Department of History

1 Major Program Modification (Significant Alterations to Existing Program Component)

History Specialist

Start Session:

Summer 2017

Current Admission Requirements:

New Admission Requirements:
No changes

Current Enrolment Requirements:

This is a limited enrolment POST that can only accommodate a limited number of students. Eligibility will be based on a students marks in the required courses. The precise mark thresholds outlined below are an estimate of what will be required in the coming POST admission cycle. Achieving those marks does not necessarily guarantee admission to the POST in any given year.

Required courses: 2.0 HIS FCE, one of which must be at the 100-level, with a final mark of at least 73% in each.

New Enrolment Requirements:
No changes

Current Completion Requirements:

(10 full courses or their equivalent)

First Year: 1.0 HIS FCE at the 100-level; in addition, students may take 1.0 HIS FCE at the 200-level.

Higher Years: Additional HIS courses to a total of 10 FCEs overall, meeting the following requirements:

1. At least 5 FCEs at the 300-level or above, including 1.5 FCEs at the 400-level

2. 1 FCE at the 200-level or above from each of the following Divisions*:

   I. Asia/Africa/Middle East

   II. Canada/United States/Latin America/Caribbean

   III. Europe

3. 1 FCE in pre-modern (before 1800) history*.

* Courses that satisfy the Pre-modern and Divisional requirements are listed on the History website.

Courses in other departments:

Courses in other departments: Equivalent Courses: the History Department website lists a number of history courses offered by other departments,
such as East Asian Studies, Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations, and Classics, which can be taken for program credit. Typically these courses are taught by faculty members who are trained as historians but whose primary appointment is in another department; they may include subjects not covered by HIS offerings. These are considered equivalent to HIS courses for the purpose of all program requirements except the 100-level requirement, and there is no limit on the number of these courses that can be included in a student's program.

b) Related Courses: the History Department website also lists a number of courses in other departments that may be substantially historical in content but that differ in methodology or approach from an HIS course. Specialists may draw up to 2.0 FCEs to fulfill items 1 through 3 of the Specialist program. Note: A 100-level related course may be applied toward the Divisional or Pre-modern requirements but does not take the place of the required 100-series HIS course.

New Completion Requirements:

The Specialist program gives students in-depth training in historical research, analysis and writing for graduate study or professional use. To achieve these objectives, students choose one of two options when entering their third year. (10 full courses or their equivalent) Consult the department for details of equivalent courses.

First year: 1.0 HIS FCE at the 100-level; in addition, students may take 1.0 HIS FCE at the 200-level

Higher Years: Additional HIS courses to a total of 10 FCEs overall, meeting the following requirements:

1. 1.0 FCE at the 200-level or above from each of the following Divisions*:
   I. Asia/Africa/Middle East
   II. Canada/United States/Latin America/Caribbean
   III. Europe

2. 1.0 FCE in Pre-modern (before 1800) history*.

3. At least 5 FCEs at the 300-level or above, including 1.5 FCEs at the 400-level to be fulfilled in the following ways:
   I) HIS 476Y (full year senior thesis) and a 400-level H seminar course; or
   II) HIS 475H (half year senior thesis) and two 400-level H seminar courses; or
   III) One of the following senior Methodology* half courses (JAH 391H/Y, HIS 345H, HIS 389H L101, HIS 389H L201, HIS 389H L701, HIS 389H L702, CDN 390H, HIS 440H, HIS 465H, HIS 495Y) and two 400-level H courses.

Note that the Thesis Option has limited enrolment due to limited capacity in Thesis Courses HIS495H1 and HIS496Y1. Interested students should contact the department for more information regarding Thesis supervision.

*Courses that satisfy the Methodology, Pre-modern and Divisional requirements are listed on the History website.

Academic Context:

The proposed changes to the Specialist program give students entry to smaller upper-level classes where they receive greater attention from instructors for projects of their own devising. For students undertaking the thesis option, close contact with faculty will introduce them to advanced techniques of research, analysis and presentation. Students undertaking the methodology option will be exposed to the latest research tools and methods, and encouraged to be creative in the presentation of their findings.

Learning Outcomes:

No specific description of Learning Outcomes under the Specialist heading in the Calendar. A general description of
A History Specialist degree is suitable for students wishing to pursue in-depth study of a particular time period, region of the world and/or sub-discipline of History. Completion of a Specialist degree confers advanced-level investigative, analytical and communication skills upon a student through taking a greater number of History courses with advanced options listed below:

Students who undertake the thesis option (H or Y) will learn to research and write-up an original historical project. The skills thus obtained will be invaluable to those headed for masters and doctoral study in History, Museum Studies, Archival Studies and heritage work. Students who undertake the methodology course option will acquire transferable skills in data collection and analysis. These will facilitate their entry to graduate programs in History or related fields like library and information studies, law, journalism and public policy. These skills will also be valuable in a range of professional roles.

### Depth of Knowledge:

Only relevant to 4th year History Specialists.

