

Graduate Handbook

Master of Arts in History | Master of Arts in Public History

Carleton University | Department of History | 2026-27

This handbook is intended as a resource for students pursuing a Master of Arts degree in the Department of History at Carleton University. It is intended as a guide only. The Office of Graduate Studies and the Faculty of Arts and Social Science have authority over academic matters, and requirements are subject to change. For updates and further information please see:

<https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/>

<https://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/gradregulations/>

The Handbook addresses the expectations for each of our MA degree options:

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For academic requirements for each of these options (number of credits, mandatory courses, language requirement, etc.), as well as the Collaborative Masters Programs in African Studies, Data Science, Digital Humanities, and Latin American and Caribbean Studies, please consult the Graduate Calendar:

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/gradprograms/>

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Graduate Supervisor, Graduate Committee, and Curriculum Committee

The Graduate Supervisor is a full-time faculty member who is responsible for the administration of the graduate program. They work closely with the Graduate Administrator (Joan White) on the day-to-day management of graduate student matters and graduate courses, and they meet regularly with the Graduate Committee (a group of 4–5 full-time faculty members plus 2 graduate student representatives) to deal with a wide range of issues such as external and internal student awards, admissions, and general program planning. They work closely with the Departmental Curriculum Committee, which is involved in planning, reviewing, and assessing curricular requirements and learning outcomes in the graduate programs.

In the summer before the academic year starts in September, you will receive email correspondence to your assigned Carleton email address from both the Graduate Supervisor and Graduate Administrator about registration procedures and deadlines, orientation sessions, and other departmental events. This correspondence will continue throughout the academic year reminding you of important deadlines and events, and alerting you to research, study, and funding opportunities.

Graduate Administrator

Our Graduate Administrator, Joan White, can be reached by email at: grad.history@carleton.ca. To keep Joan's workload manageable, we ask that students consult this handbook and related Graduate Studies materials before asking for advice on routine matters.

Supervisor(s)

Your supervisor is the most important point of contact you will have with the Department. Students may work with a single supervisor or two co-supervisors. Supervisors are there to advise students on course selection and to provide guidance for your capstone thesis or research essay. Supervisors are also mentors from whom you should solicit advice on academic and professional questions, problems, or concerns. It is important to begin this relationship with your supervisor at the time of registration. Each supervisor works differently and it is important to establish with your supervisor an effective way of working that meets both of your needs. The following University document provides the framework for this relationship: "Graduate Supervision – Responsibilities and Expectations Policy" (<https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/thesis-requirements/graduate-supervision-responsibilities-expectations-policy/>). Graduate students are always encouraged to seek the advice and conversation of faculty members outside of the supervisory team.

Teaching Assistantships

Full-time graduate students in the Department of History usually hold Teaching Assistantships. The department considers this an important aspect of graduate students' professional training, nurturing skills that can be applied in a wide range of career options beyond the university classroom. In our department, many of these positions are attached to first- and second-year undergraduate courses and involve attending lectures and leading discussion groups (usually 25-35 students per group) in addition to doing some course grading and holding weekly office hours. Other positions are more grading intensive and usually involve attending lectures, holding office hours, and grading assignments at various points in a term. Some online courses also require Teaching Assistants, although this is rare. All teaching assistantships are 130 hours per term and are governed by the Collective Agreement found at the CUPE 4600 website: <https://www.cupe4600.ca/>

In the summer before you start, you will be asked to fill out your **TA Profile**. This is a crucial step that must be taken so that we can try to match you with a suitable course to TA. Go to: Carleton Central > TA Management > Graduate TA Management System > Graduate TA profile. The Graduate Supervisor tries to accommodate your preferences when assigning you to courses, but there are myriad factors (such as conflicts with your own course schedule, other students with the same course preferences, etc.) that might see you assigned to a course outside your preferences. Because we usually have more History TAs than positions available in our undergraduate courses, the Dean's office will sometimes place History TAs in other humanities departments. Fall Term TA assignments are normally made in late August. Winter Term TA assignments are normally made in mid-December.

