

# University of South Florida History Department

## PhD Program Manual AY 2024-25

This document describes the Department of History's key policies, procedures, expectations, and responsibilities for students in the PhD program. Since it reflects the current status of our evolving program, it may be subject to change. Students should refer to the [USF Graduate Catalog](#) for all information on degree requirements. Please be sure to consult the FAQ at the bottom of this Program Manual and the [Graduate Program Canvas page](#) for additional details about the program.

### Important Contacts

**History Department Graduate Director:** Dr. Matt King, [matthewking1@usf.edu](mailto:matthewking1@usf.edu), SOC 213

**Graduate Program Specialist:** Ruth Borrero, [borrero168@usf.edu](mailto:borrero168@usf.edu), 813-974-2784, SOC 268

When you have questions about logistics related to this program, students should first consult the PhD Program Manual from the year in which they entered the program ([accessible via Canvas](#)) and the [History Graduate Program Canvas page](#) generally. If these resources do not provide you with satisfactory answers, please send an email to both the Graduate Director and the Graduate Program Specialist so that they can assist you to the best of their abilities.

### Deciding Upon a Course of Study

By the end of their first semester, students ought to have a general idea of their interests and be ready to start research on their dissertation topic. Although students may change this topic at any time within the first two years of their program, they are strongly encouraged to begin researching their topics as soon as possible in order to move through the program efficiently.

### Faculty Advisors and Dissertation Committees

Upon admittance to the program, students will be assigned a provisional faculty advisor in their field of study with whom they will meet to develop a plan for their coursework. Typically, this person will become the student's dissertation advisor (also called Major Professor). However, if the student's research topic changes or they find a better fit with another faculty member, they are free to choose another advisor. In this case, they need to inform their previous advisor, the Graduate Program Specialist, and the Graduate Director of this change via email.

During their first two years in the PhD program (and prior to advancing to doctoral candidacy), students also need to form a dissertation committee of four members. Three of these members should be graduate faculty within the USF History Department. The fourth committee member, formally known as the external member, may be selected from another department within USF or from another institution entirely. Students should work with their advisors to determine who will be the most suitable committee members, though it is the responsibility of students to form their own committees.

Students are required to have successfully completed at least 3 credits of course work with each member of their committee who is a faculty member within the USF History Department and is permitted to supervise doctoral students. The external committee member needs to hold a PhD degree and be affiliated with an accredited university. There is no minimum course requirement

for the external member, but they still need to undergo an approval process. To have an external member approved for your committee, students should send to the Graduate Program Specialist a current CV (no more than a year old) of the proposed external member and a short paragraph (written by the student) that describes the expertise provided by this external member. Once a committee has been formed, students should inform the Graduate Program Specialist, who will begin the process of collecting signatures on the following forms:

- [History Department PhD Committee Form](#)
- [Graduate School PhD Dissertation Committee Form](#)

Any changes to this committee must be approved by the Graduate School through a [Change of Committee Form](#).

### **Graduate Student Responsibilities**

Graduate students are expected to maintain sufficient contact with their advisor to ensure that both are aware of the progress of the student in the program. The graduate student must take the initiative to schedule meetings. It is recommended that this be done during the first 2 or 3 weeks of each semester, and at other times throughout the semester as needed.

### **Meeting Official Deadlines**

Meeting all deadlines is the graduate student's responsibility. USF is a large institution with a complex bureaucracy, for which forms and procedures are critical to smooth transitions and complying with policies and requirements. Students should become familiar with requirements and deadlines for both the History Department and the Office of Graduate Studies. The Graduate Director and Graduate Program Specialist frequently communicate these deadlines with graduate students [via Canvas Announcements](#), which should be read promptly and carefully.

