

History for the 21st Century



**The UMBC Historical  
Studies Program  
Graduate Student  
Handbook  
AY 2022-23**

History for the 21st Century



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# WELCOME

Welcome to the UMBC Historical Studies Program!

The Historical Studies Program is a young but successful program that, since its founding in 1990, has shepherded graduate students into careers as academics, museum and nonprofit directors and staff, archivists, and policy analysts. We are proud of this record and we look forward to working with you to launch your career as a historian.

The three keys to a successful experience in the Historical Studies Program are 1. having a clear understanding of what is expected of you and how to fulfill your commitments, 2. building a fruitful relationship with a faculty advisor, and 3. gathering a cohort that can support you as you wrestle with classes and your thesis. This Handbook is designed to help you meet the first obligation above and provide you with the contacts that will facilitate your meeting the second and third.

This handbook is your guide to the Historical Studies program. Herein you can find information on all of the contacts and resources you will need to navigate program requirements and graduate student responsibilities, TA-ships and travel funding, and information about everything else from course registration to defending your thesis.

Though much of the information herein will remain the same year after year, there are some sections that will be updated annually. Considering, please make sure that you have the current issue of the Handbook.

Best wishes for a successful academic year.

Dan Ritschel  
Graduate Program Director

## CONTACTS & RESOURCES

### **Graduate Program Director**

Dr. Dan Ritschel

Fine Arts North, Rm. 512

410-455-2034,

[ritschel@umbc.edu](mailto:ritschel@umbc.edu)

The Graduate Program Director is your main point of contact with the Historical Studies Program. He serves as the principal advisor for first year students and as a secondary advisor for those students who have selected thesis advisors.

### **History Department Administrator**

Ms. Carla Ison

Fine Arts North, Rm. 505

410-455-2049

[ison@umbc.edu](mailto:ison@umbc.edu)

Besides the Graduate Program Director, the History Department Administrator is your main point of contact for any administrative aspects of the Historical Studies Program. She can help you with locating and filing important forms and generally with navigating the Graduate School bureaucracy.

### **Your UMBC email and the Histgrad listserv ([histgrad-group@umbc.edu](mailto:histgrad-group@umbc.edu))**

The Historical Studies Program and the Graduate School rely on e-mail sent to your UMBC e-mail account as their primary method of communication. Please check your UMBC e-mail regularly or link it to an account that you do. Additionally, the History Department Administrator will add you to the Histgrad listserv using your UMBC email address during the summer before your first semester of classes. The program uses this listserv to announce deadlines, changes in program requirements, new course offerings, internships and job openings, etc. The listserv is also a forum for students to connect and discuss issues of importance to the history graduate student body. **If you are not sure that you are subscribed to the Histgrad listserv, send a short note including your UMBC email address to Ms. Ison at [ison@umbc.edu](mailto:ison@umbc.edu), requesting that you be added.**

### **History Department website ([www.history.umbc.edu](http://www.history.umbc.edu))**

Under the “Graduate Students” drop down menu on the department homepage, students can find all of the information they need to understand the requirements of the program. All forms required by the Graduate School are linked through this site. Students can also find an up to date copy of this handbook on this site.

### **Graduate School website ([www.umbc.edu/gradschool](http://www.umbc.edu/gradschool))**

This website contains all of the information that you will need concerning TA-ships, submitting the thesis and graduation that are not contained in the History Department website. Most of these functions are, however, linked through the Department website, so check there first.

### **History Librarian, Ms. Erin Durham ([edurham@umbc.edu](mailto:edurham@umbc.edu))**

Ms. Durham can help you navigate the library and assist you in finding sources for any research project. And she is glad to do it. It is literally her job. Contact her at the email above or sign up for an appointment at <https://library.umbc.edu/makearesearchappt>.

**The Graduate Student Association** (<http://gsa.umbc.edu/>)

Commons Building, Rm. 308

410-455-2773

[gsa@umbc.edu](mailto:gsa@umbc.edu)

The GSA is both the principal graduate student governance organization (through the Graduate Student Senate) and the principal source of research and travel funds for graduate students. It also offers several part-time, non-teaching assistantships for students. Students can apply for these funds / jobs through the GSA website.

