



Academic Year 2025-2026

Dietrich College
Department of History

Doctoral Student Handbook

Degree Programs Covered by This Handbook:
History Ph.D.

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SECTION 1: Welcome & Introduction

As the Director of Graduate Studies, I am pleased to welcome you to Carnegie Mellon's Department of History. This handbook is intended to clarify departmental policies concerning graduate study. It is not a comprehensive guide to University policies that may affect graduate students, and it does not supersede any such policies.

While this handbook is specific to your academic experience in the department, it is just one element of the Graduate Student Handbook Suite. There are several other resources within the suite that you should consult when needed:

- The University-Wide Graduate Student Handbook (Available from the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs)
- *The Word* Student Handbook

Benno Weiner

Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies
Department of History

SECTION 2: Program Vision, Mission, and Values

2.1: Vision and Mission

- The Department of History conceives its primary missions as falling into six broad categories, all of vital importance:
 - contributing centrally to humanistic education and the internationalization of learning at Carnegie Mellon;
 - seeking excellence in undergraduate instruction by emphasizing breadth of learning, command of basic research skills, precision in writing, and facility in oral communication;
 - developing innovative undergraduate majors, all with an interdisciplinary orientation, in Social and Political History; Global Studies; and Ethics, History and Public Policy;
 - sponsoring a strong doctoral program that is based on the national, thematic and methodological strengths of the faculty and informed by broad transnational and global perspectives;
 - fostering an adventuresome intellectual climate that nurtures and rewards individual and collaborative scholarship, within and across disciplines;
 - and sustaining a commitment to diversity in the recruitment, mentoring, and retention of faculty, graduate students, and staff.

SECTION 3: Degrees Offered

The department's graduate program only admits students for the Doctor of Philosophy in History. However, the department bestows a Master's Degree in History en route to the Ph.D. after the successful completion of four semesters of course work and the production of a research paper.

SECTION 4: Departmental Personnel

- Dietrich College Dean: Richard A. Scheines, BH 154H, scheines@cmu.edu
- History Department Head: Christopher J. Phillips, BH 240E, cjp1@cmu.edu
- History Department Associate Head, Ema Grama, BH 239B, egrama@andrew.cmu.edu
- Director of Graduate Studies: Benno Weiner, BH 242A, bweiner@andrew.cmu.edu
- Director of Undergraduate Studies: Ricky Law, BH 238B, rlaw@andrew.cmu.edu
- Graduate Advisor: Aidan Beatty BH 240A, aidanbea@andrew.cmu.edu
- Business Manager: Natalie Taylor, BH 240D, nstaylor@andrew.cmu.edu
- Undergraduate Program Manager: Alexandra Garnhart-Bushakra, BH 240G, agarnhaR@andrew.cmu.edu
- Department Coordinator: Victoria Donahoe, BH 240B, vdonahoe@andrew.cmu.edu
- Administrative Coordinator: Olivia Cunnally, BH240F, ocunnall@andrew.cmu.edu

SECTION 5: Departmental Resources

The History Department is located in Baker Hall 240. The department phone number is 412.268.2880. Fax number is 412.268.1019. The department website address is www.cmu.edu/dietrich/history/. Computer technical support for technology owned by the university is available through <https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/faculty-staff/computing/index.html>. Departmental Mailboxes, as well as copy machines and scanners for official department use, are also located in Baker Hall 240. Graduate students are assigned cubicle space in Baker 225C. This is open daily and requires a key outside of working hours. Please report any damages to the cubicle space or any need for new office supplies to Graduate Advisor, Aidan Beatty. Please report all other concerns to the department's business manager, Natalie Taylor.

SECTION 6: Advising

6.1: Role of an Advisor and Advisor Assignments

Communication & Meetings

Advisor and advisee should agree on the following, normally communicated by the advisor in the first semester of the advising relationship:

- The best way to communicate (e.g., email, text, phone).
- The acceptable formats for meeting (e.g., in person, on campus, remote).
- The expectations for what an appropriate time frame would be to receive a response to professional questions, feedback on writing, letters of recommendation, and general communication.
- Times the advisor is regularly unavailable.
- A rough schedule of regular meetings; the frequency and agenda of these meetings should be determined in advance by both advisor and advisee.
- The agreed-upon “next steps” after each advising/mentorship meeting.

Meeting Programmatic Milestones

- Advisor should aid advisee in meeting and understanding programmatic milestones such as coursework, qualifying exams, committee creation, prospectus, dissertation writing, etc.
- Advisee and advisor should regularly update the DGS of programmatic milestones, with everyone cc'd to ensure accountability.

Exam and Dissertation Committee Formation, Function, and Resolving Committee

Conflict

- The advisor should assist advisee with choosing potential committee members and aid advisee in resolving conflict with any committee members.
 - If the conflict involves the advisor themselves, then the advisee should consult the Director of Graduate Studies and/or Department Head, who will help mediate the situation. If the advisor is the DGS, the student will first approach the Department Head.
- If the conflict requires the advisee to change their committee or exam fields, then the advisor and the advisee will collectively determine how to respond.
 - If the unresolvable conflict involves the advisor, then the advisee will consult with the Director of Graduate Studies (and, if appropriate, Department Head).
- Advisee has the right to find another advisor, as long as another advisor is willing and able to advise a project, without any prejudice or retaliation for changing their advisor. If no other advisor is willing to advise the project then the student will work with the DGS to resolve the conflict with the advisor, find a new project with a suitable advisor, or transition out of the program. In the event that the Director of Graduate Studies is the student's advisor, the Department Head will facilitate the change of advisor.
- Dissertation committees will ideally meet together as a group once a year to discuss advisee progress; depending on circumstances, it may make more sense for the advisor and/or advisee to communicate progress with committee members in lieu of meeting.