Every semester, the Graduate Program Specialist or Graduate Director will circulate a list of important Office of Graduate Studies dates. Students should note these and take them very seriously, for they are inflexible. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that such deadlines are met. The Graduate Program Specialist handles the distribution and processing of forms, but students and faculty advisors should monitor the submission of both departmental and college forms and procedures outlined in this document. These deadlines are also posted on the [Semester Deadlines & Exam Information page](#).

### **Degree Requirements and Coursework**

The USF History PhD curriculum and coursework requirements can be found in the [Graduate Catalog](#) corresponding to the year a student entered the program. Normally, full-time students will take 9 credit-hours per semester (the equivalent of three, 3-credit seminars) for their first two years of coursework. In their second year, they should complete their remaining courses and their Portfolio review to advance to candidacy. Students are required to complete 24 credit hours (typically equivalent to 8 courses) of coursework prior to advancing to doctoral candidacy, though many students take more than 24 credits based on course offerings.

## Curriculum and Required Courses

There are three core required courses for PhD students in History:

- **HIS 6112: Analysis of Historical Knowledge** – offered every fall semester; required for all incoming students who have not already taken the course or an equivalent introductory graduate historiography course (please contact the Graduate Director for course transfer approval if you think you have already taken such a course).
- **HIS 7937: Interdisciplinary Pro-Seminar** – offered every spring semester; a research seminar required for all first-year PhD students.
- **HIS 7938: PhD Capstone Seminar** – offered every fall semester; required for all second-year PhD students. In this seminar, students will work on preparing their dissertation proposals and completing the requirements for the Portfolio.

Individual concentrations each have required courses and, along with their advisors, students should consult the [Graduate Catalog](#) (and [Course Audit worksheets](#)) to determine the courses they will need to take to complete these requirements. If you decide to change your concentration, then you should let Ruth Borrero know so that she can initiate [relevant paperwork to change it](#). To fulfill their minor fields and remaining coursework credits, students should choose from the variety of graduate seminars offered at the 6000-level in our history department and in other departments at USF. Course descriptions from the history department and similar fields are [posted each semester on Canvas](#). The department is actively considering altering the timing of HIS 7937 and HIS 7938 based on ongoing conversations with graduate students, so please be advised that the timing of these classes may change over the course of the next two academic years.

## Independent Studies

Students may take a maximum of three hours each of HIS 6908 Independent Study and HIS 6914 Directed Research in place of a regularly scheduled graduate seminar. Exceptions to this rule can be made with the approval of the major professor and Graduate Director. The Graduate Director must approve all Independent Study and Directed Readings courses, and, once approved, students should complete the [Graduate Directed Study Agreement](#) form and submit it to the Graduate Program Specialist in advance of registration. To register for an Independent Study or Directed Research class, follow these steps:

- Contact the faculty member with whom you would like to work for this course and confirm with them that they are willing to teach it. The two of you should also ensure that you have a general idea of the scope and content of this course.
- Forward that email exchange to the Graduate Director, who will then give approval for the course or request that certain changes be made to the proposed curriculum.
- Fill out the [Graduate Directed Study Agreement](#) (excluding signatures) and send it to the Graduate Program Specialist so that all involved parties can sign it.

## Course Registration Procedure

All history graduate courses (and many in other departments) require a permit, which is granted only by the professor teaching the course. This necessitates students contacting instructors, usually by email, to explain their interest in the course and to request a permit to enroll. Since enrollments are limited, students are advised to begin the process of requesting permits before the actual registration process. Once an instructor in the history department has approved of a student's attendance in their class, the student should forward that approval email to the Graduate Program

Specialist so that they can issue an add code for the student. If a student is registering for a course in a different department, they should ask the instructor what their department's protocol is for registration. The schedule of classes is available online through the [Registrar's Student Schedule Search](#). Faculty email addresses are available on the [History Department website](#).

### Language Requirements

The language requirement for PhD students is optional and dependent on individual student needs/field requirements. Students should consult with their advisors to determine if foreign language proficiency is necessary for their research.

