

HISTORY, M.A.

With some 130 graduate students and nearly 60 faculty members, the Department of History is home to one of the oldest, most distinguished, and most comprehensive graduate programs in the US, renowned for its long and valued tradition of collegiality and openness. We offer separate graduate degrees in History and in the History of Science, Medicine, and Technology. All told, our internationally recognized faculty (<https://history.wisc.edu/people-main/faculty-listed-alphabetically/>) has been mentoring distinguished historians since 1893 (<https://history.wisc.edu/our-graduate-program/doctorates-awarded/>).

Our degree program in History is designed to meet the needs of the Ph.D. candidate, and we offer funding (<https://history.wisc.edu/graduate/prospective-students/funding/>) only to students who intend to pursue the Ph.D. However, we also welcome applications from students who wish to earn only the M.A. if they have external funding or are self-funded.

Graduate training in the History degree program is organized by primary fields of study. Although most of our students are trained in a single field of study, students whose research interests span more than one field have the option to craft an individual plan of study (<https://history.wisc.edu/graduate/individual-plan-of-study/>).

We offer the following primary fields of study (<https://history.wisc.edu/fields-programs/>) in the History degree program:

- African History
- East Asian History
- European History—Ancient, Medieval, Early Modern, and Modern
- Latin American and Caribbean History
- Middle East and North African History
- South Asian History
- Southeast Asian History
- US/North American History

Within their primary field of study, students also have the opportunity to organize their studies thematically. Our faculty's special thematic strengths (<https://history.wiscweb.wisc.edu/people-main/faculty-by-area-of-specialty/>) are in:

- Borderlands and diasporas
- Environmental history
- Gender and Women's History, Program in (<https://history.wisc.edu/fields-programs-and-working-groups/program-in-gender-and-womens-history/>)
- History of Science, Medicine, and Technology (<https://history.wisc.edu/fields-programs-and-working-groups/history-of-science-medicine-and-technology/faculty-associates-affiliates/>)
- Intellectual and cultural history
- Jewish History, Program in (<https://history.wisc.edu/fields-programs-and-working-groups/program-in-jewish-history/>)
- Labor and political economy
- Race, ethnicity, and indigeneity
- Religion and ritual
- War in Society and Culture Program (<https://history.wisc.edu/fields-programs-and-working-groups/war-in-society-and-culture-program/>)

Our faculty train 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 (<https://www.wisc.edu/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.

OTHER DEGREE OPTIONS INCLUDE: BRIDGE PROGRAM WITH UW–MADISON'S DEPARTMENT OF AFRO-AMERICAN STUDIES

This academic partnership is designed to allow students to complete the M.A. in the Department of Afro-American Studies and the Ph.D. in History. It enables the Afro-American Studies student who specializes in the History area to meet the basic requirements of the History M.A. while completing a degree in Afro-American Studies. Students may apply simultaneously to the two departments or may apply to the Department of History after they begin their program in the Department of Afro-American Studies, usually in the fall of the first or second M.A. year.

For details, see The Bridge Program (<https://history.wiscweb.wisc.edu/our-graduate-program/bridge-program/>) or contact the graduate program coordinator.

ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. **Applicants must meet** the minimum requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/>) **of the Graduate School as well as the program(s)**. Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/>).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	December 1
Spring Deadline	This program does not admit in the spring.
Summer Deadline	This program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Not required.
English Proficiency Test	Every applicant whose native language is not English or whose undergraduate instruction was not in English must provide an English proficiency test score and meet the Graduate School minimum requirements (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/#english-proficiency).
Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)	n/a
Letters of Recommendation Required	3

All applicants must meet UW–Madison Graduate School's minimum applicant requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements/>), in addition to the below History Graduate Program requirements described below.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: DECEMBER 1

To apply, applicants must submit or declare the following in the online application (<https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/>):

History Supplemental Application

This section of the application asks you to provide information about your research interests, declare your preferred faculty advisors, and outline your prior language preparation (if any).

Writing Sample

Provide a sample that best illustrates the quality of your written work (optimally no more than 50 pages, double-spaced; maximum file size 6 MB).

Transcripts

Upload an unofficial copy of your transcript from all institutions attended, showing any undergraduate and graduate degrees awarded. If accepted, you will be required to send two official transcripts from each institution.

CV or Resumé

This should highlight your accomplishments and qualifications including academic honors or distinctions; professional, research, and/or teaching experience; and any publications.

Letters of recommendation

Provide contact information for the three individuals who will furnish recommendations on your behalf. (They will receive an upload link by email.) Your letter writers need not be historians, but they should be able to speak to your academic preparation to pursue historical studies at the graduate level.

