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UNIVERSITY

# AN INTRODUCTION TO GRADUATE STUDY IN HISTORY

*A Handbook of  
Regulations,  
Requirements,  
and Advice for  
Graduate Students*

AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Department of History

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<http://www.cla.auburn.edu/history/>

# The Graduate Student Handbook

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## **INTRODUCTION: THE GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN HISTORY**

This History Department Handbook will guide students through the program, from admission to the successful defense of the thesis or dissertation. The basic regulations governing all graduate study in History are those of the Graduate School, which are found in the Graduate School portion of the *AU Bulletin*. Every student should become familiar with the current *AU Bulletin*. Standards and regulations found in it are minimal, however, and *in several instances those of the History Department are more rigorous*. Students should be aware that they need to follow both sets of regulations in order to successfully complete the program.

The Department of History offers two graduate programs leading to degrees. These are:

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.).** The doctoral program requires a minimum of 55 hours of coursework beyond the baccalaureate degree, reading proficiency in at least one foreign language, and a minimum of 10 hours of research and dissertation. At least 42 hours of coursework taken toward the degree must be in graduate seminars rather than lecture or readings courses.

The History Department offers a “direct track” Ph.D. program, into which students can enter directly out of their baccalaureate degree. It also welcomes applications from students completing a master’s degree or with one in hand. In the latter case, students may be able to transfer up to two semesters’ credit for coursework to Auburn on the condition that it meets the Graduate School’s standard of currency, is applicable within the framework of the History Department’s doctoral program, and is approved by the student’s advisory committee and Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) for inclusion in the plan of study.

**MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.).** The master’s program includes a minimum of 27 hours of coursework and 4 hours of research and thesis. The department does not admit students to pursue a non-thesis M.A. While some theses may require that students use foreign-language resources, a foreign language is not a program requirement for the master’s degree. At least 21 hours of coursework must be taken in graduate seminars rather than lecture courses (note that there is an exception to this requirement for students in Archival Studies and Public History).

## GETTING HERE

### ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Detailed instructions for application to the Auburn University History Department's graduate program can be found on the Department's website.

General requirements for admission to graduate study at Auburn University are established by the Graduate School and are stated in the *AU Bulletin*. In addition, specific admission standards and requirements are established by the Department of History.

The History Department requires that every application be supported by at least three recommendations, a formal statement of purpose indicating the applicant's specific interests and professional goals, and a writing sample (such as an undergraduate or graduate term or research paper or excerpt from an M.A. thesis). Students who complete the M.A. at Auburn and wish to continue graduate study in the doctoral program must formally apply for admission and must also be recommended by their examining committee.

The GRE General Test is required for admission to both the master's and doctoral programs. For the M.A. program, a minimum score of 153 on the Revised General Test's Verbal Reasoning section (500 under the old scoring system) is required, with a minimum combined Verbal / Quantitative Reasoning score of 293 (900 under the older scoring system). M.A. applicants must score 4.0 or higher on the GRE's Analytical Writing section. For the Ph.D. program, a minimum score of 156 on the Revised General Test's Verbal Reasoning section (550 under the older scoring system) is required, with a minimum combined Verbal / Quantitative Reasoning score of 300 (1050 under the older scoring system). Ph.D. applicants must score 4.5 or higher on the GRE's Analytical Writing section.

In addition, applicants for admission to either program who lack sufficient undergraduate course work in history may be required to take additional coursework beyond the minimum requirements of the program.

Auburn baccalaureates are eligible to apply for the M.A. program. However, they will not be admitted into the History Department's Ph.D. program unless they have completed or are completing a master's degree elsewhere.

## **GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

A number of Graduate Teaching Assistantships are available each year and renewable for a fixed number of years. Stipends are paid over the course of nine months of the year, from mid-August to mid-May. Details of these awards are published annually, and applicants should address inquiries to the History Department.

Students wishing to be considered for assistantships must submit their applications no later than January 15. Awards are made on a competitive basis on the recommendation of the Graduate Committee. Primary consideration is given to evidence of academic potential in statements of purpose and writing samples, grade point averages (incomplete grades are detrimental), Graduate Record Examination scores, letters of recommendation, and performance as a GTA (in the case of current appointees). Assistantships require a commitment of approximately 13 hours a week. Assistants are normally assigned to professors teaching large undergraduate survey courses, although senior doctoral students may be assigned independent teaching according to departmental needs.

The total number of assistantships offered by the department varies from year to year in accordance with the availability of funds. M.A. students are eligible to hold assistantships for two academic years or four semesters (not including Summer terms). Doctoral students entering with a M.A. in hand are eligible to hold assistantships for four academic years. Students in the direct-track doctoral program have a maximum eligibility of five academic years.

Teaching assistants who do not maintain a GPA of at least 3.2, make satisfactory progress toward preliminary examinations and completion of the thesis/dissertation, or perform satisfactorily as assistants will lose their eligibility for funding. Commencing in 2014-2015, all graduate students will be expected to complete an annual report on their progress and to submit it to their major professor for comment. Failure to submit this report on the form provided by the DGS will lead to the student being declared as making unsatisfactory progress. In addition, the Graduate Committee automatically reviews the status of assistants who receive a course grade of C. Teaching assistants who make a second C or an Incomplete in addition to the first C, or an F at any time, will be dismissed as assistants. Satisfactory progress in regard to exams is defined as completing and passing preliminary written and oral exams within the time limits set.

A detailed summary of policies relating to graduate assistantships is furnished in the document "Rules And Guidelines For The Collaboration Of World History Faculty And GTAs."

## **THE DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES (DGS)**

The Director of Graduate Studies acts as first point of contact for all incoming students. Students are encouraged to consult him/her if they have any questions about the program.

The DGS acts as the primary advisor to all new Ph.D. students until they secure major professors at the end of their first year or their second semester in the program. The DGS also serves as principal advisor to M.A. students prior to their selection of a major professor. Students are expected to consult him/her concerning their course choices.

Throughout the student's time at Auburn, including after the student has secured a major professor, the DGS continues to advise the student generally regarding procedural matters, to maintain departmental records of the student's progress, and to direct students to the forms, requirements, and deadlines established by the Department and the Graduate School.

In addition, the DGS chairs the Graduate Committee and serves as principal liaison between the department and the Graduate School.

## **REGISTRATION FOR CLASSES**

Normally, students register for courses on the university website (via [AU Access](#)). Newly admitted students must first be cleared for registration by the Graduate School and the Registrar's Office. Instructions and procedures for registration can be obtained from the [Office of the Registrar](#). Students should consult the DGS before making course choices.

While students can register themselves for seminars and lecture courses electronically, the DGS manages student registration for reading courses and independent studies, thesis and dissertation hours (7/8990), and for the Group Research and Writing Seminar.

## **ORIENTATION**

A formal orientation is held at the beginning of each academic year for all graduate students. All new students will be notified in advance of the dates and times of orientation activities.

While all new graduate students are expected to attend orientation, it is particularly important for new graduate teaching assistants to be present in order become acquainted with departmental policies, personnel, and practices in teaching, as well as with their responsibilities as GTAs. All graduate assistants should have a current copy of the "Rules and Guidelines for the Collaboration Of World History Faculty And GTAs" and should familiarize themselves with the document.

## **STUDYING AT AUBURN**

### **OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION**

Communications regarding departmental and university events, academic affairs, and other matters of interest to graduate students are conducted in several formats. The most important of these is e-mail. All students are responsible for checking their Auburn University–issued e-mail account on a regular basis. The official e-mail system for students is identified by user@auburn.edu and can be accessed via TigerMail, or any other IMAP type client. Students should check their email year-round.

