

GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN HISTORY
AY 2025-2026

WILLIAM P. CLEMENTS DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY DEDMAN COLLEGE
SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY

Table of Contents

HISTORY DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY CONTACTS	1
MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	2
- Coursework	2
- Thesis and Non-Thesis Options	3-4
- Graduation	5
- Transfer of Credits 	5
- Time Limits	5
- M.A. Degree Progress Form	6-7
- M.A. Calendar	8-12
PhD DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	13
- Language Examination	13
- Transfer Credit	13
- Coursework	14
- Independent Studies	15
- Qualifying Oral Examination	15
- M.A. for Doctoral Students	16
- Dissertation Prospectus	16
- Dissertation	17-19
• The Dissertation Committee	17-18
• The Dissertation	18
• The Dissertation Defense	19
- Graduation	19
- Teaching 	19
• Teaching Preparation Requirement	20
• Other Teaching Opportunities	20
• Registration for Teaching Assignments	21
- Advising	21
• Primary Faculty Advisor: Qualifying Oral Exam & Dissertation	21
• Curricular Advising and Registration	21
• GPA Requirement	22
• Incomplete Grades	22
- Assessment of Academic Performance	22-23
• Semiannual Review of Grades	22
• Annual Review	22
• Academic Remediation	22-23
• Funding Renewal	23
- Time Limits	24
- PhD Degree Progress Report	25-27

- PhD Calendar	28-46
----------------	-------

ACADEMIC RESOURCES (MA & PhD)	47
--	-----------

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES (MA & PhD)	47
---	-----------

• SMU Fellowships (PhD)	48
• External Funding (PhD)	48
• Internal Funding (MA & PhD)	48-51
• Emergency Funding (MA & PhD)	51

WRITING REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES (MA & PhD)	52
---	-----------

• Coursework	52
• Other Written Work	52
• Research Paper Requirement (PhD)	52-53
• Graduate Writing Center	53

PROFESSIONALIZATION	53
----------------------------	-----------

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES	53
---	-----------

HISTORY DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY CONTACTS

History Department Chair *ad interim*: Sabri Ates (sates@smu.edu)

Director of Graduate Studies (DGS): Crista DeLuzio (cdeluzio@smu.edu)

Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS): Macabe Keliher (macabe@smu.edu)

Director of Outreach: Erin Hochman (ehochman@smu.edu)

Graduate Coordinator: Priscilla Gama (pgama@smu.edu)

Administrative Assistant to the Chair: Margi Evans (mfevans@smu.edu)

Director of Graduate Fellowships & Awards: Rachel Ball-Phillips (rmball@smu.edu)

Director of Graduate Career Development & Postdoctoral Affairs: Rob Pearson
(pearsonr@smu.edu)



Early Dallas Hall

MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The Master's degree requires 30 credit hours and is offered on two tracks – U.S. history or Global history. Students on both tracks must take 24 hours of coursework as stipulated below. For the remaining 6 credit hours, students on both tracks choose between the Thesis Option and the Non-Thesis Option, as described below.

Coursework (24 credits)

Required Courses for the U.S. and Global Tracks (6 credits)

- HIST 6300: Historiography (3 credits)
- HIST 6315: Global and Comparative History OR another departmental graduate course focused on global/comparative themes and methods (3 credits)

Courses for U.S. Track (18 credits)

- Students take six courses at the 6000 level, which are focused primarily on themes and topics in U.S. history.
- With approval of the student's primary faculty advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, up to two of these courses may be taken in other departments or schools.
- One of these six courses must be focused on global/comparative themes and methods.
- No more than two of these six courses can be focused on global/comparative themes and methods.

Courses for Global Track (18 credits)

- Students take six courses at the 6000 level, which are focused on various time periods and areas of the world (Classical history, Medieval history, early modern and modern Europe, Russia, the Middle East, the Islamic world, the Atlantic world, sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, East Asia, and South Asia, as well as the United States).
- With approval of the student's primary faculty advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, up to two of these six courses may be taken in other departments or schools.
- One of these six courses must be focused on U.S. history.
- No more than two of these six courses can be focused on U.S. history.

Thesis Option or Non-Thesis Option (6 credits)

Thesis Option

Students who choose the thesis option must have appropriate language skills to conduct primary source research in their area of scholarly interest. Often, students who choose this option are planning on pursuing a Ph.D.

Students should begin to discuss possible thesis topics with their thesis advisor (primary faculty advisor) in the spring semester of their first year. Once students have decided on a topic, they work on writing the prospectus.

The prospectus should be about ten pages long (double spaced), including notes and bibliography. It should describe the topic of the thesis, explain the historical problem(s) to be investigated, articulate the research questions to be explored, situate the project in relation to the relevant historiographical literatures, review the historical evidence to be examined, and make a case for the significance of the research. The bibliography should include the primary and secondary sources the student plans to analyze in order to answer the research questions posed in the prospectus. Students are invited to upload their prospectus to the Prospectus Repository (located in Box) and are encouraged to consult other students' prospectuses when crafting their own. By **September 30** of the second year, students should submit the prospectus and bibliography to their advisor for final approval. A copy of the approved prospectus should be sent to the Graduate Coordinator.

The M.A. thesis committee, which assesses the thesis and conducts the oral defense, is composed of the student's thesis advisor and two other professors who serve as readers, usually tenured/tenure-track faculty members of the History Department. A student who would like a professor who is not a tenured/tenure-track faculty member in the History Department to serve on the thesis committee should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies, who will bring the student's request before the Graduate Committee. Students should discuss the composition of the thesis committee with their advisor in **the fall** of the second year and decide when to invite others to join. The student, advisor, and two readers will likely find it helpful to discuss the expectations for the readers and draft a thesis completion calendar, which can be updated as needed. In **January** of the second year, students work with the Graduate Coordinator to schedule the thesis defense.

The thesis should be 50-75 double-spaced pages long, including notes and bibliography. Appendices, illustrations, etc. are additional.

The final version of the thesis should be provided to the committee **at least two weeks** prior to the oral defense, which is held in April and lasts for about an hour. At the start of the defense, the student delivers an opening statement that summarizes the research topic and questions, methodology, main arguments, and original contributions to the historical literature. The student may also explain the origins of the project, any challenges encountered while

researching and writing the thesis, and/or any long-term plans for further research, revisions, and publication. Committee members then question the student about evidence, findings, methodology, arguments, historical interventions, etc. A unanimous positive vote of the committee is necessary for the student to pass the defense.

Some funding for Master's thesis research may be available from the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies, the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA), and the History Department. To offset departmental funding, students are expected to apply for other sources of support. See the section on Funding Opportunities for more information.

Non-Thesis Option

In lieu of writing a thesis, students must do the following: take two additional graduate courses during the spring semester of the second year; write two research papers in any two graduate courses taken during their tenure as an M.A. student; and take a 90-minute capstone oral exam covering three historical fields at the end of the spring semester of the second year.

The oral exam committee consists of three members: the student's primary faculty advisor (who serves as chair) and two other tenured/tenure-track members of the department. A student who would like a professor who is not a tenured/tenure-track faculty member in the History Department to serve on the oral exam committee should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies, who will bring the student's request before the Graduate Committee. Membership of the oral exam committee should be established by **November 1st** of the second year. Students compile the reading lists for examination with each committee member and submit the approved lists to the Graduate Coordinator by **December 1st**. Each list should contain 40 entries (primarily books).

Lists should include readings students have completed during their coursework (readings listed on course syllabi as well as those used in writing historiographical and research papers). Students are invited to upload their lists to the Oral Exam Repository (located in Box) and are encouraged to consult other students' lists when compiling their own. During the spring semester of the second year, students may meet with individual committee members to prepare for the exam.

In **January** of the second year, students work with the Graduate Coordinator to set the date for the oral exam, which takes place in **April**. During the exam, each professor questions the student for 25-30 minutes. Students should expect questions requiring demonstration of historical knowledge about the time periods and topics covered in the readings, as well as a clear understanding of the dominant themes and historiographical issues addressed in the three fields.

Graduation

For deadlines and steps to file for graduation see the [Graduate Deadlines and Checklist](#). These deadlines are established by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and are not flexible. It is the **student's responsibility** to review this checklist and meet all deadlines.

*This is the most rapid way to move through the program; there are other possibilities depending on varied circumstances.