**GSA Graduate Writing Advisor** (<http://gsa.umbc.edu/writing-advisor/>)

The GSA Writing Advisor is the person to turn to for stylistic, grammar, or drafting help with your course papers and thesis. The **UMBC Writing Center**

(<http://lrc.umbc.edu/tutor/writing-center/>) also has a writing coach available at times to help graduate students. However, the Graduate Writing Advisor caters more directly to graduate students.)

# AY 2022-23 PROGRAM CALENDAR

## June

June 1 – New graduate student registration opens (Registration is not required until late August)

June 15 – Last day to apply for summer graduation

## July

July 31 – Last day to submit thesis for summer graduation.

## August

Late August – TAs are given their semester assignments

August 29 – Historical Studies Program New Graduate Student Orientation and course registration. TA Orientation. Look for a save the date with more detailed information over the summer.

-Also, look out for an invitation to the *Graduate School* New Student Orientation and TA Orientation around this time as well.

August 31 – First day of fall semester

## September

Sept. 15 – Last day to submit fall application for graduation

Third Wednesday of the Month – “Graduate Students Helping (1<sup>st</sup> year) Graduate Students” panel

## October

Third Wednesday of the Month – Works in Progress Seminar

## November

Work with your advisor to register for spring courses

Third Wednesday of the Month – Works in Progress Seminar

Late Nov. – TA/GAs please remind your advisors to submit evaluations at <https://gradschool.umbc.edu/funding/assistantships/forms/>

Nov. 30 – Last Day to submit thesis for fall graduation

## December

Dec. 21 – Fall graduation ceremony

## January

Late January – TAs are given their semester assignments

Jan. 30 – First day of spring semester

## February

Feb 15 – Last Day to submit spring application for graduation

Third Wednesday of the Month – “(Alumni) Graduate Students Helping (2<sup>nd</sup> year) Graduate Students” panel

**March**

Third Wednesday of the Month – Works in Progress Seminar

**April**

Work with your advisor to register for fall courses

Third Wednesday of the Month – Works in Progress Seminar

Late April – UMBC Graduate Research Conference

Late April – TA/GAs please remind your advisors to submit evaluations at <https://gradschool.umbc.edu/funding/assistantships/forms/>

**May**

May 1 – Last day to submit thesis for spring graduation

Second or Third week in May – Preliminary Prospectus Presentations (HIST 702 students)

May 24 – Spring graduation ceremony

## ADVISING & REGISTRATION

### Advising

When graduate students enter the program, the Graduate Program Director (GPD) will serve as their advisor. All students should meet with the GPD for advising before enrolling in classes. Before the end of their second full-time semester, students should select a thesis advisor from among the regular or associate graduate faculty in the Department of History. The thesis advisor will serve as the student's advisor for all matters (progress toward the thesis, selection of courses, assistance with a job / Ph.D. program search) until they leave the program. (Students must still consult the GPD when seeking authorization for internships and independent study courses.) Students are encouraged to consult the GPD when selecting a thesis advisor. Once a student has selected a thesis advisor, they must complete the [Declaration of Thesis Advisor Form](#) and submit it to the History Department Administrator.

### Courses of Study

There are two courses of study which lead to completion of the M.A. in Historical Studies at UMBC:

#### M.A. in Historical Studies

Students who plan to pursue the traditional M.A. in Historical Studies must earn a minimum of 30 credits. All students are required to take HIST 701 (The Study of History) typically in the fall semester of their first year, and HIST 702 (The Practice of History) typically in the spring semester of their first year. Students must take six elective courses, with at least three of these courses being at the 700 level. (The 700 course requirement can be modified for cause with the permission of the GPD.) Students may, with permission from the GPD, use HIST 798 (Special Topics in Historical Studies) and/or HIST 790 (Internship) to fulfill elective credit requirements. Finally, students must take at least six credits of HIST 799 (Thesis) over two or more semesters. Students should use this [checklist](#) to track their progress toward completion of the M.A. in Historical Studies.

#### M.A. in Historical Studies, Public History track

Students who enroll in the M.A. in Historical Studies, Public History track must also earn a minimum of 30 credits to graduate. All Public History track students are required to take HIST 701 (The Study of History) and HIST 705 (Introduction to Public History) typically in the fall semester of their first year, and HIST 702 (The Practice of History) typically in the spring semester of their first year. In addition, students in the Public History track are required to complete HIST 790 (Internship). Public History track students fulfill the remaining credit requirements with four elective courses and at least six credits of HIST 799 (Thesis) over two or more semesters. Students should use this [checklist](#) to track their progress toward completion of the M.A. in Historical Studies, Public History track.