- Advisor and advisee should discuss and set revisable goals for dissertation defense and graduation dates.

Funding

- Advisor and advisee should discuss both internal and external funding opportunities (fellowships, grants, etc.) at least once a year.
- Funding conversations should also tie in the programmatic milestones and timelines (e.g., finishing grants require application long before actually finishing; research grants often before starting much of the research).
 - The normal expectation is that advisors will provide letters of support and guidance throughout the application process, as long as they are given sufficient advance notice.

Feedback

- Advisor and advisee should agree upon what form and how often the advisee will receive feedback regarding overall progress and other professional activities.
- Advisor and advisee should agree upon what kind of feedback the advisee will receive at each stage in the drafting, editing, and revising process as well as a time frame for when to expect feedback for each deliverable.
 - Feedback will depend on the situation but the advisee should expect extensive feedback on milestone documents (prospectus, dissertation chapter drafts, etc.).
- Advisor and advisee should determine how far ahead of time the advisee circulates work to other committee members, and under which circumstances it should be circulated.
 - They will also determine the order in which the advisee should send work to the various faculty members as well as how much time is needed by each of the members to provide feedback.
- Advisor and advisee should discuss how to manage feedback from multiple committee members.
 - If one committee member's feedback conflicts with another, then it is the advisor's responsibility to work with the student to figure out a compromise that ensures the advisee's progress toward programmatic milestones is not impeded.

6.2: Advisor/Advisee Collaboration

Professional Goals

- If an advisee has identified either short or long-term professional goals (e.g., job market, publications, fellowships, etc.), their faculty advisor should discuss any suggested or required steps, resources, and/or training necessary to accomplish said goals.
- Advisor and advisees should discuss professional development within the department beyond required milestones and teaching (e.g., graduate student representative roles, RA and TA positions, awards, teaching an additional course, etc.).

- Advisor and advisee should discuss professional conferences. Advisor should help advisee identify conferences, caucuses, and other professional organizations that will help advance advisee's scholarship and career development.

Skill Development

- Advisor and advisee should meet at the beginning of each year to identify the skills and abilities the advisee will focus on developing during the upcoming year.
 - These could be but are not limited to writing, teaching, researching, mentoring, developing secondary language proficiency, and additional training experiences such as workshops or internships.
- Advisor should discuss the importance of publication and presentation, disciplinary norms around authorship and co-authorship as well as strategies for publication and the professional presentation of their work.
- Advisor should assist advisee with identifying publishable materials and potential venues for publication and presentation that align with the advisee's professional goals. Should the advisee wish to do an internship, this should be discussed with the advisor to ensure it does not delay overall progress and fits with their professional goals. Advisors cannot be responsible for finding advisees internships.

Teaching

- Advisor should be available for teaching observations upon the invitation of the advisee, particularly those in their third year or later in the program. These observations are not meant to be evaluative in nature but rather serve as a constructive and supportive conversation about teaching practices and strategies.
 - The purpose of these observations is to aid the advisee in their professional development, especially concerning letters of recommendation and preparation for the job market.
- Should advisee wish to teach a standalone course, the advisor should work with them to ensure such a course does not delay their overall progress and fits with their professional goals.

Individual Development Plans (IDPs) are meant to promote professional and personal growth by formally documenting goals and facilitating dialogue, collaboration, and accountability between advisors and advisees. Carnegie Mellon has developed a set of templates that can be used by doctoral students, postdocs, and their advisors to create an Individual Development Plan:

<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/professional-development/index.html>

6.3: Review/Redress of Academic Conflicts

Normally, conflicts are handled via the advisor and/or the Director of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Advisor or the Department head. If additional steps are necessary, students can refer to the

Summary of Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures for additional policy:
<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/policies/appeal-grievance-procedures.html>

SECTION 7: Doctoral Degree Requirements

7.1: Residency Requirements and Expected Timeline

As outlined in the Doctoral Student Status Policy, <https://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/doctoral-student-status.html>, students will complete all requirements for the Ph.D. degree within a maximum of ten years from original matriculation as a doctoral student. Once this time-to-degree limit has lapsed, the person may resume work towards a doctoral degree only if newly admitted to a currently offered doctoral degree program under criteria determined by that program. Under extraordinary circumstances, such as leave of absence, military or public service, family or parental leave, or temporary disability, a school or college may, upon the relevant department's recommendation and with the written approval of the dean, defer the lapse of All But Dissertation status for a period commensurate with the duration of that interruption. Students, who are pursuing the Ph.D. degree as part-time students for all semesters of their program, as approved by their program, may also appeal to their program or department for extension of the time to degree limit.

In the Department of History, ABD status is attained upon approval of the prospectus. All doctoral candidates are required to be ABD In Residence in the semester in which their Ph.D. is to be conferred, and may be required to pay tuition on five units of study. Please refer to the Doctoral Student Process Flowchart and the All But Dissertation Status Detail Chart under Student Records here: <https://www.cmu.edu/es/forms/index.html>.

The university requires Ph.D. students to have a minimum of one year in residency on a CMU campus. In the Department of History, the coursework component of the degree extends this residency requirement to two years.

U.S. government regulations require F-1 and J-1 international students to be enrolled in an in-person degree program, with in-person expectation coursework. Even though this immigration requirement is specifically for international students, residency requirements in a degree program must be consistent for both international and domestic students.

