

Graduate Group in Ancient History

Graduate Student Handbook

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I. PhD Program in Ancient History

a. Program Overview

The Graduate Group in Ancient History is an interdisciplinary, cross-departmental program that encompasses the study of the ancient history of the Near East and the Mediterranean Basin, from the early cultures in the fertile river basins of the Tigris and the Euphrates to the rise of Islam and the emergence of the successor kingdoms. The expertise and interests of members of the group are diverse and heterogeneous. What unites us is the enterprise of building historical narratives from the fragmentary and diffuse textual and material evidence available to us. Students admitted to the Graduate Group in Ancient History will receive training in the political, intellectual, cultural, socio-economic, and religious history of at least two discrete ancient societies as part of their preparation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Ancient History is a discipline that draws on literary, documentary, visual, archaeological, and environmental evidence, and employs a range of methodologies in combining these evidentiary categories in order to answer specific questions about the structures, processes, and thought-worlds of ancient societies. Faculty members of the Graduate Group in Ancient History come together from a range of Departments, including [Anthropology](#), [Classical Studies](#), [History of Art](#), [Religious Studies](#), [Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures](#), and the [Penn Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology](#). Each department holds regular seminars, colloquia, or speaker series, and members of the group are encouraged to attend as many as they consider relevant to their interests and fields of study. Additionally, the [Center for Ancient Studies](#) functions as an information hub for those interested in the study of the ancient world at Penn and neighboring institutions and annually sponsors conference events staged by graduate students as well as by faculty.

Administratively, the Graduate Program in Ancient History is housed in the Department of Classical Studies. The department hosts a weekly [colloquium](#), which all students in the Graduate Group are expected to attend. In addition to the departments listed above, graduate groups, with which the Graduate Group in Ancient History has traditionally maintained close ties at both faculty and student levels, include the [Graduate Group in the Art and Archaeology of the Mediterranean World \(AAMW\)](#), the [Graduate Group in Religious Studies](#) and the [Graduate Group in Greek and Latin Languages and Literatures](#).

The Graduate Group in Ancient History also hosts the annual [Hyde Visitor](#), a distinguished scholar of the ancient world who visits campus for a week to deliver a series of lectures and seminars, and meet one-on-one with graduate students in the Group.

Students in the Graduate Group in Ancient History are encouraged to pursue their studies in an explicitly and self-consciously interdisciplinary way. Most particularly, it is our strong conviction that the societies of Greece and Rome (the usual subject-matter of Ancient History) can and should fruitfully be compared with the societies of the Near East and elsewhere. These twin aims of interdisciplinarity and comparative engagement with the ancient world are facilitated by regular co-teaching of seminars among faculty, as well as encouragement and financial support for participation in activities such as study abroad,

archaeological excavations, numismatics and papyrology summer schools. Nevertheless, the acquisition of a broad base of skills relevant to a student's field(s) of interest must be underpinned and sustained by a deep and intimate knowledge of the languages and the textual and intellectual cultures of the ancient society or societies in question.

b. Academic Calendar

[Penn's Academic Calendar](#)

c. Program Advising

The Graduate Group Chair serves as advisor for all students in coursework and during these years also builds a formal mentoring relationship with them. Once a student has advanced to Candidacy, the main mentoring responsibilities are taken over by the dissertation advisor. These formal mentoring relationships and responsibilities are meant to ensure equity and transparency and help to build the necessary trust. However, we also consider informal mentoring a strength of our program. Practices of informal mentoring include (but are not limited to) providing guidance, sharing knowledge based on experience, and modeling professional modes and behavior.

d. Program Requirements

1. Course Requirements

Students in the ANCH Graduate Group take **20 courses** over three years of coursework. This coursework constitutes the essential building blocks for the development of the various skills that make up the ancient historian's toolkit: grasp of not only the broad historical contours but also the pressing historiographical debates in the study of ancient societies; solid grounding in the philological and literary aspects of the relevant ancient languages; specialized competencies, for example in epigraphy, numismatics, legal frameworks or economic structures; experience engaging analytically and critically with elements of the art, architecture, and material culture of the ancient world; familiarity with the various methodological and theoretical approaches that are current in scholarly discourse.

The ANCH graduate curriculum is intentionally designed to be flexible. While certain courses are considered mandatory, we are committed to enabling our students to develop their own scholarly profiles, and there is great flexibility in crafting an itinerary through the program. All course choices are made in consultation with the Graduate Group Chair.