Regardless of their linguistic needs, all students should complete a [Language Proficiency Form](#) in consultation with their advisor by the end of their first year of study. On this form, students should indicate if they do or do not need to obtain proficiency in one or more foreign languages to complete the research for their dissertation. If they do need to use foreign language sources, they should document either evidence of their proficiency in the necessary language(s) or plans to obtain it. The general expectation for students admitted into our PhD program (who need foreign language proficiency to undertake their dissertation research) is that they have already obtained proficiency in at least one of their research languages, as there is typically not enough time built into the degree for students to begin a new language and obtain the level of proficiency needed to work with primary and secondary sources at a professional level.

### Dissertation Writing Hours

After completing their comprehensive examinations (see below) and advancing to doctoral candidacy, students will enroll in HIS 7980: Dissertation Writing Hours, as they will be required to complete 18 hours of dissertation writing credits to complete their degree. Students who complete these 18 credit hours but still need more time to complete their degree are able to register for 2 credit hours/semester to remain enrolled and continue working on their dissertations.

### Comprehensive Examinations

#### The PhD Portfolio

During their third or fourth semester in the PhD program, students will submit a portfolio of written work and take an oral examination. When both are passed, students advance to candidacy and are considered ABD (All But Dissertation – also known as Doctoral Candidacy). The portfolio is the culmination of students' coursework and should represent their best writing. As such, students should work closely with their advisors during both the first and second years of the program to determine which assignments that they have completed during their courses would be appropriate to develop further as elements of their Portfolio. [Course Audit worksheets](#) provide space to check off completed Portfolio components.

Here are the required components of the USF History PhD Portfolio:

1. An original research paper of at least 7,000 words (including footnotes but excluding bibliography); we encourage students to write this paper on a topic that is directly applicable to their dissertation project;
2. Two short historiography papers of 3,000 words each (excluding footnotes and bibliography) that do not overlap with the historiography section of the dissertation prospectus; one of these papers should relate to the student's major field and the second

should be unrelated to the major field in order to show breadth of historical knowledge [NB: we envision these papers as revised and polished versions of historiography essays that students have already written for topical seminars];

3. The project statement for a grant proposal relating to the student's dissertation project;
4. A syllabus for an undergraduate upper-division seminar in the student's major field and an accompanying pedagogical statement that justifies the readings and assignments found within it (the pedagogical statement should be approximately 1,000-1,500 words);
5. A dissertation prospectus in which the student outlines the following:
  - a. Statement of the research question and preliminary thesis for said question (approximately 250 words)
  - b. Historiographical context for the research question (approximately 4,000 words)
  - c. Methods, sources, and theories to be utilized in answering the research question (approximately 4,000 words)
  - d. Proposed schedule for research (approximately 500 words)
  - e. Proposed chapter outline (approximately 500 words)
  - f. Bibliography (no word count – number of sources contingent on topic)

Upon submission of the PhD portfolio, the three USF History professors on the student's committee (but not the external reviewer) spend several weeks reviewing it and then provide a pass/fail grade to the student. External member(s) of committees are not required to evaluate the portfolio (though they can per student and committee preference). If more than one committee member votes to fail the student on the written portfolio, the student fails that portion of the exam. If the student fails the written portfolio review, they have one additional semester to revise and resubmit it to their dissertation committee for review. Failing the written portfolio review twice results in the student's removal from the program.

If the student passes the written portfolio review, the student must then schedule an oral exam with their committee (as above – only the three USF history professors) to discuss its contents, especially the prospectus. This oral exam typically lasts around 2 hours. If more than one committee member votes to fail the student on the oral exam, the student fails it. If the student fails the oral exam, they have one additional opportunity to reschedule and retake it before the end of the following semester. Failing the oral exam twice results in the student's removal from the program. Additional instructions about these exams and their forms [are available here](#).

