HISTORY HANDBOOK
GUIDELINES FOR UG STUDENTS

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
ASHOKA UNIVERSITY

(LAST UPDATED ON 25 AUGUST 2020)

The Department of History

The History Major at Ashoka University seeks both to equip students with the historian's toolbox and trains them on how to use it. A historian combines the skills of a detective, a scavenger, a judge and a ventriloquist. S/he is an artist and a skilled craftsperson who spins and weaves narratives of the past. Historical creativity lies in gathering, wrestling with, and connecting the traces of the past to construct a rich tapestry of human lives, emotions, and ideas. These traces come in various garbs – gravestones, burial sites, forgotten cities, mud pots, musical notes, folklores, war songs, memoirs, archival records, speeches, letters, newspapers, cartoons, cave art, paintings, architecture, clothes, food, chronicles, cinema, advertisements – all and any remnant of human existence.

A historian's ability to make effective use of these materials requires inculcation of two core ideas: empathy and imagination. Empathy fuels and glues our connection with other humans. It helps us recognize others' perceptions, feelings and ways of being. Empathy is a vital tool of a historian because it obligates a historian to question and challenge a single conception of the world in order to access other worlds and other lives. Thus the spirit of questioning and the consciousness of one's own frames of reference is the starting point of historical inquiry. The second feature of imagination is the creative faculty which enables us to form images and feelings that ordinary senses cannot perceive. It is a critical instrument for a historian who studies worlds that are removed both in time and space from his or her own. Conjuring up those historical worlds requires a leap of imagination, a willing suspension of disbelief and a readiness to encounter the unknown.

HISTORY MAJOR, MINOR, & CONCENTRATION

The Department of History requires students to take a total of **12** courses in three years in order to receive the History Major degree and **10** to receive the History-IR Major degree, according to UGC guidelines. However, the course should be considered as a four year programme, including the 'Advanced Major', which brings the total courses to 16 in four years for History Majors and 14 for History-IR Majors.

History students have to do a mix of compulsory and elective courses. Compulsory courses provide students with a basic grounding in the discipline. Elective courses seek to stir, whet, and capture a student's historical imagination through a conceptual, historiographical and methodological study of different historical themes and subjects. In addition, the UG Research Thesis/Project (for third-year students) and the Capstone Thesis (for ASP students) offer History students opportunities to put into practice their understanding of the discipline of history by undertaking independent inquiry on their chosen historical themes.

History Curriculum

History Core Courses:

A. GATEWAY COURSES:
- HIS-1001 European History from Renaissance to Revolution (Spring)
- HIS-2001 History of India I: From Prehistoric Beginnings to the Mauryan Empire (Spring)
- HIS-2002 History of India II: From the Mauryan Empire to c. 1000 CE (Monsoon)
- HIS-2003 History of India III: From c. 1000 CE to 1764 CE (Spring)
- HIS-2004 History of India IV: From 1764 CE to 1967 CE (Spring)

B. READING COURSES
- HIS-3001 Reading History (Spring)
- HIS-3002 Reading Archaeology (Monsoon)

C. RESEARCH COURSES
- HIS-3991/3992 UG Research Thesis/Project (optional, 3rd year)
- HIS-4991/4992 - History Capstone Thesis/Project (compulsory for History Advanced Major, 4th year)

History Major Requirements

A Major is the field of a student's primary academic focus in the course of their undergraduate degree. For a Major in History, students must take a total of **12** courses in History. History majors must take **all 5** gateway courses (HIS 1001, HIS 2001, HIS 2002, HIS 2003, and HIS 2004). These five gateway courses give students a solid foundation in the history of the general patterns and processes of Indian and modern European history within a global comparative framework. These courses provide students with chronological anchors for more advanced thematic courses.

Along with the gateways, **2** reading courses, (HIS-3001 & HIS-3002) equip students with the basic apparatus of the historical craft. Reading History introduces students to different theories that have influenced historical imagination, the various schools of thought and modes of writing history such as positivism, Marxism, annals, structuralism, post-structuralism, postmodernism and postcolonialism. Reading Archaeology introduces students to the methods and theories of archaeology globally, and engages students with the history of archaeological thought.

History Majors need to complete **12** History courses. These are the following:

(i) **5** Gateway Courses:

- HIS-1001 European History from Renaissance to Revolution
- HIS-2001 History of India I: From Prehistoric Beginnings to the Mauryan Empire
- HIS-2002 History of India II: From the Mauryan Empire to 1000 CE
- HIS-2003 History of India III: From 1000 CE to 1764 CE
- HIS-2004 History of India IV: From 1764 CE to 1967 CE

(ii) **2** Reading Courses:

- HIS-3001 Reading History
- HIS-3002 Reading Archaeology

In addition to these 7 compulsory courses, there are 5 additional courses to be done to complete the tally of 12 courses. The distribution of these 5 courses follows two trajectories, depending on the batch.