In their first year, students participate in the **Proseminar in Classical Studies and Ancient History**, which introduces scholars of the ancient world to the range of critical approaches, disciplinary expectations, materials and methods employed by practitioners in the field.

The bulk of courses take the form of **Seminars** taught by members of the faculty of the Graduate Group in Ancient History either individually or collaboratively. We believe that seminars are the cornerstone of graduate education. Seminars allow students from different years to communicate both with faculty and

with each other, to create a productive working dialogue. Seminars provide students' first and most important opportunity to practice many of the skills that will prove essential to them in the profession, when they will have to produce conference papers, lectures, academic books and articles, and classroom presentations. Skills practiced in the seminar environment include the ability to communicate in a clear and engaging way with students and colleagues, the ability to present ideas, both through class presentations and through seminar papers, and the ability to respond constructively to challenges and alternative perspectives.

Generally, it is expected that students will take at least **one language-intensive class** per semester, for these courses serve the double function of preparing students for the language exams that form part of their Qualifying and Candidacy Exams, and providing them with tools of textual criticism that will be essential in their future scholarship and pedagogy.

In the spring of the third year in the program, students typically participate in the **Prospectus Workshop** as one of their courses in that semester, in which they develop their formal dissertation proposal and provide and receive feedback from the instructor and their peers.

2. Transfer of Credit

Students who have already taken courses at the graduate level may petition for transfer credit for up to eight courses. The actual award of credit can be made only after satisfactory completion of the first year at Penn, and is by no means guaranteed. Rather, it forms part of a broader evaluation of the most effective way for the student to fulfill the various requirements of the program. Ordinarily, any transfer of credit is used to fulfill requirements so that there is more room in the student's schedule to broaden their interests and skills, rather than as a means to accelerate through the coursework portion of the program.

3. Independent Studies

As part of their coursework, students may petition to take an **Independent Study**, with the approval of the relevant faculty member(s) and the Graduate Group Chair. Independent Studies are a kind of tutorial, involving one or more students and a faculty member, who teaches the course as an overload. Typically, students will take an Independent Study under the supervision of their proposed dissertation supervisor in the Fall or Spring of their third year of coursework. This allows them to delve in detail into texts, materials, methods and/or approaches that will be particularly important for their dissertation. Outside these circumstances, Independent Studies generally occur only when both faculty and student agree that the student's interests will not be addressed by any regularly taught course. Students petitioning to take an Independent Study are expected to have a very clear idea of the proposed topic, including a preliminary bibliography and account of the motivation for the study prior to making the petition. For example, an Independent Study might allow a student to gain a thorough acquaintance with a previously unfamiliar and difficult field of study in which a great deal of guidance is needed.

4. Audit Policies

A graduate student may audit one course per semester if the course instructor and the Graduate Group Chair agree that this is beneficial for the student's development of their scholarly profile and progress to degree. The instructor will determine the auditing student's responsibilities for participating in the course. The student must register for the course as auditor, and the course will appear on the student's transcript.

5. Policy on Incompletes

It is expected that a student shall complete the work of a course during the term in which that course is taken. The instructor may permit an extension for the completion of the course, and the student must inform the instructor and the Graduate Group Chair of their plans to complete the required assignments. In such cases, any course which is still incomplete after one calendar year from its official ending must remain as "incomplete" on the student's record and shall not be credited toward a degree.

6. Teaching Requirement

Teaching is a fundamental part of a scholarly career, and we take seriously our responsibility to provide our students with the tools and experience they need to become effective teachers. As part of their training, students will serve as Teaching Assistants and/or teach their own classes in the Fall and Spring semesters of their second and third years. Before graduate students begin teaching at Penn, they receive teaching orientations and workshops offered by the Graduate Group and by the Center for Teaching and Learning.

The usual teaching assignment in the second year is as a Teaching Assistant (TA) in the Greek and Roman history sequence (ANCH 0101 and ANCH 0102), although all assignments are made in consultation with the Graduate Group Chair and other relevant faculty. During this year, TAs are closely mentored by faculty and collaborate extensively with peers in constructing lesson plans, creating productive classroom environments, and troubleshooting any challenges and problems that arise. Particularly in the third year in the program, a student may serve as TA in another course appropriate to their studies.

