

HIST 5960 Culminating Essay (Comprehensive Exam)

For details on when and how to register for HIST 5960, please see section 3 of the History Department's [MA Program Handbook](#).

Instructions for your HIST 5960 Reflective Essay

Your essay should be 1,000-2,000 words long and describe your development as a historian over the course of your years in the Master's program at Cal State Los Angeles. The essay can either argue a point or provide a narrative. If narrative-oriented, your essay should provide a strong explanatory thread rather than simply describe your course of study.

Here are some examples of questions you might address in the essay. These questions are meant to help stimulate your thinking. You should NOT try to address all of them.

- *What kind of a historian have you become, and how did you get there?*
- *Which courses influenced your path?*
- *Which significant scholarly literature formed your outlook on history?*
- *Which primary sources particularly interested you, and how did you work with them?*
- *How did your writing, research, and analytical abilities evolve in this program?*
- *Of the historiographic schools of thought that you have studied, with which ones do you see yourself primarily aligning?*
- *What are your present strengths as a historian, and in what areas do you imagine becoming stronger in the future?*
- *How do you envision (and/or how have you experienced) the MA program helping you in the job market, as a teacher, as a researcher, as an archivist, as a museum worker, or in a job you currently hold?*

This essay should be well-written and thoroughly edited. You should work with your primary advisor to develop and refine this assignment.

The essay is due by noon on Wednesday of the exam week for the term in which you are registered for HIST 5960.