### **Timeline and Degree Path: Year One**

#### **Fall Semester: Coursework for Full-Time Students (9 credits)**

- HIS 6112 Analysis of Historical Knowledge (3 credits) (if not taken previously)
- Content Seminar (3 credits)
- Content Seminar (3 credits)

**Portfolio Considerations:** Students should be using seminar final assignments to prepare portfolio elements when appropriate, in consultation with their advisors.

#### **Spring Semester: Coursework for Full-Time Students (9 credits)**

- HIS 7937 – Interdisciplinary Pro Seminar (3 Credits)
- Content Seminar (3 credits)
- Content Seminar (3 credits)

**Portfolio Considerations:** Students should be using the Pro Seminar and seminar final assignments to prepare portfolio elements when appropriate, in consultation with their advisors.

**By the end of the first year of the PhD program:**

- Students should have developed (and ideally completed a draft of) their major research paper in their Pro-Seminar (spring semester).
- Students should have at least one historiography paper drafted and, at minimum, a plan for their second paper.
- If they have not already completed a syllabus and pedagogical statement during their first-year coursework, students should have this on their radar for potential projects to complete during their second-year coursework.
- Students should submit the Foreign Language Requirement Form (if needed).

### **Timeline and Degree Path: Year Two**

**Fall Semester: Coursework for Full-Time Students (9 credits)**

- HIS 7938 - PhD Capstone Seminar (3 credits)
- Content Seminar (3 credits)
- Content Seminar (3 credits)

**Portfolio Considerations:** Students should be completing the remaining elements of their portfolio during this semester.

**By the end of the first semester of the second year:**

- Students will have completed a draft of their dissertation proposal in the PhD Capstone course (fall semester).
- Students should consult with their advisor to determine what elements of their portfolio remain and begin revisions to prepare for the review and defense of the portfolio.
- Some students may be able to defend their portfolios and proceed to candidacy during the fall semester of their second year, while others may need to wait until spring semester.

**Spring Semester: Coursework for Full-Time Students (9 credits)**

- Content Seminars or Independent Studies to prepare for portfolio review  
OR
- HIS 7980: Dissertation Writing Hours (9 credits) for those who have moved onto candidacy

**During the semester when you intend to defend the portfolio:**

- Before they can schedule the defense of their portfolio, students will need to form a Dissertation Committee and complete all forms associated with this process (see above, “Faculty Advisors and Dissertation Committees”).
- Everyone should make sure to check all semester deadlines to ensure that they leave enough time for the portfolio evaluation and defense before the end of the semester deadline to apply for candidacy.

### **Admission to Doctoral Candidacy**

Students should submit their [Admission to Candidacy form](#), which must include signatures from all members of the dissertation committee (including the external member), for approval during the same semester in which the Portfolio is submitted and the oral examination is conducted, but no later than the semester following the successful completion of the comprehensive exam. Once the Admission to Candidacy form has been approved, the student can begin registering for dissertation hours. Please see the [USF Graduate Catalog](#) for the university requirements on admission to candidacy.



Assuming the completion of coursework at the end of the second year in the program, ABD students have 2 funded years to complete the research and writing of your dissertation. All students, including part-time and self-funded students, must complete their degrees within 7 years of entry into the doctoral program or will need to request an extension from the Graduate Director. Unfortunately, the university expects all Graduate Assistants to serve as TAs or Instructors during the academic year, which can hamper full-time research.

You should be in close contact with your advisor and the Graduate Director to let them know what your research plans are so they can facilitate your research as much as possible, including through the possible assignment of online classes for your GA assignment for semesters you need to do archival research off-campus. It is also a good idea to apply for [external funding to help support your research and writing whenever possible](#).

### **Timeline and Degree Path: Year Three and On**

Students should begin registering for HIS 7980: Dissertation Writing Hours with their advisor/major professor once the portfolio and oral exam have been passed. Typically, students with a GAship register for 9 credits of dissertation hours per semester.

