all graduate students about applying for these awards. Sometimes we wait until we have the announcement from the Graduate College of their specific due dates before we prepare the departmental memo to students; if possible we announce the competition earlier, to give students more time to prepare their files. The department's Fellowships Committee makes its ranked recommendations to the faculty for their approval at the March faculty meeting. None of the results of the award decisions are announced until the Graduate College announces the results of the Ballard and Seashore Fellowships.

All continuing graduate students seeking regular teaching aid, both with and without eligibility, complete forms documenting current status in the program, progress made and anticipations for future work. These forms are given to advisors for comments and

approval, and are then submitted to the DGS, either by the student or the advisor. The DGS then prepares information on all of the students who applied for aid in preparation for the aid meeting.

The admissions committee makes up the final list in late February/early March, for ratification by the department at the March faculty meeting.

March At the March Department meeting the faculty makes the final decisions on admissions, aid for continuing students, and recommendations for graduate fellowships. At this time, the Department decides upon the maximum number of students to admit with aid and whether any one should be admitted to the MA Terminal or PhD program without aid. The DGS prepares History Department offers, including commitments to Graduate Instructorships, for entering students. After this meeting, the DGS has discretion (in consultation with the DEO and faculty advisors if necessary) to make additional appointments.

Soon after the March faculty meeting, appointment letters are sent for Graduate Assistantships for continuing students. These letters will specify tentative assignments for fall semester (which, however, are subject to change). Appointment letters—not payroll forms—are what the department considers to be a binding commitment for graduate aid for the coming year. We ask the student to sign and return a copy of the appointment letter either accepting or rejecting the appointment no later than April 15.

The Graduate College announces the decisions on Ballard and Seashore Fellowships. The department then announces its departmental awards. The DGS quickly incorporates this information into the material needed for the aid meeting, as any student with eligibility who had applied for aid and now receives a Ballard or Seashore no longer can hold a TAship.

Early April All appointments (both new and continuing students) should be accepted/rejected by April 15. At this time, DGS and Department Administrator will begin process of making assignments for the fall semester.

May By the week before classes start for Summer Session, CLAS knows the status of enrollments to its courses for the summer. If a course has fewer than **16** –students enrolled **it may be cancelled**.

Mid-summer – August Changes happen throughout the summer that may impact teaching assignments. To include:

- Students we have accepted but have changed their minds about coming to the UI
- Responses from applicants on the waiting list whom we accept when another person decides not to come
- Graduate students get jobs elsewhere; get external grants; chose to continue doing research out of town; or have personal reasons NOT to teach in the fall or spring

If your plans for the upcoming fall semester change, please contact the DGS as soon as possible.

Information on Orientation dates will be sent via email.

then we start all over again....

The History Department Guidelines for Graduate Assistant Absences

Exceptional circumstances sometimes necessitate missing your class. In some cases you can plan for the absence, in others cases there might be an illness or a sudden emergency. In most cases, it is the responsibility of the teaching assistant (TA), if necessary with the assistance of the Issues Coordinator (for Issues/Perspectives) or Course Supervisor (for multi-section surveys) to arrange coverage of missed classes.

In the case of a **planned absence** (for example, to attend a scholarly conference), you should consult ahead of time with the Issues Coordinator or Course Supervisor about why, when, and for how long you will be away, and what alternative arrangements you are making for your students' instruction.

In the case of an **illness or family crisis**, contact the Issues Coordinator or Course Supervisor as soon as possible by telephone and email with the following information: your class's meeting time and place, when you think you expect to be able to return to the classroom, who might be able to cover for you, and how to reach you while you're out. (Do not assume the message has gotten through until you get a reply from the Issues Coordinator or Course Supervisor.)

If you cannot reach the Issues Coordinator or Course Supervisor and the class is imminent, call the History office (335-2299) so a **cancellation announcement** can be posted on the classroom door. Then continue your efforts to reach the Issues Coordinator or Course Supervisor.

