

Dear Dr. Lee,

Below is a description of the ways that the MA Program in History will fulfill the Diversity and Inclusion Requirements from the Graduate School per The Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies Resolution 2017-18A.

The scholarly discipline of history has long been engaged in ethical and methodological practices regarding diversity and inclusion. Indeed, the American Historical Association's Standards of Professional Conduct statement declares the primary shared value of historians to be

striv[ing] constantly to improve our collective and diverse understanding of the past through a complex process of critical dialogue—with each other, with the wider public, and with the historical record—in which we explore former lives and diverse worlds in search of answers to the most compelling questions of our own time and place. Incorporating multiple schools of history and hitherto underrepresented points of view is critical to ensuring the integrity of our scholarship and historical practice.¹

As such, much of what follows reflects goals and practices that are already deeply embedded in the History MA program. We have, however, used this directive as an opportunity to revisit and refine various aspects of how our MA program engages students in the presentation and incorporation of diversity and inclusion practices throughout the curriculum.

The Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies Resolution 2017-18A requires students to engage with the following issues:

1. The Virginia Tech Principles of Community as they apply to the valuing of human diversity and inclusion.
2. The impact that personal actions and words have on self, others, and the communities— university, national, and global—in which we live; issues of privilege, bias, power, prejudice, and discrimination; concepts of multiple personal, social, and cultural identities.
3. Available avenues of redress and our shared responsibilities as active by-standers.
4. The process of individual introspection required both to understand one's own forms of implicit or unconscious bias and to create inclusive environments.

Graduates of the History MA Program will meet these objectives in the following ways:

1. New graduate student orientation will include discussion of the Principles of Community, how they apply to valuing of diversity and inclusion, and how they are represented in the policies and procedures of the History MA program. Orientation will also include discussion of the American Historical Association's Standards of Professional Conduct and how they relate to diversity and inclusion within the historical profession.

¹ <https://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/statements-standards-and-guidelines-of-the-discipline/statement-on-standards-of-professional-conduct#SharedValues>

2. New students will complete the GRAD 5004 GTA workshop, the diversity.edu training, and disrupting academic bullying module.
3. The history graduate program's policies and guidelines document will be updated with more explicit language regarding the Principles of Community. The current guidelines contain the following statement of non-discrimination:

“The Department of History graduate program does not discriminate against employees, students, or applicants on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, veteran status, national origin, religion, or political affiliation.

The University is subject to titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Vietnam Era Veteran Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, Federal Executive Order 112146, Governor Allen's State Executive Order Number Two, and all other rules and regulations that are applicable. Anyone having questions concerning any of those regulations should contact the Office for Equity and Accessibility (<http://oea.vt.edu/>). “

This will be updated to include and reaffirm the Virginia Tech Principles of Community:

“The History graduate program expectations of civility, inclusion, and respect are embedded in, and reaffirmed by, Virginia Tech's Principles of Community: Virginia Tech is a public land-grant university, committed to teaching and learning, research, and outreach to the Commonwealth of Virginia, the nation, and the world community. Learning from the experiences that shape Virginia Tech as an institution, we acknowledge those aspects of our legacy that reflected bias and exclusion. Therefore, we adopt and practice the following principles as fundamental to our on-going efforts to increase access and inclusion and to create a community that nurtures learning and growth for all of its members:

- We *affirm* the inherent dignity and value of every person and strive to maintain a climate for work and learning based on mutual respect and understanding.
- We *affirm* the right of each person to express thoughts and opinions freely. We encourage open expression within a climate of civility, sensitivity, and mutual respect.
- We affirm the value of human diversity because it enriches our lives and the University. We acknowledge and respect our differences while affirming our common humanity.
- We *reject* all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including those based on age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, and veteran status. We take individual and collective responsibility for helping to eliminate bias and discrimination and for increasing our own understanding of these issues through education, training, and interaction with others.

- We *pledge* our collective commitment to these principles in the spirit of the VirginiaTech motto of Ut Prosim (That I May Serve)."

4. The history graduate program's policies and guidelines document will be updated with regard to available avenues of redress and our shared responsibilities as active bystanders. The current guidelines contain the following language:

"Students with questions or concerns about any of the policies covered in this statement have several avenues of redress. Many procedural issues can be clarified by the Administrative Assistant/Coordinator for the Graduate Programs. Concerns about the thesis process should be taken up first with the student's thesis adviser. Students with issues related to GA assignments should first discuss the question or problem with the faculty member with whom the student is working.

If the problem cannot be resolved or the policy clarified at this level, students should follow up their concerns with the Director of Graduate Studies. If the Director of Graduate Studies is unable to resolve the problem or satisfactorily clarify the policy, students may also consult the [Ombudsperson \(https://gradauteombudsman.vt.edu\)](https://gradauteombudsman.vt.edu) at the Graduate School."

