

New School for Social Research

New School University

Committee on Historical Studies (History)
Curriculum Handbook 2015– 2016

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This *Graduate Handbook* is a general reference to graduate study in this department. It includes information on academic programs, program requirements, teaching and research assistant-ships, and other matters related to your academic progress. It is designed to help your life as a graduate student proceed as smoothly as possible and to enable you to anticipate each stage in your graduate career.

The *Graduate Handbook* accompanies the *NSSR Catalog*. The *Catalog* is the official source of information about the rules, regulations and requirements of the University, the NSSR, and the Department. As a companion to the *Catalog*, this handbook is designed to clarify NSSR and Departmental policy, and provide you with resources for solving any problems that may arise as you pursue your graduate studies.

The information published here represents the plans of the New School for Social Research at the time of publication. The division reserves the right to change any matter contained in this publication, including but not limited to policies, degree programs, names of programs, course offerings, academic activities, academic requirements, faculty and administrators.

For further assistance, please contact the Department Student Advisor, the Department Secretary, or your faculty Advisor.

The Committee on Historical Studies (History)

History is a field of inquiry essential to all human understanding. Recognizing that historical studies have transformative potential for interpretation, theory, and political action, we seek to establish a theoretically-informed interdisciplinary space for producing critical history. Our program conceives of history as a way of thinking, a form of inquiry, and a mode of critique, aligned with the intellectual tradition that defines the New School. We train students in the rigors of scholarly discourse, independent research, and the imaginative act of relating history to the contemporary world. Students' projects combine theoretical and political engagement with rich empirical research.

The Committee on Historical Studies (CHS) was founded in the mid-1980s by Charles Tilly, Louise Tilly, Aristide Zolberg and Ira Katznelson on the conviction that the social sciences, public discussion of contemporary problems, and policy-making all become richer and more effective when joined with historical analysis; that practicing social scientists who want to work with history should learn to use historians' standard materials and methods; and that the theories and methods of the social sciences strengthen historical research. These sentiments continue to guide the pedagogical and research programs of historical studies at The New School.

The Committee on Historical Studies is closely linked with History at Eugene Lang College. In conjunction with a number of scholars elsewhere at the university, we are developing an integrated Department of History across divisions.

Committee Members 2014-2015

Chair:

[Federico Finchelstein](#), Professor of History

Faculty:

[Elaine Abelson](#), Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer Graduate Faculty

[Oz Frankel](#), Associate Professor of History

[Orit Halpern](#), Assistant Professor of History

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Aaron Jakes, Assistant Professor of History

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[Julia Ott](#), Assistant Professor of History

[David Plotke](#), Professor of Politics

[Ann-Louise Shapiro](#), Professor of History

[Ann Stoler](#), Willy Brandt Distinguished University Professor of Anthropology and Historical Studies

[Jeremy Varon](#), Associate Professor of History

[Eli Zaretsky](#), Professor of History

Affiliate Faculty:

[Laura Auricchio](#), Associate Professor of Art & Design Studies, Parsons School of Design

David Brody, Associate Professor of Art & Design Studies, Parsons School of Design

[Julia Foulkes](#), Associate Professor and Chair of Social Sciences, New School for General Studies

[Joseph Heathcott](#), Associate Professor of Urban Studies, New School for General Studies

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The M.A. in Historical Studies

Coursework and Degree Requirements

Students pursuing a degree in Historical Studies must meet the requirements of the Committee on Historical Studies and the New School for Social Research. Students are expected to be familiar with both sets of requirements and procedures. For this reason, they should read this handbook in conjunction with the New School for Social Research Bulletin, which can be obtained at the office of Admissions or in the Office of Academic Affairs, located at 79 Fifth Ave., Rm 1007.

To obtain an MA in Historical Studies students are required to:

- Complete 30 course credits
- Maintain no less than a B (3.0) grade point average
- Complete a thesis project

Additionally, all MA students are required to take a linked trio of seminars designed to orient them to historical inquiry and further learn the craft of historical research.

- GHIS 6133 Historiography and Historical Practice (one semester course to be taken in the student's first year)
- GHIS 6134 Historical Sources and Methods (one semester course to be taken in the student's first year)
- GHIS 5900-A MA Thesis Seminar (one semester seminar to be taken in the student's 3rd semester)

Students must take, in addition, at least 18 credits that are listed or cross-listed with Historical Studies (that is, courses that have a GHIS code)

- 12 credits must be listed or cross-listed with Historical Studies

The remaining credits (9) are general electives from any discipline.

