PROCEDURES FOR A MASTER'S DEGREE IN HISTORY

I. Acceptance into the Program

A. Applicants are evaluated holistically; however, before being accepted into the history master's program at the University of North Texas, a student should meet the following general requirements by the specified departmental due date:

1. Score at the 50th percentile or higher on the verbal portion of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) AND either at the 40th percentile or higher on the quantitative portion OR 4.0 or higher on the analytical/writing portion of the GRE. (GRE scores are NOT required, but are highly recommended.)

2. Have a bachelor's degree and 24 hours of history credits from an accredited university (6 hours of US history, 6 hours of world history, and 12 hours of upper-level history).

3. Have a cumulative undergraduate grade-point average (overall OR for the last sixty hours OR in at least 24 undergraduate history credit hours) of 3.5 on a four-point scale.

4. Submit an acceptable statement of purpose in seeking the master's degree in history.

5. Provide two acceptable letters of recommendation.

6. Have met all other university requirements.

B. Students whose application files are incomplete by the department's current application deadline may register as an undeclared major with UNT and enroll in graduate history courses (with the written permission of the appropriate faculty; note faculty are not required to grant permission) while they complete all of the history admission requirements. Such students may transfer up to twelve hours of this history graduate coursework to count towards the completion of their history master's degree, if they are later admitted to the History master's program. Admission to the History graduate program is not guaranteed by enrolling as an undeclared major. Transfer admissions are made the same semester as incoming students (Fall).

C. The Department Chair, Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), Associate Directors of Graduate Studies (ADGS), and Graduate Committee review the application file of each candidate and determine whether that student will be admitted into the history master's program.

II. Advising, Choosing a Major Professor, and Picking a Student's Master's Committee

A. The Department DGS serves as the general advisor for all Master's students. The DGS will assign incoming students a faculty mentor to guide them until such time as students select a major professor. Each student may ask the faculty mentor or another professor to serve as major professor.

B. Prior to completion of their first nine (9) hours of graduate history coursework, students must meet with the DGS or ADGS to discuss fulfillment of program requirements.

C. After the completion of their first nine (9) hours of graduate history coursework, and no later than their completion of eighteen (18) total hours of graduate history coursework, students should select a major professor (in consultation with the ADGS and/or DGS) from among the department's current Category 2 and 3 graduate faculty (see "Faculty Concentrations and Categories"). Note that faculty
members have the right to refuse to serve as a major professor--the picking of a major professor must be a mutual decision between student and faculty member.

D. The major professor will serve as chair of the student's committee and director of the student's thesis (if applicable). The student will then, in consultation with the DGS and/or ADGS and major professor, select two additional committee members from among the department's current graduate faculty (or a history faculty member and a faculty member from the student's approved minor field--see below). If a committee member is no longer on the faculty at the time of the thesis defense or oral examination, the member may remain on the committee but may not serve as major professor. Note that a student must have successfully completed at least one graduate-level course (exclusive of thesis hours) with each committee member (including the major professor) prior to taking final oral exams or defending the thesis.

E. The student must meet with the Graduate Program Assistant to complete a degree plan once the committee is set, no later than the completion of a student's first 18 hours of graduate history coursework. The ADGS, the Department Chair, and the Dean of Toulouse Graduate School all certify the degree plan.

III. Degree Requirements

A. The Department of History offers the Master of Arts (MA) with or without a thesis.

1. For a master's degree with thesis, the student must complete thirty-three (33) credit hours, which includes a minimum of two (2) graduate-level history seminar courses (6 credit hours), six (6) hours of thesis, and three (3) hours of historical bibliography.

2. For a master's degree without thesis, the student must complete thirty-three (33) credit hours, which includes a minimum of two (2) graduate-level history seminar courses (6 credit hours) and three (3) hours of historical bibliography. When such students complete all of their coursework, they must then take oral exams concerning the coursework they have taken with the members of their committee to complete the degree requirements.

3. A student may, with the major professor and the Department Chair's permission, take six graduate level hours of coursework from another department at UNT and declare an official minor field. In this case, a faculty member from the minor field department will serve as a committee member in lieu of a history faculty member, and the six hours from the minor field will replace six hours of history coursework. As previously stated, however, the minor field committee member must be a faculty member with whom the student has taken a graduate level course.

4. The department has adopted a general policy of not allowing any transfer hours from outside institutions to be used to fulfill our History MA degree requirements. In extraordinary cases, a student may petition the Graduate Committee to transfer in up to six hours of graduate credit from an outside accredited institution. This six-hour limit on outside graduate credits is in accordance with University policies concerning this issue.