Additional opportunities to teach courses exist through Penn's Liberal and Professional Studies (LPS) Program and during the Summer Session. Faculty and students in the Graduate Group maintain close and productive ties with Penn's [Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Innovation](#), participating regularly in workshops and other pedagogy-related events. The Graduate Group also organizes its own workshops and seminars on pedagogical topics, often in conjunction with related Graduate Groups such as the [Graduate Group in Greek and Latin Languages and Literatures](#) and the [Graduate Group in Art and Archaeology of the Mediterranean World \(AAMW\)](#).

7. Language Requirements

Ancient Languages

Students entering the program are expected to have a broad familiarity with ancient history and sufficient language preparation to begin graduate work **in two ancient languages**. For languages generally taught at the undergraduate level, such as Ancient Greek, Latin, Arabic, and Biblical Hebrew, this characteristically amounts to a minimum of three years of study in one language, and two in another. The student will be expected to demonstrate competence in each of these languages in a diagnostic test before they begin their first semester in the program and by passing exams, typically administered at the end of the third semester and at the end of the sixth semester. For languages not generally taught at the undergraduate level, such as Akkadian, Aramaic, Coptic, Syriac, or Sumerian, expectations of competence at the moment of entry into the program are necessarily different. In these circumstances, the student should identify the proposed language(s) in the application and plan upon arrival to enroll in introductory courses. Having attained an appropriate level of competence, they will be expected to demonstrate that competence by passing exams, on a comparable schedule to that outlined above. Applicants who are in doubt as to their language preparation should contact the Graduate Group Chair directly, prior to submitting their application.

Students needing additional language training before applying to the Graduate Group may be interested in Penn's [Post-Baccalaureate Program in Classical Studies](#). Applicants to the Post-Baccalaureate Program may also apply for the [Elsie Phare Fellowship](#) and the [Masciantonio Fellowship](#).

Modern Languages

It is also desirable, although not required, for applicants to the program to have knowledge of one or more modern languages, especially German, French, and/or Italian.

Modern Languages Examinations

All candidates for the Ph.D. must pass examinations in German and either French or Italian. Each examination will involve translating one page (approximately 200 words) of scholarly prose accurately and into idiomatic English, and then writing a short summary, not a translation, of a second passage. The exam is two hours long. Use of a dictionary is permitted. Students are urged to attempt these examinations as early in their graduate careers as possible. The examinations will be given in October and March at dates set by the Graduate Group Chair; in exceptional circumstances, they may be offered at other times. The modern languages examination requirement should be fulfilled by the end of the student's third year in the program. Failure to pass these exams in a timely fashion may constitute grounds for dismissal from the program.

8. Qualification Exams

The Qualification Exams are given at the beginning of a student's fourth semester in the program, usually in the first two weeks of the semester. The Examination Committee is chosen by the Graduate Group Chair and consists of at least three examiners, including the Graduate Group Chair. The examination has written and oral components, as follows:

Written Translation Exam in Two Ancient Languages

The student takes translation exams in two ancient languages. In each exam, the student translates three passages from the four offered by the examiners. In the weeks before the exam, the student will have the opportunity to draw up a list of authors and texts with which they feel familiar. The examination will be prepared in conjunction with this information; however, the exam will include passages not drawn from this list. The use of a dictionary is not permitted.

Time: usually 2 hours for each exam, typically taken on two consecutive days.

NB: If a student passes one or two language components at the Qualifying Exam stage to a sufficiently high standard (deemed “high pass”), they may be exempted from the translation requirement in this language/these languages at the Candidacy Exam stage (see below, no. I.d.9).

If a student passed the translation exam in one or two languages in the Qualification Exam at a high standard (but not deemed sufficient for a “high pass”), the student may petition to take one or two translation exams for the Candidacy Exam already at the beginning of their third year in the program. The Graduate Group Chair and Examination Committee decide whether the student should be given this option in consultation with faculty who has taught the student in the respective language(s). Students are encouraged to discuss this option with the Graduate Group Chair and other faculty.

Oral Exam in Two Historical Fields

After the end of classes in the fall semester, the student will be given a list of approximately 20 questions in total from two historical fields. Of these, the student chooses three for each historical field around which the oral exam will revolve, and informs the Graduate Group Chair of their choices at least one week before the date of the oral exam.

