

Guidelines for the General Examinations for the Ph.D. in Classics History Track

Students must be formally admitted into the History Track before they take the exams described below. This may be done in two ways. New applicants to the program can indicate their interest by entering “Ancient History” in the “subfield” box on the application form and tailoring their personal statement appropriately. Ongoing students may apply to the History Track at any time before they have earned 21 credits by submitting a written statement of intent along with their undergraduate and graduate transcripts to the Executive Officer who will forward these materials to the History Committee for consideration.

General Policies

Students must use computers in the special secure computer room reserved for the occasion. Handwritten exams will not be accepted.

No notes or digital devices, including cell phones, may be taken into the exam room.

A student who fails any of the exams on the first try must submit a detailed plan of study for approval by the Executive Committee. After receiving approval, the student may take the exam a second time the next time the exam is offered. If the student fails to pass on the 2nd try, the student must leave the Program.

The Modern Language Exams.

The choice of languages is German and either French or Italian. This requirement may be filled at any time before advancing to candidacy, either by passing an exam administered by the Program or by earning a grade of B or higher in a second-level course offered at the Graduate Center. The Program’s exam consists of a medium length passage on a classical topic from a scholarly article or book written in the relevant language. The student is expected to translate the passage into idiomatic English. The time limit is two hours and students are allowed to use a small dictionary.

First Examination for the History Track

The “First Examination” is taken before the completion of 45 credits. It has two parts which are taken separately and may be taken in any order. These exams are generally offered at the beginning of each semester. When a student passes both parts of the First Examination they are advanced to the second doctoral level. The Executive Officer will circulate an announcement with the dates of the exams at least two months in advance and ask students to sign up in writing. Two faculty members will compose each exam and two other faculty will read them. When a student passes both parts of the First Examination they are advanced to the second doctoral level.

TRANSLATION EXAM: **One** translation exam from the following:

- **The Greek Translation Exam** for the Ph.D. This exam tests the student’s ability to translate from Greek to English. It consists of six passages (three prose and three poetry), each about twenty lines long, with two out of each set taken from the Greek Reading List for Translation – MA & PhD. At the time of the exam, each student selects and translates two prose and two poetry passages. The time limit is three hours.
- **The Latin Translation Exam** for the Ph.D. This exam tests the student’s ability to translate from Latin into English. It consists of six passages (three prose and three poetry), each about twenty lines long,

with two out of each set taken from the Latin Reading List for Translation – MA & PhD. At the time of the exam, each student selects and translates two prose and two poetry passages. The time limit is three hours.

WRITTEN HISTORY EXAM: The Written Examination in the History of Greece and Rome. This exam tests the student's knowledge of both Greek and Roman history. In advance of the exam, students will be provided with 16 questions in these four areas: 1) Archaic and Classical Greece, 2) the Hellenistic East, 3) the Roman Republic, and 4) the Roman Principate. The exam itself will present two questions in each area, and history students should choose one question to write on in each of the four areas. In their answers students should refer to texts included on the History Reading List of Ancient Authors. The History Committee will also provide reading lists of secondary scholarship for each area to guide the students' preparation. The time limit is three hours. This exam is offered twice a year at the same time as the translation exams and the same policies covering the announcement, composition and reading of the exam are followed.

The en route M.A. After completing the entire "First Examination," a research paper (which may be a paper submitted as course work), one modern language exam (French German or Italian) and 45 credits with an average grade of B or higher, students may be awarded an en route Masters Degree in Classics.

The Second Examination for the History Track

The "Second Examination" is taken when the student is near or has completed 60 credits. Its three parts are taken separately in no set order. Following the completion of the Second Examination and all other requirements for the PhD, students are advanced to candidacy and reach level three.

TRANSLATION EXAM: Whichever translation exam was not taken in the First Exam. See above.

A written Examination in the History of Greek and Latin literature. Students will be provided with 12 essay questions that have been set for the exam that semester. The exam itself will consist of four of these questions, two Roman and two Greek, selected by the faculty. Students will select three of the four to answer, and will have three hours to complete the exam. Students may rely on the reading lists developed for the Latin and Greek translation exams as guidance in preparing for the exam. Notes may not be brought into the exam, but it is expected that the students will have given the essays some thought and done some research in preparation for writing them. They should be able to support their arguments with specific examples and demonstrate a broad range of knowledge in your responses.

An oral Examination in Greek and Roman History. The exam will be administered by a committee of four faculty members appointed by the Executive Officer in consultation with the History Committee. The exam will cover each of the following areas: 1) Archaic and Classical Greece, 2) the Hellenistic East, 3) the Roman Republic, and 4) the Roman Principate. Committee members may consult with each other before the exam, with the student's advisor, and with the student about his/her preparation and interests. Two hours will be allotted for the exam, with each of the four faculty member questioning the student for about 30 minutes. At the conclusion of the exam, the student will be asked to leave the room while the committee deliberates. The student will then be called back and the committee will announce its decision. The exam may be graded as Pass with Distinction, Pass or Fail. Oral exams will normally be given at the convenience of the student and the examiners during the academic semester. Students must inform the Executive Officer in writing of their intention to take the exam at least one month prior to the exam itself.

NOTES:

No notes or digital devices, including cell phones, may be taken into the exam room.

A student who fails any of the exams on the first try may take it again without special permission, but a student who fails an exam a second time must submit a detailed plan of study to the Executive Committee along with a request to take it a third time. A student who cannot pass any of the exams after three tries will be asked to leave the program.