MA in History

Admission Contact Information

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Admission Criteria

Fall deadline: Mid-January (see departmental website for specific date)

- Minimum GPA: 3.0 in last 60 hours
- BA or BS degree
- GPA of 3.3 in undergraduate history courses, and at least 18 hours in history
- Official GRE score report, recommended but not required
- Minimum TOEFL scores (international applicants only):
  - Internet-based test (iBT)
    - Effective July 1, 2015 must have score of 80
  - Paper-based test (PBT)
    - Effective July 1, 2015 must have score of 550

Candidates who lack the necessary undergraduate hours in history must take graduate-level classes in history to remedy that deficiency before they can be considered for admission. They should consult with the director of graduate studies about appropriate classes. Graduate School regulations prohibit a non-degree student from taking more than twelve hours of course work.

Candidates must achieve a grade point average in these classes of at least 3.3 on a 4.0 scale to be considered for admission. A 3.3 GPA or higher does not guarantee admission. Course work taken as a non-degree student to remedy a deficiency in prerequisites ordinarily will not count toward the MA degree.

Required Application Materials

To the Office of Graduate Studies:

- All required documents, including online application
- One uploaded copy of each college transcript where a degree was earned or is pending (official transcripts will be required upon admission)
- Short essay explaining goals and expectations in graduate study, including the fields in which the student plans to specialize (upload to the online application)
- Substantial writing sample, such as a final research paper from a course (upload to the online application)
- 3 letters of recommendation (submission through the online application system strongly preferred, but postal mail submission directly to the department allowed)
- Official GRE score report, recommended but not required
- Official TOEFL score for international students

Note: Incomplete applications will not be considered. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that all required documents have been received by the January deadline.

Financial Aid from the Program

In this department, all applicants are considered for financial aid unless they indicate otherwise. Announcements of awards are made no later than April 1. Applicants may compete for fellowships for entering students. Fellowships require departmental nomination. Interested students should consult with the director of graduate studies for further details.

The department provides qualified students the opportunity to gain college-level teaching experience as graders who grade exams and papers in American and European history. Pending administrative approval and availability of funding, they earn at least $8,000 an academic year and carry nine semester hours.

Each appointment is subject to annual review and may be renewed up to a maximum of two years.

Requirements for the Degree Residency

A minimum of two semesters of full-time enrollment (9 hours each semester) or three semesters of part-time enrollment (6 hours each semester). Enrollment in all graduate courses requires the consent of the student’s advisor and the instructor(s) of the class.

Hours

Thirty semester hours of graduate credit are required by the Office of Graduate Studies for the MA degree. The Office of Graduate Studies also mandates that at least fifteen of these hours be in courses numbered 8000 or above, and will not count more than twelve hours of individually directed studies toward the thirty hours necessary to earn the degree. The department requires that at least twenty of these hours be in history. For students of United States history, at least fifteen hours must be in formally constituted US history courses. For students in the non-United States history program, at least twelve hours must be in formally constituted non-US history courses. Independently directed work does not count toward fulfilling this requirement in either category.

Required Courses

A studies course in every semester in which as many as nine credit hours are carried, unless the student is granted an exemption by the director of graduate studies. Every master’s student must take HIST 8480 Historiography unless excused by the director of graduate studies. HIST 8480 is offered regularly.

Every student who is a non-thesis candidate must complete at least two research seminars before receiving the MA degree. No master’s candidates in US or non-US history are required by the department to demonstrate reading proficiency in any foreign languages or to develop research skills before receiving the MA degree. Individual advisors, however, can require MA candidates to become proficient in reading foreign languages and/or develop specific research skills if they determine such knowledge is essential for the successful completion of a student’s master’s program. As soon as any such determination is made, students will be informed by their advisors. The advisors will also discuss with them processes for achieving and demonstrating those proficiencies.

Master’s candidates in Ancient History must demonstrate proficiency in at least one ancient language (Greek or Latin) and at least one modern language (generally, either French or German) before they begin work on their theses, if they choose that alternative, or before they take the non-thesis MA examination, if they are seeking a terminal master’s degree. These students should also be aware that ancient history graduate
courses can include readings in Greek and Latin. For directions on how
to demonstrate proficiency in these ancient and modern languages,
students should talk with their advisors and obtain a written description of
this process from them.

Special Note: No student will receive graduate credit for any course in
which s/he earns a grade below B. The grade of C in a graduate class is
the equivalent of an F in an undergraduate course.