### **The Dissertation**

The culminating degree requirement for a PhD in History at USF is the completion of a doctoral dissertation (or its Digital Humanities equivalent) and a public oral defense of the dissertation. The dissertation should be an original work of historical scholarship that demonstrates your capacity to work as a professional historian. It should be a substantial contribution to your field, containing an original argument and historically sound analysis of relevant primary and secondary sources. Your doctoral advisor will help guide you in the process of selecting your topic, researching, and writing your dissertation, while your dissertation committee will conduct a close review of the dissertation to ensure that it meets the standards of the discipline. [Additional details about the dissertation can be found here](#).

### **Dissertation Writing and Editing**

A doctoral dissertation in History takes at least a year to write after what is typically a full year dedicated to research. There must be opportunities for significant feedback and revision prior to the final submission. Once the student's doctoral advisor is satisfied that the dissertation is ready for review by the entire committee, the advisor should ensure that the student provides copies to all four committee members in a timely fashion, allowing them sufficient time to read and review. This is, nonetheless, primarily the student's responsibility, and in some circumstances, students may ask committee members to read drafts earlier in the process.

The dissertation must be read and approved by the entire four-person committee, and all members must have the opportunity to read it thoroughly and request changes and revisions. Students should not assume that because their advisor has approved a draft, that the other members will follow suit. Committee members may suggest substantial revisions, and time is needed to respond. With that in mind, students should typically allow *at least three months* between handing their polished draft to the faculty on their committee and delivering the final copy to the Office of Graduate Studies. Students should note that firm university deadlines for submission of a final copy are generally in

early November or early April (not the end of the semester). Students planning to graduate in the spring semester should, therefore, schedule defenses no later than early October or early March in order to have time to make revisions and submit their final version through the [Electronic Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\)](#) system on time.

Students should confer with the Graduate Program Specialist and, if necessary, appropriate staff in the Office of Graduate Studies regarding the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation submission process which entails specific deadlines. Students should plan to attend an [ETD workshop](#) at least one semester prior to their anticipated graduation date.

Students should not plan on completing drafts and distributing them during the summer, when committee members and supervisors might not be on academic contract and therefore unavailable for thesis/dissertation review and defense.

### The Dissertation Defense

Please see the [USF Graduate Catalog](#) for university policies on the conduct of the final oral examination, or dissertation defense. Once the committee has approved the dissertation and the advisor decides it is ready for the defense, the student should meet with the Graduate Program Specialist to check over their records and make sure they are prepared for the defense. The Graduate Program Specialist will then process the paperwork certifying that the dissertation is ready for defense, following the guidance of the faculty advisor and the requirements of the Office of Graduate Studies and the College. Advertisement of the defense must be posted at least two weeks prior to the date on which the defense is to occur to comply with state requirements.

The time and date of the defense will be set by the student and faculty advisor based on availability of the committee members and outside chair. In normal circumstances, the Graduate Program Specialist will schedule a room; special procedures are also in place if the defense must be conducted remotely (in this case, please consult with the Graduate Director and Graduate Program Specialist). A copy of the announcement must also be submitted to the College of Arts and Sciences and publicly distributed, preferably two weeks prior to the defense date. The public, including other students, faculty, friends, and relatives, are welcome to attend, although they will be asked to vacate the room during the committee's final deliberations.

Candidates will be asked to give a 20-minute presentation of their dissertation at the beginning of the defense and then committee members will ask them questions about their research and conclusions. If time permits, the audience may also ask questions of the candidate. Once the committee is satisfied that the candidate has successfully responded to their questions, the candidate and audience will be asked to leave the room.

The Committee then discusses both the dissertation itself and the performance of the candidate in the defense. The outcome of the deliberations will be one of the following:

- The student passes the defense and dissertation with no further revisions needed.
- The student passes contingent on specified changes or additions.
- The student may be required to schedule a second defense if the committee deems the performance inadequate.



