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I. Welcome

Welcome!

First, we would like to congratulate you on your admission to graduate school here at the University of Wyoming. This is a tremendous opportunity to achieve your professional goals in the field of history. This Graduate Student Handbook is designed to help you move quickly and successfully through the program by providing a roadmap for success. In it we provide answers to almost any question you might have about the program. We here in the UW Department of History are proud of our program’s achievements, especially when it comes to our MA degree. Our graduates have gone on to some of the finest PhD programs in the nation, or found employment in any number of related fields. We believe we have built an outstanding MA program that demands the best out of each MA candidate. It will be up to each of you to apply yourselves fully to this program in order to reach your goals. We will provide you all the tools necessary, but it will ultimately be up to you to complete the program. We hope this handbook helps guide you along your journey to professional success!

Sincerely,

Jeffrey D. Means, Chair, Department of History
II. Application Process

A. Before you apply, consider the following important issues:
   1. What area of history most interests you? Consider geographical area and time period, as well as thematic concentration and approach. Our department offers considerable opportunities in American History and the History of the American West. Other areas of interest, such as European History, will be considered.
   2. Which faculty member would you hope to work with? You should contact that faculty member directly and discuss with them your goals and interests. Finding the right graduate advisor is central to your success as a graduate student.
   3. Is Wyoming a good fit for your interests and goals? Explore our website, visit campus, and talk with current graduate students. You should consider whether our program is a good fit for you before you apply.

B. Requirements
Admission to the M.A. program is for the fall semester only. Since the application is entirely online, please do not send any paper documents to the History Department or Office of Admissions. A one-time fee of $50 is required to submit your application.

Your admission packet is your opportunity to further your professional career, so strive to make each document as professional as possible. You should consider having a trusted mentor or colleague review your documents and help guide you in creating the best application packet possible. The following documents are required:

1. Statement of Purpose
   This document is your introduction to our faculty, thus it is important to make a strong impression. It should be a maximum of 500 words in length. As you compose your statement, you should address the following:
   ▪ Your reasons for pursuing an M.A. in History
   ▪ Your reasons for applying to the University of Wyoming
   ▪ Your major and minor fields of interest
   ▪ If you have not yet done so, review the list of faculty members and contact the faculty member(s) you hope to work with before completing this section. Matching your interests with those of our faculty is one of the central aims of the graduate program
   ▪ Your future plans: moving on to a PhD program, working in K-12 education, etc.
   ▪ Indicate whether you are applying for a Graduate Assistantship

2. Writing Sample
   This should be 10 to 20 pages and represent your most sophisticated writing. A senior thesis or undergraduate seminar paper would be ideal.

3. Transcripts
   Include transcripts from all institutions you have attended since high school. You must provide official transcripts and note that formal acceptance and admission
will be contingent upon receipt of official, final transcripts. You do not need to submit transcripts for coursework completed at the University of Wyoming.

4. GRE Scores
A minimum combined score of 291 (900 under the old scoring system) with a minimum verbal score of 153 (500 old system) is required. The Department of History reserves the right to consider the analytical (writing) score as well. You must upload official scores, and you must have ETS send your official scores to UW. GRE scores are valid for five years after the testing date.

5. Letters of Recommendation
Three letters of recommendation are required, and ideally should come from undergraduate instructors with whom you have had sustained contact. Instructors of seminars and smaller, discussion-based classes will often have the best idea of your skills and interests. Once you have supplied contact information for your recommenders, the Admissions Office will email them with instructions for submitting their letters.

III. Department Structure
The History Department operates under a system of shared governance. This means that various faculty members, both individually and as members of committees, work together on different projects to make the Department and the Graduate Program work. The following is a breakdown of departmental responsibilities in the Department of History at the University of Wyoming.

A. Departmental Responsibilities
The following information familiarizes you with pertinent Department of History faculty and staff personnel.

Chair: The Department Chair represents the Department to the administration and wider campus community and serves as a link between Department and the outside world. The Chair deals with tasks such as budgets, funding, personnel hiring and assessments, and the everyday running of the Department. You will normally have very little direct contact with the Department Chair during your tenure as a graduate student.

Director of Graduate Studies: The DGS administers the Graduate Program for the Department. The DGS follows each graduate student’s progress through the MA program, making sure that the necessary forms are filled out and the program’s requirements met. The DGS also assigns TAships each semester. The DGS has broad responsibilities for the Graduate Program and is the administrator with whom you will normally have the most contact. You should address all questions about the Program, e.g., coursework, language exams, TA placements to the DGS. The DGS also serves as the graduate ombudsman and general problem-solver, so any problems that may come up either individually or as a group should be brought to them.
**The Graduate Committee:** The Graduate Committee is responsible for forming Graduate Program policy, determining admissions and TA awards, and dealing with policy questions during the academic term. Once you are admitted, you will have very little, if any, contact with the Graduate Committee.

