

M.A. in History Handbook
Department of Humanities
Texas A&M University – Central Texas



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY
CENTRAL TEXAS

2020 – 2021

This handbook is designed to provide information for completion of the Master of Arts (M.A.) in History. Questions about the information contained within this document should be directed to the Graduate Coordinator.

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Welcome

Welcome to the M.A. in History in the Department of Humanities! Just as it is a privilege for you to be able to attend Texas A&M University – Central Texas, it is a privilege to teach you over the course of your time here.

Program Level Student Learning Outcomes

1. Identify connections between historical issues and life outside the classroom, and compare the historical development of their own and other cultures
2. Think historically about the past by identifying and critiquing historical interpretations (historiographical analysis) and analyzing issues in a historical context
3. Select and use evidence from a variety of sources, including primary sources, and complete assignments that prompt them to argue effectively and critically
4. Examine current issues from a historical perspective and examine the role of historical interpretation in shaping current actions and policies

Mutual Expectations and Responsibilities

The M.A. in History, the Department of Humanities, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Graduate School all expect and demand intellectual engagement and curiosity, academic integrity, and professionalism. In return, the M.A. in History and its faculty pledge to provide a challenging and safe learning environment, to hold you to high academic standards, and to be professional in all its contact with you. Furthermore, Texas A&M University – Central Texas offers the necessary academic resources and ancillary services to support you in your time here. If you should have concerns about your ability to meet any expectations or requirements, please consult with the Graduate Coordinator.

M.A. in History Faculty Directory

<u>Name</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Specialization</u>
Dillman, Jefferson	204 HH	(254) 519- 5441	j.dillman@tamuct.edu	Adjunct Instructor	Transatlantic world, slavery, Caribbean, landscape studies

Hemmis, Timothy	216H HH	(254) 501- 5931	themmis@tamuct.edu	Assistant Professor	Colonial America, Revolutionary America, and the Early Republic; American War and Society
Jones, Jerry	204H HH	(254) 519- 5446	jerry.jones@tamuct.edu	Dean; Professor	Modern U.S. and Europe; military and diplomatic
McDaniel, Cadra	204L HH	(254) 501- 5932	cadra.mcdaniel@tamuct.edu	Assistant Professor	Russian and Soviet culture and foreign affairs; European culture and politics
Nichter, Luke	216J HH	(254) 519- 5735	luke_nichter@tamuct.edu	Graduate Coordinator; Professor	20 th century U.S. political and international
Tucker, Gene	204 HH	(254) 519- 5441	gene.tucker@tamuct.edu	Adjunct Instructor	Colonial Atlantic, Texas, Cartographic history
Volle, Lisa	204 HH	(254) 519- 5441	lvolle@tamuct.edu	Adjunct Instructor	Spanish readings course

Other Important Contact Information

<u>Office</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Website</u>
<u>Academic Support</u> (GRE Prep, Study Abroad, Tutoring)	Varies	(254) 519-5796	<u>https://tamuct.edu/student-affairs/academic-support.html</u>
<u>College of Arts and Sciences</u>	217 FH	(254) 519-5441	<u>http://tamuct.edu/coas/</u>
<u>Community Counseling and Family Therapy Center</u>	207 WH	(254) 519-5403	<u>http://tamuct.edu/ccftc/ccftc.html</u>
<u>Financial Aid</u>	108 FH	(254) 501-5854	<u>http://tamuct.edu/financial-aid/</u>
<u>Graduate School</u>	424 FH	(254) 519-5447	<u>http://tamuct.edu/graduate-studies/</u>
<u>Research and Economic Development</u>	418 FH	(254) 519-5741	<u>http://tamuct.edu/research/</u>
<u>Student Conduct</u>	105 WH	(254) 501-5909	<u>http://tamuct.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct.html</u>
<u>Student Government Association</u>	105 WH	(254) 501-5909	<u>http://facebook.com/TAMUCTSGA</u>
<u>Technology Help Desk</u>	113 FH	(254) 519-5466	<u>http://tamuct.edu/help/</u>
<u>Testing Center</u>	212 WH	(254) 501-5830	<u>https://tamuct.edu/testing-center/</u>
<u>University Library</u>	Warrior Hall	(254) 519-5798	<u>http://tamuct.libguides.com/index</u>
<u>University Writing Center</u>	416 WH		<u>http://tamuct.mywconline.com/</u>
<u>Veterans Affairs</u>	221 FH	(254) 519-5423	<u>http://tamuct.edu/veterans-affairs/</u>

