



# **GRADUATE STUDIES HANDBOOK**

**Department of History  
Valdosta State University**

**Revised Fall 2011  
Approved August 2011**

Ashley Hall  
(229) 333-5947  
[www.valdosta.edu/history](http://www.valdosta.edu/history)

## GRADUATE STUDIES HANDBOOK – REVISED 2011

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants may be admitted to the M.A. Program in History with one of the following classifications. The History Department's Graduate Studies Committee will determine the applicant's appropriate admission status.

#### *Regular Admission:*

The following are the minimum requirements for the History Department to consider any applicant for Regular Status admission into the graduate program:

1. A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university;
2. A cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale;
3. A minimum of 15 semester credit hours in upper level (3000 or above) history courses;
4. A minimum of 3.0 GPA in all college-level history courses with no grade below a C in any history course;
5. A minimum score of 152 on the verbal section and a minimum score of 4 on the analytical writing section of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE);
6. A completed application for graduate admission that includes the following supporting documents:
  - A career goals essay in which the applicant states her or his specific research interests (see available areas of concentration, p. 6) and future plans and a statement as to why the applicant has chosen VSU to pursue a Masters of Arts degree in History;
  - A writing sample that must be a formal research paper based on primary and secondary sources with appropriate citations, properly formatted, and a minimum of 10 pages in length;
  - Two letters of recommendation from individuals who are familiar with the applicant's academic work, preferably the applicant's academic work in history;
  - Official transcripts of all prior college or university work;
7. A simple majority of the History Department's Graduate Studies Committee must recommend the applicant for admission and the Graduate Studies Committee will determine whether the applicant should be admitted on Regular or Probationary status;
8. Students who wish to be considered for admission in the Fall Semester of any academic year must have their application packets completed and submitted to the Graduate School by **April 1**.  
*Applications received after April 1 will be considered for admission for the Spring semester of said academic year;*

9. Students who wish to be considered for admission for the Spring semester of the academic year must have completed application packets submitted by **October 15**;
10. Students who wish to be considered for any of the available graduate assistantships ought to have their completed application packets submitted at least one month before the above stated deadlines

*Probationary Admission:*

In addition to Regular Status applicants may be admitted to the M.A. Program in History on Probationary Status. Probationary Status means that an applicant has submitted all the required documents, but has failed to meet one or more of the criteria for Regular admission status. The Graduate Studies Committee will determine the conditions to be imposed and notify the applicant in writing in the admissions letter as to the specific criteria to be met. Probationary Status is not guaranteed and the decision is at the sole discretion of the Graduate Studies Committee. Should a student fail to meet the stipulated criteria, she or he will be dismissed from the program. The student will receive a letter from the Graduate School and the CGS notifying her or him of the dismissal.

*Non-Degree Admission:*

Applicants may apply for admission to the M.A. Program in History as a non-degree seeking student. Non-degree seeking applicants must apply to the program through the Graduate School. They must have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university and they must have the required 15 hours of upper level history courses with no grade lower than a C in any history course. Non-degree seeking students may apply for regular status admission, but they must re-apply through the Graduate School, and they are not guaranteed admission to the M.A. Program in History. The History Department's Graduate Studies Committee decides whether to accept or reject degree-seeking students. Non-degree seeking students may only transfer a maximum of 9 hours of coursework regardless of how many hours they accrued in the program as a non-degree student. Students admitted as a non-degree basis are not eligible for financial aid or graduate assistantships.

**NO APPLICANT IS GUARANTEED ADMISSION AND MEETING THE MINIMUM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS DOES NOT GUARANTEE ACCEPTANCE INTO THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT'S GRADUATE PROGRAM.**

***GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION:***

***COORDINATOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES***

The Coordinator of Graduate Studies (CGS) oversees the Masters of Arts Program in History in consultation with the Department's Graduate Studies Committee and the Department Head. The duties of the CGS include, but are not limited to, serving as the advisor for all History graduate students enrolled in the program, monitoring students' progress, and reviewing all thesis topics and supervisory committees. The CGS is the first person students should consult if they have a question or concern regarding the program.

### **GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE**

The Graduate Studies Committee administers the History Department's graduate program, and the CGS serves as the Committee chair. The Graduate Studies Committee has a variety of functions, which include but are not limited to deciding on applications for admission into and dismissals from the program, selecting students for available assistantships, and recommending policy revisions to the Department.