### Course Offerings

All graduate courses are listed in the [Graduate Course Catalogue](#). History graduate courses bear the numerical designation 600 or 700. The history faculty seek to offer most graduate level courses in the late afternoon or evenings to accommodate students who work during the day. Nearly all graduate classes take place during the fall and spring semesters. Though you may find

the occasional 600 level course offered in the summer, you will rely mostly on courses taught during the regular fall and spring semesters. If you have trouble getting into a course that is technically “closed” to additional graduate students, please contact the instructor and ask for permission to register.

### Internships (HIST 790)

The department circulates internship opportunities via the Histgrad listserv. Students may also find internships on their own and / or with the help of their advisor. Wherever you find an internship, in order to receive graduate credit for it students must 1. have it pre-approved by the Director of Public History, Dr. Denise Meringolo ([ddm@umbc.edu](mailto:ddm@umbc.edu)), and 2. apply to and be awarded the internship. Once you have secured an internship, it can be supervised by any Historical Studies program graduate faculty member. The student must work with their supervisor to register for HIST 790 to earn credit for the internship. An internship is required for students pursuing the Public History track, but they are available (as elective credit) to students in the general M.A. program.

### Special Topics in Historical Studies (HIST 798)

Students seeking an individualized study experience may work with a faculty member to create a Special Topics in Historical Studies Course. Special Topics courses are typically run as reading courses wherein the student reads the equivalent of a book per week and meets either weekly or biweekly to discuss said readings with the instructor. Instructors typically assign response papers for these readings and a bibliography or short research paper at the end of the semester. That said, the reading schedule and assignments are to be determined on a class by class basis by the instructor in consultation with the student.

To begin the process of creating a Special Topics Course, students should ask a member of the graduate faculty if they are willing to create and run such a course. If the answer is yes, the student and faculty member will begin building a short course syllabus that lists the readings, assignments and course schedule, and register the student for HIST 798.

### **GA/TA Special Course Registration**

Graduate assistants and teaching assistants must be registered as full-time students whether they hold a full-time appointment or a part-time appointment. To be considered full-time, a student must be registered for a minimum of nine (9) credits in each fall and spring semester. To this end, those GAs and TAs who enroll in fewer than three courses should register for a no-cost course: GRAD 600 or GRAD 601.

- If you are a full-time GA or TA (full time is a work-load of 20 hours per week), please register for GRAD 601. This course is fixed at five credits.
- If you are a part-time GA or TA (part time is a work-load of 10 hours per week), please register for GRAD 600. This course is fixed at three credits.

GRAD 600 and GRAD 601 do not conflict with any other courses and do not add responsibilities or duties to the student – they also do not provide credit toward graduation. Their purpose is simply to reflect the workload associated with assistantship duties.

Students may enroll in these courses by searching through the [Schedule of Classes](#) and looking for the subject: “Graduate School Assistantship.”

For more information about these courses view the [Registration](#) page of the Graduate School website.

### **Deadlines for Enrollment**

Students should register for classes the semester before the term in question, during the advising period. If they do not register early, students must register within the first two weeks of classes. The Graduate School fines anyone who does not register by the end of the first two weeks of the semester. Just as importantly, your signing up for classes early allows the professor to plan based on class size. The fall 2022 add/drop deadline for the University, which includes internships and independent studies, is September 14. The spring 2023 deadline is February 11.

### **Continuous Enrollment and Leaves of Absence**

Once a graduate student takes their first class as a degree-seeking graduate student in Historical Studies, they have five years to complete the program. During that time, they must maintain “active status” – i.e. must be registered for at least 1 credit during the semester – to have access to the library or any other UMBC facilities and to meet with faculty.

Students who wish to continue in a degree program but who cannot study in a particular semester or year should notify the GPD and take a leave of absence (LOA). All graduate students, both full and part-time, must be registered for something by the end of the first two weeks of classes regardless of whether they will be taking classes or working on their thesis. If they have not registered for classes in a given semester, they will automatically be classified as on LOA. Failure to enroll after two consecutive semesters of LOAs will result in a student’s enrollment status changing from active to discontinued. Students are limited to three LOAs for their time in the program. (Please note: Having a LOA does not count as having “active status.” A LOA is designed for those students who must temporarily interrupt their studies due to personal or professional concerns; thus one loses access to the library and university facilities during the LOA period.)