Transfer of Credits

Not more than six credit hours of work from another institution shall apply toward a candidate's master's program. All credit for work transferred must show grades of *A* or *B* and is subject to the approval of the major department. An official record of such work must be on file in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies at Southern Methodist University at least 30 days before the student expects to receive the degree.

Time Limit

No credit will be allowed toward the master's degree for courses taken more than six years before the date on which the degree is to be conferred. An exception to this policy can be made only by approval of the department's faculty, approval of the Moody School Dean, and passing written examinations of the subject matter for each course petitioned.

M.A. DEGREE PROGRESS FORM

Name: _____ ID#: _____

Entry Year: _____

I. ACADEMIC

General Course Requirements

Course number/title

Professor

Semester

6300 Historiography (3hrs.)

63__ Global & Comparative (3hrs.)

History 6000-Level Courses (18hrs.-cross-disciplinary with approval only)

☐

US

☐

Global Track

Professor

Semester

63__

63__

63__

63__

63__

Alternate Track (3-6hrs. of 18 above)

63__

63__

II. THESIS OR NON-THESIS OPTION

Thesis Option (6hrs.)

Hist 6398 (term) _____

Hist 6399 (term) _____

Thesis Committee (3 Members with Advisor/Chair)

Advisor/Chair	
Reader 1	
Reader 2	

Clements Department of History
Southern Methodist University

Prospectus

Title: _____	Approval Date: _____
--------------	----------------------

Defense

Title: _____	Defense Date: _____
--------------	---------------------

Non-Thesis Option

6 hrs. from 6000 level courses

	<u>Professor</u>	<u>Semester</u>
63_____	_____	_____
63_____	_____	_____

Two Research Papers in 6000/7000 level courses

	<u>Paper Title</u>	<u>Professor</u>	<u>Semester</u>
63_____	_____	_____	_____
63_____	_____	_____	_____

Capstone Exam Committee _____ (date) _____ (chair)

Exam Field 1/Faculty:	_____
Exam Field 2/ Faculty	_____
Exam Field 3/ Faculty	_____

Fail ☐

Pass ☐

Distinction ☐

Graduation Date: _____

M.A. CALENDAR

First Year

FALL SEMESTER

- 9 hours of classes.
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School to discuss career planning

August

- Participate in Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies orientation for incoming graduate students
- Participate in ISSS orientation for incoming international graduate students. (if applicable)
- Participate in individual and group orientation sessions with the Director of Graduate Studies
- Attend departmental new student orientation lunch
- Classes begin

September

- Classes

October

- Classes

November

- Classes
- Advising and registration for spring semester due by December 5

December

- Classes
- Course examinations and/or papers due

SEMESTER BREAK

- Planning for thesis or oral examination

SPRING SEMESTER

- 9 hours of classes

Thesis Option:

- Consult with primary faculty advisor/ thesis advisor about potential thesis topics
- Preparation of applications for funding for summer travel and research

January

- Incomplete grades due 30 days after last day of fall final exams
- Classes begin

February

- Classes

March

- Classes
- By March 31, submit CV to Graduate Coordinator for annual review

April

- Classes
- Attend doctoral prospectus presentations
- Advising and registration for fall semester due by May 5

May

- Course examinations and/or papers due
- Attend end-of-year graduate reception
- Attend graduation (optional)

SUMMER BREAK

Non-Thesis Option:

- Incomplete grades due 30 days after last day of spring final exams
- Possible summer employment

Thesis Option:

- Incomplete grades due 30 days after last day of spring final exams
- Researching and writing prospectus (due by Sept 30)
- Possible summer employment

Second Year

FALL SEMESTER

- 6 hours of classes
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School to discuss career planning

Non-Thesis Option:

- Determine oral exam fields and establish oral exam committee by Nov 1
- Oral exam reading lists due by Dec 1

Thesis Option:

- Preparation of applications for funding for travel and research
- Prospectus due by September 30
- Researching and writing thesis
- Consult with thesis advisor about forming thesis committee.

August

- Attend new student orientation lunch (required)
- Classes begin

September

- Classes

Thesis Option:

- Prospectus due by Sept 30

October

- Classes

November

- Advising and registration for Spring semester due by December 5

Non-Thesis Option:

- Oral exam committee established by Nov 1

December

- Course examinations and/or papers due

Non-Thesis Option:

- Oral exam reading lists due by Dec 1

SEMESTER BREAK

Non-Thesis Option:

- Preparation for oral exam

Thesis Option:

- Researching and writing thesis

SPRING SEMESTER

File for graduation-- For deadlines and steps to file for graduation see the [Graduate Deadlines and Checklist](#). These deadlines are established by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and are not flexible. It is the **student's responsibility** to review this checklist and meet all deadlines.

Non-Thesis Option:

- 6 hours of classes and preparation for oral exam

Thesis Option:

- 6 hours of writing (HIST 6398 **and** 6399)

January

- Incomplete grades due 30 days after last day of fall final exam

Non-Thesis Option:

- Classes begin
- Work with Graduate Coordinator to schedule oral exam
- Preparation for oral exam

Thesis Option:

- Work with Graduate Coordinator to schedule thesis defense
- Researching and writing thesis

February

Non-Thesis Option:

- Classes and preparation for oral exam

Thesis Option:

- Writing thesis

March

Non-Thesis Option:

- Classes and preparation for oral exam

Thesis Option:

- Optional thesis check by graduate office

April

- If attending end-of-year graduate reception, complete department graduation questionnaire

Non-Thesis Option:

- Classes
- Oral exam

Thesis Option:

- First thesis check by graduate office
- Second thesis check
- Thesis submitted to graduate office
- Oral defense

May

Non-Thesis Option:

- Course examinations and/or papers due

Thesis and Non-Thesis Option:

- Attend end-of-year graduate reception
- Attend graduation

*This is the most rapid way to move through the program; there are other possibilities depending on varied circumstances.

PHD DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Language Examination

All students in the PhD program must present evidence of reading proficiency in a language other than English. Language proficiency is tested by a two-hour written examination that takes place early in the fall and spring semesters. Under the general supervision of the Director of Graduate Studies, appropriate departmental faculty or outside readers set and grade the exam. Students are asked to translate a passage into clear and grammatical English. The passage is usually selected from a historical book, journal, or document printed in the language in which the student chooses to be examined. The translation will be judged to be of passing quality if it shows that the student can extract information and arguments from such a piece of writing accurately enough to use it as a source in his/her own historical research and writing. Students are permitted to use a translation dictionary during the exam.

Students needing assistance with language preparation should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies **as early as possible** following their matriculation into the graduate program. The History Department may be able to provide some financial assistance for such students to audit an SMU language course (or to cover the cost of a tutor, up to the cost of auditing a class).

Students may take the language exam up to three times. Those who fail the third time put their continuation in the program in jeopardy. Students must satisfy the language requirement before taking the qualifying oral examination.

Transfer Credit (History Department Policy)

Students who enter the PhD program with graduate credit from another institution may petition the Graduate Committee to request to receive up to 6 hours of transfer credit. Students interested in pursuing this option should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies as soon as possible following their matriculation to SMU.

Coursework

The doctoral degree requires 48 credit hours. Students complete 45 credit hours of coursework as stipulated below plus a 3-credit-hour dissertation course (HIST 8398).

Required Core Courses (9 credits) Students will take HIST 6300: Historiography, a course that introduces them to the professional study of history; HIST 6306: Introduction to Digital Humanities, which provides a theoretical and practical introduction to on-line texts, especially in history; and HIST 6395: History as an Academic Profession, which develops the skills needed to make the transition from graduate student to professional historian.

American History (12 credits) During the first two years, students take a sequence of three to four colloquia in which they read intensively in American history from the era of Indigenous-European contact to the present. These colloquia emphasize new problems, interpretations, and debates vital to the study of American history. With approval from the Director of Graduate Studies and the student's primary faculty advisor, a student may substitute another 6000-level U.S. history course for one of the four colloquia.

Global and Comparative History (12 credits) Courses in global and comparative history introduce students to the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that have guided advanced research in world history in recent decades. Students usually take HIST 6315: Global/Comparative History, which explores influential methodologies and theoretical perspectives of the field. Additionally, students take three courses that treat, in comparative contexts, such themes as nationalism, borderlands, migration, capitalism, revolution, colonialism, postcolonialism, slavery, and gender.

