

## **Thesis Registration Policy**

In order to ensure that graduate students who wish to pursue a Master's thesis have successfully demonstrated that they have a viable thesis project, the History and Philosophy Department has adopted the following policy that will determine when students may register for History 612: Thesis I or History 613: Thesis II. No exceptions will be made to the following guidelines.

### **In order to register for Thesis I students must:**

- Have completed at least 9 credits of graduate coursework, including HIS 600: Historical Research Methods.
- Have written a complete draft of one chapter of the thesis (A substantial research paper on the topic based on primary source research written for HIS 600, HIS 601, or another graduate class may fulfill this requirement).
- Submit a written thesis proposal that has been approved by all members of the thesis committee that includes:
  - A narrative (2-3 pages) discussing the research questions that will be explored in the thesis, the existing secondary literature on the topic, and available primary sources that will be used in writing the thesis.
  - A bibliography of relevant primary and secondary sources.
  - A timetable with specific dates for the research, writing, and revision of the thesis. It should also include all departmental and university deadlines.

### **In order to register for Thesis II students must:**

- Demonstrate that they have made reasonable progress on the thesis.
- Have written complete drafts of at least two chapters of the thesis (comprising approximately 50% of the length of the final work).
- Submit an updated research and writing timetable that shows that the thesis can be completed in twelve months or less. This revised timetable must be approved by the thesis advisor.

**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY  
1871 Old Main Drive  
Shippensburg, PA 17257-2299**

**THESIS INSTRUCTIONS**

The following information is provided to assist the graduate student in working with his department in planning for his master's degree thesis:

1. The graduate student will confer with his respective department chairperson to arrange for the appointment of a major thesis adviser and a Thesis Committee. The committee should be composed of the major research adviser and at least two other members of the faculty who teach graduate classes.
2. When the committee is established, the student must complete the form, Arrangements for Completing the Thesis Requirements for the Master's Degree. This form is available in the Registrar's Office or from the History Department.
3. With approval of the thesis adviser, the graduate student may schedule and register for thesis credit. The student must contact the Registrar's Office to schedule, as thesis is not listed as a regularly scheduled class. Each student must complete six thesis credits but may register for three credits at a time. The student should indicate the course and department number. (Example: History 612 – Thesis I or History 613 - Thesis II)
4. "Q" grades must be submitted for a thesis when the work is not completed. Only when the thesis is completed can a regular letter grade be recorded. Under no conditions can a regular letter grade be submitted unless the thesis is completed and signed by all members of the Thesis Committee.
5. The completed and approved thesis must be submitted to the Registrar's Office in final form within one calendar year of the date of registering for Thesis II. Students who do not complete the thesis within one calendar year from the date on which they registered for Thesis II must register for thesis credit again and pay the appropriate course fees.
6. Upon completion, a copy of your thesis will be housed in the Lehman Library and made available to the public. Students interested in having their thesis copyrighted may obtain information from the Ezra Lehman Memorial Library, Shippensburg University, or by writing to the Copyright Office, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20559.

04/26/02

***Your defended Thesis should be submitted to the  
Registrar's Office approximately 30 days before  
your intended graduation date!***

## **Thesis Policy from the Shippensburg Graduate Catalogue 2014-2016**

Before registering for thesis you should confer with the department chair concerning the appointment of your research advisor and the other members of your thesis committee. The names of the advisor and committee members must be submitted to the Registrar's Office for approval at the time you register for the thesis. Registration for the thesis may be completed at the beginning of any semester or summer session. In planning work on your thesis, you should take into consideration faculty members are not always on campus during the summer sessions. You may register for Thesis I and Thesis II concurrently or in different semesters. A temporary grade of Q will be recorded for a thesis when the work is not completed at the end of the semester.

Only when the thesis is completed can a regular letter grade be recorded. Under no conditions may a regular letter grade be submitted unless the thesis is completed and signed by all thesis committee members.

You must submit the thesis to the Registrar's Office in final approved form within one calendar year from the date you register for Thesis II. Otherwise, you must register again for Thesis II and pay the appropriate course fees. If you do not complete the thesis within the required time and do not reregister for Thesis II, grades of F will be recorded for both Thesis I and Thesis II.

When registering for thesis credit, you must submit the Arrangements for Completing the Thesis Requirement for the Master's Degree form. For additional information, contact the Registrar's Office.

