

M.A. IN HISTORY EXAMINATION

GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY, EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

The M.A. in History exam is a capstone experience in which the student demonstrates his or her extensive knowledge of History. Through a written examination, lasting approximately four hours, the student will discuss two fields of History including the salient content and relevant historiography.

The student should be aware that the M.A. in History exam is only administered during a one week period each fall, winter, and summer terms. The student must submit a completed application to take the examination the semester before he or she intends to take the exam.

I. Prerequisites

The student should be nearly finished with all of his or her course work before taking the M.A. exam. Specifically, the student must have completed HIST 505: Historical Methods and HIST 688: Historiography, before he or she may sit for the exam. The application to take the examination must be on file the semester before the student takes the exam.

II. The Fields

The student will select two fields in which to be examined, based upon the areas of study he or she has concentrated upon in fulfilling the requirements for his or her program of study. The student will select one field from two of the following Areas.

Area 1: United States

America to 1877

America from 1865

Area 2: Europe

Classical Greece and/or Rome

Medieval Europe

Renaissance and Reformation

Modern Europe

Area 3: Other World

South Asia

East Asia

Latin America

Africa

Middle East

History of Religion

III. Preparation

The student should begin preparing for his or her M.A. exam in History upon entering the graduate program. The courses he or she takes will necessarily inform the selection of fields. After completing each class, the student should review what he or she has learned and ask the instructor for additional readings to establish a firm foundation of knowledge.

When the student has completed the prerequisites for the M.A. Exam, he or she will select two faculty members to administer the exam, one from each of his or her two areas of concentration. Participation on the M.A. Exam committee is at the discretion of each faculty member. Also, the availability of faculty members varies, hence the student should confirm with potential committee members that they will be willing and available to work with and supervise the student throughout the process of preparing for and taking the examination. Each examining instructor will meet with the student to assess the student's preparation for the exam through a review of the courses taken and scholarly works read, and to devise a plan to help the student prepare for the exam. The instructor may choose to assign an additional ten books per field or the equivalent in scholarly articles to read.

For the examination, the student will be expected to display a mastery of the content of his or her chosen fields, as well as a solid grasp of the major trends and developments in the historiography that has shaped these fields as well. A student's reading and preparation for the exam should enable him or her to address both issues of content as well as historiography in the written essays.

Each examining instructor will give the student a bibliography of scholarly works in the field that the examination questions will come from. A copy of this bibliography must be submitted with the M.A. Exam Application. The examining instructor may also choose to give the student sample questions in order to help the student better prepare for the exam.

IV. Application

When the student selects examining instructors, he or she should also fill out the "M.A. in History Exam Application." This form asks the student to confirm his or her preparation for the exam, the fields chosen, and the examining instructors. The student must have each examiner sign the form and receive a bibliography for each field.

The student should submit the application and bibliographies, along with a copy of his or her graduate transcript, to the History Graduate Advisor by the end of the semester prior to which he or she intends to take the exam. The student will receive written confirmation that his or her application has been accepted within two weeks of submitting it. At that point, the student and the examining instructors can schedule the M.A. Exam with the History Graduate Advisor.

V. The Exam

At the beginning of the fall term of each academic year, the History Graduate Committee will identify one week in the fall, winter, and summer terms, when all M.A. in History Exams will take place during those semesters. These dates will be announced on the History Section website. The student must take both parts of the exam during this week, although he or she can

take the exam in parts or all in one day. The department will provide each student with a laptop computer on which to write his or her essays, if the student so desires.

The length of exam will vary from field to field and depending upon the expectations of each individual professor. However, the student should expect to spend two hours per area of examination, and should be prepared to write substantial essays for each field.

VI. Evaluation

After the student has completed the M.A. Exam, members of the exam committee will evaluate the essays written in their respective fields. Each committee member will award one of the following designations to the work submitted in his or her field: Pass with Distinction, Pass, or Fail.

If the student fails any part of the exam, he or she will be retested in that portion. If a student fails all portions of the exam, he or she will be retested in those two portions. A student may be retested once, for a total of two sittings for any portions of the exam that he or she has failed. Students will not be permitted a third seating for any portion of the exam. Failure to pass one or more portions of the exam after two sittings will result in a failure to receive the M.A. degree. Students must reschedule a second sitting during the regularly scheduled exam week of the following term.