Statement of purpose

The statement of purpose (2–3 pages, double-spaced) explains your reasons for graduate study. It may be the hardest part of the application to write, but it is also the most important. While you will likely include some autobiographical information, its primary purpose is to acquaint us with how your mind works. We want to know, for example, what kinds of intellectual problems and issues interest you, whose stories intrigue you, what sorts of analytical or narrative approaches you like to pursue, which historical writings you admire—and your reasons for these various preferences. Please help us understand your decision to enter the historical profession, especially at a time when the academic job market is in decline, and how you see your own role in it. There is no single right way to approach this part of the application, but we suggest that you bear in mind the usual cautions for personal writing: speak straightforwardly, in your own voice, and write as well as you know how.

INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS

All international applicants must also meet the **English Proficiency** requirements (<https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/requirements/>) set forth by the Graduate School.

For additional detail about the admissions process, please visit the Prospective Student (<https://history.wisc.edu/our-graduate-program/prospective-students/>) pages on our website.

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (<https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/>) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

We offer funding only to students who intend to pursue the Ph.D.—an application for admission to our Ph.D. program, therefore, is an application for funding. We also welcome applications from students who have external funding or are self-funded, including those pursuing the M.A. only.*

MULTI-YEAR FUNDING PACKAGE

If you apply to the History Ph.D. degree program without external or self-funding and are accepted, you will be offered a multiyear support package, which begins in your first year. The details of our support guarantees may vary by funding source, field of study, and other circumstances, and the guarantee is, of course, contingent on satisfactory progress and performance. Most of our support packages offer 5 years of support and begin with a fellowship year from the UW–Madison Graduate School, generously funded by the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (<http://www.warf.org/stewardship/grants-support/current/current-grant.cmsx>). Our most distinguished packages include two years of fellowships and may also include summer support:

- Graduate Research Scholar fellowships (<http://ls.wisc.edu/current-students/graduate-students/cgrs/>) for underrepresented students or first-generation college students—offered annually
- George L. Mosse fellowships in modern Jewish history, European cultural history, or LGBTQ history—offered annually or as endowment income permits
- Julie A. and Peter M. Weil Fellowship (<https://history.wisc.edu/our-graduate-program/prospective-students/julie-a-and-peter-m-weil-distinguished-graduate-fellowship/>) in American Jewish history and select U.S. history fields—offered annually or as endowment income permits
- William J. Courtenay Fellowship in Medieval history—offered as funds permit
- Gerda Lerner Fellowship (<https://history.wisc.edu/our-graduate-program/prospective-students/funding/>) in women's history—offered as funds permit

Additional years of guaranteed funding will come from employment as teaching assistants or project assistants or additional fellowships.

COMPETING FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

All students in good standing can apply for writing prizes, conference travel awards, and supplements to external awards. Once graduate students have passed their preliminary examination and advanced to candidacy, they may apply for various departmental fellowships and research travel funding.

For students who have reached the advanced stages of dissertation writing, further funding opportunities are available. Our advanced dissertators may apply for teaching fellowships that give them

the opportunity to design and teach an undergraduate course—the Merle Curti Teaching Fellowship (<https://history.wisc.edu/our-graduate-program/current-students/funding-opportunities/merle-curti-teaching-fellowship/>) (any field of study), the George L. Mosse Teaching Fellowship in European History, and the William J. Courtenay Teaching Fellowship in ancient, medieval, or early modern European history. (These fellowships are offered as often as endowment income permits.) Thanks to funding provided by the Doris G. Quinn Foundation (<https://dorisquinnfoundation.org/>), we are also pleased to offer a dissertator fellowship, which provides financial support for the final year of dissertation writing in any field.

In addition, UW–Madison offers a wealth of other opportunities to compete for funding offered, for example, by the International Division (<http://international.wisc.edu/funding-your-international-experiences/>), the Institute for Research in the Humanities (<http://irh.wisc.edu>), and the UW Graduate School (research and conference travel awards (<https://grad.wisc.edu/studentfunding/grantscomp/>)).

More details on our funding for current/continuing students are available here (<https://history.wisc.edu/our-graduate-program/current-students/funding-opportunities/>).

* If you wish to apply only for the History M.A. (also known as the terminal M.A.), please describe your sources of support on the History Supplemental Application. For information on the cost of graduate study at UW–Madison, see this link (<https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions/cost/>).

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (<http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/#policiesandrequirements>), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students are able to complete a program with minimal disruptions to careers and other commitments.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW–Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirements Detail	
Minimum Credit Requirement	30 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	24 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	15 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Details can be found in the Graduate School's Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) policy (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 (3.25 after 4th semester of full-time study)
Other Grade Requirements	n/a
Assessments and Examinations	In order to receive the Master's Degree in History, students must pass the Second-Year Review (SYR). A passing review requires that students: complete an article-length research paper, fulfill one language requirement, clear all incompletes, fulfill any additional requirements for their specific field of study, submit a list of prelim fields along with a timeline for completing prelims, and receive a positive endorsement from the three faculty members on the review committee.
Language Requirements	All students must demonstrate, at a minimum, reading knowledge of at least one language other than English. Each field of study determines which languages may be used to satisfy the language requirement; see below for details.

