

Guidelines/Policy for Master's Thesis in Public History

Public history students currently have the option to complete a thesis in lieu of the seminar sequence (611-612). Students should follow these guidelines for successful completion of the thesis option:

1. Composition and role of thesis committee
 - The thesis committee should include a minimum of 3 faculty members at least 2 of whom should be in the History Department. The committee may also include other appropriate faculty or professional members. The composition of the final committee must be approved by the Graduate Director.
 - Typically, the mentor will serve as the director of the thesis.
 - The student will develop a thesis proposal in consultation with their mentor.
 - The thesis committee will approve the proposal in a consultation meeting with the student at the beginning of the project.
 - After successful committee approval of thesis proposal, student must receive approval from the Director of Graduate Studies to substitute thesis for seminar sequence.
 - The thesis committee will meet with the student at least once during the development of the thesis to review a complete draft. Committee members approve the final draft with their signatures on the title page.
2. General expectations for the thesis
 - The thesis should be based on substantial primary source research and be directly related to the student's professional goals. Students should work with mentors to be sure that the thesis will make a meaningful contribution to the professional portfolio they are developing in the Master's program.
 - The thesis should take into account the following scholarly elements:
 - A. Historiography: literature review placing the student's work in a larger professional context;
 - B. Methodology: explanation and evaluation of methodologies applied in the project;
 - C. Interpretation and historical context: analysis of original research findings.
3. Advice regarding thesis schedule
 - Students will develop a research and writing schedule with mentors for successful completion of the thesis.
 - The following represents a possible thesis schedule for two-year degree completion:
 - A. Students should organize the thesis committee and schedule the consultation meeting for approval of the thesis proposal by the end of 18 hours of course work.
 - B. Establish deadlines and schedule for completion of thesis chapters with mentor.
 - C. Summer research-draft chapter one for review in early fall.

- D. Third semester: complete chapter one and draft chapter two.
- E. Fourth semester: complete chapter two and draft chapter three.
Schedule committee meeting for thesis approval. Check Graduate School schedule for dates of thesis submission for spring graduation.
- F. Submit thesis following guidelines outlined in *The Graduate School Guide for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations*.