**Satisfactory Progress and Annual Review**

At the beginning of every Spring semester, students must complete a
“Progress Report” on the Office of Graduate Studies’ Graduate Student
Progress System (sometimes referred to as “online assessment”). This
report will be read by the student’s faculty advisor, who will then submit
an “Advisor Response.” In addition, the student and advisor should meet
to discuss the student’s progress, confirm expectations for the coming
year, and address any concerns either may have regarding the report.

This is an extremely important process for two reasons. First, the advisor
determines whether the student is making satisfactory progress toward
a degree. If s/he is not, the advisor informs the student what needs to
be done to rectify the situation. The student then usually has a year to
return to making satisfactory progress. Failure to do so may result in loss
of financial aid or dismissal from the program. Second, if the student is
making satisfactory progress, the advisor and s/he decide together on
what reasonable goals are for the next twelve months. These goals will
define “satisfactory progress” at the next assessment meeting.

**Appeals**

The student may appeal any assessment to the director of graduate
studies. If not satisfied, s/he may seek the remedies described in the
Graduate School catalog.

**Effect of Progress Report Completion on Funding**

Completion of the Graduate Student Progress System forms by both
student (Progress Report) and faculty (Advisor Response) is mandatory
to maintain eligibility for any form of financial aid from the department.
Receipt of financial aid requires confirmation by a student’s advisor that
s/he is making satisfactory progress. No student in the program who
applies for or who is seeking renewal of financial aid will be eligible for aid
without a complete and up-to-date Graduate Student Progress System

**Plans for MA Degrees: Thesis plan**

All students who wish to apply for admission to doctoral programs in
history either at the University of Missouri or at other institutions must
write a thesis. A thesis involves an original and extended analysis of an
historical issue that requires substantial research. The topic of the thesis
must be approved in advance by the student’s faculty director and the
thesis committee, which is composed of the director, at least one other
member of the history faculty, and one faculty member from outside the
department.

The Office of Graduate Studies regulations require that there be an
outside faculty person on each thesis committee. At the discretion of the
director, additional faculty members may be added to the committee. The
appropriate forms, signed by the advisor and the director of graduate
studies, will be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies.

Students will take HIST 8090, Thesis Research, during those semesters
they are actually engaged in writing their thesis. N.B.: The Office of
Graduate Studies only permits six hours of HIST 8090 to count toward
the 30 hours necessary to earn a master’s degree. Students should also
note that hours earned in HIST 8090 do count toward the maximum of
12 hours of independent study, i.e., HIST 8085 (Problems), HIST 8089
(Research), and HIST 8090 (Thesis Research), the Office of Graduate
Studies will accept as credit for this degree.

**Plans for MA Degrees: Non-thesis plan**

Students may earn a master’s degree without writing a thesis. A
non-thesis MA is a terminal degree. Those who receive it will not be
considered for admission to the doctoral program. These students must
successfully complete two research seminars in history. These seminars
will count toward the thirty hours required for an MA degree. One of the
seminar papers must be submitted to the department to fulfill the Office of
Graduate Studies requirement for a substantial effort reflecting creativity
or originality.

**Examination for the MA degree: For Thesis Plan**

The student must defend her/his thesis before a committee of at least
three faculty members, one of whom must be the thesis director.
Another must be from a department other than History. The committee is
appointed by the Office of Graduate Studies upon recommendation from
the Department of History. The examining committee decides:

1. whether to recommend the awarding of the MA degree to the student
2. for prospective doctoral candidates, whether the student shall be
   permitted to enter the doctoral program.

This latter action constitutes a decision on the qualifying examination
required in the doctoral program. Afterwards, the appropriate form(s)
will be signed by the advisor, committee members, and the director of
graduate studies, then sent to the Office of Graduate Studies.

**Examination for the MA degree: For Non-
Thesis Plan**

A comprehensive oral examination covering all work for the degree will
be conducted by a committee of the advisor and at least two other faculty
members, one of whom may be from a department other than history.
The examining committee decides whether to recommend the awarding
of the MA degree. Afterwards, the appropriate form(s) will be signed by
the advisor, committee members, and the director of graduate studies,
then sent to the Office of Graduate Studies.

**Graduate School Deadlines for receipt of
the MA degree**

Students must meet the Office of Graduate Studies’ deadlines for the
awarding of degrees and the submission of theses. The final form of
the thesis must be in conformity with the Office of Graduate Studies
requirements.