Department of History
Western Illinois University
Master of Arts in History
Graduate Handbook

World Map, c. 1799

Department of History: http://www.wiu.edu/cas/history/

School of Graduate Studies http://www.wiu.edu/grad/

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Purpose and Mission of Program

The Department of History at Western Illinois University offers a program of study leading to the Master of Arts degree (MA) in WIU’s School of Graduate Studies. The Department of History’s MA program is designed to train students in the methodological and theoretical components of academic history and in broad areas of historical study and analysis. The program prepares students for careers in teaching, academia, law, public and government service, publishing, and research, as well as other professions. The program also assists in the professional development of full-time teachers and other educators and provides a foundation for further graduate study.

Admission Requirements

Students selecting history as a graduate major should have completed a minimum of 18 semester hours of undergraduate work in history and must have a cumulative undergraduate GPA of at least 2.75 (based on all hours attempted) or a GPA of at least 3.0 for the last two years of undergraduate study.

The Integrated Baccalaureate and Master’s Degree in History

In addition to the program by which graduates can earn a Master of Arts Degree, the WIU Department of History offers an accelerated program whereby advanced undergraduates can earn a Bachelor of Arts Degree and a Master of Arts Degree in History within the span of five years—as opposed to the six normally required for both degrees. The Integrated BA/MA Degree maintains the integrity of both degrees by allowing students to take nine semester hours of coursework that are simultaneously applicable to requirements for each of the two degrees. The program is specifically designed for outstanding students either going on to seek a doctoral degree in History or eager to start a profession that values broad historical knowledge and a disciplined approach for attaining it.

Undergraduate students may apply for admission to the Integrated Degree Program in History after completing 60 semester hours of undergraduate coursework, of which a minimum of 30 semester hours must be earned at WIU. Moreover, a student must be a history major and have a cumulative GPA of 3.25, as well as a GPA of 3.25 in history courses required by the major. Both GPAs are indicative of the academic excellence required to earn the Integrated Degree in History.

Students in the Integrated Degree Program must fulfill current requirements for the Bachelor of Arts Degree in History for either the History option, the Pre-Law option, or the History-Teacher Education option, as well as current graduate requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in History (see below). Given the additional semester hours required for History-Teacher Education, the program cannot guarantee that students pursuing this option will be able to attain the Integrated Degree in five years.
To enable students to earn both degrees within five years, they may take nine semester hours (usually three “bridge” courses) at the 400(G)-level, by which students would earn both undergraduate and graduate credit. Students in the Integrated Degree Program in History would have to meet the extra requirements normally assigned only to graduates in a given 400 (G) course in order to have the course qualify as both undergraduate and graduate semester hours.

Fields of Study

The three pre-approved major fields of study are United States, European, and Comparative World History. Please see Appendix E for further details concerning Comparative World History. A student’s major field may be in another area, but students must secure permission from the graduate director and the graduate committee. Based on instructor availability, the pre-approved minor fields are United States, Europe, Asia, and Comparative World. The minor field may be a thematic area (e.g., gender, diplomatic, labor, religion, military etc.), but students must secure permission from the graduate director and the graduate committee. Moreover, the minor thematic area must be in a different geographical area from the major area of study. Prospective students should familiarize themselves with the faculty in the Department of History when considering major and minor fields. For faculty information, go to http://www.wiu.edu/cas/history/faculty.php

Degree Plans

The graduate director is the adviser for all graduate students in the history program. Any questions students have about the program should be directed to the graduate director. In consultation with the director, students will develop a plan of study and choose a degree plan. The graduate director and student will make use of the “Student Advising Worksheet” to initiate the process (see Appendix D). Eventually, students will need to obtain a copy of the Graduate Studies degree plan and fill it out in consultation with the graduate director during either their second or third semester. Before graduation, the student’s degree plan must be endorsed by the graduate director, the department’s graduate committee, and the School of Graduate Studies. The degree plan must match all courses to be taken. A student cannot change his or her degree plan after it has been accepted by the School of Graduate Studies unless the student can demonstrate a compelling reason for the change. In such a case, the student will still need to go through the approval process. At the very latest, Degree plans must be filed with the School of Graduate Studies the semester prior to when the student plans to defend a thesis or submit a portfolio. For students intending to graduate in spring, the degree plan must be filed by October 1. For those students intending to graduate in fall, the degree plan must be filed by March 1.

The MA degree in history may be earned through one of three plans of study. Plan I requires a written exam and the writing of a thesis, and Plans II and III require a written exam, the creation of a portfolio, and a formal review of its contents in an oral exam setting. Students must complete all requirements within six (6) years of initial enrollment.

Plan I. Thesis
Students choosing the Thesis plan must first secure approval from the graduate director and the consent of a professor who is willing to direct the thesis before pursuing this plan. The Thesis plan requires **31 semester hours** of coursework, in addition to passing a written exam and completing a masters-level history thesis. Students will write the thesis in their major field, which is customarily in US or European history. Students can request to write a thesis in another field, but only after securing the approval of the thesis adviser, the graduate director, and the department’s graduate committee. For their coursework, students who choose Plan I must balance their 400G and 500/600-level coursework so that they take more semester hours in 500/600-level courses. This is a School of Graduate Studies requirement; it can only be changed or waived through a special petition. Two 500-level research seminars are required for this plan. Because full-time students choosing the thesis plan will be expected to take the written exam at the beginning of their second year of matriculation, they must commit to the thesis, take courses applicable to both their major and minor fields, secure a committee of three faculty to administer the written exam and serve as readers and advisers for the thesis, and begin work on a thesis prospectus, all by the end of their second semester.

