PH.D. IN HISTORY

Admissions

We are looking for applicants with a record of outstanding academic achievement and evidence of potential success in graduate studies, attributes which can be measured in various ways such as grades, recommendations, written work, and test scores. Students with a master’s from an accredited institution may apply for admission to the doctoral program. Students with a bachelor’s degree only and with very strong credentials may be admitted into the doctoral program. Applicants must meet the admissions requirements set by both the graduate school, which are listed in its materials, and the department of history.

Because one of the strengths of our program is a close working relationship between faculty members and students, we cannot always accept qualified applicants when no one in the department can provide the guidance they need in their area of interest. Applicants should explore the listing of faculty on our website and contact the DGS or relevant faculty members if they have any questions.

The complete application contains:

1. A completed application form.
2. A completed financial aid application, if seeking aid.
3. Three letters of recommendation, preferably from the applicant’s former professors.
4. Recent Graduate Record Examination scores.
5. For international students, TOEFL scores.
7. A detailed statement from the student indicating:
   a. the student’s background and education;
   b. the student’s interests (field, topic, etc.);
   c. why the student wants to pursue a graduate degree in history at the University of Miami; and
   d. what the student plans to do with the degree upon completion. This statement constitutes a very important part of the application review process and should indicate the student’s understanding of the professional nature of the training that the student is about to begin.
8. A representative writing sample.

Admission from M.A. to Ph.D. Status

Students admitted at the master’s level who are performing well in their studies are encouraged to proceed to Ph.D. status. Advisors who believe that a student should be admitted to the Ph.D. program, and have the consent of the student, inform the DGS of this desire early in the spring semester and at least before the annual departmental meeting reviewing graduate students’ progress. The request is then reviewed by the department at its annual meeting for recommendation to the graduate committee. Students who move from the M.A. to the Ph.D. program are eligible for the same number of years’ aid as students entering the Ph.D. program directly from the B.A., minus the years of aid they have already received. For course requirements, see below.

Deadlines

January 5: Applications for admissions and aid for Fall semester.

Committee

Upon admission to the program, the student is assigned a provisional major advisor. As noted above, students should then concur or select a different advisor by the beginning of the second semester in the program. An advisory committee of four or five, including the major advisor and faculty members representing the second and third fields, must be formed no later than the student’s third semester in the program. It is the responsibility of the student and the advisor to form this committee and notify the DGS of its composition. The major advisor chairs the advisory committee and oversees the student’s course of study and progress in the program. The advisory committee will also administer the oral and written comprehensive examinations. Students may change advisor and other committee members throughout the program provided that the faculty member(s) selected agree(s).

Requirements

1. Requirements:
   a. For students entering the Ph.D. program with a B.A., 45 credit hours (5 semesters) of graduate coursework at the University of Miami.
   b. For students entering the Ph.D. program with a masters from another university, at least 27 credit hours (3 semesters) of graduate coursework at the University of Miami.
   c. For students entering the Ph.D. program with a Masters from another program at the University of Miami, at least 27 additional credit hours (3 semesters) of graduate coursework at the University of Miami.
   d. For students entering the Ph.D. program with a Masters from the History department at the University of Miami, 24 additional credit hours of graduate coursework (to conform to a Graduate School requirement) at the University of Miami.
   e. All doctoral students are expected to take their comprehensive exams no later than their 6th semester in the History Graduate Program at the University of Miami.
2. Completion of HIS 721, included in the above number of credit hours. All students are required to take the Historiography course in their first year.
3. Completion of HIS 701 and HIS 702 (the two-semester Research Seminar), included in the above number of credit, at least once. Typically, students take HIS 701 and HIS 702 in their 2nd and 3rd semesters in the program.
4. Passage:
   a. Passage of a major field in written and oral exams.
   b. Passage of a 2nd field in written and oral exams.
   c. Passage of a 3rd field in written and oral exams.
5. Following completion of course credit hours, students will need to take sufficient dissertation research credit (HIS 830 if before the comprehensives have passed; HIS 840 after the comprehensives have been passed) to reach a total of 60 credit hours beyond the B.A. in order to receive the doctorate. Graduate School rules require that students take a minimum of 12 dissertation credit hours. Students who enter the Ph.D. program with an M.A. from another university or from another program at the U. of M. receive 30 credit hours towards the 60 credit hour requirement.
The required credit hours of coursework are only the formal minimum. Although course work is necessary preparation for the comprehensive examination, students are examined on the mastery of fields of knowledge rather than courses. The number of courses taken depends on the student’s background, choice of fields, nature of related work, language skills, etc. Courses should be selected only after consultation with the Major Advisor.