### **GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

Upon admission to the program, the CGS will provide each student with the Department's Graduate Program Handbook or the student may access it on-line at the History Department's web page. This document, along with the University's Graduate Catalog, defines and explains all program requirements. Both the Department's Handbook and the Graduate School's Catalog may be revised from time to time. Students will be held to the requirements of the program as outlined in the version of the Handbook and the Catalog in force at the time they began their program. Also, from time to time, the Department's policies may differ from the Graduate School's. In cases where there is a discrepancy between Department and the Graduate School guidelines or policies, please consult with the CGS.

### **ADVISING**

The CGS will advise all students enrolled in the History Department's Graduate Program and will maintain current files for all such students. The CGS in her or his capacity as advisor will actively monitor the progress of all students enrolled in the program, including consultation with faculty regarding coursework and other academic work. For those students who have opted for the Thesis Track, the CGS will consult regularly with faculty members who direct student theses.

All graduate students must abide by the schedule of classes for which they were advised. Any student who deviates from the agreed upon schedule will be held responsible for any consequences that might occur as a result of not heeding the advice. Nine hours (3 courses) is considered full time enrollment for students who have Regular Status. No student may enroll in or take more than nine hours of course work in any given semester without the express permission of the CGS.

### **APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION**

Students should apply for graduation at least one semester in advance. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the application for graduation. The CGS will meet with the student to review the student's progress and assist in completing the appropriate paperwork. **Students will not be permitted to file their "Application for Graduation" form until after they have fulfilled their foreign language requirement.** The CGS and the Graduate Studies Committee encourage all students to review the Graduate School's policies for graduation before completing the form.

### **GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

The Graduate School allots the History Department a certain number of Graduate Assistantships per year, depending on the availability of funding for these positions. In addition, funding for history graduate students may also be available through other sources such as Teaching, Advising, and Library Assistantships. The Graduate School will notify students when such funding is available and students should respond to the notification to indicate if they are

interested in the positions. The postings for these funding opportunities are now on-line through the Graduate School's website and that is where students must apply for them. The CGS in conjunction with the Graduate Studies Committee will review applicants for the available Graduate Assistantships and make the nomination(s) to the Graduate School.

Assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis and graduate students who receive them must apply for renewal. Renewals may be on a semester or an academic year basis, depending on the type of assistantship awarded. **Renewal is not guaranteed.** No student may serve more than two years as a Graduate Assistant for the History Department.

The CGS will coordinate the duties of graduate students who have been awarded assistantships in the History Department. Those duties will vary based upon the type of assistantship and departmental needs at the time.

## **GRADUATE FACULTY**

**AIELLO**, Thomas (Ph.D., University of Arkansas, 2007) Associate Professor  
African American  
U.S. Sports History  
U.S. Twentieth-Century  
U.S. Intellectual

**BARTOS**, Sebastian (Ph.D., Graduate Center, CUNY, 2008) Assistant Professor  
Medieval and Early Modern Slavic Europe  
Medieval Church and Society  
Protestant and Catholic Reformations  
Crusades  
Byzantine Empire and Society

**BYRD**, Melanie S. (Ph.D., Florida State University, 1992) Professor  
France 1750-1815  
French Revolution and Napoleonic Era  
Europe 1750-1850  
Ancient World  
Cuisine and Culture

**CROWLEY**, John G. (Ph.D., Florida State University, 1996) Associate Professor  
Local and Regional History  
Genealogy  
Religious History (especially U.S. South)  
U.S. Social History to 1877

**HAGGARD**, Dixie R. (Ph.D., University of Kansas, 2005) Professor  
Colonial North America  
American Revolution  
Native Americans (especially Southeastern)  
Environmental History

**HINNERSHITZ**, Stephanie (Ph.D. University of Maryland, 2013) Assistant Professor  
US Post-1945  
Immigration  
Asian Americans

**JONES, Owen** (Ph.D., University of California at Riverside, 2009) Assistant Professor  
Colonial Latin America  
Modern Latin America  
Native American (Mexico, Central, and South America)  
Global History, 1450-1750 (Atlantic World and Pacific Rim)

**MEYERS, Chris** (Ph.D., Florida State University, 1996) Professor  
U.S. Political and Military History  
U.S. 1920-1945  
U.S. Civil War Era  
Georgia History since 1865

**OGLESBY, Catherine** (Ph.D., Michigan State University, 1996) Professor  
US Women's History  
US in the Long Twentieth Century  
US Social History  
US Intellectual History  
US Race and Gender  
New South

**RIGGS, Paul** (Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, 1997) Department Head and Professor  
Scottish History  
Great Britain  
History of Crime and Punishment

**WILLIAMS, H. David** (Ph.D., Auburn University, 1988) Professor  
Antebellum South  
U.S. Civil War Era  
Georgia History to 1865

