

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

HANDBOOK FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Revised August 2017

Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at New York University

The study of the Middle East at NYU has a long and distinguished history, which may well have begun with the university's founding in 1831. It is known that by 1837 the faculty included both a professor of Arabic, Syriac, Persian, and Ethiopic and a professor of Hebrew and Oriental languages; courses were offered in Arabic, Persian, biblical and rabbinic Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Syriac.

The Department of Near Eastern Languages and Literatures (NELL) was established in 1966; the late Professor R. Bayly Winder served as the department's first chair. In 1973 the department moved into its present quarters at the corner of Washington Square South and Sullivan Street, in the newly-completed building (designed by Philip Johnson) which also houses the Hagop Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies. NELL originally included faculty specializing in Hebrew and Judaic studies and the history, cultures and languages of the ancient Near East, but in 1986 the Skirball Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies was established as a separate department. For some years NYU's Program in Religious Studies also operated under the aegis of NELL. To better reflect its changing composition and orientation, the department changed its name in 1996 to Middle Eastern Studies (MES), and again in 2003 to Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (MEIS).

People at NYU and elsewhere often confuse the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies with the Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies. In fact, although they share the same building, the two are distinct (if very friendly) entities. The Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies is an academic department with its own faculty and offers an undergraduate major and minor as well as a graduate program leading to the Ph.D. In contrast, the Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies is an area studies center, funded in part by the federal government, whose mission is to encourage and coordinate teaching and research on the Middle East at NYU and to sponsor educational, informational, and outreach programs for teachers, the general public, and other people interested in the region. The Kevorkian Center also administers the Program in Near Eastern Studies (NES) leading to the M.A., as well as joint master's degrees with business, journalism, and museum studies. The Kevorkian Center is not a department and has no tenured or tenure-track faculty of its own.

You are encouraged to consult the departmental webpage for additional materials and guidelines as well as NYU's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences webpage, in particular the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual (<http://gsas.nyu.edu/content/nyu-as/gsas/about-gsas/policies-and-procedures/policies-and-procedures-manual-and-forms.html>).

Finally, we encourage graduate student to participation in the intellectual life of the department and to communicate their interests and concerns with the faculty. With this in mind the department recognizes one or two MEIS graduate student representatives to regularly consult with the department, attend meetings, and organize events.

The Graduate Program

The graduate program of the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies provides training in fields relating to the history, cultures, languages, literatures, and religions of the Middle East, but focusing mainly on the period from the rise of Islam to the present. Members of the department are drawn from different disciplines and specializations (including history, anthropology, literature, Islamic studies, language instruction, sociology, and political science) and are committed to providing students with a solid disciplinary grounding; at the same time, the department fosters interdisciplinary and comparative approaches to the study of the Middle East. Several of the faculty have joint-appointments with other departments and centers at NYU.

The department offers a program of course work and supervised research leading to the doctorate in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, with an option of pursuing tracks in Islamic Studies, Literature, or Culture and Representation. In collaboration with the History Department, it also offers a Joint Ph.D. Program in History and Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies. The department seeks prospective graduate students who are strongly committed to pursuing the Ph.D.; it therefore regards the Masters of Arts degree it offers not as a terminal degree but as a marker of its graduate students' progress toward the Ph.D. Students who are primarily interested in a master's degree should apply to the Kevorkian Center's Program in Near Eastern Studies, which offers a terminal M.A. in Near Eastern Studies.

Students in the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at NYU can take courses offered at institutions in the Inter-University Doctoral Consortium (IUDC) , which includes Princeton University, Columbia University, CUNY Graduate Center, Rutgers University—New Brunswick, Fordham University, Stony Brook, the New School University, and Teachers College of Columbia University. Information about the IUDC is available on the NYU website at <http://gsas.nyu.edu/academics/inter-university-doctoral-consortium.html>; the registration form for Consortium courses is also available there. Consortium courses are available only for students who have completed one year of graduate study at NYU or elsewhere. The department encourages its students to explore the many opportunities for course work, faculty assistance, and research available in the New York area.