All requirements for the master’s degree must be completed within a five-year period, regardless of any LOAs. Students seeking an extension of the five-year deadline must submit an [Extension Request](#) to the Graduate School after consultation with the Graduate Program Director.

Please visit the Graduate School’s [Enrollment and Registration](#) page or speak with the GPD if you have any further questions about these policies.

## ASSISTANTSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

### **Eligibility for Financial Assistance and How to Apply**

The Historical Studies Program annually awards a limited number of assistantships and scholarships to full-time students. Assistantships confer tuition remission, a stipend of slightly over \$14,000, and health insurance benefits. Only full time students can serve as graduate assistants. To be considered full-time, a student must be registered for a minimum of nine credits in each fall and spring semester for the year under consideration. Scholarships typically cover tuition and, in some cases, fees. Both full-time and part-time students are eligible for scholarships.

Both new applicants and continuing students in the Historical Studies Program are eligible to apply for financial assistance. New students apply by checking the relevant boxes under “Financial Assistance Information” in Section IV of the [Graduate School application form](#). Continuing students wishing to be considered for an assistantship must send (by the same deadline) a letter indicating their interest and qualifications for financial assistance to the Graduate Program Director. This letter can be transmitted via email.

### **TA-ships and GA-ships**

The Historical Studies Program controls approximately three or four Teaching Assistantships (TA-ships) - the number can vary depending on the program budget. In these positions, students assist a member of the faculty in managing their course by taking up the duties of facilitating discussion and other forms of student work, and grading.

Once a student is awarded a TA-ship, the GPD will assign them to a supervisor roughly two weeks before classes begin – when class rosters stabilize. Students and their supervisor are encouraged to meet as soon as they are assigned to one another and organize their work schedule in whatever manner is mutually agreeable, so long as it meets the guidelines laid out in the [Graduate Assistant Handbook](#).

The Historical Studies Program also sends two students to the Special Collections department of the UMBC Library to serve as Graduate Assistants (GAs). These students assist the UMBC archivists in processing collections, building finding aides, and other work associated with an archive. Here too, students and their supervisor are encouraged to meet as soon as they are assigned to one another and organize their work schedule in whatever manner is mutually agreeable, so long as it meets the guidelines laid out in the Graduate Assistant Handbook.

### **Resources for GAs and TAs**

GAs and TAs first point of contact for any problems they are experiencing on the job is the GPD. If they are more comfortable seeking advice or help from their fellow graduate students, the Graduate Student Association provides excellent resources for GAs and TAs, including [helpful links](#) explaining everything from your healthcare benefits to professional development and confidential consultation for [conflict resolution](#).

## THE THESIS

The thesis demonstrates a student's ability to create historical scholarship that integrates both primary and secondary sources to make a novel argument about the past. All theses involve working with a faculty advisor and at least two additional faculty as thesis committee members. The thesis can take one of two different forms in the Historical Studies Program. The first is a traditional, written thesis of three chapters, ranging between 75 and 125 pages. The other is a project-based public history thesis that includes a substantive writing section examining the historiography of the chosen research topic integrated with the student's insights but, instead of written chapters, may include a website, exhibition, archival collection, or lesson plan.

### **Finding Your Thesis Advisor and Topic**

At some point during their second semester in the program, students are required to select a thesis advisor. A thesis advisor serves as a content specialist and mentor to their students, doing everything from, helping students to draft their prospectus and reading multiple drafts of the thesis, to helping students choose classes, writing recommendations, and assisting them in either applying to a Ph.D. program or finding a job. Considering the importance of the thesis advisor to a student's graduate school experience and early career, this choice should not be made lightly. Students should choose an advisor who, 1. possesses the requisite content expertise, 2. with whom they have or believe they can develop a good working relationship, and 3. is available and willing to work with the student during their time in the program. Students will choose an advisor as part of the HIST 702 (Practice of History) course in their second semester, but should begin looking as soon as they arrive on campus. Once a student has chosen a thesis advisor, they must fill out a [Declaration of Thesis Advisor Form](#) and submit it to Ms. Ison.

