**Master of Arts in History**

The MA program in History has two options: “Plan A” degrees require a thesis; “Plan B” degrees do not. Students are encouraged to take Plan A and write a thesis; students who intend to pursue a Ph.D. must do so. The Plan B, non-thesis, option is available for non-traditional students or MA candidates who are full-time teachers. The department also offers a joint MA/JD degree in conjunction with the Law School; students must be admitted to the Law School first before beginning this program.

Students must satisfy the core coursework requirements described below. The History MA degree requires a minimum of 30 credit hours of coursework. All students will craft a Program of Study in conjunction with the Director of Graduate Studies setting out how each student will complete a course of study at USD. USD’s Graduate School requires a Program of Study.

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<th>Plan A</th>
<th>Plan B</th>
<th>MA/JD</th>
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<td>Courses</td>
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<td>Total (Plan B)</td>
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**Required Core Courses: Plan A and Plan B**
- HIST 780: Historiography
- HIST 782: Research Seminar

**Required Seminar Courses: Two seminars selected from the following:**
- HIST 770: Seminar in Native History
- HIST 771: Seminar in European History
- HIST 772: Seminar in American History
- HIST 773: Seminar in Ancient History
- HIST 774: Seminar in Diplomatic History
- HIST 775: Seminar in Women’s and Gender History
- HIST 776: Seminar in Great Plains History
- HIST 777: Seminar in Intellectual History
- HIST 778: Seminar in Military History
- HIST 779: Seminar in Medieval History
- HIST 781: Reading Seminar

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Seminar Requirement
At least four courses on your Program of Study must be graduate-level seminars (700 level) in History. Independent Study, Directed Research, or other 700 level courses that do not include “Seminar” in the course title may not be used to fulfill this requirement. The History graduate program is built around seminars. HIST 780 and HIST 782 are designed to orient new MA students to graduate level work, and to get students started on their thesis topic. All first-year students take three seminars a semester. The seminars offered in any given semester will often be centered on topics outside a student’s main field of interest. It is valuable for students to study in a variety of areas of history. Students generally have more flexibility in their second year to choose courses that fit their specific research interests.

Electives
All students in History also take elective courses, either in History or relevant courses with a prefix other than HIST (i.e., non-departmental electives). Up to six credit hours of non-departmental electives are permissible. The Director of Graduate Studies (hereafter DGS) must approve non-departmental electives. Students are strongly encouraged to take 700-level courses in preference to 500-level courses. 700-level courses are for graduate students only, while 500-level courses are graduate sections paired with 400-level undergraduate classes. Each 500-level course has a separate syllabus that defines the appropriate graduate-level work associated with that section. In addition to their graduate-level work, graduate students may also do the same course work as undergraduates.

Courses with numbers below 500 do not count for graduate credit. This means graduate students may not take undergraduate language courses for credit, except by special arrangement. You may enroll in language courses, but these do not count toward your graduate degree requirements unless they are at the graduate level.

Transfer Credit
You may transfer up to 6 hours of graduate credit from other departments or schools within USD, or from other accredited institutions. Credits must not be more than seven years old at the time of graduation from USD. Transfer credits are approved through the Approval of Graduate Transfer Credit form, which the DGS, department chair, and the Graduate School must approve and sign.

Admission Status
Students who have been provisionally admitted to the MA program must be fully admitted in order to graduate. The DGS makes the change from provisional to full status. Generally, the change from provisional to full status happens if the student eliminates the reason for provisional admission (takes the GRE, achieves the requisite grade point average, etc.). You should receive official notification of any change in admission status from the Graduate School. Students who have provisional status are not eligible for GA (Graduate Assistant) positions.
Advising
The DGS is the formal advisor for all graduate students in the History Department. Most graduate students naturally work most closely with their thesis advisor. Any concerns about policies, forms, or Graduate School processes should be brought to the DGS. Students are required to meet with the DGS during their first semester to craft a Program of Study, mapping out the student’s path to degree completion. Programs of Study are filed with both the department and the Graduate School, and an accurate Program of Study is required for graduation.

