

MASTER OF ARTS  
CONCENTRATION IN PUBLIC  
HISTORY

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

ASSEMBLED BY  
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Department of History  
Middle Tennessee State University  
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*DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES DESCRIBED IN THIS  
HANDBOOK SUPPLEMENT UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND ACADEMIC  
REGULATIONS, AS ARTICULATED IN THE GRADUATE CATALOG*

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## **1. CORE COURSES: M.A. PUBLIC HISTORY**

Two courses are required for all students seeking a Master of Arts degree from the History Department: HIST 6010 and HIST 6020. They are designed to introduce essential concepts and methods in scholarship as practiced by professional historians. Two additional courses are required for M.A. students in the Public History Program: HIST 6510, the foundational Seminar in Public History, and HIST 6570, Public History Internship.

### **a. HIST 6010 Historiography**

This course introduces graduate students to the historical development of the discipline of history. Students learn about the development of the historical profession, the different schools of historical thought, and the theoretical debates that underpin them. Students are advised to take HIST 6010 during the first semester of enrollment in the graduate program.

### **b. HIST 6020 Historical Research Methods**

This course introduces graduate students to the techniques and standards of research as practiced by professional historians. Students learn about the development of research topics, the use of sources, standards of historical evidence, styles and standards of scholarly writing, and the process of publication in professional outlets. Students are advised to take HIST 6020 during the second semester of enrollment in the graduate program.

### **c. HIST 6510 Seminar in Public History**

This course introduces students in the Public History Program to the historiographical development of public history as an approach to historical practice and a field of study, the principles of reflective practice and ethics in practice, and the interpretation of history for diverse audiences. Students are advised to take HIST 6510 during the first semester in the graduate program.

### **d. HIST 6570 Internship**

Students in the Public History Program also must complete an internship of at least 300 contact hours. See #6.

## **2. SELECTION OF PUBLIC HISTORY SPECIALIZATION**

The Public History Program academically supports five areas of professional practice: Historic Preservation, Archival Management, Museum Management, Oral History, and Public Archaeology. After taking HIST 6510, M.A. students select a specialty by taking one of the courses described below. NOTE: Students choosing the Non-Thesis Option take three of these courses (see #7).

### **a. HIST 6610 Essentials of Historic Preservation and Cultural Resources Management**

Catalog Description: Regulatory policies and procedures employed by federal, state, and local agencies in the work of identifying, evaluating, recording, preserving, and managing the historical, architectural, and cultural resources of the United States. Emphasis on implementing the National Historic Preservation Act and the documentation requirements of the National Register of Historic Places.

**b. HIST 6615 Essentials of Archival Management**

Catalog Description: Examines major concepts, vocabulary, standards, professional ethics, and current issues in archival management. Includes readings, class discussions, and in-class exercises supplemented by guest lectures, field trips, and a field project.

**c. HIST 6535 Essentials of Museum Management**

Catalog Description: Examines the history, theory, and methodologies of museums. Explores the roles of history museums in diverse communities and career options in museums, including administration, exhibit development, education, and collections.

**d. HIST 6225 Oral History Theory and Methodology**

Catalog Description: Examines theory and methodology of oral history, including in-depth examination of the relationship of history and memory; explores oral history in texts, films, websites and museum exhibits. Students learn how to conduct professional quality oral history interviews, how to process the materials, and how to organize a professional project.

**e. HIST 6710 Essentials of Public Archaeology**

Catalog Description: Explores the disciplinary history, professional ethics, key concepts and debates, and best practices of public archaeology in the U.S. with emphasis on historical archaeology's contributions to American historiography, its relationship to cultural resource management and heritage legislation, and current issues in shared authority with diverse public audiences.

**3. SELECTION OF MAJOR FIELD AND ADVISOR**

Public History is the major field for all students pursuing an M.A. with a specialization in Public History. The selection of an advisor is governed by the student's decision to pursue either the Thesis Option or Non-Thesis Option (see #7).

**a. Non-Thesis Option**

Students who are pursuing the Non-Thesis Option do not choose an advisor; the Public History Director will serve as the advisor for these students.

**b. Thesis Option**

Students pursuing the Thesis Option select a Public History faculty member to serve as the major field advisor, and this faculty member should be selected within the first 12 hours of coursework. The major field advisor will serve as director of the thesis. Students may change their major field advisor if necessary. Students pursuing the Thesis Option also will develop a secondary area of intellectual and research interest on which the M.A. examinations and the thesis will focus. Thesis students do not take comprehensive exams.

**4. NON-MAJOR FIELD ELECTIVES**

MAPH students take nine hours of History electives. These courses should constitute a definable History field, particularly if the student is pursuing the thesis option.

## 5. PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENT/GUIDELINES

The purpose of the MAPH Portfolio is to document the professional skill set that each student acquires in the course of completing their degree program, establish a common standard for assessing the professional development component of the MAPH program, and help students prepare for entry into the job market.

Portfolios should document a student's professional throughout their time at MTSU. There are six domains of professional skills. Students will be evaluated on the basis of three of the six domains.

The following skills are required:

1. research and analysis/assessment/interpretation
2. communication/presentation

One or more of the following must also be demonstrated:

3. technical and specialized research techniques
4. organizational management and administration
5. pedagogy and educational programming
6. ability to work with community organizations or groups

Examples of the types of skills that might be included:

1. Research and analysis/assessment/interpretation: historiographical literature review, public records research, manuscript and special collections (archival), oral history, material culture analysis, architectural survey, cultural landscape survey, ethnographic data collection, archaeological fieldwork, collections appraisal, exhibit development, documentary film development, scholarly article, master's thesis. Whenever research also involved formal analysis, assessment, or interpretation, specify the level of analysis. For instance, architectural survey typically would lead to writing architectural descriptions but field research might also lead to an assessment of significance under National Register criteria. These are two distinct levels of skill.
2. Communication/Presentation: foreign language (indicate level of skill and how used as part of graduate studies, such as ability to read scholarly articles in another language), public speaking, conference presentation, reports, exhibit design, archival finding aid, civic engagement facilitator, public history blog, master's thesis.
3. Technical and specialized research skills: quantitative analysis, geospatial information systems (GIS), ground penetrating radar (GPR), cartography, graphic design, computer- assisted drafting (CAD), electronic description of archival materials (EDAM), web design, photo conservation, building conservation, storymaps, podcasting, documentary filmmaking, audio recording and editing.
4. Organizational management and administration: project management, grant writing, strategic planning, docent/volunteer training or supervision, public relations/marketing project.
5. Educational programming and pedagogy: standards-based lesson plans, educational program design/development, instruction (classroom or otherwise), instructional training, teaching evaluations.

6. Ability to work with community organizations or groups: evidence of outreach to one or more community groups, sustained partnership with one or more community groups, evidence of ability to partner with diverse groups or organizations.

This list is meant to be used as a guide for describing your particular skill set. Some skills may be listed under more than one area. If you have questions about how to categorize a skill not listed above, please consult a faculty member.

**a. online portfolio**

The online portfolio must contain a professional resume or CV, major written coursework (essays, reports, etc.), and work products. The content should cover three of the six domains. Some projects or activities will involve skills from more than one domain, thus students are encouraged to think about the interconnections between and among professional skills and to present them as appropriate. There is no prescribed length. Portfolios must be online two weeks in advance of the scheduled review. Please send the web address to the Public History Director and the Graduate Studies Director.