**Internship Coordinator:** The Internship Coordinator deals with all aspects of the internship process, from application to final assessment. Few graduate students are involved in internships, but if you are interested, you should contact the Internship Coordinator for specifics.

**Mentoring Coordinator:** The Mentoring Coordinator directs the Department’s Mentoring Program. The Mentoring Coordinator convenes teaching training during the fall term and conducts the required Practicum in College Teaching (Hist 5900) in the spring. The Mentoring Coordinator helps new TAs prepare for their teaching responsibilities, provides guidance during each semester, and helps to integrate graduate students into the Department and the broader history profession. You will have frequent contact with the Mentoring Coordinator during your tenure in the program.

**Staff:** The staff makes the Department and the Graduate Program work. They perform an enormous range of tasks from student questions to Department budgets.

**Your Advisor:** Your Advisor or Committee Chair is the single most important faculty member for each graduate student. Your advisor will direct your primary field. In addition, your Chair will help you decide on your primary and secondary fields, help you choose the most appropriate graduate seminars, help you decide on a thesis topic, direct your research and writing, and at the end, convene your committee for your oral defense. The DGS will suggest appropriate chairs at the beginning of your first year and you should plan to make contact with one or more of these faculty members immediately. You will have much more contact with your advisor than any other faculty member.

**History/Minor Committee Member:** The second member of your committee will direct your secondary field or graduate minor. They will help you choose seminars and graduate courses for your secondary/minor field and will offer general advice in conjunction with your Committee Chair. If you opt to declare a Graduate Minor (AIST, GAST, GWST), the chair of your minor committee will take the place of the second History committee member. This person may or may not be History Department Faculty, so if you have a graduate minor, your chair may be the only member of your committee who is actually a History faculty member.

**Outside Committee Member:** University regulations require that one member of your graduate committee be a faculty member from outside the department. Your Committee Chair will help you select your outside member. You are encouraged to take at least one graduate seminar or class with your outside person, but this is not absolutely necessary.

**Changing Advisors:** It is not uncommon for graduate students to make changes in their topics as they progress through the program and sometimes this will mean changing your committee chair to someone whose specialty is closer to your new topic. If this becomes the case, discuss this with BOTH your present chair and the person who would most
likely become your new chair. Once they both agree, have them send the DGS a brief email notifying them of the change.

IV. Logistics
This section of the handbook addresses the practicalities of pursuing graduate work in the History Department at the University of Wyoming.

A. Coursework Funding
Graduate Assistantships constitute the History Department’s primary source of funding for graduate students. Following state-mandated guidelines, all Graduate Assistants will have teaching responsibilities as Teaching Assistants. Students receiving financial support must be registered as full-time (9 hours per semester) students and must be making satisfactory progress towards degree completion. Support is not given for more than two academic years.

B. Student Loans
The University of Wyoming offers student loans to those students pursuing full-time graduate study without a Graduate Assistantship. See the University’s Financial Aid page to explore these options: http://www.uwyo.edu/sfa/loans%2Cgrants_work-study/

C. International Students
The History Department encourages applications from International Students. Information about the international students and scholars community at Wyoming, how to navigate important forms and deadlines, and resources designed especially for international students through the following link: http://www.uwyo.edu/iss/index.html

D. Leaves of Absences and Re-Entry
If a graduate student is unable to complete their M.A. degree in History in four consecutive semesters, the following guidelines will be applied to each student’s case pertaining to readmission to the History Department graduate program.

1. The University of Wyoming registrar and the History Department will keep the student on the active rolls for two semesters following the student’s last recorded semester.
2. A student seeking to re-enroll in the History Department’s graduate program after the above time period must reapply to both admissions and the History Department. Ultimately, the student’s main advisor will make the decision to approve or deny readmission.
3. The student may appeal their main advisor’s decision to the History Department’s Graduate Committee. In these situations, the Graduate Committee will review the student’s case and reach a final decision.
4. After a six (6) year period following the student’s final recorded semester, the university registrar will no longer count a student’s course work toward their degree. However, graduate students may petition the university registrar and the History Department to allow those courses to count toward their degree. If any or
all courses are declined the student must retake new courses to fulfill the department’s requirements.

E. Satisfactory Progress
Satisfactory progress in the M.A. program is determined by a student’s main advisor. In cases where satisfactory progress is in question, the Graduate Committee will review the student’s progress using the following guidelines:

1. Graduate students must maintain a coursework GPA of 3.3 or higher.
2. Graduate students must make appropriate progress toward their thesis, as defined by the main advisor and communicated clearly to the student.
3. Graduate students must attend all department events. If a student absolutely cannot attend an event, they must inform their main advisor and the event organizer ahead of time.
4. Graduate students must meet all program deadlines (including assembling their committees, submitting their programs of study, presenting thesis proposals, etc.).

