

The Abbreviated Handbook for PhD Students
Department of History

Updated May 5, 2015

This is a brief summary of the major elements of the PhD program.

Course Work and Comprehensives

Course work for PhD students takes the shape of three reading courses in your comprehensive fields: a 6 credit unit course for your major field and a 3 credit unit course in each of your minor fields. These field courses are chosen based on consultations with your supervisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. (After the fields have been selected, someone will prepare individualized courses in PAWS, the university's management system, for which you can register after Sept 1).

The major field is usually most closely aligned with your dissertation research and is typically administered by your thesis supervisor. The major field and two minor fields are designed to give you a teaching competency in three different areas of history. Fields require the preparation of 100 books (or equivalent) for the major field and 50 books (or equivalent) for each of the minor fields. Typically, you will be required to meet with your field supervisors every two weeks to discuss 4-6 books on the readings list. You will also be asked to write analyses of these books and send them to your field supervisors in advance of each meeting. Supervisors are asked to submit grades for these field courses in April, prior to the completion of the field preparations. These grades are usually based on your written assessments of the readings, your contributions to the discussions, and any "preparatory" comprehensive exams taken up to that point.

The formal comprehensive examinations are held in October of your second year of the program. They consist of a 4 hour written examination in each of your fields, held on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of a single week. The oral examination is a 3 hour examination of all of your fields and is typically held the week following the written comprehensives.

You must also register for Hist. 996 Research (Thesis) and maintain registrations in this course until your program is completed. This means registering in Term 1 (Sept-Dec), Term 2 (Jan-Apr) and spring/summer Term (May-Aug).

You must also register for Hist 990 Colloquium in Term 1 and Term 2 until you complete the colloquium requirement and receive a CR (credit). You do not need to register for HIST 990 in spring/summer terms.

In addition, you are required to take the on-line Ethics course(s). GSR 960_Intro Ethics and Integrity is required by all students as part of your program requirements, to be taken within the first term. GSR 961_Ethics and Integrity in Human Research is required by students who are conducting research that will involve human subjects. If you completed these requirements as an MA student at the University of Saskatchewan then you have met the requirement.

Advisory Committee and Dissertation Proposal

You will be assigned an advisory committee after completing your comprehensive examinations, consisting of your supervisor and (usually) two other members of the department, along with a member of a different department (cognate). They are responsible for assessing your progress through the program and, at the time of submission of your thesis, of approving its progress to defence. They will also form part of the examining committee of the thesis. You should have meetings with this committee at least once a year.

You will be expected to develop a thesis proposal by December of your second year in the program. This proposal is examined and needs to be approved by your advisory committee.

Language Requirement Examination

You are required to prove your competence to read a language other than English, to be determined by your Advisory Committee. If English is your second language you are not required to pass a language examination unless another language is needed for your research. You must pass a language competency examination before you can defend your thesis. The examination is usually given by a member of the department in Term 1 and consists of translations from the language to English. You may attempt the language examination as many times as is needed to pass it. Alternatively, you may register for a French Language course (INCC 801) usually offered in Term 2 with no additional tuition or fees required. This course counts towards your language requirement if a pass grade is obtained. If you completed your language requirement as a Master's student at the University of Saskatchewan that would require the same language exam, this requirement is waived.

990 Colloquium

To meet the 990 requirement for your degree, you will be expected to participate in the Graduate Student Colloquium. PhD students are required to attend the regular meetings of the graduate colloquium series at which Master's students present their research. Near the time of the thesis defence PhD students present a "job talk" about their research and teaching that is designed to mimic a typical job interview for an assistant professor position.

Funding and Teaching Assistantships

The department has various levels and sources of funding. All eligible students will be expected to apply for external funding (from SSHRC or equivalent) in each of their first three years in the program. The Department will hold a workshop in the fall to advise students about such applications. Departmental scholarships are valid for the first three years in the program, provided the recipient maintains acceptable progress through the program. The other major form of funding is Graduate Teaching Fellowships (GTFs) and Graduate Research Fellowships (GRFs). Decisions about scholarships are made by the Graduate Committee. Decisions about teaching assistantships are made by the Chair of the Department in consultation with the executive committee. The Department also has some funds for student research travel which you can apply for each February.

Dissertations

You will work closely with your supervisor in preparing the dissertation. When the supervisor feels that the thesis is ready to go to defence, copies will be presented to the advisory committee. They will decide if the dissertation is ready to go to defence. At that time the dissertation will go to an external examiner, a faculty member at another university. The examining committee for the oral defence consists of the advisory committee plus the external examiner. All graduate students and faculty in the History Department and all faculty members in the CGSR are welcome to attend.

TIME LINE

- Year One:
- September: preparation of comprehensive fields and reading courses begin
 - October: SSHRC Application
 - by December: departmental language examination written OR
by April: INCC 801 French course completed
 - Summer: course work completed
- Year Two:
- October: Comprehensive examinations
 - Fall: advisory committee chosen
 - December: thesis proposal approved and dissertation research begins
- Year Three:
- Dissertation research and chapter draft
- Year Four:
- by March: completed dissertation presented to supervisor and advisory committee
 - Spring or summer: dissertation defence