Specialization (12 credits) The specialization is defined around a common theme (global, American, or transnational) such as borderlands, political history, gender, capitalism, or another coherent field. The courses should be chosen in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and the student's primary faculty advisor.

The courses taken in the global/comparative and specialized fields may vary in both content and method; these may be graduate seminars and/or individual directed readings courses/independent studies. If individual interests and requirements justify doing so, a limited number of these courses may be taken in other departments, such as Anthropology, English, Religious Studies or Art History. The fields can thus provide broad interdisciplinary views of particular topics of global significance.

HIST 8398 (3 credits)

Students register for HIST 8398 during the second semester of the third year under the supervision of their dissertation advisor/director. The major assignment for this course is the completion and presentation of the dissertation prospectus.

Independent Studies

With the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies and the student's primary faculty advisor, students may take one or more independent studies to fulfill coursework requirements. Independent studies may be conceptualized as readings or research courses. In general, independent studies should be taken after most other coursework has been completed, usually during the student's fifth semester. Students work with the course instructor to determine the topic and create a syllabus for the independent study, which must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator prior to the start of the semester. The reading and writing requirements for the independent study course should be equivalent to other departmental reading and research seminars. Independent study course numbers include: HIST 6322, HIST 7398, and HIST 7399.

Qualifying Oral Examination

In the spring semester of the third year, doctoral students take a two-hour qualifying oral examination. The exam covers four historical fields, with each examiner questioning the student for 25-30 minutes.

Doctoral students establish the membership of the oral examination committee during the spring semester of the second year. The committee consists of four members: a chair, who will typically become the student's dissertation advisor/director, and three other tenured/tenure-track members of the History Department. A student who would like a professor who is not a tenured/tenure-track faculty member in the History Department to serve on the qualifying oral exam committee should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies, who will bring the student's request before the Graduate Committee. At least one exam field must focus on the student's area of specialization. One field must focus on global and comparative history. The remaining field(s) should focus on other areas of the student's scholarly interests.

Students compile the reading lists for examination with each committee member and submit the approved lists to the Graduate Coordinator by **June 30** of the second year. Each list should contain 50 entries (primarily books). Lists should include readings students have completed during their coursework (readings listed on course syllabi as well as those used in writing historiographical and research papers), supplemented by additional titles as committee members deem necessary.

Students are invited to upload their lists to the Oral Exam Repository (located in Box) and are encouraged to consult other students' lists when compiling their own.

In **November** of the third year, students work with the Graduate Coordinator to set a date for the oral examination. Exams usually take place in **February and early March** (before spring break) of the third year. Students may not take the qualifying oral exam until they have removed any outstanding incomplete grades and have passed the language exam.

During the fall semester of the third year, students may meet with individual committee members to prepare for the exam. Students should expect questions requiring demonstration of historical knowledge about the time periods and topics covered in the readings, as well as a clear understanding of the dominant themes and historiographical issues in the four fields. Students are not allowed to have their reading lists with them during the exam.

Students must pass the qualifying oral examination before beginning work on the dissertation. The examining committee may award a "pass" or a "pass with distinction." Those who do not pass the exam may, at the discretion of the Oral Exam Committee and the Graduate Committee, take it again. Graduate students who pass the qualifying oral examination become doctoral candidates.

M.A. for Doctoral Students

In the event that a doctoral student elects to leave the program early, he/she may be granted an M.A. if he/she has satisfied all of the requirements for the Non-Thesis M.A. option. That is, the student must complete a minimum of 30 credit hours of coursework, write two research papers, and pass an M.A.-level oral exam (covering three fields).

Doctoral students who wish to receive the M.A. and who are continuing toward the Ph.D. may do so after passing their doctoral-level qualifying oral exam. They are invited to participate in the graduation ceremony at the end of the third year.

In both cases, students wishing to receive an M.A. from SMU must not have previously earned an M.A. in History from another institution, as SMU generally does not confer equivalent degrees.

Dissertation Prospectus

During the fifth and sixth semesters, while students are preparing for their qualifying oral exam, they are also working on writing their dissertation prospectus. Students should be in touch with their dissertation advisor/director **no later than two weeks** after the qualifying oral exam to discuss their plan for completing the prospectus. Students will likely submit one or more drafts of the prospectus to their dissertation advisor/director and make revisions as needed. The prospectus must be approved by the student's advisor/director before it is circulated to students and faculty for the prospectus presentation.

The prospectus should be 15-20 pages long (double spaced) with footnotes, not including the bibliography and timeline for completion. Appendices, illustrations, etc. are also additional. Most prospectuses contain the following sections: introduction and project overview; methodology; historiography; chapter outline; bibliography; and timeline for completion. In terms of substance, the prospectus should describe the topic of the dissertation; define the historical problem(s) to be investigated; articulate the research questions to be explored; advance the overarching argument for the dissertation and the arguments for particular chapters (insofar as these have begun to be formulated); situate the project in relation to the relevant historiographical literatures; review the historical evidence to be examined; and make a case for the significance of the research. The bibliography should include the primary and secondary sources the student plans to analyze in order to answer the research questions posed in the prospectus. The timeline should lay out the plan for completing the dissertation.

Students are invited to upload their prospectus to the Prospectus Repository (located in Box) and are encouraged to consult other students' prospectuses when writing their own.

After completing the qualifying oral examination in the spring of the third year, students work with the Graduate Coordinator to set a date for the prospectus presentation, which takes place **in late March or early April** and is attended by faculty and graduate students. **No later than one week** prior to the presentation, the student submits the prospectus to the Graduate Coordinator for circulation among the faculty and graduate students. Presentations should be 15-20 minutes long, with an additional 10 minutes for Q and A. The use of visual aids is encouraged, but not required.

Dissertation

The student's main business during the second half of the program is researching and writing the dissertation. Students are encouraged to start considering possible dissertation topics early on in their graduate studies and to undertake preliminary research during their first two summers in the program. Dissertation advisors/directors offer guidance on topics and sources (see the section on Advising on for information about selecting a dissertation advisor/director). Doctoral candidates usually present the dissertation prospectus in **April** of the third year (see the section on the Dissertation Prospectus for more details).

Before renewal of funding for the fifth year, students must demonstrate that they are making substantial progress with researching and writing the dissertation (see the section on Assessment of Academic Performance for more information about funding renewal). Students must also demonstrate that they are making substantial progress with researching and writing the dissertation in order to be nominated by the Graduate Committee for a dissertation completion fellowship from the Moody School (see the section on Funding Opportunities for more information about these fellowships).

The Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee generally consists of the student's dissertation advisor/director (who serves as chair), at least two other tenured/tenure-track members of the History Department (internal reviewers), and at least one external reviewer, who is either a tenured/tenure-track SMU faculty member from outside the department or a scholar not associated with the university.

- **Advisors/Directors**
Dissertation advisors/directors must be tenured/tenure-track members of the History Department
- **Co-advisors/co-directors**
Students may opt for two tenured/tenure-track History Department faculty members to serve as co-advisors/co-directors for the dissertation. In that case, the committee also includes at least one additional departmental/internal member and at least one external member.
- **Internal Reviewers**
Students work with their advisor/director to select the internal reviewers. Generally, the internal reviewers should be secured **no later than six months before** the student aims to defend the dissertation.

In some cases, the advisor/director will reach out to possible internal reviewers to invite them to serve as committee members. In other cases, the advisor/director may encourage the student to invite faculty to serve. The advisor/director provides guidance about when to involve the internal reviewers in reviewing the dissertation (the advisor/director, student, and reviewers may opt for committee members to review initial drafts of chapters, chapters that have been revised based on feedback from the advisor/director, multiple drafts at once, etc.). The internal reviewers may offer input on this process as well.

A student who would like a professor who is not a tenured/tenure-track faculty member in the History Department to serve as an internal reviewer should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies about petitioning the Moody School for approval of the proposed internal reviewer.

- **External reviewers**

The advisor/director works with the student to identify potential external reviewers. The external reviewer should be secured **no later than three months before** the student plans to defend the dissertation.

External reviewers who are tenured/tenure-track members of the SMU faculty do not need to be approved by the Moody School of Graduate Studies. The student's dissertation advisor invites the potential reviewer to serve on the committee.