If at any time a student fails to meet these expectations, they will be placed on probation by the department. Until their progress achieves satisfactory levels, that student will not be eligible for department funding or awards. The student’s progress will be re-assessed by the Graduate Committee the following semester. If progress is deemed satisfactory, the student will be removed from probationary status and will again be eligible for department funding and awards. Should a student’s progress be unsatisfactory for two consecutive semesters, the Department Chair, in consultation with the Graduate Director, will recommend the student's suspension.

H. Petitions and Forms (PDF links)
Committee Form, Program of Study, Graduate Petition may be found at the Office of the Registrar’s website:
http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/students/graduate_student_forms.html

Defense Assessment Form:
http://www.uwyo.edu/history/graduate-studies/defense%20assessment%20form.html

Graduate Conference Travel Fund Request:
http://www.uwyo.edu/history/graduate-studies/grad-travel-request.html

V. The Masters Program of Study
Once admitted into the M.A. Program you will be expected to create a two-year plan for completion of the program in conjunction with your major advisor and the Graduate Director. This section provides guidance concerning program requirements, pertinent timelines and deadlines, selecting a Thesis Committee, your Thesis Proposal, Field Research, and your Thesis Defense.

A. Program Requirements
Graduate students are expected to take 9 credit hours per semester, unless otherwise authorized by the student’s main advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies. A course load of 9 credit hours per semester is considered full-time for graduate students.

Graduate students are required to discuss registration for courses with the Graduate Director in their first semester and with their main advisor in following semesters. Advising and registration for fall semester courses takes place during the previous spring, and advising and registration for spring semester courses takes place during the previous fall.

Candidates for the MA in history are required to complete a minimum of 30 hours of course work with at least 24 hours in history. This will include:

1. 12 hours of history course work in a time/place field.
2. 6 or more hours of history course work in a thematic/comparative field.
3. 4 hours of thesis credit.
4. History 5880
5. History 5910
6. Students must enroll in at least one designated graduate-only (non-dual-listed) seminar each semester of their two-year program. This requirement may be waived in the fourth semester at the request of the student's committee chairperson and will be considered in semesters 1-3 on a case-by-case basis. Any waivers require the approval of the committee chairperson and the Graduate Director. This requirement is in addition to the History 5880 requirement.
7. Students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of a foreign language appropriate to their research. Generally, the language requirement may be met by either of the following options:
   a. Passing a language exam administered by the Department of History. If you wish to stand for the department language examination, begin by making arrangements with one of the faculty members grading exams in your language. You’ll find a list of examiners below. The examiner will work with your committee chairperson to determine the text to be graded. There is no charge for the exam.
      a. Spanish: Drs. Messenger and Larson
      b. French: Dr. Messenger
      c. Latin, Greek, Middle English: Dr. Logan
      d. Italian: Dr. Laegreid
   b. Completing the equivalent of the fourth semester of a language as offered at the University of Wyoming. All courses must be passed with a grade of C or better (may be taken pass/fail). In special cases other relevant historical tools may substitute for the language requirement upon approval of the thesis advisor and the Graduate Director.
   c. The language exam should be completed by March 1 of the first year. In the case of failure, the examiner will set a final deadline.
8. In the spring semester of the first year, typically in early February, as scheduled by the Department Chair, the student will publicly defend his/her thesis proposal,
which must include a written research prospectus and bibliography.

9. The student will successfully defend the final thesis draft before the Graduate Committee in the spring of your fourth semester.

B. Timeline and Deadlines
Your career here at UW requires a certain level of paperwork to be filed, both in the Department of History and with the Office of the Registrar. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will inform you of impending deadlines through email. He or she is available to answer any and all questions you may have concerning your program. The following is a list of applicable deadlines for selecting your thesis chair, your thesis committee, presenting your thesis proposal, completing your Program of Study, applying for graduation, and your thesis defense:

1. September, First Semester: Thesis Chair selected and the DGS notified by email.
2. October, First Semester: Have your full Thesis Committee selected, which will be comprised of your Thesis Chair, one other Department of History faculty member, and one member from another department. A completed Committee Assignment form will be turned into the DGS. Forms are located on the Office of the Registrar’s website.
3. February, Second Semester: You will formally present your Thesis Proposal to the department early in your second semester, usually held in February. Details are provided in the next section.
4. Fall, Third Semester: Complete your Program of Study form. In consultation with the thesis advisor and the Graduate Director, the student will design a coherent program of study with a focus on two clearly defined time/place and thematic fields of historical inquiry, one primary, and the other secondary. An established graduate minor may be chosen as a secondary field upon approval of the thesis advisor and the Graduate Director. A completed Program of Study form must be forwarded to the Graduate Director by this date. Forms are located on the Office of the Registrar’s website.
5. Spring, Fourth Semester: An Anticipated Graduation Date form must be provided to the Office of the Registrar as soon as possible in your final semester so they may perform a Program of Study/CAPP audit. Anticipated Graduation Date forms are located on the Office of the Registrar’s website.
6. Spring, Fourth Semester: Your Thesis Defense will be held in the spring semester of your final year, usually in April. Details are provided below.