Time: usually two hours. The oral exam is normally held 7-10 days after the written translation examinations.

Failure to pass parts of the Qualification Exam might constitute grounds for dismissal from the program. If a student fails one or several of the components of the Qualifying Examination, the Graduate Group Chair in consultation with the Examination Committee decides whether the student will be given the opportunity to retake the exam. Characteristically, all requirements have to be fulfilled by the end of the fourth semester in the program.

9. Candidacy Exam

The Candidacy Exam consists of a sequence of exams characteristically to be taken over the course of a student’s sixth semester in the program and the subsequent summer. Unless an extension has been explicitly granted by the Graduate Group Chair, coursework and modern language requirements must have been met before a student begins their fourth year in the program. Courses graded “Incomplete” do not count towards the coursework requirement. The Graduate Group Chair appoints the Examination Committee, consisting of at least three examiners, including the Graduate Group Chair. The exam has written and oral components, as follows:

Written History Exam in the First Historical Field:

At the beginning of a student's sixth semester in the program, the student takes a written exam in one historical field. The exam is typically organized in four sections along the major chronological divisions and focuses on the history, sources, modern scholarship, and methods of studying this field (see below). The students will answer one of three questions from three of these sections. Questions are prepared by the Exam Committee in consultation with those faculty members of the Graduate Group who have taught the student.

Time: usually three hours.

Written History Exam in the Second Historical Field

In the middle of a student's sixth semester in the program (usually in March), the student takes a written exam in a second historical field. The exam is typically organized in four sections along the major chronological divisions and focuses on the history, sources, modern scholarship, and methods of studying this field. The student will answer one of three questions from three of these sections. Questions are prepared by the Examination Committee in consultation with those faculty members of the Graduate Group who have taught the student.

Time: usually three hours.

Oral Exam on Historical Approaches (focusing on two chronological periods)

The oral exam is taken toward the end of a student's sixth semester in the program, usually shortly after classes have ended. The exam focuses on two historical approaches, such as social history, political history, environmental history, gender studies, cultural history etc., each of them in their application to a distinct chronological period (see examples below). The two chronological periods must come from two distinct historical fields. In the exam, students should demonstrate familiarity with the historical background, primary sources, modern scholarship, and the respective methodological considerations. Periods and historical approaches are defined and agreed upon by the candidate, the Graduate Group Chair, and the Examination Committee. They are subject to approval by the Graduate Group Chair and the Examination Committee at least four weeks before the date of the exam. At least two weeks before the exam, the student submits a select bibliography for each of the periods and historical approaches to the Graduate Group chair. One of the chosen approaches and chronological periods may be related to the prospective dissertation project. The oral exam also includes a discussion of the Dissertation Prospectus (see below, no. I.d.11).

Time: usually 3 hours.

Sample List of Chronological Periods*

Ancient Near Eastern History II: Late Bronze Age (ca. 1500-1200 BCE); Early Iron Age (ca. 1200-900 BCE); Assyria, Babylonia and their Neighbors (900 BCE-550 BCE); Achaemenid History (550-330 BCE)

* These are examples. The student should discuss their choices with the Graduate Group Chair and other faculty members of the Graduate Group. The respective periods and approaches must be approved by the Graduate Group Chair and the Examination Committee.

Greek History: Early Greece; Archaic and Classical Greece; Later Classical and Early Hellenistic Period; Late Hellenistic and Roman Period

Roman History: Archaic Rome to Middle Republic; Late Republican Period; Early Imperial Period (Augustus – Flavians); High Empire; Late Antiquity – Early Medieval Period

Early Islamic History: Late Antiquity; Muhammad, and the early Arab empire; Abbasids and the later formative period

Sample List of Historical Approaches*

Social History

Political History

Cultural History

Gender Studies

Economic History

History of Ideas

History of Institutions

History of Religion (incl. religious beliefs and practices)

Environmental History

Material and Visual Culture

Dissertation Prospectus

A full dissertation proposal outlining the topic, structure, goals, and methodology of the dissertation, along with a research bibliography, must be submitted to the Graduate Group Chair for distribution to the examiners at least two weeks before the Oral Exam. The Prospectus will then be discussed during the Oral Exam (see below, no. I.d.11).