7.2: Registration Process

Except for the Fall Semester of their first year, students are responsible for registering for courses for the upcoming semester. Registration is completed via this website: <https://www.cmu.edu/hub/>

and is typically completed one semester in advance (during Fall semester for the following Spring semester, for example). The Graduate Coordinator or the Graduate Director will communicate with all students before the registration process begins in order to clarify the required courses for the upcoming semester and to provide suggestions for electives. In addition, it is recommended that all students discuss their planned courses with their advisors. Students are encouraged to reach out to the Graduate Coordinator or the Graduate Director with any questions about the registration process. Generally, questions about how to register should be directed to the Graduate Coordinator. Questions about which courses to register for should be directed to the Graduate Director.

After successful completion of course requirements (usually after four semesters) students register for the course, "History Prospectus," during their third year of residence. They are expected to meet the requirements for both the Oral Examination and the Dissertation Prospectus during the third year. After successful defense of the Dissertation Prospectus, students register for the course, "History Dissertation."

7.3: Required Units for Degree Attainment

The basic requirements for the doctoral program are as follows:

1. Two years of graduate-level coursework with satisfactory grades, for a total of 150 units (12.5 courses) distributed across the required courses and electives
2. Oral Examination successfully completed (no later than the end of the fifth semester)
3. Dissertation Prospectus approval (no later than the end of the sixth semester)
4. Doctoral Dissertation approval (by the end of the tenth year)

7.4: Core Courses

Required courses: 8.5

- Research Seminar (two semesters)
- Four thematic seminar courses (one per semester)
- Major Exam Field Reading Course (normally taken in the fourth semester)
- Combined Undergraduate-Graduate Survey Course
- Mini course on instruction [or equivalent pedagogical training as approved by DGS]

The Research Seminar

The Research Seminar is a critical part of the graduate program. Here students develop and master the skills in research, analysis, and writing that are necessary before undertaking a doctoral dissertation. Students are encouraged to begin to identify a suitable dissertation topic and produce an original article-length contribution based on primary source research. Above all, students must demonstrate in the Research Seminar that they are capable of conducting research in primary sources and using these sources to develop new historical knowledge. The Graduate Studies

Committee views a student's performance in the Research Seminar as perhaps the single best predictor of success in designing and completing a doctoral dissertation.

Students will be registered members of the research seminar for two semesters. The Research Seminar will require each student to complete a research paper by the conclusion of the second semester. The Seminar itself will focus initially around problem definition, move toward primary source location and evaluation, and evolve toward preliminary presentation and critique of students' research products. The Research Seminar instructor will work closely with students' advisors to keep them well informed of their student's progress in the seminar and solicit their impressions of each student's work.

7.5: Electives

Elective Courses: 4

- Additional directed readings with individual faculty members
- Workshop in Digital History
- Workshop in Public and Applied History
- Quantitative Methods
- Departmental elective courses
- Additional undergraduate courses with an added graduate component
- Graduate Courses in other CMU departments or schools
- Graduate Courses at University of Pittsburgh or other area universities

7.6: Department Policy on Double Counting Courses

The history department normally does not allow courses to be double counted but students may petition the Graduate Studies Committee for exceptions should circumstances warrant.

7.7: Department Policy for Courses Outside the Department/College

The History department normally allows for courses at the graduate level taken outside the department or college to count as elective courses. Should students wish to take them to satisfy a required course, they should consult with their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies in advance.

7.8: Course Exemptions

Exceptions and exemptions to course requirements will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the Graduate Studies Committee”

7.9: Protocol for Evaluation of Transfer Credit

While the Department of History's Ph.D. program does allow students to take courses at the University of Pittsburgh and other PCHE members, we do not normally accept transfer credits earned before a student entered our Ph.D. program. The Department does not accept transfer credit from non-PCHE members without *prior* approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, following submission of the proposed course(s) description, university, instructor, and syllabus. The DGS, in consultation with the Graduate Studies Committee, has authority for accepting or rejecting transfer credit. No pass/fail graded course, or course receiving less than a "B" grade, is eligible for departmental credit, and such credit can typically only be used as an "elective" within course requirements.

7.10: Teaching Requirements/Opportunities

The department of history does not have a teaching requirement, but students normally serve as Teaching Assistants and Graders as a condition of their financial package.

Graduate students are required to have a certain level of fluency in English before they can instruct in Pennsylvania, as required by the English Fluency in Higher Education Act of 1990. Through this Act, all institutions of higher education in the state are required to evaluate and certify the English fluency of all instructional personnel, including teaching assistants and interns. The full university policy can be reviewed [here](#).

The fluency of all instructional personnel will be rated by Language Support in the Student Academic Success Center to determine at what level of responsibility the student can TA. In addition to administering the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) Test (a mandatory screening test for any non-native speaker of English), Language Support in the Student Academic Success Center helps teaching assistants who are non-native English speakers develop fluency and cultural understanding to teach successfully at Carnegie Mellon. Visit the [Student Academic Success Center](#) website for additional information.

Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence & Educational Innovation

<https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/>

The Eberly Center offers a wide variety of confidential, consultation services and professional development programs to support graduate students as teaching assistants or instructors of record during their time at Carnegie Mellon University and as future faculty members at other institutions. Regardless of one's current or future teaching context and duties, Eberly's goal is to disseminate evidence-based teaching strategies in ways that are accessible and actionable. Programs and services include campus-wide Graduate Student Instructor Orientation events and our Future

Faculty Program, both of which are designed to help participants be effective and efficient in their teaching roles. The Eberly Center also assists departments in creating and conducting customized programs to meet the specific needs of their graduate student instructors. Specific information about Eberly Center support for graduate students is found at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/graduatestudentsupport/>

7.11: Research Requirements/Opportunities

Grading system for research

Research conducted as part of study will be graded under the same conditions as coursework and dissertation.