Advising

If you haven't indicated a preference before you enter the department's graduate program, you will be assigned an advisor with whom you should consult regarding course selection and other questions; but you should also feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). After your first semester at NYU you may change advisors, after consulting the DGS and relevant faculty.

Later on, as explained below, you will need to choose a major field advisor and then a dissertation advisor—though they may well end up being the very same person. The DGS will need to approve your choice of advisors, to make sure that you are working with the faculty member(s) most suited to your needs and interests; when the time comes, the DGS will also need to approve the composition of your dissertation committee, which approves for prospectus as

well as the dissertation writing process. If you subsequently want to change advisors or the composition of your dissertation committee, you must get departmental approval for that too.

You should plan on meeting your advisor(s) frequently—at the beginning, middle, and end of each semester at the very least. While you are still doing course work, you will need to meet with your advisor at the beginning of each semester, before registering, to discuss your plans for the semester and get his or her signature on a proposed plan of study for the semester; the signed plan should be turned in to the department office and will be kept in your file. Once you've finished your course work, you will need to meet with your dissertation advisor and other faculty regularly to discuss your research and report on your progress. This regular communication will ensure that you understand expectations and faculty are aware of your plans and the entire committee can coordinate their schedules.

Evaluation and Screening

The department believes that the students it admits into its graduate program have the ability and commitment to complete it. At the same time, the department has a responsibility to monitor and evaluate its students' performance, for a variety of reasons: to let students know how they are doing, to be able to recommend them for financial aid and employment, to certify that they are in good standing, and so on.

As noted above under "Advising," you should meet regularly with your advisor(s) to discuss your work in the graduate program. The more your advisor knows about your progress, problems, concerns, etc., the more effectively the department can provide help and guidance. On a regular basis, advisors and other faculty will report to the department on the performance and progress of all students (especially those receiving financial support). In addition, department faculty will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of all graduate students at least once each academic year.

There are several points in the trajectory of your graduate career at which you will undergo screening by the department, to evaluate your academic performance and progress and to determine whether you should be permitted to enter the next stage of graduate study and receive financial aid. The point of this process is not to harass or intimidate you; it is simply to ensure that you have a clear idea of where you stand and what is expected of you, and that all the department's graduate students are pursuing their studies seriously, consistently, and satisfactorily.

As discussed below, students who enter the program without an M.A. must complete the requirements for the master's degree and petition the department for permission to continue graduate study toward the Ph.D. Such permission is neither guaranteed nor automatic, and the department has the right to deny it to students whom it does not feel should continue graduate study; such students will receive the M.A. as their terminal degree.

Students who fail their comprehensive exams may also be denied permission to continue graduate study. Students who fail to perform satisfactorily in their special field exam or equivalent may be required to withdraw from the graduate program. Finally, the department may

compel any student who does not measure up to its academic standards to withdraw from the graduate program, temporarily or permanently.

Grades and Incompletes

The department expects that students will maintain a consistently strong academic record at NYU. Be aware that the department strongly discourages "incompletes" even if they are made up before the end of the following semester. Among other things, according to Graduate School of Arts and Science (GSAS) rules, too many outstanding or even made-up incompletes may prevent you from receiving assistantships or waivers of maintenance of matriculation fees for which you might otherwise be eligible. Any **I (Incomplete)** that appears on your transcript turns permanently into an **F (Failing)** on the first day of the term one year after the term the student took the course (e.g. an I earned in the Fall 2010 semester would change to an F on the first day of the Fall 2011 term). You should also know that the total number of incompletes cannot exceed the number of years enrolled at NYU. All outstanding incompletes must be made up before you take your comprehensive exams.

Financial Aid

All graduate students admitted to MEIS are awarded MacCracken Fellowships, which usually provide for five years of tuition and stipend. Although teaching is not a condition of this fellowship support, students are encouraged to serve as Graduate Student Teachers or as Preceptors in departmental lecture courses or in the College of Arts and Science's core course program for an average of four semesters. The salary earned by teaching can be banked (either by the student or through the GSAS MacCracken Reserve system) to support research and dissertation writing after the student's semesters of MacCracken stipend are exhausted. The department sees teaching as an essential part of graduate training: apart from the intrinsic joys of teaching, it prepares you for an academic career and it will look good on your CV when you apply for academic positions or other jobs.