External reviewers not associated with SMU must hold a Ph.D. or other doctorate in History or a related field and should be teaching at the college level and doing research in that field. If the proposed external reviewer does not meet these criteria, the student and their dissertation advisor/director should discuss this with the Director of Graduate Studies. External reviewers not associated with SMU must be approved to serve on the student's committee by the Department Chair and the Dean of the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies. To secure approval, the dissertation advisor/director submits to the Chair and the Dean the proposed scholar's CV, as well as any additional information relevant to the scholar's qualifications to evaluate the student's work. Once the proposed external reviewer has been approved by the Chair and the Dean, the student's dissertation advisor invites them to serve on the committee.

The student's dissertation advisor should be primarily responsible for communicating with the external reviewer about all matters related to the dissertation and the defense. Advisors should consult with external reviewers about when they expect to receive the dissertation. Generally, external reviewers should receive the dissertation **no later than six weeks prior to** the defense.

The Dissertation

Dissertations should be at least 200-250 double-spaced pages, including notes and bibliography (appendices, illustrations, etc. are additional). Before preparing the final version of the dissertation, students should consult the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about degree [deadlines and rules on formatting and production.](#)

The Dissertation Defense

At the start of the semester in which the student plans to graduate, the student works with the Graduate Coordinator to schedule the dissertation defense. Upon completion of the dissertation, a two-hour formal defense in the form of an oral examination is conducted before the dissertation committee. At the start of the defense, the student delivers an opening statement that summarizes the dissertation's research topic and questions, methodology, main arguments, and original contributions to the historical literature. The student may also explain the origins of the project, any challenges encountered while researching and writing the dissertation, and/or any long-term plans for further research, revisions, and publication.

Committee members then question the student about evidence, findings, methodology, arguments, historical interventions, etc. and make recommendations for revisions, some of which may need to be completed before the dissertation can receive final approval. If the committee decides that revisions are required before the dissertation can be approved, the dissertation committee decides whether the revised dissertation must be reviewed again by the entire committee or only by the director. The committee also determines the timeline for revisions and final approval.

Public defenses are optional. At the student's request, the Graduate Coordinator will issue an invitation to outside guests to attend the defense. Outside guests are observers; they are not invited to participate in the defense. Outside guests will be asked to leave the room along with the candidate during the committee's deliberations.

Graduation

For deadlines and steps to file for graduation see the [Graduate Deadlines and Checklist](#). These deadlines are established by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and are not flexible. It is the student's responsibility to review this checklist and meet all deadlines.

Ph.D. students must have all requirements completed before participating in commencement. August graduates either participate in December commencement or return for the following May commencement.

Teaching

Teaching Preparation Requirement

Learning to be an effective instructor is a vital part of the PhD program. All students are required to fulfill a teaching preparation requirement, which can be met through one of the two options described below. Both options provide students with the opportunity to cultivate a range of pedagogical skills and to receive mentoring regarding their development as a teacher.

Students generally fulfill this requirement during the fourth or fifth year of graduate study. Teaching assignments are coordinated by the Director of Graduate Studies. Students fulfilling the teaching preparation requirement receive \$3000 in compensation.

Option 1: Teaching Practicum

Students team-teach an undergraduate survey course (commonly in U.S. History) with a faculty member in the department. Such classes will generally consist of 40-60 students. Student responsibilities may include planning the course content and materials, giving multiple lectures, leading one or two discussion sections per week, and collaborating in the preparation and grading of assignments and exams. Conversations about pedagogy and course content take place among the faculty member and the graduate student instructor(s) throughout the semester.

Option 2: Teaching Preparation TAship

Students serve as a TA for one of the department's large (100-120 students) undergraduate lecture courses. Student responsibilities include leading two discussion sections per week and grading student work. Students should also be invited to give one lecture. The professor of the course, another member of the History faculty, and/or a faculty or staff member affiliated with the Center for Teaching Excellence will visit each TA's discussion section twice over the course of the semester to observe and provide feedback about the TA's teaching. Conversations about pedagogy and course content take place among the professor of the course and the TAs throughout the semester.

Other Teaching Opportunities

Students who have fulfilled the teaching preparation requirement may serve as a TA during a subsequent semester. In this case, lecturing and outside observation of the TA's discussion sections will not be required. TA assignments are coordinated by the Director of Graduate Studies. TAs receive \$3000 in compensation.

After fulfilling the teaching preparation requirement, students may teach a course on their own at SMU, a community college, or another institution of higher education. Students are welcome to consult with the Director of Graduate Studies if they would like assistance with pursuing independent teaching opportunities.

Registration for Teaching Assignments

When fulfilling the Teaching Preparation Requirement and in any other semester that a student serves as a TA, the student registers for either HIST 7000 or 7101 with the instructor of record for the undergraduate course. Students register for HIST 7000, which carries no credit hours, if they are also enrolled in other credit-bearing courses (including HIST 8398). Students register for HIST 7101, which carries one credit hour, if they are registered only for graduate full-time status (HIST 8049). In both cases, students receive a letter grade for the course from the instructor of record.

Advising

Primary Faculty Advisor: Qualifying Oral Examination and Dissertation

By no later than the end of the first academic year, students should select their primary faculty advisor, who is responsible for chairing the student's qualifying oral examination committee, directing the dissertation, and chairing the dissertation defense committee. Students are welcome to consult with the Director of Graduate Studies about selecting an advisor. Students should reach out to the prospective faculty member directly to confirm whether he/she is willing to serve as the student's advisor. Once confirmed, the student should let the Graduate Coordinator know about the selection.

If graduate students have problems with their advisor or wish to change advisors, they should first seek to resolve the matter with that person directly. If that is not possible for any reason, they should consult the Director of Graduate Studies. If that does not settle the matter, they should consult the Department Chair.

Curricular Advising and Registration

In **November and April** of each year, students in their first and second years meet with the Director of Graduate Studies to select their courses for the following semester. The Director of Graduate Studies will record the course selections in the comments section of the Degree Progress Form in Box. Students are encouraged to review their course selections with their primary faculty advisor. If the faculty advisor has any questions or concerns about the selections, the faculty member should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies. Shortly after students meet with the Director of Graduate Studies, students will receive an email from the Graduate Coordinator letting them know the steps to take in order to register for classes. Students should complete the registration process by no later than **December 5 and May 5**. Once registration is complete, the Graduate Coordinator updates the student's Degree Progress Form.

Students in the third year and beyond will receive an email from the Graduate Coordinator explaining what course(s) they need to register for. In most cases, students who will be entering into the second semester of the third-year register for HIST 8398 -- Dissertation, which carries 3 credit hours. Students in the fourth and beyond register for HIST 8049 – Graduate Full-Time Status. Students planning on fulfilling their Teaching Preparation Requirement or serving as a TA register for Hist 7000/7101.

GPA Requirement

Students are required by the department to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5

Incomplete Grades

If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from completing coursework by the end of the semester, the student should discuss the matter with the course instructor and request to be granted an incomplete (incomplete grades will not be given automatically by instructors if work is not turned in on time). The instructor may lower the grade for a particular assignment and/or the final course grade due to the extension of time for completing the work. The work necessary to remove the incomplete should reach the instructor **no later than 30 days** after the last final exam date in any semester.

Assessment of Academic Performance

Each student's academic performance is assessed one or more times per year, depending on the student's stage in the program.

Semiannual Review of Grades

In mid-January and mid-May, the Director of Graduate Studies reviews the grades of all students who were enrolled in classes during the previous semester and discusses any concerns with the student, the student's primary faculty advisor, the Graduate Committee, and/or relevant course instructors.

Annual Review

By **March 31**, students submit a curriculum vitae to the Graduate Coordinator, highlighting their accomplishments over the previous year. In April, all students undergo a full review of their performance in coursework, qualifying oral examination preparation and performance, research, and professionalism, which is conducted by the Director of Graduate Studies, the student's primary faculty advisor, the Graduate Committee, and other departmental faculty members involved in graduate training. Students whose performance is deemed to be inadequate may be put on a remediation plan. A copy of the Annual Review Form with any commentary, remediation plan, or timeline is signed by the Director of Graduate Studies and the student and placed in Box.