Students must meet with the Graduate Student Advisor before registering each semester to ascertain that the course of study follows the expected guidelines. In addition, each student is assigned a Faculty Advisor, with whom they must meet at least once per semester to discuss their course of study. This academic year, the Graduate Student Advisor is Luis Herran Avila. His e-mail address is Histadv@newschool.edu. All contact information is available on the website at <http://www.newschool.edu/nssr/historical-studies/>.

Students who will seek entrance into a PhD program with an NSSR Department upon completion of the Historical Studies MA, are strongly encouraged to take the basic, required courses from either the Politics or Sociology Departments. Students can download the PhD admissions procedures and core requirements for each department from the NSSR Website <http://www.newschool.edu/nssr/>

Academic Advising

The Student Advisor is an advanced graduate student who assists students with academic decisions. The Student Advisor counsels students about course selections during registration. In addition, the Advisor informs students about requirements for the M.A. thesis, the PhD programs with other social science disciplines with a specialization in History, credit transfers, and other academic petitions. The office of the Historical Studies Student Advisor is located in Room 512 at 80 Fifth Ave. Office hours are posted on the door, or can be arranged by appointment. The Student Advisor can also be contacted via email through the Historical Studies Website. Go to: <http://www.newschool.edu/nssr/subpage.aspx?id=9244#hist> and click on “Student Advisor.”

Faculty Advising

Entering M.A. and PhD students will be assigned a faculty advisor, based on academic interests. Students need to consult their faculty advisor at least once during each semester and are encouraged to meet with their faculty Advisor more often. The faculty advisor is an essential guide in career and thesis planning.

MA Thesis

At the end of their first year of coursework, after completing both required courses, students submit a proposal for an MA Thesis project to their primary faculty advisor. If the proposal is approved, students work on their Thesis Projects in their second year. Students will write their thesis as an independent study under the supervision of their thesis advisor.

MA Thesis papers are written in the form of a polished research article in history. Typically, papers range between 40 and 60 double spaced pages, and should not surpass 65 pages in length. First and Final Drafts are due the following dates.

COMPLETED FIRST DRAFT - FRIDAY, APRIL 29, submitted to one's Thesis Advisor

COMPLETED FINAL DRAFT – FRIDAY, MAY 13, submitted to one's Thesis Advisor and one other CHS faculty member (History, or an affiliate).

The PhD at the New School for Social Research with specialization in History

Though the New School offers no self-standing PhD in History, it does have an innovative and exciting interdisciplinary program — the PhD with specialization in history. Students pursuing this specialization pair formal disciplinary training in one of the NSSR's Ph.D-granting programs in the social sciences and humanities (Politics, Sociology, Anthropology, Economics, and Philosophy) with training in Historical Studies. Embodying the interdisciplinary ethos of the NSSR as a whole, the specialization encourages cutting edge research that synthesizes the methods and approach of multiple fields.

Students pursuing this path receive their formal degrees in their primary, PhD granting field. They may be eligible, however, for academic employment both in that field and as historians, and their work is typically marked by rigorous efforts to bridge disciplinary knowledge, methods, and cultures.

Students pursuing this path must satisfy all the degree requirements of their primary PhD field (coursework, qualifying exams, and dissertation) and also do a reasonable amount of work in Historical Studies. This generally entails taking two “core” History courses (Historiography; Historical Sources and Methods); doing one qualifying exam under the supervision of a History faculty member (typically oriented to historiographic study of a topic related to the dissertation research); and having one History faculty member (primary or “affiliate”) on one's dissertation committee. These requirements, however, may be modified based on the student's academic background, stage in their program, and research interests.

Admission into the History specialization program can work a number of ways, based on the student's prior training and their stage in post-graduate study. A student may:

Apply for the specialization in History when already enrolled in a PhD program at the NSSR. In such cases, students discuss their plans for this degree with their advisor in their PhD field; identify a History faculty as their History advisor and discuss the program with them; and submit an application to the Chair of the History Department. The application includes an academic transcript; a brief statement (3-4 pages) explaining the rationale for the added specialization and how their work meaningfully engages history; a cv; and a form (NSSR General Student Petition Form) that, signed by the History Chair, changes their status to a student with the History specialization. The form is submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs at the NSSR for processing. In consultation with their History advisor, such students go over the program requirements and make any valuable modifications, taking into account the stage of the student in their PhD program and what best serves their intellectual and professional development.