Students choosing the thesis plan must enroll in the following:

- History 500  
  - 4 hrs.
- Major field of study (four courses)  
  - 12 hrs.
- Minor field of study (three courses)  
  - 9 hrs.
- History 698 (Written Exam)  
  - 0 hrs.
- History 600 (Thesis Research and Writing)  
  - 3 hrs.
- History 601 (Thesis Completion and Defense)  
  - 3 hrs.

**Plan II. Applied Project**

Students choosing the Applied Project plan must first secure the approval of the graduate director and the consent of a professor who is willing to direct the Applied Project. The Applied Project plan requires **35 semester hours** on topics spread across a variety of geographic areas. Students are required to choose their major and minor areas of study. In addition to the courses that cover the major/minor areas, students must also complete History 500, two 500-level research seminars, one 500-level reading seminar in the major field, and History 698 and 699. Students must balance their 400G and 500-level coursework, so that they are taking more 500-level courses than 400G courses. This is a School of Graduate Studies requirement; it can only be changed or waived through a special petition. The project must be approved by the graduate director and the graduate committee. Possible projects include, but are not limited to, the following: presenting a professional conference paper; editing a series of primary documents; writing a paper for publication; conducting and transcribing oral history interviews; and curating museum displays. Students must enroll in History 599 for at least 4 semester hours to complete the Applied Project. In addition, students are required to secure an examination and portfolio committee of three faculty members, pass the written exam, compile a portfolio, and have the portfolio reviewed and approved by their committee. The written exam must be taken near the beginning of their last semester of matriculation, while the portfolio’s compilation and review must be completed by the end of the same semester. A student’s portfolio must include a written paper that explains how the Applied Project addresses the criteria for assessment (sources,
historiography, theory and methods, communication skills), and the professor supervising the Applied Project must be on a student’s examination and portfolio committee.

Students choosing the Applied Project Plan must enroll in the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History 500</td>
<td>4 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major field of study (five courses)</td>
<td>15 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor field of study (three courses)</td>
<td>9 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective (one course)</td>
<td>3 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History 599 (Applied Project)</td>
<td>4 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History 698 (Written Exam)</td>
<td>0 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History 699 (Portfolio Review)</td>
<td>0 hrs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plan III. Coursework

Students taking the Coursework plan must first secure the approval of the graduate director. In this plan, students are required to take 37 semester hours of courses on topics spread across a variety of geographic areas. Students must choose a major and a minor area of study. In addition to covering the major and minor areas, students must also complete History 500, two 500-level research seminars, one 500-level reading seminar in the major field, and History 698 and 699. Students must balance their 400G and 500-level coursework, so that they are taking more 500-level courses than 400G courses. This is a School of Graduate Studies requirement; it can only be changed or waived through a special petition. Students are also required to secure an exam and portfolio committee of three faculty members, pass the written exam, compile a portfolio, and have the portfolio reviewed and approved by their committee. The written exam must be taken at the beginning of their last semester of course work, while the portfolio’s compilation and review must be completed by the end of the same semester.

Students choosing the Coursework plan must enroll in the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History 500</td>
<td>4 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major field of study (six courses)</td>
<td>18 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor field of study (three courses)</td>
<td>9 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective (two courses)</td>
<td>6 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History 698 (Written Exam)</td>
<td>0 hrs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History 699 (Portfolio Review)</td>
<td>0 hrs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Coursework Overview

400G-Level Courses

Both undergraduate and graduate students can enroll in these courses. These courses can count toward the fulfillment of students’ course requirements in their major and minor fields. Students may also take these courses as electives. Students must balance their 400G and 500-level coursework, so that they are taking more 500-level courses than 400G courses. This is a School of Graduate Studies requirement. Professors teaching these courses will determine the
requirements for graduate students. Each professor decides what constitutes graduate-level work, but some common expectations exist in terms of work load, level of analysis, and participation in the course. Students may do all the work assigned to undergraduates, plus extra work at the graduate level, or the professor may have the graduate students read different literature and fulfill different assignments than those expected of undergraduates. Students are encouraged to speak with a professor before enrolling to find out what he or she expects from graduate students.

History 500

This course is required for all history graduate students. This four-credit course is only offered in the fall. The graduate director teaches the class. The course introduces students to historical theory and the practice of history. Students will further develop their use of the research tools, methodologies, *Chicago Manual of Style* citation, format and other analytical techniques used by historians. In addition, the course offers professional and career development activities and workshops for graduate students.

500-Level Seminars

Graduate students are required to take a number of 500-level seminars. There are two types of seminars: reading and research. The topics and assignments change according to the professor, but all seminars share some common expectations. Students are required to actively participate in the seminars by critically discussing information and ideas, asking analytical questions, and leading class discussions. The graduate director posts the seminar schedule 8-10 weeks before registration begins. Often, professors make available additional information, such as the topic of the seminar or specific course requirements.

Reading seminars are reading- and writing-intensive. These seminars are designed to deepen students’ understanding of the historiography and scholarly debates on a particular topic. Students may be required to write book reviews, response papers, comparative papers, and/or historiographic papers.