Academic Remediation

Students who do not remain in good standing in the program may be put on a remediation plan. Criteria for concern include (but are not limited to): failure to resolve a grade of incomplete within 30 days after the last day of semester final exams; failure to maintain the minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5 required by the department; failure to meet the deadline for turning in qualifying oral examination lists; failure to pass the language exam; failure to pass the qualifying oral examination; failure to meet the deadline for completing the prospectus; failure to make adequate progress with researching and writing the dissertation; and/or commission of a breach of academic ethics.

The Director of Graduate Studies, the student's primary faculty advisor, the Graduate Committee, and other faculty involved in the student's training collectively determine if a student who has not met one or more of the requirements for the program or has committed a breach of academic ethics should be placed on a remediation plan. This same group of faculty works together to prepare the remediation plan for the student.

The Director of Graduate Studies will provide the student with a letter that explains the faculty's concerns and outlines the plan and timeline for remediation. The Director of Graduate Studies will review the contents of the letter with the student in person. Being placed on a remediation plan does not automatically result in the immediate termination of the student's funding. The fact that the student has been placed on a remediation plan is not recorded on the student's official transcript.

If/when the student has met the requirements stipulated in the remediation plan, the Director of Graduate Studies will provide the student with a letter indicating that the student has returned to good standing in the program. If the student fails to resolve the outstanding issues in the remediation period, these consequences may follow: loss of funding and/or suspension or dismissal from the program.

Please see the [SMU Graduate Catalog](#) for information about academic progress, probation, suspension, and dismissal that apply to all graduate students, as well as for information about the Moody School termination appeal process.

Funding Renewal

Students are expected to meet the following criteria for funding renewal:

- To receive funding for the second year, students must have no outstanding incompletes and attain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or above at the end of the first year of coursework.
- To receive funding for the third year, students must have no outstanding incompletes, attain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or above at the end of the second year of coursework, and submit their qualifying oral examination lists by June 30.
- To receive funding for the fourth year, students must have no outstanding incompletes; attain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or above at the end of the fifth semester of coursework; pass the language exam; pass the qualifying oral examination; and present the prospectus.
- To receive funding for the fifth year, students must demonstrate that they are making substantial progress with researching and writing the dissertation. Dissertation directors/advisors may require students to create a dissertation calendar and/or submit a detailed progress report, which will be assessed at the Annual Review meeting of the faculty.
- Students in need of funding for the sixth year should work with the director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards beginning early in the fifth year to apply for external fellowships. Students may also be nominated by the Graduate Committee to apply for the Moody Dissertation Fellowship and/or the Dean's Dissertation Fellowship, which are awarded from the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies in the spring.

Time Limits

Ordinarily a student enrolled for full-time study should pass the qualifying examination by the end of the third year. An extension of one year may be granted by the dean upon submission of a petition by the student and the endorsement of the student's department. Except under unusual circumstances, extensions beyond the fourth year will not be granted.

The doctoral dissertation should be submitted and accepted within five years after the student has been admitted to candidacy. An extension of one year can be granted by the Moody School Dean. After this time, the students will be dropped from candidacy and can be readmitted only by passing a second qualifying examination, except under special circumstances. In such cases, new time limits will be set by the student's committee with the approval of the dean.

Time spent on research leaves will not be counted as part of the time limit. If a student must take an unavoidable leave of absence for medical or family reasons, leaves may be granted without affecting time limits. The decision to grant such a leave of absence will be made by the department and approved by the Moody School Dean. In the case of part-time students, time limit requirements will be interpreted appropriately to allow for their part-time status.

No credit will be allowed toward the doctoral degree for courses (including transfers) taken more than six years before the advancement to candidacy. An exception to this policy can be made only by approval of the department's faculty, approval of the Moody School Dean, and passing written examinations of the subject matter for each course petitioned.

PH.D. DEGREE PROGRESS REPORT

Name: _____ ID#: _____ Entry Year: _____ Current Year: _____

I. ACADEMIC

Course Requirements Completed

Professor

Semester

Core (9hrs)

6300 Historiography

6306 Introduction to Digital Humanities

6395 Academic Profession

American History (12 hrs., 4 colloquia; 1 other 6000-course may substitute)

6301 Early America

6302 America, 1812-1877

6303 America, 1877-1932

6304 Modern America, 1929-Pres.

63__

Global & Comparative History (12 hrs.; 1 other 6000-course may substitute for 6315)

6315 Global/Comparative History

63__

63__

63__

63__

Specialization-Global or American Theme (12hrs.; borderlands, political history, gender, capitalism, or another coherent field)

63__

63__

63__

63__

Clements Department of History
Southern Methodist University

Describe Specialization:

Language Examination _____ (language) _____ (date)

II. RESEARCH

Research Papers

	Course number	Professor	Paper title
1.			
2.			

MA Thesis Title:	Date approved by Grad Committee:
------------------	----------------------------------

Qualifying Examination _____ (date) _____ (chair)

Exam Field 1/Faculty:	
Exam Field 2/ Faculty:	
Exam Field 3/Faculty:	
Exam Field 4/Faculty:	

Fail ☐

Pass ☐

Distinction ☐

Prospectus

Title:	Presentation Date:
--------	--------------------

8398 Dissertation (3hrs.)

Semester Registered:	Title:
----------------------	--------

Dissertation Director:	
Internal Reader:	
Internal Reader:	
External Reader:	

Defense: _____ (date) _____

III. PROFESSIONALIZATION

Teaching Practicum (7000/7101)

Semester:	Course Title:	Instructor of Record:
-----------	---------------	-----------------------

Notes:

PH.D. CALENDAR

FIRST YEAR

FALL SEMESTER

- 9 hours of classes
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning.
- Consult with primary faculty advisor and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships.
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding.
- Select primary faculty advisor (by end of first year). Inform Graduate Coordinator of selection.

August

- Participate in Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies orientation for incoming graduate students.
- Participate in ISSS orientation for incoming international graduate students (if applicable)
- Participate in individual and group orientation sessions with the Director of Graduate Studies
- Attend departmental new student orientation lunch
- Schedule language exam
- Classes begin

September

- Classes
- Language exam

October

- Classes

November

- Meet with Director of Graduate Studies for advising and registration for spring semester
- Enrolling in health insurance for Spring semester

December

- Course examinations and/or papers due

SEMESTER BREAK

- Planning for qualifying oral examination and dissertation

SPRING SEMESTER

- 9 hours of classes
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning.
- Consult with primary faculty advisor and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships.
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding
- Select primary faculty advisor (by end of first year). Inform Graduate Coordinator of selection

January

- Incomplete grades due 30 days after last day of fall final exams
- Classes begin

February

- Classes.

March

- By March 31, submit CV to Graduate Coordinator for Annual Review
- Classes

April

- Meet with Director of Graduate Studies for advising and registration for fall semester
- Attend prospectus presentations (required)
- Classes

May

- Course examinations and/or papers due
- Attend end-of-year graduate reception
- Sign off PhD Annual Review Form

SUMMER BREAK

- Incomplete grades due 30 days after last day of spring final exams
- Reading for qualifying oral examination and preliminary research for dissertation
- Possible summer employment
- Enrolling in health insurance for the Fall semester
- Decide 10-month or 12-month Stipend by **June 20**

SECOND YEAR

FALL SEMESTER

- 9 hours of classes, including a research seminar if possible
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning
- Consult with primary faculty advisor and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding
- Begin working on forming qualifying oral examination committee

August

- Attend new student orientation lunch (required)
- Classes begin

September

- Attend Cohort Information Session (required)
- Classes

October

- Classes

November

- Meet with Director of Graduate Studies for advising and registration for spring semester
- Classes
- Enrolling in health insurance for Spring semester

December

- Course examinations and/or papers due

SEMESTER BREAK

- Continue working on forming qualifying oral examination committee
- Compile qualifying oral examination field lists (**due by June 30**)

SPRING SEMESTER

- 9 hours of classes, including research seminar if possible
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning
- Consult with primary faculty advisor and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding
- Continue working on forming qualifying oral examination committee
- Compile qualifying oral examination field lists (**due by June 30**).

