

Graduate Studies in History



Welcome!



Welcome to the graduate program in history. We are pleased you have selected SUNY Cortland to pursue your graduate training, and we expect that you will find the department to be an intellectually challenging and congenial place to study.

This Graduate Advisement Manual introduces you to the History Department and the relevant policies and procedures governing the graduate program in history. Those policies are spelled out explicitly in the Graduate Catalog, which you should consult and consider binding. The Graduate Catalog (online) that is in effect when you enroll is the official document that outlines all the regulations by which you must abide. **It is your responsibility to read and understand your degree requirements and program policies.** Failure to do so may have an adverse effect on your progress through the program.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Graduate Coordinator, who is also your academic advisor:

Dr. Laura Gathagan

Associate Professor

210-D Old Main

laura.gathagan@cortland.edu

607-753-5622

Helpful Contact Information

The following offices and persons provide information and services that you may need while pursuing your graduate degree at SUNY Cortland.

Graduate Coordinator

Dr. Laura Gathagan
Old Main 210-D
607. 753. 5622
laura.gathagan@cortland.edu

Registrar's Office

Miller Building, 223
607. 753. 4702

Graduate Admissions

Miller Building, 106
607. 753. 4800
Graduate.admissions@cortland.edu

History Department Chair

Dr. Kevin Sheets
Old Main 212-B
607. 753. 2060
kevin.sheets@cortland.edu

History Department Secretary

Corrina Harvey
Old Main 212
607. 753. 2723
Corrina.harvey@cortland.edu

Financial Aid Office

Miller Building, 205
607. 753. 4717
Financial.aid@cortland.edu

Advisement and Transition

Tracy Frenyea, Graduate Student Support
Coordinator
Memorial Library, Room A-111
607. 753. 4726
Tracy.frenyea@cortland.edu

Library Resources for Online Programs

As a student in good standing in our online Master's Degree Program, you may access SUNY Cortland Memorial Library's online resources, including peer-reviewed articles, videos, eBooks and even physical books delivered to your home.

Online Materials and Tools:

ONEsearch searches all of the library's resources. When asked, choose to authenticate via myRedDragon on the popup.

Publications searches the library's journals and newspapers.

Databases lists the databases from A-Z and by subject.

Research Guides lists the research guides by subject area. They include recommended library resources, websites and contact information for the subject librarian.

Libkey products, such as LibKey Nomad, can help you get to article downloads faster.

Online materials are available 24/7 whether on-campus or off-campus, here:

<https://cortland.libguides.com/c.php?g=1183672>

Interlibrary Loan Delivery Service to your home:

Online graduate students can access the same comprehensive Interlibrary Loan Service offered to on-campus graduate students, with the added benefit of home delivery. You can find the form for home delivery of physical books here:

https://sunycortland.formstack.com/forms/ill_deliver_items

Degree Requirements: M.A. in History

The History M.A. Degree is a 31-credit hour program with the following requirements:

A. History Readings Courses (15 credits) - Select 15 credit hours in 500-600 level HIS courses. Exceptions are HIS 647, HIS 687 and HIS 697

B. Scholarship on the Teaching and Learning of History (3 credits) - HIS 647 - Scholarship on the Teaching and Learning of History

C. Approved Electives in History or Related Field (6 credits) - two graduate-level courses in HIS or other graduate coursework in another discipline with prior approval from the Graduate Coordinator

D. Research Seminars (6 credits) - two 600-level research seminars in different geographical areas. An additional research seminar may be taken to fulfill additional History requirements or electives

E. Culminating Activity (1 credit) - either a comprehensive examination or a master's thesis

Notes:

1. Up to six credits from another accredited university may be transferred **with prior approval** from the Graduate Coordinator and Associate Dean.
2. A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is required for graduation. No grade below a C- will be counted toward a Master's degree.
3. Students must complete their degree requirements within five years from their initial coursework. Extensions must be approved by the Associate Dean, but only for documented extenuating circumstances.
4. Students completing their degree requirements must apply to graduate by following the procedures outlined by the Registrar's Office.

Policies, Procedures, and Tips

- Meet with your Advisor at least once a semester, but ideally more frequently, to keep her informed of your progress and to discuss any concerns you may have.
- Use DegreeWorks to track your progress toward your degree and keep up to date on what classes you still need. There's a tutorial video here:
<https://video.cortland.edu/hapi/v1/contents/permalinks/DW-for-grad-students/viewhttps://video.cortland.edu/hapi/v1/contents/permalinks/DW-for-grad-students/view>
- Set up an appointment with your Advisor during registration period each semester to discuss coursework options and degree progress. Because the History Department cannot offer a large number of graduate courses in any one semester, it is very important that you plan coursework carefully to ensure timely fulfillment of program requirements.
- If you decide not to enroll in courses during a particular semester, you MUST enroll in GRD 500 (Graduate Continuing Enrollment) Section 001. This is a no-credit, no cost “course” that simply informs the College that you intend to resume your graduate studies, but will not be enrolling in coursework for the current semester. Enrolling in GRD 500 keeps you on your advisor’s advisee list within Banner so you will continue to receive emails from her. If you fail to enroll, you likely will miss important emails and communications regarding your graduate program.
- As you approach degree completion, you should discuss with your advisor options for HIS 687: Culminating Activity, however, it is never too early to have this conversation. You have two options: writing a thesis (recommended for those students wishing to pursue the Ph.D.) or completing a comprehensive examination. (Both options and procedures are outlined elsewhere in this manual). You may not enroll in HIS 687 until you have successfully completed at least 24 credit hours, have earned a minimum of a 3.0 GPA, and have no incomplete courses.
- The Graduate Faculty Executive Committee has two grant programs with funds dedicated to support graduate student research and travel. There is often more money available than requests, and History students very rarely take advantage of this opportunity. If you intend to pursue a Ph.D., you should seriously consider accessing funds to support a research and writing project or a presentation at a local, state, or national conference. This takes planning and you will need advisor/faculty endorsement, so plan accordingly. Descriptions of the grant programs can be found here: <https://www2.cortland.edu/academics/curriculum/committees/GFEC.dot>
- As much as your schedule allows, take advantage of opportunities offered by the department and college. Get to know the department and faculty. Your faculty can be important resources and can provide letters of recommendation for employment or Ph.D. applications, but only if they know you.