All Graduate Teaching Assistants are also assigned mailboxes in the departmental main office. These too should be checked regularly, and graduate students are warned not to let mail build up or their mailbox privilege may be revoked. There are, in addition, several bulletin boards on the third floor of Thach Hall where notices are posted, including notices of grants and fellowship opportunities outside the university.

Some information will also be communicated by word of mouth, by major professors, by the DGS, or by the Chair. If required, students should be able to meet with any of the above with no more than a week's notice.

Finally, students should always feel free to approach the DGS, as well as the faculty they are working with, with any questions they have about the program or their work. While fostering a friendly environment where students can interact openly and easily with faculty is important, students should remember that professors do have other responsibilities and that they sometimes cannot meet with them immediately.

### **RALPH BROWN DRAUGHON LIBRARY**

The History graduate student's main locus of activity will be in the [Ralph Brown Draughon Library](#). Graduate students should familiarize themselves with the regulations of the University library. They are particularly warned that they do not have extended loan privileges and are subject to fines for overdue books.

The library provides a dedicated space for graduate and faculty study on the third floor. Library carrels may also be available by application, but, because of the limited number, their use may be restricted.

Students may also find useful material in the [Special Archives and Collections department](#).

## **PROCEEDING THROUGH THE PROGRAM: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (Ph.D.) STUDENTS**

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree is given upon demonstration by the student of comprehensive knowledge and scholarly work at the highest level. A series of written and oral examinations is required, as well as a written dissertation based upon results of original investigation.

### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. The Ph.D. requires satisfactory completion of at least 65 credit hours beyond the baccalaureate degree, consisting of 55 hours of coursework as well as 10 hours of HIST 8990 (Research and Dissertation). HIST 7700 (Seminar in Historical Methods), HIST 8700 (Historiography and Theory of History), and HIST 8710 (Introduction to the Teaching of History) are required courses. At least 42 hours of coursework taken towards the Ph.D. degree must be in graduate seminars (including research seminars and internships) rather than lecture courses and readings seminars.

The doctoral program also requires that a student take a Research and Writing Seminar in either their second or third semester of coursework. They may, on the recommendation of their major advisor, take one further research seminar. After completing coursework, they must register for a minimum of 10 hours of HIST 8990 (Research and Dissertation).

2. Demonstration of reading proficiency in at least one foreign language. While this is a requirement of the Ph.D. degree, students should be aware that language instruction is not a regular component of the graduate program. The Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures provides some preparatory courses but the History Department cannot guarantee their availability. Prospective students are therefore strongly advised to develop knowledge of a foreign language *prior* to joining the program.
3. Presentation of a research paper at the Graduate Student Colloquium.
4. Preliminary Qualifying written and oral examinations.
5. Defense of Dissertation Proposal.
6. Dissertation and Defense.

## **REGISTRATION AND CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT**

Registration at Auburn University is electronic. Students register for courses on the university website (via [AU Access](#)). Newly admitted students must be cleared for registration by the Graduate School and the Registrar's Office. Instructions and procedures for registration can be obtained from the [Office of the Registrar](#).

Students should consult the DGS before making course choices.

Students must register in the semester of graduation and in any other semester in which the staff or the facilities of the University are used, in the removal of an "Incomplete" grade, during preliminary exams, work on the dissertation, and when oral examinations are scheduled. A minimum of one credit hour is required. This is usually accomplished by registering for one hour of HIST 8990 (Research and Dissertation).

While students can register themselves for seminars and lecture courses electronically, the DGS manages student registration for reading courses and other independent studies, thesis and dissertation hours (7/8990), and for the Group Research and Writing Seminar. Students are expected to reply promptly to emails about their registration needs.

All full- and part-time degree-seeking graduate students must be continuously enrolled. Continuous enrollment is defined as registration in at least two semesters in a given academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer) until the degree is awarded.

Except in cases where they secure an official leave of absence, students who fail to register for at least two semesters in a given academic year will be declared inactive. To be re-activated, students must apply for re-activation to the program in which they were enrolled and to the Graduate School. Re-activation is not guaranteed. In order to fulfill the continuous registration requirement, students who are re-activated must register retroactively and pay the continuous enrollment fee for all semesters that have elapsed since they were last enrolled, up to a maximum of eight semesters. Students should address concerns about the continuous enrollment policy and registration options to the DGS.

## VARIETIES OF GRADUATE COURSES

There are four types of graduate courses taught at Auburn (not including internships). Students should be aware of the differences between them.

1. Seminar Courses: Seminar courses (numbered among the Department's HIST 7000-level options) make up the majority of a Ph.D. student's coursework while in the program. Small groups meet regularly with their professor to discuss particular books or topics prepared in advance. All students are expected to participate actively in the discussion.

This form of teaching does not normally involve lectures. If students are unfamiliar with the background of a topic, they are expected to read up on it by themselves.

2. Lecture Courses: Ph.D. students may also take a maximum of 12 credit hours in the form of lecture *or* readings courses. Lecture courses are numbered HIST 6000–6970 and are taught in conjunction with parallel undergraduate courses. While they are called “lecture” courses, they will normally involve other forms of learning interaction. The requirements for graduate students in these courses will be higher than those for undergraduates.
3. Readings Courses: As noted, students may take a maximum of 12 credit hours in the form of lecture *or* readings courses. Readings Courses are numbered HIST 8000–8600. They consist of regular meetings with a professor to discuss particular books or topics, prepared in advance. The workload will be equivalent to that of a seminar. Students taking readings courses are normally expected to have had prior coursework in the field.

Students planning readings courses should consult the DGS regarding registration. Only one readings course may be taken in a minor field.

4. Research Seminars: One research seminar (and no more than two) is required in the doctoral program. Students will register for a Research and Writing Seminar during their second or third semester of coursework. This seminar permits students to concentrate exclusively on research and writing a seminar paper of publishable quality. Enrolled students will meet regularly as a group with a designated professor over the course of the semester.

On the recommendation of their major advisor, they may enroll in the Research and Writing Seminar in one additional semester.

Alternatively, their major advisor may, completely at his or her discretion, recommend that they work together directly in this second instance, and not as part of a group. In this case, the student will enroll in one of the research seminars established for each major field of study in the doctoral program. As in the group Research and Writing Seminar, the student will concentrate exclusively on the research and writing of a seminar paper of publishable quality.

**WORKSHEET**  
**Semester One: Prospective Plan of Study**

	Major Field	Minor 1	Minor 2	Breadth World**	Prog. Req.*	Other
Semester 1						
Semester 1						
Semester 2						
Semester 2						
Semester 3						
Semester 3						
Transfer						
Transfer						
Transfer						

Insert short title for transferred courses.  
 Insert course code, short title, and instructor initials for Auburn courses.

e.g.  
7450 Fr.  
Rev. RK

\* Program Requirements are 7700, 8700, plus at least one research seminar  
 \*\* Cross this out if planning to do a minor field in World History instead

Use this table to think in advance about course choices and fields. While the department does its best to provide advance information about seminar schedules on the department website, course offerings routinely change in response to student enrollment, faculty availability, as well as changes in program requirements and other circumstances. It is unlikely therefore that this prospective Plan of Study will work out exactly as planned.

