

BA/MA INSTRUCTION SHEET FOR FACULTY AND STUDENTS (Revised May 4, 2014)

THE BA/MA PROGRAM

The BA/MA in the Department of History was initiated in 1971-72 to provide a way for outstanding undergraduates to receive both the BA and an MA at the end of four years. The program is designed for students who demonstrate exceptional scholarly ability and promise and are able to undertake a rigorous program that culminates in the completion of a major scholarly research project. It assumes that the student will complete most other requirements for graduation by the end of the junior year, and during the senior year will be able to concentrate primarily on the BA/MA program of study as outlined below.

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

The prospective BA/MA student must be prepared to submit a formal application to the regular graduate program in history by December 15 of the junior year. Application materials will include:

- 1) a personal statement;
- 2) a transcript;
- 3) a proposal for the capstone research project to be completed in the senior year;
- 4) a writing sample, preferably a research paper;
- 5) a letter of support from a faculty sponsor who has agreed to supervise the student's master's thesis and admit the student to a graduate seminar;
- 6) a minimum of one additional letter of recommendation from a faculty member (in any field) who can attest to the student's superior abilities and achievements;
- 7) a signed form from a second reader confirming willingness to read the thesis and assist the sponsor in advising the student. If the second reader is already familiar with the student's work, he or she may submit the "additional letter of recommendation" (#5) in lieu of this form.

For questions about the program, **contact Toby Ditz, Director of Undergraduate Studies (toby.ditz@jhu.edu) or Megan Zeller, Graduate Coordinator, Department of History: mzeller4@jhu.edu, who can also provide details about application procedures.**

PREREQUISITES FOR ADMISSION

This is an accelerated undergraduate program. Therefore, the basic prerequisites for admission must ordinarily be completed by the end of the sophomore year. They include the following:

1) A cumulative general GPA /GPA in history of 3.8 or higher. The student who is admitted to the program will be expected to maintain this caliber of work throughout the junior and senior years. *Under unusual circumstances, exceptions to the general GPA requirement can be made when the student otherwise meets the criteria for admission. The sponsor should make a request for such an exception in his or her letter of support. The final decision rests with the graduate committee.*

This is a minimum criterion of admission. The excellence of the student's research proposal and faculty assessments of his or her scholarly abilities and achievements weigh heavily and not all students who meet the GPA requirements can expect to be admitted into the program.

2) Completion of the Undergraduate Seminar (100.193-194) by the end of the sophomore year.

3) Reading competence in at least one foreign language. All students enrolled in the BA/MA must demonstrate competence in one foreign language through the intermediate level. Applicants who have not yet completed this requirement must do so the end of the junior year and should be enrolled in intermediate-level coursework at the time of application. Under special circumstances, students may demonstrate competence by taking and passing the graduate language exams given by the department of history, which are administered at the beginning of the fall semester and the beginning and end of the spring semester.

4) Sponsor. Prior to submitting the application, the student must seek out a faculty member who agrees to sponsor a research project, offer admission into a graduate seminar, and help plan the student's course of study through regular consultations. *We strongly encourage students to identify a sponsor early in the first semester of the junior year to ensure timely submission of formal applications and to obtain guidance on the formulation of research proposals.*

5) Second Reader. In consultation with his or her sponsor, the student will also seek out a second reader who has expertise in the student's intended area of research. Depending on the student's interests, the second reader may be an instructor from another department.

REQUIREMENTS FOR COMPLETION OF THE BA/MA PROGRAM

General:

- 1) The completion of 120 credits based on current requirements for the bachelor's degree.
- 2) Demonstrated competence in at least one foreign language as above.

The Junior Year

3) Plan of Study. BA/MA students will collaborate closely with their sponsors to develop a coherent program of study that deepens their scholarly background in their areas of specialization and research. Normally, students will be expected to take at least three history courses during the junior year, but courses in other disciplines can also be very important to the student's preparation and should be selected carefully. Any courses taken during study abroad should also form part of a coherent program of study.

4) Advance Work on BA/MA thesis. The deadline for final submission of the MA thesis is early March of the senior year. (See below.) The student will therefore be expected to do substantial work on his or her thesis during the spring of their junior year or the summer following it.

5) Assessment of Progress. The student shall consult with his or her sponsor and second reader no later than the end of the second semester of the junior year to assess candidly the student's readiness to move forward. If the student's academic progress appears to fall short of the standards necessary for successful completion of the BA/MA, the sponsor and second reader will recommend to the student in writing, with a "cc" to the Director of Undergraduate Studies, that the student return to the regular BA

or honors BA program as appropriate. Such a return will remain possible if it becomes apparent that the student is not making satisfactory progress during the fall semester of the senior year.

The Senior Year:

6) Guided Research and Reading: Seminars and Independent Study

The department strongly advises BA/MA students to take no more than four courses per semester during the last year of study. The student will be expected to devote six to seven credit hours per semester to graduate work.

Graduate Research Seminars/Guided Research (3 credits per semester): The student will work closely with his or her sponsor on an MA research essay throughout the senior year. If offered, the student shall be admitted into the sponsor's research seminar; otherwise supervised research will take the form of independent study with the sponsor (100.804 Independent Study).*

Graduate Reading Seminars & Guided Reading (3-4 credits per semester): This requirement is meant to provide in-depth scholarly background in the student's area of research specialization and to prepare the student for the graduate "field examination." Typically, the student will take a continuing, two-semester reading seminar given by the sponsor, or a one-semester reading seminar combined with guided readings in the form of independent study.* The sponsor and the student may also decide to substitute a reading seminar given by another faculty member, ordinarily the second reader.

**The Homewood Schools limits undergraduates to one independent study per semester.*

7) Field Examination. The student will take one graduate "field" examination in his or her area of specialization in the spring semester of the senior year. The readings and written requirements for the field will be defined by the student's sponsor and will be the equivalent of "fields" taken by graduate students admitted into the Department's PhD program.

8) General Seminar Presentation. When it has been approved by the sponsor and second reader, the BA/MA student will present a completed research essay at one of the History Department's "General Seminars," attended by graduate students and faculty in his or her area of specialization. In this regard, the BA/MA student's research essay will be treated with the same seriousness and respect accorded to first-year graduate students admitted into the Department's PhD program. Normally these presentations take place between March 1st and April 30th.

9) Deadlines: MA The sponsor and the second reader must write a letter certifying that the student has fulfilled the requirements for the BA/MA thesis in early March. The thesis itself must be deposited with Graduate Board of the Homewood Schools by March 21 in accordance with its specifications for theses written in partial fulfillment of graduate degree requirements.

10) Deadlines: BA with Honors. The student must maintain an overall and departmental GPA that meets the requirements for graduation with Honors in History. If the student wishes to be *provisionally* cleared for graduation with departmental honors, the sponsor must be able to report to the Director of Undergraduate Studies by March 31st that the student's research essay already meets the criterion for a passing grade in History (C-). A final grade for the thesis must be reported by April 30 and must be high enough to qualify for Honors.