Thesis option: HIS 498H and HIS 499Y students will be combined in one senior seminar that meets weekly. This was launched this September (2016). In the first semester of the seminar, (H) students will learn how to choose a feasible dissertation topic, conduct a literature review, identify useful primary sources, frame appropriate research questions and write a scholarly research proposal. Students who stay the full year (Y) will workshop their research-in-progress and learn how to conduct constructive oral and written peer reviews of each others work. Writing training will also take place.

Methodology option: The department currently offers Historiography, an Introduction to Archives, Digital History, Material Culture and Public History upper-level methodology courses. While the course menu will change from year to year, students will learn advanced techniques in all of them for collecting and analyzing different kinds of historical evidence. Fieldwork will be undertaken where appropriate. Students will acquire oral, written, visual and interactive communication skills, the deployment of which will be encouraged in presentations of their work. This could take the forms of videos or websites, as well as more traditional forms of history writing.

### Critical and Creative Thinking:

Thesis Option: The thesis should be original in some way (though not necessarily publishable).

Methodology Option: At least one assignment must be devised by the student in consultation with the instructor. This could take many forms, of which some examples are provided: found-object analysis, research paper, photographic exhibition (on CD or internet), archival catalogue.

### Information Literacy:

Relevant to the thesis and some courses in the Methodology Option. Digital history, where students learn computer programming, best fits this requirement.

### Quantitative Reasoning:

Relevant to the thesis and some methodology courses that employ demographic and economic data.

### Social and Ethical Responsibility:

Integral to all new (and many old) methods of historical research.

### An Integrative, Inquiry Based Activity:

(An example of an integrative activity could be fulfilled through either the thesis or methodology options, through current 300- and 400-level courses.)
Program Delivery:

Method: In Class

Mode: Full Time

Brief Description of the Proposal:

This proposal constitutes a rejuvenation of our Specialist program, about which little is perceived to be special by students or faculty. Students will be given the opportunity to pursue two options:

1) The Methodology Option will admit students to smaller classes where they will receive greater attention from instructors for projects of their own devising. They will be exposed to the latest research tools and methods, and encouraged to display creativity in the presentation of their findings. Methodology courses focus on academic skills rather than content, which has dominated History's curriculum until now.

2) The Thesis Option will permit students to work closely with regular faculty on longer papers requiring in-depth research, advanced analysis and the sophisticated presentation of results. The thesis differs from Independent Study in its explicit preparation of students for graduate school. The addition of a compulsory thesis fosters esprit de corps in the Specialist programme and familiarizes students with the academic functions and social dynamic of a research colloquium.

Details of Proposed Change:

No specific description of Learning Outcomes under the Specialist heading in the Calendar. A general description of Learning Outcomes is provided in the Introduction. The following text should be inserted under the History Specialist (Arts program) heading:

A History Specialist degree is suitable for students wishing to pursue in-depth study of a particular time period, region of the world and/or sub-discipline of History. Completion of a Specialist degree confers advanced-level investigative, analytical and communication skills upon a student through taking a greater number of History courses with advanced options listed below:

Students who undertake the thesis option (H or Y) will learn to research and write-up an original historical project. The skills thus obtained will be invaluable to those headed for masters and doctoral study in History, Museum Studies, Archival Studies and heritage work.

Students who undertake the methodology course option will acquire transferable skills in data collection and analysis. These will facilitate their entry to graduate programs in History or related fields like library and information studies, law, journalism and public policy. These skills will also be valuable in a range of professional roles.

Rationale:

Both faculty and students believe that the present program does not meet the demands and needs of Specialist students, the vast majority of whom go on to graduate study in History or related disciplines like law, museum studies and library studies. Such students seeking careers connected to History wish to acquire more exposure to historical sources, research techniques and faculty-expertise. The present proposals will better train both would-be academic and professional practitioners of history by better imparting library, archival, material culture and digital research skills.

Impact that the proposal may have on students or other academic units/divisions:

We are likely to get more students enrolling in the Specialist programme. Since we have no joint specialist programmes, there will be no impact on other departments.

Present 4th year students undertaking independent study projects (H and Y) are in the pilot thesis seminar now. They are enthusiastic so far about its social and academic value. No accommodation problems are anticipated for...
continuing students.
The proposed changes to the Specialist program are welcomed because they give students more exposure to research methods in History whilst increasing the amount and depth of contact they have with instructors. One concern about the present Specialist program in History is that there is nothing special about it: students just do a few extra courses. The introduction of compulsory methodology and research training would, it is hoped, create a stronger spirit of esprit de corps in the student body.

Consultation:

Faculty and students have expressed a wish for a rejuvenation of our Specialist program. The History Students Association regularly expresses a wish for more student contact with faculty. Colleagues have been enthusiastic about the proposed changes in department meetings. FAS Deans have enthusiastically endorsed these proposals.

Resource Implications:

8 students presently in 2nd year though many have yet to declare a subject POS; 37 in 3rd year; 43 in 4th year. 88 overall.
A tour from the Fisher Rare Books Library. Other assistance from specialist librarians will be requested in due course.