Limited GSAS and departmental funds are available to students for participation in conferences, for summer language study, and for summer research-related travel. The exact procedures and available funds are announced at the beginning of the academic year.

New and continuing students who are US citizens or permanent residents and studying Arabic, Persian, or Turkish may apply for the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship; for details contact the Director of the Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies. The deadline for summer and academic-year FLAS fellowships is usually the end of the preceding January.

Given the limited resources at its disposal, the department strongly urges all graduate students to apply for other sources of funding whenever possible, especially pre-dissertation and dissertation research fellowships from external funding institutions. A comprehensive listing of university, GSAS, and departmental fellowships, prizes, and awards appears in the "Financial Information" section of the GSAS *Bulletin*; GSAS also maintains a database of sources of university and external financial support at its Office of Academic and Student Life, located at ½ Fifth Avenue.

The department maintains its own list of NYU and external awards, grants, fellowships, and employment opportunities, which are available via the department webpage.

As you go through your graduate program you will need to plan ahead, especially with regard to applying for fellowships for pre-dissertation and doctoral dissertation research in the Middle East. Keep in mind that most fellowships have application deadlines about a year in advance of your expected date of departure; **that is, you will need to apply in September-November of one year for fellowships that begin in September of the following year.** That means that you must begin developing your doctoral dissertation research plans quite early in your graduate career.

Maximum Time-to-Degree

All graduate students in MEIS are subject to GSAS rules concerning the maximum number of years they may take to complete all degree requirements. If you enter a graduate program at NYU with a B.A. or equivalent, you have a maximum of five years to complete all your M.A. degree requirements, and a maximum of ten years to complete both your M.A. and Ph.D. requirements. If you enter a graduate program already holding an M.A., you have a maximum of seven years to complete all requirements for the Ph.D. Students who do not satisfy all degree requirements within these time limits may be terminated by the department. In special circumstances students may petition for an extension, but the department is under no obligation to grant such a request.

It should be noted that once a student exceeds the maximum time to degree the GSAS will not cover the maintenance and matriculation fees that are required to remain in good standing and students are responsible for paying these fees that will ensure that they are eligible to graduate.

Types of Courses

All graduate courses normally offered by the department are worth 4 points.

In addition to regular classroom-based courses, the department offers various forms of individualized study, which may carry 1-4 points. Before registering for any of the following types of individual study, however, you must use the form available in the department office to secure the approval of both the faculty member with whom you wish to work and the Director of Graduate Studies. Certain restrictions apply to these courses:

Master's Thesis Research - During the semester in which they will be completing their master's thesis--normally the spring semester of their second year of full-time study--M.A. candidates may register for a maximum of 4 points of Master's Thesis Research. This will free them from regular course work to research and write the master's thesis.

Directed Study - Over the two semesters preceding their comprehensive exams, students may register for a maximum of 4 points of Directed Study with their major field advisor(s) for each major field in which they will be taking an examination, in order to have adequate time to prepare for it. This will normally take the form of an informal reading course designed to go

through the reading list for the relevant field. However, if a formal "literature of the field" course is offered for that field, you may not take both that course and a Directed Study. Directed Study may also be used as a means for enabling graduate students to register and receive degree credit for undergraduate courses, when appropriate, but only with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

Dissertation Research - After the successful completion of the comprehensive exams, a student may register for a maximum of 4 points of Dissertation Research, in order to formulate a dissertation proposal and prepare for its defense.

Independent Study - With approval from both the faculty member with whom he or she wishes to work and the Director of Graduate Studies, a student may register for no more than 4 points of Independent Study in any academic year. Every Independent Study must include a writing assignment, which might be, for example, a research paper **or** a bibliographical essay. Excessive use of Independent Study is, however, discouraged, and students should plan on pursuing and developing their research interests in the framework of regularly-offered courses.