**b. portfolio presentation**

Thesis students will present their portfolios during their thesis defense. Non-thesis students will present their portfolios during their oral examination. Presentations should last no more than ten minutes and may be followed by questions from the defense/examination committee. Students who came into the MAPH program with some level of proficiency in various skills should consider opening the 10-minute presentation with a brief summary of their entering skill set. In order to pass the portfolio presentation, a student must demonstrate proficiency in (1) research, (2) communication, and (3) at least two additional skill domains. Formal review will be conducted by a panel of Public History and History faculty members.

Students may be exempted from the portfolio presentation (but not the portfolio itself) by demonstrating reading proficiency in a foreign language for research purposes by passing a proficiency examination administered by the Foreign Languages and Literature Department.

## **6. PUBLIC HISTORY INTERNSHIP**

A key part of the Public History M.A. is the internship (HIST 6570). An internship, according to the guidelines drafted by the National Council for Public History, should engage students “in meaningful work under the mentorship of experienced public history professionals.” The purpose of the Internship requirement is to provide students with a structured, work-learning experience that helps them develop professional skills. The Internship experience serves as an intellectual laboratory, where students can analyze the intersection of scholarship and practice in the work environment. The internship also provides students an opportunity to develop a network of professional contacts outside of the University.

The ideal internship involves the student in multiple aspects of the host organization, a close working relationship with a mentor, an appropriate level of responsibility, and a series of specific and engaging work assignments. The Internship is a partnership between the student, the faculty member overseeing Internships at MTSU, and the mentor at the host institution. The intern will spend 300 hours at the host institution, so the host institution should be invested in the intern’s project-based learning experience. All three parties must participate in the design of the Scope of Work, Timetable and Contract as these documents clearly establish mutual expectations for the internship. The Scope of Work defines a discrete project or series of projects the student will work on during the internship period, and identifies the steps needed to accomplish the project(s). The Timetable explains what will happen when and ensures that you can realistically complete the projects in the time allotted. Preparing the Scope of Work and Timetable teaches student valuable project planning skills. The Contract is a formal document between the student, the host institution (signed by the mentor) and MTSU (signed by the Internship faculty member). It commits all parties to the internship. Students typically create several drafts of the Scope of Work, Timetable and Contract until they are finalized, so it is vital to begin the process early in the semester. Although paid internships are not mandatory, MTSU urges students to secure internships that compensate them appropriately for their work. With rare exceptions, students may not engage in an internship with an MTSU faculty member, nor take a class to satisfy the internship requirement. Students are required to successfully complete HIST 6510, Seminar in Public History, before beginning the internship.

### **a. Developing an Internship:**

#### **Timetable August: New Student**

##### **Orientation**

The faculty Internship Coordinator or the Public History Director will explain the place of the internship in the Public History Program and introduce students to the internship process. Included in this handbook are templates for (1) the required Internship Agreement between the student and the host institution and (2) the Internship Report on which the course grade for HIST 6570, Public History Internship, is largely based. Other templates will be provided as needed.

#### **December: Internship Presentations**

New students are required to attend the final presentations of the prior year’s interns. The presentations take place in early December. Prospective interns will get an overview of the breadth and substantive nature of the internship experience, and ideas about how to find and negotiate a good internship.

## **December-March: Internship Search**

With the guidance of the Internship Coordinator, other faculty advisors, and prior year interns, students search for potential internships. Students should consult MTSU online sources, browse websites, listservs, publications in the field, and explore the needs and possibilities of local and regional organizations. The Internship Coordinator and other faculty members will post timely information about internship opportunities on the department's H-Grad listserv throughout the fall and spring. Other useful listservs include

H-PUBLIC, H-MUSEUM, <http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/jobsforstudents.htm>, and <http://about.aaslh.org/jobs/>. The search is an important step in the process. Students should give serious thought to deepening their skills in a particular area or broadening their range of skills. They should try to find an opportunity that will generate work products that become part of their professional portfolio.

## **January: Internship Overview Meeting**

All prospective interns are required to attend an Internship Overview Meeting with the Internship Coordinator in early January. Students will learn about the steps involved in the internship and the due dates for all materials. The meeting will provide an overview of: Schedule, Scope of Work, Timetable, Contract, Mentor, Internship Duties, Readings, Ideal Internships, Fieldwork Journal, Portfolio Preparation, Final Paper, and Presentations.

## **February: Scope of Work, Timetable and Contract Meeting**

Students meet to discuss how to prepare a Scope of Work, Timetable, and Contract. Students should bring a list of potential internship institutions, and one-paragraph summaries of their possible duties at each institution. The Scope of Work and Timetable define a discrete project or series of projects the student will work on during the internship period, identify steps to accomplish the project(s) and create a timetable for what will happen when. This Scope of Work and Timetable should be discussed with the host institution. The Contract spells out additional mutual expectations between the student and the host institution and identifies a specific individual in the institution who will serve as the student's professional mentor. The Scope of Work and Timetable become part of the Contract.

## **March: Draft Scope of Work, Timetable and Contract Due April:**

### **Final Scope of Work, Timetable and Contract Due**

During the priority registration period for the following fall semester, the student will sign up to take HIST 6570, Public History Internship. Students will not be permitted to register for History 6570 until the Scope of Work, Timetable and Contract are approved by the Internship Coordinator and signed by the student, the mentor, and the Internship Coordinator.

## **Summer: Internship**

The student will complete a minimum of 300 hours of supervised work for the host institution, meeting with their mentor weekly. At the end of the summer, the mentor will complete a letter of evaluation for the student and submit it to the Internship Coordinator.



During the internship, the students will maintain a daily Fieldwork Journal, documenting their activities, observations, and questions. Students will also read at least four articles relating to their work and write responses to the readings in the Fieldwork Journal. The Fieldwork Journal will include reflexive entries, connecting the student's studies at MTSU with the fieldwork experience.

**Year 2 Fall: The student will take HIST 6570 and receive credit for the Internship.**

**Year 2 September: Portfolio and Internship Report Meeting**

Students will meet to discuss their internship experiences, how to write the Internship Report, complete the Portfolio, and create summary information for the MTSU website.

**Year 2 September: Internship Report, Portfolio and Database Entry Due**

At the completion of the internship, each student will submit to the Internship Coordinator a report that describes the activities and accomplishments of the internship, evaluates the ways in which the internship contributed to their professional development (skills, historical knowledge, research), reflects on the application of history (historical scholarship, historical methods) in the functions and activities of the sponsoring institution, and discusses how academic coursework related to the internship experience. For further details see "Internship Report Requirements for HIST 6570" in the Appendix. Students will upload descriptive information about their internship to the Internship Database.

**Year 2 December: Presentations, Summary Fliers**

Each student who completed an internship will present a ten-minute PowerPoint describing the internship search, internship project/responsibilities, lessons learned, professional skills acquired, and assessing how the internship experience advanced their development as a Public Historian. Students will also distribute summary fliers to incoming interns, describing the key components of their internships.