How to Register for Classes

The easiest way to register is online, through Warrior Web. Detailed instructions are available [here: tamuct.edu/registrar/registration-instructions.html](http://tamuct.edu/registrar/registration-instructions.html). If you have any trouble registering for courses, you should contact the Office of the Registrar at (254) 519-5452.

How to Track Degree Progress

Students are encouraged to track degree progress during their career at Texas A&M University – Central Texas. The easiest way to do this is through Warrior Web. You should check your degree progress at least once a semester to ensure that it is accurate. You will be allowed to graduate only if Warrior Web indicates that you have fulfilled all degree requirements, so make sure that it is accurate and up-to-date. The degree check sheet has been attached at the end of this handbook. If you have any questions, ask the Graduate Coordinator.

Questions?

For any matter concerning academics, answers to many of the commonly asked questions are in this handbook. If you cannot find the answer, check the website for the Graduate School, then the Graduate Coordinator. Another good resource is Rosemarie Torres in the College of Arts and Sciences. For matters affecting graduate students more generally at Texas A&M University – Central Texas, contact the Student Government Association.

Your Degree, Your Responsibility

You are ultimately responsible for your education. The M.A. in History, the Department of Humanities, the College of Arts and Sciences, the Graduate School, and Texas A&M University – Central Texas offer many resources to help you to complete your goals and beyond. However, it is up to you to be aware of deadlines, to fill out the requisite forms, and to make sure that you are fulfilling educational and administrative requirements. In other words, you are responsible for making sure that you fulfill all academic and financial obligations associated with being a graduate student in the M.A. in History program at Texas A&M University – Central Texas. In the case of a student grievance about any program procedure, if a satisfactory outcome cannot be reached with the Graduate Coordinator appeals should be made to the Chair of the Department of Humanities according to the Department's policy for appeals.

M.A. in History Overview

M.A. in History students at Texas A&M University – Central Texas enjoy numerous program options, academic resources, and financial aid opportunities. The program's main strengths lie in U.S. history, modern European history, modern East Asian history, and diplomatic and military history. The M.A. in History offers two master's degree options, including a thesis and a non-thesis option.

All students are required to take HIST 5300: Elements of Historical Inquiry and HIST 5380: Historiography and Historical Method. HIST 5300 should be taken early in the degree, and it is typically offered during the fall semester. HIST 5380 is a capstone, and should be taken late in the degree. It is typically offered during the spring semester. HIST 5300 is a pre-requisite for HIST 5380.

Beyond these two required courses, students are free to enroll in any graduate history course. With permission of the Graduate Coordinator, it is also possible to enroll in graduate-level offerings in related departments and programs. All students must take at least one research seminar, designated as Selected Topics courses. These carry the course prefixes HIST 5320, HIST 5322, and HIST 5342. Students may retake any course that carries the same catalog number, e.g. HIST 5343, as long as the topic varies.

Guidelines and Procedures for M.A. in History Students

The following guidelines and procedures are intended to acquaint students working towards the M.A. in History degree with the general operations of the program and to provide a clear statement of certain degree requirements. Students are also urged to read carefully the requirements and regulations for the M.A. in History as stated in the Graduate Catalog, which also appear in the appendices to this handbook.

1. Administration: The Graduate Coordinator, in consultation with program Graduate Faculty, administers the M.A. in History program.
2. General Policies and Requirements: The following policies and requirements apply to all students:
 - a. All students are required to take HIST 5300: Elements of Historical Inquiry and HIST 5380: Historiography and Historical Method.
 - b. All students must take at least one research seminar, designated as Selected Topics courses. These carry the course prefixes HIST 5320, HIST 5322, and HIST 5342.
 - c. Courses identified as Directed Readings typically include a significant written component of some kind, whether an annotated bibliography, historiographical essay, research paper, or literature review.
 - d. Students must apply for graduation. The deadlines for graduation applications are set each semester by the Graduate School. Students must be continually enrolled for at least one credit hour each long semester until graduation. Failure to remain continually enrolled may result in the need to reapply for admission to the Graduate School.
 - e. Students with incomplete grades must complete all course requirements by the deadlines stated in the contract with their instructor. Failure to do so may result in an automatic F grade for that course and the inability to graduate.