Students choose and develop their thesis topic in HIST 702 (Practice of History). They are encouraged, however, to begin searching for a thesis topic before they enter this class. To begin discussing possible topics, schedule a meeting with the GPD or a member of the faculty who specializes in your chosen field.

### **The Prospectus**

Before writing the thesis, students must write a formal prospectus and have it approved by their thesis advisor and two additional thesis committee members. For an idea of what goes into the prospectus see the "How to: Prospectus" guide on page 14 below. Students will write a preliminary draft of the prospectus in HIST 702 (Practice of History).

### **Thesis-Related Courses**

Students ready to begin work on the thesis should register for 1-3 credits of HIST 799 (Thesis) with the approval of their advisor – this should be done during the semester after the student completes HIST 702 (Practice of History). Before registering for a fourth credit of HIST 799 (Thesis), students must have chosen a thesis committee and submitted a prospectus to said committee. Once their prospectus is approved, students may register for the final 3 credits of HIST 799. If needed, students can register for credits of HIST 799 (Thesis) beyond the initial six, in order to remain active.

### **Important Forms and Deadlines:**

It is the student's responsibility to gather all the appropriate forms, have them signed by the requisite advisors and committee members, and submit them to the History Department Administrator, Ms. Ison, by the appropriate deadlines.

Forms	Due Dates	Notes
<a href="#">Declaration of Thesis Advisor Form</a>	Preferably at the end of the second full-time semester.	
<a href="#">Prospectus Approval Form</a>	When the prospectus is finished, typically at the start or mid-point of the third full-time semester.	
<a href="#">Application for Graduation Form</a>	<p><b>Fall:</b> Apply to graduate: July 1 – September 15 Supplemental Application Due: September 30</p> <p><b>Spring</b> Apply to Graduate: December 1 – February 15 Supplemental Application Due: March 1</p> <p><b>Summer:</b> Apply to Graduate: April 1 – June 15 Supplemental Application Due: June 30</p>	
<a href="#">Certification of Readiness to Defend the Master's Thesis Form</a>	No later than two weeks prior to the defense.	
Format the Thesis using the Graduate School's <a href="#">Thesis Style Guide</a>	<p><b>Fall:</b> Before November 30 <b>Spring:</b> Before May 1 <b>Summer:</b> Before July 31</p>	While a thesis does not need to be formatted until it is submitted to the Graduate School, students are strongly encouraged to adopt the proper formatting <i>when they begin writing</i> to save themselves the added work of having to reformat their thesis after it is finished.
<a href="#">Submit the Thesis</a>	<p><b>Fall:</b> Last day to submit November 30 <b>Spring:</b> Last Day to submit May 1 <b>Summer:</b> Last day to submit July 31</p>	These deadlines indicate the date by which your academically complete document must be submitted to the system. An academically complete document is one to which all thesis committee-ordered revisions have been made.

### **Scheduling the Defense and Defending the Thesis**

Students must work closely with their committee to schedule the thesis defense. Keeping an eye on the thesis submission deadline for a given semester (see the dates above), students must plan to give their advisor and committee time to read the thesis (the general rule is that faculty are given two weeks to read any submissions from graduate students) *and* time to make any requested revisions. So, at minimum, if a student hopes to submit the thesis on May 1, they should defend no later than April 15. And if they plan to defend on April 15, they should get the final draft of the thesis to their advisor no later than March 15. The advisor will read and (possibly suggest revisions) before the thesis must be sent to the full committee sometime around April 1. The committee must then be given two weeks to read the thesis before the defense.

Every defense has the same format, one for which the student must be prepared. See the “What to expect when you are defending” guide on page 16 below for details.

## How To: Prospectus (12-20 pages)

Writing the prospectus is the first step in producing a thesis. Its primary purpose is to convince your thesis committee that your topic and approach are sound so that you can gain approval to proceed with the actual research. It will also serve as a rough draft of your thesis introduction.