Students who expect to decline their TAsip due to having alternate funding or being away from campus must apply through Carleton Central for a "Leave from Duties" (LFD). If granted, you can postpone your TAsip until a later term, such as the following Summer Term.

Awards

The Department of History places a great deal of emphasis on assisting students in applying for major external awards (SSHRC and OGS), internally funded university awards, and various internally funded departmental awards. Learning how to apply for such awards is an important part of your professionalization and training. In addition to supervisors providing feedback on your applications, the department offers a Fall

workshop in advance of the first deadlines. Graduate Studies also provides workshops where students can receive important advice that complements what supervisors and the department provide. A full list of awards and their deadlines is available through Graduate Studies <http://gradstudents.carleton.ca/awards-and-funding/> and the Department of History website.

Awards deadlines:

- Late September: deadline for internal, university-wide award competitions (details provided on the Graduate Studies website and circulated memo from the Graduate Supervisor)
- November-December: external award competition deadlines, SSHRC and OGS (details provided on the Graduate Studies website)
- Late January: deadline for internal, department-specific awards (see the Department of History website and the memo from the Graduate Supervisor circulated in early January)

Departmental Life

We pride ourselves on being an active department. In addition to the annual Shannon Lecture Series (in the fall) and the student-run Underhill Graduate Student Colloquium (in the spring), we offer a number of special occasions throughout the academic year that are important opportunities for faculty and students to come together. To keep abreast of all the goings-on, see the announcements in our weekly newsletter, and follow us on the platform-formerly-known-as Twitter (@CU_History) and on Facebook. You can view work completed by past MA students on our Graduate Research Showcase: <https://cuhistory.github.io/grads/>

HGSA

The History Graduate Student Association (HGSA) is a student-led and student-oriented organization that allows students to come together, socialize, and strategize. You should expect to hear from the HGSA in the summer about the upcoming academic year, including social events at the start of term, various club teams, and some special academic events all geared around student life in the department. Please see the HGSA page on the department's website <http://carleton.ca/history/graduate/graduate-student-association-hgsa/> and follow them on Twitter @carletonhgsa and on Facebook Carleton HGSA News and Events - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/176536625731663/>

Underhill Graduate Student Colloquium

Each year, History Department graduate students organize the Underhill Graduate Student Colloquium.

- the Colloquium is one of the longest running history graduate student conferences in Canada
- made possible by the Frank H. Underhill donation
- held annually in late February or early March
- planned and chaired exclusively by Carleton History graduate students
- provides an excellent low-pressure opportunity to present your work in a supportive and collegiate environment

Online Profiles

The Department of History hosts profiles of graduate students on the departmental website. This is optional, but it allows students to create a professional online presence. Consult with your supervisor about what to include on your profile, and submit the information to the Undergraduate Administrator at history@carleton.ca. They can be changed at any time.

Language Requirement

All students must demonstrate reading proficiency in a language other than English allied to their program of study. For Canadian history, a reading proficiency in French is usually required. For students in other areas

of study the appropriate language requirement will be determined in conjunction with their supervisor and the Graduate Supervisor. Proficiency is normally demonstrated through completion of the departmental language exam (early **September of Year One**) or a specified number of course credits. The language exam comprises an open-dictionary translation and comprehension exam of set texts, to demonstrate reading ability. Language proficiency requirements must be met by the end of the student's first year of study.

Students who intend to meet this requirement through language courses should look through the course catalogue before registration opens in their first year to find an appropriate course, or ask the Graduate Supervisor for help choosing one. Any language courses taken are considered extra credits and do not count towards the credits required in History for the MA degree.

Generative AI Usage Policy

Please note that in 2026-27, the Graduate Committee, in consultation with the wider Department of History faculty and graduate students, will be developing a set of policies regarding the use of generative AI in research and writing by History graduate students. Until such policies are finalized, students are encouraged to maintain open communication with their supervisor(s) about any generative AI usage in their research. Trying to hide it, in other words, is never the right approach. Students should also familiarize themselves with the University's general academic integrity policy:

<https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/sites/158/Academic-Integrity-Policy-2021.pdf>

It is expected that students have themselves produced all words, sentences, and paragraphs submitted in written coursework assignments as well as in their thesis or MRE and its components.