For UG batches that joined Ashoka till 2018:

(iii) **5** additional History courses:

- This may be any combination of History Electives, Independent Study Modules (ISM), CTS that is cross-listed with History, language course (Persian/ Sanskrit), and/or UG Research Thesis/Project.

For UG batches joining Ashoka from 2019 onward:

(iii) **5** additional History courses:

- This may be any combination of History electives, electives of other departments that are cross-listed with History, Independent Study Modules (ISM), CTS that is cross-listed with History, language course (Persian/ Sanskrit), and/or UG Research Thesis/Project, **including at least 2 History electives offered by the Department of History**.

Note:
- No more than 1 CTS and 1 language course (Persian/ Sanskrit) will count towards a Major in History.

Ideally, all the 7 compulsory History courses should be finished by the time a History Major student finishes their 4th semester at Ashoka. The Department of History <u>strongly recommends</u> the following sequence for these 7 compulsory History courses:

Semester	*Recommended Sequence for Taking the 7 Compulsory History Course(s)*		
1	None		
2	HIS-1001 European History	HIS-2001 History of India I	--
3	HIS-2002 History of India II	HIS-3002 Reading Archaeology	--
4	HIS-2003 History of India III	HIS-2004 History of India IV	HIS-3001 Reading History
5	None		
6	None		

History Major students are strongly advised to keep this recommended sequence of the 7 compulsory courses in mind while planning their coursework.

History Minor Requirements

A Minor is a secondary area of study that a student can choose to focus in the course of their undergraduate degree. **History Minor** students must take **6** total courses in History. These are:

(i) **any 2** of the five Gateway Courses (HIS 1001, HIS 2001, HIS 2002, HIS 2003, and HIS 2004)

(ii) **any 1** of the two Reading Courses (HIS 3001, HIS 3002)

(iii) **3 additional History courses**, which may be any combination of Gateway Courses, Electives, Independent Study Modules (ISM), CTS cross-listed with History, language course (Persian/ Sanskrit), and/or the UG Research Thesis/Project.

Note: No more than 1 CTS and 1 language course (Persian/ Sanskrit) will count towards a Minor in History.

History Concentration Requirements

A Concentration is a field of a student's secondary academic interest aside from their Major (and Minor) in course of their undergraduation. For a Concentration in History, students must take **4** total courses in History. These are:

- **HIS 3001**. Reading History
- **3 additional History courses**, which may be any combination of Gateway Courses, Electives, Independent Study Modules (ISM), CTS cross-listed with History, language course (Persian/ Sanskrit), and/or the UG Research Thesis/Project.

Note: No more than 1 CTS and 1 language course (Persian/ Sanskrit) will count towards a Concentration in History.

INTERDISCIPLINARY MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

History & International Relations

For the History & International Relations (IR) Interdisciplinary Major, 16 courses are required, including 10 courses in History and 6 courses in IR.

Note: No more than 1 CTS course may count as an elective.

These 16 courses should include the following:

- **5** History Gateway Courses
    - HIS 1001 European History from Renaissance to Revolution
    - HIS 2001 History of India I
    - HIS 2002 History of India II
    - HIS 2003 History of India III
    - HIS 2004 History of India IV

- **1** History Reading Course
    - HIS 3001 Reading History

- **1** Introduction to International Relations Course
    - Introduction to International Relations

- **5** International Relations Electives

- In addition to this, there are **4** additional History courses to be done to complete the tally of **10** History courses. The distribution of these **4** courses follows two trajectories, depending on the batch:

For UG batches that joined Ashoka till 2018:

4 additional History courses:

- any combination of History electives, electives of other departments that are cross-listed with History, Independent Study Modules (ISM), CTS that is cross-listed with History, language course (Persian/ Sanskrit), and/or History UG Research Thesis/Project.

For UG batches joining Ashoka from 2019 onward:

4 additional History courses:

- **4** additional History courses, which may be any combination of History electives, electives of other departments that are cross-listed with History, Independent Study Modules (ISM), CTS that is cross-listed with History, and/or History UG Research Thesis/Project, **including at least 2 History electives offered by the Department of History.**

Note: No more than 1 CTS and 1 language course (Persian/ Sanskrit) will count towards a History elective.

