

Sam Houston State University
Department of History
General Rubric for the Evaluation of
Research Papers and Masters Theses

Organization of the Paper/Thesis:

- The paper/thesis should be composed in a clear and logical manner.
- If the study lends itself to a narrative form, events should be covered in a clear chronological outline.
- If the study is more analytical or descriptive, the points should be presented in a logical sequence that enhances the general argument.
- The paper/thesis should have an introductory statement, a body of evidence, and a conclusion.

Coverage and Content of the Paper/Thesis:

- The paper/thesis should directly address the issue or problem it is investigating.
- The focus of the subject researched should be maintained throughout.
- Points and/or subtopics of the research subject should be clearly and logically conceived, presented and discussed.
- The information presented to substantiate points and topics ought to be accurate and clearly presented.
- The facts and the interpretation of those facts that are offered in the paper/thesis should contribute evidence to the general arguments and support the conclusions of the paper/thesis.

Mechanics of the Paper/Thesis:

- The writing style of the paper should be clear and concise.
- It should be written and spoken as if addressed to a prospective audience of educated lay people.
- Each paragraph should lead logically into the other. All terms, events, people ought to be clearly identified and defined.
- Effective transition statements should be incorporated to allow the paper/thesis to flow well.
- The paper/thesis must demonstrate mastery of the fundamentals of paragraphing, sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
- Proper margins and format must be maintained.
- The text should be carefully proofread for grammar, spelling, organization, continuity, and transition.

The Notes and Bibliography of the Paper Thesis:

- The paper/thesis must use proper notation according to current edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*.
- All notes should be cited at the end of the text or at the foot of each page.
- A bibliography list all relevant materials used in the preparation of the paper/thesis.

Sam Houston State University
Department of History
General Rubric for the Comprehensive Examinations

Comprehensive Examinations:

- Comprehensive examinations evaluate the student's general knowledge of three selected fields of history.

- They are a necessary component for graduation. Failing these exams constitutes failure in the program.

Written Examinations:

- The written examination will be based the student's coursework, including a list of historical works identified by each member of the examination committee.
- Members of the examination committee will formulate appropriate questions and will apprise the student and other members of the committee as to the form of their questions. Students will have one hour to address the questions of each member of the committee.
- The student's examination answers should display an effective command of each field and its literature.
- Students must score a pass or high pass in each of the fields covered in the written examinations.
- A student failing one or more fields in the written examination will be allowed one retake of each failed field during the subsequent academic semester. Subsequent failure on any outstanding section of the exam will result in termination from the program.

Oral Examinations:

- The oral examination will also be based the student's coursework, including a list of historical works identified by each member of the examination committee. Specifically, committee members will direct questions designed to address perceived gaps in or to follow up on students written answers.
- Committee members will also ascertain the students ability express concepts and impart information in oral discourse.
- Students must score a pass or high pass in each of the fields covered in the oral examinations.
- A student failing one or more fields in the oral examination will be allowed one retake of each failed field during the subsequent academic semester. Subsequent failure on any outstanding section of the exam will result in termination from the program.