



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

UNIVERSITY *of* HAWAI'I *at* MĀNOA

2023

Information for Prospective Graduate Students

Aloha from the Graduate Program

The Department of History is part of the College of Arts, Languages & Letters (CALL) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM). We have [twenty-five full-time faculty members](#), with interdisciplinary expertise that provides a broad framework for approaching almost any historical topic or theme. Many of our faculty specialize in the histories of Hawai'i, Oceania, and Asia, and we have been a pioneer in the field of World / Comparative History. We also offer the M.A. and PhD degrees in the histories of the US and Europe.

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[History Department website](#)

[Graduate Division](#)

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The University

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is a Research Intensive or R-1, indigenous-serving institution whose responsibility is to protect and promote the culture, traditions, and learning of the peoples of Hawai'i. The values of the university include the importance of mālama 'āina, or sustainability in regards to the land and environment, and preserving the history and customs of the people of our state.

Hawai'i is nearer both geographically and culturally to Asia and the Pacific Islands than is any other major American center of higher education. The cosmopolitan blend of people in Hawai'i is justly celebrated, and the University shares to full advantage the resulting interaction of cultures and peoples.

Scholarly and Archival Resources

The study of History at UHM is enhanced by outstanding research and archival institutions nearby.

The [East-West Center](#), established by Congress in 1960 to promote better relations and understanding among the people and nations of the US, Asia, and the Pacific, offers [fellowships](#) and [housing options](#) for UHM graduate students, and welcomes many visiting scholars of international reputation.

Within CALL there are important area studies centers, including the Centers for Chinese, Japanese, Korea, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Philippine Studies. These Centers provide many resources and opportunities for students and faculty, including lecture series, scholarships, and cultural events.

[Hamilton Library](#) is a major resource for the study of Asian and Pacific history. The Library holds more than 2.8 million volumes, and maintains substantial ranges of research materials on Asian, Pacific, and Hawaiian History. The library staff are trained as experts in these collections and can offer key research assistance to graduate students and faculty. The library archives also contain the papers of many leading figures from the history of Hawai'i, as well as eras like the Territorial Period and World War II in Hawai'i. The library also has rich and fascinating collections of photographs, maps, and other visual materials; the social movement collection; and collections of artists and other leading figures in the state's history.

In addition to resources on campus, other local archives include the Archives of the State of Hawai'i, the Hawai'i War Records Depository, the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, and the collections of the Mission Children's Society and the Hawaiian Historical Society. Many graduate students find that local archival collections can be the starting point of world-class original research projects.

The Graduate Program in History

Degree Programs

The M.A. program provides students with substantive knowledge of particular areas of history and hones research and writing skills. Students who earn the M.A. as their terminal degree often work in government or public service; corporate, non-profit, and the private sector; secondary education; or they combine their studies with professional degrees like library science or law (UH Mānoa's Richardson School of Law offers a [dual degree](#) with History). M.A. students must demonstrate competency in a foreign language relevant to their research field. The program offers a thesis option (Plan A, 24 credits of coursework) and non-thesis track (Plan B, 30 credits).

The PhD program typically prepares students for careers in university teaching and research. The degree is highly specialized and allows students to acquire a thorough knowledge of several areas of history and to develop advanced research skills. The PhD program requires a historiography seminar and seminars in each of the student's chosen fields for their comprehensive examinations. PhD students must demonstrate proficiency in two non-English reading languages, or one reading language and one methodological or theoretical field. PhD students also write and defend a dissertation based on original historical research that makes a significant contribution to the field. M.A. and PhD students should complete their programs in no more than seven years.

Areas and Fields of Study

Students seeking admission must apply to a specific area of study. The Department cannot accommodate students who seek training in fields outside of our faculty's area offerings.

Major Fields	Minor Fields
US & the Americas	U.S. and the Americas
Hawai'i	Hawai'i
Pacific	Pacific
Europe	Europe
Southeast Asia	Southeast Asia
South Asia	South Asia
China	China
Japan	Japan
Korea	Korea
World Comparative / Transnational	World Comparative / Transnational
Environmental History	Environmental History
Race & Indigeneity	Race & Indigeneity
Imperialism & Colonialism	Imperialism & Colonialism
Gender & Sexuality	Gender & Sexuality
	Other

What Courses to Take

Prior to starting the thesis or dissertation, students are considered to be enrolled full-time if taking eight credits or more per semester, in degree-related courses, or six credits if a Graduate Assistant. M.A. students must earn at least 24 credits, including HIST 602: Historiography. PhD students generally must earn at least 15 credits, including HIST 602, but the specific plan for each PhD student is determined by their program committee.

History graduate students are encouraged to take courses within the Department, even in areas of study not their own. Graduate seminars are numbered 600 and above, and they form the major part of every student's program of study. Undergraduate courses may carry graduate credit only if they are not introductory in scope and are approved by the student's program committee, typically at the 400-level.