The vote of the Dissertation Committee must be unanimous and recorded on the Successful Defense form. Once the decision has been reached, the student is invited back into the room and is informed of the outcome. If revisions are needed, these should be explained clearly prior to adjourning the defense, and a plan developed for when the final draft will be completed and how it will be assessed. If changes are minor, all committee members usually sign the Successful Defense Form certifying the outcome of the defense. If revisions are significant, certification may be withheld until the entire committee is satisfied. The student must submit their final revised and properly formatted dissertation through [ETD](#).

### **Funding**

To foster an ideal working relationship between students and faculty, the History Department at USF only admits a few full-time PhD students each year. Normally, students admitted to the PhD program will receive a four-year financial package that includes a tuition waiver, subsidized health insurance, and a Graduate Assistantship with a stipend that is determined [according to a contract](#) set by the USF-GAU (graduate student union). During the regular school year, GAs are contracted to work no more than 20 hours/week. In the History Department, GAs who are still in their coursework and have not yet achieved candidacy work as TAs to professors, although a few are assigned to administrative or research positions; once students have achieved candidacy, they can be assigned as Instructors of Record to their own courses.

We strongly encourage students to pursue external funding opportunities, particularly for their dissertation research. The Office of Graduate Studies provides a [database of funding opportunities](#) and the History Department offers [resources on our Canvas page](#) as well as workshops on how to find and apply for grants and fellowships, including year-long grants such as the Fulbright or short-term grants to individual archives. Additional details about GA employment [can be found here](#).

### **FAQ: General Questions**

Where can I find information about student regulations, policies, and resources?

The [Regulations and Policies](#) page of the USF Website provides a comprehensive listing of them. Here are a few offices that have been historically relevant for our students:

- [Student Accessibility Services](#): provides accommodation letters.
- [Graduate Catalog](#): details program requirements, academic standing, leaves of absence, incomplete grades.
- [Student Conduct Policies](#): considers plagiarism, academic and personal conduct, medical amnesty, student grievances.
- [Title IX](#): protocol for discrimination, harassment, and retaliation/

I have a question about the graduate program. Who should I ask?

Before sending any emails, I recommend reading through this FAQ (or using CTRL+F to locate relevant search terms), going through the [USF History Graduate Program Canvas page](#), [browsing the Graduate section of the department website](#), and reading [USF's Graduate Catalog](#). If you still have an unanswered question, you should probably speak to one of three people. For questions about your academic progress, the structure of your portfolio, and classes you should take, I recommend first contacting your faculty advisor. For questions about bureaucratic processes and forms, Ruth Borrero ([borrero168@usf.edu](mailto:borrero168@usf.edu)) is your best bet. For questions about the graduate

program generally (and anything else that does not fit in the above categories), contact the Graduate Director, Dr. Matt King ([matthewking1@usf.edu](mailto:matthewking1@usf.edu)).

In general, you will find the most up-to-date and detailed information about the program on the [Canvas page](#). I highly recommend that you familiarize yourself with this page upon entry into the program so you can familiarize yourself with the department's policies and procedures. I also recommend changing your personal [Notification Settings](#) for Announcements from this Canvas page to "Notify Immediately" so you are aware of Announcements as they are posted.

### Can I change advisors?

Yes! We assign interim advisors at the beginning of your time at USF, but you are welcome to switch advisors (ideally within the first year of your enrollment) based on your preferences. If you have concerns about your relationship with your advisor, please contact Dr. Matt King ([matthewking1@usf.edu](mailto:matthewking1@usf.edu)) to inform him of the situation.

### How can I best utilize USF's libraries?

Reach out to our library liaison, [Dr. Matt Knight](#), who works directly with students and faculty to facilitate our access to research resources in the USF Library. Feel free to email Matt directly if you have questions related to library resources. He is an amazing resource and also teaches Irish and Irish-American history in our department!

### FAQ: Classes and Coursework

Where can I find information on history department courses (and courses in other departments)?

We maintain a [page on Canvas](#) dedicated to information about course offerings.