C. Thesis Proposal
Early in your second semester, most often February, each student will give a presentation on their thesis at the Thesis Proposal Symposium held in the Department of History’s seminar room. The purpose of the Thesis Proposal Symposium is six-fold:

1. To help you locate and organize a thesis topic
2. To demonstrate the importance of that topic (why it’s worth doing)
3. To present a clearly articulated hypothesis for your project
4. To demonstrate that the sources you need for your research both exist and are available (some sources may exist which are closed to most or all researchers, e.g. the manuscript censuses after 1940)

5. To explain how these sources can be used to answer your research question (hypothesis)

6. To propose a budget for travel to archives so that you can access the source material you need.

What we are asking you to do is to prepare a proposal in exactly the same way that faculty prepare applications for project funding. This is partly a conceptual project (formulating your thesis topic and hypothesis) and partly a practical one (locating sources and determining the cost of travel, lodging, and document reproduction, etc.). The single most important aspect of this process is to work closely with your committee and especially your chair in preparing all of this material. They are there to provide their expertise and guidance and you are not in any way expected to do this on your own.

The purpose of the Symposium is to provide a public venue in which you can present your ideas and obtain positive suggestions from the faculty and your fellow graduate students. This will also give you some experience with public academic presentations that will be helpful when you present papers at conferences. Lastly, you’ll be using your budgets (appropriately revised) when you apply for summer research funding at the end of February.

You will have 15 minutes to present your proposal and answer questions. You should plan to spend no more than 10 minutes with the presentation and allow about 5 minutes to answer questions. Like all conference presentations, it’s always better to NOT READ your proposal, but talk about it in an informed but somewhat conversational manner. Just tell your story to the group. It also helps to view the questions as helpful suggestions rather than criticisms. It’s, in fact, what they are. All of your listeners will complete a short form offering positive suggestions, which will be given to your chair and which they will later discuss with you.

**D. Field Research**

Field research is vital to any historian’s career. For our graduate students their research almost universally takes place during the summer between their first and second years in the program. In order to complete your thesis you will travel to applicable archives, libraries, etc., that contains the documents or interview opportunities you require. This research is expensive. Therefore, you will need to seek funding from both the department and external sources. The Department of History offers Larson-McGee Research Funding opportunities through an application process in the spring of your second year. Other funds may be obtained through competitive application processes at the College of Arts & Sciences, and University levels, and off-campus through various organizations.

There are three keys to success in obtaining funding: being pro-active, packet preparation, and follow through:
1. Pro-Active: YOU have to seek out every opportunity available and identify applicable funding.
   a. Set aside an entire day every month to seek out funding opportunities.
      i. Departmental, College and University
      ii. State and Regional, National
2. Preparation: Give yourself time to put together a successful packet.
   a. Give yourself enough time to get a colleague’s input.
   b. There are workbooks in the offices of Office Associate Doug Johnson and Dr. Jeff Means that provide detailed instructions on how to write a successful grant. See, *The Grant Application Writer’s Workbook: Successful Proposals to Any Agency*, by Stephen W. Russell and David C. Morrison.
   c. Make sure your packet looks professional.
   d. Make sure your packet is organized as delineated to organizational instructions.
3. Follow Through: You are responsible for a complete packet arriving on time so make it happen.
   a. Make sure letters of recommendation have been sent before the deadline by contacting your writers for a gentle reminder.
   b. Feel free to contact organizational representatives both before and after the deadline.

This formula applies to conference funding as well. Conference presentations also demonstrate a strong engagement with the profession and greatly increase your employability and ability to be accepted into a strong PhD program. Conference funding request forms can be found at the following Office of the Registrar website:
http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/students/graduate_student_forms.html.