Reading Courses - This category of courses allows a faculty member and a group of students some flexibility if they wish to work together on a specific set of texts. However, as with Independent Study, the department much prefers that students rely primarily on regular departmental course offerings.

Students may not register for more than 4 points for Master's Thesis Research, Directed Study, Dissertation Research and/or Independent Study *combined* in any one academic year, unless they have obtained prior approval from the Director of Graduate Studies.

The M.A. in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

As noted above, the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies admits graduate students with the expectation that they will complete the requirements for the Ph.D., the M.A. serving as a marker of progress toward that goal rather than as a goal in itself. The specific requirements for the M.A. are detailed in this section, but students should note that the Ph.D. requirements, specified in the following section, will also have an impact on their planning for the M.A. component of their graduate career at NYU.

All requirements for the M.A. offered by the department should normally be satisfied within two years of matriculation. A student who has not satisfied all these requirements and received the master's degree by the end of his or her second year in the MEIS graduate program may not register for additional course work (or for maintenance of matriculation) without departmental approval. Nor may anyone who has already received the M.A. register for additional course work unless the department has approved his or her request to continue graduate study toward the Ph.D.

Degree Requirements

1. You must complete at least 32 points of course credit (typically, 8 courses at 4 points a course). No credit toward the degree will be awarded for language instruction except for courses at the advanced level or beyond.
2. You must take **either** MEIS.GA.1687 (Problems and Methods in Middle Eastern Studies) or, if pursuing the Islamic Studies track and it offered, MEIS.GA.2725 (Problems and Methods in the Study of Islam), the first time it is offered after your arrival at NYU.
3. You must take at least 2 courses in Middle Eastern history, unless specifically exempted by the Director of Graduate Studies.
4. You must take at least 2 other Middle East-related courses in any two of the following fields: anthropology, fine arts, economics, literature, philology, politics, religion, sociology, and law. Courses in fields other than these must be approved by the DGS.
5. You must take at least 2 courses at the advanced level or beyond in Arabic, Persian, or Turkish (or in another Middle Eastern language with the approval of the DGS) and pass them with a grade of B or better.
6. **You must submit** *either* a master's thesis *or* (with your advisor's approval) two seminar papers, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. **Master's Thesis:** Normally 60-80 typed doubled-spaced pages in length, this may be either an expanded seminar paper or an entirely independent work, but it should demonstrate your knowledge of a particular subject and the related scholarly literature, as well as your ability to analyze a problem and effectively convey that analysis to others.
 - b. **Two seminar papers:** At least one of these must include substantial original research based on primary sources, and both must, in the judgment of two assigned readers, have been developed and substantially reworked such that they are roughly equivalent to work that might reasonably be submitted for publication in a scholarly journal in your field.

You should decide which of these options to pursue as early as possible in your second year of graduate study and obtain the approval of your advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies for both your choice and the topic(s) on which you plan to write. The completed thesis or seminar papers will be read by your advisor and a second reader to be selected in consultation with your advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, and must be discussed and approved at an oral defense that includes both the advisor and the second reader.

The Ph.D. in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies

Students applying for a Ph.D. in the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies may opt either for the department's program on its own or for the Joint Ph.D. Program in History and Middle Eastern Studies. Those who are admitted for the department's program on its own may opt, upon arrival, either for the regular departmental course of study or for one of the special tracks in Islamic Studies, Literature, or Culture and Representation. While most departmental

Ph.D. requirements are uniform across these three options, each also has its own specific requirements, as outlined below.

Students who have earned an MA from the Kevorkian Center's Program in Near Eastern Studies into the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies Ph.D. program may transfer up to 24 points of degree credit for graduate-level course work; students that transfer 24 or more credits will lose a year of funding.

Students who already have, or are about to receive, an M.A. from another department, program, or university should apply for admission in accordance with the procedures specified by the Graduate School of Arts and Science. At the department's discretion, students may be granted up to 32 points of degree credit for graduate-level course work done elsewhere.

Degree Requirements for the MEIS Ph.D.