Graduation Requirements
- 30 or 33 credit hours of coursework
- Thesis and defense (Plan A)
- Written and oral examination (Plan B)

All students must submit the following forms to the Graduate School by the appropriate deadlines, which are listed later in this handbook. Forms are always available on the Graduate School’s page in the USD Portal. The Program of Study and Application for Degree are combined into one form
- Program of Study [submitted first semester of enrollment, and resubmitted one semester prior to graduation]
- Application for Degree [submitted one semester prior to graduation]
- Graduation Approval Form [submitted prior to graduation]

Plan A (Thesis option)

Choosing an MA Thesis Topic
Your thesis topic should derive from your graduate coursework and scholarly interests. HIST 780 and 782 will set you on the path toward a thesis topic. Select a topic that involves original archival research, and that you can be happy living with for an extended period of time. Pay attention to the scope of your topic. There is not a mandated length for an MA, and you will need a topic that is both substantive and manageable. Some recent History MAs are in East Hall 220 (the Seminar Room), and all History MA theses can be found in Weeks Library and online through ProQuest.

Signing Up for Thesis Credits
You cannot register for thesis credits (HIST 798) on your own. You sign up for thesis credits with an individual faculty member. Your first step should be to contact the faculty member who will become your thesis advisor. He or she will contact the department secretary, and the secretary will register you for thesis credits. Six credits of thesis work total are required. You can spread them out over two semesters (3 credits per semester) or you may, if necessary, take all six credits in one semester (the one semester option is not encouraged). You do not receive a letter grade for your first semester of thesis work; if you split the thesis into multiple semesters, you get one grade for the whole thesis, which is retroactively applied to all your thesis credits.
If the process of writing your thesis stretches beyond two semesters, you can sign up for HIST 799, a zero credit “thesis sustaining” course. The process of signing up for HIST 799 is the same as for HIST 798 (i.e., you can only sign up for HIST 799 with permission through the Department). HIST 799 enables students to stay enrolled at the University and to retain their University email account and library access. A HIST 799 course will be given a placeholder grade; because it is for zero credits, it does not count for or against your GPA. HIST 799 can only be used for thesis work, and can only be obtained with permission of the DGS.

Selecting a Committee
In addition to a thesis advisor, you must have a three-person thesis committee. Your thesis advisor will chair your committee. You will also need one other History Department faculty member and one faculty member from outside the department to be on your committee (the “outside reader”). You should consult with your thesis advisor or the DGS about finding an appropriate committee member from outside the History Department. All the members of your committee must have graduate faculty status. Thesis advisors, by Graduate School policy, must have regular, tenure or tenure-track, graduate faculty status with the Department.

Prospectus
All MA students pursuing Plan A are required to write and present a thesis prospectus. The prospectus is not graded, but completion demonstrates continued progress through the MA program and is a required part of the thesis process. Failure to complete a prospectus may be grounds for probation or program dismissal per the Graduate School’s policies.

A prospectus is the first formal opportunity for you to articulate the scale, scope, context and content of your proposed MA thesis, and to receive feedback from your peers and the faculty. You must work closely with your thesis advisor to develop your prospectus.

Students will give a public presentation of their prospectus to the Department, full thesis committee, and their fellow graduate students. These presentations will be scheduled during the first half (or first eight weeks) of the semester in which a student first enrolls in thesis credits (HIST 798). Your prospectus is due to the DGS one week before your presentation. The DGS will coordinate the due dates and presentation dates for each semester. Presentation dates will be posted and made public. Public presentations do not have to be given all at once, and presentation dates can be staggered.

The prospectus should be about 10 double-spaced pages long and contain the following elements:

- A general description of the project that places it in historical context.
- A discussion of the question(s) you hope to answer with your thesis and a preliminary thesis statement. Remember that everything is tentative at this point and is intended only to provide a starting sense of direction for the thesis. You are not committing to anything specific at this point.
• A discussion of the historiography associated with your topic. What has been written about your topic and/or related areas, and what will your thesis contribute to the historiographic discussion? Are you filling a gap, are you extending an existing discussion, or are you providing a new perspective? This section should be a substantial part of your prospectus.
• A discussion of the primary sources that you intend to use.
• A bibliography of proposed sources for the thesis. The bibliography should be divided into primary and secondary sources, and each section should include both sources that you have looked at and sources that you have not yet had the opportunity to evaluate but which may prove useful for the thesis. The bibliography does not count towards the minimum page count required for the prospectus.

