

HISTORY (MA)

Offered at: San Luis Obispo Campus

<https://history.calpoly.edu/MA-history>

Cal Poly's Master of Arts Degree in History is tailored to students who want to pursue graduate studies and careers in public history, education, museums, and local or state government. With an emphasis on practical application of skills and knowledge, the program focuses on rigorous historical methods while allowing students the flexibility to tailor their study to match their interests and meet their goals.

Requirements for Admission

Students apply via Cal State Apply (<https://www.calstate.edu/apply/>) and must submit:

- Statement of Purpose
- Unofficial transcripts
- Two letters of recommendation
- Sample of scholarly writing, approximately 4,000 to 5,000 words in length. Preferably the writing sample will be a research-based paper from a history course; please provide one or two sentences of context about the nature of the assignment and course. Important Note: This must be attached via one of the "Unofficial Transcript" boxes in Cal State Apply's Quadrant 4 (Program Materials).
- For tips on what constitutes a strong writing sample and statement of purpose, see our Program Guide to Graduate Study (PDF)

International Students must meet all the standard eligibility criteria and demonstrate proficiency in English (English Proficiency Exam Requirements)

Prerequisites:

- Possession of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.
- Previous coursework in History. (This may be waived at the discretion of the Graduate Coordinator.)

Minimum GPA: 3.0 or higher in the last 60 semester (90 quarter) units of undergraduate course work.

Application due date: Applications are accepted in Fall and Spring semesters. Please see Graduate Student Dates and Deadlines (<https://www.calpoly.edu/admissions/graduate-student/dates-and-deadlines/>) for application deadlines.

Advancement to Candidacy

Completion of at least 6 units with cumulative and higher ed GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Culminating Experience

Students may choose one of two options:

- **Comprehensive Exams:** Students will complete two exams, chosen from two different fields of study. This will ensure a breadth of knowledge. Comprehensive exams may be taken from topics within seven general fields of study: U.S. History, European History, East Asian History, Latin American History, African History, Middle Eastern History, and Comparative World History. Students will be responsible for mastering a reading list, approximately twenty books or articles relating to the chosen examination field, agreed upon by both the student and the examining professor. Each comprehensive examination consists of essay questions dealing both with the larger field of study and one or more topics of concentration. Requires consent of the professor supervising the comprehensive field and the Graduate Coordinator.
- **Thesis:** The M.A. Thesis is an extended research paper, based upon extensive use of primary sources and comprehension of the existing historiography on the subject. Student theses should have an original interpretation or raise new questions about a subject. The thesis should be written in an accessible and compelling manner and will generally run between 80 and 100 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, including bibliography and appendices. The student will, in consultation with the professor with expertise in that area and the Graduate Coordinator, decide upon an acceptable M.A. thesis topic. Requires consent of the professor supervising the thesis and the Graduate Coordinator.

Program Learning Objectives

1. Diversity: Construct a self-critical academic perspective on human diversity and social, cultural, political, economic and philosophical traditions.
2. Critical Thinking: Demonstrate skills of historical critical thinking and intellectual discipline: conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating materials originating from historical observation, experience, reflection, and reasoning.
3. Knowledge: Demonstrate a breadth and depth of historical knowledge and an understanding of change over time.
4. Historiography: Demonstrate the ability to engage in, interpret, assess, critique, evaluate, and make constructive use of major historiographic debates in various historical fields.
5. Research: Demonstrate the research skills appropriate to a master's-level historian, analyzing and interpreting primary and secondary historical materials from different fields.
6. Communication: Demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate historical knowledge, interpretations, and arguments, in writing and in oral presentations.
7. Engagement: Participate in vibrant intellectual communities, seeking out and respecting others' ideas while working to construct one's own positions and approaches as a historian.
8. Perspective: Construct a broad perspective on the past that enables one to better understand and evaluate the complexities of history and its relevance to one's own time.

Code	Title	Units
REQUIRED COURSES		
HIST 5504	Graduate Study in History	4
Graduate Seminars		
Select from the following:		20
HIST 5500	Special Problems for Graduate Students	
HIST 5505	Graduate Seminar in United States History	
HIST 5506	Graduate Seminar in European History	
HIST 5507	Graduate Seminar in Asian History	
HIST 5508	Graduate Seminar in Latin American History	
HIST 5509	Graduate Seminar in African History	
HIST 5510	Graduate Seminar in Comparative History	
HIST 5511	Graduate Seminar in Middle Eastern History	
Culminating Experience		
Select from the following:		6
Thesis		
HIST 5599	Graduate Thesis	
Comprehensive Exams		
HIST 5597	Supervised Reading for Comprehensive Examinations ¹	
Select any 5000-level HIST course		
Total Units		30

¹ Course may need to be repeated to complete the degree requirements.