**NOTE:** Students usually complete the internship during the summer between the first and second years of coursework. Occasionally, a student will combine coursework and an internship during the fall semester of their second year. Doing a fall internship requires careful advance planning with both the Public History Director and the Internship Coordinator, as HIST 6570, Public History Internship, is only offered in the fall. Note that students are required to successfully complete HIST 6510, Seminar in Public History, before beginning the internship.

**b. HIST 6570 Public History Internship**

Catalog Description: Internship requires 300 contact hours with a public or private historical institution of local, regional, or national significance. Its purpose is to expand and personalize the experiential learning component of public history training. Students acquire historical knowledge, research experience, and practical skills under the guidance of specialists who serve as mentors. It is generally completed during summer months and most often carries a stipend.

## 7. THESIS AND NON-THESIS OPTIONS

Students pursuing the Public History M.A. can choose either the Thesis or the Non-Thesis Option. The Thesis Option requires a degree program of 33 credit hours and the successful defense of a Master's Thesis; the Non-Thesis Option requires 36 credit hours and the successful completion of Comprehensive Examinations. A table summarizing the course requirements for each appears at #8. Regardless of option, students must take 6 credit hours of Public History electives and 9 credit hours of History electives. All courses **must** be taken at the 6000 level. Students may count no more than 3 hours of Selected Studies courses (6910 or 6920) toward degree requirements.

### a. Public History Electives

In consultation with the Public History Director and major field advisor, students select courses that further their educational and professional goals, either by intensifying knowledge in a chosen concentration, or by broadening one's base of skills. Consult the Graduate Catalog for a full listing of Public History courses.

*The Graduate Catalog is available online at <http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/>.*

### b. History Electives

In consultation with the Public History Director and major field advisor, students select courses that prepare them for comprehensive examinations and provide appropriate historical context for writing the thesis, if the student is pursuing the Thesis Option. For students who select the Non-Thesis Option, one of the History electives must be a graduate research seminar in American (6105), European (6205), or Global (6305) History field. All History electives **must** be 6000-level courses. Consult the Graduate Catalog for a full listing of History courses.

## 8. SUMMARY OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

<u>Thesis Option</u>	<u>Non-Thesis Option</u>
Students must complete at least 33 hours of graduate-level course-work, all at the 6000-level.	Students must complete at least 36 hours of graduate-level course work, all at the 6000-level.
<b>a.</b> Core courses (12 hours): HIST 6010 Historiography HIST 6020 Historical Research Methods HIST 6510 Seminar: Public History HIST 6570 Public History Internship	<b>a.</b> Core courses (12 hours): HIST 6010 Historiography HIST 6020 Historical Research Methods HIST 6510 Seminar: Public History HIST 6570 Public History Internship
<b>b.</b> Public History Essentials (3 hours): HIST 6610 Essentials of HP/CRM HIST 6535 Essentials of Museum Management HIST 6615 Essentials of Archival Management HIST 6225 Oral History Theory & Methodology HIST 6710 Essentials of Public Archaeology	<b>b.</b> Public History Essentials (9 hours): HIST 6610 Essentials of HP/CRM HIST 6535 Essentials of Museum Management HIST 6615 Essentials of Archival Management HIST 6225 Oral History Theory & Methodology HIST 6710 Essentials of Public Archaeology
<b>c.</b> Public History Electives (6 hours selected in consultation with Public History faculty)	<b>c.</b> Public History Electives (6 hours selected in consultation with Public History faculty)
<b>d.</b> History Electives (9 hours)	<b>d.</b> History Electives (9 hours, of which 3 hours must be a research seminar)
<b>e.</b> Thesis Research (min. 3 hours) HIST 6640 Thesis Research	

## 9. MAINTAINING SATISFACTORY PROGRESS

MA students must complete their degrees within six years (12 semesters) of entering the program. The History Department policies and procedures for assuring that graduate students maintain satisfactory progress toward the completion of degree requirements are as follows:

### a. Grade Requirements.

M.A. students are expected to make satisfactory progress toward completing degree requirements. The university defines satisfactory progress as maintaining a minimum grade point average of 3.00 in all graduate work completed at MTSU as well as in the major. Six semester hours of C grade (C+, C, or C-) coursework may be applied toward a master's degree, but no grade below C- may be applied toward a degree. All grades are included in calculating the cumulative GPA. Consult the graduate catalog for academic regulations on probation and suspension: <http://www.mtsu.edu/gcat/>.

### b. Intervention Committee

If a student receives a C+ or lower grade in any course used to satisfy M.A. degree requirements, the Graduate Director may create an intervention committee composed of the Graduate Director and the student's thesis advisor and reader (or two members of the graduate faculty if such individuals have not yet been chosen or if the student is pursuing the Non-Thesis Option). This committee will meet with the student to ascertain the reasons for the C+ or lower grade and will determine what remedies need to be taken.

## 10. DEGREE PLAN

The Graduate College requires students to complete a Degree Plan. The Degree Plan form lists the courses students must take in order to graduate and must be completed in consultation with the Public History Director. Students must submit this form during their first semester of graduate work. Changes to the Degree Plan can be made in consultation with the Graduate Director at any point prior to graduation. (Note: Students wishing to change from a Thesis Option to a Non-Thesis Option degree must file a new Degree Plan).

*A copy of the Degree Plan for M.A. in Public History is available from the College of Graduate Studies online at <http://mtsu.edu/graduate/forms.php>.*

## 11. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS: NON-THESIS OPTION

The comprehensive exam is intended to be a review of the entire graduate career. Non-thesis students should therefore save notes, syllabi, papers, and other class materials from each class that they take so that they may use this material to study. They should be able to describe and analyze the arguments and evidence from each book or article they have read. In addition, they should be able to discuss how each historical work fits into a larger body of historiography.

Students can prepare for the oral exams by reviewing their notes from each of their graduate seminars. They should think about the major issues raised by that particular seminar. They should think about some of the issues that are common to a number of their seminars. Students can create outlines of major ideas in their coursework at MTSU and the literature they read that applies most directly to those ideas.

### A. Scheduling

Comprehensive exams will be given once per semester, usually three weeks before examination results are due in the College of Graduate Studies. In the fall, the exam period will usually be

late October to early November; in spring, the exam period will usually be late March to early April. Exams are not administered in the summer. Students who are not enrolled in any other course during the semester in which they plan to take their exam must be enrolled in History 6999, Comprehensive Exam Preparation.

### **B. Examination subcommittee**

Written questions will be developed by a subcommittee comprised of members of the graduate committee and public history committee. The examination subcommittee will evaluate the written exams and may consult faculty specialists in relevant subfields, if they decide it is necessary. Members of the examination committee may divide evaluation duties among themselves as they see fit. The examination subcommittee will also conduct the oral exam.

The Public History Director, Graduate Director, and members of the examination subcommittee will be available to advise students on preparation for the examination.

### **C. Format and Scope of Written Exam**

The written examination will consist of two (2) questions. One will cover the student's history coursework, and the other will cover the student's public history coursework. It will be a take-home examination in which students may consult notes and other course materials. Students must adhere to the university's academic integrity policies, which prohibit plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication. Students must not consult online sources other than those which may have been assigned in their courses, and all ideas and analysis must be the student's own. Instances of academic misconduct will be reported to the Director of Academic Integrity and may lead to dismissal from the program.