If the submitted Prospectus is deemed unsatisfactory by the Examination Committee, the examiners will decide whether the student should revise the Prospectus within a specified time frame and re-submit it for further discussion, or be dismissed from the program.

Written Translation Examination in Two Ancient Languages

The student takes written translation exams in two ancient languages in the summer immediately following their sixth semester in the program. In each exam, the student translates four of five passages as set by the examiners. The use of a dictionary is not permitted.

Time: two hours for each exam, usually taken within the same week.

NB: If a student's translation in one or two ancient languages in the Qualification Exam was deemed "high pass" by the Examination Committee, the student may be exempted from the translation requirement in this language/these languages at the Candidacy Examination stage (see above, no. I.d.8).

* These are examples. The student should discuss their choices with the Graduate Group Chair and other faculty members of the Graduate Group. The respective periods and approaches must be approved by the Graduate Group Chair and the Examination Committee.

Upon successful completion of the Candidacy Exam, the student is advanced to candidacy.

Failure to pass parts of the Candidacy Exam might constitute grounds for dismissal from the program. If a student fails one or several of the components of the Candidacy Exam, the Graduate Group Chair in consultation with the Examination Committee decides whether the student will be given the opportunity to retake the exam or be dismissed from the program.

10. Annual Progress Reports and Evaluation

Students in Coursework

The Graduate Group Chair serves as advisor for all students in coursework and during these years also builds a formal mentoring relationship with them. The Graduate Group Chair meets regularly with each student in coursework to discuss their progress to degree. At the end of each semester, the Graduate Group Chair solicits comments from all instructors who have taught ANCH graduate students that term or who have supervised their teaching.

ABD Students

Once a student has advanced to Candidacy, the main mentoring responsibilities are taken over by the dissertation advisor. Dissertators meet regularly with their advisor; the format and frequency of these meetings are determined by the student and the dissertation advisor. Shortly after the Oral Candidacy Exams, the student and advisor meet to discuss and clarify mutual responsibilities and expectations.

Formal committee meetings are held at least once a year, although typically, they are more frequent (for instance, when a chapter has been completed or when the student and advisor decide that it would benefit the student's progress).

The student also prepares an Annual Dissertation Progress Report. A copy of the signed progress report is submitted to the dissertation advisor and Graduate Group Chair and is documented by the School in the student's academic record.

Annual Self-Assessment

Every May, all graduate students in the program complete a written self-assessment. The questionnaire asks students to summarize their progress to degree and other accomplishments, to reflect on how their interests have changed or solidified over the past year, to describe challenges they have met and/or anticipate, and to outline their plans and goals for the coming semesters.

Annual Feedback Letter

At the end of the academic year, all graduate students receive an individual feedback letter from the Graduate Group Chair that summarizes the student's progress and achievements, identifies areas in which they should work to improve their skills and knowledge, and offers advice for the upcoming year.

11. Dissertation

Academic Rules for PhD Students

Following completion of three years of coursework and all examinations, a student will advance to the dissertation stage. The dissertation constitutes a significant and original contribution to a field or fields of scholarship in ancient world studies. It is undertaken under the supervision of (usually) one primary faculty advisor, along with a dissertation committee of at least two other faculty members. Generally, it is expected that the dissertation will be completed by the end of the student's fifth year in the program.

Dissertation committee composition

Students will usually have one primary faculty advisor for the dissertation, who is a standing member of the Graduate Group in Ancient History. Typically, the advisor will also serve as Chair of the student's dissertation committee, which will include two or more members, who are generally also faculty members of the Group. In some circumstances, the dissertation chair and Graduate Group Chair, in conjunction with the student, may decide to appoint a member of the dissertation committee from outside the Graduate Group.

Dissertation Prospectus -- Requirements and Process

In the spring of the third year in the program, students typically participate in a Prospectus Workshop as one of their courses in that semester. A full dissertation proposal outlining the topic, structure, goals, and methodology of the dissertation, along with a research bibliography, must be submitted to the Graduate Group Chair for distribution to the examiners at least two weeks before the Oral Exam. The Prospectus will then be discussed during the Oral Candidacy Exam.

If the submitted Prospectus is deemed unsatisfactory by the Examination Committee, the examiners will decide whether the student should revise the Prospectus within a specified time frame and re-submit it for further discussion, or be dismissed from the program.