Research seminars are research- and writing-intensive. These seminars are designed to train students in the methods of historical research. Students will research and write on a theme related to the seminar. This may include a 10 to 30-page research paper based on primary and secondary sources. Students may be required to collect, edit, and synthesize a collection of sources concerning a particular topic or generate a database for a topic using quantitative data. Students will learn how to identify historical sources, evaluate them, and use them in original historical writing. For students choosing Plans II or III, they should bear in mind that their research seminar papers may be included in their portfolio, and as such their final draft must reflect a high quality of writing and research.

History 598

Students who have completed six (6) semester hours of graduate history courses can enroll in an independent, specialized reading course supervised by a faculty member. Independent reading should not be taken in place of a regularly scheduled course on a similar topic during the same semester. The topic should reflect the student’s interest and the faculty member’s expertise. For one semester hour students should expect to read three scholarly monographs or the equivalent in other sources, discuss the readings with the professor, and complete a writing component.
Although the chair of the department is listed as the instructor of record on STARS for this course, the student must ask a faculty member to direct and supervise the independent readings. Once a professor has agreed to supervise the independent study, the student and the professor will determine the number of semester hours, readings, assignments, and timetable for completion. After having a plan of study from the professor offering the course, the student must receive permission from the graduate director and the departmental chair (see Appendix C). While students are normally allowed to have a maximum of three or four (3/4) semester hours of either History 598 or History 599 count toward their degree, for exceptional circumstances they may petition the department’s graduate committee in order to take both courses for a total of six or seven (6/7) semester hours. Students are responsible for communicating with the professor and completing their work in a timely manner, or they could receive a failing grade. The deadlines for approval of History 598 are 1 December for the Spring Semester and 1 May for the Fall Semester.

**History 599**

Students who have completed six (6) semester hours of graduate history courses can enroll in an independent, specialized research course with a faculty member. This course is designed for intensive research into areas of history not specifically covered in other courses. The topic should reflect the student’s interest and the faculty member’s expertise. The number of semester hours will depend on the historical problem to be examined and the length of time required to complete the project. Although the chair of the department is listed as the instructor of record on STARS for this course, the student has to ask a faculty member to direct and to supervise the independent study. Once the professor has agreed to supervise the independent study, the student and the professor will determine the number of semester hours, readings, assignments, and timetable for completion. After having a plan of study from the professor offering the course, the student must receive permission from the graduate director and the departmental chair (see Appendix C). Students taking History 599 for four or more semester hours will have to complete the program through the Applied Project plan. History 599 is the same as History 598 in regard to requirements, restrictions, and deadlines.

**The Written Exam / History 698**

All graduate students seeking the MA degree in history are required to take a written exam based on their major and minor fields. In order to take the exam, students must register for History 698, which will require special permission from the graduate director. An examination committee, consisting of three members—two representing the major field and one the minor field—will administer the exam. Students must request one of the faculty members representing the major field to be the chair of the committee. The exam committee will also serve as the thesis committee for students choosing Plan I, or the portfolio committee for students choosing Plans II or III.

In order to prepare the student for the exam, committee members will make available reading lists pertaining either to the major or minor field. Each list will have titles of at least ten works of significant historical literature. The reading list will reflect what each committee member considers the most fundamental works for general knowledge regarding either one’s own portion
of the major field or the minor field as a whole. It is extremely important that students read the books and/or articles on the list in preparation for the written exam. Also, students are advised to review their graduate coursework since it also can be the basis for questions on the exam. Students can request examples of questions used in past written exams.

The written exam consists of answering two essay questions that students will complete in an onsite, two-hour session. The student is required to answer one question from each of the two sections of the exam. Section A covers the major field as a whole, while Section B covers the minor field as a whole; each section requires a student to answer one of two given questions. If the student fails the exam, the student is allowed to retake it once. Failure to pass the exam on the second attempt will result in dismissal from the MA program. Upon passing the written exam, the student goes on to either write a thesis (Plan I) or prepares a portfolio (Plans II and III).

Academic honesty is expected of all students taking the written exam. Cheating on the written exam will not be tolerated. Please see WIU’s academic integrity policy: http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php

The Exit for Plan I: Thesis / History 600 and 601

The purpose of a thesis is to train students to produce a work of original historical scholarship. Students are expected to sustain an argument over several chapters. The thesis can be conceptualized as the equivalent of three 20- to 30-page research papers, framed by an introduction and a conclusion that hold the study together. The thesis has attributes similar to a historical monograph, which is considered the most significant level of scholarship that professional historians undertake. Students are expected to have both a command of the primary and secondary sources of the topic and be able to place the thesis within the context of the historiography of the subject.

When planning a thesis, students must keep in mind that the research involved can be quite time-consuming. The student must remain in close contact with the thesis adviser. Students are strongly encouraged to consider funding opportunities to support their research, because funding for travel to research sites could be crucial to the success of the project. See below for competitive funding support offered by the School of Graduate Studies and the Department of History.

Students should be aware of several important aspects of this process:

- The student is responsible for finding a professor willing to chair the thesis committee. The chair of the committee will not only advise the thesis but also organize the taking of the student’s written exam.
- Three professors on a student’s exam committee will also assist in the reading and revising process. Time must be built in to accommodate feedback from these professors.
- Students must finish all incompletes as well as submit an approved thesis prospectus to the graduate director before they begin History 600 and 601. The guidelines for the
prospectus, which must be approved by all committee members before it is submitted to the graduate director, are found in Appendix F.

