Master of Arts in World History

Thesis Option

A master’s thesis is an original piece of historical scholarship that builds a strong and compelling argument based on a comprehensive knowledge of the appropriate primary and secondary sources. The thesis option provides an opportunity for students in New York University’s M.A. in World History program to build their skills as historians while engaging in rigorous independent scholarship under the mentorship of a member of the Department of History. The goal in writing the M.A. thesis is to produce a polished article-length work with the potential for publication. For those interested in pursuing doctoral studies in history, the thesis may also serve as a writing sample for submission to Ph.D. programs.

General Information:

1. Full-time students in the Master of Arts in World History program must declare their intention to write a thesis by the end of their first semester at NYU. Part-time students must do so by the end of their second semester.

2. Students who choose to write a thesis will do so under the direction of a member of the Department of History at NYU with whom, for example, they have taken (or intend to take) a course.

3. It is the responsibility of the student to find an advisor and to establish timelines and parameters for the project. Student should schedule regular meetings (every 3 or 4 weeks as needed) with their advisors, who will serve as sounding boards during the research and writing process.

4. Every M.A. thesis will be read by two readers: the advisor and a second reader. Students will select a second reader in consultation with the primary advisor. The second advisor can be from outside of the Department of History.

5. In the final semester, students must register for an independent study course with their advisor (4 credits). This is the thesis credit. Please submit this form to the graduate program administrators at the Department of History.

6. Once the thesis has been submitted and read, a thesis-defense will be scheduled. During this meeting, the student will present and explain the findings of the thesis while answering questions about content and argument from members of the thesis committee. The student is also responsible for obtaining a signed thesis cover page and two signed Master’s Thesis Reader Sheets which must be returned to the Graduate Program Administrator before May 15th.
Thesis Requirements:

1. **Topic**: The thesis should touch upon themes developed in the core courses of the M.A. in World History program.

2. **Scope**: The thesis should offer original arguments and analyses that are anchored in a comprehensive review of the scholarly literature associated with the topic. There should be strong evidence of primary-source research.

3. **Length**: The final presentation should be in the range of 30 to 40 pages, including notes and bibliography.

4. **Originality**: The thesis must be entirely the student’s own work with all sources (primary and secondary) carefully cited.

5. **Style**: The presentation, including bibliography and notes, should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

6. **Deadlines**: April 1st is the FINAL DEADLINE for submission of the M.A. thesis.

7. **Defense**: A thesis-defense will be scheduled once the thesis has been submitted and read. During this meeting, the student will present and explain the findings of the thesis while answering questions about content and argument from members of the thesis committee.

8. **Responsibility**: The M.A. thesis is designed to foster independence and personal initiative. It is the student’s responsibility to satisfy all requirements of the thesis option, coordinate with the advisor and second reader in meeting all deadlines, and produce a work of history that reflects the highest standards of scholarship.