Students will be given the questions at 9:00am on the day of the examination and have twenty-four (24) hours to complete both questions. Responses must be submitted via email to all members of the examination subcommittee by 9:00am the following day, unless otherwise directed. Late responses will not be accepted.

The total length of both examination essays should be 4000-5000 words of text (e.g., 2000-2500 words per essay). They must be footnoted in Chicago/Turabian style. Footnotes do not contribute toward the word count.

For each question, students must draw upon material from at least three courses taken in their MA program at MTSU (the same courses may be discussed in both answers).

### **D. Evaluation Criteria for Written Exam**

Written questions will require the student to demonstrate the following:

- 1 A thorough understanding of a field
- 2 The ability to understand, synthesize, and analyze the major themes and debates in the historiography of a field or topic area
3. An understanding of the significance of a field for larger historical processes.
4. An understanding of the processes of historical change.
5. An ability to write an organized essay with a clear argument and organizational structure that is free of major spelling and grammatical errors and errors of fact.

Each section of the written examination will receive a grade of pass or fail. If a student fails one or both sections of the exam they will be allowed one retake, with different question(s). Failure a second time on one or both sections of the written exam terminates a student's participation in

the program. The retake must be scheduled sufficiently in advance to allow the student adequate time for preparation. All written exams, whether passed or failed, are to be placed in the student's permanent file along with the signed examination report.

### **E. Sample written questions**

Questions will be drawn from the comprehensive examination test bank and tailored to suit a student's program of study. The following sample questions are from the test bank:

#### **History field:**

- 1) In the recent past, what have been the major trends and key interpretative shifts in scholarship in the literature you have read for your courses? Discuss future avenues for exploration. Indicate specific gaps in the current scholarship in terms of themes, methodologies, and sources. Within reason, you can define "recent past" in a manner relevant to your particular topic.
- 2) How have historians justified the importance of studying the literature you read for your courses for understanding broader historical questions? For example, how has the literature you read for your courses impacted our understanding of bigger themes in American/European/Global history during this period?

#### **Public History field:**

- 3) In the recent past, what have been the major trends and paradigm shifts in interpretive theory as reviewed in the literature of your public history courses? How have these theoretical discussions informed changes to professional ethics and standards of best practice? Your response should connect methods, policies, and/or sources employed by public historians with key academic concepts and theoretical principles in public history scholarship. Within reason, you can define "recent past" in a manner relevant to your area(s) of focus within public history.
- 4) How does public history practice respond to or challenge relevant historiography that you have reviewed in your courses in traditional history? In a well-cited discussion of both seminal academic literature and case studies of public history practice, describe how historical research has been applied to changes in historical interpretation for public audiences and/or how public history practice has contributed new sources, methods, or thematic emphases to academic historiography.

### **F. Oral examination**

The oral examination will be held only after the student has passed the written examination in its entirety. It will be conducted by the examination subcommittee, who may invite other faculty specialists in the student's area of study to attend. This may result in an oral exam committee of more than two people. All examiners are expected to be present at oral exams, although participation by video or telephone conference is acceptable if an examiner cannot be there in person. If an examiner cannot be present, the oral exam can also proceed with a substitute examiner, as long as the other examiner and the student agree. A student who fails the oral exam may retake it one time, but the composition of the examination committee may change if the original examiners have scheduling conflicts. Failure a second time terminates a student's participation in the program.

As part of the oral exam, students will also present their online professional portfolio to the examining committee. **See Section 5 of this handbook for portfolio guidelines.**

## 12. THESIS

To complete the Thesis Option for the M.A. degree in History, graduate students must receive approval for, write, defend, and submit a thesis.

### A. Thesis Director

The student should find a faculty member with the appropriate expertise to serve as Thesis Director. In most cases, this professor will have been the student's Major Field Advisor, but changes can be made. The student should continue to work closely with the Thesis Director as they research and drafts the thesis.

### B. HIST 6640

Students need to enroll in HIST 6640 Thesis Research with their Thesis Director. Thesis Research is graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Different faculty members have different expectations for the amount of Director-Student interaction involved in Thesis Research. Discuss expectations with your Director before enrolling. HIST 6640 is a 1 credit hour class, but students can enroll in up to 3 hours of 6640 per semester. M.A. students must complete 3 hours of 6640 in order to graduate. Remember, you must be enrolled in at least 1 hour of classes the semester you intend to graduate, so plan your schedule accordingly.

### C. Thesis Guidelines

The Department of History has detailed expectations for the scope, content, style, and format of Master's Theses.

The College of Graduate Studies has additional guidelines for Master's Theses. Most of them are technical, relating to format and hard copy submission. These guidelines are mainly found in the Thesis/Dissertation Checklist, which must be filed along with the finished thesis.

*A copy of the Department's current guidelines is appended to this handbook.*

*College of Graduate Studies Thesis/Dissertation Checklist:*

*<http://www.mtsu.edu/graduate/pdf/ThesisDissChecklist.pdf>*

### D. Proposal Defense

Students pursuing the Thesis Option must complete a thesis proposal and submit to the chair of their thesis committee the semester before defending their thesis. The student must defend the thesis proposal at least one semester before the thesis is submitted. Committee members will not sign the Thesis Proposal Acceptance form without a successful defense of the proposal.

Students in the Public History Program are expected to produce a thesis that demonstrates the relevance of historical scholarship to some area of public history practice. Copies of accepted theses are available for browsing in Special Collections of Walker Library and in the History Department's internal (non-circulating) library.

A thesis proposal contains the following elements:

- **Title Page:** All thesis proposals must include a preliminary thesis title.
- **Introduction:** In one paragraph, describe the topic to be studied.
- **Research question(s) and thesis statement:** Clearly articulate the

research questions to be explored and a preliminary statement of your argument.

- **Historiography:** Identify the body of historical scholarship that informs your approach and discuss the historiographic significance of your topic.
- **Scope and approach:** Identify and discuss the primary sources you plan to use. Also discuss the research methods, theoretical or analytical approaches, and the geographical or temporal scope of your investigation.
- **Structure:** Explain the basis on which you plan to organize your thesis. Provide a preliminary outline (as detailed as possible) of chapter divisions and contents. Estimate the length of your thesis, excluding appendices and bibliography. The History Department expects that the narrative will be between 80 – 100 pp. in length (i.e., excluding appendices and bibliography) and contain at least three chapters.
- **Timeline:** Include a work schedule for completing research and writing.
- **Bibliography:** Append a working bibliography of primary and secondary sources that demonstrates an awareness of the broader historical context in which the thesis topic will be developed.

The thesis proposal must be an essay of sufficient length (7-8 pages, exclusive of the bibliography) to convey research and writing plans to the readers. All proposals MUST be prepared in standard form and format according to the guidelines in Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, most recent edition.

The student will submit a copy of the proposal to all members of their advisory committee, and the committee will review and comment on the proposal. When the committee approves a version of the proposal, the student will present a copy to the Graduate Director for review and placement in the student's file along with the following two forms:

*A Copy of the Thesis Proposal Acceptance Form is appended to this handbook.*

All proposals are research plans and are subject to alteration as investigation and consideration of the research material proceeds.