## STEPS THROUGH THE PROGRAM

### *Coursework*

1. New students, except in cases where the student has been given permission to transfer a satisfactory equivalent, should register for and take HIST 7700 (Seminar in Historical Methods) at the first available opportunity, typically in their first semester in the program.
2. In accordance with both Graduate School and History Department policy, students who matriculate into Auburn's Ph.D. program with the understanding that they will have completed an M.A. at another institution prior to arrival will not be allowed to register for a second semester of graduate coursework at Auburn until they complete the M.A. degree requirements at their prior institution.
3. A full load for graduate students in History is 9 hours; students will not receive credits for history courses exceeding the 9-hour limit without the approval of the Graduate Committee. Courses that do not carry graduate credit in History (e.g., foreign language preparatory courses) and official audits do not count in determining load. Graduate assistants are required to take a minimum of 9 hours until they have completed all courses listed on their plan of study.

Students should read beyond the basic readings required for seminar classes. The well-advised and successful doctoral student will prepare far beyond the perimeters of coursework. This is an essential part of preparation for successful completion of the preliminary qualifying examination.

4. The Graduate School's regulations stipulate, in general, the maintenance of a 3.0 grade point average for a student to remain in good standing. A student may be dropped from the graduate program if his/her grade point average is below 3.0 for more than two consecutive semesters.

A grade of incomplete should be removed as quickly as possible. Graduate School regulations allow six months to clear an incomplete. After that point, the incomplete automatically becomes an F.

Students are reminded that incompletes have a detrimental effect on their application for continuation of assistantships. In addition, the Graduate Committee will automatically review the status of graduate teaching or research assistants who receive a course grade

of C. Assistants who make a second C or an Incomplete in addition to the first C, or an F at any time, will be dismissed as assistants.

### *Annual Reports*

5. Effective beginning Fall 2014, the Graduate School will require that each department conduct – at least on an annual basis – an evaluation of the progress of each Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) and each graduate student enrolled in a doctoral program. Annually, each department will report to the Graduate School confirming the evaluation of all GTAs and doctoral students have been completed. In addition, the department will provide the Graduate School with a summary report of all instances in which a GTA or doctoral student has received an unsatisfactory review. Failure to complete the annual report will lead to the student being reported to the Graduate School as making unsatisfactory progress.

### *Language Proficiency*

6. Before moving on to preliminary examinations, competence in a minimum of one foreign language is required. Students must take this foreign language test during the first year of study. The reading proficiency examination for foreign languages is usually given once each semester. Consult the DGS regarding date and time of the examination. Each student is personally responsible for meeting this deadline.

In cases in which a student is working in a field that necessitates the knowledge of more than one foreign language, a student's committee may require language competency beyond the minimum requirement. This requirement will be established during the third semester review. Similarly, a committee may require the student to acquire specialized methodological skills depending on the nature of his/her research.

7. The requirement for a working knowledge of the language must be demonstrated by passing a reading proficiency exam on a 600-1000 word passage in the selected language, normally from a historical source, in a period of two hours. Students must take this foreign language test during the first year of study.
8. Any student failing the competency test during the first year of the program must retake the exam before the beginning of his or her fourth semester of study (not counting the summer semester). Any student who fails to pass the language exam before the date scheduled for their preliminary examinations will not be allowed to take those examinations or to continue in the program.

**FORM**  
**Language Requirement**

Scheduled For:	
Taken on:	
Passed:	Yes / No
Scheduled For:	
Taken on:	
Passed:	Yes / No
Scheduled For:	
Taken on:	
Passed:	Yes / No

Requirement successfully completed: \_\_\_\_\_  
[signed by DGS]

**FORM**  
**Colloquium Requirement**

Paper Title:	
Presented on:	

Requirement successfully completed: \_\_\_\_\_  
[signed by DGS]

**FORM**  
**Permission to take a Second Research Seminar**

\_\_\_\_\_  
[signed by Major Professor]

Any student holding a Graduate Teaching Assistantship who fails to pass the language exam by the fourth semester of study will no longer be eligible for an assistantship.

### *Colloquium Requirement*

9. All Ph.D. students are required to present at least once at the Graduate Student Colloquium, held in the Department during Spring semester. The Colloquium gives students the opportunity to present scholarly papers in a friendly setting, and is an important preparation for venturing out to present at regional or national conferences. Ph.D.-track students are encouraged to present more than once.

### *Fields of Study*

10. Four fields are required for the Ph.D. These are a major field, two minor fields, and a breadth field. Doctoral students may specialize in one of the following major fields:

- United States to 1865
- United States since 1865
- History of Technology
- Europe, 1500–1789
- Europe since 1789

While there is no minimum or maximum number of courses set for a major field, both major professors will expect to have the opportunity to work directly with students before agreeing to serve on their committees. Coursework will also contribute towards a student's reading for his or her major field examinations.

11. In addition to a major field, students in consultation with their major professor(s) and the DGS must designate two minor fields of study. In each minor field, students are required to take a minimum of 9 hours of coursework (three courses); at least one course must be a seminar, and there can be no more than one readings course. It is expected, however, that students will develop an expertise in their minor fields beyond that provided by the minimum requirement of 9 hours of coursework.

Options for minor fields include any of the fields listed as major fields, as well as Latin American History, Archival Studies, Public History, and World History. It is also possible to create a thematic minor field (such as War and Society, Women's History, and so forth) in consultation with the DGS and relevant professors. Students who choose a minor field in Archival Studies or Public History may wish to add to their coursework in order to secure a Certificate in one of those fields as the certificate programs require

more than 9 hours of coursework. Such students should consult with the program officers for Archival Studies or Public History.

12. Students are required to take one additional breadth field (two courses or 6 hours of coursework, of which at least three must be in seminar). Reading courses may not be used to satisfy the breadth requirements. After consultation with the DGS, a non-History field may qualify as a breadth field.
13. From Fall 2013, admitted students will be required to take World History as either the breadth field or one of the minor fields. As part of this requirement, they will take at least one seminar that addresses current debates in the field of World History, for example, HIST 7690 (Seminar in Modern World History). This course should not be geographically specific, but instead adopt broader historiographical and/or theoretical approaches and treat comparative themes. Other courses used to satisfy the World History breadth field requirement will be expected to focus on some aspect of non-European, non-United States history.

*Major Professor and Advisory Committee*

14. A major professor must be agreed on by the end of the second semester. Once the student has decided the general area of interest or topic of his/her dissertation, he/she should consult with the appropriate professor(s) concerning the feasibility of his/her idea and the willingness of that professor to accept direction of the project. Prior to selecting a major professor, the DGS serves as the student's principal advisor. Thereafter he/she continues to advise the student generally regarding procedural matters, to maintain departmental records of the student's progress, and to direct students to the forms, requirements, and deadlines established by the Department and the Graduate School. Students are encouraged to consult him/her at any time.

Obviously, many considerations guide decisions regarding a major professors and thesis topics. Some of these considerations relate to an individual student's interests, language facility, and personality. Other considerations are the resources available in the department and the university library and archival collections; the specific areas of focus of the faculty as revealed in their academic training, publications, and research; and the formal fields offered as degree fields in the department. Mutual confidence and respect between the major professor and student are also very desirable. Clashes in personality or conflicts in values or in historical judgments can impede and sometimes destroy good relations and the ability to collaborate effectively. It is advisable to weigh carefully all relevant considerations.