1. You must complete at least 72 points of graduate course work (normally 18 courses at 4 points a course) beyond the B.A., including at least 3 graduate seminars. No credit toward the degree will be awarded for undergraduate language courses, which normally include all language courses at the elementary and intermediate levels.
2. You must take MEIS.GA.1687 (Problems and Methods in Middle Eastern Studies) as soon as possible after your arrival at NYU; if appropriate to your planned course of study, and with approval of your advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, you may substitute MEIS.GA.2725 (Problems and Methods in the Study of Islam) for this course.
3. You must achieve proficiency in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, or Hebrew (or other Middle Eastern language, with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies). This proficiency may be confirmed either by passing a departmental or GSAS language exam or by passing a course (with a grade of B+ or better) that demonstrates a command of the relevant language adequate for your research needs (the department maintains a list of courses that satisfy this requirement). Your advisor must certify that you have fulfilled this requirement, in whatever way you choose to do so; this must be done before you defend your dissertation proposal.
4. You must attain a reading knowledge adequate for research purposes of another language other than English, to be confirmed either by passing a departmental or GSAS language exam or by passing a course (with a grade of B+ or better) that demonstrates a command of the relevant language adequate for your research needs (the department maintains a list of courses that satisfy this requirement). Your advisor must certify that you have fulfilled this requirement, in whatever way you choose to do so; this must be done before you defend your dissertation proposal. NYU has typically offered intensive summer language courses designed for PhD students interested in acquiring reading ability of French, German, and some other languages; successfully completing one of these courses also satisfied this requirement.
5. You must pass two written comprehensive exams, in two different major fields, at or near the end of your coursework. The fields on which you are to be examined are to be chosen in consultation with your advisor, and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. The exams

will be based on your coursework, a core reading list for each field, and additional reading lists developed with your advisor in view of your specific interests and research agenda. You may prepare for these exams either by enrolling in a relevant “literature of the field” course or by registering for a Directed Study course of no more than 4 points with an appropriate faculty member. Each exam will be read and evaluated by your advisor and a second reader will be selected by the advisor after consultation with you. The written exam will be followed by an oral exam, giving the two readers the opportunity to query you on your essays but also to range more widely across the field. Your exam grades will reflect both their written and oral components. Students who do not pass an exam may petition the department for permission to take it one more time.

6. After completing your comprehensive exams, you should begin to formulate a dissertation proposal, in consultation with the faculty member who will serve as your primary dissertation advisor and with two additional faculty members who will serve as the other members of your dissertation committee. The Director of Graduate Studies must approve the composition of your dissertation committee (including your choice of advisor) and any subsequent changes therein. The department strongly believes that students' dissertation committees should be composed of those scholars who will provide them with the most effective possible intellectual guidance, whether or not they are NYU faculty members; we encourage students to develop contacts with a wide range of scholars and institutions whose work is pertinent to their interests, especially in the Middle East. You should note however that GSAS requires three of the five members of the dissertation committee to be faculty in NYU's Faculty of Arts and Sciences (see GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual, 6.2)

7. Your dissertation proposal should include an extensive critical bibliography of the relevant scholarly literature, a thorough discussion of how your proposal relates to that literature, and an explanation of the approaches, methods, and sources you plan to use in your dissertation research. The department website includes a brief template for the prospectus. When it is properly formulated, and after the completion of all course work (including all incompletes), the fulfillment of all language requirements, and successful completion of your comprehensive exams, you must successfully defend it before your dissertation advisor and two other faculty members, who will normally be the other two dissertation readers serving as core members of your dissertation committee.

8. Once your dissertation proposal is approved, you may proceed to research and write a doctoral dissertation, under the supervision of your advisor and committee. The doctoral dissertation should normally be 300-400 pages in length and conform to all departmental and GSAS standards. The completed dissertation must be read and approved for defense by your advisor and two other NYU faculty members (or approved faculty from other universities) who serve as readers; however, such approval means only that the dissertation is ready to be submitted to a defense. It can then be defended in a public oral defense in which these three readers, along with two other readers identified by you in consultation with the core committee members. To be accepted, the dissertation must be approved by at least four of the five participants in the dissertation defense, in accordance with GSAS procedures. Students must consult the GSAS guidelines to make sure they follow the necessary steps and deadlines to organize their defense

and successfully submit their dissertation (see GSAS's guidelines: <http://gsas.nyu.edu/academics/submitting-your-dissertation.html>).