Research funding options

As department funds permit, the department provides financial support for student research carried out in conjunction with the Research Seminar.

All graduate students in good academic standing are eligible to apply for small research/travel grants through the Graduate Studies Committee.

The Committee gives preference to graduate students who are ABD, who are making good progress in research and writing, and who can demonstrate prior efforts to receive university (e.g., Graduate Small project Help, or GuSH) and/or external grants:

<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/funding/index.html>

University funds are also available to help pay costs of presenting papers at professional conferences: <https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/funding/conference.html>
<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/funding/professional-engagement.html>

You may use Department grants to support research trips (domestic and international); expenses associated with presenting a paper at a professional conference; and miscellaneous research-related expenses (fees to enter archives, digital reproductions, photocopies, etc.).

Department grants are intended to supplement the paid, non-teaching semester(s) provided to each graduate student upon successful defense of her/his/their dissertation prospectus. Students should plan to complete the bulk of their research during the non-teaching semester(s).

Procedure for Applying for Departmental Funds:

1. Discuss the research/travel for which you are seeking a grant and your proposed budget with your faculty advisor(s).
2. Complete the short application form available from the Graduate Director or Graduate Coordinator and submit it via email.

Review of applications by the Graduate Studies Committee: the Graduate Studies Committee reviews applications for Department research funds on a rolling basis throughout the year. The Director of Graduate Studies makes decisions about grant applications up to \$500. The entire committee will review all requests for \$501 and above. In the event the committee is evenly divided, the Director will make the final decision.

GuSH Research Funding is a source of small research grant funds provided by the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) and the Provost's Office and managed by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs. Students can find more information about the application process and deadlines at: <https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/professional-development/research-funding/index.html>

Resources and Regulations Governing Research at Carnegie Mellon

- Office of Sponsored Programs
<https://www.cmu.edu/osp/>
- Office of Research Integrity & Compliance
<https://www.cmu.edu/research-compliance/index.html>
- Intellectual Property Policy
<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/administrative-and-governance/intellectual-property.html>
- Policy on Restricted Research
<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/research/restricted-research.html>
- Human Subjects in Research Policy <https://www.cmu.edu/policies/research/human-subjects-in-research.html>

Conference Funding

Conference Funding is a funding application process provided by GSA and the Provost's Office for students, student work groups or groups to attend a conference, whether as a participant or as a presenter. The process is managed by the Graduate Education Office. Students can find more information about the application process and deadlines at: <https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/professional-development/index.html>.

7.12: Internship/Co-op Requirements and Opportunities

Students have the option of completing an approved part-time internship. Internships are not required. Approved internships can be for one semester only. Internships can ordinarily only be taken in a student's fifth or sixth year; a student who wishes to complete an internship at an earlier point must submit a formal request to the Director of Graduate Studies explaining why this internship must be taken at this point in their PhD. No student can complete an approved internship prior to reaching ABD status.

If a student opts to not teach for one semester while completing an internship, the department will cover the costs of the student's tuition, fees, and health insurance, and will provide the usual stipend. The department cannot guarantee an internship nor the availability of any particular internship. All internships for which students are requesting teaching relief or stipendiary support must receive prior approval from the Graduate Studies Committee. The request for approval must clearly state how this proposed internship fits with the student's research interests and/or career goals. Internships that do not meet these goals will not be approved.

International students are required to consult with Office of International Education for eligibility before seeking an internship/co-op or signing an offer contract (required addition to ensure the University is in compliance with immigration laws for F & J status students).

Resources to Explore Potential Internships:

- Faculty Recommendations
- College Career Services
- Career and Professional Development Center

SECTION 8: Dissertation Preparation & Requirements

8.1: PhD Qualifying Exam Requirement

Beginning in the fourth semester, students, in consultation with advisors, will select three fields for the oral examination. The field supervised by the student's advisor (or one of the student's advisors, in the case of co-advisors) will be designated the "major" field, and the student will take a directed readings course with that advisor in the fourth semester in order to complete the reading for the field and produce a ~10,000-word historiographical essay on a topic of mutual agreement. This field will normally have a list of 40-50 books; the other two fields will not have a written component and will involve 30-40 books. Two of the fields will be chosen from either regional/national categories (e.g., Modern Latin America, U.S. post-Civil War; Imperial China, etc.) or analytical approaches (e.g., Social History, Gender, Race, Migration, Disability Studies, etc.). Normally, the third field will be chosen from among Science, Technology, Environment, Health, Medicine, etc., and will involve more than one country or region and cover at least two centuries of time. Some proposed fields may fall under multiple headings. For example, a field in "digital humanities" may be used either as an "analytical" field or as a replacement for a science field, as appropriate to the student's course of study. The final composition will need to be approved by both the primary advisor and the DGS.

Field supervisors are normally chosen from departmental faculty (including lecturers and teaching-track professors), though outside scholars can be brought in to supervise one field with permission of the Graduate Studies Committee. (There is no compensation available for such external examiners.) Each field will have a distinct supervisor except in special cases that receive approval of the Graduate Studies Committee. Supervisors will clearly communicate with students their standards for what constitutes sufficient mastery of the list of books such that students are aware of what is required to receive a “passing” grade on the examination.

No later than the midway point of the fourth semester, students should communicate the preliminary design (i.e., the basic titles and chronological bounds of the fields and the faculty field supervisors) to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Coordinator. The Director will communicate any problems with the choice of fields to the faculty members of the Graduate Studies Committee. The Committee reserves the right to request modifications to the basic design of the fields if they do not conform to the above-stated guidelines. Once a preliminary design is approved, the student’s advisor and the other faculty field supervisors assume responsibility for the student’s development of these fields and for maintaining the department’s objectives for field coherence and breadth. Reading lists should be finalized by the end of the fourth semester to ensure sufficient preparation time prior to the oral exam.