Dissertation Defense and Deposit

Candidates for the PhD degree are required to defend the dissertation formally. The dissertation defense will be scheduled only when the chair of the dissertation committee, in consultation with the other committee members, has confirmed that the dissertation is close to completion.

"Close to completion" is defined as:

1. All individual chapters, including the introduction and conclusion, have been read and commented upon by all committee members; all suggested revisions to each chapter have been acted upon to the satisfaction of all committee members.
2. The final order of chapters has been determined and all chapters, including introduction and conclusion, have been revised accordingly.
3. A complete bibliography of works cited has been compiled.

A draft of the whole dissertation incorporating all suggested revisions must be submitted to the committee at least two weeks before the scheduled defense.

Defense

The defense consists of two steps, typically to be scheduled in the same week:

1. **Dissertation Review:** The Chair of the Graduate Group, the dissertation advisor, and the other members of the committee confer about the dissertation and decide if further revisions are going to be requested. They then meet with the student to discuss the project as a whole and outline any remaining requirements for the completion and deposit of the dissertation. The discussion also includes consideration of the student's career plans and the next steps on the project and beyond.
2. **Public Defense:** The student will give a public oral presentation of the dissertation for approximately 40-45 minutes, followed by an open-floor question period. The presentation may focus on a selected portion of the dissertation but must include an account of the whole. The public defense is chaired by someone NOT on the dissertation committee, such as the Chair of the Graduate Group or any other member of the standing faculty. Immediately following the defense, the committee will decide whether the dissertation has been satisfactorily defended.

Students who finish their dissertations in the summer months may have to defer their defense until the fall semester.

Deposit

After the successful defense, the student must revise the dissertation as recommended by the committee. In all cases, the finalized dissertation must be read and approved by the candidate's dissertation advisor and the other members of the dissertation committee before the dissertation is deposited formally. The finalized dissertation must follow the format prescribed in the [Dissertation Formatting Guide](#). All dissertations must be submitted electronically. Candidates are encouraged to familiarize themselves early on with the guidelines and requirements published by the [Office of the Provost](#) and should make an appointment for depositing the dissertation well in advance.

Time Limits

The dissertation advisor and the Chair of the Graduate Group will regularly assess the state of the student's progress towards completion of the dissertation. Students who have not completed the dissertation within five years of advancing to Candidacy are required to submit a revised dissertation Prospectus and to repeat that portion of the Preliminary Examination that involves defending the Prospectus before a committee of at least three examiners. The revised Prospectus must include an account of the current state of scholarship on the topic and an up-to-date bibliography.

The University's maximum time limit for completion of a PhD program is ten years after matriculation. Graduate students who have been dropped after ten years may petition the Graduate Group to return as a student for a maximum of one year in order to achieve recertification and defend the dissertation.

12. Sample Plan of Study

The study of Ancient History covers an exceptionally broad intellectual, methodological, and evidentiary field. The 20 units of a student's career through coursework are typically distributed in the following way, with courses and teaching integrated in the second and third years:

Year One

8 courses (4/semester)

Year Two

6 courses (3/semester)

2 courses taught/TAed
(1/semester)

Year Three

6 courses (3/semester)

2 courses taught/TAed
(1/semester)

First year students will also audit the undergraduate introductory survey courses in the ancient societies relevant to their research and pedagogical interests, and undertake a course of readings that will be developed in collaboration with the instructor of the relevant course. In subsequent years, course choices are made in consultation with the Graduate Group Chair. However, methodology, historiographical problems, and direct, unmediated engagement with primary texts remain the foundation of a student's course of study. We believe that, together, these courses provide an essential foundation for the practice of Ancient History, both as a scholar and as a pedagogue.

No two students will find themselves pursuing exactly the same course itineraries. Nevertheless, there are some anchors around which those itineraries can be arranged. All course choices are made in consultation with the Graduate Group Chair. In addition to courses taught by faculty of the Ancient History Graduate Group, students regularly take graduate courses in other fields connected to the Ancient Mediterranean and Near East (e.g., in Ancient Greek, Latin, Classical Studies, Middle Eastern Languages and Cultures, and Art and Archaeology of the Mediterranean World). We also strongly encourage students to explore courses in other fields and other disciplines, which will extend and enhance their capacity to ask scholarly questions about the ancient world, such as Anthropology, History of Art, Religious Studies, History, Environmental Studies, Comparative Literature, Philosophy, or Political Science.