REQUIRED COURSES

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
HISTORY 701	History in a Global Perspective	1
HISTORY 800	Research Seminar in History (or an equivalent research seminar in the student's field of study) ¹	3
Electives		
Work with advisor to complete 26 credits of graduate-level courses		26
All History Courses (http://guide.wisc.edu/courses/history/)		
Total Credits		30

¹

Alternative course options: HISTORY 855 Seminar in Japanese History for students studying East Asian History, HISTORY 861 Seminar-The History of Africa for students studying African History.

- **Additional M.A. Requirements by fields of study**¹

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These pathways are internal to the program and represent different curricular paths a student can follow to earn this degree. Pathway names do not appear in the Graduate School admissions application, and they will not appear on the transcript.

African History

Course Requirements: Each student must enroll in a seminar or proseminar (if available) every semester of residence. In their first year, they may enroll in History lecture courses in their area of specialization. Undergraduate lecture courses may not be taken for credit after the first year of graduate study. With approval, students can take AFRICAN (<https://guide.wisc.edu/courses/african/>) courses.

Language Requirements: Students must fulfill their M.A. language requirement with an African language.

Central Asian History

No special field requirements. Students should choose courses in consultation with their advisor in History numbered 300 or above. The language requirement varies according to the student's research interest.

East Asian History

Course Requirements: Students must complete four graduate courses in East Asian history. These can be upper-division lecture courses or graduate seminars/colloquia (taken for a minimum of 12 credits). At least two of these courses should be in the major field, and at least one should be outside the major field. NOTE: Students should also begin fulfilling the course requirements that must be completed prior to taking preliminary examination. They are required to take one semester each of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean history. They may fulfill this requirement by taking a graduate seminar or an upper-division lecture course. They may also fulfill the requirement by serving as a TA in either an introductory or upper-division course. Students are also required to take HISTORY 703 History and Theory.

Language Requirements: Students must complete the eighth semester in their main language (Chinese, Japanese, or Korean) by the time they either undergo the Second-Year Review or complete their fourth semester of coursework.

European History

Language Requirements: Students in Medieval History must demonstrate proficiency in two foreign languages, usually one medieval and one modern.

Latin American and Caribbean History

Course Requirements: Each student must enroll in a seminar or proseminar (if available) every semester of residence. Other courses will include History graduate seminars or similar courses in the culture area of specialization. Undergraduate lecture courses may not be taken for credit unless a faculty advisor or co-advisor approves.

Middle East and North African History

Proficiency in two languages, at least one of which must be a language of the Middle East or North Africa, is required. There are no other specific special field requirements; students choose courses in consultation with their advisor.

South Asian History

Course Requirements: Each student must enroll in a seminar or proseminar (if available) every semester of residence. In lieu of a History graduate course, they may substitute an independent study in History

or a graduate seminar in another department. In their first year, they may enroll in History lecture courses in their area of specialization. Undergraduate lecture courses may not be taken for credit after the first year of graduate study.

Language Requirements: Students must complete two years of study in one South Asian language (or demonstrate equivalent proficiency by examination).

Southeast Asian History

Course Requirements: M.A. students shall take six credits of graduate seminar in Southeast Asian history each academic year or, if not available, substitute credits of independent study with a faculty specialist in Southeast Asian history.

Language Requirements: Students must complete two years of study (or demonstrate equivalent proficiency by examination) in a Southeast Asian language or, with the approval of the Southeast Asian faculty, in a relevant colonial/imperial language.

United States History

Course Requirements: Students must take:

- The core seminar, HISTORY 900 Introduction to History for U.S. Historians, in the fall semester of their first year. This seminar introduces students to the U.S. History faculty and their fields of research and teaches students the core skills of professional historians.
- Three three-credit seminars that cover a significant portion of the seventeenth and/or eighteenth centuries, the nineteenth century, and the twentieth century, respectively. If a seminar falls into more than one category, the student may choose the single category for which they will receive credit.

In exceptional circumstances, student may, with the consent of their advisor, take up to six credits in upper-level undergraduate courses. The instructors of such courses have the prerogative to refuse admission to graduate students. NOTE: Prior to completing their preliminary examination, students may use no more than six credits of HISTORY 999 Independent Work to meet the requirements of the major field. Students will probably find it useful to preserve most, if not all, of their six credits of HISTORY 999 for preliminary examination preparation.

Program in Gender and Women's History Concentration

Course Requirements: Students must meet the requirements of their primary field of study; take HISTORY 752 Seminar in Transnational Gender History; and take at least two additional History graduate seminars that are gender-specific, i.e., that have at least a 50% focus on issues and analyses of gender, women, or sexuality.