## **E. Thesis Defense**

Theses must be defended prior to final submission to the College of Graduate Studies. Thesis defenses must be held at least two weeks prior to the submission date set by the College of Graduate Studies (available on their website). All members of a student's thesis committee must receive a copy of the thesis prior to the defense date and with enough time to read and evaluate the thesis beforehand (two weeks is ideal). All members of the thesis committee must be present for the defense, although in extenuating circumstances a committee member may attend via video or telephone conference. If a committee member is unable to attend in person or remotely, the Director of Graduate Studies may appoint a substitute. Thesis defenses last at least an hour and will include the presentation of the student's online portfolio. **See Section 5 of this handbook for portfolio guidelines.**

At the conclusion of the defense, the committee may decide either to accept the thesis

as-is, to accept the thesis pending revisions, or to decline to accept the thesis. If revisions are required, the student must submit the revised thesis to the committee members for final approval before submitting it to the College of Graduate Studies. Committee members will not sign off on a thesis until they are satisfied with the revisions. If the committee declines to accept the thesis, the student has failed their defense. The student may schedule no more than one additional defense date for a later semester; if the student fails the defense a second time, their participation in the program will be terminated.

#### **F. Signatures**

Students must obtain the approval of their Thesis Director and additional reader(s) before submitting the thesis to the Chair of the Department for signature. These approvals are indicated by signatures on a Thesis Cover Sheet. All departmental signatures must be obtained before a thesis is submitted to the College of Graduate Studies.

*A sample cover sheet is appended to this handbook.*

#### **G. Deadlines**

The College of Graduate Studies maintains deadlines for the submission of completed, signed theses for graduation. Check the College of Graduate Studies website for those dates. HOWEVER, remember that your Director and second reader must read your thesis prior to the defense, and you must complete all revisions and put the thesis in proper format before submitting the final copy to Graduate Studies. For this reason, it is important to schedule your defense at least two weeks before the Graduate Studies submission deadline.

*Graduate Student Academic Calendar: <http://www.mtsu.edu/graduate/student/calendar.php>*



### **13. GRADUATION PROCESS/PAPERWORK**

#### **a. Intent to Graduate Form**

At the beginning of the semester in which a student intends to graduate, they must submit an Intent to Graduate Form to the College of Graduate Studies. Check the website of the College of Graduate Studies for precise deadlines.

*College of Graduate Studies Intent to Graduate Form On-Line*  
<http://mtsu.edu/graduate/intent.php>.

#### **b. Graduation**

Middle Tennessee State University has three graduation ceremonies each academic year – August, December, and May. All details concerning graduation are handled through the College of Graduate Studies.

*See current graduation information and procedures at:*  
<http://mtsu.edu/graduate/student/graduation.php>

### **14. PUBLIC HISTORY PROGRAM SUPPORT FOR CONFERENCE TRAVEL AND THESIS RESEARCH**

The Public History Program allocates a portion of its annual operating budget to subsidize Public History students who travel to conferences of scholarly or professional organizations for the purpose of making a presentation accepted to a conference program. The Program also will subsidize travel for thesis research to a limited extent. If funds are available, the program will subsidize student travel to conferences for the more general purpose of educational and professional development, i.e., not on the program as a presenter. To qualify for travel assistance from the PH Program, students must also seek funding from the College of Graduate Studies and/or through the Association of Graduate Students in History.

*For details, see the Request for Student Travel Assistance form and the Request for Student Travel Reimbursement form, which are appended to this handbook.*

### **14. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

Students who are funded as Graduate Assistants must meet requirements for continued eligibility, including the maintenance of a 3.0 GPA. Students who have completed their coursework are not eligible for funding. In most cases, this means that students may receive no more than four semesters of funding.

## **15. SELECTED STUDIES AND ADVANCED PROJECTS COURSE REQUEST PROCESS**

All students who wish to take a selected studies or advanced projects class must submit a memo to the public history director and graduate director that identifies the topic of the course and lists the assigned books. Students must also attach an email or letter from the faculty member verifying that they have agreed to teach the course. This information must be submitted before the first day of class.

## **16. DISTANCE LEARNING POLICY**

Students are expected to be present on campus for most of their degree program. However, a limited number of courses offered by the department have a video teleconference option. Enrollment in these courses will only be permitted in special circumstances. Students wishing to take a course in this manner must have permission of both the instructor and graduate director.

## M.A. PUBLIC HISTORY: CHECKLIST

**NAME:**

**M:**

☐ **THESIS OPTION**

☐ **NON-THESIS OPTION**

### DEGREE PLAN FILED:

- a. Required Courses (12 hours):
- ☐ HIST 6010 Historiography
  - ☐ HIST 6020 Historical Research Methods
  - ☐ HIST 6510 Public History Seminar
  - ☐ HIST 6570 Public History Internship
- b. Public History Essentials (Thesis: 3 hours in appropriate concentration; Non-thesis: 9 hours)
- ☐ HIST 6610 Essentials of HP and CRM
  - ☐ HIST 6615 Essentials of Archival Management
  - ☐ HIST 6535 Essentials of Museum Management
  - ☐ HIST 6225 Oral History Theory and Methodology
  - ☐ HIST 6710 Essentials of Public Archaeology
- c. Public History Electives (6 hours) – coordinate with Area Concentration and select from the following in consultation with the Director of Public History
- ☐ HIST 6190 State and Local History
  - ☐ HIST 6220 Public Programming for Historical Organizations/Archives
  - ☐ HIST 6226 Oral History Fieldwork
  - ☐ HIST 6530 Seminar in Administration of Historical Organizations
  - ☐ HIST 6520 Seminar: Historic Preservation
  - ☐ HIST 6540 Seminar: Museum Management
  - ☐ HIST 6545 Seminar in Collections Management for Archives and Museums
  - ☐ HIST 6550 Seminar: American Material Culture
  - ☐ HIST 6551 American Architectural History
  - ☐ HIST 6590 Archives Practicum
  - ☐ HIST 6620 Seminar: Archival Management
  - ☐ HIST 6630 Topics in Archival Management
  - ☐ HIST 6720 Field Methods in Public Archaeology
  - ☐ HIST 6730 Research Methods in Public Archaeology
  - ☐ HIST 6993 Current Issues in Public History Practice
  - ☐ HIST 6994 Advanced Projects in Public History
- d. History Electives (9 hours) – consult Graduate Catalog and Schedule of Courses for 6000-level course offerings and select in consultation with Director of Public History. Non-thesis option requires that 3 hours be a research seminar.
- ☐ HIST [Readings, Topics, or Research Seminar in American, European, or Global History]
  - ☐ HIST [same]
  - ☐ HIST [same]
- e. ☐ Portfolio Presentation: \_\_\_\_\_
- f. ☐ HIST 6640 Thesis Research (3 hrs.; thesis option only) Major Professor: \_\_\_\_\_ Thesis Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

## INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT FORMAT FOR HIST 6570

**Student Name, email**

**Name of Host Institution, Location and Name of Mentor**

**Dates of Internship**

**Internship Title**

**Date of Contract**

Using the eight headings below, rewrite this model agreement to define the specifics of YOUR internship.

### **1. Description of Duties and Responsibilities: Scope of Work and Timetable**

The Intern shall engage in the following projects in the timeframe outlined. Some projects may be amended and timeframes changed as needed during the internship.