January

- Incomplete grades due 30 days after last day of spring final exams
- Continue working on forming qualifying oral exam committee and compiling qualifying oral exam field lists (**due by June 30**)
- Classes

February

- Continue working on forming qualifying oral examination committee and compiling qualifying oral examination field lists (**due by June 30**)
- Classes

March

- Continue working on forming qualifying oral examination committee and compiling qualifying oral examination field lists (**due by June 30**)
- By March 31, submit CV to Graduate Coordinator for Annual Review
- Classes

April

- Meet with Director of Graduate Studies for advising and registration for fall semester
- Attend prospectus presentations (required)
- Continue working on forming qualifying oral examination committee and compiling qualifying oral examination field lists (**due by June 30**)
- Classes

May

- Course examinations and/or papers due
- Continue working on forming qualifying oral examination committee and compiling qualifying oral examination field lists (**due by June 30**)
- Attend end-of-year graduate reception
- Sign off PhD Annual Review Form

SUMMER BREAK

- Incomplete grades due 30 days after last day of spring final exams
- Qualifying oral examination committee in place and field lists submitted to Graduate Coordinator by **June 30**.
- Reading for qualifying oral examination and research for dissertation prospectus
- Possible summer employment.
- Enrolling in health insurance for the Fall semester
- Decide 10-month or 12-month Stipend by **June 20**

THIRD YEAR

FALL SEMESTER

- 9 hours of classes
- Preparing for qualifying oral examination
- Researching and writing dissertation prospectus
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning
- Consult with primary faculty advisor and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding

August

- Attend new student orientation lunch (required)
- Meet with qualifying oral examiners to discuss schedule for qualifying oral examination preparation
- Classes begin

September

- Attend Cohort Information Session (required)
- Meet with qualifying oral examiners to prepare for qualifying oral examination
- Classes

October

- Meet with qualifying oral examiners to prepare for qualifying oral examination
- Classes

November

- Meet with qualifying oral examiners to prepare for qualifying oral examination
- Work with Graduate Coordinator to schedule qualifying oral examination and prospectus presentation
- Classes
- Enrolling in health insurance for Spring semester

December

- Meet with qualifying oral examiners to prepare for qualifying oral examination
- With assistance from the Graduate Coordinator, register for Hist 8049 (Graduate Full-Time Status) and Hist 8398 (Dissertation) for spring semester
- Course examinations and/or papers due

SEMSTER BREAK

- Preparing for qualifying oral examination and researching/writing prospectus.

SPRING SEMESTER

- Qualifying oral examination; doctoral candidacy achieved
- Some students are eligible to receive a Master's degree after passing the qualifying oral examination. (Students wishing to receive an M.A. from SMU must not have previously earned an M.A. in History from another institution, as SMU generally does not confer equivalent degrees.) For deadlines and steps to file for graduation see [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist](#). These deadlines are established by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and are not flexible. It is the student's responsibility to review this checklist and meet all deadlines.
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning.
- Consult with primary faculty advisor and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships.
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding

January

- Incomplete grades due 30 days after last day of fall final exams
- Preparing for qualifying oral examination and researching/writing prospectus
- [Apply for graduation](#) (M.A. degree)

February

- Preparing for qualifying oral examination and researching/writing prospectus

March

- Writing dissertation prospectus
- Submit prospectus to Graduate Coordinator **no later than one week** prior to prospectus presentation
- By March 31, submit CV to Graduate Coordinator for annual review

April

- Presentation of dissertation prospectus
- Attend prospectus presentations (required)
- Researching and writing dissertation

May

- With assistance of Graduate Coordinator register for HIST 8049 (Graduate Full-Time Status) and possibly for teaching preparation for fall semester
- Attend end-of-year graduate reception
- Participate in/attend graduation (optional)
- Sign off PhD Annual Review Form

SUMMER BREAK

- Researching and writing dissertation
- Possible summer employment
- Enrolling in health insurance for the Fall semester
- Decide 10-month or 12-month Stipend by **June 20**

FOURTH YEAR

FALL SEMESTER

- Researching and writing dissertation
 - Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning
 - Consult with dissertation director/advisor and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships
 - Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding
 - Possibly fulfilling teaching preparation requirement

August

- Attend new student orientation lunch (required)
- Researching and writing dissertation.

September

- Attend Cohort Information Session (required)
- Researching and writing dissertation
- Work with dissertation director/advisor to create dissertation completion calendar (recommended).

October

- Researching and writing dissertation

November

- Researching and writing dissertation
- With assistance of Graduate Coordinator, register for HIST 8049 (Graduate Full-Time Status) and possibly for teaching preparation for spring semester.
- Enrolling in health insurance for Spring semester

December

- Researching and writing dissertation

SEMESTER BREAK

- Researching and writing dissertation

SPRING SEMESTER

- Researching and writing dissertation
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning
- Consult with dissertation director and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School about applying for external grants and fellowships
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding
- Possibly fulfilling teaching preparation requirement

January

- Researching and writing dissertation

February

- Researching and writing dissertation

March

- Researching and writing dissertation
- By March 31, submit CV to Graduate Coordinator for annual review
- By March 31, meet with advisor to discuss progress on dissertation. Provide advisor with written progress report (recommended).

April

- Researching and writing dissertation
- Attend prospectus presentations (required)

May

- With assistance of Graduate Coordinator, register for HIST 8049 (Graduate Full-Time Status) and possibly for teaching preparation for fall semester
- Attend end-of-year graduate reception
- Sign off PhD Annual Review Form

SUMMER BREAK

- Researching and writing dissertation
- Possible summer employment
- Enrolling in health insurance for the Fall semester
- Decide 10-month or 12-month Stipend by **June 20**

Fifth Year

(with plan to graduate in May)

FALL SEMESTER

- Researching and writing dissertation
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning and postdoc opportunities.
- Consult with dissertation advisor/director and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships and to discuss postdoc opportunities.
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding
- Possibly fulfilling teaching preparation requirement
- Begin job search.
- Consult with Director of Graduate Studies for assistance with arranging mock interviews and mock job talks

August

- Attend new student orientation lunch (required)
- Researching and writing dissertation

September

- Attend Cohort Information Session (required)
- Researching and writing dissertation
- Work with dissertation advisor/director to update dissertation completion calendar (recommended).

October

- Work with dissertation advisor/director to select internal reviewers for dissertation committee (no later than six months prior to defense)
- Researching and writing dissertation.

November

- Researching and writing dissertation
- With assistance of Graduate Coordinator, register for HIST 8049 (Graduate Full-Time Status) and possibly for teaching preparation for spring semester.
- Enrolling in health insurance for Spring semester

December

- Researching and writing dissertation

SEMESTER BREAK

- Researching and writing dissertation

SPRING SEMESTER

- For deadlines and steps to file for graduation see [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist](#). These deadlines are established by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and are not flexible. It is the student's responsibility to review this checklist and meet all deadlines.
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning and postdoc opportunities.
- Consult with dissertation advisor/director and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships and to discuss postdoc opportunities.
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding
- Possibly fulfilling teaching preparation requirement
- Continue job search
- Consult with Director of Graduate Studies for assistance with arranging mock interviews and mock job talks

January

- Work with dissertation advisor/director to secure external reviewer for dissertation committee (no later than three months prior to defense)
- Apply for graduation (students will receive an email from Kerri Bennett, Assistant Director for the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to begin the application process)
- Work with Graduate Coordinator to schedule dissertation defense
- Revising dissertation

February

- Revising dissertation

March

- Optional dissertation check by Kerri Bennett, Assistant Director for the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies (see [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist](#) Step 2 for specific date)
- Once the dissertation committee is finalized, submit member names to the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies (required). See [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist](#) Step 3 for specific date
- Once the dissertation defense is scheduled, submit the Dissertation Defense Scheduler form to the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies (this must be done at least fourteen days prior to the defense). See [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist](#) Step 4 for details.

April

- Submit dissertation for first mandatory format check. See [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist Step 5](#) for specific date
- After making required formatting corrections to your dissertation, submit dissertation for final format check by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies. See Graduation Deadlines and Checklist Step 6 for specific date
- Dissertation defense
- Attend prospectus presentations (required)
- If participating in end-of-year graduate reception, complete graduation questionnaire.

May

- Once all revisions have been made to the dissertation, both formatting and content, submit final copy of the dissertation to SMU Scholar. See [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist Step 9](#) for specific date
- Complete Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies exit survey. See [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist Step 9](#) for details
- Attend end-of-year graduate reception
- Sign off PhD Annual Review Form
- Attend Graduation

*This is the most rapid way to move through the program; there are other possibilities depending on various circumstances.