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Work from Other Institutions

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

UW–Madison Undergraduate

This program follows the Graduate School's policy for Satisfying Requirements with Coursework from Undergraduate Career at UW–Madison. (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>)

UW–Madison University Special

This program follows the Graduate School's policy for Transfer from UW–Madison University Special Student Career at UW–Madison. (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1216/>)

PROBATION

This program follows the Graduate School's Probation policy. (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1217/>)

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

This program follows the Graduate School's Advisor policy (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1232/>) and the Graduate School's Committees policy (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1201/>).

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

TIME LIMITS

This program follows the Graduate School's Time Limits policy. (<https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1221/>)

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
 - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Dean of Students Office (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employeeabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)

- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

Students should contact the department chair or program director with questions about grievances. They may also contact the L&S Academic Divisional Associate Deans, the L&S Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning Administration, or the L&S Director of Human Resources.

OTHER

n/a

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

The Department of History is committed to training our students to develop skills required for a variety of careers both in and outside the academy. Although a large network of our alumni teach at colleges and universities in the U.S. and across the world, a number of our Ph.D.s have enjoyed considerable success outside the academy. They include recent graduates who are currently a museum curator, teachers at prestigious preparatory academies, a historian with the U.S. Secretary of Defense's POW/Missing Persons Agency, a CEO of an investment firm, an analyst for a defense contractor, an editor at a small press, and consultants working with non-profits in the human services, education, and public policy fields. In recent years we have undertaken a number of initiatives, detailed below, to broaden the training of our students for a wide array of careers.

Much of the preparation for the job market occurs informally and over the course of the student's graduate career—in the mentoring relationship between faculty advisor and student, in the presentation of student research in department venues, in the student's participation in professional conferences, and in early forms of professional publication. Coursework, such as for the minor requirement or certificates, can be an avenue to expanded competencies. The Center for Humanities, for example, offers a Public Humanities certificate (<http://humanities.wisc.edu/public-humanities/graduate-certificate/>). Be sure to explore the Graduate School's resources such as "The Versatile PhD" (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/versatilephd/>) and its Professional Development pages (<http://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>).

Whatever career paths interest you, we encourage you to plan ahead and discuss your options—early and often—with your faculty advisor(s), with the Director of Graduate Studies, or with the Graduate Coordinator.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINARS (HISTORY 710)

This topics seminar is offered every semester. It emphasizes building skills that are valuable both inside and outside the academy, such as managing the writing process, teaching college history, or

communicating historical research to a broad, nonspecialist audience. Since it is a topics course, more than one may be offered in a given semester. Recent topics include "Writing for Academy and Beyond," "Digital History," and "On the Job Market."

Also see our faculty affiliate (<https://history.wisc.edu/people-main/faculty-affiliates/>) and teaching associate (<https://history.wisc.edu/people-main/teaching-associates/>) profiles.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENTS

Throughout the year, the Graduate Program sponsors various workshops intended to help students negotiate specific milestones of graduate study and to assist them in preparing for and going on the job market as they near completion of the Ph.D. Our programming currently includes:

Preliminary Examination Workshop

This offers a discussion of the various requirements for preliminary examinations: how to assemble committees, compiling reading lists, Graduate School requirements, and more.

Curriculum Vitae Workshops

These workshops are designed for students at all levels, ranging from first-year students writing CVs for campus positions to advanced dissertators on the job market.

Mock Interviews

The Graduate Program offers a series of opportunities to practice with a committee of our faculty for AHA interviews and on-campus job talks. They are open to a limited number of students who expect to be actively on the job market in the fall.

Careers in History Workshops

Our program is committed to helping its graduates seek and secure employment following the completion of their Ph.D. Since the financial crisis in 2008, the academic job market has softened markedly. While the Graduate Program continues to provide outstanding preparation for academic jobs, we also encourage our students to think more broadly about their career prospects and the transferability of their skills. As funds permit, we occasionally bring to campus History graduates who are working in the non-profit, private, or public-sector to meet with current graduate students and share their experience. We also offer opportunities to learn best practices for post-doctoral fellowship applications.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Articulates and critiques the theories, research methods, and approaches to historical inquiry in the student's primary field of study.
2. Demonstrates understanding of the primary field of study in a historical and global context.
3. Is able to identify and make appropriate use of relevant historical sources.
4. Demonstrates the ability to evaluate and synthesize large bodies of scholarship or evidence.
5. Is able to construct a significant and persuasive historical argument that makes an original contribution to historical knowledge.
6. Communicates complex ideas in a clear and understandable manner.
7. Recognizes and applies established principles of ethical and professional conduct.

PEOPLE

See the History department webpage for a full directory of faculty (<https://history.wisc.edu/people-main/faculty-listed-alphabetically/>).