The oral examination will be around two hours in length, and should occur before the midpoint of the fifth semester. The oral examination will be open to the faculty as a whole, and notice of its date, time, and location shall be posted at least one week in advance. The student’s advisor will preside at the oral examination. In the case of multiple advisors, one will be designated (in consultation with the Graduate Director) as the chair for the purpose of the examination. Each field supervisor will be allowed at least thirty minutes to examine the student and to ask questions related to the student’s reading lists. Students should not have access to books or notes during the examination.

After all examiners have completed their questioning, the student and any faculty visitors are asked to leave the room. At this point, the student’s advisor, as chair, will poll the other examiners to determine the outcome of the examination as a whole. The following outcomes are possible: High Pass; Pass; Failure in one field; Failure in two or more fields. The student is informed of the decision as soon as possible.

If the outcome of the Oral Exam is a High Pass or a Pass, then the student should proceed at once to the completion of the required Dissertation Prospectus. If the outcome of the Oral Exam is Failure on one or more fields, then the examiners, in conjunction with the Director of Graduate Studies and the student’s advisor, determine a subsequent course of action for the student. This course of action may include retaking the examination in one or more fields in a timeframe to be determined by the Field Examiner and the Director of Graduate Studies. Students who have failed one or more fields

of the oral exam will be allowed one more opportunity to pass. A second failure on one or more fields will constitute sufficient grounds for a student's dismissal from the program.

8.2: PhD Criteria for Advancement to Candidacy

The Dissertation Prospectus

A dissertation proposal, in the form of a prospectus, should be submitted for approval to a dissertation committee during the sixth semester of study for full-time students.

The prospectus is essentially a statement of intention. Its purpose is to outline in some detail the theoretical, methodological, and substantive dimensions of the dissertation, including the procedures and data sources (archival or otherwise) to be used and a rationale for the structure selected. It represents a highly informed and thoughtful plan about what the dissertation will be and how it will be accomplished.

Students create a prospectus in consultation with their dissertation advisor(s) and members of their dissertation committee. Committees will consist of the advisor(s) and two or three other faculty members, usually chosen from the History faculty at CMU. Occasionally, faculty from other departments at CMU, faculty from other universities, or external experts may be among these members.

Faculty who participated in a particular student's oral exam are often asked to serve on that student's dissertation committee but the student should not assume that field supervisors will also serve as dissertation committee members. It is the responsibility of the student to consult with the dissertation advisor(s) regarding the make-up of the dissertation committee, and to ask faculty members if they are willing and able to serve on the dissertation committee.

As the prospectus nears completion, each candidate, in consultation with the committee and the Director of Graduate Studies, should schedule a date for the oral defense of the prospectus. The prospectus must include a one-paragraph abstract that can be circulated to interested faculty and students for comment. One purpose of the defense is to demonstrate the candidate's ability to translate the proposed historical research into an approved dissertation. Another is to focus collegial attention on the student's research to the end of improving both the research process and the final product. The defense is NOT an examination—committee members should normally agree to proceed to the defense only when the prospectus is acceptable--but rather a discussion with the student's dissertation committee plus any other interested faculty and, where acceptable to the candidate, interested students. At the discretion of the advisor(s), non-committee members may be asked to leave the room at some point during the defense so that the committee can consult confidentially about whether to accept or reject the prospectus. In the rare case of an unacceptable prospectus, students are normally given one more opportunity to make modifications prior to formal acceptance. Once the prospectus is accepted, as evidenced by the submission of the Dissertation

Prospectus Approval Form bearing the signatures of the student’s advisor and the other dissertation prospectus committee members, the student officially enters Ph.D. candidacy (i.e., is “ABD”). Approved prospectuses are kept on file with the Department and may be consulted by students and faculty.

The ABD Status Agreement Form can be found at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/hub/docs/abd-status-agree.pdf>

8.3: PhD Dissertation

Faculty within the Department of History cannot overstate the importance of producing a high-quality doctoral dissertation in a student’s professional development. It is the most important part of the doctoral program and represents the culmination of the entire course of study.

After approval of the prospectus, each student must complete a dissertation that is formally approved by the dissertation committee within ten years of initial matriculation. The style of the dissertation must conform to the Department’s guidelines (available from the Graduate Coordinator) and the Chicago Manual of Style. Additional university regulations for the submission of dissertations can be found at: <https://www.library.cmu.edu/datapub/sc/dissertation/submitting>. Dissertations that do not adhere to these guidelines will not be accepted.

SECTION 9: Department Policies & Protocols

9.1: Petition Procedures

All petitions are handled by the Graduate Studies Committee.

9.2: Department Policy for Withdrawing from a Course

Students taking undergraduate and Master’s level courses must follow the procedures and deadlines for withdrawing from courses as identified on the academic calendar. Information can be found at

<https://www.cmu.edu/hub/registrar/course-changes/index.html>

There is a separate calendar for doctoral level courses.

Students taking undergraduate and Master’s level courses must follow the procedures and deadlines for adding, dropping, or withdrawing from courses as identified on the academic calendar.

Information can be found at

9.3: Requirements for Those Without a Bachelor's Degree in Discipline

The Graduate Studies Committee will determine such requirements on a case-by-case basis.

9.4: Process for Completing a Master's Degree en route to a PhD

The department's graduate program only admits students for the Doctor of Philosophy in History. However, the department bestows a Master's Degree in History en route to the Ph.D. after the successful completion of four semesters of course work and the production of a research paper.

