**Department of History**

**School of Arts and Humanities**

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**Program Description**

Pursuing a graduate degree in history should be enriching both personally and professionally, equipping the individual with a deeper understanding of the past as well as providing an appreciation of the complexities of the present. From a professional perspective, it opens the door to a number of careers. A Master of Arts degree in History is usually a requirement for teaching the subject at community colleges, and it provides an excellent complement for teaching the history/social science framework at the high school level. Students completing the MA program will have developed critical, analytical, and writing skills that are of value in various fields. They will have received what is widely considered an excellent preparation for careers in public relations, journalism, law, politics, and the civil service. For those considering a Ph.D. in history, and eventually teaching at the university level, the MA program gives students a taste of what is involved and prepares them for doctoral work. Although the program does not require knowledge of a foreign language, students are strongly encouraged to develop a reading ability in a language other than English.

The MA program in History at CSUB offers two options or tracks: examination or thesis (see “Program Tracks” below).

**Application Process and Admission**

Those persons seeking a Master of Arts degree in History must apply for graduate study to both the History Department (the application is available online or from the department) and the university Office of Admissions (the application is available online at www.csumentor.edu). Admission to the university does not constitute acceptance into the History MA Program as a graduate student.

**Admission Requirements**

The following criteria must be met for admission as a Classified Graduate Student in History:

1. A baccalaureate degree in history from an accredited college or university; if it is not in history, students may be asked to take up to four upper-division undergraduate courses at CSUB and thereafter be assessed by the History Graduate Committee before being formally admitted as a Classified Graduate Student;

2. Good academic standing at the last college or university attended;

3. Transcripts showing an overall 3.0 GPA in the last 90 quarter units (60 semester units) of the last two years of college or university coursework;

4. A letter of intent;

5. Evidence of historical writing (preferably an upper-division research paper, demonstrating your research and analytical skills);

6. Two letters of recommendation, from academic instructors when possible.

The History MA program at CSUB does NOT require the GRE exam.

**Classification of Graduate Students**

There are three classifications for students in the History graduate program:

**Classified Standing**

A student who meets all the requirements for admission to the MA program in History will be admitted as a Classified Graduate Student.

**Conditionally Classified Standing**

Students who have been accepted into the History MA program by the History Department will be conditionally classified when the department admissions committee requires them to take up to four (4) courses for preparatory work (most often in the case of non-history majors).

**Advanced to Candidacy**

Classified students who have maintained a 3.25 GPA and have satisfied the Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) will be advanced to candidacy in the term in which they intend to graduate. Upon admission to the university and graduate-level study in the History Department, students should discuss with the Graduate Program Coordinator their plans to fulfill the requirements of the MA Program. It is the student’s responsibility, in consultation with the appropriate faculty members, to choose an MA track, fields of study, and to organize a thesis or examination committee.

**Committee Selection**

Each MA student in History must have a committee, either to provide examinations or to read and guide the thesis. The Graduate Program Coordinator can provide assistance in forming an MA committee.

**Academic Advising**

It is essential that the MA student stay in contact with the Graduate Program Coordinator and the committee chair, so that the department can provide current information to help the student move expeditiously through the program.

**Requirements for the Master of Arts in History**

**Program Tracks**

There are two tracks leading to an MA degree in History: the examination track and the thesis track. **Both tracks require 45 units of course work and HIST 697 (1-5 units) or HIST 698 (1-5 units), for a total of 46 to 50 units.** HIST 697 and 698 are credit, no-credit courses. Graduate students are encouraged to earn as many units as possible in 500- or 600-level courses. A maximum of 20 units, however, may be earned in 400-level courses. Graduate credit in a 400-level course requires submission of a “Petition for Graduate Credit,” signed by the instructor and Graduate Program Coordinator, indicating what additional work is required for graduate credit to be awarded.

Once students decide on a track, they should secure the appropriate Plan of Study from the History Department office. This Plan of Study, which will be kept in individual students’ files, will formally indicate committee members, coursework leading to the MA degree, date of classification, and satisfaction of the GWAR (see below).

**Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR)**

All MA candidates must demonstrate writing competency at the upper-division level. The requirement can be satisfied in one of two ways: take Hist 300; or take the university’s waiver exam, offered once per quarter through the English Department. (Details on the GWAR are available at: http://www.csub.edu/testing/gwar.shtml)

**Waiver of GWAR**

MA students may be exempted from the GWAR if the following apply:

1. The student has graduated from a CSU or UC since 1980.

2. The student earned the following score on a standardized test taken since 1980: CBEST—41 or higher on the writing portion; GMAT—4.5 or higher on the writing portion; GRE—4.5 or higher on the analytic writing portion of the GRE General Test.