A prospectus judged to be unsuccessful by the student’s thesis committee must be revised and re-defended. A second prospectus presentation does not need to be public, but can be presented only to the full thesis committee. The date for a second prospectus defense is at the discretion of the thesis advisor. The prospectus MUST be approved before a student can move forward with the thesis process.

Style and Format
The Graduate School’s Thesis and Dissertation Guide should be used in the preparation of your thesis. The Guide is available on the Graduate School’s page in the USD Portal.

Your thesis should adhere to the discipline’s standards, which for History can be found in the most recent edition of the Chicago Manual of Style. The department keeps recent editions in the seminar room (East Hall 220). A useful Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide can be found at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

You should consult carefully with your committee chair about the organization of your thesis. Typically, a scholarly thesis includes an introduction, several chapters of approximately seminar-paper length, and a conclusion. Most scholarly theses are 75-90 pages long.

Preliminary pages should be numbered separately from the body of your thesis, with lower-case Roman numerals at the bottom center of the page. The title page does not contain a page number. Have your committee members sign the signature page in black ink. Preliminary pages should be placed in the following order:
• Title page, with date of degree confirmation
• Committee signature page
• Abstract (approximately 350 words)
• Dedication (optional)
• Acknowledgments (optional)
• Table of contents
• List of tables, with titles and page numbers (if necessary)
• List of illustrations, with titles and page numbers (if necessary)
Your Committee and the Thesis Process
Meet frequently with your thesis advisor. If you plan to complete a significant portion of your thesis during the summer months, confirm the availability of your committee members during the summer. You should meet with all of your committee members at least once prior to the defense to discuss the thesis as a whole. Meeting with committee members to workshop the thesis prior to the defense is strongly encouraged, but not mandatory.

Oral Examination
An oral defense of your thesis is required. The standard process leading up to the thesis defense is as follows: 1) the thesis advisor approves a full draft of the thesis. Students should never try to defend a partial or incomplete thesis. A full draft means that you have written the entire thesis, including all of the main evidence and arguments, and a conclusion summarizing the thesis and its significance. 2) After making the revisions suggested by your thesis advisor, and with his or her permission, the draft then goes to your second reader; he or she will also suggest revisions. (It is acceptable, if the thesis advisor and second reader agree, to submit chapter drafts to the two simultaneously.) 3) The full, revised draft will be circulated to third committee member. The outside reader should be given a minimum of two weeks to read the full draft. 4) A public oral thesis defense will be scheduled a minimum of two weeks after the full, revised thesis has been approved by the first two committee members and sent to the outside reader.

Graduate School rules require a public thesis defense; defenses typically run for an hour. The student and thesis advisor may invite guests to the public portion of the defense; other History MA students are encouraged to attend. You should expect to provide an oral overview of the important arguments of your thesis. Members of the public at your defense can then ask questions.

After the public portion of the defense, the committee members will close the defense, and they will ask the student to clarify, expand on, or reconsider the ideas and material in the thesis. If the committee members judge the student’s performance unsatisfactory, they may ask the student to rework portions of the thesis, and there will have to be a second oral defense of the freshly revised thesis.

The committee is likely to suggest some changes, regardless of the overall quality of the thesis. Revisions, including revisions to a successfully defended draft, are a normal and expected part of the defense process.

Your defense must be scheduled at least a week before Graduation Approval forms are due. In other words, you should expect to produce a complete, defensible thesis at least three weeks before the final deadline for submission of the Graduation Approval form. Defending earlier than this deadline is strongly preferred, and greatly to your advantage.

You are responsible for bringing the following to your defense:
- One complete copy of your thesis.
The signature page of your thesis. Once signed by all committee members, this document will be scanned and included with your thesis for electronic submission to the Graduate School.

The DGS will provide a Graduation Approval Form for the committee to sign.

After you have satisfactorily completed the oral defense and have made any revisions requested by the committee, the members of the committee will determine a grade. Theses are given standard letter grades (A, B, etc.).

