Ph.D. Degree Evaluation Criteria

The principal considerations in evaluating Ph.D. students are whether they are performing at a level to be expected of doctoral students, and whether they are proceeding expeditiously with a coherent program of studies. To be considered making satisfactory progress toward the degree, a Ph.D. student must meet the following criteria:

Quick Links
- Courses, Credits and Grades
- Progress in Program
- End of Quarter Evaluations
- End of Year Evaluations
- Time to Degree

Courses, Credits and Grades

A Ph.D. student must receive grades of at least 3.5 in History graduate courses or other graduate-level History-content courses (400-500 level), and credit (CR) for HIST 600 and HIST 800. A student must maintain quarterly and cumulative GPAs of at least 3.5.

The student's written and oral work must demonstrate a solid capacity for graduate-level work at the PhD level, as evidenced by the quarterly written evaluations provided by their faculty, and faculty assessments of student progress such as those included in letters of support for funding, etc.

Progress in the Program

The student must complete the requirements for the degree in a timely fashion:

- The Ph.D. seminar paper must be completed and the Ph.D. language requirement must be fulfilled no later than the quarter preceding the Ph.D. General Exam.
- Incompletes, X grades and N grades must be removed from the student’s transcript by the end of the following quarter. (Students intending to take the Ph.D. General Exam must remove all Xs, Is and Ns from the transcript prior to the quarter in which the Ph.D. exams will be taken.)
- Students who completed the History MA at UW are expected to take one year (from the quarter of promotion to the Ph.D. program) to get to the Ph.D. General Exam. Students admitted to the History Department at the Ph.D. level are expected to take the Ph.D. General Examination no later than the end of their second year in the Ph.D. program. Extending the time to the Ph.D. exams beyond these limits can be cause for concern about the student's progress in the doctoral program; consequently an extension will be granted only in cases of extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control. A student who must postpone the Ph.D. exams beyond the expected norms must submit an explanatory petition, supported by a letter from the Chair of the Ph.D. Committee, for the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

Advisers
The nature of the relationship between students and their advisers will, of course, vary, but it is the expectation of the Graduate Studies Committee that faculty advisers and student advisees will meet at least once each quarter before classes begin, and again during the Spring Quarter, to review progress and plans.

End-of-Quarter Evaluations

End-of-the Quarter Evaluations: At the end of Autumn, Winter and Spring Quarters, History faculty are given forms by which they evaluate the performance and progress of each History graduate student in their class(es) or for whom they supervised HSTRY 600 or HIST 800 credits that quarter. The completed evaluation forms are submitted to the History Graduate Office and placed in the student's academic file. The End-of-the-Quarter Evaluations are not confidential and can be read by the student (see Student Academic Files below).

Student Academic Files

Student Academic Files: A History graduate student can review the contents of his/her academic file, with the exception of confidential materials such as the letters of recommendation submitted as part of the graduate application materials and faculty letters submitted for promotion from the History M.A. program to the Ph.D. program, faculty comments for evaluation for graduate admission and for promotion to the History Ph.D, faculty letters in support of funding nominations, and annual review letters. A student who wants to review his/her file must contact the History Graduate Office to make an appointment. Academic files cannot be removed from the History Graduate Office.

Yearly Review

The History Graduate Office conducts a yearly (usually in Spring Quarter) satisfactory progress/ performance review of the Department’s graduate students. Students are alerted to issues regarding their performance and progress in the program. These include Xs, Is, and Ns on the transcript, deadlines for establishing graduate committees, and signing up for exams. Students are warned a year in advance if they are approaching the Graduate School's time limit to complete degree requirements.

All History graduate students must meet with their faculty Chairs early in Winter Quarter to complete the Department’s required Annual Review. At this meeting the Chair and the student will review the student's progress and performance in the graduate program and discuss the student's educational and research plans for the upcoming year. The faculty Chair must submit the completed Annual Review form to the History Graduate Office.

Students who are judged not to be performing at a level expected of masters students and/or who are not making satisfactory progress will receive written notification of this assessment and will be advised on what steps they should take to correct any problems or concerns expressed by the Committee or faculty. Failure to comply with these instructions may lead to a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School for alteration of a student's standing, i.e. warning, probation or final probation. See Graduate School Memorandum #16.

Time to Degree

Completion of the UW M.A. and Ph.D. or UW Ph.D. within ten years: This is a Graduate School requirement.

- Time spent on-leave and/or out-of-status counts toward the ten year limit.
- Students in their ninth year are alerted to the approaching ten year limit as part of the Department’s satisfactory program review. The student is given the Ten Year Progress Assessment Form by which the student and his/her Chair must provide an assessment of the student’s progress on the dissertation to date and a timeline for finishing the degree by the end of the ten-year limit (the end
If circumstances beyond the student's control necessitate that completion of the degree be postponed by one quarter (only) beyond the ten year limit (i.e., to Autumn Quarter of the eleventh year), the Ph.D. Final Examination must be scheduled with the Graduate School before the end of Summer Quarter in order to extend this completion deadline to Autumn Quarter. The Dissertation Reading Committee must have read and approved a complete draft of the entire dissertation before they can agree to scheduling the defense, which means that a complete draft of the dissertation must be finished and approved by Summer Quarter. The Reading Committee and the GSR must also then agree to a specific day/time for the defense in Autumn Quarter.

- Students who do not complete the degree by the end of Summer Quarter or Autumn Quarter (through extenuating circumstances only, as described above) will not be allowed to register as a History graduate student, nor will they be granted on-leave status as of Autumn or Winter Quarter. Their registration will then lapse and they will no longer have graduate student status at the University of Washington.

- In the event that a student's registration lapses, it is still possible for the student to complete the degree in a subsequent quarter. To do this, the student must complete the dissertation while out of status, have the entire draft approved by the Reading Committee, have the Readers and G.S.R. agree to a day/time for the defense in a subsequent quarter and then apply for re-admission to the Graduate Program in History for that quarter. The History Department admits former students for this purpose in any quarter, including Summer Quarter. The student would be re-admitted for one quarter only to defend the dissertation and complete the degree that quarter. At this point, scheduling the Final Exam will require the submission of a petition to the Graduate School requesting an extension to the ten-year limit for completing the degree. The petition is submitted by the History Graduate Office only once and then only at the time that the defense is scheduled with the Graduate School. The Graduate School will usually approve a petition for a short extension of the ten-year limit, so it is in the student's best interest to finish the degree requirements as quickly as possible.

Department of History
University of Washington
318 Smith Box 353560
Seattle, WA 98195-3560

Phone: (206) 543-5790
Fax: (206) 543-9451
histmain@uw.edu

Source URL: https://history.washington.edu/phd-degree-evaluation-criteria