9.5: New Policies / "Grandfather" Policy

When policies are changed because the department believes the new rules offer an improvement, any such changes will be discussed at a meeting with the graduate students. However, students currently enrolled whose degree program is affected by a change in policy may choose to be governed by the older policy that was in place at the time of their matriculation. In case degree requirements are changed and certain courses are no longer offered, the department will try to find some compromise that allows those students to satisfy the original requirements.

9.6: Time Away from Academic Responsibilities

It is important that graduate students do not assume that their time-off follows the academic calendar of courses. Time away from research and teaching obligations is important for students as well as faculty. The Department of History provides a 12-month stipend, however, with the understanding that doctoral students are working full-time towards their degree even when classes are not in session. Students who wish to take time off to such an extent that it may interfere with satisfactory progress towards the degree should discuss their situation with their advisor and/or the Director of Graduate Studies.

University Holidays are also student holidays, and students should consult their faculty if they have challenges with taking time off during University Holidays.

SECTION 10: Grading & Evaluation

10.1: Grading Scale/System

Departmental evaluations encompass faculty assessments of student work in general. Criteria for these assessments include oral and written communication skills, conceptual sophistication, analytical skills, research capabilities, grasp of historiography, ability to think independently, teaching quality, and consistency of performance in the program, among others.

The Carnegie Mellon grade scale is as follows: A+ = 4.33 points; A = 4.0 points; A- = 3.67 points; B+ = 3.33 points; B = 3.0 points; B- = 2.67 points; C+ = 2.33 points; C = 2.0 points; C- = 1.67 points; D+ = 1.33 points; D = 1.0 points; R = Failure

Graduate students in course work should maintain an average of "B" (3.0) or better for all course work in the first two semesters. After the first year, Ph.D. students must maintain at least a 3.33 average or better for all formal courses. These grades are absolute minima for receipt of the master's and doctoral degrees, but they do not guarantee continuation in the program. Students receiving course grades of B or lower should discuss their performance with their instructors. Students whose grade reports contain more than one B (this includes B+s) should take this as a warning sign and consider initiating a discussion on progress with the Director of Graduate Studies.

Incomplete grades: University policy expects that students will complete a course during the academic semester in which the course is taken. However, if the instructor agrees, a grade of "I" (Incomplete) may be given when a student, for reasons beyond her or his control, has been unable to complete the work of a course, but the work completed to date is of passing quality and the grade of Incomplete provides no undue advantage to that student over other students.

In awarding an "I" grade, an instructor must specify the requirements for completing the work and designate a default letter grade in case the student does not follow through. There must be a written agreement between the student and instructor that outlines the specific work that needs to be completed and the deadline by which that work should be submitted in order for the instructor to have the time to assess it and change the grade before the system triggers the default grade (which typically occurs at the end of the following semester). A copy of this written agreement should be provided to the student's primary academic advisor as well as the Director of Graduate Studies.

Students must complete the required course work no later than the end of the following academic semester or sooner if required by the instructor. The instructor must record the permanent grade by the last day of the examination period of that following semester, or the Registrar will administratively assign the default grade. Graduate students should also note that the Graduate Studies Committee will be unfavorably impressed by students having unresolved incompletes or more than one incomplete in a semester. Students carrying Incompletes may register as prospectus candidates for one semester. During that semester, however, students must satisfy all Incompletes. Otherwise, they may be required to withdraw from the program.

After the student has completed all coursework, the student's major advisor(s) is the principal and primary faculty member who consults with the student, receives information, and advises the Graduate Studies Committee about the student's progress. In keeping with this role, the student's advisor is responsible for timely and accurate reporting to the Graduate Studies Committee on the student's progress. In addition, however, the student is required each spring to fill out a yearly progress report (form available from and due to the Graduate Coordinator).

The Graduate Studies Committee will, in general, recommend to the Department Head for financial aid only those students who are making satisfactory progress in research and, for those students who are twelve months beyond the defense of their dissertation prospectus, only those who have begun to produce finished chapters (or drafts of chapters) on a regular basis. The GSC's minimal standard for the production of "finished chapters (or drafts of chapters) on a regular basis" is two chapters per year.

The entire Graduate Student grading policy can be found at:

<http://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/grading.html>

10.2: Department Policy on Grades for Retaking a Course

Ordinarily classes cannot be retaken, except by special permission of the Graduate Studies Committee.

10.3: Department Policy on Pass/Fail, Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

Some courses, such as directed readings, may be taken pass/fail and count for departmental credit, but normally required courses must be letter graded. Students whose work is persistently below the level demanded of a practicing member of the historical profession will be notified of this deficiency (even if the work is judged acceptable for course credit). This deficiency must be corrected if the student is to remain in the program.

10.4: Department Policy for Incompletes

University policy expects that students will complete a course during the academic semester in which the course is taken. However, if the instructor agrees, a grade of "I" (Incomplete) may be given when a student, for reasons beyond her or his control, has been unable to complete the work of a course, but the work completed to date is of passing quality and the grade of Incomplete provides no undue advantage to that student over other students.

In awarding an "I" grade, an instructor must specify the requirements for completing the work and designate a default letter grade in case the student does not follow through. There must be a written

agreement between the student and instructor that outlines the specific work that needs to be completed and the deadline by which that work should be submitted in order for the instructor to have the time to assess it and change the grade before the system triggers the default grade (which typically occurs at the end of the following semester). A copy of this written agreement should be provided to the student's primary academic advisor as well as the Director of Graduate Studies.