**WORKSHEET**

**Third Semester: Prospective Plan of Study**

	Major Field	Minor 1	Minor 2	Breadth	Prog. Req.	Other
Semester 1						
Semester 1						
Semester 2						
Semester 2						
Semester 3						
Semester 3						
Transfer						
Transfer						
Transfer						
Proposed 4						
Proposed 4						
Proposed 5						
Proposed 5						
Proposed 6						
Proposed 6						

Insert short title for transferred courses.

Insert course code, short title, and instructor initials for Auburn courses.

If a schedule of future courses is not available, please indicate the number of courses remaining to be completed in each field at the bottom of the table (e.g. +1 or +2)

e.g.  
7450 Fr.  
Rev. RK

**FORM**  
**Third Semester Review: Agreed Plan of Study**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

	Major Field	Minor 1	Minor 2	Breadth	Prog. Req.	Other

**FORM**  
**Third Semester Review: Permission to continue coursework.**

Language Exam Passed

	Field	Professor Name	Grad Level	Signed by Professor
Major				
Major 2				
Minor				
Minor 2				

Note that **three** out of four committee members should expect to be Grad II faculty by the time the Plan of Study is filed at the end of the semester before preliminary examinations.

**Return a photocopy of this form to the DGS, retaining the original for your records.**

Selecting the right major professor may well be the most important decision in a student's professional career. Ideally it is preferable to work with the most knowledgeable person in a chosen field, as well as one who can provide sound professional advice and guidance.

When a student is certain of the area or topic and the professor most suitable for that area, he/she should formally request that professor to serve as major professor and as chair of the advisory committee. If a professor is obliged to turn down the student's request because of other responsibilities or departmental commitments, the student should not regard it as a personal affront

When the student-professor relationship has been established to the satisfaction of both parties, the major professor advises the student in the preparation of a plan of study and in the selection of an advisory committee in the third semester. Henceforth the major professor acts as the student's advisor on academic matters, although the student will still consult the DGS on matters of policy and procedure.

15. In the third semester, an advisory committee must be selected. The advisory committee includes four members: the major professor and an additional specialist in the major field of study, and one professor from each of the minor fields. At least three members of the committee (including the major professor) must be members of the Graduate Faculty at Level Two. It is the student's responsibility to secure the agreement of each of the committee members to serve.
16. The major professor and the DGS will coordinate with the student to plan the composition of the advisory committee, the third semester review, and the plan of study. For the third semester review, the major professor preferably should hold a meeting of the entire advisory committee with the student.

#### *Third Semester Review*

17. During the student's third semester in the doctoral program (exclusive of Summer term), his/her advisory committee formally reviews the student's progress and plans his/her future in the program. The major professor holds a meeting of the entire advisory committee with the student. If committee members are unable to attend the major professor will solicit their input in advance and share it with the student. In this meeting the committee discusses the student's performance in coursework and gives advice to the student on moving towards preliminary examinations. In some cases faculty may specify languages or courses that the student might require in order to proceed towards writing a thesis in his/her major field.

18. At the end of the third semester review, the student's advisory committee recommends either that he/she continue coursework toward the preliminary qualifying examination, or that he/she be directed to terminate coursework. In the latter contingency, if he/she writes and defends an acceptable M.A. thesis, he/she may, upon application to the Graduate School, be awarded the degree of Master of Arts. Alternatively the student will simply leave the program.

### *Plan of Study*

19. After the third semester review, the student, the major professor, and the advisory committee confer with the DGS to adopt a plan of study. It is then circulated and approved by the committee and the DGS and submitted to the Graduate School for approval. Note that in practice it may not be possible for "direct track" Ph.D. students to finalize their plans of study until their third year of coursework.

The student meets with the DGS in order to formally submit the plan of study to the Graduate School through Degreeworks. It must be approved before the student proceeds to preliminary examinations. Any subsequent change in committee composition or plan of study requires submission of a "Revision to Existing Plan of Study" form to the Graduate School.

20. Students with course credit in accepted graduate programs elsewhere may, with the approval of their advisory committee and the Graduate School, apply it toward degree programs at Auburn. Any credit hours transferred must be applicable within the framework of the History Department's doctoral program and be approved by the DGS with input from the student's advisory committee for inclusion in the plan of study. Coursework taken more than ten years prior to the commencement of the student's degree at Auburn will not be considered for transfer. In all, no more than two semesters' worth of credit may be transferred, and transfer credits must also meet the Graduate School's standard of currency. Please consult the Graduate School section of the [AU Bulletin](#) for further information.
21. Questions regarding such matters as transferred coursework should be clearly settled prior to drawing up and filing the plan of study. So too should the matter of specific languages or courses which the student might require in order to proceed towards writing a thesis in the major field. As advisory committees must act with unanimity, and as major professors must be members of the Graduate Faculty, students should consider committee composition carefully and maintain contact with all members at all times.

22. As established by the Graduate School, students are expected to have finished coursework and passed their preliminary examinations within six years of their admission to the program.

*Preliminary (or 'General') Examinations*

23. When required coursework has been completed and the foreign language requirement is met, the student will proceed to take his/her general (written) examinations. Six hours may be allowed for the written examination in the major field, and four hours may be allowed for each of the examinations in the two minor fields.

Students approaching general and final examinations should anticipate and plan around the availability of faculty committee members during both preparation and examination phases of the process.

Preliminary qualifying examinations must be taken in the semester immediately following the completion of coursework (not including summer semester). Students must be registered to take the examination. The DGS will set dates and times for written exams (scheduled across a two-week period), and students will sit them simultaneously rather than at individually designated times. The examinations will take place in early September and early November in Fall semester, and in late January / early February and early April in Spring semester. Students may make a written application to the Department Graduate Committee (via the DGS) to postpone taking their examinations to the next scheduled opportunity, providing that they supply a university approved excuse documenting a substantial impediment to progress. Otherwise, the student's failure to operate within the established timeline is sufficient cause for the dissolution of his/her committee. Teaching assistants who do not make satisfactory progress towards preliminary examinations will lose their eligibility for funding.

Students who fail preliminary examinations may retake them once during the following semester (in one or other of the scheduled examination periods).

Teaching assistants who fail their preliminary examinations, written or oral, will lose their funding. Students who retake and pass the examinations on the second attempt may reapply to finish the year(s) remaining of their funding. Students wishing to do so must submit applications to be considered alongside other applicants for assistantships for the following academic year.

**FORM**  
**Meeting with DGS to submit of Plan of Study to Grad School**  
**(to be done in semester prior to taking prelims)**

\_\_\_\_\_

Signed by DGS Date

**WORKSHEET**  
**Preliminary ('General') Examinations: Schedule for Written Examinations**

Field	Professor Name	List finalized (Y/N)	Scheduled Examination Date
Major 1			
Major 2			
Minor			
Minor 2			

**WORKSHEET**  
**Preliminary ('General') Examinations: Oral Exam Checklist**

Agree Scheduled Oral Exam Date:	
Submit application for General Oral Exam (Form A) to Grad School (at least one week prior to Oral Exam)	

**WORKSHEET**  
**Deadline for Dissertation Proposal Defense**

Defend by Date (within four months of oral examination)	
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24. When the major professor has ascertained that all members of the committee are satisfied with the written examination, he or she will notify the Graduate School, which will then officially schedule the general oral examination at a time and date suggested by the major professor after consultation with the student and committee members. The Graduate School will notify all parties involved and provide the appropriate paperwork. Students should not expect the oral examination to take place any earlier than two weeks after completion of the written examinations.