- Students must allow ample time for revision of the thesis chapters, for committee members may require multiple revisions, sometimes requiring additional research. Therefore, they must plan accordingly.
- Students who choose this plan must keep in mind that the thesis has to be defended in an exam-like setting before the examination and thesis committee and possibly other faculty members. The thesis will not be complete until it is successfully defended and all the committee members have signed the signature page of the thesis. The student has to coordinate the date and time of the defense with the members of the committee. The thesis adviser will secure a room for the defense.

The department suggests the following timetable:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall/First Semester</td>
<td>Take classes in major and minor fields. Get to know the program, the faculty, and what fields in the discipline are covered by each faculty member. Discuss a thesis topic with the graduate director and possible thesis adviser. Secure a thesis adviser by the end of the semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring/Second Semester</td>
<td>Take classes both in major and minor fields. In consultation with the thesis adviser, begin secondary reading; define thesis question(s); identify sources; consider other committee members; begin work with adviser on a thesis prospectus. Students are encouraged to apply for research funding during this semester. Near the end of the semester, file a degree plan and have it approved by the history department’s graduate committee, then by the School of Graduate Studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Research; travel if necessary. Prepare for Written Exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall/Third Semester</td>
<td>Submit an approved thesis prospectus to the graduate director. Enroll in History 698 and take the Written Exam. Enroll in History 600. Write first draft; submit to thesis adviser and committee members for feedback. Expect revisions and more research.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring/Fourth Semester</td>
<td>Enroll in History 601. Apply for graduation through the Graduate School. Make final revisions. When each committee member is satisfied with the thesis, the student will defend it before the thesis committee at least two weeks before the School of Graduate Studies deadline for thesis submission.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Exit for Plans II and III: The Oral Exam / History 699**

Students choosing Plan II or III must secure the permission of the graduate director before registering for History 699. Passing the written exam qualifies a student to create a portfolio, which will then be reviewed by one’s examination and portfolio committee. The portfolio will consist of the following: 1) a three-page, single-spaced self-evaluation in which the student explains how he or she has met the assessment criteria stated in Appendix A; 2) two research seminar papers (at least ten pages in length based on both primary and secondary sources) or
equivalent works produced in other graduate courses; 3) the written exam; and 4) in the case of Plan II only, a three-page single-spaced paper explaining how the Applied Project helps the student meet assessment criteria stated in Appendix A. For students of either plan, the two papers in the portfolio must have been assigned by different professors. The student will submit a full copy of the portfolio to each of the committee members at least two weeks prior to its Review. For the Oral Exam, the student will arrange a date and time convenient for the committee to meet and the chair will secure a room. At the start of the Exam, the chair will determine the order of questioning by the committee. Professors will raise questions about the student’s answers provided in the written exam and about the other portfolio contents. Each committee member has 20 to 30 minutes to determine to what degree the student meets the criteria for assessment found in Appendix A. At the conclusion of the questioning the student will leave the room while the committee evaluates the student’s responses to questions about the portfolio. The chair of the committee will then invite the student back into the room and inform the student as to whether he or she passes the exam. Students who fail the initial exam will be asked to revise their portfolio and resubmit it for a second review. Failure to pass the second exam will result in dismissal from the MA program.

The department suggests the following timetable for Plans II and III:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall / First Semester</th>
<th>Take classes in major and minor fields. Get to know the program, the faculty, and what fields in the discipline are covered by each faculty member.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring / Second Semester</td>
<td>Secure an examination and portfolio committee and request a faculty member in your major field to serve as chair of the committee. The committee will supply the student with reading lists and advise on how to prepare for the exams. Once established, the committee cannot be altered without the approval of the history department’s graduate committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Begin study of reading lists for exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall / Third Semester</td>
<td>Near the start of the semester, file a degree plan and have it approved by the department’s graduate committee, then by the School of Graduate Studies. Prepare for written exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring/Fourth Semester</td>
<td>Enroll in History 698 and 699. Apply for graduation through the Graduate School. The graduate director will secure an examination room and set a common date for the written exam. Upon passing the exam, prepare a portfolio and submit it to the committee two weeks prior to the Review, which the student will arrange in consultation with committee members.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Transfer and Online Courses

Up to nine (9) hours may be transferred from another graduate school with the approval of the departmental graduate committee. In addition, the Department of History graduate program will accept up to six (6) hours of online graduate level coursework. The courses are subject to approval by the departmental graduate committee.

Revalidation Policy

According to the WIU School of Graduate Studies, courses that students take that are more than six years old will expire. The Department of History will consider revalidating graduate history courses that have expired. However, those courses must be less than ten years old and must be from among our 400G course offerings. The Department of History will consider revalidating graduate history courses in which the student earned a B or better. A maximum of nine semester hours will be revalidated. In order for a student to have courses revalidated, he or she must submit to an examination process conducted by the history faculty members whose expertise is relevant to the courses. The examination process is subject to the discretion of the relevant faculty members.

Language Requirement

Currently, there is no foreign language requirement for the MA degree.

The Department of History encourages all graduate students to study a foreign language. Proficiency in a foreign language broadens a historian’s skills and expertise, particularly in the reading and analysis of primary and secondary sources not written in English. Students planning to pursue a Ph.D. in history will be expected by doctoral programs to demonstrate competency in at least one foreign language. Students may take foreign language courses at WIU for a letter grade or on a pass/fail basis. However, such courses do not count toward any of the degree plans.