In addition to their courses, all graduate students in Ancient History are also expected to attend the colloquium of the Department of Classical Studies.

e. Stipends, Tuition, and Finances

Admission to the Graduate Group in Ancient History comes with a five-year fellowship, usually the GSAS Benjamin Franklin Fellowship. This fellowship covers full tuition and healthcare and pays a generous stipend. Students in the Graduate Group have also been regularly successful in securing funding for a sixth year in the program to complete their dissertation, as well as internal or external funding for study abroad.

f. Residency Requirements

During the Academic Year, students in coursework are characteristically required to reside in or close to Philadelphia. Characteristically, dissertating students will also remain in or close to Philadelphia, so that they can consult regularly with their advisor and committee, participate in dissertation workshops with their peers, and continue to attend colloquia and talks on a regular basis. In these ways, students can obtain regular feedback on their progress and, equally important, remain part of the intellectual community around them. If a student wishes to move outside of the region, they are required to discuss these plans with their dissertation advisor and the Graduate Group Chair.

g. Leaves of Absence

[PhD Student Leave of Absence Policy](#)

h. Financial Support for Research Travel and Conferences

Activities such as attending conferences and workshops, conducting research in archives, and delivering papers at conferences play an important role in the professional and intellectual development of graduate students. Accordingly, the Graduate Group strongly encourages students to explore this avenue for professional development, as part of full preparation for a career that includes teaching and publication of research. The following procedures have been devised to ensure the fairest distribution of funds.

Students wishing to apply for a financial subvention should

1. discuss the suitability of attending a conference with the Graduate Chair and with their advisor or the chair of their dissertation committee.
2. show evidence that they have applied to SASgov, GAPSA, and any other appropriate funding source. (Some conferences offer subventions for graduate students).
3. supply the following details to their Graduate Chair and advisor:
 - Title and theme of the conference
 - Location and date of the conference
 - Title and abstract of the proposed paper
 - Brief explanation of the paper's relevance for the student's dissertation and research
 - Budget including all travel and accommodation costs.

Other Sources of Funding for Summer Projects, Travel, and Conferences at Penn

[Research Student Travel Grant](#)

[Retroactive Research Student Travel Grant](#)

[Penn Museum Field Funds](#)

[President Gutmann Leadership Award](#)

[GAPSA – Provost Fellowship for Interdisciplinary Innovation](#)

[SAS Dean's Travel Subvention](#)

[SASGov Small Grants](#)

[SASGov Large Grants](#)

[Salvatori Research Award](#) (Center for Italian Studies)

[Phyllis Rackin Graduate Award](#) (for research on women, gender, and/or sexuality in the humanities)

Graduate students seeking funding for summer projects, travel, and conferences are also encouraged to talk to their advisor and the Graduate Group Chair about potential sources for funding from outside the university.

i. Important Contacts

Graduate Group Chair

Julia Wilker
Associate Professor of Classical Studies
201 Cohen Hall
249 South 36th Street
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6304
wilker@sas.upenn.edu

Graduate Coordinator

Katelyn Stoler
236 Cohen Hall, 249 South 36th Street
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6304
(215) 573-0250
kastoler@upenn.edu

Graduate Dean

Beth S. Wenger
Associate Dean for Graduate Studies
Moritz and Josephine Berg Professor of History
Graduate Division
School of Arts and Sciences
University of Pennsylvania
3401 Walnut Street, Suite 322A
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6228
grad-dean@sas.upenn.edu

II. The M.A. in Ancient History

a. Program Overview

The Graduate Group does not offer a stand-alone M.A. degree. However, students in the PhD program may apply to receive a Research Master's degree in Ancient History after two years of study if certain requirements are met.

The M.A. is not awarded automatically, but eligible students are encouraged to apply for the degree. Students who wish to begin the process should contact the Graduate Group Chair and the graduate coordinator and submit an application for the M.A. [here](#).

b. Academic Calendar

Penn's [University Academic Calendar](#)

c. Requirements for the M.A. Degree

The Graduate Group's requirements for an M.A. degree include satisfactory performance in two years' worth of coursework, satisfactory performance on the Qualification Examination, and submission of a research paper.

III. Graduation

The Provost's Graduate Degrees Office oversees the University graduation process for all PhD and Research Master's degrees at the University. See the [website](#) for information on applying for graduation, deadlines, dissertation/thesis formatting, dissertation/thesis deposit, and more.