The oral examination customarily lasts at least two hours and may address all aspects of the major and minor fields prepared by the student. It is not restricted to the content of any coursework. The committee *must be unanimous* in passing a student. If the oral examination is in whole or part unsatisfactory, the committee will specify shortcomings and requirements in writing at the conclusion of the examination and proceed according to regulations set forth in the Graduate School section of the *AU Bulletin*. A student who fails the oral examination may, with the permission of the Dean of the Graduate School, retake it once. The timing of the second oral exam is determined in consultation with the student's committee members and the DGS.

Students who pass the preliminary qualifying examinations can be awarded the M.A. non-thesis (MANT) degree upon application to the Graduate School and with the unanimous recommendation of the student's committee.

Failure on the second attempt to pass the preliminary examinations is considered unsatisfactory progress towards the degree and the student will leave the doctoral program. A student who does not pass may, however, be awarded the M.A. on application to the Graduate School, if he/she writes and defends an acceptable M.A. thesis.

#### *Dissertation Committee*

25. After the oral examination, the job of the student's advisory committee for the preliminary examination is over. The student must now, in conjunction with his/her major professor, select a dissertation committee consisting of the major professor and three additional professors, all of whom should have some degree of expertise or interest in the student's dissertation topic. This will require filing a "Revision to Existing Plan of Study" form with the Graduate School in consultation with the DGS. For the final examination, at least three members of the dissertation committee, including the major professor, must be members of the Graduate Faculty at Level Two.

**FORM**  
**Dissertation Committee**

Major Professor	Grad Level	Signed
1.	II	

Other Members

2.		
3.		
4.		

Please note that changes to this list are possible, and even to be expected due to shifts in faculty availability and program requirements during the writing up period. Nevertheless, **three** out of four of the committee members listed above (including the major professor) should expect to be Grad II faculty by the time a final Plan of Study is filed in the semester prior to submitting and defending the dissertation.

**FORM**  
**Successful Dissertation Proposal Defense**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Dissertation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed by Major Professor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Defense Date

**Return a photocopy of this form to the DGS, retaining the original for your records.**

*Dissertation Proposal*

26. Within four months of successful completion of the oral examination, students will present to the assembled dissertation committee a dissertation proposal of approximately twenty pages for discussion and approval in a proposal defense. The student's failure to operate within the established timeline is sufficient cause for the dissolution of his/her committee. In addition, teaching assistants will lose the remainder of their funding unless they supply a university approved excuse documenting a substantial impediment to progress.

*Writing the Dissertation*

27. When a student has passed the preliminary written and oral examinations and has defended his/her dissertation proposal, he/she is referred to as a doctoral candidate (or, colloquially among professionals, as ABD—"All But Dissertation").
28. The Graduate School also allows students, once they have attained candidacy (ABD status), four years to write and defend their Ph.D. dissertation. After four years have elapsed, however, a student may still, with the approval of his or her dissertation committee, apply for a one-year extension in order to secure time to submit and defend the dissertation.

Notwithstanding, the Graduate School requires students to complete *all* requirements for the degree within ten years. This time to completion begins with the earliest completed course approved for inclusion in the plan of study (the Department does not include transferred coursework in this calculation). Students failing to complete the degree in this allotted time revert to the status of an applicant and must, with the approval of the dissertation committee, petition the dean of the Graduate School to retake an oral examination in order to regain the status of a doctoral candidate. There are no exemptions to this.

In addition, the Department has set limits on the currency of coursework in the doctoral program. Coursework is defined as current if it was taken less than ten years since completion of the last of the 65 course credit hours required for the degree. Where coursework was not completed, individual courses will be no longer deemed current after a period of ten years has elapsed. Limits on currency apply to transferred courses as well as to courses taken in the degree program at Auburn.

Students who reapply for candidacy with coursework not deemed current must replace those credit hours, taking or retaking both written and oral preliminary examinations.

The Department has granted a once-off extension of coursework currency to ABD students currently writing up their dissertations, but whose coursework will expire before or at the end of Spring 2014, extending the validity of all coursework taken until the end of the academic year 2014-2015.

29. The Ph.D. dissertation is a substantial monograph-length work offering a strong historical argument, presented in historiographical context and grounded in extensive original research conducted in archives and/or with other substantial collections of primary sources.

*Good research and writing take time. You will therefore have to plan and organize your research and writing carefully during the “writing up” part of your degree. You should arrange to meet with your advisor(s) at regular intervals. Your advisor(s) will help you define your ideas and approach and read draft chapters. In the end, however, your dissertation is your dissertation. Its success or failure is completely up to you.*

Even when a final draft of the entire dissertation is completed, it often takes several more months of editing for it to be ready to move towards examination. Students should be aware of this when planning for graduation, paying close attention to Graduate School deadlines including the requirement of a dissertation format check very early in the semester in which a student intends to graduate. Major professors differ in their handling of dissertation writing. Students must be sure they understand and follow their major professors' directions. In addition, students must consult the on-line [Guide to Preparation and Submission of Theses and Dissertations](#). It contains full details regarding the physical preparation and technical requirements for the final copy.

30. Students must submit a graduation check (GAAAP) by the end of the semester prior to graduation. This is an official notice to the Graduate School of the student's intent to complete the degree requirements and graduate.

### *Continuous Enrollment*

31. All full- and part-time degree-seeking graduate students must be continuously enrolled. Continuous enrollment is defined as registration in at least two semesters in a given academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer) until the degree is awarded. For more information on “Registration and Continuous Enrollment,” see above.

<p><b>WORKSHEET</b>  <b>Dissertation Final Defense and Graduation Checklist</b></p>
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Check specific deadlines on the Graduate School's [Calendar](#).

In semester before defense and graduation

Schedule for completion agreed with major professor	
Plan of Study revised and submitted with DGS	
Continuous enrollment status checked	
Graduation check (GAAAP) submitted to Grad. School	

In semester of defense and graduation

Outside Reader agreed	
Dissertation distributed to Committee Members	
“First Submission Approval Form” submitted to Grad. School & Dissertation submitted in PDF form to Grad. School for format check	
Dissertation submitted to Outside Reader by Grad. School	
Oral Defense Date scheduled	
Oral Defense	
Corrections Completed	
Electronic Dissertation Final Approval Form submitted to Grad. Sch.	
Dissertation submitted electronically on AUETD	
Complete Grad. School Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED)	
Passed Graduate School Format Check	
Minimum of 3 paper copies submitted to the DGS for binding	

### *Final Examination*

32. The final examination or dissertation defense is an oral examination about two to three hours in duration; it covers the dissertation and matters of related interest. It is open to all members of the Graduate Faculty who wish to observe it. The exam is administered by the major professor and the dissertation committee. The Graduate School will, in addition, appoint an outside reader who attends and participates in the oral examination. A unanimous opinion is required to pass.

At least one complete semester (preferably more than one) must intervene between the general oral and final examinations. The two examinations thus cannot be taken either in the same semester or in consecutive semesters.

33. If the final examination is deemed satisfactory, the major professor will file reports with the Graduate School and the History Department. Meanwhile, the student will incorporate any final revisions and corrections indicated by the committee into the text of the dissertation and submit it to the Graduate School [Auburn University Theses and Dissertations](#) (AUETD) repository and archive where it will be stored following a final format check. Students should carefully observe Graduate School deadlines for the submission of the final revised copy of the dissertation, or risk delaying the conferral of the Ph.D. degree by an entire semester. Students must consult with their major professors and the DGS about various options to embargo electronic access to their research.