The dissertation and its defense represent the culmination of your graduate education, demonstrating your mastery of the norms, concepts, and methods of scholarship in your field and your ability to deploy them productively and creatively. The dissertation should make an original contribution to knowledge or understanding in a particular field, generally through the use of previously unexplored sources, the reinterpretation of already examined materials, or the examination of a novel question or subject. A successful dissertation should provide the basis for a publishable book or monograph, or for a series of publishable articles.

Tracks

The Department offers several different tracks that allow students the opportunity to pursue specific topical and disciplinary concentrations within the field of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies.

- **Arabic Literature**

This track offers training in various periods of Arabic literature and in theoretical approaches to Arab cultural production. These include medieval poetry and poetics; the theory of medieval narrative and fiction (from high-brow historiography to the popular canon of the Arabian Nights); modern Arabic literary theory; the modern Arabic novel in a global context; drama and theater criticism; modern poetry; contemporary Arabic popular culture and mass media; literature and film; theoretical and practical perspectives on literary translation from and into Arabic; and Arab Anglophone and Francophone transnational cultural production.

Students in this track will, in consultation with their advisor(s), craft a program of coursework and supervised training in a range of areas, including medieval Arabic poetry and poetics; medieval Arabic historiography, fiction and narrative; modern Arabic poetry; the modern Arabic novel; and modern Arabic literary theory. Students in this track will also take courses, and work with faculty, in the Department of Comparative Literature in order to enhance their training in literary theory and comparative approaches.

- **Culture and Representation**

This track focuses on the theories, methodologies, discourses and practices of representation as they relate to Middle Eastern societies and cultures. This track seeks to provide a coherent interdisciplinary framework and academic space for exploring a range of overlapping fields of inquiry, including film/media studies, visual culture, literature, and cultural anthropology. The purpose of the track is to familiarize the student with scholarship concerning Middle Eastern cultural politics in relation to broader intellectual debates, including postcolonial theory and transnational cultural studies.

All students in this track must fulfill the department's basic requirements for the doctorate (see above). One of the two required major fields which students in this track will prepare and in which they must pass a comprehensive examination will focus on some of the landmark texts and key debates in the scholarly study of culture and representation, though the reading list for the field may also be formulated to reflect individual students' specific needs and interests. Faculty may specify an exam format which differs from that used for other tracks in MEIS.

- **Islamic Studies**

The Islamic Studies track is designed to offer students an integrated program of training in the academic study of the religion of Islam, combining the philological study of texts with the methodological perspectives of religious studies. Students opting for this track can draw on faculty expertise in such areas as Qur'an, prophetic tradition, Islamic law, Islamic theology, and religious praxis, while also taking advantage of the comparative and methodological resources of NYU's Program in Religious Studies.

The requirements for the Ph.D. in this track are essentially the same as those for the regular MEIS Ph.D., with the following modifications:

1. As soon as possible after your arrival at NYU you must take MEIS.GA.2725 (Problems and Methods in the Study of Islam), instead of MEIS.GA.1687, Problems and Methods in Middle Eastern Studies.
2. As soon as possible after your arrival at NYU you must take G77.1001 (Theories and Methods in the Study of Religion).
3. Your choice of courses, at both the M.A. (if applicable) and Ph.D. levels, must be designed to cover all aspects of the Islamic religious tradition, to the extent feasible.
4. Of your two comprehensive examinations, one must be in Islamic Studies and the other in either Middle Eastern history (with a focus on a specific period) or in literature (of a designated Middle Eastern language).

The Joint Ph.D. Program in History and Middle Eastern Studies

The Joint Ph.D. Program in History and Middle Eastern Studies was established by the departments of History and Middle Eastern Studies in 1996, with the aim of ensuring that all graduate students studying the history of the Middle East, regardless of period, topic, or geographical focus, receive the kind of training in historical thinking, methods, and approaches that future historians focusing on other parts of the world receive – in short, a solid grounding in history as a discipline.

