



## **Department of History**

### **Guidelines for the BA Dissertation**

All third year undergraduate students in the History Department are required to write a dissertation in their final (i.e. the sixth) semester. The work, including research and writing, will extend over that semester alone. The dissertation must be a student's own independent work and must be based on a critical reading of primary and secondary sources. A successful dissertation is one that is primarily driven by primary sources. The purpose of the dissertation is for students to demonstrate the skills they have acquired through their courses and apply them to producing original research of their own.

All students are mandated to take serious note of the following points concerning their important commitment to engaging in honest academic practice:

- The Department of History follows a zero tolerance policy towards plagiarism.
- If any student is in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, they must consult with a member of the department's faculty.
- Broadly put, plagiarism consists of any practice that involves passing off someone else's words or ideas as one's own.
- Any instance of plagiarism, including presenting work at the draft stage, will immediately garner a failing mark for the entire exercise. There will be no option for review.

### **Word limit and format for the dissertation**

- The length of the dissertation must be of a minimum of 7,000 and a maximum of 8,000 words, NOT including footnotes, the bibliography, the glossary, a list of abbreviations used, and all appendices.
- Please make a note, at the end of the dissertation, of the precise word count of the document you submit.
- The dissertation may comprise two chapters (not including the introduction and conclusion) OR may be a single, long essay, with an introduction, clearly separated sections in the main body, and a conclusion.
- All citations should be included as footnotes, not as in-text or endnote citations.
- The footnotes and bibliography should follow the rules of the *Chicago Manual of Style*.
- A list of abbreviations used in the dissertation, the glossary and list of maps/images/tables (if any) must be provided at the beginning with page breaks between each of these.
- The main body of your dissertation must be type-written, double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12 point size font, with appropriate margins (usually the default in most word processing programmes) and with page numbers included.



- The footnotes must be single-spaced in Times New Roman 10 point size font.
- Please note that your dissertation must be submitted in TWO separate formats. First, you must hand in two printed hard copies in spiral binding to the History Department office. No handwritten copy of the dissertation will be accepted during the final submission.
- Second, in addition to the hard copies, you must also email a soft (electronic) copy to your supervisor. The deadline for submission of both formats is the same and is indicated below.
- Images, if used in the dissertation, may be inserted either in the body of the text or as plates in the appendix. All images must be numbered and the corresponding number must be entered in the main body of the text. All images should be captioned clearly, indicating their source. Videos/moving images, if used, should be submitted on a CD, separate from the disc on which you submit your dissertation. Please ensure that this CD also carries your name, title of dissertation and your roll number.
- The order of the various sections of the dissertation is as follows:
  - (A) Title/ cover Page
  - (B) Certificate Pages
  - (C) Abstract of dissertation in not more than 250 words
  - (D) Content Page
  - (E) List of Abbreviations
  - (F) Glossary
  - (G) List of Maps/ Images/ Tables (if any)
  - (H) Acknowledgement
  - (I) Introduction
  - (J) Chapters or Sections (without page breaks) if there are no chapters
  - (K) Conclusion
  - (L) Images/ Maps/ Tables (if used and not inserted in main body of text)
  - (M) Bibliography (Primary materials, Secondary Readings, English and Vernacular sources have to be listed separately)
- Sample cover pages of the dissertation and certificates will be sent to the dissertation writers before the final deadline for submission.

### **Choosing topics and the process of supervisor assignment**

- Early in their sixth semester, the deadline being indicated below, students will be asked to submit a list of two proposed subjects of research in order of preference.
- These must be on two separate subjects of examination, sufficiently differentiated from each other. While every effort will be made to accommodate your first choice, this cannot be guaranteed, as the effort of the department is to distribute supervision evenly among faculty.
- When submitting your list of proposed topics of research, please ensure the subjects are defined with sufficient clarity and that the two proposed topics are accompanied by a brief description of the primary and secondary sources you will propose consulting.
- **Please note that students are to indicate preferred topics of research, NOT to choose supervisors.**
- As soon as possible after the submission of the choices of research topics, the department will announce a list of the supervisors assigned to each student.
- In some cases, if deemed either appropriate or necessary, student projects may be assigned joint supervisors.



- No switching of supervisors will be permitted barring exceptional circumstances and then only with the express permission of the department's BA Dissertation Co-ordinator.
- Please note that the supervisor's role is to serve as a guide; the dissertation is a student's own independent project. This means that it is the student who must frame her/his own hypotheses, research the subject accordingly, craft their own argument, and posit it in writing.
- Students must, however, consult their respective dissertation supervisors regularly.
- While the supervisor will read drafts of the dissertation, there will be only one reading of each of these. It is the student's responsibility to incorporate the suggestions made by their supervisor. There will be no second reading of drafts.

## **Timetable for dissertation**

### **Monday, 7 January 2019, by no later than 1:30 pm**

Students must submit two proposed topics of research in type-written form in the History Department office.

### **Thursday, 10 January 2019**

List of supervisors assigned to be posted by the History Department.

### **Thursday, 18 April 2019, by no later than 1:30 pm**

Submission of a rough draft of the dissertation

### **Friday, 26 April 2019, by no later than 1:30 pm**

Submission of the final copy of the dissertation

### **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

- The department reiterates that any dissertation with plagiarized content will be invalidated and marked FAIL without any option of a review.
- Any dissertations that do not follow the format outlined above—such as footnoting conventions, font, margins etc. —will be penalized by half a mark for each instance of the error.
- Every dissertation must adhere to the word limit.
- Unless a valid excuse is supported by documentation, the failure to submit dissertations by the deadline will result in a penalty of 2 marks for every 24 hours it is late.