HISTORY, M.A.

The Department of History offers the master of arts and doctor of philosophy degrees as well as minor work for doctoral students in other fields. The program is designed to meet the needs of the Ph.D. candidate; most students earn the master’s degree en route to the Ph.D. The department only occasionally accepts a student for terminal master’s work.

The department trains resourceful researchers, committed teachers, and engaged public intellectuals. We offer a rigorous course of study that combines independent and collaborative work and that emphasizes scholarly and intellectual connectedness. The department strongly supports the Wisconsin Idea, the principle that education should influence and improve people’s lives beyond the university classroom. For more than 100 years, this idea has guided the university’s work. Students pursue a variety of careers, both inside and outside the academy.

Graduate students in the Department of History specialize in one of the following subfields or study programs, each of which sets its own programmatic requirements, consistent with Graduate School policies and subject to the approval of the department as a whole: African history; Central Asian history; East Asian history; European history; Latin American and Caribbean history; Middle Eastern history; South Asian history; Southeast Asian history; and United States history. See also Program in Gender and Women’s History below. For information on the M.A. and Ph.D. requirements of the study programs, see the History Graduate Handbook or contact the graduate coordinator. For information about the faculty’s areas of geographic and thematic specialization, see the department’s faculty specialty page.

The department offers multiyear support packages to all incoming graduate students. Support begins with a fellowship in the first year and includes additional years of comparable support (teaching assistantships, project assistantships, and internal or external fellowships), provided the student makes satisfactory progress and performs well as a graduate assistant. Contact the graduate coordinator for details.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

To make progress toward a graduate degree, students must meet the Graduate School Minimum Degree Requirements and Satisfactory Progress in addition to the requirements of the program.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.A.

MINIMUM GRADUATE DEGREE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

30 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE RESIDENCE CREDIT REQUIREMENT

16 credits

MINIMUM GRADUATE COURSEWORK (50%) REQUIREMENT

Half of the degree coursework (15 credits out of 30 total credits) must be completed in graduate-level coursework; courses with the Graduate Level Coursework attribute are identified and searchable in the university’s Course Guide.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: GRADUATE WORK FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS

With program approval, students are allowed to count up to 6 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNDERGRADUATE

With program approval, students are allowed to count up to 7 credits of UW–Madison undergraduate coursework.

PRIOR COURSEWORK REQUIREMENTS: UW–MADISON UNIVERSITY SPECIAL

With program approval, students are allowed to count coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW–Madison University Special student, up to a maximum of 15 credits.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

PROGRAM-SPECIFIC COURSES REQUIRED

Contact the program for information on any additional required courses.

OVERALL GRADUATE GPA REQUIREMENT

3.00

OTHER GRADE REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate School requires an average grade of B or better in all coursework (300 or above, not including research credits) taken as a graduate student unless conditions for probationary status require higher grades. Grades of Incomplete are considered to be unsatisfactory if they are not removed during the next enrolled semester.

PROBATION POLICY

The Graduate School regularly reviews the record of any student who earned grades of BC, C, D, F, or Incomplete in a graduate course (300 or above), or grade of U in research credits. This review could result in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being suspended from the Graduate School.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

Every graduate student is required to have an advisor. To ensure that students are making satisfactory progress toward a degree, the Graduate School expects them to meet with their advisor on a regular basis.

An advisor generally serves as the thesis advisor. In many cases, an advisor is assigned to incoming students. Students can be suspended from the Graduate School if they do not have an advisor. An advisor is a
faculty member, or sometimes a committee, from the major department responsible for providing advice regarding graduate studies.

A committee often accomplishes advising for the students in the early stages of their studies.

**ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS**

Contact the program for information on required assessments and examinations.

**TIME CONSTRAINTS**

Master's degree students who have been absent for five or more consecutive years lose all credits that they have earned before their absence. Individual programs may count the coursework students completed prior to their absence for meeting program requirements; that coursework may not count toward Graduate School credit requirements.

**LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS**

Contact the program for information on any language requirements.

**ADMISSIONS**

The department requires an applicant to have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, with a minimum overall grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale), and a minimum 3.0 grade point average in history courses taken as an undergraduate (although successful applicants generally have far higher GPAs). The department occasionally admits superior students who have not had the equivalent of a history major. The department requires the Graduate Record Exam. The GRE must have been taken during the five years preceding application to the graduate program. Those taking the GRE need take only the general aptitude portion of the exam.

Applicants must also submit official transcripts from all colleges attended, three letters of recommendation, the selection of study sheet, and a statement of purpose (personal statement). All fields require a writing sample. International students must submit Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or Michigan English Language Assessment Battery (MELAB) scores if English is not the language of the country of the student's permanent residence. Upon admission, they must also take the SPEAK test, the institutional version of the Test for Spoken English, in order to hold the teaching assistantships that constitute an element of multiyear support packages.

Each applicant is judged on the basis of previous academic record, letters of recommendation (especially those provided by historians or scholars in related fields), the personal statement, the writing sample, and other criteria including GRE scores.

Admission is highly competitive. The deadline for application is December 1. Although the department may review exceptional applications arriving after that date, most slots are filled in the review that occurs in January.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

- Articulates and critiques the theories, research methods, and approaches to historical inquiry in the student's primary field of study.

- Demonstrates understanding of the primary field of study in a historical and global context.

- Is able to identify and make appropriate use of relevant historical sources.

- Demonstrates the ability to evaluate and synthesize large bodies of scholarship or evidence.

- Is able to construct a significant and persuasive historical argument that makes an original contribution to historical knowledge.

- Communicates complex ideas in a clear and understandable manner.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

- Recognizes and applies established principles of ethical and professional conduct.

**PEOPLE**

**Faculty:** Professors Sweet (chair), Bernault, Boswell, Chamberlain, Cohen, Cronon, Desan, Dunlavy, Enstad, Hansen, Hirsch, Johnson, Jones, Kantrowitz, Kleijwegt, Koshar, Mallon, McCoy, McDonald, Michels, Mitman, Neville, Plummer, Reese, Roberts, Scarano, Sharpless, Sommerville, Stern, Sweet, Wandel, Winichakul, Wink, Young; Associate Professors Cheng, Dennis, Enke, Hall, Kodesh, Ratner-Rosenhagen, Shoemaker, Thal; Assistant Professors Bitzan, Callaci, Chamedes, Chan, Ciancia, Dinces, Haynes, Hennessy, Ipsen, Kim, Kinzley, Lapina, Murthy, Taylor, Ussishkin, Whiting