### The Elements of a Prospectus

Your prospectus must include (The below order is strongly suggested, though not mandatory):

1. A **title** that clearly delineates the larger question that you seek to answer, the topic that you will use to answer said question, and the time and place where your narrative takes place, in an inventive manner.
2. An **introduction** section containing the following:
  - a. An **opening anecdote** (optional but highly recommended) that introduces your topic and leads smoothly into / raises the questions that you hope to answer.
  - b. A **research question**  
To structure your research question fill in the blanks in the below format:  
TOPIC: "I will study \_\_\_\_\_"  
RESEARCH QUESTION: "Because I want to find out how / who / why \_\_\_\_\_"  
SIGNIFICANCE: "In order to help readers understand how / why / what \_\_\_\_\_"<sup>1</sup>
  - c. A **background** section providing any information the reader needs to understand your topic. This section also be interspersed in between the three lines of the research question.
4. A **literature review** that *synthesizes and analyzes* the scholarly conversation (all relevant books, scholarly articles and dissertation / MA theses) on your topic. How have scholars approached this topic in the past? How has this conversation changed over time and why? Describe your intervention in said scholarly conversation at the end of this section. How is your approach, information, or perspective different? Does it fill a gap in the scholarly conversation? Does it change our understanding of a familiar topic? If historians have not greatly explored your topic, briefly explain how your thesis might add new knowledge or interpretations to the larger historical field.
5. A description of your **methodology**. What body/ies of information do you plan to use to inform your study? How do you plan to use them? What are the benefits and challenges of using these sources? Why are you using them? Have others used them? If so, how are you using them differently? Also, describe any theoretical approaches you will use to interpret your sources *if* such a description is necessary to increase the reader's understanding of your project.
6. A **chapter outline** that explains how you are organizing your study and why. Provide approximately one paragraph per chapter that describes the topic, rationale, and preliminary

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<sup>1</sup> See Wayne C. Booth, Gregory Colomb, and Joseph Williams, *The Craft of Research*, pp. 37-74 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2008).

conclusions (if any) of each in the case of a traditional thesis.

For those students doing public history projects, this is where you can describe in depth your method of delivery (podcast, website, exhibition, etc.) and the *reason* that you have chosen this mode of presentation. Make the case for why this mode of presentation is appropriate, innovative, or insightful. Discuss how your project compares to other, similar projects presented in this format, if any exist (Though this specific description can go in the literature review above if it fits better there). And like with a traditional thesis, describe how your project will be organized. Namely, describe the topic, rationale, and preliminary conclusions (if any) of each section of the project.

7. A **bibliography**. What are the sources you will use to explore this subject? Organize your sources into sections by: Primary and Secondary and then within the primary section by type of source (newspapers, books, interviews, etc.).

8. **Description of research needs** (optional). Do you have any special needs in order to complete this study? In particular, do you need funding to travel to archives, gain access to collections, or acquire technical equipment? Do you have the special skills (languages, technical expertise) that this project might require?

## What to expect when you are defending<sup>2</sup>

When you arrive, the committee members will greet you.

They may ask you to leave the room for a moment. This is mostly for paper shuffling purposes: do they have all the forms, who is the graduate school rep, etc. They will also take a minute or two to check in with each other and figure out if they have similar questions and make a general plan about who will ask what.

They will invite you back in. You should prepare about five or ten minutes --no more-- of comments. Typically, you should spend that time talking about how you came to your subject, how you approached it, where you found sources, what you think your most important contribution is to the scholarship, and what you plan to do next with this work.

Then, you will all engage in a conversation. Although this is called a "defense," you should not be "defensive." Instead, you should recognize that this is the kind of collegial conversation about your work that ALL of us go through EVERY TIME we conduct new research or publish something. Questions will likely be along the lines of "did you consider...." or "have you thought about..." or "why don't you look at...." Sometimes your answer will be, "I did look at that, but I didn't include it because...." or "Wow. I didn't really think of that, let me make a note" or "I did look at that, but maybe it's buried too far into the chapter...."

Your Advisor will generally not ask questions. They have already asked you a thousand questions. They may chime in to point out, "What Dr. so and so is asking is what I've been trying to get at...." or to say "Susan and I did talk about that but we set it aside because...."

The advisor's role will mostly be to take notes because it is extremely likely that the committee will ask you to make a few changes before you make your final submission to the graduate school. Ultimately, you and your advisor will figure out how best to approach those suggestions in a short meeting after the defense.

Once the conversation is over, the committee will ask you to leave the room again. They may spend some time making a plan for your requested revisions. They will mostly sign papers. Then they will ask you back into the room and give you their decision.

AT MOST the entire process should take 1.5 hours. Often it is far less: an hour or so.