B. Once admitted, the student must maintain a minimum 3.5 grade-point average (on a four-point scale) based on all history graduate classes (HIST) and non-history graduate classes that count toward the
degree, exclusive of I and PR grades, each semester until the degree is awarded. A student's graduate GPA will be evaluated at the end of every semester or summer term as applicable. Once this evaluation process begins, if the student's GPA as defined above is less than 3.5 at the end of any given semester or summer term, they are on academic probation with the department. The student will have one semester or summer term to pull GPA up to 3.5 or higher. In cases where it is not possible to achieve a 3.5 GPA with just one probationary semester, the student may appeal to the departmental Graduate Committee (in writing) to extend the probation one additional semester or summer term if the student has made satisfactory progress towards a 3.5 GPA in their initial probationary term. Failure to pull the GPA up to 3.5 or higher at the end of the complete probationary term OR a subsequent case of the GPA falling below 3.5 will result in the student's termination from the program. In addition, students will not be allowed to sign up for thesis hours if their GPA is under 3.5.

C. Any student who fails to register for two consecutive long semesters in classes while completing the non-thesis coursework requirements at UNT will be required to reapply for admission to the program. In addition, once a student has enrolled in thesis hours, continuous enrollment in at least 3 thesis hours each long semester is necessary to maintain eligibility in the program. Per University regulations, students have five (5) calendar years from the date of their first graduate-level history course listed on their degree plan to complete the Master's degree.

D. All master's students are required to successfully pass an oral defense of their thesis or an oral exam covering their coursework with committee members as appropriate (See section IV below).

E. Students must apply for graduation with Toulouse prior to scheduling their defense of oral exam.

IV. Thesis Defense (thesis option) or Oral Examinations (non-thesis option)

A. All Master's students will have a final oral defense/examination with their committee. The specifics of this final defense will depend on whether or not the student seeks to complete his/her degree with a thesis.

B. A candidate for the master's degree with thesis must successfully complete an oral defense of the thesis.

1. The student should work with their major professor to ensure that that the major professor gets drafts of the thesis in a timely manner to give feedback and make the project defensible by the date set for the defense.

2. The major professor should consult the other committee members at various times to inform them of the student's progress and to receive their views of the student's work.

3. The final oral defense covers the thesis. Customarily, the duration of the defense has been approximately no more than two and one-half hours, but the defense's duration is a committee decision.

4. When a student completes a draft of the thesis to the major professor's satisfaction and has met all other degree requirements, the major professor (in consultation with the student and the other committee members) will arrange with the Graduate Program Assistant the time and place of the final oral thesis defense. Before the defense, the major professor should check with the Graduate Program Assistant to see if the graduate school's form to report the defense’s
result is in the student's file. The form is generated when the student files for graduation. The student and major professor should note the catalog date by which defense results must be reported [and the thesis filed if applicable] if the student is to graduate in any particular semester. If the defense is taken [and the thesis is filed] after that date but before the end of the semester, the student's degree will be conferred at the next commencement. The form for reporting results of the defense must be for that specific graduation.

5. Upon completion of the oral thesis defense, the student's committee will decide whether the performance was satisfactory or unsatisfactory. The committee will complete the proper report form and submit it to the Graduate Program Assistant, to be forwarded to Toulouse Graduate School for certification that the student has satisfactorily completed all departmental requirements for the appropriate Master's degree. The thesis must also be submitted to Toulouse Graduate School for final approval by deadlines set forth in the Graduate catalog in the semester the student wishes to actually graduate (see Toulouse website for instructions, including final formatting).

C. Candidates for the master's degree without thesis must successfully complete an oral examination on their coursework and portfolio with their major professor and other committee members. Students who choose not to complete a thesis for their Master's will instead compile program elements into a comprehensive MA portfolio in their final semester of coursework. Once the student has successfully completed coursework and met all other degree requirements, the major professor (in consultation with the student and other committee member) will arrange with the Graduate Program Assistant the time and place of the final oral examination, which covers their portfolio and coursework that the student has taken with the committee members and their, including the major professor. The portfolio will be discussed during an oral exam with the student's committee. The portfolio must be submitted to all committee members at least two weeks prior to the oral exam.