Information about school graduation ceremonies and University commencement is shared with graduating students each year, and can be found at <https://commencement.upenn.edu/>.

IV. University-Wide Policies

[Academic Rules for PhD Programs](#)

[Academic Rules for Research Master's Programs](#)

[PhD Student Leave of Absence Policy](#)

[Family Friendly Policies for PhD Students](#)

[Code of Academic Integrity](#)

[Code of Student Conduct](#)

[Guidelines for Addressing Academic Issues of Students with Disabilities](#)

[Guidelines for Student Protection in Sponsored Research Projects](#)

[Fairness of Authorship Credit in Collaborative Faculty-Student Publications for PhD, AM, and MS Students](#)

[Policy on Secular and Religious Holidays](#)

[Alcohol and Other Drug Policy](#)

[Sexual Misconduct Policy, Resource Offices and Complaint Procedures](#)

[Evaluation and Certification of the English Fluency of Undergraduate Instructional Personnel](#)

[All other policies for Penn students](#)

V. Graduate Student Resources

[Graduate Student Center](#)

[New Student Resources](#)

[Resources for PhD Students](#)

[Resources for Students with Children](#)

[Academic Policies and Support](#)

[Community-Building and Belonging](#)

[Engagement & Wellness](#)

[Funding & Finances](#)

[Safety and Campus Conduct](#)

Student Help and Wellness

[Student Health and Counseling](#) (formerly SHS and CAPS) is the primary care and psychological care division of [Wellness at Penn](#). Penn's state-of-the-art medical and counseling centers are designed to provide high-

quality, compassionate care for undergraduate, graduate, and professional students during their academic journey.

HELP LINE: One call to the HELP LINE can assist students in finding personal and mental health support, 215-898-HELP.

[Division of Public Safety \(DPS\)](#) delivers a comprehensive and integrated safety and security program in partnership with the Penn and University City community they serve.

Students should be aware of [Sexual Misconduct Policy, Resource Offices and Complaint Procedures](#). [Penn Violence Prevention](#) provides support and information about options for reporting sexual misconduct.

[Penn's Family Resource Center](#) provides information, programs, and resources for students and post-docs with children. The Family Center provides a space for student parents to connect and develop supportive networks and offers a welcoming and family-friendly environment for Penn students, post-docs, caregivers, and children.

Office of Student Disabilities Services

The [Weingarten Center](#) provides services for students who self-identify with a disability in order to ensure equal access to all University programs, activities, and services. The process begins when a student requests an accommodation, provides documentation of their condition, and meets with a Disability Specialist. Students who receive accommodations work with the Disability Services staff to coordinate their academic accommodations as well as accessible housing, dining, communication, and technology. Through ongoing collaboration with the Weingarten Center, students learn to identify and utilize individualized accommodations and strategies that support their full participation in university life.

VI. Additional Resources for Graduate Students in Ancient History

Libraries

[Penn Libraries](#)

[Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books, and Manuscripts](#)

[Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies](#)

[Penn's Classical Studies Resource Guide](#)

[Penn's Resource Guide: Latin and Greek Texts of the Early Christian Church](#)

Centers and Spaces

[Center for Ancient Studies](#)

[Penn Museum for Archaeology and Anthropology](#)

[Resources and Training for Graduate Students at the Penn Museum](#)

[Center for the Analysis of Archaeological Materials \(CAAM\)](#)

[Penn Cultural Heritage Center](#)

[Middle East Center](#)

[Price Lab for Digital Humanities](#)

[Wolf Humanities Center](#)

[Philadelphia Seminar on Christian Origins \(PSCO\)](#)

[Program in Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies](#)
[Historic Preservation Program](#) (Weitzman School of Design)
[Penn Language Center](#)

Additional Resources for Graduate Students

[Graduate Resource Guide](#)
[Graduate Student Education and Initiatives](#)
[Programs and Services for Graduate Students at the Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Innovation \(CETLI\)](#)
[Graduate and Professional Student Assembly \(GAPSA\)](#)
[Graduate Student Government of the School of Arts and Sciences \(SASGov\)](#)
[Career Services at Penn for PhD Students and Postdocs](#)
[SAS Office of Academic Excellence and Engagement](#)
[Weingarten Center](#)