Dissertations are bound at the student's expense following procedures established by the DGS and Graduate Committee. One copy will be retained by the History Department and a second copy presented to the student's major professor.

34. Should the final examination be judged unsatisfactory, a re-examination may be given on recommendation of the committee and approval by the Dean of the Graduate School. Further examination requires exceptional circumstances and approval of the University's Graduate Council.

### *Graduation*

35. A student must be registered in order to graduate. He/she is strongly encouraged to attend commencement and receive the hood symbolizing the doctorate (the hood, but not the degree, is returnable immediately after the ceremony).

## **CERTIFICATES IN ARCHIVAL STUDIES AND PUBLIC HISTORY**

Ph.D. students with Archival Studies or Public History as a minor field may take additional coursework and complete an Archival Studies or Public History internship in order to receive a Certificate in Public History or Archival Studies.

If a student pursues both Public History and Archival Studies certificates, the student may NOT count courses taken for one certificate toward the other and must complete a second internship.

Only students enrolled in an Auburn degree program – or those who have completed a History M.A. or M.L.I.S. at Auburn or elsewhere – may seek a Certificate in Archival Studies. Students in the latter category must apply for admission to the certificate program and should contact the Archival Studies program officer for additional details and information about application requirements.

Only students enrolled in an Auburn degree program – or those who have completed a History M.A. at Auburn or elsewhere – may seek a Certificate in Public History. Students in the latter category must apply for admission to the certificate program and should contact the Public History program officer for additional details and information about application requirements.

### *Archival Studies*

Students who complete the following with a minimum GPA of 3.0 are eligible to receive the certificate in Archival Studies:

- HIST 6710 Fundamentals of Archival Theory and Practice (3 credit hours)
- HIST 7920 Archival Internship (3 credit hours)
- Three additional Archival courses (of which no more than two can be taken at the 6000-level) (9 credit hours)
- Historical Methods (HIST 7700) or equivalent (3 credit hours)

### *Public History*

Students who complete the following with a minimum GPA of 3.0 are eligible to receive the certificate in Public History:

- HIST 6810 Fundamentals of Public History (3 hours)
- HIST 7910 Public History Internship (3 credit hours)
- Three additional Public History courses (of which no more than two can be taken at the 6000-level) (9 credit hours)
- Historical Methods (HIST 7700) or equivalent (3 credit hours)

## **PROCEEDING THROUGH THE PROGRAM: MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.) STUDENTS**

The Master of Arts (M.A.) degree is usually introductory to graduate study, and is awarded to students on the basis of their production of scholarly work of the highest level, including in a written thesis that demonstrates the student's capacity for original investigation and analysis. The department does not admit students to pursue a non-thesis M.A.

Unlike the Ph.D. degree, the M.A. degree is not formally structured with fields of concentration. There is no foreign language requirement. The student is encouraged to take courses related to his/her major area of interest and academic needs, subject to his/her major professor's advice and advisory committee's approval. Students may also benefit from taking courses outside their major areas of interest, and are encouraged to explore broader interests, periods, and themes as part of their coursework. Up to 9 hours of graduate coursework may be taken outside the History Department.

Students admitted to the master's program have the option, after one year in the program *and with the approval of their major professor and advisory committee*, to apply to change to the direct-track doctoral program. As noted above, however, Auburn baccalaureates who are M.A. candidates are not eligible to pursue the Ph.D. at Auburn under these circumstances.

### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. The M.A. requires satisfactory completion of at least 31 credit hours beyond the baccalaureate degree, consisting of 27 hours of coursework as well as 4 hours of HIST 7990 (Research and Thesis). As part of their coursework, all students are required to take HIST 7700 (Historical Methods). Additionally, M.A. students must take one research seminar. There are special requirements for students in the Archival Studies and Public History programs.

The Archival Studies program requires 31 credit hours divided between traditional academic coursework, specialized seminars in Archival Studies, and field experience. Graduate students enrolled in the program must take 12 credit hours of Archival Studies coursework plus 3 credit hours of an Archival internship. Students must complete HIST 6710 (Fundamentals of Archival Theory and Practice), HIST 7920 (Archival Internship), and at least one seminar specifically related to Archival Studies. In addition to HIST 6710 (Fundamentals of Archival Theory and Practice), students may take no more than two courses at the 6000-level. All students are required to complete HIST 7700

(Historical Methods), at least one research seminar, and 4 hours of HIST 7990 (Research and Thesis), and present an acceptable completed M.A. thesis. Students completing the M.A. in History with a Public History or Archival certificate must complete at least 6 hours of coursework not focused on Public History or Archival Studies.

The Public History program requires 31 credit hours divided between traditional academic coursework, specialized seminars in Public History, and field experience. Graduate students enrolled in the program must take 12 credit hours of Public History coursework plus 3 credit hours of a Public History internship. Students must complete HIST 6810 (Fundamentals of Public History), HIST 7910 (Public History Internship), and at least one seminar specifically related to Public History. In addition to HIST 6810 (Fundamentals of Public History), students may take no more than two courses at the 6000-level. All students are required to complete HIST 7700 (Historical Methods), at least one research seminar, and 4 hours of HIST 7990 (Research and Thesis), and present an acceptable completed M.A. thesis. Students completing the M.A. in History with a Public History or Archival certificate must complete at least 6 hours of coursework not focused on Public History or Archival Studies.

2. Presentation of a research paper at the Graduate Student Colloquium.
3. Thesis and Defense.
4. Normally, students complete the M.A. program within two calendar years. In any case, the program *must* be completed within five calendar years. Requests for extensions may be addressed to the Graduate School through the major professor in consultation with the DGS.

## **REGISTRATION AND CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT**

Registration at Auburn University is electronic. Students register for courses on the university website (via [AU Access](#)). Newly admitted students must be cleared for registration by the Graduate School and the Registrar's Office. Instructions and procedures for registration can be obtained from the [Office of the Registrar](#).

Students should consult the DGS before making course choices.

When a student has completed the coursework set out in his/her plan of study, he/she may not register for further coursework until the thesis has been completed. Nevertheless, students must register in the semester of graduation and in any other semester in which the staff or the facilities

of the University are used, in the removal of an “Incomplete” grade, during work on the dissertation, and when oral examinations are scheduled. A minimum of one hour is required. This is usually accomplished by registering for one hour of HIST 7990 (Research and Thesis).

While students can register themselves for seminars and lecture courses electronically, the DGS manages student registration for reading courses and other independent studies, thesis and dissertation hours (7/8990), and for the Group Research and Writing Seminar. Students are expected to reply promptly to emails about their registration needs.

All full- and part-time degree-seeking graduate students must be continuously enrolled. Continuous enrollment is defined as registration in at least two semesters in a given academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer) until the degree is awarded.

Except in cases where they secure an official leave of absence, students who fail to register for at least two semesters in a given academic year will be declared inactive. To be re-activated, students must apply for re-activation to the program in which they were enrolled and to the Graduate School. Re-activation is not guaranteed. In order to fulfill the continuous registration requirement, students who are re-activated must register retroactively and pay the continuous enrollment fee for all semesters that have elapsed since they were last enrolled, up to a maximum of eight semesters. Students should address concerns about the continuous enrollment policy and registration options to the DGS.

## VARIETIES OF GRADUATE COURSES

There are four types of graduate courses taught at Auburn (not including internships). Students should be aware of the differences between them.