**Submitting Your Thesis to the Graduate School**
Prepare the final version of your thesis according to the guidelines posted on the Graduate School website. You should submit your thesis online using ProQuest at [http://www.etdadmin.com/sdakota](http://www.etdadmin.com/sdakota). Be aware that USD requires you to pay for two copies your thesis to go to the library, which requires a fee ($65 in spring 2015).

**Plan B (non-thesis option)**

**Plan B exam and oral defense**
Plan B requires both a written and an oral exam. What a student will be tested over on a Plan B exam depends on what courses that student has taken. Because students take different courses as part of their program, the specifics of the exam vary from student to student. Students are generally given questions asking them to reflect on material they know from their specific courses. It is expected that students be able to reflect on the “bigger picture,” that is, issues of historiography (not just “what happened,” but how historians have interpreted particular events and why these interpretations are significant). You can take the written exam during your final semester of course work, or in the summer or semester immediately following completion of course work. Students will not be permitted to take their Plan B exam after leaving the University or six months after the completion of their course work, except in exceptional circumstances. Students who do not take the Plan B exam within six months of completing their coursework must apply for leave from the Graduate School and contact the DGS to avoid being dismissed from the program.

The student will need a committee of three faculty members with Graduate Faculty status. The chair must be from the History Department, and one member must be from outside the History Department. Contact each of the committee members to set a time for the written and oral exams. The dates between the written and oral exams must be two weeks apart, in order to give the committee members plenty of time to read the exam. The oral defense should be scheduled at least a week before Graduation Approval Forms are due.

The two History members of your committee will write questions for the written exam. The outside member has the option of doing so if he/she chooses, in which case the second history faculty member will read all the exam answers. Students can take the written portion of the Plan B exam in the History Department on the second floor of East Hall.
students who are no longer on campus, it is possible for the Department to arrange to proxy the exam in another location; see the DGS to arrange details. The student will schedule a four-hour block of time with the department secretary, and will be given a room in which to write the exam. Students will be provided with a computer on which to write the exam. Students are not permitted to bring notes to the exam, or other reference materials; the student is not permitted to access the Internet while taking the exam.

In the oral defense, you will discuss with the committee members your overall Program of Study, and you will be asked to discuss and expand upon your written exam answers.

Plan B exams are not given a letter grade, but are assessed pass/fail; you do not register for course credits to take the Plan B exam. Students who fail the exam should speak to the DGS about strategies for retaking it. If the exam must be retaken, a fresh set of questions will be written; otherwise, the procedure is the same. Only one retake is permitted, and a student who does not pass on the second attempt is not permitted to remain in the program. Students who do not pass the Plan B exam on the second try will receive a formal notification of their dismissal from the Graduate School, and students may formally appeal the decision through the academic appeals process.
Graduate Student Policies

Academic Policies and Procedures

Academic Standing and Incomplete Grades
Graduate students are required to make progress toward degree completion every semester they are enrolled at the University. The Graduate School’s policies for 2015-6 include the following: "In addition to overall satisfactory performance, graduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA average of 3.0 or above [B or above] in all work included in the program of study submitted for their degrees. Furthermore, no more than one-third of the credit hours with grades of ‘C’ are permitted.... A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher is required to progress in the Graduate School." No grade below a ‘C’ is acceptable for graduate credit. “Grades of ‘D’, ‘F’, or other unsatisfactory designations are not acceptable for graduate credit. This does not mean that grades of ‘D’ and ‘F’ may not be assigned to graduate students but that credit for courses in which such grades have been earned will not be counted toward a graduate degree although they are included in GPA calculations.” Only the last grade is used in calculating GPA for courses that have been repeated.

A grade of I ("Incomplete") should be given to graduate students only when exceptional circumstances prevent him or her from completing a particular piece of assigned work (such as a seminar or research paper) on time. Student and professor will agree on a deadline for the work to be completed. The deadline should be a maximum length of one calendar year from the date the Incomplete was assigned. If the student does not meet that deadline, the Incomplete will remain on the student’s transcript, and the student, according the Graduate School policy, must retake the course. Students cannot graduate with an Incomplete on their transcript; Incompletes must be resolved before a student can complete a degree.