**Organizations Offering Graduate Funding Opportunities:**

- American Council of Learned Societies
- American Historical Association
- American Society for Ethnohistory
- American Association of University Women
- The Harvard Academy For International and Area Studies
- International Research and Exchanges Board
- Native American & Indigenous Studies Association
- Organization of American Historians
- Phi Alpha Theta, History Honors Society
- Social Science Research Council
- Western History Association

**E. Thesis Defense**
Your thesis defense is the culmination of two years of hard work. Most defenses occur in April of your fourth semester. In order to be ready you should provide the Chair of your
thesis committee your completed thesis by February or March. This will provide your Chair enough time to read your thesis and have you make needed revisions. Then you or your Chair will send your thesis to the other committee members for review. Once your Chair is satisfied that you are ready to defend a date will be selected for your defense. You and the Chair of your thesis committee will coordinate the details of your thesis defense. However, most defenses last an hour or two and are held in the department. Thesis template and format guide forms can be found at the following Office of the Registrar website: http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/students/graduate_student_forms.html.

VI. Professional Development

Expectations: The Department of History seeks to provide students with a wide variety of opportunities that will help prepare them to pursue further academic or professional careers. Indeed, much of a student’s professional development will occur outside the formal curriculum. Students are expected to attend these opportunities on campus and actively pursue funding and academic opportunities outside the University of Wyoming.

1. Academic enrichment on campus
   a. The Susan Horton Cone Family Distinguished Lecture Series: provides an annual forum for the Department to present a distinguished historian from any subfield for a series of meetings with students, class presentations and a public research presentation. Students are encouraged to read the work of Cone speakers in advance of their campus visit and take advantage of the opportunity to discuss research methodologies and strategies.
   b. Departmental colloquia: Each semester the Department organizes a series of colloquia in which faculty from History, associated departments, or graduate students present new and ongoing research.
   c. Non-departmental campus speakers and events: Many other programs around campus often offer talks and events of interest to historians. Depending on their individual interests and field of study, graduate students may wish to make contact with American Studies, Gender and Women’s Studies, Global and Area Studies, African American and Diaspora Studies, Modern and Classical Languages, Religious Studies or Chicano Studies. Repeating events on campus include the Shepard Symposium and the Goode Symposium.

2. Conferences and symposia
   a. Graduate students are expected to seek out opportunities to present their work at professional conferences appropriate to their field. Regional Phi Alpha Theta conferences and the Western History Association provide excellent opportunities for presentation of graduate student work.

3. Department professional development workshops
   a. Throughout each semester, Department faculty will provide professional development workshops to foster specific skills relating to research and career development. Past workshops have discussed teaching strategies, archival research methods and grant-writing.
4. Funding opportunities
   a. Research Funding: Thanks to the Larson-McGee Scholarship Endowment, the History Department may provide financial assistance to facilitate graduate students’ thesis research. Typically these grants support summer research projects following a student’s first year of study. Grants are awarded through a competitive application process.
   b. Graduate Conference Travel Fund: Graduate students may apply to the Department for limited travel funds to facilitate participation in regional and national conferences. This funding is only available to those delivering papers.
   c. Campus resources: There are a variety of resources on campus that facilitate graduate research and conference travel. Students should look into funding opportunities through the College of Arts and Sciences, the Wyoming Institute for Humanities Research, the Office of Academic Affairs and the American Heritage Center.

5. Career placement and professional associations: The following professional historical associations have compiled resources students may find useful for career planning:
   b. Organization of American Historians: https://www.oahsecure.org/careers

VII. Graduate Assistantships

A. Expectations
Graduate Assistantships provide financial support that allows timely completion of the M.A. degree. Assistantships also provide teaching experience that strengthens professional skills for further graduate work at the doctoral level and other career paths.

Graduate Assistants (GAs) will meet the following basic expectations:
   1. Attending course lectures
   2. Preparing discussion section materials and assignments
   3. Teaching two 50-minute discussion sections per week
   4. Holding 3 hours of office hours per week
   5. Grading assignments and exams for students in their discussion sections
   6. Participating in department training and professional development programs

Graduate Assistantships are subject to the following History Department Regulations:
   1. Graduate assistantships are normally awarded for one academic year. Renewals for a second year will be considered following an annual evaluation of academic progress and classroom performance during the first semester of work. Renewals are not automatic. Graduate assistantships can be held for a maximum of four semesters.
2. Graduate students seeking graduate assistantship renewals must submit a brief, one-page report assessing the impact that the assistantship has had on their progress through the program. This must be accompanied by two Letters of Recommendation, one from the student's committee chair and one from an instructor who has supervised the student's apprentice teaching. The report and Letters of Recommendation must be submitted on or before the due date established by the Graduate Director (usually around March 1).

3. All graduate students (including GAs) must maintain satisfactory progress in the program. Any GA failing to maintain satisfactory progress will be reviewed by the Graduate Committee. The Graduate Committee will evaluate the individual case and may decide to allow the student to continue the assistantship on a probationary basis, or to terminate the award.

VIII. Graduate Office Space

The Graduate Office (Room 59) is for the use of active Graduate Assistants, who will use this space for their office hours, grading, and other activities related to their GAships.