For information on WIU’s foreign language offerings, go to: http://www.wiu.edu/languages.

Full-Time Status

To be considered full-time, a graduate student must be enrolled in at least nine (9) semester hours of graduate-level course work during a semester. However, Graduate Assistants may enroll in as few as three (3) semester hours their last semester of matriculation provided they have filed a degree plan that has been approved and their enrollment that semester corresponds to degree requirements.
Grading Policies

Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA in order to earn a MA in History at WIU. Graduate students who earn a grade of “C” or lower in more than six semester hours of coursework will be dropped from the program. Students may request a temporary incomplete (“I”) if they are unable to finish coursework due to circumstances beyond their control. Approval of incomplete grades is at the discretion of the professor. Failure to complete coursework within one year of receiving an “I” will result in the grade being changed to an “F.”

Teaching Support Assistantships

The Department of History has five positions available during the academic year. Four of the positions require work exclusively in the Department of History and the fifth position is shared with the Office of Academic Services. In the latter position, two-thirds of the TSA’s time will be spent in the Department of History and the other third with Academic Services. All TSAs receive a tuition waiver and a monthly stipend. They are all subject to the same expectations in terms of professionalism and other requirements as WIU employees. For more information about WIU’s employment requirements for Teaching Support Assistants, go to http://wiu.edu/graduate_studies/prospective_students/gainfo.php

TSAs are appointed for a one-year term that is renewable for a second year. These are competitive positions. Students applying for a TSA position need to have a GPA of 3.0 or higher and submit three letters of recommendation, a statement of purpose written for the School of Graduate Studies, and an essay for the Department of History’s graduate committee (see Appendix B). TSAs will receive a performance review every semester and meet with the graduate director to review evaluations of their work by the faculty to whom they were assigned. In order to be retained for a second year, TSAs need to maintain a GPA of 3.5, have positive evaluations, and submit to the committee a short essay requesting retention for a second year (see Appendix B). The graduate director writes an evaluation statement of the TSA’s performance that the student will review and sign.

TSAs work up to twenty (20) hours per week. They have two primary tasks: First, they provide support services for assigned faculty, and second, they assist students in the History Academic Achievement Center. The graduate director assigns TSAs to several faculty members each semester. TSAs can expect to do a variety of activities that may include, but are not limited to, technical assistance, classroom support, and research. TSAs will assist professors with grading, lead study sessions for General Education courses, and perform selective research based on instructor need. TSAs who assist students in the Academic Achievement Center will work shifts that the graduate director assigns based on their availability. The Academic Achievement Center is open from 9 am to 4 pm Monday through Friday. TSAs have to be prepared to assist undergraduate students studying for exams and writing papers for History 105, 106, 125, 126, 144, 145 and other undergraduate courses. At the beginning of each semester, TSAs will offer two workshops for undergraduates in history courses.
Scholarships, Awards, and Research Funding

The Department of History offers several competitive awards and research funding opportunities. The Darrell and Virginia Dykstra Memorial Scholarship is a competitive award open to a new or returning graduate student. All applicants must have a BA in history, a minimum of 3.25 GPA in history courses previous to application, be attending full-time in the history graduate program, submit a letter of application, and submit at least one letter of recommendation. The deadline is March of each year. Applicants should contact the graduate director for the exact application due date. This award will be for a minimum of $1500 annually and will be applied to the recipient’s account – divided between the fall and spring semesters (if applicable). The scholarship is renewable for a second year provided the student meets the criteria.

David P. Pasquini Award is a competitive award for graduate students who are full-time history or social studies teachers. The Pasquini is a $750 one-time award. The application deadline is March 15 and applications should be submitted to the graduate director. In addition to being a full-time teacher in junior or senior high school, applicants must have taken a minimum of six semester hours of graduate history course work and completed at least one course in the graduate program in history at WIU during the calendar year preceding the award. Full-time teachers may also apply for Pasquini Research Grants to help defray travel expenses when presenting their own historical research papers at academic conferences. The maximum amount of each individual Pasquini Research Grant is $500.

Graduate students with six hours of graduate course work completed and a GPA of 3.0 can apply for research and conference travel funds through the School of Graduate Studies’ Graduate Student Research and Professional Development Fund. Applicants will formulate their applications in consultation with a faculty mentor. The application must include the faculty mentor’s signature and a budget statement. The student then submits the applications to the department graduate committee. These awards are limited to $500 per student per project or conference presentation, but may be supplemented with up to $250 in matching funds from the College of Arts and Sciences if the project/presentation budget exceeds $500. Applications must be submitted to the graduate director by September 15 for the fall semester competition; the departmental deadline for the traditionally much more popular spring semester competition is February 15 of each year. These amounts are subject to availability of funds.