**Incompletes**

All incompletes from the fall semester must be made up by the official end of the following spring semester. All incompletes from the spring semester must be made up before the official start of the subsequent fall semester. No student will be allowed to proceed to exams until all incompletes have been made up.

**Languages Requirement**

Reading knowledge of at least one foreign language is required. More than one foreign language may be required if the major advisor deems it necessary. The Modern Languages and Literatures Department administers examinations in the languages that it teaches and offers preparation courses in a handful of languages. Students may contact the DGS for the various options for taking courses in foreign languages. Students must, in conjunction with their advisor, prepare a plan that specifies how they will demonstrate language proficiency. The language requirement must be completed before a student can take the comprehensive examinations (see below).

**Comprehensive Examinations**

It is the responsibility of the student and major advisor to organize the comprehensive examinations. Students may take them at any time of the year that classes are in session. Arrangements for the exams, including selection of their dates and a final list of committee members, should be made by the end of the first month of the semester in question, with notification to the Department Chair and DGS.

The student takes the written part of the examinations in three history fields, which are normally administered over a period of two successive weeks. The portion for each field is four hours in duration. Only after the advisory committee deems that the student has successfully passed the written portions for each field is the student permitted to take the oral part of the examination.

The oral section covers the three history fields and is approximately two hours in duration. The prospectus may form part of the discussion, but the examination will focus on coverage of the fields. The committee consists of at least three faculty members.

The student advances to candidate status after passing the comprehensive examinations and submitting an acceptable dissertation prospectus.

Students who have not already received a master's degree from the University of Miami will be awarded an M.A. upon successful completion of their doctoral comprehensive exams.

**Dissertation**

After passing the examinations, students form a dissertation committee. This may be the original advisory committee, but it may also be revised to meet the needs of the dissertation work. The students, in consultation with the Major Advisor, put forward the names of individuals suggested to serve on the dissertation committee. The committee must be comprised of at least three members within the department and one outside the department. The committee is then approved and appointed by the dean of the graduate school.

The dissertation must make a significant contribution to the candidate's field of specialization. It must meet the highest standards of research, substance, and form, and demonstrate an ability to conduct and report independent and original scholarly investigation.

The student must apply for graduation in his or her penultimate semester (i.e. fall for spring semester).

Upon completion of the dissertation and its tentative approval by the dissertation committee, the student takes a final oral examination that is a “defense” of the dissertation and that lasts for approximately two hours. It is open to the university community. Following the defense of the dissertation, the dissertation committee will render its decision to accept or reject the dissertation. Approval of the dissertation must be indicated by the signature of all members of the dissertation committee.

**Fields**

**Chronological/Geographical fields:**

- Medieval Europe
- Early Modern Europe
- Modern Europe
- Early American History
- Modern U.S. History
- Colonial Latin America
- Modern Latin America
- East Asia
- Russia
- Africa
- Caribbean

**Topical Fields. These must cover either two of the geographic or two of the temporal fields listed above:**

- African Diaspora
- Race and Ethnicity
- Gender and Sexuality
- History of Religion
- History of Science and Medicine
- History of Crime and Law
- Political History
- Diplomatic History
- Urban and Environmental History
- Economic History
- Business History
- Labor History
- History of Sport
- Military History
- Cultural and Intellectual History
- Public History
• Atlantic World

Customized Fields:
Students may create their own fields in consultation with their advisory committee. The student opting for this approach must file a plan of study listing relevant courses, the faculty member(s) involved, and the rationale.
To pursue the individualized concentration, the student must obtain written approval of the plan by the major advisor, DGS, and the Department Chair.

The plan and signed approvals are placed in the student's file. With rare exceptions, a customized field may not be the major field of study.