If you are in the Joint Program, you will probably work most closely with those faculty members who, though historians by training and inclination and holding appointments in the History Department as well, are primarily based in MEIS. You will also have a great deal to do with the

members of the MEIS faculty who are not historians. But you should also expect (and strive) to work closely with members of the History Department who may know relatively little about the Middle East but can offer valuable training and guidance in historical thinking and approaches, as well as provide solid grounding in a non-Middle Eastern field.

The Joint Program is intended and designed to ensure that this kind of interaction happens, in a variety of possible forms: course work on non-Middle Eastern topics that are nonetheless relevant to your interests and future research; preparation for a qualifying exam in a non-Middle Eastern field; the required seminar on a non-Middle Eastern topic; independent study; individual advising, participation of History Department faculty on dissertation committees; and so on. In addition, you are encouraged to participate actively in the intellectual and social life of the History Department as well as that of MEIS, by attending lectures, becoming involved in graduate student life, participating in festive occasion, and so on.

All students in the Joint Program are formally affiliated with both History and Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies and are entitled to try to avail themselves of the material (as well as the intellectual) resources of both departments. This means, for example, that students in the Joint Program are entitled to apply for, and should try to get, teaching assistantships and other forms of financial support from the History Department as well as MEIS.

Admission

Students interested in the Joint Program in History and Middle Eastern Studies who have a B.A. but no M.A. should apply to either the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies or the History Department (in most cases the former will be the more appropriate), indicating that their ultimate goal is admission to the Joint Program. Students admitted in this way must meet the requirements for the M.A. specified by the department to which they belong. When they are close to completing their M.A. requirements, they may apply for admission to the Joint Ph.D. Program, in accordance with the procedures specified by both departments. Admission is neither automatic nor guaranteed; applicants who are denied admission will receive the M.A. as their terminal degree. Admission is in any case contingent on outstanding academic performance, and will be deemed provisional until the completion of all M.A. requirements and until qualifying examinations are taken and passed. Students who already have an M.A. from another NYU department or another institution should apply directly to the Joint Program in accordance with GSAS admissions procedures.

Degree Requirements

Requirements for the Joint Program are very similar to those for the regular MEIS Ph.D. program, the chief differences being with regard to required courses and examination procedures.

1. You must complete at least 72 points of graduate course work (normally 18 courses at 4 points a course) beyond the B.A. These courses must include at least 3 graduate seminars, at least one of which must be in a non-Middle Eastern field. You must also take whatever “literature of the field” course(s) History or MEIS requires for your specific major field(s), as well as the methodology course Approaches to Historical Research and Writing I, HIST-GA 3603, required of all history doctoral students. No credit toward the degree will be awarded for language instruction in

a student's primary Middle Eastern language (normally Arabic, Persian, or Turkish) except for courses at the advanced level or beyond.

2. You must take MEIS.GA.1687 (Problems and Methods in Middle Eastern Studies) as soon as possible after your arrival at NYU.

3. You must achieve proficiency in Arabic, Turkish, or Persian (or in some other Middle Eastern language, with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies). This proficiency may be confirmed either by passing a departmental or GSAS language exam or by passing a course (with a grade of B+ or better) that demonstrates a command of the relevant language adequate for your research needs (the department maintains a list of courses that satisfy this requirement). Your advisor must certify that you have fulfilled this requirement, in whatever way you choose to do so; this must be done before you defend your dissertation proposal.

4. You must attain a reading knowledge adequate for research purposes of at least one additional language other than English that will facilitate primary and/or secondary research (e.g. French, German, Russian, or an additional Middle Eastern language). Reading ability must be confirmed either by passing a departmental or GSAS language exam or by passing a course (with a grade of B+ or better) that demonstrates a command of the relevant language adequate for your research needs. Your advisor must certify that you have fulfilled this requirement, in whatever way you choose to do so; this must be done before you defend your dissertation proposal.