In cases when several "working days" or class periods must be missed, the Department may be able to secure additional funds from the College to hire a substitute instructor.

What kinds of occurrences warrant absence from the classroom are often matters of judgment. Faculty members regularly make the same judgments themselves, and you should not hesitate to ask the Issues Supervisor or another professor for advice. Note the COGs agreement specifies your right to a limited number of days of paid leave and to paid sick leave, family illness leave and bereavement leave. (See the COGS contract at (<https://cogs.org/current-contract>). In any case, remember your primary professional responsibility is to your students and their education. Students lose out when instructors miss classes.

It is wise, in planning your course, to identify a relevant video in the Main Library's collection in case of emergency. Consider also building a support group among TAs teaching similar courses, with whom you exchange syllabi and discuss your courses, so you can cover for each other if the need arises. It can be helpful, too, to have an email list of your students so they can be reached in the event of last minute emergencies and cancellations.

The teacher is responsible for meeting classes at the scheduled time and for ending classes at the scheduled time. If extra class sessions or make-up classes are needed, they should be scheduled to accommodate all students so no student is penalized because of conflicts with other scheduled academic or professional commitments. As a TA, you will be expected to follow the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' teaching policies, which are described at <https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty> (see Undergraduate Teaching Policies and Resources).

Course of Action for Graduate Assistants: Disruptive Student Behavior

This is a basic guide for handling students who engage in disruptive behavior. If you have questions about any part of this process, do not hesitate to send inquiries to the Course Supervisor, the Issues Coordinator, or the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). You may also reference [Conflict Management at Iowa](#).

I. Emergency Disruptions

- According to the University's *Code of Student Life*, if a student engages in physically or verbally disruptive behavior, you have the right to ask him/her to leave the classroom.
- If a student refuses to leave the room, you may call:
 - i. Department of Public Safety 335-5022
 - ii. Dean of Students Office 335-1162
- If you eject a student from the classroom, you must report the incident in writing to Dean of Students, 135 IMU. The History Department's DEO, DGS and Issues Coordinator are prepared to assist a Graduate Assistant in preparing a report to the Dean of Students.

II. Non-Emergency Disruptive Behavior

- The University recognizes disruptive behavior can cover a range of behaviors, from lewd remarks to confrontational gestures to belittling questions. TAs should know the University's *Code of Student Life* includes the following behavior among the actions which may make a student subject to disciplinary action:

In a classroom or other instructional setting, willful failure to comply with a reasonable directive of the classroom instructor or intentional conduct that has the effect of disrupting University classroom instruction or interfering with the instructor's ability to manage the classroom.
- The Department recommends that instructors consider carefully the *Code's* emphasis on behavior that is *disruptive*. The Department considers that *disruptive* behavior includes actions and comments that challenge or undermine the authority required by an instructor to maintain order and quiet in the classroom, and to demand the full attention and participation of students. However, some behavior, comments, mannerisms and attire may demonstrate annoyingly bad manners while not disrupting the learning environment in the classroom.
- Do not hesitate to consult the DGS, Issues Coordinator or lead TA if you are unsure whether a student's behavior is indeed *disruptive* or if you would like advice on handling disruptive students.
- If you believe that a student's behavior is disrupting the learning environment of the classroom, you have the right to undertake disciplinary action against the student. Examples of disciplinary action include: ejecting the student from the classroom for the remainder of the class period, docking a student's participation grade, marking the student absent, etc.
- If you undertake disciplinary action, you must report the incident in writing to the Dean of Students. The Department's DEO, DGS and Administrator are prepared to assist in preparing a report.
- The Department asks TAs to inform it immediately of any disciplinary action. Issues TAs should report to the Issues Coordinator; TAs in faculty-taught courses should report to the faculty-instructor.
- TAs should keep a written record of all disciplinary action, circumstances and incidents that prompt it.
- The Department affirms its commitment to supporting TAs who take disciplinary action against disruptive students.