**FIELDS OF GRADUATE STUDY ARE U.S., EUROPEAN, & WORLD**  
**The current areas of concentration within the fields are as follows:**

U.S. History: Political, Social, Military, Religious, Women and Gender, Native American, African American, Sports, Intellectual, Southern, Colonial Era, Revolutionary Era, Early National Period, Antebellum Era, Civil War Era, Gilded Age and Progressive Era, Between the World Wars, World War II Era, Genealogy, US Military History

European History: Europe, 1750-1850, France, 1750-1815, Great Britain, Slavic Europe, Byzantine Empire, Medieval, Medieval Church History, Crusades, Reformation, European Military, Imperialism, Social and Cultural

World History: Latin America, Atlantic World, Pacific Rim, Ancient World, World Military, Imperialism

Please note that the VSU History Graduate Program is not the appropriate M.A. degree granting institution for any applicant who wishes to concentrate in an area not listed in the above available fields. The History Department may add or subtract fields as the department's personnel changes.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

### GENERAL:

The Masters of Arts program in History has two tracks for graduate students: a thesis track and a non-thesis track. Students must declare one of these tracks by the end of their first academic year in the program.

The *thesis* track is designed primarily for those History Graduate Students who plan to pursue a terminal degree in History upon successful completion of the Masters at VSU.

The *non-thesis* track is designed primarily for those History Graduate Students who do not plan to pursue a terminal degree in History.

### PLAGIARISM:

The History Department takes the issue of plagiarism very seriously. Students should familiarize themselves with the History Department's "Statement on Plagiarism," which can be found near the end of this handbook. Plagiarism will serve as grounds for dismissal from the History Program.

### GRADE POINT AVERAGE:

All students in the History Graduate Program must maintain a Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 3.0 to remain in good standing. No grade of C or lower will be credited toward the graduate degree.

### DEFICIENCY POINT SYSTEM:

The Graduate School at Valdosta State University has instituted a deficiency point system for all graduate students enrolled in the School. The deficiency point scale is based on grades earned in courses and is separate from the GPA. The scale is cumulative for the duration of the graduate student's time enrolled in a department. The point scale is as follows:

C = 1 deficiency point

D = 2 deficiency points

F & WF or U = 2 deficiency points

**The History Department will dismiss from the program any graduate student who accumulates 2 or more deficiency points.**

Students admitted to the History Program on Probationary Status must meet the criteria set forth in their admission letter. The Department's Graduate Studies Committee determines terms and conditions of probation. Failure of any student on Probationary Status to meet the prescribed requirements will result in dismissal from the program. The CGS and the Graduate School will notify the student of her or his dismissal.

## PROGRAM OF STUDY IN HISTORY

### *HIST 7000: Seminar in Historiography*

All degree seeking History Graduate Students must take this class in the 1<sup>st</sup> available semester of their studies and successfully complete it with a grade of B or higher. Failure to take HIST 7000 upon its 1<sup>st</sup> availability will result in the prevention of enrollment in any and all history

graduate courses until the requirement is fulfilled. Degree seeking students enrolled in HIST 7000 who drop the course for any reason during the semester will be dropped from all other courses in that semester as well. Students who do not achieve a grade of B or better in HIST 7000 upon the 1<sup>st</sup> attempt may retake the course one time, provided the grade earned in the course does not exceed the allotted deficiency points. The student may take no other history graduate courses until HIST 7000 has been successfully completed. Any student who does not successfully complete HIST 7000 with a grade of B or better after two attempts will be dismissed from the MA program in History.

**Areas of Concentration:**

All students must choose two areas from the three available fields of study: US, Europe, World, one of which will be designated as the primary or first field and the other of which will be designated as the secondary or second field of study.

See APPENDICES 1 (thesis track) & 2 (non-thesis track) for the graduate program of study check list.

**COURSE ELECTIVES:**

In addition to the primary and secondary fields of study, students will have 6 hours of electives. Three of the elective hours must be taken from the field of study not chosen by the student as the primary or secondary area. Three of the elective hours may be from any course of the student's choosing, including a graduate level course offered by a department outside of history.

**Foreign Language:**

As a requirement for the Masters of Arts degree in History, all graduate students must demonstrate a proficiency in a foreign language regardless of the track chosen.

The foreign language requirement may be fulfilled in one of two ways:

1. Students may successfully complete a foreign language sequence, earning a grade no lower than a B in the final course. Non-thesis track students must have completed three sequenced courses of the same language and thesis track students must have completed a four sequence course of the same language.
2. Students may take a reading knowledge examination in a foreign language, and they must pass it with a minimum grade of B (80) or better. The Department of Modern and Classical Languages will administer the reading knowledge language test.