3. The student has had one or more articles published as a first author in a refereed professional journal (student must submit their work to the chair of the university-wide GWAR committee with a formal request to waive the GWAR).

4. The student already holds an MA or MS in any discipline that included a master’s thesis or project (student must submit their work to the chair of the university-wide GWAR committee with a formal request to waive the GWAR).

**Examination Track**

Students interested in teaching at the high school or community college level are advised to follow this track. It generally is completed in less time than the thesis track and provides students with a broad base of knowledge and bibliography that will be of significant value when they are preparing courses in their teaching career. Students, who select the examination track at the time of application for classification, must designate *one* primary field and *one* secondary field. Any primary field may also serve as a secondary field.

**Examination Fields**

**Primary:**

 American History: Colonial to Reconstruction

 American History: Since Reconstruction

 California and the American West

 Modern Europe Since 1789

**Secondary:**

 Ancient Mediterranean

 Medieval Europe

 Early Modern Europe

 Latin America

 Modern East Asia

 Public History

**Examination Committee**

The examination committee will consist of one History Department faculty member from the chosen primary field, one History Department faculty member from the chosen secondary field, and one additional member chosen in consultation with the Graduate Program Coordinator and the other committee members. The committee will help students determine the courses they need in order to prepare for MA exams. The committee also will conduct both written and oral examinations. The examination results will be forwarded to the Graduate Program Coordinator, using the following grading scale: Honors, Pass, or Fail.

**Written Examinations**

Students who have maintained at least a 3.25 GPA in their graduate coursework should obtain the signature of their committee chair prior to taking their exams, and must be enrolled in the university in Hist 698 in the quarter in which they take the exams. MA candidates are required to take a five-hour examination in the primary field and a three-hour examination in the secondary field. The exams are scheduled over a one-week period and are offered once a quarter. *(Note: No student shall be permitted to take an examination in a field in which he or she has not had formal course work.)* Any failed examination may be repeated one time within the following 12-month period.

**Oral Examination**

After passing each of the written examinations, students will undergo a 90-minute oral examination. The faculty member responsible for the primary field will preside. The oral examination may be repeated one time, if necessary, within the following 12-month period.

**Thesis Track**

Students are reminded that a good master’s thesis is a significant piece of written work, usually requiring research in primary sources. Because primary sources are scarce at CSUB, the choice of thesis topics is severely limited, and students need to assure the Department Graduate Committee that source material necessary to the topic is available. The thesis topic should be selected at the time of achieving Classified Status in order to ensure the maximum amount of time for completion. Research for the master’s thesis or project that involves data from/about human subjects may be required to be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research (IRB/HSR).

**Course Work**

Because department graduate offerings are designed with the examination track student in mind, it is expected that thesis track students will earn many of the required units in individual study courses. Such courses shall be specifically designed in consultation with the thesis director to emphasize research techniques and to prepare the student for writing the thesis.

**Thesis Proposal**

Students should meet with their thesis director and discuss in detail their subject, the elements of a thesis, and the sources to be examined before submission of the thesis proposal. The proposal, accompanied by chapter descriptions and a bibliography, shall be submitted to the thesis director and approved by the thesis committee no later than one quarter before enrolling in HIST 697. The names of the thesis committee members should be submitted at the same time.

**Thesis Committee**

The thesis committee shall consist of three faculty readers: the specialist reader and two others. If the thesis topic involves expertise in another discipline, one reader may be chosen from that discipline with the approval of the thesis director and the Department Graduate Committee. The thesis committee will judge whether or not the thesis represents sound research and will ensure that it meets the standards of the profession in originality, scholarship, and written English.

**Course Requirements**

Students seeking a History MA must complete 45 units of coursework, plus 1 to 5 units of Hist 697 or 698 for a total of 46 to 50 units. Two of these courses must be HIST 501 and 503.

**Good Academic Standing**

To remain in good standing in the program, a student must attain a 3.25 GPA in Hist 501, 503, and the first additional 500-level he or she takes. A student who does not do so may not continue in the program.

**Transfer Credit**

Credit for graduate courses from other institutions (maximum of 13.5 quarter units) will be considered by the Graduate Program Coordinator and the Department Graduate Committee.