SUMMER BREAK

- Enrolling in health insurance for the Fall semester
- Decide 10-month or 12-month Stipend by **June 20**

FIFTH YEAR

(with plan to continue to sixth year)

FALL SEMESTER

- Researching and writing dissertation
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning and postdoc opportunities.
- Consult with dissertation advisor/director and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships and to discuss postdoc opportunities.
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding
- Possibly fulfilling teaching preparation requirement

August

- Attend new student orientation lunch (required)
- Researching and writing dissertation

September

- Attend Cohort Information Session (required)
- Researching and writing dissertation
- Work with dissertation advisor/director to update dissertation completion calendar (recommended).

October

- Researching and writing dissertation.

November

- Researching and writing dissertation
- With assistance of Graduate Coordinator, register for HIST 8049 (Graduate Full-Time Status) and possibly for teaching preparation for spring semester.
- Enrolling in health insurance for Spring semester

December

- Researching and writing dissertation

SEMESTER BREAK

- Researching and writing dissertation

SPRING SEMESTER

- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning and postdoc opportunities.
- Consult with dissertation advisor/director and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships and to discuss postdoc opportunities.
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding
- Students may be nominated by the department to apply for the Moody Dissertation Fellowship and/or the Dean's Dissertation Fellowship, which are awarded from the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies.
- Possibly fulfilling teaching preparation requirement.

January

- Researching and writing dissertation

February

- Researching and writing dissertation

March

- Researching and writing dissertation
- By March 31, submit CV to Graduate Coordinator for annual review
- By March 31, meet with dissertation advisor/director to discuss progress on dissertation. Provide advisor with written progress report (recommended).
- Work with Director of Graduate Studies on application for Moody completion fellowships (if applicable).

April

- Researching and writing dissertation
- Attend prospectus presentations (required)
- With assistance of Graduate Coordinator, register for HIST 8049 (Graduate Full-Time Status) for the fall semester.
- Work with Director of Graduate Studies on application for Moody completion fellowships (if applicable).

May

- Attend end-of-year graduate reception
- Sign off PhD Annual Review Form

SUMMER BREAK

- Researching and writing dissertation
- Possible summer employment.

SIXTH (or FINAL) YEAR

FALL SEMESTER

- Researching and writing dissertation
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning and postdoc opportunities.
- Consult with dissertation advisor/director and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships and to discuss postdoc opportunities.
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding
- Begin job search
- Consult with Director of Graduate Studies for assistance with arranging mock interviews and mock job talks.

August

- Attend new student orientation lunch (required)
- Researching and writing dissertation

September

- Attend Cohort Information Session (required)
- Researching and writing dissertation
- Work with dissertation advisor/director to update dissertation completion calendar (recommended).

October

- Work with dissertation advisor/director to select internal reviewers for dissertation committee (no later than six months prior to defense)
- Researching and writing dissertation.

November

- Researching and writing dissertation
- With assistance of Graduate Coordinator, register for HIST 8049 (Graduate Full-Time Status).

December

- Researching and writing dissertation

SEMESTER BREAK

- Researching and writing dissertation

SPRING SEMESTER

- For deadlines and steps to file for graduation see [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist](#). These deadlines are established by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies and are not flexible. It is the student's responsibility to review this checklist and meet all deadlines.
- Meet with Director of Graduate Career Development and Postdoc Affairs in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to discuss career planning and postdoc opportunities.
- Consult with dissertation advisor/director and Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards in the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies about applying for external grants and fellowships and to discuss postdoc opportunities.
- Preparation of applications for internal and external conference and research travel funding
- Continue job search
- Consult with Director of Graduate Studies for assistance with arranging mock interviews and mock job talks.

January

- Work with dissertation advisor/director to secure external reviewer for dissertation committee (no later than three months prior to defense)
- [Apply for graduation](#) (students will receive an email from Kerri Bennett, Assistant Director for the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies to begin the application process)
- Work with Graduate Coordinator to schedule dissertation defense
- Revising dissertation

February

- Revising dissertation

March

- Optional dissertation check by Kerri Bennett, Assistant Director for the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies (see [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist](#) Step 2 for specific date)
- Once the dissertation committee is finalized, submit member names to the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies (required). See [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist](#) Step 3 for specific date
- Once the dissertation defense is scheduled, submit the Dissertation Defense Scheduler form to the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies (this must be done at least fourteen days prior to the defense). See [Graduation Deadlines and Checklist](#) Step 4 for details.

April

- Submit dissertation for first mandatory format check. See Graduation Deadlines and Checklist Step 5 for specific date.
- After making required formatting corrections to your dissertation, submit dissertation for final format check by the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies. See Graduation Deadlines and Checklist Step 6 for specific date.
- Dissertation defense

- Attend prospectus presentations (required)
- If participating in end-of-year graduate reception, complete graduation questionnaire.

May

- Once all revisions have been made to the dissertation, both formatting and content, submit final copy of the dissertation to SMU Scholar. See Graduation Deadlines and Checklist Step 9 for specific date.
- Complete Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies exit survey. See Graduation Deadlines and Checklist Step 9 for details.
- Sign off PhD Annual Review Form
- Attend end-of-year graduate reception
- Attend Graduation

ACADEMIC RESOURCES (MA and PhD)

The graduate program offers extensive opportunities for students to broaden and deepen their knowledge. Resources include the Clements Center for Southwest Studies and the Center for Presidential History with their symposia, research fellows and distinguished visitors; the DeGolyer Library, a repository for a remarkable collection of books and manuscripts on Mexico and the Southwest; the Meadows Museum of Art, which houses perhaps the world's finest collections of early modern Spanish art outside of Spain; the Bridwell Library, which provides a wealth of primary sources for the study of religious history; the Underwood Law Library, which supports the study of legal history, including that of international law; the Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute, which offers opportunities for cross-disciplinary learning and collaboration; and the Women's and Gender Studies Program, through which students can pursue a Graduate Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES (MA and PhD)

SMU Fellowships (PhD)

The department awards fellowships to most students accepted into the doctoral program. Funding is provided for five years for students whose work remains excellent (see the criteria for funding renewal in the Assessment of Academic Performance section). Fellowships for the 2025-26 academic year include tuition, fees, student health insurance, and a departmental stipend of \$23,000.

During semesters in which they receive tuition and stipend payments, doctoral students are expected to pursue their studies full-time, although they may accept employment as needed without departmental approval. Individuals must check whether Dedman College or the University has any restrictions on any particular job.

Students receiving fellowships from the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies are expected to abide by the stipulations of those fellowships regarding external employment established by the Moody School.

Graduate students are advised that employment usually slows progress towards the degree.

External Funding (PhD)

SMU's [Office of Graduate Fellowships and Awards](#) provides assistance to graduate students with applying for national and international fellowships and awards. Each fall, the Director of Graduate Fellowships and Awards is invited to give a presentation to History graduate students on the services provided by the Graduate Fellowships office. In addition to attending this workshop, students are highly encouraged to make an individual advising appointment with the director during their first year of graduate study and to remain in contact with the Office of Graduate Fellowships and Awards throughout the course of their graduate career.

Internal Funding (MA and PhD)

Opportunities for post-admission fellowship funding for PhD students are provided by the History Department and the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies.

Opportunities for funding for conference and research travel and other expenses for MA and PhD students are provided by the History Department, the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies, the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA), the Clements Center for Southwest Studies, the Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute, and the Women's and Gender Studies Program.

To offset departmental funding for conference and research travel, students are expected to apply for other sources of support. When applying for internal funding, please contact the appropriate office for possible revisions to the information provided below.

1) History Department – Conference and Research Travel

- Depending on the availability of departmental funds, the History Department may award individual MA and PhD students up to \$1000 for travel and research funding in an academic year.
- To apply for funds for conference and research travel, students must complete [The Clements Department of History Conference and Research Travel Application form](#).
- Applications for support for conference and research travel must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator **at least three weeks** before departure and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and Department Chair **before travel begins**. Funding for travel cannot be awarded retroactively.
- Travel expenses will be reimbursed **after the travel is completed**. Funding cannot be provided in advance. Students should submit **itemized receipts** to the graduate Coordinator **within a month** of return from travel.
- Students must also complete SMU's Student Certification for Business-Related Travel form, which can be obtained from the Graduate Coordinator. This form should be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator along with the Clements Department of History Conference and Research Travel Application form.