The occupant of each desk must post their name visibly and legibly, identifying their occupancy of the desk.

At the beginning of each academic year (by August 15), all desks must be cleaned out. Materials found in the Graduate Office after this date will be removed. Continuing students who will be serving as GAs in the fall of the new academic year may appeal this decision to the Department Chair, but are not guaranteed to keep their space.

Desk space in the Graduate Office will be allocated to active Graduate Assistants. If empty desks remain after all GAs have desk space, active graduate students in History may apply to use those desks to the Department Chair. The Department Chair will distribute desk space at their discretion, based on seniority and other circumstances.

All occupants of the GA Office must comply with the following rules, also posted in the GA Office:

GA Office Guidelines
This is a shared office space for History Department GAs. Please respect your fellow GAs and their right to work in this space. This means:

1. **GA work:** These desks are meant for the use of GAs currently teaching classes for the History Department. This means that current GAs get priority use of this space, and that GA work (holding office hours, grading, etc.) also take priority. If your work here is not GA-related, or is interfering with GA work in this space (noise, clutter, etc.), you will be asked to work elsewhere.

2. **Food:** In a space like this, you share food smells and sounds with your neighbors. Be considerate about what food you bring into this space, and *always* clean up after...
yourself immediately. You are welcome to eat snacks and meals in the lounge upstairs, to give your fellow GAs a more pleasant work environment.

3. **Noise:** Please keep noise to a minimum. Do not play music in this space, or watch videos (unless you are using headphones, at a reasonable volume – others should not be able to hear what you’re listening to). Social conversations should be held elsewhere. This includes non-GA-related conversations with peers, and *any* cell phone and skype conversations.

4. **Cleanliness:** Keep this space neat and clean. This office is not a locker room, and you should not leave an excessive amount of your belongings here. The History Department cannot ensure the safety of your belongings, and this space should be kept clean and neat for the purposes of letting all GAs work here, including providing space for their students as needed.

5. **Respect:** In this space, you are a GA representing the History Department. This means you must behave professionally while working here. Please adhere to all Department policies, FERPA guidelines, and University regulations. Remember that this is a public space.

Please feel free to discuss any of these guidelines, or to suggest new guidelines, with the Graduate Mentor.

**B. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Ethical Grading**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is the University of Wyoming’s standard for grading ethics, and it is your responsibility to understand and obey the dictates of this federal law.

Some general guidelines that will apply directly to your work as a GA include:

1. Grades must be transparent. Document your process of grade-calculating, and be sure you can demonstrate where those grades came from and their appearance in the course syllabus.
2. Student grades are private. Do not leave final exams or papers out where others can see them. Do not post grades publically unless you have established pre-arranged codes known only to you and the individual students. Do not discuss student grades, even with the student in question, where others can hear you.
3. Do not leave papers or exams to be graded in a public space unattended.
4. Resist the temptation to release teaching stress by complaining about your students. This is especially true on campus, where all spaces are public.
5. Parents do *not* have the right to information about their child’s grades or academic performance.
See also [http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/ferpa/index.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/ferpa/index.html) for a more in-depth discussion of FERPA guidelines, or contact the Office of the Registrar for guidance at 766-5724. Faculty members are also happy to discuss FERPA guidelines with you, and to help you tackle any difficult situation.

C. Graduate Mentoring Program

As part of their responsibilities, all first-time GAs will participate in the History Department’s Graduate Mentor training program. This training program facilitates professional development in teaching as well as research, career planning, and other professional skills. Through the Graduate Mentor program, the History Department aims to help graduate students become not only outstanding scholars, but also well-rounded professionals. The faculty Graduate Mentoring Director and peer Graduate Mentor(s) will direct these programs.

1. **Training Workshop**
   In August, first-time GAs will attend a teaching workshop to prepare them for their first weeks of teaching. This workshop will address department expectations, teaching techniques, tough situations, communicating with faculty, and other topics.

2. **Teaching Observations**
   New GAs will participate in three types of teaching observations during their first semester: (1) new GAs will observe another GA (usually another first-time GA) teaching a discussion section, and will write a one-page reflection giving feedback on that GA’s teaching. (2) New GAs will be observed by another new GA, and receive a one-page reflection from their teaching. (3) New GAs will be observed by a faculty member in the History Department (usually the instructor of the course for which they are GAing or the Graduate Mentoring Director) and receive a one-page reflection from their teaching.

   These observations will be made available to the Graduate Committee, and will be used in evaluating graduate students’ success in teaching and eligibility for renewal of assistantships. It is the responsibility of first-time GAs to arrange and complete these observations by the deadline announced by the Graduate Mentoring Director.