THE MASTER OF ARTS (M.A.) DEGREE

M.A. in History (THESIS PATHWAY)

Time for Completion: Studies for the thesis option normally require two years of full-time study (5–6 academic terms, which is 20–24 months) to complete, and are achieved through coursework and the completion of a thesis.

Courses: MA (Thesis) students are required to take 4.0 credits (of which 2.0 credits are assigned to the M.A. Thesis itself, written in the Second Year). In the Fall and Winter of First Year, students take 2.0 credits in graduate courses, which includes a mandatory 0.5 credits in HIST 5003 (*Historical Theory and Method*).

Note that as of Fall 2026, Graduate Studies requires MA (Thesis) students to maintain continuous registration each term, including in HIST 5909, the Thesis, beginning in the first semester of Year One. See:

<https://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/gradregulations/#continuousregistration>

	Fall Term	Winter Term	Summer Term
Year 1	• HIST 5003 (0.25 credits) • HIST 5909 - Thesis	• HIST 5003 (0.25 credits) • HIST 5909 - Thesis	• Submit Thesis Proposal (April 30) for review
	• 3 courses (0.5 credits each for a total of 1.5 credits) split over Fall/Winter Terms		• HIST 5909 - Thesis
Year 2	• HIST 5909 - Thesis	• HIST 5909 - Thesis	• HIST 5909 - Thesis (if needed)

Collaborative Specializations: Students in the Thesis pathway may apply to an interdisciplinary Collaborative Specialization in a variety of areas (Accessibility, African Studies, Climate Change, Digital Humanities, Latin American and Caribbean Studies). Typically, this requires that the Thesis research be in the appropriate area of study, and students accepted into the specialization usually have additional coursework to complete. For the exact requirements, see the graduate calendar: <https://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/gradprograms/history/>

Thesis: The thesis is the major research requirement and capstone for the MA (Thesis) option. It is based on extensive research and should advance an original historical interpretation. Students may choose to prepare other kinds of research projects with the support of the supervisor(s) and approval of the graduate committee, but that is a conversation that must begin with the student and supervisor. The traditional research thesis should be between **100–125 pages** including bibliography. Students are expected to provide their supervisor with drafts of their thesis for comments and feedback prior to the final submission, usually doing so chapter-by-chapter. All students and their supervisor(s) will work out a schedule for the thesis, including the preparation of a thesis proposal as part of HIST 5003 in Year One.

Thesis Proposal: Details about the thesis proposal are appended to this handbook. It is normally due at the end of the Winter Term of the first year of study (**April 30**) as part of the required assignments in HIST 5003.

Submission of Thesis: Your thesis will only be accepted for examination after your supervisor has determined it is ready to be examined. In addition to the content of the thesis meeting your supervisor's expectations for examination, the thesis must also conform to the technical requirements established by Graduate Studies: <http://gradstudents.carleton.ca/thesis-requirements/>

Information about Electronic Thesis Deposit (ETD) is available here: <http://gradstudents.carleton.ca/thesis-requirements/electronic/>

The deadline for submission of the thesis is normally early April for students completing in Winter Term, early August for students completing in Summer Term, and early December for students completing in Fall Term. Exact deadlines will be circulated by the Graduate Supervisor in January, May and September of each year. Please notify your supervisor(s) and the Graduate Supervisor at least two weeks in advance of the date you intend to submit your thesis. Your thesis must be received by the examiners at least three weeks in advance of the date of the thesis examination.

Thesis Examining Committee: The Graduate Supervisor determines a Thesis Examining Committee in conjunction with the student's supervisor. The committee is comprised of the supervisor(s), one other faculty member (the "Departmental Examiner"), and one "Internal Examiner" normally drawn from another department at Carleton. Occasionally, the "Internal" examiner is drawn from outside of Carleton. A fourth faculty member serves as committee chair, but their role is purely administrative and they do not assess the thesis. This committee is given a minimum of three weeks to read the thesis in advance of the thesis defence and to provide their assent that the thesis is ready to be defended.