### Which classes should I take?

This is a question best answered by your graduate advisor and, potentially, the Graduate Director. I recommend first taking a look at the MA Course Audit or PhD Course Audit forms available on the [USF History Graduate Program Canvas page](#), which specify the courses you need to complete to graduate.

### Should I take independent studies?

We are trying to limit the number of independent studies that graduate students take, even when (seemingly) there are no classes offered in a semester that apply to a student's field of study. The reasons for this are multiple. First, independent studies put an extra burden on faculty, who do not receive any teaching credit for these classes despite the labor that they put into them. Second, having graduate students in independent studies means that there are fewer students in our other seminars, which means that more seminars are cancelled. Third, I think it is a good thing for students to take classes outside of their specialties because it broadens their understanding of history and the ways that we can approach it. Having said this, if you and your advisor agree that it is imperative that you need to take an independent study, then Ruth and I will sign off on the necessary forms (detailed above) needed for this to happen.

### What should I do if I cannot find any classes that I want to take?

There are bound to be some semesters where you cannot find multiple classes that directly relate to your research. This can feel annoying, but it can be useful. I highly recommend that you take

courses outside of your geographic/chronological/thematic specialty so that you can approach your field from different vantage points. Some of my most rewarding experiences in graduate school were from classes that had little relevant to my field of study. The goal of coursework is to give you a wide toolset of skills related to the field of history, and while some of these might not be relevant to your dissertation directly, they still make you a stronger and more well-rounded scholar.

### Can I take courses outside the history department?

Yes, and we encourage this! If you are interested in taking seminars outside of the department, you typically need to introduce yourself (via email) to the professor teaching the seminar and ask for an add code. The departments listed below are some of the few that might have relevant courses: Anthropology; Economics; English; Humanities & Cultural Studies; Interdisciplinary Global Studies; Library and Information Science; Philosophy; Religious Studies; Sociology & Interdisciplinary Social Sciences; Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies; World Languages.

### How does the graduate minor work?

The minor is very flexible. In consultation with your graduate advisor, you choose two classes that are thematically related in some way, not used for any required components of your graduate degree, and then designate those two classes as fulfilling the prerequisites for your minor. These classes can be taken in the history department or outside of it. For example, you could take a history course called "Early American Empire" and an English class on "Literature in the British Empire" and pull them together for a minor in "Comparative Empires." This process is designed to be flexible to accommodate your interests and the courses that USF is able to offer during your coursework.

### What is considered "good academic progress"?

The Graduate Director and departmental graduate committee keep a close eye on the academic progress of our graduate students. A GPA of 3.0 is necessary to remain in "good standing" with the USF Graduate School, and any grade below a "C" is considered by the USF Graduate School to be a failing grade and will not be counted as credit toward your degree. Students with a GAsip must maintain a 3.0 GPA. Additionally, within the department, any grade below a "B" is considered a sign of poor performance in the course and may merit some intervention, as may multiple Incomplete grades, depending on the circumstances. Students who fail to maintain "good standing" may be placed on academic probation and/or dismissed from the program.

### How do I apply for graduation?

To apply for graduation, you should ensure that you have met all degree requirements, including clearing all Incomplete grades and financial holds, and then go to [the Graduation Application page](#) on the Registrar's website to formally apply for graduation. The deadline to apply is typically at the beginning of the semester in which you plan to graduate, so you should keep an eye out for deadline announcements from the department and university. Graduate students cannot walk in commencement unless they have met all degree requirements, however, so if you do not complete your degree during the semester in which you initially apply, you will need to reapply for a subsequent semester, after you have completed all of your requirements.

**FAQ: Funding**

Where can I find resources related to funding opportunities?

We maintain a [Canvas page](#) dedicated to information about funding opportunities inside and outside the history department. Pay attention to Canvas Announcements, too, as faculty members sometimes make announcements about specific funding opportunities in their subfields.