Graduate reading courses help students prepare for comprehensive examinations, and each graduate student must take at least one reading seminar in each of the fields for which he or she will be examined. Research seminars deal with technical aspects of historical study and required papers based on research in primary sources. In these seminars students usually begin researching and writing theses or dissertations. M.A. students must complete a research seminar in their major fields and, if applicable, in their minor fields as well.

Course Listings

Current semester course offerings: manoa.hawaii.edu/history/courses Online UHM

catalog: manoa.hawaii.edu/catalog

Admission Requirements and Procedures

Admission to the History graduate program requires review by both the Graduate Division and the Department of History. Applicants should take care to direct application forms and supporting materials to the appropriate entity by December 15 of each year. The Department does not admit students for the Spring semester.

The Department must receive completed applications, including all supporting materials, no later than December 15 for all admissions to the graduate program for the following academic year. The deadlines for applications for graduate assistantships are also December 15. At the applicant's request, incomplete applications may be considered for the subsequent year, provided the application is ultimately completed and that appropriate arrangements have been made with the Graduate Division.

Graduate Division Admissions Standards

Applicants must have earned a B.A. or M.A. at an accredited U.S. college or university, or the equivalent degree at a non-US institution. Applicants must also provide evidence of above-average academic performance (grade point average of 3.0 or better). Graduate Division makes final admissions decisions. [Go here for more information](#) on Graduate Division admissions standards and procedures.

History Department Admissions Standards

Generally, students are admitted only if they have a B.A. or M.A. in History or a closely related field, as determined by the Graduate Chair. Applicants without a History degree can be admitted only on a conditional basis and generally only if their undergraduate studies included at least 18 upper-division semester hours in History or related fields with a grade of B or better. Students admitted with pre-program deficiencies must make up the deficiencies, which the Graduate Chair specifies at the time of admission.

Applicants to the PhD program must have completed an M.A. or equivalent degree at the time of enrollment. Applicants who apply for the PhD program without an appropriate M.A. degree may be considered for admission to the History M.A. program.

Applications who meet Graduate Division and Department minimum standards are evaluated by the History faculty, taking into account the applicant's preparation and professional goals in regards the proposed area of study; the applicant's research and writing skills as evidence in the writing sample; the applicant's academic promise as evidenced by grade-point averages and letters of recommendation; and, for students who are not native English speakers, TOEFL scores and other evidence of English-language proficiency.

A Statement of Objectives is a part of the Graduate Division application form and is important in the review of the application in the Department. Persuasive statements explain why the applicant wishes to pursue graduate study in History; (2) why they wish to do so in our department specifically; (3) which area and field of history they are applying for; and (4) how their academic and other qualifications and experiences have prepared them for success in the field.

The Department admits students to study a specific area or field of history, and students may not transfer to another area or field without permission of the Graduate Chair and the appropriate faculty.

Standardized Exams

The History Department no longer requires the GRE for admission. However, you should consult the UHM Graduate Division website for general exam requirements, including standardized exam scores from applicants whose transcripts include more than 25% of undergraduate course work at a US institution with non-traditional grades, as well as the TOEFL or IELTS tests from applicants who are not native speakers of English.

Additional Application Requirements

Writing sample. Applicants should submit ONE (1) academic writing sample, ideally a research paper completed for a course in History on a topic related to the subject the applicant plans to study in the graduate program. It should demonstrate the applicant's research and writing abilities, such as a B.A. capstone project or M.A. thesis chapter. Published research articles are also welcome.

TOEFL scores. Non-US applicants whose native language is not English and who do not have a recent B.A. or M.A. degree from a US college or university must take the TOEFL and have official scores sent to Graduate Division. The minimum score acceptable for admission to the Department of History is 580 (computer score of 237 and/or internet score of 92); the minimum score for appointment to a teaching assistantship is 600 (computer score of 250 and/or internet score of 100).

Graduate Division Forms

Prospective students submit the following items via the Graduate Division's [online application](#) portal:

- Application fee
- One copy of all academic transcripts
- TOEFL Scores (for international applicants)
- Other documents as requested in the application form

History Department Forms and Supporting Documents

- [Express Information Form](#)

Applicants submit these documents via the [Graduate Application Supplemental Documents Upload Website](#):

- Statement of Objectives
- Writing Sample
- Letters of Recommendation* (2 for M.A. Program**; 3 for Ph.D. Program).
- If applying for a Graduate Assistantship, also submit the following via [Graduate Application Supplemental Documents Upload Website](#):
 - [Graduate Assistantship Application Form \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Graduate Assistantship Evaluation Form \(PDF\)](#) (3 total)
 - CV or resume
 - If applying for a graduate assistantship, your letters of recommendation for the program are also used to evaluate the application for an assistantship

Financial Assistance

Graduate study can require considerable financial investment. Applicants are encouraged to research carefully the [costs of attendance](#). Below are some of the most typical forms of financial assistance available to History graduate students.