2) History Department – Incidental Expenses

- The History Department provides some funding for incidental expenses related to dissertation and master's thesis research. To apply, students should fill out [the Graduate Student Request for Incidental Expenses form](#). The form should be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator for approval. Expenses will be reimbursed **after purchases are made**. Funding cannot be provided in advance. Students should submit **itemized receipts** to the Graduate Coordinator **within a month of purchase**.

3) History Department -- Award for Excellent Achievement in Graduate Study

Eligibility Criteria:

- Granted to PhD students at the end of the third year to provide additional stipend support for the fourth and fifth years of graduate study. Eligible students must have completed all coursework, passed their qualifying oral exam, and presented the prospectus.
- All third-year students who receive the basic stipend from the department are eligible. Students whose stipend is funded in total or in part by the Moody School or by any external source are not eligible.
- The award recognizes students who have performed with excellence in coursework, on the qualifying exam, and on the prospectus. In addition, the award recognizes students who have shown substantial intellectual and professional growth over the first three years of graduate study.

Amount: The department may award one or more renewable \$1000-\$5000 awards annually, depending on student merit and the availability of departmental funds.

4) Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies – [Travel Grants](#)

- The maximum amount of a grant is \$750.
- Travel grants cannot be awarded retroactively; proposals must be submitted before travel.
- Only one grant per student per academic year is awarded or funded. Please prioritize your proposals accordingly.
- Requests with matching funds from other sources have a higher priority.
- This grant will only fund conference travel to present an accepted paper, poster, creative project or performance (applications without documentation of acceptance are ineligible for this grant). The paper, poster, creative project, or performance must formally recognize SMU as the venue at which the work was produced.
- Applications are accepted year-round, and must be submitted at least 10 business days prior to travel (or 10 business days prior to virtual event).
- The proposals should be sponsored by the department chair and the graduate advisor. Department chair and graduate advisor are requested not to sponsor students who could be supported from other sources such as sponsored research grants and contracts.
- Before applying for this grant, notify your department administrator. The department will give you instructions regarding any pre-travel requirements. Procedures vary by school. If you are receiving funding from your department, they may use different procedures for reimbursement than the Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies. Please be sure you know your department's requirements before your departure.

5) **Moody School of Graduate and Advanced Studies – Other Grants and Post-Admission Fellowships**

Along with Travel Grants, the Moody School offers various kinds of grants and fellowships beyond those provided at the time of admission (i.e., Provost's Summer Research Grants, Dissertation Fellowships, etc.) In some cases, students apply directly for these awards. In other cases, students must be nominated by the department. The Director of Graduate Studies will keep students apprised of such opportunities as they are announced and will provide assistance with the application/nomination process as needed.

6) **Graduate Student Assembly**

There are five categories of funding available (annual limit of \$1,200 total per individual, dependent upon total available GSA funds for the year):

Category I (\$1,200 limit per academic year): Thesis and Dissertation-Related Expenditures

- Conference expenses at which a paper or poster is presented
- Travel for research
- Other thesis/dissertation-related work (buying or collecting data)

Category II (\$450 limit per academic year): Conferences Not Covered in Category I

- i.e., attending a conference but not presenting

Category III (\$150 limit per academic year): Photocopying

Category IV (\$300 limit per academic year): Fee for One Year Membership in Professional Organization(s) or Journal(s)

- Organizations or journals must be directly related to student's field of study

Category V (\$100 limit per meeting, \$200 limit per academic year): Miscellaneous Awards

7) **Clements Center for Southwest Studies**

The William P. Clements Center for Southwest Studies offers a small number of travel grants to support research on the American Southwest and the borderlands by SMU graduate students needing to visit sites beyond the campus of SMU. Preference will be given to students who have passed their qualifying oral examination and are working on the dissertation (but who have not exhausted their five-year enrollment at SMU). The Center will **reimburse** expenses for travel, research materials, and research-related activities, up to \$500 per week.

There are three named grants available:

- **The Clements Center Research Grant:** This grant is awarded to students to conduct research for their dissertation on any aspect of Texas, the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands, and the American Southwest.
- **The Joseph H. Staley Research Grant:** Named in memory of Joe Staley, a longtime member of the Clements Center executive board and its former chair. This grant is

awarded to students to conduct research for their dissertation on any aspect of Texas, the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands, and the American Southwest.

- **The Steve Denson Research Grant:** Named in honor of Steve Denson, long time SMU board member of the Clements Center as well as a professor in SMU's Cox School of Business and an enrolled Chickasaw. This grant supports dissertation research on any aspect of Native American and Indigenous history.

8) **Dedman College Interdisciplinary Institute**

The DCII Graduate Student Summer Research and Writing Fellowship Program provides support to graduate students as they pursue topics of interdisciplinary interest and impact. The program is designed to give graduate students the resources to devote themselves to full-time research or writing during the summer months, and the opportunity to engage with other students who share their interdisciplinary interests.

Award funds can be taken as summer salary or used for summer research travel or research expenses. Summer Fellows form a cohort that meets in the Spring and Fall semesters to share research plans, collaboratively tackle research challenges, and present research findings.

9) **The Women's and Gender Studies Program**

Funding opportunities may be available from the Women's and Gender Studies Program for students working on research projects related to the history of women and gender. Students should contact the program director for information about possible funding resources.

Emergency Funding – Office of Student Affairs (MA and PhD)

The [SMU Student Emergency Fund](#) may be available to currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students who experience unexpected or unforeseen circumstances that lead to financial hardship. Students should make every effort to exhaust all other available resources prior to applying for the fund. If funds are granted, they do not need to be repaid.

WRITING REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES (MA and PhD)

Coursework

All courses taken by graduate students (including independent studies) include a substantial writing component.

The Graduate Committee recommends the following writing requirements for graduate courses (these limits refer to final copies, not earlier drafts):

- Colloquia or Readings Seminars – a total of 20-25 double-spaced pages, including notes and bibliography; appendices, illustrations, etc. are additional. These courses often require a mix of writing assignments, including book reviews and historiographical essays.
- Research Seminars – 30-35 double-spaced pages, including notes and bibliography; appendices, illustrations, etc. are additional. Usually, a single long paper is required.

Note: Instructors may reduce the amount of writing required of doctoral students in the semester immediately before their qualifying oral examination (i.e., in the fifth semester). It is the student's responsibility to remind professors of this provision at the beginning of the semester.

Other Written Work

- MA Thesis Prospectus – 10 double-spaced pages, including notes and bibliography; appendices, illustrations, etc. are additional.
- MA Thesis – 50-75 double-spaced pages, including notes and bibliography; appendices, illustrations, etc. are additional.
- Dissertation Prospectus – 15-20 double-spaced pages (with footnotes); bibliography, timeline, appendices, illustrations, etc. are additional.
- Dissertation – 200-250 double-spaced pages, including notes and bibliography; appendices, illustrations, etc. are additional.

Research Paper Requirement (PhD)

Doctoral students are required to write two substantial research papers during their first 2 ½ years of study. Students aim to produce a significant work that is based on primary sources and is of a quality comparable to that of an article in a scholarly journal. With the exception of the four colloquia in American history, a research paper may be undertaken in any History graduate course (including independent studies). Students who would like to write a research paper in any course other than a research seminar **MUST** receive approval from the instructor **before registering** for the course.

Upon successful completion of each research paper, students should fill out a Research Paper Requirement form and send it to the Graduate Coordinator, who will update the student's Degree Progress Form in Box.

Students entering the doctoral program with a Master's degree in hand may formally petition the Graduate Committee to have the MA thesis serve as a substitute for one research paper. Such students should fill out a **Research Paper Requirement form** and return it to the Graduate Coordinator, **as early as possible** in their graduate career.

Graduate Writing Center

Students who would like additional assistance with developing their writing skills should contact the [Graduate Writing Center](#).

PROFESSIONALIZATION

Letters of Recommendation

Requests to faculty for letters of recommendation for fellowships, jobs, etc. should be made **at least four weeks** in advance of the due date for a first-time request and **at least two weeks** in advance if the faculty member has already written on the student's behalf.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Please see the student handbook: <https://www.smu.edu/studentaffairs/dean-of-students/student-handbook>