- f. Thesis students should obtain a copy of the Thesis Manual from the Graduate School.
- g. The M.A. in History program follows the Chicago/Turabian documentation style. For more information, consult the latest edition of Kate L. Turabian's *Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

In addition to meeting applicable Graduate School regulations, the M.A. in History program expects students to maintain satisfactory academic progress. The program reserves the right to warn those who are not maintaining satisfactory academic progress and can remove those from the program in serious cases. Any student who receives a course grade of "C" or lower will receive a warning. Any student who receives a semester GPA less than a 3.0 in two semesters will be removed from the program.

Foreign Language Requirement

The M.A. in History requires students to demonstrate reading proficiency in a foreign language. There are a variety of ways to meet this requirement:

1. Undergraduate coursework: If a student has taken a foreign language through the intermediate level, the requirement has been met. Obtaining proficiency at the intermediate level is normally achieved through a sequence of courses as typically follows: Elementary I (4 credit hours), Elementary II (4 credit hours), Intermediate I (3 credit hours), and Intermediate II (3 credit hours), for a total of 14 credit hours. This coursework could have been part of the student's undergraduate degree or taken at another time. All coursework must have received a grade of C or higher.
2. Readings course: Each academic year, Texas A&M University – Central Texas offers a Spanish course designed to help M.A. in History students achieve reading and translation proficiency. This course is called SPAN 3600: Spanish Readings. In this one 6 credit hour course, students can meet the entire foreign language requirement in one semester. The course is offered on a pass/fail basis, and no prior Spanish ability is expected.
3. Standardized test: Students who have obtained foreign language proficiency through some other method – independent study, travel, or work – can choose to take a CLEP exam in lieu of additional coursework. Information about CLEP exams can be found [here: clep.collegeboard.org/exam](http://clep.collegeboard.org/exam). The M.A. in History will follow the guidelines established by the Registrar's Office for awarding credit for four semesters of foreign language (the required score varies by language).

Thesis Option

Students interested in the thesis option should contact the Graduate Coordinator to receive a thesis orientation in terms of what is expected. These expectations are covered briefly here.

Each student will complete a thesis under the direction of a thesis advisor. The thesis advisor will chair the student's thesis committee, which will be composed of a minimum of two full-time faculty members who must be members of the Graduate Faculty. The student will not begin work on the thesis prior to completion of 24 hours of course work and will enroll in HIST 5198: Thesis only with prior approval of the Graduate Coordinator. Only six hours of HIST 5198: Thesis may count towards graduation.

The thesis shall be prepared in accordance with the procedures specified by the Graduate School. The student should consult past theses from this program, which can be found in the University Library. Upon completion of the thesis, the student shall sit for an oral defense before their thesis committee. The six credit hours of thesis may be together in a student's final semester, or they can be spread out over the final two semesters – often the better option. However, once the student begins enrollment in thesis hours, the student must maintain continuous enrollment of at least one credit hour of thesis per semester until the student graduates.

The thesis topic should be agreed upon in consultation between the student and the thesis advisor. The thesis topic must be approved by the Graduate School by filing the Thesis Proposal Approval Form available from the Graduate School. Deadlines related to the thesis are also available from that office, including deadlines related to submitting the topic approval form, the defense deadline, and filing an electronic copy of the thesis.

The requirements for the thesis are determined by the thesis advisor in consultation with the thesis committee. *The student must remain in regular communication with the thesis advisor at every stage of the thesis.* The thesis advisor will set deadlines for progress throughout the thesis that must be met. Thesis committee members will be chosen by the thesis advisor in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator and the student. Regardless of the specific topic chosen or approach taken, a thesis must meet three basic requirements:

1. The thesis should make an original contribution (however modest) to historical scholarship and the historiography of the topic. It is not an extended report.
2. The thesis should have a strong evidentiary base in primary sources. It is not a lengthy study of the secondary literature.
3. The thesis should be prepared according to the Chicago/Turabian documentation style. For more information, consult the latest edition of Kate L. Turabian's *Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.