This will be amended to include language regarding violations of the Principles of Community along the following lines:

"Complaints about professional misconduct (integrity and civility) are concerns of both the persons victimized and the Department of History Students who have suffered or witnessed another student's violation of the VT Principles of Community should, in a timely fashion, initiate a complaint with departmental authorities. These include the student's graduate advisor or the Director of Graduate Studies.

For concerns about faculty conduct, the student can contact the Chair of the Department of History, or, if necessary, the Graduate School Dean.

All complaints and grievances will remain confidential except those pertaining to sexual harassment/assault. Mention of sexual harassment/assault must result in a phone call to the Human Resources Title IX coordinators. Reports of sexual harassment/assault result in HR officer outreach to alleged victims, who then choose whether to authorize continued investigation.

Students may also opt to reach out to HR Resource Title IX coordinators themselves.

Students wishing to initiate confidential discussions about sexual harassment/assault may wish to contact the Women's Center Counseling Staff or Cook Counseling.

Students concerned about another student's disruptive behavior, threats, incivility, or harassment may also report that behavior to the Student Conduct division of the Dean of Students Office.

Students concerned about breaches to academic integrity can report those concerns to the Graduate Honor System.

5. All students are required to take HIST 5104 - Historical Methods. This course introduces students to the processes of historical knowledge production and how they have

changed over time. It fundamentally addresses questions of power, inequality, representation, identity, and perspective in the content and conduct of the discipline.

All students are also required to take at least one graduate level seminar whose content falls outside of the student's primary area of geographical interest. So, for example, a student whose research interests lie in US history must include at least one non-US history course in their plan of study. This guarantees that students will be exposed to diverse experiences and perspectives during their time in the program.

In addition, we will institute a new requirement that students complete at least one elective course from the following list:

HIST 5114 - U.S. to 1877

American history, from European discovery through Reconstruction. Emphasis on major themes and developments in the emergence of the United States: exploration and settlement; encounters among Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans; achievement of political independence; territorial expansion and political conflict; immigration, industrialization, and urbanization; Civil War, emancipation, and Reconstruction.

HIST 5124 - U.S. Since 1877

Introduction to main themes in U.S. history beginning with post-Civil War industrialization. An intensive readings course emphasizing the social, cultural, political, economic and military changes in the century after Reconstruction.

HIST 5194 - Topics in African American History

Variable topics readings course focusing on the particular themes, key scholarly works, and historiographical debates in African American history as well as the multiple theoretical frameworks and historical method used in writing histories of the Black experience. May be repeated once with different content for a maximum of 6 credits. Pre: Graduate standing.

HIST 5214 (ASPT 5214) - Topics in Global History

A variable content course exploring historiographical approaches to the study of global history from the classical age to the present. Special emphasis on chronological frameworks, histories and theories of globalization, and implications of new scholarship in global history for research and teaching. May be taken with different content for a total of 6 credit hours. Graduate standing required

HIST 5224 - Readings in African History

Variable topics readings course focusing on historiographical trends on particular themes in African history. May be taken with different content for a total of 6 credit hours. Pre: Graduate standing.

HIST 5414 (ASPT 5414) - Topics In Cultural History and Theory

A variable content course exploring the intersection of cultural theory and the discipline of history. Introduces important theoretical contributions to the study of culture and

examines how historians have used these constructs to interpret the past. May be taken with different content for a total of 6 credit hours. Graduate standing required.

HIST 5534 - Imperialism, Nationalism, and Decolonization

Imperialism, nationalism and their legacies in the twentieth century. Concentration on imperialism and nationalism as categories of historical analysis. Critical examination of the imperial and colonial experiences and of the expansion and transformation of the nation-state system as a consequence of decolonization and global restructuring.

HIST 5934 - Gender in U.S. History

Theoretical approaches to understanding the role of gender in political, economic and social life and in popular culture. Survey of major themes and developments since the seventeenth century. Concentration on the development of biological and sociological explanations of gender differences and similarities, and on the evolution of gendered politics and work and family relationships. Emphasis given to class, race, ethnic differences and differences in sexual orientation.

HIST 5424 - Public History

Introduction to the theoretical, interpretive, controversial, and practical issues facing public historians. Focus on interpretations and specific issues surrounding the presentation of history in museum exhibits, documentary films, photographic collections, community history projects, the Internet, and a variety of other public venues.

Prerequisite: Graduate Standing required

Students pursuing the dual degree with the School of Education may substitute the following course to meet this requirement:

EDCI 5104 - Schooling in American Society

A study of the people and forces that impact on American education, analyzing the social setting of schooling and the relationships among school, curriculum, clients, personnel, and culture.

Through these coursework requirements, students will be exposed to issues of privilege, bias, power, prejudice, and discrimination; concepts of multiple personal, social, and cultural identities as well as process of individual introspection required both to understand one's own forms of implicit or unconscious bias and to create inclusive environments.

Sincerely,



Matthew M. Heaton
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