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are a type of part-time academic appointment that carry stipends as well as waivers of tuition. Graduate students apply for GA-ships, and selection is recommended by a faculty committee based on academic merit, department priorities, and equity among department fields. Graduate students in History are able to apply for graduate assistantships in other departments; these are often advertised in the UHM employment website.

Graduate teaching assistants are generally assigned to the World History Program, which offers opportunities to be mentored by experienced faculty. TA's conduct weekly discussion lab sessions, grade papers and exams, and hold office hours for students. The Department calculates the workload of graduate teaching assistants at 20 hours per week, so assistants carry course loads of no more than nine credit hours per semester.

Prospective students apply for graduate teaching assistantships separately from admission to the Department of History and Graduate Division, although GA-ships are only awarded to successful applicants. Assistantships are renewable, assuming satisfactory progress toward the degree, for a maximum of two years (four semesters) at the M.A. level, and three years (six semesters) at the PhD level (though never longer than necessary to complete a degree program). Complete applications for assistantships are due by 15 December for appointments for the following academic year. Applications received or completed after this date may be considered but will receive lower priority in the selection process.

Other Forms of Financial Assistance

The Department has a limited number of non-resident tuition exemptions, which allow non-state residents to pay in-state tuition, and limited scholarship monies. Awards are made on a competitive basis and are contingent on the student making satisfactory progress, including maintaining a grade-point average of 3.5 or better and remaining enrolled for at least one credit or more. Failure to meet award conditions will result in forfeiture of the scholarship and the student will be responsible for reimbursing the university. The Graduate Chair automatically considers all unsuccessful applicants for graduate teaching assistantships for other financial assistance provided they have been admitted to the Department.

Students majoring in Chinese intellectual history are eligible to apply for the Hung Family Fellowship, which the Department of History awards and which carries a current annual stipend of approximately \$15,000 plus a waiver of tuition. The Department also awards select fellowships and grants for modest amounts of money to advanced Ph.D. students. These include the John F. Kennedy Memorial Fellowships, usually no more than \$1,250 and \$2,500 for dissertation research travel; the Sakai Awards, usually no more than \$750, for travel to professional meetings and job interviews; and Kwok Grants for dissertation-related expenses. Questions about and requests for consideration for these awards should be directed to the Grad Chair's office. The Department offers the Jagdish P. Sharma Memorial Scholarship for the study of South Asia and its people; the scholarship is administered by History but graduate students in the Colleges of Arts & Sciences are eligible to apply via the online STAR scholarship system.

Financial Assistance from Extra-Departmental Sources

The East-West Center, a federal agency that works closely with the University of Hawai'i, awards scholarships to American, Asian, and Pacific Islands students. The scholarships are granted for 12-month periods and are renewable up to 24 months for M.A. students and 48 months for Ph.D. students. Application forms, detailed information concerning these awards, which have a value approximately equal to that of graduate teaching assistantships, and the various deadlines may be found on their [website](#).

The School of Pacific and Asian Studies (SPAS) administers Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships for students of Asian, Southeast Asian and Pacific Islands languages and area studies. These fellowships are particularly valuable for students whose graduate programs require intensive language study, and can be used by students in any field, provided that learning one of these languages is required for their program of study. The fellowships are for the academic year and are contingent upon funding from the U.S. Department of Education. Each fellowship includes a tuition waiver and a stipend of approximately \$15,000 for the academic year. Summer fellowships for students majoring in East Asian history are also available, with stipends of \$2,500 and tuition waiver up to \$4,000. Recipients must pursue a full-time graduate program in Asian language and area studies during the tenure of the fellowship. Deadlines are usually in January of each year, and applicants to graduate programs are able to apply for the following year, with funding contingent on acceptance to a UHM academic program. For further information, please contact the Fellowships Coordinator, Ms. Chizuko Allen (808-956-2210, chizuko@hawaii.edu).

Some of the area studies centers offer fellowships or other forms of support for which graduate students in History may apply. The Center for Chinese Studies offers the Eu Tong Sen Memorial Exchange Scholarship to the Chinese University of Hong Kong, which provides full tuition at CUHK for one semester and approximately \$8,000 stipend. The Center for Japanese Studies offers The Crown Prince Akihito Scholarship, which covers one year of study in Japan with an annual \$30,000 scholarship award plus \$15,000 annual allowance, and is open to American graduate students at UH Mānoa pursuing study in subject areas leading to better understanding between Japan and the U.S. For these and other programs, students may inquire directly at the appropriate Centers.

The Department of History encourages prospective students to inquire about and apply for all sources of extra-departmental funding for which they might be eligible, and to research possible opportunities via the STAR Giving Tree scholarship program as well as the UHM employment website, where opportunities for graduate assistantships across the university are frequently posted.