HIS 687: Culminating Experience

This course provides a capstone experience for your graduate program in the history department. Unlike other courses, it functions more like an independent study than an actual class. As such, it does not meet. There is no classroom or class meeting times. That said, it does have requirements and policies/procedures you need to know.

You have a choice. You can satisfy the requirements of HIS 687 by choosing EITHER a thesis OR a Comprehensive Examination. **HIS 687 is typically taken in your LAST SEMESTER of graduate coursework but you need to prepare during the prior semester.** Pay careful attention to the schedules below. (Reminder: In order to enroll in HIS 687, you must have completed at least 24 credit hours, have earned a minimum of 3.0 GPA, and have no outstanding incomplete.)

Both the comprehensive exam and the thesis are graded S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory). In the event that you do not pass HIS 687, you are required to enroll in HIS 697 and complete the work necessary to pass.

HIS 687: Culminating Experience

Comprehensive Examination Option:

The “comp exam” provides you with the opportunity to think critically about some of the major issues in your field of study and clarify your thinking about those issues in written form. Typically, the exam comprises essay questions supplied by the faculty with whom you studied. These questions are often broadly interpretive and provide you with opportunities to integrate your reading and interpret evidence to make an argument. (Individual faculty members can clarify their approach to the comprehensive exam). The following table provides you with key mileposts you should follow as you prepare for HIS 687:

Semester Prior to Taking HIS 687	Semester You are Enrolled in HIS 687
<p><u>During Advisement:</u> Discuss with Dr. Gathagan which faculty you will ask to write questions for your Comprehensive Exam. Dr. Gathagan must approve your list of faculty before you ask them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• M.A. students need TWO History Department faculty (full-time, tenure/tenure-track faculty). <p><u>By the End of the Semester:</u> Finalize agreements with approved faculty who will be writing questions for your comprehensive examination.</p>	<p><u>By the End of the Second Week of Classes:</u> You must meet with each of the faculty writing questions for your comprehensive examination. They will be able to discuss with you how best to prepare for their portion of the comprehensive exam.</p> <p><u>During the Rest of the Semester:</u> Study!</p> <p><u>During the Last Week of the Semester:</u> The schedule for the comp exam is posted after the first week of the semester. The Department secretary will email you the date and time of the exam and the place to go. Typically, comp exams are scheduled for the <u>last Friday of the semester from 9:00 to 3:00 p.m.</u> in one of the computer labs in Old Main.</p> <p>Once the faculty have read and evaluated your comprehensive exam, the department will contact you with the results.</p>

HIS 687: Culminating Experience

Thesis Option:

Writing a thesis is an extraordinary opportunity for you to puzzle through a particular research question and to offer an original contribution to the scholarly literature. This is a great option if you plan to move forward to a Ph.D. program, as it will give you an excellent introduction to the kind of work you will be doing and it will also provide you with a writing sample you may need for the application process. The following table provides you with key mileposts you should follow as you prepare for HIS 687:

Semester Prior to Taking HIS 687	Semester You are Enrolled in HIS 687
<p><u>By the End of the Second Week of Classes:</u> Discuss with Dr. Gathagan which faculty you will ask to serve as your primary and secondary readers for your thesis. Dr. Gathagan must approve your list of faculty before you ask them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select faculty with whom you have worked and whose area of expertise matches your thesis topic. • Your Primary Reader will guide you through the process, read drafts, and evaluate your final thesis. The Secondary Reader typically reads drafts and the final thesis. <p><u>By mid-semester:</u> Meet with your Primary and Secondary Readers to discuss preliminary ideas for your thesis.</p> <p><u>By the last 2 weeks of the semester:</u> Register for HIS 687.</p> <p>Submit a 3 to 4-page prospectus to your Readers for their approval, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear research question(s) • An outline of the topic • An initial working bibliography of primary source collections and secondary literature. Your prospectus should demonstrate that you have appropriate and sufficient primary sources to undertake the project. <p>Your thesis may not be the same paper you turned in for a seminar. It must represent a substantial new direction or line of inquiry. Your Readers can determine what is appropriate for you to write.</p> <p><u>By the End of the Semester:</u> In consultation with your Primary Reader, you should have a clear schedule of deadlines and a work plan for the completion of the thesis.</p>	<p><u>By the End of the Second Week of Classes:</u> Discuss your progress with your Primary Reader including work you accomplished prior to the start of the semester (i.e. during Winter Break or over the summer).</p> <p><u>During the Rest of the Semester:</u> Work, work, work! Keep in regular contact with your Readers and apprise them of any challenges you may be facing. Do not wait till the end of the semester to discuss major roadblocks or problems you are having!</p> <p><u>By November 1 (for a fall semester thesis) or April 1 (for a spring semester thesis) or July 1st (for summer session):</u> You must present to your Primary and Secondary Readers a substantial rough draft of your thesis.</p> <p><u>By the Last Day of Classes:</u> Unless you have a different arrangement with your Readers, the final copy of your thesis must be turned in on the last day of classes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your thesis should not be less than fifty pages (exclusive of footnotes) or more than eighty pages (including footnotes). • You must follow Turabian Style for citations and formatting. <p>Once the faculty have read and evaluated your thesis, the department will contact you with the results.</p>