Students must complete the required course work no later than the end of the following academic semester or sooner if required by the instructor. The instructor must record the permanent grade by the last day of the examination period of that following semester, or the Registrar will administratively assign the default grade. Graduate students should also note that the Graduate Studies Committee will be unfavorably impressed by students having unresolved incompletes or more than one incomplete in a semester. Students carrying Incompletes may register as prospectus candidates for one semester. During that semester, however, students must satisfy all Incompletes. Otherwise, they may be required to withdraw from the program.

10.5: Independent Study/Directed Research

A directed readings course normally involves meeting regularly to discuss an agreed-upon list of books and/or articles, equivalent in difficulty and workload to a normal semester-long graduate-level course. Written assignments may or may not be a component of the course. These courses are graded and students and faculty should agree in writing upon expectations in advance. Frequently students take Directed Readings courses with faculty who serve as field supervisors for the oral exam, but this is not a requirement for a Directed Readings course in general, nor should it be assumed that a faculty member who participates in a Directed Readings course will serve as a field supervisor.

10.6: GPA Requirements and QPA Requirements for Graduation

Graduate students in course work should maintain an average of "B" (3.0) or better for all course work in the first two semesters. After the first year, Ph.D. students must maintain at least a 3.33 average or better for all formal courses. These grades are absolute minima for receipt of the master's and doctoral degrees, but they do not guarantee continuation in the program. Students receiving course grades of B or lower should discuss their performance with their instructors. Students whose grade reports contain more than one B (this includes B+s) should take this as a warning sign and consider initiating a discussion on progress with the Director of Graduate Studies.

10.7: Satisfactory Academic Standing

Beyond the grades received in courses, the Department's criteria for satisfactory progress require that full-time Ph.D. students meet a range of specific milestones in a timely manner:

- Completing all course work (which includes the resolution of any outstanding “Incomplete” grades) at an acceptable grade level no later than the fifth semester.
- Completing the Oral Examination no later than the fifth semester.
- Successfully defending a dissertation prospectus (thus gaining ABD status) within the sixth semester; the absolute final deadline for a prospectus to be submitted to the committee is the mid-term of the seventh semester in order to allow ample time for it to be defended. A student cannot receive financial support for an eighth semester without a successfully defended dissertation prospectus on file.
- For students seeking financial aid from the Department of History or the University, producing demonstrable evidence of research achievement and writing following the dissertation prospectus defense. Students should plan on completing the bulk of their archival, statistical, and/or library source research during their fourth year. They should write up the results of their research in years five and six, and finish the dissertation by the end of the second semester of year six.
- For students not seeking financial aid from the Department of History or the University, completing an acceptable doctoral dissertation within ten years of matriculation.

10.8: Regular Reviews and Evaluations by Department

In addition to fulfilling general registration and course requirements, students must make satisfactory progress toward their degrees. The Graduate Studies Committee will normally conduct a formal progress review at the end of each year for every student. The Graduate Director may, however, at any time solicit information from advisors about the progress of their advisees. Students will be informed in writing about their progress at the end of each academic year or more frequently if circumstances warrant. Students may formally appeal the Graduate Studies Committee’s evaluation to the Department Head.

Probationary Period

Students who fail to maintain the GPA requirement or otherwise are not in good “academic standing” as defined in that section will normally be given a one semester “probationary” period by the Graduate Studies Committee. Students who are carrying more than one Incomplete *at any time* will be automatically considered on probation. If the deficiency is not corrected during the one-semester probationary period, or is *at any time* judged severe, the student will be asked to withdraw from the program. Students in the third and fourth year will be required to meet the deadlines for the oral exam and prospectus, or will be put on probation. Similarly, students in the fifth or sixth year who fail to submit a completed chapter draft or its equivalent to their advisor for more than one semester will be put on academic probation. Students who fail to bring themselves into compliance with the criteria of “satisfactory academic standing” at the end of the semester in which they have been placed on probation will be immediately ineligible for funding and potentially required to withdraw from the program.

Doctoral students can appeal any decisions via this procedure outlined here:
<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/policies/appeal-grievance-procedures.html>

SECTION 11: Funding & Financial Support

11.1: Statement of Department Financial Support

The department's commitment to financial support is outlined in each student's letter of admission.

11.2: Stipend

Stipends are paid on a semimonthly basis

11.3: Health Insurance Requirement

Health Insurance and Fees

If students elect to enroll in Carnegie Mellon University's Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP), the University will cover 100 percent of the premium for individual coverage under SHIP. While students will have the opportunity to purchase partner, spouse or dependent coverage under the SHIP plan, and/or dental and vision plans, the University's support will be limited to 100 percent of the *individual coverage amount*. If students wish to elect the required health insurance coverage under an alternate plan, they will not be eligible for the University support referenced here. More information is found here: <https://www.cmu.edu/health-services/student-insurance/index.html>.

11.4: Department Fees

In addition to covering tuition, the department normally pays the technology fee for students receiving financial aid. Students are responsible for paying any applicable activities and transportation fees.

The department will only cover six years of tuition in total. Students who do not complete their PhD within six years have the option of taking a Leave of Absence to avoid paying tuition fees. Students also have the option of paying 5 units of part-time ABD tuition to maintain enrollment. Students returning from a Leave of Absence may have to pay for 5 units of tuition as well as fees.

11.5: Travel/Conference and Research Funding

Research funding options

As department funds permit, the department provides financial support for student research carried out in conjunction with the Research Seminar.

All graduate students in good academic standing are eligible to apply for small research/travel grants through the History Department's Graduate Studies Committee. The Committee gives preference to graduate students who are ABD, who are making good progress in research and writing, and who can demonstrate prior efforts to receive university (e.g., Graduate Small project Help, or GuSH) and/or external grants: <https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/funding/index.html>

University funds are also available to help pay costs of presenting papers at professional conferences: <https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/funding/conference.html>

You may use Department grants to support research trips (domestic and international); expenses associated with presenting a paper at a professional conference; and miscellaneous research-related expenses (fees to enter archives, digital reproductions, photocopies, etc.).