Thesis Defence: All theses are defended before the examining committee. After being formally introduced, the student leaves the room for a few minutes so the committee can discuss the examination process. On return, the student gives a short (7–10 minute) presentation that highlights the thesis and its contributions. At that point each examiner is then given 10–12 minutes to have a one-on-one conversation with the student about the thesis. Questions can be broad or specific, addressing such things as argumentation, selection and use of evidence, theory, method, and historiography (to name only some). In a second round of questioning, the exam is more like a seminar in which one examiner poses a question but both the student and other

examiners can join in the conversation. This second round usually lasts 20-30 minutes. After the second round, the student leaves the room and the committee goes into deliberations about the assessment.

There are two assessments. The first is of the oral defence itself, either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. The second is of the thesis itself, either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. Students who receive a "Satisfactory" will normally be required to do some revisions to the thesis before it is formally deposited to the library and Library and Archives Canada. These revisions can range from the very minor (typos) to major (re-writing of sections, e.g.) and must be approved by the thesis supervisor (or perhaps the examining committee more broadly if revisions are extensive) before the thesis can be formally deposited. If a student receives a grade of "Unsatisfactory" they are normally entitled to make appropriate revisions and to sit the defence a second time. Since these are Graduate Studies regulations, students ought to review the policy of thesis examination hosted there: <https://gradstudents.carleton.ca/wp-content/uploads/Thesis-Examination-Policy-revised-Jan-2022-1.pdf>

Suggested Timetable and Deadlines for Full-Time Study:

Year One (complete all course requirements for degree)

- August: registration and initial contact with supervisor
- First week of September: orientation workshops, first classes, and a meeting with supervisor(s)
- January-February: meet with supervisor to map out path to thesis proposal
- April 30: thesis proposal due as part of HIST 5003
- May-August: Continuous registration in HIST 5909 (MA Thesis), conduct research through summer term

Year Two (research and writing of thesis)

- August: registration (normally only in HIST 5909 MA thesis research and writing)
- September: define a schedule for research, reporting, and meeting with supervisor
- Mid-February: the thesis supervisor and chair of the department should be informed two weeks prior of the intent to submit your thesis for examination.
- March – if finishing in Winter Term, apply for graduation (you will receive reminders from Graduate Studies and Graduate Administrator, but this is the student's responsibility)
- April: if finishing in Winter Term, your thesis must be approved by your supervisor and submitted in examinable form by April 1 in order to meet deadlines for the Spring (June) Convocation. Precise deadlines will be circulated by the Graduate Supervisor. See instructions and thesis checklist on the Graduate Studies website
- July: if finishing in Summer Term, your thesis must be approved by your supervisor and submitted in examinable form by late July in order to meet deadlines for the Fall (October) Convocation. Precise deadlines will be circulated by the Graduate Supervisor. See instructions and thesis checklist on the Graduate Studies website
- August – if finishing in Summer Term, apply for graduation (you will receive reminders from Graduate Studies and Graduate Administrator, but this is the student's responsibility)

M.A. in History (RESEARCH ESSAY PATHWAY)

Time for Completion: Studies for the Master's Research Essay (MRE) option normally require one year (3 full academic terms, 12 months) and are achieved through coursework and the completion of an MRE.

	Fall Term	Winter Term	Summer Term
Year 1	• HIST 5003 (0.25 credits)	• HIST 5003 (0.25 credits) • HIST 5900 (0.5 credits)	• Submit Thesis Proposal (April 30) for review
	• 4 courses (0.5 credits each for a total of 2.0 credits) split over Fall/Winter Terms		• HIST 5908 – MA Research Essay

Collaborative Specializations: Students in the Research Essay pathway may apply to an interdisciplinary Collaborative Specialization in a variety of areas (Accessibility, African Studies, Climate Change, Data Science, Latin American and Caribbean Studies). Typically, this requires that the MRE research be in the appropriate area of study, and students accepted into the specialization usually have additional coursework to complete. For the exact requirements, see the graduate calendar:

<https://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/gradprograms/history/>

MRE: The MRE is the major research requirement and capstone for the MA (MRE) pathway. It is based on focused research and should advance an original historical interpretation with the rough equivalent of a scholarly journal article. It is presented as an essay of between 40-60 pages including bibliography. Students may choose to prepare other kinds of research projects with the support of the supervisor(s) and approval of the graduate committee, but that is a conversation that must begin with the student and supervisor. Students are expected to meet with their supervisors to work out a schedule, and then provide their supervisor with drafts of their essay for comments and feedback prior to the final submission. MRE students take HIST 5900 in the Winter term, which is a course designed for students to prepare their proposals and begin substantial research in order to complete their MRE in the Spring / Summer session. All students and their supervisor(s) will work out a schedule for the MRE, including the preparation of a proposal as part of HIST 5003 in Year One.

MRE Proposal: Details about the proposal are appended to this handbook. It is normally due at the end of the Winter Term of the first year of study (**April 30**) as part of the required assignments in HIST 5003.

Submission of MRE: Your MRE will only be accepted for examination after your supervisor has determined it is ready to be examined. A copy of the MRE is submitted to both the Graduate Supervisor and the Graduate Administrator. See below for deadlines.

MRE Assessment: please see below, p. 9.

Suggested Timetable and Deadlines for Full-Time Study:

Year One (complete all course requirements for degree)

- August: registration and initial contact with supervisor
- First week of September: orientation workshops, first classes, and ideally a meeting with supervisor(s)
- January: first week of classes, students meet with their supervisor in the context of HIST 5900 to begin directed secondary and primary research on the MRE topic and preparation of the proposal
- April 30: proposal due (although we encourage these to be done as early as possible in the term)
- May-July: writing and completion of the MRE
- August: your supervisor-approved MRE must be submitted in examinable form in early August in order to qualify for graduation in the Fall (October) Convocation. Precise submission deadlines will be circulated by the Graduate Supervisor. See instructions and thesis checklist on the Graduate Studies website.

- Please notify your supervisor(s) and the Graduate Supervisor at least two weeks in advance of the date you intend to submit your MRE.

M.A. in Public History

Time for Completion: Studies for the MA in Public History normally require two years (5-6 academic terms, 20-24 months) to complete and are pursued by coursework, internship, and the completion of a major research essay / project.

Year 1 (3.0 credits over 3 terms)

	Fall Term	Winter Term	Summer Term
Public History MA Students	HIST 5003 (0.25 credits) HIST 5700 (0.5 credits)	HIST 5003 (0.25 credits)	HIST 5703 (0.5 credits) - Internship
	1.5 credits (3 courses) over Fall/Winter Term minimum (see note).		
Public History MA Students with Collaborative Specialization in Digital Humanities	HIST 5003 (0.25 credits) HIST 5700 (0.5 credits) DIGH 5000 (0.5 credits) DIGH 5800 (0.0 credits)	HIST 5003 (0.25 credits) DIGH 5800 (0.0 credits)	
	1.0 credits (2 courses) over Fall/Winter Terms minimum (see note).		

Year 2 (2.0 credits over 2 terms)

	Fall Term	Winter Term	Summer Term
Public History MA Students	HIST 5908 (1.0 credit) – MA Research Essay / Project 1.0 credits (2 courses) taken in either or both terms.		If not completed by April, the summer term can be used to complete HIST 5908.
Public History MA Students with Collaborative Specialization in Digital Humanities	HIST 5908 (1.0 credit) – MA Research Essay / Project (must be related to Digital Humanities) 1.0 credits (2 courses) taken in either or both terms.		