5. Students in the joint History/MEIS PhD program must take exams in two different fields. Both of these may be history fields offered by historians primarily based in MEIS (including modern Middle Eastern history and Islamic history), or one may be an MEIS history field and the other a field offered by History. Students doing a field offered by History must take the exam prep course(s) specified for that field in the spring semester before the exam; students doing an MEIS-based history field must take the "literature of the field" course or other form of exam preparation specified for that field before taking the exam.

A student who has prepared a field under the supervision of a member of the History Department will sit for one day of exams in that field on the day specified by the History Department in May of the student's second year; the exam will conform to the History Department exam structure and procedures, with examiners drawn from History faculty. A student who has prepared for an exam under the supervision of one of the historians primarily based in MEIS will take that exam at a time, and in a format, specified by MEIS, with examiners who are either History faculty or historians based in MEIS. Both exams will normally be completed by no later than the end of a student's fifth semester in the joint program.

With special approval of the DGSs of both departments, a student may define and pursue a field for which they will prepare by working with NYU faculty who are not historians based in either History or MEIS. In such cases, the student will take the exam according to MEIS structure and procedures, with examiners to be approved in advance by the DGSs of both departments.

Students who do not pass a major field exam may petition for permission to take the exam one more time.

6. After completing your major field exams, you should begin to formulate a dissertation proposal, in consultation with the faculty member who will serve as your primary dissertation advisor and with the faculty members who will serve as the other members of your dissertation committee. The Directors of Graduate Studies of both MEIS and History must approve the composition of your dissertation committee (including your choice of advisor) and any subsequent changes therein. Your dissertation advisor must be either a member of the History Department or a member of the MEIS faculty who also holds an appointment in the History Department.

7. Your dissertation proposals, proposal defence, and dissertation will follow the structure and procedures outlined above.

Ph.D. Timeline

The following is a timeline for you to follow as you make your way through your first several years until you become ABD. Should you not meet these milestones, the Department (in consultation with your advisor) may take disciplinary measures.

Students entering with an MA

First year – Course work with an eye towards completing requirements (e.g. Problems and Methods) and preparing for comprehensive exams.

Summer following first year – If you do not already have reading competency in a secondary language, work on acquiring this via course work such as the free summer reading course in French and German; otherwise work with primary research language or sources (e.g. visit libraries and archives).

Second year – Develop reading lists for exams in collaboration with adviser; take up to 4 points of Directed Study with your major field advisor(s) for each major field in which you will be taking an examination. Take first comprehensive exam in May of spring term (or at the latest in September of the third year). Consider applying for GSAS summer funding for pre-dissertation research.

Summer following second year – Study for second comprehensive exam. Students whose dissertation projects involve international or archival research may be able to prepare research grant applications.

Third year – Take first comprehensive exam in September (if it was not taken in May of the second year). Take second comprehensive exam during your third year; take up to four credits of dissertation prospectus preparation. Defend dissertation prospectus in May (or at the latest in September of the fourth year). Apply for external funding if you plan to do field research.

Summer following third year – Work on dissertation prospectus (if not yet defended) and grant applications.

Fourth year – Defend dissertation prospectus in September (if it has not been defended in May of the third year); become ABD.

Students entering without an MA

First year – Course work with an eye towards completing requirements (e.g. Problems and Methods) and MA papers/thesis.

Summer following first year – If you do not already have reading competency in a European language, take free summer reading course; otherwise work with primary research language or sources (e.g. visit libraries and archives).

Second year – Complete MA requirements (thesis or 2 seminar papers); develop reading lists for exams in collaboration with adviser; take up to 4 points of Directed Study with your major field advisor(s) for each major field in which you will be taking an examination. Take first comprehensive exam in May of spring term (or at the latest in September of the third year). Consider applying for GSAS summer funding for pre-dissertation research.

Summer following second year – Study for second comprehensive exam. Students whose dissertation projects involve international or archival research may be able to prepare research grant applications.

Third year – Take first comprehensive exam in September or December (if it has not been taken in May of the second year); take second exam in May. Apply for external funding if you plan to do field research.

Summer following third year – Work on dissertation prospectus (and grant applications, if appropriate).

Fourth year – Defend dissertation prospectus in December; become ABD.