Apply for the History specialization when he/she applies into a PhD granting program, while already in the MA program in that field (e.g. a Politics MA student applies to the

Politics PhD program with the History specialization). In such cases, the admissions decision rests with the department of the PhD field. That department will, however, share the application with the History department, which may make a recommendation as to the candidate's "fit" for the specialization and comment on her/his general academic abilities. Upon admission to the PhD program, the student will then consult with the History faculty regarding the specific requirements of the specialization and the formal application process, whose steps are identical as those for the prior category of student.

Apply for the History specialization as an "external" PhD candidate, with no prior MA work at the New School. In such cases, the admissions process is as above. If a student who already did an MA in history elsewhere is admitted in this fashion, it is likely that the History specialization requirements will be substantially modified (as the student may have already taken a class in historical methods).

Apply for the History specialization program while currently being an MA student in Historical Studies. This is perhaps the most common route into the PhD with a History specialization, and has the most involved procedures. In general, it entails taking courses while an MA student in Historical Studies in the department in which one will apply for the PhD; developing a faculty advocate both in History and the PhD-granting department; and applying into that program as an "internal candidate," within a timetable set by that department and based on fulfilling certain admissions criteria it may set. The final admission decision lies with the PhD department, but the History faculty consults in that decision.

Historical Studies MA students are instructed throughout their time at NSSR about the PhD history specialization option: first, in a meeting of the new MA cohort before fall classes even begin, and then in special meetings later in the fall and/or spring for all Historical Studies MA students, about how to apply to PhD programs, whether at NSSR or elsewhere. At such meetings, the key advice is that the student make sure to take classes in the PhD-granting field, consult with the Student Advisor of that fall regarding program requirements and expectations of candidates, and build a relationship with at least one faculty member in that department, who can serve as a faculty sponsor of one's application.

Specific application procedures and deadlines are follows:

By **November 1** students intending to apply to PhD programs with the History specialization are to submit to Academic Affairs the "Application for Internal PhD Admission" form. Separate from the actual PhD application, this form helps NSSR track all "internal" PhD candidates (NSSR MA students applying into NSSR PhD programs).

By **February 1** students intending to apply to PhD programs with the History specialization are to submit their PhD application to the Department Secretary of History. The student must also submit a complete application to the Ph.D field into which they are applying (those deadlines vary by individual department; some are on February 1, and others are later). The precise

contents of the application are largely set by the department of the PhD field and can be ascertained by consulting materials from that department (whether on-line and/or in their Curriculum Handbook) and by talking to its graduate Student Advisor. Specialization applications must include, in addition, at least one letter by a “faculty sponsor” in both History (regular or affiliate) and in the PhD granting field. These can be conventional recommendation letters in the student dossier (though best is for such letters to speak to the specificity of the history aspects of their work and why the applicant is a good candidate for it), or special, supplementary letters. Further, the student’s “statement of purpose” (a standard part of PhD applications) should include some description of the rationale for pursuit of the history specialization and how/why the student’s work is enhanced by interdisciplinary training.

* Note: the PhD application in Anthropology is due considerably later than those of most other NSSR departments. Hence, a History specialization applicant may submit to the History faculty on February 1 a preliminary application, and add materials later to their Anthropology application.

By **February 15** Historical Studies faculty will meet to discuss and assess all PhD applications, and prepare comments for potential, future consultation with the admissions committees of the PhD departments into which the students are applying.

The students will be informed of their acceptance, rejection, or wait-listing by the PhD-granting department based on the dates for notification set by those departments.

Coursework and Degree Requirements

Though specific requirements may vary (see above), History specialization students are expected to:

- Complete all the requirements for the doctoral degree in their respective social science discipline.
- Complete 60 credits of coursework.
- Take GHIS 6133, Historiography and Historical Practice; GHIS 6134, Historical Methods and Sources: Students who have already taken these courses as part of an MA in Historical Studies have already fulfilled this requirement. Note: PhD students are not required to take the MA Thesis Writing Course.
- Prepare one exam field for CHS in addition to those required by their other department. The form of the exam (a take-home exam, or a field statement) will mirror the practices in Political Science or Sociology.