Students may carry two Incompletes only under extraordinary circumstances or at the discretion of the DGS. Students with two Incompletes are not considered by the Department to be in good academic standing, and will not be allowed to register for the next semester. At least one of the Incompletes must be resolved before taking additional classes or engaging in thesis work. History Graduate students not in good standing are not permitted to enroll in classes until one or both Incompletes are successfully resolved.

Academic Standing: Probation and Dismissal
The History Department adheres to the Graduate School's policies on probation and dismissal, which are as follows: “If a student has more than one course of unsatisfactory work and/or has not maintained a 3.0 term or cumulative graduate GPA, the academic program [the History Department] places the student on warning, or probation or dismisses him/her from the program in keeping with department and Graduate School policies. Degree programs and the Graduate School review the academic standing of all graduate students each term, and program leaders notify students directly of academic warning, probation or dismissal. The Graduate School is copied on all student communication. A graduate student may be dismissed from the program at any time for
failure to meet the academic performance and progress standards of the degree program or Graduate School. The department is required to provide students with a written notice of the issues and an opportunity to meet with the program director (face-to-face, teleconference, virtually) before dismissal action.”

**Oral Exams and Defenses**
In keeping with Graduate School policy, all MA thesis defenses or Plan B examinations will be conducted in person on the USD campus. With the prior written approval of all committee members, defenses or exams may be conducted via Skype or other videoconferencing systems. In such cases, the student is responsible for all arrangements for the video conference. East Hall 220 (the seminar room) has a whole-room Skype camera attached to its AV system and may be reserved through the History Department secretary.

**Academic Integrity**
*The College of Arts and Sciences considers plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty imimical to the objectives of higher education. The College supports the imposition of penalties on students who engage in academic dishonesty, as defined in the ‘Conduct’ section of the University of South Dakota Student Handbook.*

No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. A student found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty may, at the discretion of the instructor, be:

- a. Given a zero for that assignment.
- b. Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.
- c. Assigned a reduced grade for the course.
- d. Dropped from the course.
- e. Failed in the course.

*Adopted by vote of the faculty of the College, April 12, 2005*
*Amended by vote of the faculty of the College, March 18, 2014*

Graduate students are expected to conduct themselves honestly and professionally both within and outside the department. Graduate students who engage in dishonest conduct in their professional relationships - including in the production and submission of theses, presentations, and work for publication - may be subject to sanctions, including, but not limited to, removal of departmental funding or dismissal from the program. All such decisions are at the discretion of the DGS. The University of South Dakota Graduate Catalog states that “a graduate student may be dismissed from the program at any time for failure to meet the academic performance and progress standards of the degree program [History] or the Graduate School. The department is required to provide students a written notice of the issues and an opportunity to meet with the program head (face-to-face, teleconference, virtually) before dismissal action.”

**Graduate Academic Appeal and Grievance Procedures**
Students may appeal an academic decision involving such matters as final course grades and dismissal from the program using an appeal process defined by South Dakota Board of Regents Policy 2:9. The History Department adheres to the procedures established by the
Office of Academic Affairs for impartial review and hearing of any academic grievances. The university’s academic appeal procedures, including the form that must be filed with any appeal, are accessible through the Graduate School’s page in the USD Portal; look for the Academic Appeal Form. A student pursuing an academic appeal may confer with the Graduate School before initiating the process.

Students may also invoke the standards and procedures provided under this policy to challenge academic responses to instances involving alleged student academic misconduct or to challenge other decisions, justified on academic grounds, that affect their participation in or completion of university academic programs.

Students should initiate an appeal through discussion with the individual responsible for the decision. For grading disputes, students should contact the appropriate faculty member. For decisions regarding the program, students should contact the DGS and the chair of the History Department.
Professional Development

Graduate Assistantships
The History Department has five graduate assistantships for the 2018-9 academic year. The number of assistantships may vary due to available funding; future assistantships are not and cannot be guaranteed. Graduate assistants are normally assigned as teaching assistants to the faculty members with the highest-enrolled freshman courses (History 111-2, 121-2, 151-2 and REL 250). Specific tasks carried out by graduate assistants and workloads vary from course to course and from faculty member to faculty member. Once notified of an assistantship by the Graduate School, students should contact the faculty member they will work for to find out the specifics of their assistantship. GAs will be assigned office space by the Department, and can expect to have the Department provide them with the books for their course. GAs will also have to keep track of their time per instructions provided by the Graduate School.