Graduate students with a 3.0 GPA may apply to the department graduate committee for awards from the history Professor Emeritus Fund to help defray the expenses incurred while conducting historical research for WIU courses, for their masters’ theses or applied projects, or to help defray conference travel expenses when presenting their own research papers. To be considered for an award, the student must first apply for funding from the Graduate School Student Research and Professional Development Fund. Students who are accepted to a conference or incur research-related expenses after the Graduate School’s application deadline may also apply for a Professor Emeritus Award. The maximum individual award amount per semester is $500; the maximum total funding amount per student is $1,000. These amounts are subject to availability of funds.
Professional Activities

Students have a number of professional activities available to them while pursuing their graduate degree at WIU. Working with a faculty mentor, students can present their original scholarly research at academic conferences, work as interns in museums, government facilities, national parks, and in historical societies, develop special projects, and publish their scholarship. For more information on these and other professional activities outside of the traditional classroom setting, contact the Department of History graduate director or other faculty members in the department. For publishing opportunities, see the "WIU History Resource Guide: Graduate Journal Listings" at http://www.wiu.edu/cas/history/pdf/GradResources.pdf

Phi Alpha Theta

National History Honorary Society

The mission of Phi Alpha Theta is to promote the study of history through the encouragement of research, teaching excellence, publication, and the exchange of ideas among historians. In fulfillment of this mission, Phi Alpha Theta endeavors to bring together students, teachers, and writers through a broad range of activities that assist historical understanding and research. First established at the University of Arkansas in March 1921, Phi Alpha Theta is now the largest accredited honor society in the United States with more than 700 chapters located throughout the nation.

Activities and Programs

The national organization of Phi Alpha Theta sponsors a variety of programs for the benefit of its members. Among these are biennial conventions for undergraduate, graduate, and faculty members; annual awards in recognition of outstanding papers written by the society's members; and scholarships to support the study of history at the graduate level. In addition, Phi Alpha Theta publishes The Historian, a distinguished scholarly quarterly devoted to all fields of historical inquiry.

For further information concerning Phi Alpha Theta, its national programs, activities, and scholarships, e-mail the society at info@phialphatheta.org.

Phi Alpha Theta at WIU

Western Illinois University is home to the Omicron Omicron chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. Each year, our local chapter sponsors a number of activities for its members and the community at large, and is in contact with other Phi Alpha Theta chapters about regional conferences and other professional opportunities. For further information concerning Phi Alpha Theta, its local and national programs, activities, and scholarships, visit our Phi Alpha website at: http://www.wiu.edu/cas/history/PhAT.php, or contact the History Department’s Phi Alpha Theta faculty adviser. WIU’s Phi Alpha Theta chapter sponsors an on-line journal of student research, the Western Illinois Historical Review. For further details, go to: http://www.wiu.edu/cas/history/wihr.
Membership Requirements

In order to qualify for membership in Phi Alpha Theta, graduate students must have completed at least 12 semester hours of coursework in history while maintaining a grade point average of 3.0 or better in all History courses.

Petitioning Procedures

Occasionally, graduate students need to change their degree plan or make modifications in their degree requirements. The School of Graduate Studies has a petition procedure in place for such situations. Before submitting a petition, the student has to secure approval from the Department of History’s graduate director, graduate committee, and chair. Students must present legitimate arguments and documentation with their petition. The School of Graduate Studies then decides whether to approve or reject the petition.

For instructions on how to fill out a petition, go to:
http://www.wiu.edu/graduate_studies/catalog/academic_guidelines/index.php.

The petition form is available at:
http://www.wiu.edu/graduate_studies/current_students/forms/petition.pdf.

School of Graduate Studies Policies

Students must complete their degree in a timely manner. The MA degree must be completed in six consecutive calendar years or courses will begin to expire, forcing the student to retake them. Part-time students in particular, need to be aware that courses can expire. Some courses can be recertified. Others courses, however, especially those at the 500-level, are too topic-specific to be recertified. Students may petition for an extension of time for outdated courses, but that decision ultimately rests with WIU’s Graduate Council. The complete policy and other important policies regarding the filing of degree plans and graduation are available at the WIU School of Graduate Studies website:

http://www.wiu.edu/graduate_studies/current_students/index.php#guidelines

Graduate Program Policy Changes

Although the Department of History has tried to anticipate a variety of issues that may arise in a graduate student’s career at Western, it is not always possible to foresee every contingency. Therefore, the Director of Graduate Studies will make policy changes, in consultation with the graduate committee, for issues that are not covered in the Handbook.
Appendix A

Master’s Degree Written Exam

Evaluation Form

Candidate: __________________________________________________

Evaluator: __________________________________________________

Date: ______________________

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<th></th>
<th>Demonstrates excellence</th>
<th>Demonstrates competence</th>
<th>Does not demonstrate competence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General knowledge of major field</td>
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<tr>
<td>General knowledge of minor field</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills in written communication</td>
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Additional Comments:
**Master’s Degree Oral Exam (Portfolio Review)**

**Evaluation Form**

Candidate: ____________________________________________

Evaluator: ____________________________________________

Date: ____________________

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<th>Demonstrates excellence</th>
<th>Demonstrates competence</th>
<th>Does not demonstrate competence</th>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis of historical sources</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis of historiography</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application of theory and methods</td>
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<td>Skills in written communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skills in oral communication</td>
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Additional comments:

18
**Master’s Degree Thesis Defense**

**Evaluation Form**

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<th>Demonstrates excellence</th>
<th>Demonstrates competence</th>
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<td>Analysis of historical sources</td>
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<td>Analysis of historiography</td>
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<td>Application of theory and methods</td>
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<td>Skills in written communication</td>
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<td>Skills in oral communication</td>
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Additional Comments:
Assessment Definitions:

**General knowledge of major field**

Excellence: Displays a comprehensive understanding of significant trends, events, and other essential historical knowledge, thereby demonstrating a mastery of major field.