- Form a dissertation committee with at least one CHS faculty member. Among their other advising responsibilities, this committee member will determine whether the thesis engages historical materials in a serious manner.

PhD Qualifying Exam in Historical Studies

Procedure:

PhD students generally take their CHS Qualifying Exam within six months of completing course work and before they defend their dissertation proposal. Students must choose a faculty advisor. This faculty Advisor will head their PhD Qualifying Exam Committee and ideally should serve on their dissertation committee. In conjunction with their faculty advisor, students must find another CHS faculty member to serve on the Qualifying Exam Committee

Fields for the PhD qualifying exam should be devised with a specific PhD project in mind. Preparation for the exam assists students to situate their work within particular fields of historical research and methodology. Together with their faculty advisors students will prepare a detailed bibliography for each field. Ordinarily, the exam will be conducted as a three-day “take home” exercise in which students will be asked essay questions based on their respective fields, though exam formats may vary.

Scholarly Expectations:

- 1) Demonstration of thorough knowledge of the field literature.
- 2) Exposition of the candidate’s own interpretation of the problem posed in the question. Along with critically reviewing the existing literature, the candidate is encouraged to discuss conceptual problems left unsolved or not addressed by the field.
- 3) A general summary of the ways in which the problem relates to broader questions of social and historical interpretation. The candidate should suggest the relevance of the research topic to questions posed in various sectors of social science and history.

Departmental Procedures

Registration

For MA students, registration begins in the Committee on Historical Studies with an appointment with the Student Advisor. PhD students must register with the Student Advisor in their corresponding department. Students register on-line during two periods, April and November. Important information regarding registration and other policies are conveyed via the New School e-mail system. It is very important that all students set-up and maintain their accounts.

Transfer of Credits

A maximum of 3 credits may be transferred from another institution at the MA level. Students may apply for transfer credits after completing 6 credits at NSSR. All NSSR courses are for 3 credits. Requests for transfer credit will be reviewed by CHS faculty. At the PhD level, while NSSR rules permit a transfer of as many as 30 credits from another institution, the precise number of credits transferred will be determined on a case basis. Given the extent of requirements in Historical Studies plus either Politics or Sociology, it is unlikely that large numbers of credits can be transferred, in most cases.

Student Evaluations

Each year in August and February, the Chair of the Committee and the Office of Academic Affairs review the transcripts of all students and send each student an Academic Review. The main objective of the review is to determine whether or not there is any situation that might prevent continued study or graduation, or that might hinder financial aid. The Committee and the Assistant Dean typically look at incomplete coursework, the GPA, and the match between completed coursework and departmental requirements. The academic review is an attempt to help students navigate the roadblocks and pitfalls of earning an advanced degree.

All students receive mail through their CHS mailboxes. Each student is assigned a box, which is located on the wall in the lobby at 80 Fifth Avenue, 5th floor. Communications concerning CHS events are done through email.

Graduation Requirements Checklist: CHS MA

Courses	Sem/Yr	Credits
A: CHS Core Courses		
GHIS 6133 Historiography and Historical Practice	_____	3
GHIS 6134 Historical Methods	_____	3
GHIS 5900 MA Thesis Seminar	_____	3
B: Courses Listed or Cross-Listed in Historical Studies (GHIS)		
1. _____	_____	3
2. _____	_____	3
3. _____	_____	3
4. _____	_____	3
C: General Electives (GHIS or otherwise)		
1. _____	_____	3
2. _____	_____	3
3. _____	_____	3
Topic/Title _____		
Approved on _____		
Total:		30 Credits

Graduation Requirements Checklist: PhD with specialization in History

Requirements	Sem/Yr
A: CHS Core Courses	
GHIS6133 Historiography and Historical Practice	_____
GHIS 6134 Historical Methods	_____
B: Ph.D. Exams	
Ph.D. Qualifying Exams in Departmental Discipline	_____
Historical Studies Field Exam/Field Statement	_____
D: Oral Defense of Dissertation Proposal	
Topic/Title _____	_____
Approved on _____	_____