

Doctor of Philosophy in History

Earning a KU Ph.D. in History requires a mastery of research skills, including the ability to contextualize and interpret primary sources, knowledge of the languages relevant to one's research, and the ability to develop an original historical argument that contributes to the historiography of one's field. Moreover, a KU Ph.D. in History certifies that students can communicate complex ideas persuasively in writing and orally. It also attests to the readiness of a graduate of our program to teach history and advise undergraduates at the level of the university classroom and to train graduate students.

Our program privileges advanced training in History that prepares and encourages students to research and write "across and between" conventionally-defined historiographical fields. To develop such a research program, students read in geographic, chronological, and thematic fields. Fields may be geographic, chronological, and/or thematic to provide maximum flexibility. Ph.D. students designate one major and two minor fields in consultation with their primary advisor and advisory committee.

All students who are admitted into the Ph.D. program for full-time study, except those who have secured guaranteed external institutional funding, are provided with 5 years of funding in the form of a fellowship, teaching, or research position, contingent on funding availability. International students whose native language is not English are eligible to hold a GTA appointment, provided they meet the University's and the Department's standards for written and spoken English. Applicants who indicate that they are seeking Department funding will be considered automatically for nomination for University-wide fellowships and grants for entering graduate students.

For statistics regarding our program, please see our Doctoral Program Profile (<https://ogs.ku.edu/program-profiles/>), which demonstrates our success at funding and placing current and recent graduates.

Admission to Graduate Studies

Admission Requirements

- All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the Admission to Graduate Study (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study/>) policy.
- Bachelor's degree: A copy of official transcripts showing proof of a bachelor's degree (and any post-bachelor's coursework or degrees) from a regionally accredited institution, or a foreign university with equivalent bachelor's degree requirements is required.
- English proficiency: Proof of English proficiency (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.

Graduate Admission

In History at KU, we privilege high-quality graduate advising and mentorship at every stage of a student's interaction with our department. As such, our application processes for the M.A. and Ph.D. are geared towards ensuring the best possible fit between faculty and graduate

students. Graduate applicants who seek to study at the University of Kansas are **required** to correspond with **at least one** prospective faculty advisor well in advance of the application deadline. On the most basic level, these preliminary contacts with faculty give applicants a sense of whether or not the prospective advisor is currently taking new students. More than this, these conversations offer candidates for admission a better sense of how they might fit into the program at KU. Our admissions process is designed to educate prospective students about what studying at KU would really be like and about the resources the Department and University possess in their areas of interest, as well as offering an opportunity to get to know some of the people they'd be working with during their time here. Moreover, the early establishment of a relationship between prospective faculty and applicant permits students to refine their applications to better articulate the candidate's fit with our program. The prospective faculty advisor will be able to more effectively advocate for the applicant's candidacy based upon this correspondence.

Once candidates for admission have established correspondence with at least one prospective advisor, they must complete the online application through the KU Office of Graduate Admissions (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/apply/>).

The application comprises the following:

- **Statement of Academic Objectives**, including a clear plan for graduate research in a specific field of study. This statement should articulate your preparation for graduate studies and should achieve the following objectives:
 - Suggest a potential direction for your research at KU as concretely as possible;
 - Identify specific chronological, geographical, and thematic areas of interest and identify faculty with whom you wish to work;
 - Discuss previous educational and personal experiences that have shaped your research interests;
 - Outline how you see a Ph.D. in History fitting into your broad career goals.
- The University of Kansas Department of History seeks to build a student body reflective of our community, our nation, and the world. In your statement you may share life experiences or personal characteristics that are concretely tied to your research interests, preparations for graduate study, or career goals.
- **Curriculum Vitae**
- **Writing Sample (maximum twenty-five pages, double-spaced).** The Department is interested in reviewing the best-crafted, most persuasively argued writing sample that applicants are able to provide. Such papers are often derived from an upper-level undergraduate history class in which the student conducted independent research and employed both primary and secondary sources.
- **Official Transcripts** from each institution that has granted you a degree, or at which you are currently enrolled
- **Three letters of recommendation**

Please note that documents, including a writing sample and transcripts, should be uploaded to the application. Applicants should not send hard copies of application materials to the Department of History. When you submit your online application, it is made available to the Department of History for review, yet it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the Office of Graduate Studies has received all materials by the deadline.