NOTE: As part of their course work over the two years, students are required to complete one (0.5 credit) HIST course that is NOT designated as public history. They must complete a minimum of 1.5 credits in Public History electives (1.0 credits if in the Digital Humanities collaborative specialization). For complete details on these requirements, see the graduate calendar:

<https://calendar.carleton.ca/grad/gradprograms/history/>

MRE: The MRE is the major research requirement and capstone for the MA MRE option. It is based on focused research and should advance an original historical interpretation with the rough equivalent of a scholarly journal article. It is normally presented as an essay of between 40-60 pages including bibliography. Students may choose to prepare other kinds of research projects with the support of the supervisor(s) and

approval of the graduate committee but that is a conversation that must begin with the student and supervisor. Students are expected to provide their supervisor with drafts of their essays for comments and feedback prior to the final submission. Each student and their supervisor(s) will work out a schedule for their research, including the preparation of a MRE proposal as part of HIST 5003.

MRE Proposal: Details about the proposal are appended to this handbook. It is normally due at the end of the Winter Term of the first year of study (**April 30**) as part of the required assignments in HIST 5003.

Internship: The internship is normally a paid position in a public history (broadly defined) position that offers the student professional experience in the field and also a summer income. As set by the university, during the internships students must be registered in the course (HIST 5703) and pay regular, full-time tuition. Students who hold an external award, SSHRC or OGS, are permitted to hold that award during their internship. The instructor for HIST 5703 will help to facilitate the process, which will begin in the Fall term, but it can take until the end of April for positions to be confirmed. These are normally held in Ottawa, but students may take up available positions outside of Ottawa if they meet the criteria for an internship and the student understands that there is no extra funding for accommodation while employed beyond the normal salary for the position. If you are interested in working outside of Ottawa, please notify your supervisor and the internship coordinator as soon as possible, ideally early in the Fall term, as it takes more time to find and arrange such positions.

Suggested Timetable and Deadlines for Full-Time Study:

Year One (do most course requirements for degree)

- August: registration and first contact with supervisor
- First week of September: orientation workshops, first classes, and ideally a meeting with supervisor(s)
- January-February: meet with supervisor to map out path to thesis proposal; internal, department-specific awards; begin applications for Internships with support of Co-ordinator of M.A. in Public History Program
- April 30: proposal due
- May-August: Internship

Year Two (research and writing of MRE, plus 0.5 or 1.0 credits of coursework)

- August: registration
- September: define a schedule for research, reporting, and meeting with supervisor(s)
- March: if completing in Winter Term, apply for graduation (you will receive reminders from Graduate Studies and History's Graduate Administrator, but this is the student's responsibility)
- April: if completing in Winter Term, your supervisor-approved MRE must be submitted in examinable form in order to qualify for graduation in the Spring (June) Convocation. See instructions and thesis checklist on the Graduate Studies website.
- August: if completing in Summer Term, your supervisor-approved MRE must be submitted in examinable form in order to qualify for graduation in the Fall (October) Convocation. See instructions and thesis checklist on the Graduate Studies website.
- August: if completing in Summer Term, apply for graduation (you will receive reminders from Graduate Studies and Graduate Administrator, but this is the student's responsibility)

MRE Submission and Assessment

The deadline for submission of the MRE each year is normally around April 15 for students completing in Winter Term, around August 15 for students completing in Summer Term, and around December 1 for students completing in Fall Term. Exact deadlines will be circulated by the Graduate Supervisor in January,

May and September of each year. Submission dates are designed to allow a minimum of two weeks for examiners to assess the MRE and for potential revisions to be completed before university deadlines for the submission of grades. Any submissions after the official submission date cannot be guaranteed to be assessed in time and another term of registration may be required if a final grade cannot be submitted prior to the university deadline.

Submission of MRE: Your MRE will only be accepted for examination after your supervisor has determined it is ready to be examined. Students are required to inform their supervisor(s) and the Graduate Supervisor of the date they intend to submit their MRE at a minimum of two weeks in advance of the intended submission date. A copy of the MRE is submitted to both the Graduate Supervisor and the Graduate Administrator.

MRE Examining Committee: The student's supervisor determines an MRE examining committee in conjunction with the Graduate Supervisor. The committee is comprised of the supervisor(s) and two other faculty members to make a total of three (or four in the case of co-supervision).