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<sup>2</sup> Courtesy of Denise Meringolo

# TRAVEL / RESEARCH FUNDING

## GSA Professional Development and Research Grants

The UMBC Graduate Student Association provides [Professional Development and Research Grants](#) to all graduate students. Interested students can apply for funding on a monthly basis throughout the year – applications are due on the 15th of each month. Students must apply for funding at least one month before they hope to use the funds or their application will be considered late – so apply as early as possible! All applications are reviewed by the GSA’s Grant Review Panel using their [Points of Policy](#). Please review these criterion to ensure that your application is successful.

Below is the process for applying for a GSA Professional Development or Research Grant:

- Student identifies an opportunity for which a grant is appropriate.
- Student directly, or working with Department Administrator Carla Ison, in the event the student is not a GA, prepares the travel pre-approval form. For a description of the University’s travel policies and a link to the pre-approval form click [here](#).
- The form should be completed as if the GSA award will be granted to the student.
  - The **GSA MUST** be listed as the “first approver” on the Pre-Approval Form. This is accomplished by listing GSA as the first approver and inputting the primary chart string 1113-10458-021-GSATRGNT-MAIN in the form.
  - Applicants should choose one of the following accounts when filing out the Pre-Approval Form as appropriate:
    - 7040100 - In State Travel
    - 7040300 - Out of State Travel
    - 7040277 - Graduate Student - Conference Fees
    - 7129900 - Other Grant, Subsidy & Contributions
  - After completing the chart string the student will need to choose the GSA approver. Using the drop down box “Approver:”, choose “Dawn Galindo”.

The screenshot shows a web form with the following fields and values:

Fund:	*Dept:	PFin:	Project:	*Activity:
1113-☺	10458-Gr	021-I	GSATRGNT	MAIN

Below these fields is a dropdown menu for \*Approver: with the following options: Select, Antonio Moreira, Dawn Galindo (highlighted), Isabel Garrido, Janet Rutledge, Patrice McDermott, Philip Rous, and Dawn Galindo. A yellow button labeled 'Validate Chartstring' is located to the right of the Approver dropdown.

- Students should be sure to check the box stating that this pre-approval is a part of and contingent upon GSA approving the student’s request for a Professional Development or Research Grant.

- 
- Yes  No **Is Travel federally sponsored?**  
 Yes  No **Are you requesting a Working Fund travel advance?**  
 Yes  No **Will any portion of the expenses be covered by non-UMBC funds?**   
 Yes  No **Will any part of this travel include Athletic Recruitment?**  
 Yes  No **Is Travel Graduate Student Association (GSA) grant funded?**
- 

**I understand that this pre-approval is a part of and contingent upon GSA approving the student's request for a Professional Development or Research Grant.**

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- After submission of the Pre-Approval Form, GSA holds the approval until the Grant application is reviewed and approved by GSA. After application approval, GSA approves the pre-approval form and it then continues to process as normal. In the event GSA does not approve the grant, GSA will “decline to sign” the pre-approval request. When that happens, the pre-approval will revert back to review status and will then be cancelled by GSA.

### **Supplemental Department Grants**

The Historical Studies Program provides supplemental funding (to a GSA grant) for research expenses (scanning, photocopying, purchase of materials, hiring of research help, etc.) and/or research related travel expenses (to visit archives, interview subjects, etc.) for Historical Studies program students. Students may apply for a maximum of \$500 per year. This funding is not intended to support travel to conferences, which is available from the Graduate Student Association.

Applicants for Historical Studies Program supplemental funding must be in good standing. To apply for the funding they must:

1. Write a brief letter to the GPD including a short explanation of their proposed research and/or travel. This letter must include a budget identifying a. their proposed costs for the trip / research, b. the funding they have been granted by the GSA, and c. the amount of money they are requesting from the Historical Studies program.
2. Students should forward the following attachments along with their letter:
  - a. A letter or email from the GSA confirming that the student has received a GSA grant and the amount of said grant.
  - b. If requesting funds for travel, the student must attach the e-travel approval that they received following the awarding of their GSA grant.
  - c. A note from the student’s thesis advisor supporting the applicant’s plan and budget.

Students must apply for supplemental funding at least 30 days ahead of the time when they will need the money. Students must submit receipts for all of their expenses to secure reimbursement.

Applications can be submitted to the GPD via email.