Ph.D. in History Degree Requirements

The following courses are required for all students in the History Ph.D. These courses must be completed by the end of the semester of the portfolio and oral comprehensive exam. Note that these are minimum requirements to be approved to move forward to the oral comprehensive exam. At least 24 hours of the minimum credits must be taken as HIST courses.

Course Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
HIST 802	Seminar in: _____ (Taken twice for a total of 6 hours)	6
HIST 805	The Nature of History	3
HIST 998	Portfolio Preparation	3
9 hours of Colloquia in the History department		9
The student, in consultation with the appropriate faculty advisor(s), develops a unique plan of study comprised of 12 hours of electives at the 700+ level.		12
Total Hours		33

Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship

The University requires that every doctoral student receive training in responsible scholarship pertinent to the field of research and obtain research skills pertinent to the doctoral level of research in their field(s). These requirements must be completed by the end of the semester that the student takes the oral comprehensive exam. For students in the History Ph.D., this requirement is satisfied by completion of:

1. HIST 802
2. HIST 805

Research Language Requirement

Upon admission to the program students must consult with their advisor to determine if their research interests require knowledge of a language other than English. If needed, students must certify proficiency in the primary research language by the end of their first year in the program.

Students whose primary research language is English may fulfill this requirement in two ways:

1. Certify proficiency in a secondary research language designated by their advisor.
2. Fulfill the Alternative Doctoral Skills Requirement.

See the Graduate Handbook (<https://history.ku.edu/graduate-resources/>) for language certification requirements.

M.A. Examination

Students who enter the program without an M.A. must complete the M.A. exam in order to be awarded an M.A. in History. The exam consists of final drafts of the two required research papers produced in HIST 802 which are sent to a faculty committee for a written evaluation of their work. Students who successfully complete the exam are awarded a Master of Arts in History and are approved to continue in the Ph.D.

Portfolio and Oral Comprehensive Exam

A written portfolio of the student's work and an oral examination that will provide the candidate with an opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired and respond to questions from the faculty committee

about their written portfolio. The committee must meet the guidelines outlined in the Office of Graduate Studies' Doctoral Student Oral Exam Committee Composition policy (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/oral-exam-committee-composition/>). Students enroll in HIST 998 while preparing for the exam. The student must pass their portfolio exam by the end of their fifth semester of study.

Post Comprehensive Exam Requirements

Upon passing the comprehensive examination, the student becomes a candidate for the Ph.D. degree and is approved to proceed with their dissertation research and project. Starting the semester following successful completion of the oral comprehensive exam, students must enroll in accordance with the Office of Graduate Studies' Doctoral Candidacy Policy (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-candidacy/>). This enrollment includes, but is not limited to, at least 1 dissertation hour every semester until graduation. See the Doctoral Candidacy policy for more information about this University level requirement.

Dissertation Prospectus Defense

Students will defend their Dissertation Prospectus in an oral examination with their committee the semester following their passing of the Portfolio and Oral Comprehensive Exam. Students must successfully defend a dissertation prospectus by the end of their sixth semester.

Doctoral Dissertation and Defense

The dissertation must be an original work of research that advances the field of History and complies with the Office of Graduate Studies' Doctoral Dissertation policy (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-dissertation/>). Upon approval by the students committee that the student's dissertation research and written document is complete, the student must defend the dissertation before all committee members in the "final oral examination," or dissertation defense. The final dissertation defense includes a public presentation of the dissertation research by the candidate and concludes with a period of questioning by the committee. After posing questions to the student about the dissertation work, committee members deliberate and vote on a grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. A grade of Satisfactory requires a majority vote, and may be contingent on the completion of specific revisions by a designated due date.

For more information about the Ph.D. program in History, consult the Graduate Handbook (<https://history.ku.edu/graduate-resources/>)

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

- Formulate a distinctive insight into a historical question and demonstrate analytical rigor in discovering and interpreting data to answer that question.
- Effectively compose and communicate historical, evidence-based arguments in written and oral form to varied audiences.
- Mobilize qualitative and/or quantitative methodologies to access and evaluate historical sources to identify patterns, formulate and support interpretations.
- Recognize, analyze, and contextualize the diversity of human experiences and perspectives across time and space.
- Maintain the highest standards of intellectual integrity in our discipline.

- Develop project management skills to plan and conduct research on a distinctive topic in collaboration with stakeholders and knowledgeable experts.