Assessment: The examining committee will meet online or in person to determine a letter grade for the MRE. The examining committee will also determine what (if any) revisions, are required prior to the final submission. The supervisor(s) will produce a report for the Graduate Supervisor that clearly outlines the grade, any required revisions, and a short commentary about the work gathered from the committee. The Graduate Supervisor will be responsible for approving the report and conveying its contents to the student. Individual committee members may, at their discretion, pass on comments, copy editing, or notes to the supervisor that would assist the student for their future consideration.

Students may, in consultation with their supervisor or co-supervisors, opt to meet with the examining committee directly. Students who wish to exercise this option must inform the Graduate Supervisor at least two weeks in advance of the departmental submission deadline. The assessment meeting will be chaired by the Graduate Supervisor or their delegate. At the meeting, the student will open with a brief statement of (around 5 minutes) about their work, followed by a seminar-style open discussion with the examiners. The presentation and discussion will normally last for around one hour. The student's performance during the meeting is not itself subject to assessment. The assessors will then move in camera to complete the MRE report (as outlined above).

Final Submission In all cases, a formal grade will only be submitted once the student has completed any required revisions and submitted the final, supervisor-approved, revised MRE to the Graduate Supervisor, the Graduate Administrator, and the Chair of the Underhill Committee. The final submission must take place prior to the graduation grade deadlines set by the university.

APPENDIX: MA PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Objectives: The purpose of the proposal is to identify the research questions, scholarly literature, and primary sources related to the goals of your research project. A proposal is part of a much broader process of questioning, investigating, refining questions, re-investigating, and writing, writing, writing. A proposal is also a point of departure, so while it needs to provide a solid foundation from which to pursue your research, it should also be focused on raising informed, smart questions and on providing some sense of where you will find answers (and, inevitably, some more new questions).

Expectations: A good proposal makes all of its elements fit together. Your topic, research questions, evidence, research methods, and theoretical perspectives are all brought into focus as part of a larger

whole. The proposal requires both craft and skill: it needs to be specific and focused, yet also synthesize a range of literatures. It also requires time, especially in identifying evidence in the library and archives. Unless circumstances prevent you from doing so, in which case you need to come speak with your supervisor(s) immediately, it is critical that you spend some time reading / viewing / listening with primary sources. Only with some experience with those sources can you speak to questions of method and begin to get a sense of which scholarly literatures (historiographical and theoretical) will be most useful. Remember that the Proposal is a kind of progress report: it is understood that your research questions, sources, etc. will change and mature as you enter into the research and writing stages of your project.

Format: 4-5 pages double-spaced, not including bibliography, Times Roman 12-point font, Word document (not PDF).

Elements: While these are the key elements of a proposal, how you choose to tackle each and in what order (other than #1), will reflect your own sensibilities. The page counts for each element are also suggestive rather than determinative, although please do NOT exceed the 4-5 page range (not including bibliography).

- 1) An introduction to the topic, providing some necessary historical context, and a statement indicating your specific interests. Approx. 1 page.
- 2) A discussion of some of the key scholarly works related to your topic that identifies interpretive patterns, major questions, and the kinds of evidence, theoretical perspectives, and concepts which inform the literature. 1-2 pages.
- 3) A clear, concise statement about the research questions you wish to pose of your topic, how these questions relate to the literature, and an identification of the kinds of primary sources, method, and theory with which you will work in order to answer those questions. 1-2 pages.
- 4) A bibliography, broken into primary and secondary sources. Approximately 2-3 pages; try to identify the most important works at this stage; the bibliography will grow and evolve with the research process.

Process: It is important to communicate with your supervisor about expectations and a timeline for completing this milestone. You should build in the necessary time for revisions and corrections. The department's expectation is that the final version of the proposal, approved by your thesis or MRE supervisor, will be forwarded by your supervisor to the Graduate Supervisor by **30 April** so you should plan to have most of this work finished by early April. Once the proposal has been received by the Graduate Supervisor, it will be sent to a faculty member for review and comment.