No History Graduate Student may sit for her or his comprehensive examinations until the foreign language requirement has been fulfilled. No student may file an "Application for Graduation" form until the foreign language requirement has been satisfied. The following languages are available at VSU for the History MA requirement: Spanish, French, German, and Latin. A student who wishes to substitute another language should consult with the CGS.



## **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS**

All students in the History Graduate Program regardless of the track they have chosen must take and pass a series of written and oral qualifying examinations in order to complete the program successfully.

### *M.A. SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE FOR COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS*

All students regardless of which track they are on will select a comprehensive examination supervisory committee consisting of two History Department faculty members who must also be members of the VSU graduate faculty. The supervisory committee will prepare and judge the student's written and oral comprehensive exams. One qualifying exam faculty member will have expertise in the student's primary field of study and the other will have expertise in the student's secondary field. The graduate student will coordinate the selection of the qualifying exam committee in consultation with the CGS. Students should select faculty members for their qualifying exams from whom they have taken courses and should consult with said committee members at least one semester before taking the examination so that they may agree upon a general body of knowledge for the comprehensive examinations. The History Department requires the qualifying examinations as proof that a student has mastered at least two fields of expertise.

### **NON-THESIS TRACK**

Students who have selected the Non-Thesis Track will schedule their written comprehensive examinations during the last semester of their course work in the program. The CGS will schedule the date of the examinations and will notify students as to the dates of the examinations in writing. The M.A. examination committee will consist of two History Department faculty members, who must also be graduate faculty members, and one of whom must be the Thesis Director. Both of the M.A. exam committee faculty must have areas of expertise in the student's chosen fields. The CGS will notify the student of the results of the comprehensive exams. The student will then coordinate with the exam committee members to schedule the oral examination defense.

### **THESIS TRACK**

Students who have selected the Thesis Track will schedule their written comprehensive examinations during the last semester of their course work in the program. The CGS will schedule the date of the examinations and will notify students as to the dates of the examinations in writing. The M.A. supervisory committee will consist of two History Department faculty members, who must also be graduate faculty members, and one of whom must be the Thesis Director.

The general rules governing the writing of a thesis are outlined in the "Thesis and Dissertation Guide," available on the Graduate School's web page. Please pay close attention to the specific requirements and details mandated by the Graduate School. The Graduate School will not accept a thesis that is not wholly in proper order.

### *WHAT IS A THESIS?*

A thesis is a substantial work of research (at least 90 pages of text) that is original and offers a contribution to the existing body of knowledge on a subject. It is not merely a rehashing of what

has already been written on a given topic. For that reason, every thesis involves an extensive investigation and analysis of primary source materials in addition to a demonstration of familiarity with the principal secondary sources. A proper thesis in the History Department will adhere to the following guidelines:

- An introduction that reviews the existing literature on the subject and a statement as to how the student's thesis contributes to that body of knowledge.
- An original interpretation of the topic being analyzed.
- A well-organized text that consists of an introduction, main-body chapters, and a conclusion.
- Proper citation for the discipline with footnotes that must conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style*.
- A comprehensive bibliography that is properly formatted and that conforms to the *Chicago Manual of Style*.
- A complete thesis manuscript that must conform to all of the structural requirements as outlined in the Graduate School's "Thesis and Dissertation Guide."

Writing a thesis is a building block for those students who intend to pursue a doctoral degree in History. All History graduate students must demonstrate skills in researching, organizing, and writing a thesis. The production of a thesis is meant to be an in-depth and thought provoking exercise culminating in a rigorous oral defense in front of the thesis advisory committee of the student's work.

Students writing a thesis for an MA in History shall be guided by the following:

1. **THESIS DIRECTOR:** All History graduate students who choose the thesis option must have a Thesis Director. The Thesis Director must be a current member of the VSU History Department and the Graduate Faculty. In addition, the Thesis Director must be qualified to direct a thesis on the student's specific topic, that is, the Director must have a prior academic area of study or be currently engaged in research and publishing in the student's chosen thesis area.
2. **THESIS TOPIC:** All thesis topics must be registered with the CGS. Thesis Directors should keep the CGS informed as to the status of their student's progress on the thesis.
3. **THESIS COMMITTEE:** All History graduate students writing a thesis will, in addition to the Thesis Director, have a thesis advisory committee that shall consist of two other VSU History Department faculty who are also members of the Graduate School faculty. The student will choose the committee members, but must have the approval of the Thesis Director and the CGS. The two other faculty members should be familiar with the student's graduate level coursework and have some expertise with the student's thesis topic. Lastly, the student's thesis committee shall have one additional faculty member from a department outside of History who will read a final draft of the thesis and be present for the student's oral defense of the work.
4. **THESIS COMMITTEE FORM:** Before a student can sit for the thesis defense, she or he must submit the proper "Thesis Committee" form to the Graduate School to ensure that all thesis committee faculty are current on the VSU graduate faculty.
5. **THESIS DEFENSE:** The student will have successfully passed the thesis defense when a simple majority of the committee members have agreed that the final thesis draft is acceptable. The thesis defense must take place during the semester in which the student intends to graduate. Any student who fails the thesis defense will be granted one chance

to defend the work a second time. Once approved, the student shall submit the manuscript and the proper signature pages to the Graduate School not less than three weeks before the date of graduation. The specifications for the manuscript and signature pages can be found at the Graduate School's "Thesis and Dissertation Guide" web page.

6. **THESIS COMPLETION:** After the student passes the oral defense, the CGS will notify the Dean of the Graduate School and the University Registrar that said student has successfully defended the thesis and has fulfilled all the History Department's requirements for successful completion of the MA program.

### **STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM**

Using the words, ideas, or conclusions of another person without giving proper credit to that person is a form of intellectual dishonesty known as PLAGIARISM and it is not acceptable practice. The History Department will not tolerate it under any circumstance or for any reason. It is the student's responsibility to understand what plagiarism is and to make sure that she or he is never guilty of it in any of the written work that the student produces.

In writing History, regardless of whether the text is an essay, book review, article, thesis, dissertation, book, or any other form of scholarly or literary writing, the author must properly credit any and all sources of words, ideas, and conclusions that she or he uses. Writers of History give proper credit through citations such as footnotes or endnotes.

Furthermore, a writer of History who uses any words exactly as they appear in any source must indicate this by placing the phrase or sentence or sentences within quotation marks. Any quotation longer than four lines should be set off as a blocked quote from the rest of the body of the text. When quoting from any source, writers must use the words or phrases or sentences exactly as they appear in the original source.

Students should consult the Graduate Catalog and the Graduate School's "Thesis and Dissertation Guide" for a more extensive discussion of plagiarism. Plagiarism can serve as grounds for dismissal from the program.

**APPENDIX ONE**  
**Program Checklist—Thesis Track**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

Semester Admitted into Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Field: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Field: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Course/Semester/Grade</b>	<b>Grade</b>
HIST 7000 _____	_____

**PRIMARY FIELD:**

Seminar \_\_\_\_\_

Seminar \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

**SECONDARY FIELD:**

Seminar \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

**ELECTIVES:**

History Course \_\_\_\_\_

History/Non-History Course \_\_\_\_\_

**THESIS HOURS (3-6 hours):**

HIST 7999 \_\_\_\_\_

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

Language \_\_\_\_\_

Date Passed \_\_\_\_\_

**Application for Graduation**

Date filed \_\_\_\_\_

Semester of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_

**Exam Committee**

Primary Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

**Written Comprehensive Examinations Date Taken** \_\_\_\_\_

Grade (Part One) \_\_\_\_\_

Grade (Part Two) \_\_\_\_\_

**Thesis Committee**

Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty (non-History): \_\_\_\_\_

Oral Defense of Thesis Date Taken \_\_\_\_\_

Grade (Pass/Fail) \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX TWO**  
**Program Checklist—Non-Thesis Option**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

Semester Admitted into Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Field: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Field: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Course/Semester/Grade</b>	<b>Grade</b>
HIST 7000 _____	_____

**PRIMARY FIELD:**

Seminar \_\_\_\_\_

Seminar \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

**SECONDARY FIELD:**

Seminar \_\_\_\_\_

Seminar \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

**ELECTIVES:**

History Elective \_\_\_\_\_

History/Non-History Elective \_\_\_\_\_

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

Language \_\_\_\_\_

Date Passed \_\_\_\_\_

**Application for Graduation**

Date filed \_\_\_\_\_

Semester of Graduation \_\_\_\_\_

**Exam Committee**

Primary Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Examiner: \_\_\_\_\_

**Written Comprehensive Examinations Date Taken** \_\_\_\_\_

Grade (Part One) \_\_\_\_\_

Grade (Part Two) \_\_\_\_\_

**Oral Defense of Exams**

Date Taken \_\_\_\_\_

Grade (Pass/Fail) \_\_\_\_\_