Competence: Displays a satisfactory understanding of significant trends, events, and other essential historical knowledge with some evident gaps.

Lack of competence: Displays weak or distorted historical understanding of the field.

**General knowledge of minor field**

Excellence: Displays a comprehensive understanding of selective key trends, events, and other essential historical knowledge, thereby demonstrating a mastery of minor field.

Competence: Displays a satisfactory understanding of selective key trends, events, and other essential historical knowledge with some evident gaps.

Lack of competence: Displays weak or distorted historical understanding of the field.

**Analysis of historical sources**

Excellence: Synthesizes historical materials in a sophisticated and creative manner, offering solid, critical, and innovative insight into the use of the materials.

Competence: Synthesizes historical materials in a satisfactory manner, but may have some inconsistencies in critical evaluation of the materials.

Lack of competence: Lacks basic comprehension of historical materials and fails to synthesize them in a meaningful way.

**Analysis of historiography**

Excellence: Provides a detailed assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of important works in the field, offers a clear explanation of their importance by placing them in a broad context, and demonstrates mastery of historical literature and concepts.

Competence: Demonstrates a satisfactory command of historical literature with some gaps in knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses.

Lack of competence: Fails to demonstrate a command of historical literature due to significant gaps in knowledge and errors of interpretation.
Application of theory and methods

Excellence: Thoroughly understands theories and utilizes historical methods in creative and innovative ways.

Competence: Shows basic understanding of theories and historical methods and their application, but with some difficulties in understanding and application.

Lack of competence: Does not adequately understand and cannot accurately apply theories or historical methods.

Skills in written communication

Excellence: Formulates strong arguments that are well-supported by evidence. Mechanics of writing as a historian show no weaknesses.

Competence: Formulates an argument with some minor weaknesses in logic or sources. Mechanics of writing as a historian are strong, but may contain some minor errors that may not impede understanding.

Lack of competence: Cannot formulate an argument or the argument is not adequately supported by historical sources. Mechanics of writing as a historian are weak, containing numerous and/or substantive errors.

Skills in oral communication

Excellence: Articulates strong arguments that are well-supported by evidence and responds to questions and comments from examiners in a lucid and fluent manner.

Competence: Articulates a coherent argument with only minor weaknesses in logic or sources and responds adequately to questions and comments from examiners with some prompting.

Lack of competence: Cannot articulate an argument or the argument is not adequately supported by historical sources. Student fails to respond in a coherent, organized manner to questions and comments from examiners.
Appendix B

Essay Prompts

Applicant essay prompt: “Teaching Support Assistants (TSAs) in the History Department are expected to assist undergraduate history students who seek their help, and to personify strong academic performance. To allow the History Department to consider your interest in a TSA position, please tell us in 2500 characters (on average, about 300 words) or less about one undergraduate exercise or experience that helped you improve as a historian, and what particular areas of history or historical questions interest you.”

Retention essay prompt: “In order to be retained for an additional year as a Teaching Support Assistant (TSA) in the History Department, please tell us in 2500 characters (on average, about 300 words) or less how your position as a TSA has enhanced your graduate education, and explain how your coursework and training during the past year are indicative of your timely progress toward the completion of your degree requirements.”
Appendix C
Approval for Independent Study

HIST 598
HIST 599

You must have the approval of the faculty member offering your study, the graduate director, and the departmental chair in order to register for Independent Readings in History or Special Problems in History.

Student Name_________________________  Semester ___________   Year ___________

WIU Student ID Number ___________________________  Phone ___________________________

Course Number and Title ___________________________  Semester Hours ______

Statement of justification for independent study ___________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

Once you and the faculty member offering your independent study agree on a plan, you must fill out the second part of this form. By signing below, the faculty member offering the independent study agrees to the stated plan of study.

________________________________________________________
Faculty/Date

Once the faculty member offering your independent study has signed above, submit this form to the graduate director, who must give you permission to enroll.

________________________________________________________
Graduate Director/Date

The graduate director will take the form to the chair of the history department for final approval.

________________________________________________________
Department Chair/Date

Deadline Dates: 1 December for the Spring Semester and 1 May for the Fall Semester
Plan for Independent Study

Fill out the form below or submit a complete syllabus as a substitute.

Topic:

Required Texts:

Major Assignments:

Scheduled Meetings and/or Other Activities:
Appendix D
Student Advising Worksheet

**Major Area** (18 for Coursework)
(15 for Thesis)
(15 for Applied Project)

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**Minor Area** (9 for Coursework)
(6 for Thesis)
(9 for Applied Project)

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**Electives** (6 for Coursework)
(3 Applied Project)

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1 Reading Seminar (major field)

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2 Research Seminars

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- **History 500** (4 Semester Hours)
- **Less than ½ of Total SH at 400-Level**

**Plan I: Thesis** (History 600-601)
**Plans II and III: Exams** (History 698-699)

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**Remaining Courses?**

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Appendix E

Comparative World History definition:
Comparative world history is a macro-historical approach to the study of history, which involves transnational, cross-cultural and/or trans-regional themes. Although students may study specific countries and issues related to them in their coursework, the field in comparative world history requires that students study phenomena that transcend individual nation-states, regions, and cultures. Political, economic, social, and environmental contacts, exchanges, and movements, which have global themes or at least a trans-regional impact, should be emphasized.

Request to pursue a comparative world as a major field:
Students interested in majoring in comparative world history will have to determine a theme of study in consultation with a major professor, who will also act as chair of the student’s exam or thesis committee.

