M. A. Project in History

Best Practices

1.12.26

Departmental Requirements from the Graduate Student Handbook:

Research project

Starting in Fall 2025, students beginning the MA at UCSB are required to produce a Master's Research Project that demonstrates the ability to contribute significant research in one of the Department's subfields (see below), conducted under the supervision of a History affiliated faculty advisor and two other ladder rank faculty members. The research project is comprised of two parts: a historiography paper of 15-20 pages and a research paper that engages with at least one primary source.

- The historiography portion may be in full or in part the product of HIST 202, a reading seminar, or the HIST 292 series.
- The research portion may be the product of a two-quarter research seminar or the equivalent, also in full or in part.
- Three faculty members, including the student's primary mentor, must assess the research project.
- With the prior approval of the Director of Graduate Studies and the student's supervisor, a student may substitute a project such as an exhibition or digital humanities project for one of the papers.
- A satisfactory project is one that earns a grade B or better, but only those projects earning an A- or better will qualify the student to continue to the Ph.D.

Procedure:

- The student's advisor will form a committee made up of the advisor and two other ladder faculty from History. Non-ladder and non-History faculty may be included with the prior agreement of the DGS.
- The student will provide a digital copy of the required papers to the Graduate Coordinator who will then email them to the members of the committee with a grade sheet similar to that used for comprehensive exams. The papers should have already been revised by the student to take into account faculty comments.
- Each committee member will email the sheet with a grade and any comments to the Graduate Coordinator who will then share all three grading sheets with the committee members.
- If the committee is in agreement about whether the student should receive a passing grade or not, that decision will be official. If they disagree, the chair of the committee, who is the student's advisor, will convene a meeting of the committee to reach a consensus on the student's grade, but all committee members must agree for a student to pass. Once the committee reaches a decision, the committee chair should inform the Graduate

Coordinator who will send the committee members a form similar to the one used for comprehensives for them to sign.