The Department of History <u>strongly recommends</u> the following sequence for taking the 6 compulsory History courses:

Semester	Recommended Sequence for Taking the 7 Compulsory History Course(s)		
1	None		
2	HIS-1001 European History	HIS-2001 History of India I	--
3	HIS-2002 History of India II	--	--
4	HIS-2003 History of India III	HIS-2004 History of India IV	HIS-3001 Reading History
5	None		
6	None		

History & Economics Interdisciplinary Major

For the History and Economics Interdisciplinary major **17 courses** are required, including **8** each from History and Economics and **1** last from either.

Note: For History, no more than 1 CTS may count as an elective.

The 16 courses include the following:

- **7** Economics required courses
    - Maths for Economics
    - Intermediate Microeconomics
    - Intermediate Macroeconomics
    - Statistics for Economics
    - Econometrics
    - Game Theory
    - Development Economics

- **1** Economics elective course

- **5** History Gateway Courses
    - HIS 1001 European History from Renaissance to Revolution
    - HIS 2001 History of India I
    - HIS 2002 History of India II
    - HIS 2003 History of India III
    - HIS 2004 History of India IV

- **1** History Reading Course
    - HIS 3001 Reading History

- **2** additional History courses, which may be any combination of History electives, electives of other departments that are cross-listed with History, Independent Study Modules (ISM), CTS that is cross-listed with History, language course (Persian/ Sanskrit), and/or History UG Research Thesis/Project, **including at least 1 History elective offered by the Department of History.**

Note: No more than 1 CTS and 1 language course (Persian/ Sanskrit) will count as a History Elective.

The Department of History <u>strongly recommends</u> the following sequence for taking the 6 compulsory History courses:

Semester	Compulsory History Course(s) to be taken		
1	None		
2	HIS-1001 European History	HIS-2001 History of India I	--
3	HIS-2002 History of India II	--	--
4	HIS-2003 History of India III	HIS-2004 History of India IV	HIS-3002 Reading History
5	None		
6	None		

The Undergraduate Thesis/Project

History and History-IR Interdisciplinary Major students can choose to do an Undergraduate Thesis/Project (HIS-3991/3992) in their fifth semester. The Undergraduate Thesis/Project is a semester-long research venture. It comprises 4 credits. This offers students a scope of engaging in an extended intellectual journey, where one gets to study a particular historical issue closely under the guidance of a faculty member.

Interested students should finalise a topic for the thesis/project in course of their fourth semester. They should approach faculty member(s) who they think might be interested in guiding them in that topic. By the end of the fourth semester, interested students are required to submit their proposal for the Undergraduate Thesis/Project to the History UG Thesis/Project Coordinator (currently Prof. Nayanjot Lahiri). Before the onset of the fifth semester, potential supervisors will assess the amount and quality of work done by the student(s) till then and decide if the student(s) can proceed to do the Undergraduate Thesis/Project. The decision of the concerned faculty member will be binding. The thesis is to be researched and written in course of the monsoon semester and submitted at the end of it. Every thesis is evaluated by two faculty members, one being the supervisor.

For further details and guidance, students should contact Prof. Nayanjot Lahiri.

The 4th Year - Ashoka Scholars Programme (ASP)

At Ashoka University, students can opt for the Ashoka Scholars' Programme (ASP), which comprises a fourth year after the completion of graduation at the end of the third year. For the History Department, this comprises the History Advanced Major programme. This extra year is aimed at equipping our students towards research in the discipline through immersive research-oriented coursework and academic writing.

History Advanced Major Requirements

The History Advanced Major comprises **16 credits**. Students can choose to opt for this in their 4th year (Ashoka Scholar's Programme or ASP). Once they do, they will be required to take three additional courses in History at the advanced level. The first two among these courses are exclusive to the rigorous research-oriented training that the History Advanced Major programme comprises:

i. HIS-4001 & HIS-4002. Sources and Histories I & II (4 credits):

This course is intended to impart first-hand research training to 4th-year History students. This course is co-taught by the entire departmental faculty. In the course, students collectively read, discuss, and analyse primary source material along with a faculty member. Faculty members circulate the source(s) for her class beforehand, with a brief note and a few leading questions. Students read the sources before the class, bring their notes to the class for a discussion led by the faculty member, and then submit their reflections in writing before the next class. Students get an opportunity to study a diverse array of primary sources drawn from various periods of South Asian history.