3. **Practicum in College Teaching**
   All first-time GAs will enroll in HIST 5900, Practicum in College Teaching, usually during the spring semester of their first year. This course is a workshop in graduate student professionalization. The course explores the art of teaching – leading effective discussion sections, meeting teaching challenges, and developing your own teaching style. This course also broadens graduate students’ training as historians, exploring professional collegiality, course planning, careers and the job market, and other topics.

IX. **Professionalism**
A. Professional Decorum in the Department
The M.A. is a professional degree, and the History Department’s expectations of graduate students are accordingly professional. The following are guidelines for behavior, though not an exhaustive list of all professional behaviors required in this program. Please discuss professionalism with your main advisor for more tailored and in-depth advice.

1. Course Expectations
   a. Graduate students are expected to be present and on time for all classes. If a graduate student absolutely must miss a class, they are expected to contact the instructor ahead of time to explain.
   b. Graduate students are expected to do all readings, and to come to class prepared to actively discuss readings. Actively discussing readings entails asking questions and raising issues, rather than simply responding to discussion prompts.
   c. Graduate students are expected to complete all assignments on time and at a high level. Graduate students should seek to improve their critical reading, writing, and discussion skills every semester, to broaden their historical understanding and knowledge, and to respond positively to all feedback they receive from all instructors.
   d. Graduate students are expected to actively seek out guidance. Graduate students make use of faculty office hours to ask questions and seek guidance in areas of interest, as well as areas in which students have limited expertise.

2. Time Management
   a. Graduate students are expected to meet every appointment they make. Lateness and no-shows are unacceptable and rescheduling takes time and calls for consideration of others’ schedules.
   b. Graduate students are expected to attend all History Department events and practice courteous listening. They are expected to on time, not to leave early, and to participate actively in event discussions. If a graduate student absolutely must miss a department event or leave early, they are expected to contact the event’s organizer well ahead of time.
   c. Graduate students are expected to submit all forms by the appointed deadline. Look ahead at all applications and program deadlines, and manage your time effectively. Missing deadlines means missing opportunities and also damaging your professional reputation with faculty who you may later ask to write you letters of recommendation.
   d. Graduate students are expected to provide professors writing letters of recommendation with completed proposals/applications at least two weeks in advance. Provide professors with all necessary instructions, deadlines and links.
   e. Graduate students are expected to work with their main thesis advisor to create a timeline for writing their thesis. All committee members should have two full weeks to read the final thesis draft before the defense.
Graduate students are expected to meet all chapter deadlines with their main advisor and recognize their advisor’s work in reading their thesis and helping them to develop this important project.

3. Self-motivation and Work Ethic
   a. Graduate students are expected to seek out opportunities. Investigate, research, and talk over possible internships, funding, and research opportunities with professors. This is your responsibility; do not expect to be automatically informed about all relevant opportunities.
   b. Graduate students are expected to go beyond expectations. You are now a graduate student, and should never aim to simply meet (rather than exceed) minimum requirements. Never ask "how many sources do we need"? Look for opportunities to rewrite and improve. Push yourself to learn things that are difficult for you. Take seminars outside your area and actively apply what you learn to your own research. Demonstrating self-motivation and exceeding program expectations will be noted and recognized by faculty; likewise, doing the bare minimum will impact your competitiveness for funding opportunities, faculty willingness to work with you, and your eventual letters of recommendation.

4. Professionalism
   a. Treat office staff with respect and gratitude. Office staff understand things that you never learned about. Office staff make your work possible, and you should recognize their hard work to facilitate what you do in this program. Move personal conversations out of History office.
   b. Treat all staff with courtesy: librarians, office associates across campus, custodians--everyone here contributes to your success. Look at everyone as useful resources and helpful colleagues. Be a helpful resource and colleague in return.
   c. Treat professors/instructors with respect. Note that different instructors have own strengths, and can teach you different things; strive to learn from all, not to identify “favorites” and dismiss others. Remember that faculty members are experts who are offering you an opportunity to learn, and respect their evaluations of your work. Your job is not to complain about hard grades or tough assignments, but to embrace these challenges as learn as much as you possibly can from people who have already succeeded in the goal toward you are currently striving.
   d. Emails: always use proper grammar when writing emails in a professional capacity (i.e., any email you write from your university email, and any email you write to faculty, staff, students, administrators, and professional contacts outside the university). Address your contacts by name, not as “hey,” and do not use casual texting or abbreviations in your writing.
   e. Honor the structure of the History Department by obeying proper procedure. Your ability to navigate department and university structures reflects on your professionalism. Do not go over anyone’s head; learn who is most appropriate to approach to deal with problems and practice...
transparency and professionalism even in situations of interpersonal tension or other conflicts.