If a student is unable or unwilling to comply with these instructions, the student could be strongly encouraged to move to the non-thesis option for the M.A. in History. *In extreme cases, the student will be involuntarily moved to the non-thesis option.* A thesis defense is scheduled after the committee approves the final, submitted, error-free thesis. It is an oral exam, normally lasting one to two hours. The defense covers the thesis and the field(s) of history related to the thesis.

The student should be able to explain your thesis to a non-specialist in a brief conversation. It is why it is a good idea, as a starting point, to draft a one to two-page proposal before beginning work on a thesis. The proposal should cover the following: 1) a description of the topic, 2) your proposed original contribution to our understanding of that topic, and 3) key primary and secondary sources you plan to consult.

This is one possible structure for your thesis:

- Introduction: State the scope, central research question(s), and thesis. Also, describe the structure of the manuscript that follows, including the purpose of each chapter. The Introduction is often written last because you will not know what you are introducing until you write the rest of your thesis.
- Chapter 1: Review the relevant secondary literature. Demonstrate to your reader that you are a master of the field. You do not need to include every publication, but you should not miss anything important. Show the various schools of thought, and where scholars agree or disagree. Conclude by showing where the gaps and unanswered questions are – that is where your thesis fits in. This chapter could be an expanded version of the Historiographical Essay you wrote in HIST 5380: Historiography and Historical Method.
- Chapter 2-X: Each chapter is your opportunity to explore how your work in primary and secondary sources fills the gaps in our understanding of the topic. Each chapter should link back to your central research question(s). The required number of chapters, as well as the overall length of your thesis, will vary based on your topic. If you have questions about this, please direct them to your thesis chair.
- Conclusion: Explain what we now know about this subject as a result of your work, and how your work has changed our understanding of the topic. More crudely put, address the “so what?” question.

Following a successful defense, but before submitting the thesis to the Graduate School, the student must make certain that the thesis is free of typographical, spelling, and grammatical errors. The Graduate School will return theses if they contain such errors or do not conform to its prescribed format. Following approval by the Graduate School, the thesis will be published and made available through ProQuest. Questions about thesis publication should be addressed to the Graduate School.

If the student does not make the necessary corrections in a timely manner, graduation may be delayed. In extreme cases, a student unable or unwilling to submit an error-free thesis as determined by the thesis committee or the Graduate School may be moved to the non-thesis track for the M.A. in History.

Non-Thesis Option

In lieu of writing a thesis, each student on the non-thesis track will sit for written comprehensive exams (HIST 5090). Students preparing for comprehensive exams should contact the Graduate Coordinator. Comprehensive exams are normally taken in the student's final semester. Check the Graduate School website for applicable deadlines. Preparation for taking comprehensive exams should begin with a discussion between the student and the Graduate Coordinator.

The Graduate Coordinator will review the general procedures with the student and create a committee of examiners, which is normally composed of three full-time faculty in the M.A. in History program. All committee members must be members of the Graduate Faculty. Once the committee is established, the student should contact all committee members and request an exam, which is typically based on a selection of prior coursework the student had with the faculty member.

Once the committee membership and exam topics are established, the student should coordinate the scheduling of the exams with the Office of Academic Support Programs Testing Center, which is located in 212C Warrior Hall. The student may schedule the exams at their convenience, in coordination with the Testing Center schedule, as long as all exams are completed within seven days. On the day of each exam, the Testing Center will provide a computer and a place to work. All exams will be typed and left with the Testing Center at the end of the exam.

Once the exam dates and times have been established, the student should communicate with each committee member the day and time that exam will be taken. The student should then complete the Testing Form, which is available on the website of the Testing Center, under "Student Proctoring Support." Questions about the testing environment should be directed to the Testing Center. Questions about the exams should be directed to the specific committee member providing the exam. Each committee member may have slightly different guidelines regarding their exam, preparation, and materials permitted during the exam.