Students apply for GA positions through the Graduate School. Both first-year (incoming) graduate students and returning graduate students are eligible to apply for GA positions. Graduate assistantships are chosen and assigned by the DGS. Students may serve as graduate assistants for more than one year. Students who have provisional status are ineligible for GA positions.

Engaging with the Profession
Graduate students are strongly encouraged to pursue professional opportunities as part of their training in the discipline, including membership and service in professional organizations and scholarly societies, conference presentations, and publication in peer-reviewed journals. Funding for students who have had a paper accepted at an academic conference may be available from the Graduate School, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, or the History Department. See the next section for information about applying for departmental funding.

Graduate Student Travel
Specific Departmental funds are available for graduate student research, travel, and presentations. The History Department will strive to reimburse graduate students for some or all of the expenses they incur while traveling to engage in research or present their work at conferences. The following policies apply:

- Students must fill out an Application For Student Research and Conference Presentation Funding Support form, which is available from the department secretary or the department chair.
- Research and travel support is subject to the availability of funds.
- Requests for funding are approved by the department chair.
- Students are strongly urged to apply for funds and submit travel request forms at least four weeks before the start of their trip. Each funding support and travel request form must include a budget and a justification for the trip, with the justification consisting of one or two paragraphs explaining the specific professional benefits of participation.
- Students must follow state and university policies on travel requests.
• Receipts and other documentation must be provided in accordance with university reimbursement procedures.
• Students should also seek out and apply for appropriate funding competitions sponsored by the Graduate School, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and other university entities.
History Graduate Faculty

**Elise Boxer**, PhD, Arizona State University. Assistant Professor: American Indian Studies/History, Mormon History, 19\(^{th}\)/20\(^{th}\) Century U.S. History

**Scott Breuninger**, PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Associate Professor and Honors Program Director: European Intellectual History, Early Modern, Modern British, Irish, and Atlantic History.

**Steven Bucklin**, PhD, University of Iowa. Professor: U.S. Diplomatic and Modern American History, American History in Film.

**David Burrow**, PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of History: Modern European History, Russian and German History, 20\(^{th}\) Century Europe.

**Kurt Hackemer**, PhD, Texas A&M University. Professor and Interim Provost: Military History, Civil War, 19\(^{th}\) Century U. S. History.

**Sara Lampert**, PhD, University of Michigan. Assistant Professor: Colonial America, Early Republic, Women & Gender, Cultural History.

**Clayton Lehmann**, PhD, University of Chicago. Professor: Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern European History.

**Molly Rozum**, PhD, University of North Carolina. Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies: U. S. West, Great Plains, Canadian Borderlands, South Dakota, and Women & Gender.
**Important Dates**
(Check the Graduate School's page on the Portal for updates)

**December 2018 Graduation**
- 4/15/18 Final Program of Study/Application for Degree (with committee members' signatures) due in Graduate School Office (if this is already on file with the Graduate School, please disregard)
- 11/30/18 Graduation Approval Form (with results of written and oral exams) filed with the Graduate School Office
- 11/30/18 Thesis submitted online to ProQuest
- 05/04/19 Graduate Commencement Ceremony at 3:00, Sanford Coyote Sports Center

**May 2019 Graduation**
- 10/15/18 Final Program of Study/Application for Degree (with committee member's signatures) due in Graduate School Office (if this is already on file with the Graduate School, please disregard)
- 04/26/19 Graduation Approval Form (with results of written and oral exams) filed with the Graduate School Office
- 04/26/19 Thesis submitted online to ProQuest
- 05/04/19 Graduate Commencement Ceremony at 3:00, Sanford Coyote Sports Center

**August 2019 Graduation**
- 10/15/18 Final Program of Study/Application for Degree form (with committee member's signatures) due in Graduate School Office (if this is already on file with the Graduate School, please disregard)
- 08/16/19 Graduation Approval Form (with results of written and oral exams) filed with the Graduate School Office
- 08/16/19 Thesis submitted online to ProQuest
- 05/09/20 Graduate Commencement Ceremony at Sanford Coyote Sports Center, time tba.