Note: This course has a total of **4** credits, but is offered in two parts over two semesters. **Sources and Histories I (with 2 credits)** is offered in the Monsoon Semester and **Sources and Histories II (with 2 credits)** is offered in the Spring Semester. History Advanced Major students must take **both** parts of this course in order to complete a total of 4 credits.

ii. HIS-4983. History Capstone Thesis/Project (8 credits):

Students pursuing History Advanced Major are required to do a Capstone Thesis/Project. In contrast to the UG Research Thesis, which is done over one semester only, the Capstone thesis is a year-long research venture. It comprises **8** credits. The greater time and credit is meant to offer students an advanced intellectual exercise and an opportunity to work extensively with primary sources under the close guidance of a faculty member. Planning so this is to be started by students by the end of their third year at Ashoka. Students have to seek out faculty members with similar areas of interest for potential supervision.For further details and guidance, interested students should contact the current History ASP Coordinator Dr Aparna Vaidik.

Note: The Capstone Thesis/Project can be done even without doing a Major or Advanced Major in History.

iii. Any one History Elective/ISM at the 300/400 level (4 credits):

All fourth-year students - whether pursuing a History Advanced Major or not - are assigned a faculty mentor, who watches over the intellectual development of the student throughout the year.

In addition to these courses, History Major students pursuing the ASP can also opt to do one or more Teaching Practicum Assistantships.

History-IR Advanced Major Requirements

During the fourth year at Ashoka, students who opt for the History-IR Advanced Major are required to take three additional courses in History and IR at the advanced level. These are:

i. Sources and Histories (4 credits)
ii. History or IR Capstone Thesis (8 credits)
iii. Any IR Elective/ISM at the 300/400 level (4 credits) :

In addition to these courses, History-IR Major students pursuing the ASP can also opt to do one or more Teaching Practicum Assistantships.

Teaching Practicum (2 credits)

The Teaching Practicum introduces students to the world of pedagogy. The Teaching Practicum Assistant (TPA) participates in the lesson planning process, ideally meeting the faculty member to discuss class preparation at least once per week. The TPA is expected to (re)read the assigned readings, and may be given additional readings by the faculty in preparation for class discussions. The TPA is responsible for assisting the faculty with setting up the classroom and holding office hours outside of the class meetings (2 hrs per week) to meet with the students to continue the discussion, help them with paper topics and writing, and other course-related questions.

TPA's will *not* be responsible for grading or evaluating other students' work, except occasionally may be involved in the grading process with the faculty in order to learn how grading is done. The Teaching Practicum is considered as an apprenticeship, in which the faculty member is responsible to mentor, teach, and train the TPA in pedagogical methods.

TPA's will also be required to attend pedagogy workshops during the Orientation week. The TPA may be assigned readings over and above the syllabus readings for the rest of the course. The workload should not exceed 3 hrs outside of class time per week.

Every Teaching Practicum carries 2 credits. Students who wish to register for a Teaching Practicum will need to apply to the ASP Coordinator of the Department of History (currently Dr Aparna Vaidik) by July for the Monsoon Semester and by December for the Spring Semester. The History Teaching Practicum is meant primarily for History and History-IR Major students who are pursuing the ASP in their fourth year. Other students, including third-year students, may apply for this. The selection of students as TPAs and their allocation to individual courses will be done by the History faculty, taking into account the quality of the applications and pedagogical requirements. The decision and choice of the concerned faculty member will be binding.

For further details and guidance about the History ASP, interested students should contact the History ASP Coordinator Dr. Aparna Vaidik.

Language Courses

The Department of History currently offers two languages - Sanskrit and Persian. The objective for this is to equip History students for historical research in the future. The department strongly encourages its students to learn at least one of these languages while they are at Ashoka. Currently, **any one** language course (Persian/ Sanskrit) can count in lieu of **one** History elective in the total course tally of History students. Beyond this, students can take as many language courses as they want. In future, the department will explore options for making more language courses available for its students.

Language Courses currently on offer:

Monsoon Semester:

HIS-5511. Persian 1

HIS-5501. Sanskrit 1
HIS-5503. Sanskrit 3

Spring Semester:

HIS-5502. Sanskrit 2
HIS-5504. Sanskrit 4

For any queries, students should contact Prof. Mahesh Rangarajan (Head, Department of History).

CAPSTONE & UG RESEARCH THESIS/PROJECT FORM
Form Must Be Filled And Submitted Before Course Registration in Monsoon Semester

Student Name: _____

▢ UG Research Thesis   ▢ UG Research Project   ▢ 4th Year Capstone   (✔ one)

Title: _____

_____

_____

Supervising Faculty Name:_____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Research Coordinator Signature: _____ Date: _____

CAPSTONE & UG RESEARCH THESIS/PROJECT FORM
Form Must Be Filled And Submitted Before Course Registration in Spring Semester

Student Name: _____

▢ UG Research Thesis   ▢ UG Research Project   ▢ 4th Year Capstone   (✔ one)

Title: _____

_____

_____

Supervising Faculty Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Research Coordinator Signature: _____ Date: _____