Department grants are intended to supplement the paid, non-teaching semester(s) provided to each graduate student upon successful defense of her/his/their dissertation prospectus. Students should plan to complete the bulk of their research during the non-teaching semester(s), which outside of extenuating circumstances is normally taken in the Fourth Year.

Procedure for Applying for Departmental Funds:

1. Discuss the research/travel for which you are seeking a grant and your proposed budget with your faculty advisor.
2. Complete the short application form available from the Graduate Director or Graduate Coordinator and submit it via email.

Review of applications by the Graduate Studies Committee: the Graduate Studies Committee reviews applications for Department research funds on a rolling basis throughout the year. The Graduate Director makes decisions about grant applications up to \$500. The entire committee will review all requests for \$501 and above. In the event the committee is evenly divided, the Graduate Director will make the final decision.

Funding for Research Associated with the Research Seminar (79-701 and 79-702)

As department funds permit, the department provides financial support for student research carried out in conjunction with the Research Seminar.

11.6: Funding Payment Schedule

Standard stipends are paid biweekly across the entire year, starting on 16 August of each year, continuing to 15 August of the following year.

11.7: Additional Sources of Internal & External Financial Support

There are no additional formal paid positions for graduate students but additional paid positions do emerge based on departmental and faculty need.

Conference Funding is a funding application process provided by GSA and the Provost's Office for students, student work groups or groups to attend a conference, whether as a participant or as a presenter. The process is managed by the Graduate Education Office. Students can find more information about the application process and deadlines at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/professional-development/index.html>.

Graduate students who find themselves in need of immediate funds for emergency situations should contact the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs, www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/index.html, to inquire about an Emergency Student Loan.

GuSH Research Funding is a source of small research grant funds provided by GSA and the Provost's Office and managed by the Graduate Education Office. Students can find more information about the application process and deadlines at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/professional-development/research-funding/index.html>

Outside Funding, Fellowship and Scholarship Opportunities

Your advisor should be the major source of information and guidance about the availability of external monies to support research and when to apply for them. Those students who are members of the American Historical Association can consult the Association's online directory of grants, fellowships, and prizes: www.historians.org/awards-and-grants. The American Historical Association's publications also contains information about grants and deadlines for them.

Graduate students are strongly encouraged to apply for outside funding from foundations, government agencies, and other sources, especially after they have completed their prospectuses. Students in the Department have been successful in obtaining dissertation support from the Mellon, Fulbright, Woodrow Wilson, Guggenheim, Smithsonian, National Science, and Spencer Foundation, Chateaubriand and American Association of University Women fellowships.

Funding Implications of External Grants

(This section does not apply to small grants that cover only travel to collections or to present conference papers.)

External grants considered here fall into one of two categories – those used to fund one or more research semesters, and those that are designed to fund research beyond the research semester(s). Grants obtained to fund research semester(s): Students who obtain external grants to help fund themselves during one or more research semesters will receive their stipends in addition to the external grant money. The department will also pay tuition, healthcare and fees.

Grants obtained to fund research beyond the research semester(s): Students who obtain external grants beyond the research semester(s) will be considered differently according to the amount of the grant:

- a. If the grant is greater than or equal to the amount of the stipend, the student will be relieved of teaching duties during the term of the grant while the department will maintain its existing level of support for benefits, tuition, and fees.
- b. If the grant is less than the stipend but greater than \$8,000 for one semester (or the equivalent for the year), the department will both relieve the student of teaching duties during the term of the grant while also supplementing the grant so the student receives a normal stipend. In addition, the department will maintain its existing level of support for benefits, tuition, and fees.
- c. If the grant is less than \$8,000 for one semester (or the equivalent for the year), the student may keep the amount of the grant in addition to the stipend, but there will be no release from teaching duties or their equivalent.

11.8: Availability of Summer Employment

International students must contact the OIE regarding their ability to hold employment. Summer teaching opportunities for advanced PhD students may be available, on a case-by-case basis and dependent on departmental need.

11.9: Department Policy on Outside Employment

The department does not explicitly prohibit outside employment, although international students must contact the Office of International Education regarding the ability to hold employment. Students receiving financial support from the department are reminded that they are considered “full-time” students, however, and are expected to complete coursework, fulfill teaching obligations, etc., accordingly. Further, any such employment, aside from the department’s Internship program, can be held by students receiving financial support from the department only to the extent to which it does not interfere with the completion of satisfactory progress towards the degree.

11.10: Requirements for the Continuation of Funding

The Department offers several types of financial aid. These awards are designed to assist students during their graduate study. Although a variety of criteria are used in granting or maintaining the awards, *their continuance always depends on satisfactory progress in the program*. The Graduate Studies Committee evaluates and makes recommendations to the Department Head on all financial aid matters.

11.11: Procedure for Written Notification of Change in Financial Support

Students will be informed in writing with at least sixty days' notice of any unexpected change in financial support, normally alongside a notice of failure to make satisfactory progress. This does not apply to expected changes in financial support as outlined in the department's letter of admission to students. The Graduate Studies Committee and Department Head make an effort, when feasible and if departmental funds exist, to provide notice of any change in financial support prior to a final semester of support.

Graduate students who find themselves in need of immediate funds for emergency situations should contact the Office of the Dean of Students:

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/index.html>

<https://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/dean/loans/>

to inquire about the types of emergency funding available to enrolled students.