When all exams are completed, the Testing Center will send them to the committee members. Exams are graded on a pass/fail basis. The typical turnaround from the time the exams are received by committee members to the time the student is notified of the results is approximately

one week. However, more time may be needed if exams are taken over holidays or a university break period. In the event of a failure of any exams the student may be required to re-take them.

Graduate Assistantships

The M.A. in History has openings for graduate assistantships each year. Most graduate assistants are assigned to the Graduate Coordinator and to other faculty from the M.A. in History program. Duties tend to be related to assisting with faculty teaching, research, or some other way of supporting the program. Graduate Assistantships are generally awarded to the strongest students in the program as a form of meritorious recognition. Preference is given to those without outside employment. The commitment is approximately 20 hours per week.

Availability of these positions is determined by the Graduate Coordinator, in coordination with the Department of Humanities and the College of Arts and Sciences. Important factors in obtaining a Graduate Assistantship include: educational background, research interests, career ambitions, specific skillsets that may address program needs, and academic merit. Eligibility and other rules and regulations pertaining to graduate assistantships are determined by the Graduate School. There are often other graduate assistant positions available each year in other offices around campus as well.

Graduate Student Awards

Each year the College of Arts & Sciences, the Graduate School, and the Office of Research sponsors a series of awards for graduate students. These include awards for Scholarship, Professionalism, Community Service, and the Outstanding Thesis Award. During each spring semester there is a call for nominations for these awards, which are awarded at the end of the semester at the College banquet and university graduate banquet. Each year the M.A. in History program nominates students for these awards, with the goal being to forward a nominee for each award. If you have questions about these awards, ask the Graduate Coordinator.

Each spring semester, the History program holds a reception. It is the most important event that we hold each year, and the only time we are all assembled in one place. This event is our time to recognize students (both undergraduate and graduate), conduct our Phi Alpha Theta history honors society initiation, and make announcements related to the program. It is a time of friendship and fellowship to get to know others in the program better. We normally have a guest speaker, on a different topic related to History each year.

Internships

Internship opportunities exist, whether for whether for academic credit or to gain valuable professional experience in the historical discipline. In recent years, students have successfully completed internships locally as well as in the greater Austin area with its many archives, museums, and historic sites. In addition, Texas A&M University – Central Texas partners with

the Fort Hood Academic Placement Internship Program to provide experience working as a civilian historian with the III Corps History Office. For all inquiries related to internships please contact Dr. Timothy Hemmis at themmis@tamuct.edu.

History Bulletin Board

Located outside of 216J Heritage Hall is the History program bulletin board. On it, the program posts notices, internships and job announcements, publishing opportunities, study abroad programs, campus events, and academic conferences.

Appendix

M.A. in History Degree Check Sheet

MA/HIST

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CENTRAL TEXAS
Advising Guide _____ CATALOG
MASTER OF ARTS
History

NON-THESIS – 36 Hours **SEM**
DATE SCHOOL HOURS GRADE POINTS

HIST 5300 Elements of Historical Inquiry					
HIST 5380 Historiography and Historical Method					
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*					
*					
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*					
*					
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*					
HIST 5090 History Comprehensive Examination					
3 hours of Research from one of the following:					
HIST 5320 Selected Topics in State and Local History					
HIST 5322 Selected Topics in American History					
HIST 5342 Topics in European History					

THESIS – 36 Hours **SEM**
DATE SCHOOL HOURS GRADE POINTS

HIST 5300 Elements of Historical Inquiry					
HIST 5380 Historiography and Historical Method					
HIST 5188 History Thesis					
HIST 5188 History Thesis					
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*					
3 hours of Research from one of the following:					
HIST 5320 Selected Topics in State and Local History					
HIST 5322 Selected Topics in American History					
HIST 5342 Topics in European History					

Up to 12 hours of the elective courses may be taken in an outside area if approved by the Graduate Coordinator.

Proficiency in at least one foreign language must be demonstrated before the awarding of the M.A. in History degree. See the Program Handbook for more information.

NOTE: This is a tentative guide to be used for advisement of students. It is not considered an official degree plan by Texas A&M University-Central Texas and it is subject to review and change by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.