Auburn University

Graduate Degrees & Certificates

The Department of History at Auburn University offers two graduate degree programs and two graduate certificates. These are:

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

The doctoral program involves a minimum of 55 hours of coursework beyond the baccalaureate degree, as well as a successful defense of a Ph.D. dissertation grounded in extensive original research.

As well as recruiting Ph.D. students completing or with a masters degree in hand, the History Department offers, as well as the M.A. program, a "direct track" Ph.D. program, into which students can enter directly out of their baccalaureate degree. Applicants should contact our Graduate Program Officer to discuss their best course of action in this regard.

Master of Arts (M.A.)

The Master of Arts is a two-year degree for students completing or with a baccalaureate degree in hand. It includes a minimum of 27 hours of coursework, and the degree is completed by the submission and successful defense of a thesis grounded in original research. The Department does not admit students to pursue a non-thesis M.A.

Students concentrating on Archival Studies or Public History are eligible to receive a Certificate in Archival Studies or Public History in addition to their M.A. in History. These certificate programs are designed to give students a grounding in the fundamentals of those fields and to directly prepare our graduates for employment in archival and public history organizations.

M.A. students may also continue their studies by moving onto the Ph.D. program. While Auburn baccalaureates are eligible to apply for the M.A. program, they will not be admitted into the Department's Ph.D. program unless they have completed or are completing a master's degree elsewhere.

Certificates in Archival Studies and Public History

The History Department at Auburn also offers a Certificate in Archival Studies and a Certificate in Public History, both to students enrolled in the Department's M.A. and Ph.D. degree programs, and to students who have already completed a M.L.I.S. or M.A. in History at Auburn or elsewhere.

Graduate Handbook

Students interested in graduate study in history should follow the links above which provide a basic introduction to our program. More detailed information about specific policies, etc., aimed at students currently enrolled, is also available in the Department's Graduate Handbook.

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Auburn University

Graduate Courses

Graduate degrees in history begin with coursework. In the first years in the program a full-time student will take three courses per semester until she or he has satisfactorily completed the program requirement of 27 hours (for M.A. students) or 55 hours (for Ph.D. students).

Graduate programs are right for intellectually curious individuals who enjoy reading, thinking, writing, and researching. However, graduate programs are also hard work. During coursework, students read a minimum of three books a week, every week, on top of the work put into researching and writing in-depth research papers. Pursuing a degree in history requires a significant investment of time and effort as well as a willingness to have your work critiqued.

The University Bulletin lists all the courses currently in the Auburn curriculum. View graduate courses scheduled to be taught in upcoming semesters. Note that these course offerings may change in response to student enrollment, faculty availability, changes in program requirements, and other circumstances.

There are four types of graduate courses taught at Auburn.

1. **Seminar Courses**
   Seminar courses (numbered among the Department’s HIST 7000-level options) make up the majority of a Ph.D. student's coursework while in the program. Small groups meet regularly with a professor to discuss a particular book or topics prepared in advance. All students are expected to participate actively in the discussion. This form of teaching does not involve lectures. If unfamiliar with the background to a topic, students are normally expected read up on it by themselves.

2. **Lecture Courses**
   Lecture courses are numbered HIST 6000–6970 and are taught in conjunction with parallel undergraduate courses. While they are called “lecture” courses, they will normally involve other forms of learning interaction.

3. **Reading Courses**
   Readings Courses are numbered HIST 8000–8600. They consist of regular meetings with a professor to discuss particular books or topics, prepared in advance. The workload will be equivalent to that of a seminar. Students taking readings courses are normally expected to have had prior coursework in the field.

4. **Research Seminars**
   Research seminars permit students to concentrate exclusively on research and writing a seminar paper of publishable quality. Enrolled students meet regularly with a designated professor over the course of the semester.

**Mandatory Courses**

Some courses are mandatory. All M.A. and Ph.D. students are required to take HIST 7700 (Historical Methods). Ph.D. students are, in addition, required to take HIST 8700 (Historiography and Theory of History), and HIST 8710 (Introduction to the Teaching of History).
Elective Courses

Other courses are elective. Ph.D. students should note, however, minimum course requirements for minor and breadth fields, and plan accordingly from early in their degree. All students must consult the GPO before making course choices.

In addition, students adding the Archival Studies and Public History certificates to their M.A. or Ph.D. degree count internship opportunities towards their coursework.

Dissertation and Research

Once coursework is completed students sign up for HIST 7990 (Research and Thesis) or HIST 8990 (Research and Dissertation). All full- and part-time degree-seeking graduate students must be continuously enrolled. Continuous enrollment is defined as registration, with fees paid in full, in at least two semesters in a given academic year (fall, spring, summer) until the degree is awarded.

Registration

Registration at Auburn University is electronic. Students register for courses on the university website (via AU Access). Newly admitted students must be cleared for registration by the Graduate School and the Registrar’s Office. Instructions and procedures for registration can be obtained from the Office of the Registrar.

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