#### **Sample Scope of Work:**

##### **Participate in Docent Training, Lead Tours**

Describe the steps involved in your training, such as attending classes or workshops, shadowing experienced docents, etc. Describe the nature of the tours you will lead.

##### **Develop Exhibit on the Life of Jane Smith**

Describe the steps involved in developing the exhibit you will work on (name each exhibit), including research (where? with what files or objects?), script development, object identification, etc.

##### **Create Curriculum Materials for the Jane Smith Exhibit**

Describe the steps involved in creating curriculum materials. Name the exhibit or project, describe the age group, the nature of the lesson plans, field trips you expect to take to educators, etc. Create curriculum materials for exhibit including lesson plans for in-classroom use, and for field trips to museum, research Tennessee State Standards to determine grade level standards, etc.

##### **Conduct Research for the Fall Exhibit on the Tennessee Labor Movement**

Describe the steps involved in doing the research, including the archives you will visit, the online research you will do, the organizations you will consult, etc.

##### **Prepare and Oversee the Museum Summer Academy**

Describe the steps involved in planning the museum's annual educational summer day camp for elementary school students. Explain what you will do and how you will prepare, including activities, publicity, educational materials, etc.

##### **Prepare Draft Exhibit Catalogue for the Jane Smith Exhibit**

Describe the steps involved in preparing an exhibit catalogue, including writing text, identifying images, using Photoshop or InDesign, etc.

#### **Sample Timeline:**

Specify how you will spend your time and set deadlines for "deliverables" (finished products). What part of the projects you will be involved with will you work on each week? Estimate how much time you will spend on each step and when you will do that particular step.

May 16-20: Docent training (40 hours)

May 23-June 3: Research on Jane Smith Exhibit. Read files at TSLA, review images at Library of Congress, prepare draft of exhibit themes (*20 hours per week, 40 hours total*); prepare Museum Summer Academy, attend meetings, review prior summer programs, research other museum education programs (*10 hours per week, 20 hours total*); lead tours of museum (*10 hours per week, 20 hours total*)

June 6-17: Continue research on Jane Smith Exhibit, write exhibit script, submit for review, identify final images and write captions (*30 hours per week, 60 hours total*); lead tours of museum (*10 hours per week, 20 hours total*)

June 17: Complete exhibit script for Jane Smith Exhibit

June 20-24: Prepare curriculum materials for Museum Summer Academy, create activities, submit for review (*20 hours*); begin to develop curriculum materials for Jane Smith Exhibit (*10 hours*); lead tours of museum (*10 hours*)

June 24: Complete all materials for Museum Summer Academy

June 27-July 1: Research and prepare draft of Jane Smith Exhibit curriculum materials (*15 hours*); begin research on Tennessee Labor Movement Exhibit, online research at labor archives, phone interviews with labor leaders in TN (*15 hours*); lead tours of museum (*10 hours*)

July 6: Complete all materials for Jane Smith Exhibit curriculum

July 7-8: Oversee Museum Summer Academy (*16 hours*)

July 11-22: Compile images and text for Jane Smith Exhibit catalogue; write draft of catalogue text (*15 hours per week, 30 hours total*); write final report for Museum Summer Academy (*10 hours*); identify images for Tennessee Labor Movement Exhibit (*15 hours per week, 30 hours total*); lead tours of museum (*10 hours*)

July 25-29: Write text for Jane Smith Exhibit Museum Catalogue, submit text for review and revise (*15 hours*); write draft text for Tennessee Labor Movement Exhibit (*15 hours*); lead tours of museum (*10 hours*)

July 29: Complete all materials for Jane Smith Museum Catalogue; Complete draft text for Tennessee Labor Movement Exhibit.

**2. Bibliography:** The intern will read the following four articles, which are relevant to the specific internship experience (name the four articles).

**3. Fieldwork Journal:** The intern will spend the last fifteen to twenty minutes of each day writing in the fieldwork journal, recording details of any projects worked on, meetings attended, thoughts on upcoming projects, responses to the readings, and anything else that relates to that day's experience. The journal will be the basis for the final paper and should be as detailed as possible.

**4. Internship Report:** At the completion of the internship, the Intern shall submit to the Internship Coordinator a report that describes the activities and accomplishments of the internship, evaluates the ways in which the internship contributed to their professional development (skills and historical knowledge, research), reflects on the role of history (historical scholarship, historical methods) in the operations and activities of the sponsoring institution, and discusses how their intellectual training in Public History at MTSU impacted their internship. For further details on the requirements of the Internship Report see "Internship Report Requirements for HIST 6570."

**5. Work Schedule:** (300 contact hours required; amend as necessary)

The internship shall be performed \_\_\_\_\_ hours a day, \_\_\_\_\_ days a week, Monday through Friday, from \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_ for a minimum of 300 contact hours.

**6. Compensation:**

The Intern shall be paid at the rate of \$\_\_\_\_\_/hr. and be provided with travel expenses at the rate of \$\_\_\_\_\_/mile, \_\_\_\_\_ with a mileage log, from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, round trip, \_\_\_\_\_ times per week for \_\_\_\_\_ weeks.

**7. Mentor Relationship:**

\_\_\_\_\_ shall be responsible for assigning projects to the Intern, providing any necessary equipment and supplies, meeting weekly with the Intern, and conducting a final review based upon the Intern's work performance and a self-evaluation by the Intern. Upon completion of the internship, \_\_\_\_\_ will provide the Internship Coordinator with a one-page evaluation of the Intern.

**8. Exclusion and Indemnification:**

a) The Intern agrees to indemnify and save and hold the \_\_\_\_\_, its agents and employees harmless from any and all claims or causes of action arising from the performance of the Agreement by the Intern.

Intern: M Number, Date, Name

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Instructor: Martha Norkunas, Ph.D.    Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Department of History  
P.O. Box 23  
Middle Tennessee State University  
Murfreesboro, TN 37132  
615-494-7701  
[Martha.Norkunas@mtsu.edu](mailto:Martha.Norkunas@mtsu.edu)

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Mentor: Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Full address, telephone, email,  
including name of Sponsoring  
Institution

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## INTERNSHIP REPORT REQUIREMENTS FOR HIST 6570

At the conclusion of the internship, students enrolled in HIST 6570 must submit an Internship Report that meets the requirements stated below.

### CONTENT

The Internship Report must include both a narrative portion and one or more appendices.

The narrative portion must be at least twelve pages in length and must include the following information: (1) a succinct description of your duties, responsibilities, and accomplishments as an intern; (2) a self-assessment of your professional development as a result of the internship; and (3) a discussion of how your intellectual training influenced your internship. Students may draw on their Fieldwork Journal to complete the Internship Report and should submit a copy of the Fieldwork Journal as an appendix to the Report.