5. Collegiality
   a. Treat your fellow graduate students with respect. Remember that this is a professional degree, and behave with professional dignity. Also remember that your fellow students are your colleagues, and cultivate supportive and respectful relationships with all of them. Be a good citizen of the academic space you share by working hard and collaboratively. Strive to develop a reputation among your peers as a model classmate and scholar; these are your future fellow scholars and a potentially very useful support system. Treat them as such.

6. Teaching (Graduate Assistantships)
   a. Keep your relationships with undergraduate students professional. The History Department does not allow dating or sexual relationships with undergraduate students, whose grades you are responsible for, or who may be responsible for in the future.
   b. Dress up, not down when you teach: your dress should not distract students. Aim to dress professionally.
   c. Think carefully about social media use with students, or in places that students can access. Carefully manage your digital identity in forums like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc. This kind of publically available information can erode your authority in the classroom and even your professional reputation among fellow graduate students and faculty.

7. Representing the Department
   a. When you attend on-campus lectures and colloquia, and also when you travel to a conference, you represent the History Department and the University of Wyoming. Behave professionally and respectfully. Remember that you are cultivating your own professional reputation, and also contributing to the standing of this program. Bad behavior reflects badly not only on you, but also on your colleagues and on the faculty who offer you their time and support.
   b. Do not complain about the program. If you have a concern or a problem, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the appropriate faculty or staff, but resist the temptation to simply complain about it to friends or colleagues. Remember that this is professional program, and you harm yourself, your colleagues, and this University by bad-mouthing the program that is educating you.
   c. Remember that campus is public space. Do not conduct conversations you believe to be private anywhere on campus. You cannot control who overhears you, and you should be conscious at all times that when you are on campus, you represent this program and this university.
Timeline: History M.A. Program
This timeline offers a model for what graduate students in History should be doing each semester of their graduate study, in order to successfully graduate after two years. (Students should discuss this timeline with their advisors. This is by no means a universal model, and each faculty member may wish to adjust this timeline for their advisees.)

Year 1

Fall
- History Department Graduate Orientation events (August).
- Select Main Advisor, notify Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) by September 1.
- Identify a thesis topic. Begin readings in secondary literature and primary sources (available online, through UW Libraries, etc.).
- Content knowledge: sit in on lecture courses in your field(s).
- Meet regularly with your advisor. Submit a thesis proposal to advisor by end of first semester.
- Begin seeking out funding opportunities – for archival research and coursework funding – at UW and beyond. These deadlines come up quickly, so begin this process as soon as possible.

Spring
- Select all Thesis Committee Members in communication with main advisor. Submit Committee Assignment Form to DGS by February 1. Form available online via Office of the Registrar.
- Thesis Proposal Presentations (February).
- Submit application for History Department research funding to DGS by March 1.
- Language Exam (complete by May 1).
- Identify your fields of study --- major field and comparative/thematic field. Make this decision in consultation with your main advisor, and notify DGS.
- Content knowledge: sit in on lecture courses in your fields.
- Continue seeking out funding opportunities for archival research and coursework funding.
- Prepare a literature review for your thesis topic, in order to conduct field research with a mastery of the historical content and historiographical discourse of your topic.
- Prepare for archival research. Identify archives and collections for your research. Contact archivists and learn archival policies, hours, when archivists will be on vacation, etc. Practice archival document analysis, time management, technology use, etc. at AHC. Plan travel and accommodations.
Summer
- Conduct archival research. Begin analyzing your archival sources and brainstorming a chapter outline for your thesis.
- Be in close touch with your advisor and plan to submit a chapter outline for your thesis by September.

Year 2

Fall
- Complete your Program of Study Form in consultation with your main advisor and DGS. Form available online via Office of the Registrar.
- Write a full draft of your thesis by December. Create a writing schedule with your advisor. (For example: Chapter 1 in September; Chapter 2 in October; Chapter 3 in November; Intro and Conclusion in December.)

Spring
- Revise all thesis chapters, in response to advisor comments, by March.
- Ideal revision schedule to graduate on time, assuming a May 1 Thesis Defense date:
  - March 15: send fully revised thesis to advisor. Advisor will either require additional edits or give student permission to send full thesis to committee readers.
  - April 1: send full thesis to all committee readers. Readers require 2 weeks to give feedback.
  - April 15: receive comments from committee readers, make needed revisions.
  - April 20: send “final” draft of thesis to all committee readers to secure “green light” for defense.
- Anticipated Graduation Date Form must be provided to the Office of the Registrar as soon as possible in your final semester. Form available online via Office of the Registrar.
- Pay graduation fee to Cashier’s Office, Knight Hall 170.
- Order MA regalia, see http://www.uwyo.edu/commencement/cap-gown/
- Ask faculty member to hood you at graduation.
- Thesis Defense.
- Submit Report on Final Examination Form (thesis defense form) to the Office of the Registrar. Form available online via Office of the Registrar.
- Graduate!