**Templates for thesis cover pages and committee signature pages can be found on the following pages:**

A HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT  
IN HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

By  
Mary E. Smith

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Department of  
History and Philosophy and the Graduate Council  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY  
Shippensburg, Pennsylvania  
May, 2002

SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY

Shippensburg, Pennsylvania

This thesis submitted by Mary E. Smith has been approved as meeting the research requirements for the Master of Arts degree.

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Date

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Chairperson of Thesis Committee and  
Associate Professor of History

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Date

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Professor of History

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Date

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Associate Professor of History

Note: The signature of the chairperson of the Thesis Committee should appear first. Check in the History Department Office to determine the exact titles of advisers before typing the approval page. This page should be inserted after the title page.

# **Master's of Applied History**

## **Department of History**

### **Guidelines for Writing a Master's Thesis**

#### The Thesis Option ---

A Master's Thesis demonstrates a graduate student's competence in: (a) defining a research topic and stating a thesis; (b) pursuing research in primary sources; (c) integrating information derived from documents with relevant, current secondary scholarship; (d) organizing and writing an essay of approximately 50 to 100 pages; and (e) compiling reference notes and bibliography in standard forms. This process can seldom be completed in a few weeks, so it is important for those who want to write a thesis to begin thinking about topics early.

#### Ten Steps to Completing the Thesis ---

- 1) Choose a broad area of interest by geographic region, chronological period, and focus (political, social, military, demographic, diplomatic, women, religion, etc.). Within your field of interest, refine possible topics to discuss with your potential advisor.
  
- 2) Find an advisor with competence in your field of interest who is willing to supervise your thesis. Prepare an outline of your proposal to discuss with this advisor. This should indicate what issues you want to explore and sources (primary and secondary) that you know about. Your advisor will probably suggest other sources to review and may ask you to further define or narrow the topic. Sometimes a proposed topic proves to be unfeasible; common reasons are because too much is already published, primary documents cannot be obtained, or it would take too long to accumulate data.
  
- 3) When the topic's parameters are agreed upon, you and your advisor will select two other appropriate faculty to serve on your thesis committee. One may be in another department. After these faculty have agreed, you register for thesis credits (History 612 and 613) and complete forms required by the Graduate Office. History 612 and 613 either can be taken over two semesters or by registering for six hours in one semester.
  
- 4) At this point, or within a few weeks after you begin research, you should meet with each member of your committee. You should present your proposal and should be prepared to answer questions about sources, your approach, and the feasibility of the project.
  
- 5) Do research in primary documents to provide the core of the thesis essay. However, it is also important to read secondary books and articles, being especially aware of significant scholarly books and journal articles published in the past ten years. Your original research should be presented in the context of contemporary scholarship, either by amplifying or refuting the work of others. Criteria for judging the quality of a thesis include mastery of both primary materials and the secondary literature.
  
- 6) As your research progresses, consult with your advisor regularly. Report exciting documentary discoveries, developing interpretations and puzzling issues. Work with your advisory and other faculty to pursue relevant sources and to understand their meaning. If you encounter problems or delays, notify your advisor and committee members in order to adjust your work timetable.

7) A thesis should be organized in chapters of about twenty pages. Each chapter should have a coherent theme, an introduction, exposition, and conclusion. The final thesis draft also needs: a title page, a table of contents, a list of illustrations or maps (if you include these), an introduction, a conclusion, notes (either endnotes or footnotes), and a bibliography of sources you consulted. Think about the essay's final form as you develop your materials and outlines. You may want to consult with your advisor about form and preliminary chapter drafts.

8) A final draft of the entire thesis – with table of contents, notes and bibliography – should be submitted first to your advisor. When this is returned to you with editorial and/or substantive revisions suggested, you begin the process of revising the essay. Few theses are acceptable in their first draft, so adequate time should be allowed to accomplish necessary revisions.

9) When a corrected draft is approved by your advisory, it should be submitted to the other two members of your committee. They may suggest further revisions, though usually these are less comprehensive than the advisor's.

10) After any corrections or revisions are made and committee members' signatures are on the required form, your thesis is ready to be submitted to the Graduate Office. A fee for binding the thesis is required at this time. The Graduate Office requires that the completed thesis and fees be filed by a date which should be ascertained by contacting that office at the beginning of the semester when the thesis is expected to be completed. A second bound copy of the thesis must be submitted to the History Department. Both copies must include signature pages.

NOTE: It is the responsibility of the student to be familiar with all departmental and university rules and deadlines regarding the completion of the Master's thesis. Students writing a Master's thesis should contact the Registrar's Office and School of Graduate Studies to confirm all deadlines for the submission and completion of the thesis. It is also the primary responsibility of students writing a thesis to meet all deadlines in timely fashion.