- (1) The descriptive section should be approximately half the length of the narrative. If you find that you need more than five pages to summarize your duties, responsibilities, and activities, then lengthen your overall narrative accordingly, i.e., if the description is six pages long, the total length of your narrative should be at least thirteen pages.
- (2) The self-assessment of your professional growth and development should detail with some specificity the knowledge, skills, and abilities that you acquired or honed during your internship. You may also comment on the mentoring that you received, but do not use the narrative as an opportunity to complain about staff, working conditions, or any other aspect of the work environment. This section should be two to three pages in length.
- (3) The final section of the narrative should critically analyze the role that your graduate study of historical scholarship and methods played in your learning experience. Where appropriate, reference specific readings or activities associated with your coursework that influenced your thinking about your internship. Comment on the degree to which the scholarship and methods of history were valued and practiced in the institution where you served your internship. Include a discussion of the readings completed over the summer and how they related to your internship. This section should be four to five pages in length.

In addition to the narrative the Internship Report should contain one or more appendices containing work products, or samples that document the knowledge, skills, and abilities you developed during the internship. It should also contain an assessment of your scope of work and timetable and how closely it approximated how you actually spent your time. Make sure that you reference specific attachments appropriately in the narrative portion of your report. Materials in the appendices must be referenced in the narrative and included in the Table of Contents.

## **PRESENTATION**

The Internship Report should look professional. Submit one paper copy and one electronic copy. The paper copy must:

- (1) be typed, double spaced, with one-inch margins and appropriately paginated;
- (2) have a title page that includes, at a minimum, your name, date of submittal, and place where you served your internship;
- (3) contain a Table of Contents including appendices;
- (4) include a copy of the Fieldwork Journal;
- (5) include plastic or paper sleeves for all media.

The electronic copy of the Internship Report may be submitted on a flash drive (the flash drive will not be returned to you). All electronic copies must be clearly labeled with your name, date, and name of host institution. All Internship Reports must also be uploaded to D2L.

The Internship Report becomes a part of your permanent file and will be deposited in the University Archives at the Albert Gore Research Center. You are strongly encouraged to make a copy for your own portfolio.

## **GRADING**

Pass/fail grades for HIST 6570 are based on (1) the thoroughness of the Scope of Work, Timetable and Contract; (2) the submission of all materials by the due dates and attendance at all internship meetings; (3) the quality of the daily entries in the Fieldwork Journal, including responses to readings; (4) the quality of the information provided for the summary sheets and the database; (5) the content and presentation of the Internship Report (see Internship Report Content); (6) the quality and professionalism of the final presentation; (7) and the strength of the letter of evaluation submitted by the internship mentor.

Mentor letter of evaluation: Please ask your mentor to submit their evaluation as a formal letter. A scanned letter or email is acceptable. Your internship agreement form must include the name, mailing address, telephone, and email of the instructor for History 6570.



# REPORT OF M.A. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Department of History

Middle Tennessee State University

Student Name and M# \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Public History Question:   P     F

History Question:               P     F

Oral Examination:           P     F

We report that this student (check one):

\_\_\_\_\_ has successfully completed the examination.

\_\_\_\_\_ will have to retake portions of the examination indicated by the failing grade(s) above.

\_\_\_\_\_ has failed all retakes and will be terminated from the program.

Signatures of examination subcommittee:

Examiner 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner 3 (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Examiner 4 (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

## REPORT OF M.A.P.H. PORTFOLIO PRESENTATION

Department of History

Middle Tennessee State University

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student M Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Skill Areas

*(Please mark YES or NO for each skill area.)*

\_\_\_\_\_ Has demonstrated proficiency in research.

\_\_\_\_\_ Has demonstrated proficiency in communication.

Has demonstrated proficiency in (check one)

\_\_\_\_\_ a specialized research skill,

\_\_\_\_\_ organizational management and administration

\_\_\_\_\_ pedagogy and educational programming.

\_\_\_\_\_ ability to work with community organizations or groups

\_\_\_\_\_ Has passed the portfolio presentation

\_\_\_\_\_ Will have to improve and revise those portions of the portfolio indicated by the failing grade(s) above and present the entire portfolio again to the examining committee.

Signatures of committee members:

Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_

## **THESIS PROPOSAL ACCEPTANCE FORM**

Department of History  
Middle Tennessee State University

Preliminary Thesis Title: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student M Number \_\_\_\_\_

Thesis Director \_\_\_\_\_

Second Reader \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Thesis  
Completion Date \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE ATTACH A COPY OF THE THESIS PROPOSAL**

## **M.A. THESIS GUIDELINES**

Department of History  
Middle Tennessee State University

In addition to the general thesis and dissertation guidelines issued by the Graduate Office, the Department has the following guidelines, which apply specifically to theses and dissertations in history. Please familiarize yourself with the rules and work out ambiguities and questions with your director early in the composition process. Assume that your early chapter drafts should be submitted to your director with proper footnote/endnote citations and in the proper page format. Furthermore, it is highly recommended that you double-check questions regarding format with the Director of Graduate Studies and/or the Graduate Office. Finally, feel free to submit sample pages, notes, photograph set-ups and the like both to your director and the Graduate Office.

**1. Responsibilities of students, directors, and readers:** Students are responsible for submitting the thesis in the proper format, proofreading the copy, and taking the initiative to work out with the thesis/dissertation director and the Graduate Office any problems or questions regarding text, notes, citations, photos, etc. Thesis directors are there primarily to assist students with the process of composition: strategies of chapter presentation and organization, narrative rhetoric, and the issues of logic and analysis. Although directors should certainly help with any problems or questions about format, it is not their job to set up the thesis for the student, or to act as line by line copyeditors.

The above having been said, thesis directors are likewise responsible for double-checking the student's project to make sure all is in order before it goes to the Chair of the Department for signing. Responsible thesis directing means making sure that the student has submitted the project in proper format. The Graduate Office will not accept a thesis without the Chair's signature.

Thesis directors should work together with their second readers to ensure the successful completion of the student's thesis. Directors and readers should feel free to work out in their own way the particulars of how they will direct their student's work project, but they should establish these particulars at the time the student turns in their thesis proposal. This is best done in a meeting where all the parties are present. This way, details and potential misunderstandings can be worked out face to face beforehand. At minimum, thesis directors, and dissertation directors too, are to ensure that drafts are submitted to second readers in a timely manner. It is the director's responsibility to provide the readers with full opportunity to fulfill their own responsibilities in a professional manner.

Second and other readers of theses and dissertations are responsible to review the student's project to see that it conforms to acceptable standards of logical argument as defined by the historical discipline. The second readers bear no responsibility for proofreading the student's project for mistakes in format or style, although they may certainly take notice of errors and suggest corrections. Moreover, second readers are not obligated to sign any thesis or dissertation that is sloppily composed or improperly formatted. The Department Chair, moreover, is not obligated to read any thesis/dissertation that second readers have not signed.

**2. Length and purpose of a thesis:** The thesis is an opportunity for the student to demonstrate that they can conduct intelligent independent research from an historical perspective. For this purpose, an 80-100-page thesis (exclusive of appendices and bibliography) is sufficient so long as it sustains one continuous argument subdivided into chapters, and so long as it provides an interpretation of secondary and primary sources.

**3. Style manuals:** The history department's manual of choice is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, most recent edition, or, for more complex citations, the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Students are advised to use the style manual for all work submitted in graduate school—book reviews, critical essays, seminar papers—so that the forms and formatting become second nature before the thesis project begins.