Upon successful portfolio submission and examination, the student will be eligible for graduation. Before the exam, the major professor should check with the Graduate Advisor or the Graduate Program Assistant to see if the graduate school's form to report the exam's result is in the student's file. The form is generated when the student files for graduation. The student and major professor should note the catalog date by which the exam results must be reported if the student is to graduate in any particular semester. If the examination is taken after that date but before the end of the semester, the student's degree will be conferred at the next commencement. The form for reporting results of the examination must be for that specific graduation.

MA Comprehensive Exam (Non-Thesis Master's Portfolio Option)

Portfolio Requirements

1. Seminar Paper: Students should select one 15-20 page seminar paper they wrote for a seminar course that speaks to their research interests.

2. CV: Students will put together a CV documenting their education and experience. The CV should be geared towards the student's intended career or field.
3. **Cover Letter or PhD Statement of Purpose**: Students who are planning to pursue a job after graduation will write a one-page, single-spaced cover letter for a desired job. Students who are planning to apply for PhD programs after graduation will submit a statement of purpose they plan to include in their applications.

4. **Personal Reflection**: Students will write a one-two page personal reflection on their growth in the graduate program, career ambitions following MA conferment, and the practical steps they intend to take towards their next goal.

Students requesting to be scheduled to complete their oral exam must contact the Graduate Program Coordinator via email at historygradprogram@unt.edu (must copy major professor on email). Before the student(s) can be scheduled to take their exam, the Graduate Advisor will verify they are eligible to be scheduled. Once they have been verified to have completed all the required items (see above for items), they will be scheduled on the departmental calendar. On day of exam, major professor will be provided with two (2) forms from Toulouse Graduate School that are required for the non-thesis-exam. The list of forms needed is below:

- Final Comprehensive Examination/Project Form
- UNT Non-Thesis Evaluation Rubric

Note: Both forms must be returned to the Graduate Studies Assistant in order to be processed.

1. Upon completion of the oral examination, the student’s committee will decide whether the performance was satisfactory or unsatisfactory. The committee will complete the proper report form and submit it to the Graduate Program Assistant, to be forwarded to Toulouse Graduate School for certification that the student has satisfactorily completed all departmental requirements for the appropriate Master's degree.

V. **Department Policy on Maximum Hours of non-Thesis Coursework and Grades of "Incomplete" on Graduate Coursework**

A. The department recognizes that sometimes it is necessary due to extenuating circumstances for students to take more than the required twenty-seven to thirty-three credit hours of graduate coursework (exclusive of thesis) in pursuit of their master's degree. It is still in the best interests of all parties involved (students, department, and university), however, to have students finish their master's degree in as timely a manner as possible. Towards this end, any student who wishes to take more than forty-two credit hours of graduate coursework (again, exclusive of thesis hours) while pursuing his or her master’s degree must get the approval of the departmental Graduate Committee (in writing) for these excess hours. In addition, the student should be aware that the five-year university limit on obtaining the degree overrides all other considerations.

B. An Incomplete Grade ("I") is a non-punitive grade given only during the last one-fourth of a term/semester and only if a student (1) is passing the course and (2) has a justifiable reason (such as serious illness), for not completing the work on schedule. The student must arrange with the instructor to finish the course at a later date by completing specific requirements. These requirements must be entered on the grade roster by the instructor. Grades of I assigned to a graduate course at the end of
the Fall 2017 semester and later will default to F after a period of one year unless the instructor has designated a different automatic grade.

C. Students who have 3 outstanding graduate-level grades of "Incomplete" on their transcript at any given time will not be allowed to register for further classes until at least one of the "Incompletes" is removed. Students may not register for thesis hours or sit for their oral examination if they have any grades of "Incomplete" on their UNT graduate record.

VI. General Statement of Departmental Philosophy and Appeals Procedures

A. All of the preceding departmental policies are meant to facilitate the students' completion of the MA degree in a timely manner and in a way that meets the needs of the student, the department, and the university.

B. With the above statement being a general framework, the department realizes that each student's path to the degree will be different and that any given student may encounter circumstances in their program of study that fall outside of departmental policies.

C. In recognition of the above-stated fact, students who face extraordinary circumstances that make adherence to particular departmental policies problematic for them may appeal to the Graduate Committee for a waiver of the policy in question.

D. Such appeals must be made in writing to the DGS or the Department Chair, who will then present the appeal to the Graduate Committee for discussion and a vote. Decisions on appeals of departmental policy made by the Graduate Committee are not meant to set precedent for future appeals of a similar nature by other students. Every reasonable effort will be made by the Committee to render decisions in a timely manner.