1. Seminar Courses: Seminar courses (numbered among the Department's HIST 7000-level options) make up the majority of an M.A. student's coursework while in the program. Small groups meet regularly with their professor to discuss particular books or topics, prepared in advance. All students are expected to participate actively in the discussion.

This form of teaching does not normally involve lectures. If students are unfamiliar with the background of a topic, they are expected to read up on it by themselves.

2. Lecture Courses: Students may also take a maximum of 6 credit hours in lecture courses. Lecture courses are numbered HIST 6000-6970 and are taught in conjunction with parallel undergraduate courses. While they are called "lecture" courses, they will normally involve other forms of learning interaction. The course requirements for graduate students will be higher than those for undergraduates.

Students pursuing a concentration in Archival Studies are required to take HIST 6710 (Fundamentals of Archival Theory and Practice) and students concentrating in Public History are required to take HIST 6810 (Fundamentals of Public History). They may take no more than two additional lecture courses at the 6000-level.

3. Readings Courses: In exceptional cases, M.A. students may substitute one lecture course with a readings course. Readings courses are numbered HIST 8000-8600. They consist of regular meetings with a professor to discuss particular books or topics, prepared in advance. The workload will be equivalent to that of a seminar.

Readings courses are offered completely at the discretion of individual professors. Students with permission to take a readings course should consult the DGS regarding registration.

4. Research Seminars: One research seminar is required in the master's program. Students will register for this normally during their third semester of coursework.

This research seminar may take one of two forms. Both forms permit students to concentrate exclusively on research and writing a significant portion of their thesis. On the recommendation of their major advisor, they may enroll in the Research and Writing Seminar in which they and other enrolled students will meet regularly as a group with a designated

professor over the course of the semester. They will also meet with their major professor as needed during the semester for individual guidance.

Alternatively, their major advisor may, completely at his or her discretion, recommend that they work together directly and not as part of a group. In this case, the student will enroll in one of the independent-study research seminars established for each major field of study. As in the group Research and Writing seminar, the student will concentrate exclusively on the research and writing of a significant portion of their thesis.

## STEPS THROUGH THE PROGRAM

### *Coursework*

1. The M.A. requires satisfactory completion of at least 27 hours of coursework, as well as 4 hours of HIST 7990 (Research and Thesis).
2. Students should register for and complete HIST 7700 (Seminar in Historical Methods), at the first available opportunity, typically in their first semester in the program.
3. The Graduate School's regulations stipulate, in general, the maintenance of a 3.0 grade point average for a student to remain in good standing. A student may be dropped from the graduate program if his/her grade point average is below 3.0 for more than two consecutive semesters.

A grade of incomplete should be removed as quickly as possible. Graduate School regulations allow six months to clear an incomplete. After that point, the incomplete automatically becomes an F.

Students are reminded that incompletes have a detrimental effect on their application for continuation of assistantships. In addition, the Graduate Committee will automatically review the status of graduate teaching or research assistants who receive a course grade of C. Assistants who make a second C or an Incomplete in addition to the first C, or an F at any time, will be dismissed as assistants.

### *Annual Reports*

4. Effective beginning Fall 2014, the Graduate School will require that each department conduct – at least on an annual basis – an evaluation of the progress of each Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) and each graduate student enrolled in a doctoral program. Annually, each department will report to the Graduate School confirming the evaluation of all GTAs and doctoral students have been completed. In addition, the department will provide the Graduate School with a summary report of all instances in which a GTA or doctoral student has received an unsatisfactory review. Failure to complete the annual report will lead to the student being reported to the Graduate School as making unsatisfactory progress.

**FORM**  
**Colloquium Requirement**

Paper Title	
Presented on	

Requirement successfully completed: \_\_\_\_\_  
[signed by DGS]

**FORM**  
**Thesis and Advisory Committee (end of second semester)**

Student Name	
Thesis Topic	

	Name	Signature
Major Professor		
Committee Member		
Committee Member		

Registered for Research Seminar for Fall of third semester

**Return a photocopy of this form to the DGS, retaining the original for your records.**

*Colloquium Requirement*

5. All M.A. students are required to present at least once at the Graduate Student Colloquium, held in the Department during Spring semester. The Colloquium gives students the opportunity to present scholarly papers in a friendly setting, and is an important preparation for venturing out to present at regional or national conferences.

*Thesis and Major Professor*

6. Students should decide as soon as possible upon an area of interest for thesis research, and secure a major professor to direct it. Once an area of interest has been identified, the major professor will help the student develop a specific topic and thesis. A major professor and thesis should be agreed upon by the second semester.

*Advisory Committee and Plan of Study*

7. Before the end of the second semester the student, with the advice of a major professor, will select two other professors to form a thesis advisory committee. The student, the major professor, and the advisory committee members confer with the DGS to agree upon a plan of study. The plan of study is then circulated and approved by the committee and the DGS and submitted to the Graduate School for approval.
8. The student will then complete the coursework outlined in plan of study. The plan of study is flexible. If changes in courses or committee members are necessary, the student should consult the Director of Graduate Studies, as such changes require submission of a "Revision to Existing Plan of Study" form to the Graduate School.

*Writing the Thesis*

9. The process of writing the M.A. thesis must be underway by the beginning of the third semester. A M.A. thesis is a substantial work offering a strong historical argument grounded in extensive original research conducted in archives and/or with other substantial collections of primary sources. As good research and writing take time, many major professors expect their students to use the summer semester to get a head start on research. Then, normally in the third semester, the student registers for a research seminar that concentrates exclusively on research and writing a significant proportion of their thesis (for more details on the forms of research seminars, see "Varieties of Graduate Coursework" above).

10. Students must submit a graduation check (GAAAP) by the end of the semester prior to graduation (normally the end of the third semester). This is an official notice to the Graduate School of the student's intent to complete the degree requirements and graduate.
11. In their final semester students register for HIST 7990 (Research and Thesis) hours, typically under their major professor. Although these are ungraded hours, professors may require regular meetings with the student and updates on the progress of research and writing.

Even when a final draft is completed, it often takes several more weeks of editing for the thesis to be ready to move towards examination. Students should be aware of this when planning for graduation, paying close attention to Graduate School deadlines. Note that it is also likely that professors will require corrections, additions, or amendments to the thesis after examination before its final electronic submission to the graduate school. Major professors differ in their handling of thesis writing. Students must be sure they understand and follow their major professors' directions. In addition, students must consult the on-line [\*Guide to Preparation and Submission of Theses and Dissertations\*](#). It contains full details regarding the physical preparation and technical requirements for the final copy of a thesis.

### *Examination*

12. When approved by the major professor, the draft thesis is submitted to the other members of the committee for their review, recommendations for further work, or approval for progress to an oral examination.
13. Once the major professor and advisory committee have approved the thesis for progress towards examination, the major professor will schedule the oral examination, secure the necessary forms from the DGS or departmental website, and post notice of the examination in the History Department office. The examination itself will be of approximately two hours duration. The major professor acts as chair and submits the appropriate reports of examination results to the DGS and the Graduate School. Students approaching the completion of their work must anticipate and plan around the availability or absence of faculty committee members, especially during Summer terms.

The M.A. oral examination serves as the culmination of the student's work. Rather than a retesting of material previously covered in coursework, the examination focuses on the student's thesis and will encourage the student to reflect upon the significance of his or her thesis and the ways in which it relates to broader historical questions. It is, therefore, incumbent upon faculty to frame questions that require the student to discuss the thesis in

the context of relevant historiography and to draw possible implications from the student's primary research that extend beyond the narrow confines of the particular subject explored in the thesis.