**4. Endnotes/Footnotes:** Students may use either footnotes (notes at the bottom of each page of the text) or endnotes. Endnotes, if used, must be placed at the end of each chapter (the introduction, if there is one, is counted as a chapter). Whether using footnotes or endnotes, each source cited must receive a first full reference citation the first time it is cited in a chapter. For subsequent references to the source in the chapter the student may use the second reference according to the style manual.

**5. Bibliography:** Bibliographies must be subdivided according to primary and secondary sources. Finer categorizations may be made (for example, newspapers, manuscript correspondence, etc.) depending upon the nature of the project. Students should consult their director on this issue. Bibliographies indicate the sources used to compose the thesis/dissertation.

**6. Order of Arrangement:** Use the order of arrangement provided by the Graduate Office guidelines. Use the pagination and numbering system cited in the example attached to these guidelines. In fact, Graduate Office guidelines, which may be subject to periodic change, always take precedence over *Turabian* or *Chicago Manual of Style*

**7. Deadlines:** The College of Graduate Studies maintains deadlines for the submission of theses on their website. It is your responsibility to ensure that the thesis defense is scheduled with sufficient time to undertake necessary revisions and secure the signatures of the thesis director, second reader(s), and History Department Chair before it is sent to the College of Graduate Studies.

## **8. Master's Thesis Timetable**

a) As required by departmental guidelines, you need to declare your thesis field sometime within your first 12 hours of graduate history courses and have arranged with the Director of Graduate Studies and, where applicable, the Public History Director, for the appointment of a field director and reader

b) Within your first academic year (normally a fall and spring semester), seriously explore possible topics so that you can use your first summer semester to read secondary works and examine possible primary sources (maybe aim to complete 80% of your primary research here)

c) By the semester before you defend your thesis, you must, according to departmental guidelines, submit a formal thesis proposal to your thesis director and second reader (the proposal requires signatures from the director and second reader, and is developed according to a form established by the Department - - see the Graduate Director for details)

- d) Keep constantly in contact with your thesis director during the entire process of composition of the thesis. Assume that it will take six months beyond the proposal defense to compose your thesis
- e) Work by the rule of thumb that your thesis must be complete and in the hands of your committee members about a month before the College of Graduate Studies submission deadline.
- f) Schedule your defense at least two weeks before the College of Graduate Studies submission deadline. This will ensure that you have plenty of time to conduct any necessary revisions and submit the final draft to your committee members prior to formal submission.
- g) Submit your completed and approved thesis to the Department Chair for signing. Also provide an electronic copy of the completed thesis to the History Department's executive aide for graduate programs.

**9. Graduate Office Procedures for Master's theses:** After your thesis has been signed by your thesis director, second reader, and the Department Chair, it goes to the Graduate Office. The procedure works as follows:

- a) When the student has made the corrections suggested by the thesis director, second reader, and Department Chair (note, the Department Chair will not sign the thesis until all these corrections are made), the student should take one completed, corrected copy of the thesis to the Graduate Office. The deadline for submission to the Graduate School is posted each semester on the Graduate Studies website. This copy must include the signature page, thesis abstract, title and table of contents pages, acknowledgements (optional), body of the thesis, notes, appendices (if applicable), and bibliography.
- b) A designated representative of the Dean of Graduate Studies will read the completed thesis and make their own suggestions for corrections. Once read, the Dean will send a letter to the student, thesis director, Department Chair, and Director of Graduate Studies notifying these persons of their decision to accept or reject a thesis. Note: the Dean's signature is required on the thesis, and they have the right to refuse to accept a project if they deem it beneath Graduate School standards.
- c) Once the letter of acceptance from the Dean is received, the student must then produce three additional copies of the thesis. Each copy should be placed in a large envelope, with the components of each copy in proper order ready for binding. On each envelope the student should type or print the title of the thesis, the author's full name, the expected graduation date (17F, say), and the number of the copy. If the student has used a typist, that person's name and telephone number should appear on the envelope.

**10. Abstract:** The abstract summarizes the content and argument of the thesis/dissertation for scholars working in the discipline, providing them information to decide whether or not they wish to read the complete work. In history, abstracts should include a brief statement of the intellectual/historical issue(s) explored in the original research, a brief description of the sources used, and a summary of the major argument presented. Thesis abstracts should not exceed 150 words.

[Thesis Title goes here: begin  
subtitle on second line]

[your name here]

Approved:

---

Dr. [type name]  
Major Professor

---

Dr. [type name]  
Reader

---

Dr. [type name]  
Chair, History Department

---

Dr. [type name]  
College of Graduate Studies



**Public History Program**  
**Department of History**

**REQUEST FOR STUDENT TRAVEL ASSISTANCE**  
**PUBLIC HISTORY PROGRAM**

Depending on funds availability in any given semester:

- PhD students who have been advanced to candidacy are eligible to receive up to \$500 for research travel associated with completion of the dissertation requirement.
- M.A. students in the Public History Program who have an approved thesis proposal are eligible to receive up to \$250 for research travel associated with completion of the thesis requirement.
- All graduate students in the Public History Program are eligible to receive up to \$250 for conference travel if presenting a paper or poster. Students who are not presenting a paper or poster are eligible to receive up to \$150.

**NOTE: Funds for conference travel will be awarded only to defray expenses over and above costs that are reimbursed by the College of Graduate Studies and/or by SGA via AGSH.**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

M# \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT REQUESTED FROM THE PUBLIC HISTORY PROGRAM \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 FOR: ☐ CONFERENCE TRAVEL ☐ RESEARCH FOR THESIS OR DISSERTATION

**CONFERENCE TRAVEL**

Name of Conference: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of Travel: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you presenting a paper or poster? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Have you requested funding from the College of Graduate Studies? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Have you requested SGA funding through AGSH? ☐ YES ☐ NO

**RESEARCH TRAVEL FOR THESIS OR DISSERTATION**

Dates of Travel: \_\_\_\_\_

Name/s and location/s of research repositories:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Director, Public History Program      Date

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:**

☐ Funds Encumbered

Semester \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_



**Public History Program**  
**Department of History**



**REQUEST FOR STUDENT TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT – PUBLIC HISTORY PROGRAM**

**ALL TRAVEL CLAIMS MUST BE FILED WITHIN 30 DAYS OF RETURN DATE.**

**This form is to be submitted with an MTSU Travel Claim Form,  
 which can be found at this link:**

<http://www.mtsu.edu/boffice/forms.shtml#as>

**\*Forms submitted must have original signature.**

In order to be reimbursed, a "REQUEST FOR STUDENT TRAVEL ASSISTANCE" form must have been completed in advance by student and approved by Public History Director. If you received an email confirmation please provide authorization number issued by Accounting Services **T**\_\_\_\_\_.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

M# \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

WHERE DID YOU GO (City, State)? \_\_\_\_\_

FOR: ☐ CONFERENCE TRAVEL ☐ RESEARCH FOR THESIS OR DISSERTATION

If conference travel, name of conference: \_\_\_\_\_

If conference travel, were you a presenter? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Did you receive funding from Graduate Studies? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If you answered YES, how much funding did you receive? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you receive funding from SGA through AGSH? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If you answered YES, how much funding did you receive? \_\_\_\_\_

Amount remaining unreimbursed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT REQUESTED FROM THE PUBLIC HISTORY PROGRAM \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Director, Public History Program

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