Coursework
Eighteen credit hours (500 and/or 400G) are required: six world area, six US, and six Europe

Special Project
Fifteen credit hours (500 and/or 400G) are required: six world area, three or six US, and three or six Europe

Thesis
Fifteen credit hours (500 and/or 400G) are required: six world area, three or six US, and three or six Europe

Request to pursue a comparative world as a minor field:
Students interested in minoring in comparative world history will have to determine a theme of study in consultation with a professor, who will also act as the minor field representative on the student’s exam or thesis committee.

Coursework
Nine credit hours (500 and/or 400G) are required: three world area, three US, and three Europe

Special Project
Nine credit hours (500 and/or 400G) are required: three world area, three US, and three Europe

Thesis
Six credit hours (500 and/or 400G) are required: three world area, three in US or Europe
Appendix F

Master’s Degree Thesis Prospectus Guidelines

The prospectus is a plan of action for your thesis. In it you will explain what you intend to research, why you think that it is meaningful to do so, and the structure you envision your thesis to take. When formulating in your mind your research project think in terms of purpose, scope, methodology, and major argument. (You are not expected to articulate an argument – thesis statement – until you write the first draft, but it is worth pondering possible arguments at this stage.) The basic reason for writing a prospectus is to inform your thesis adviser and the other members of your committee as to the value and feasibility of the subject of your research. In effect, you must convince them that you have a worthwhile topic for which adequate source materials, particularly primary sources, are available. Moreover, your thesis must be written in your major field of study.

Your prospectus, which must be no shorter than eight pages, should be organized as follows:

1) Provide a descriptive title and subtitle for your project. See example below:
“Women as Homesteaders: From Property Rights to Voting Rights”

2) State your research project’s purpose and objectives.
Here you will explain what you are studying, why you are engaged in this study, and what you hope to achieve through your research project. You may want to list the questions that you will address to your research topic. Also, you may make reference to what led to this particular course of study, gaps in your historical knowledge, direction that you want to pursue in your history education, etc.

3) Explain the scope of your research.
What is the timeframe? What countries, regions, towns, or cities will you investigate? Which people, social groups, classes, individuals or will you study? What themes, institutions, events will be addressed in your work? What relationships will you examine? What is the framework of the historical developments that you plan to study?

4) Briefly provide historical context or background for your topic.
In this segment, you will introduce your topic of research and contextualize it for the committee. In providing a historical context, you are establishing a historical setting for your topic. You are giving the committee background information so that they can better understand the nature of the project that you plan to undertake.

5) Historiography.
Here you will provide an overview and commentary on the literature that exists on your topic. You will explain what has been written in recent decades on the subject of your research in monographs and in scholarly journal articles. Also, you should explain how your work fits into the historiography of the topic. What do you hope to contribute with your research? Why will the history of this topic benefit from your work?
6) Methodology.
In the prospectus you will need to explain the historical methods that you will use. Is there a specific form of analysis necessary? What research tools will you use? What type of primary sources will you use, and why are these primary sources essential to your project? Are you using new and previously untapped sources? Ultimately, you will be writing an analytical narrative. You will be telling a story but not simply a descriptive one. In this segment, you could frame the points of analysis that you would be emphasizing. Here is also where you can sketch out your argument or thesis regarding the topic.

7) Form of your thesis.
You will need to outline the chapters of your thesis. This will be instructive as to how to conceptualize the project and how it will be organized. Typically, the thesis should have an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, and a bibliography. At this point, you only need to provide the committee with an outline of the introduction, chapter topics with maybe some outline of what you plan to treat in each chapter, and how you plan to conclude with your study.

8) Problems in completing the research.
In this segment, you will comment on any problems that you anticipate with your research and how you plan to overcome those problems. They can be gaps in the historical record, availability of sources, financial difficulties in getting to some of the source collections, or there may be problems in securing permission to examine personal or family papers.

9) General research schedule and plans.
You should aim toward finishing the research and writing of the thesis within two semesters plus one summer. Provide a timeline for completing research and writing chapter drafts. This timeline is subject to change, though it can inform the committee as to where you plan to be in your work over the succeeding months.

10) Bibliography of sources.
List the primary and secondary sources that you will use in the research and writing of your thesis.
Approval Form for Thesis Prospectus

In order for you to enroll in History 600, in which you will begin your thesis research and writing, you must have your thesis prospectus approved by all three members of your thesis committee, and then submitted to the graduate director for his approval. Please provide one clean, paper copy of your thesis prospectus to the graduate director with this approval form.

Student Name_________________________   Semester ____________   Year ___________
Student ID Number ____________________   Email Address __________________________

Tentative Title of Thesis:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

By signing below, the thesis adviser is verifying that the student’s thesis prospectus is acceptable and therefore the student is prepared to engage in thesis research and writing.

________________________________
Thesis Adviser/Date

By signing below, the thesis committee member is verifying that the student’s thesis prospectus is acceptable and therefore the student is prepared to engage in thesis research and writing.

________________________________
Thesis Committee Member Two/Date

By signing below, the thesis committee member is verifying that the student’s thesis prospectus is acceptable and therefore the student is prepared to engage in thesis research and writing.

________________________________
Thesis Committee Member Three/Date

By signing below, the graduate director approves the student’s thesis prospectus.

________________________________
Graduate Director/Date