The decision to pass the student must be unanimous. If the student fails, reexamination may be given on recommendation of the committee and with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School. The timing of the second oral exam is determined in consultation with the student's committee members and the DGS.

14. Following the oral examination, the major professor files reports with the Graduate School and the History Department. The student must revise the thesis to incorporate all revisions and corrections indicated by the committee, with forms signed by the advisory committee. If approved, the thesis may now be submitted to the Graduate School [Auburn University Theses and Dissertations](#) (AUETD) repository and archive where it will be stored following a final format check. Students should carefully observe Graduate School deadlines for the submission of the final revised copy of the thesis, or risk delaying the conferral of the M.A. degree by an entire semester. Students must consult with their major professors and the DGS about various options to embargo electronic access to their research.

In its report to the Department of History, the committee also advises whether the student should be recommended for further study in Auburn's Ph.D. program in the future. Students receiving a positive recommendation must still apply formally for admission to the Ph.D. program. A recommendation against further graduate study means that the student cannot continue beyond the M.A. degree at Auburn. Auburn baccalaureates who graduate with the M.A. degree in History may not apply to the History Department's Ph.D. program.

Theses are bound at the student's expense following procedures established by the DGS and Graduate Committee. One copy will be retained by the History Department and a second copy presented to the student's major professor.

### *Graduation*

15. Students are reminded that they must be registered at the time of the oral examination and at the time of graduation, even if they are not then engaged in further coursework or residing in Auburn. Students are strongly encouraged to attend commencement.

**WORKSHEET**  
**Thesis Final Defense and Graduation Checklist**

Check specific deadlines on the Graduate School's [Calendar](#).

In semester before defense and graduation (normally the third semester)

Confirm Plan of Study with DGS	
Graduation check (GAAAP) submitted to Grad. School	

In semester of defense and graduation (with coursework completed)

Thesis approved by major professor	
Thesis submitted to other committee members	
Thesis submitted in PDF form to Grad. School for format check (optional)	
Oral Defense Date Scheduled	
Oral Defense	
Corrections Completed	
Thesis Master's Final Examination Form (form 9) and Electronic Thesis Final Approval Form submitted to Grad. School	
Thesis submitted electronically on AUETD	
Passed Graduate School Format Check.	
Minimum of 2 copies submitted to the DGS for binding	

The deadline set by the Graduate School for electronically submitting the final corrected version of the thesis is set for students wishing to graduate at the end of the semester. Students who, with the permission of committee members, submit after this deadline but before the end of semester may receive a 'Certificate of Completion,' which allows them to formally complete the M.A. program and graduate in the following semester without registering for classes. In both cases, students should submit *in advance of the deadline* in order to allow sufficient time for the Graduate School's format check.

## **CERTIFICATES IN ARCHIVAL STUDIES AND PUBLIC HISTORY**

Only students enrolled in an Auburn degree program – or those who have completed a History M.A. or MLIS at Auburn or elsewhere – may seek a Certificate in Archival Studies. Students in the latter category must apply for admission to the certificate program and should contact the Archival Studies program officer for additional details and information about application requirements.

Only students enrolled in an Auburn degree program – or those who have completed a History M.A. at Auburn or elsewhere – may seek a Certificate in Public History. Students in the latter category must apply for admission to the certificate program and should contact the Public History program officer for additional details and information about application requirements.

If a student pursues both Public History and Archival Studies certificates, the student may NOT count courses taken for one certificate toward the other and must complete a second internship.

### *Archival Studies*

Students who complete the following with a minimum GPA of 3.0 are eligible to receive the certificate in Archival Studies:

- HIST 6710 Fundamentals of Archival Theory and Practice (3 credit hours)
- HIST 7920 Archival Internship (3 credit hours)
- Three additional Archival courses (of which no more than two can be taken at the 6000-level) (9 credit hours)
- Historical Methods (HIST 7700) or equivalent (3 credit hours)

### *Public History*

Students who complete the following with a minimum GPA of 3.0 are eligible to receive the certificate in Public History:

- HIST 6810 (Fundamentals of Public History) (3 credit hours)
- HIST 7910 (Public History Internship) (3 credit hours)
- Three additional Public History courses (of which no more than two can be taken at the 6000-level) (9 credit hours)
- HIST 7700 (Seminar in Historical Methods) or equivalent (3 credit hours)

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

### OPPORTUNITIES IN THE DEPARTMENT

#### *Phi Alpha Theta*

The local chapter (Kappa Pi) of [Phi Alpha Theta](#), the international History honor society, sponsors a range of events throughout the academic year to which all graduate students are invited. Some of these are social, including the annual graduate/faculty party at the beginning of Fall semester. Such events provide an opportunity for graduate students to get to know one another and individual faculty members better. Students who are not yet members of Phi Alpha Theta, and who qualify, are urged to affiliate with the chapter.

Other Phi Alpha Theta events are academic, including the annual Graduate Student Colloquium, held in the Department during Spring semester. The Colloquium gives students the opportunity to present scholarly papers in a friendly setting, and is an important preparation for venturing out to present at regional or national conferences. All Ph.D. and M.A. students are required to present at the Colloquium at least once. Graduate students are also encouraged to present research at the Phi Alpha Theta regional meetings held annually both in Alabama and in neighboring states.

#### *Department Awards and Fellowships*

Each year the Department offers a number of awards and fellowships to current graduate students to reward excellence or to assist in defraying the costs of research and writing. Details of these awards and fellowships are available online at: <http://cla.auburn.edu/history/graduate-students/awards-and-fellowships/>.

### OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH THE UNIVERSITY

#### *Graduate School Awards*

The Graduate School at Auburn University offers a number of research and travel awards: <http://www.grad.auburn.edu/ps/aid.html>.

*Biggio Center for Teaching and Learning*

The Biggio Center offers a range of programs to help graduate students prepare for careers as university teachers:

[http://www.auburn.edu/academic/other/biggio/programs/for\\_graduate\\_students/](http://www.auburn.edu/academic/other/biggio/programs/for_graduate_students/).

*Research Week*

During Research Week (normally Spring semester), the Graduate Scholars Forum and Symposium serves as a further opportunity to present research and hone presentation skills in front of a multi-disciplinary audience. See: [http://ocm.auburn.edu/research\\_week/](http://ocm.auburn.edu/research_week/)

*Graduate Student Council (GSC)*

Graduate students may also consider involvement in the GSC: <http://www.auburn.edu/gsc/>.

## **OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE THE UNIVERSITY**

The ambitious graduate student will look for opportunities to engage with a wide scholarly audience from the moment he/she begins to produce original research. In particular, Ph.D. students will be expected to begin presenting their research in the form of formal scholarly papers at local, regional, and even national conferences relevant to their field.

In addition, many libraries and archives offer stipends or fellowships to work with their collections and students are encouraged to apply for these when appropriate. Information about such awards is often included on institutional websites. Students might also regularly check academic announcement services like the one hosted by [H-Net](#).

H-Net may also serve as a way to locate publishing opportunities, starting with short book reviews and perhaps even—and only when the student’s research is well advanced—calls for articles to feature in journal special issues or edited collections.

Before the student applies for any outside opportunity, however, he/she should discuss it with his/her major professor. When writing for outside readers, it is also advisable to look for examples of similar applications made by students at and outside Auburn, in order to get a better sense of the rules of the genre.