

Senior Assessment: History Oral Exam [updated 2024]

Exam format

The History Oral Exam is thirty minutes long and consists of three main components: questions about three scholarly texts of your choice, questions about your research paper, and questions about selected historians and historiographical terms and areas. Additionally, the examining committee may ask you to reflect on your professional skills and accomplishments and on the intersection of scholarship and faith.

History & Political Studies faculty serve as the examiners for the oral exam.

Preparation

One week prior to the beginning of Oral Exam Week, students must submit the following as one PDF document to Chair of the History & Political Studies Department

- A list of three monographs and/or edited volumes from your History coursework - one from the Americas field; one from a non-Americas field; and one of your choice
- A historical research paper written for a WRT course in the History major (NOT Research Methods)
- A list of five major historians from your Historiography course and/or History Seminar (these cannot overlap with the three monographs)
- An up-to-date CV following the format of [the sample CV on the departmental website](#)

Students are advised to consult with faculty as they compile the items above.

Passing the exam

Students cannot fail any one area of this rubric and still pass the exam.

Students will sign up for their exam times during the first week of the fall semester the year they are graduating. They will take the exam the 3rd week of the school year.

Failing the exam means that it will need to be rescheduled by midterm break. And the student cannot get more than a C on the exam if it has to be re-taken or any part of it is a failure.

Rubric

I. Monographs and/or edited volumes

- Submits three monographs and/or edited volumes from History coursework
- Demonstrates ability to identify and critically assess authors' arguments, methodologies, sources, and historiographical contributions
- Identifies themes across and makes comparisons between selected texts, as well as with primary and other secondary sources from History coursework
- Contextualizes readings within broader historical information from History coursework

_____ / 30 points

II. Research paper

- Submits research paper from WRT class in the major
- Communicates argument with clarity and concision

- Responds knowledgeably to questions raised by examiners about selection of research topic, methodology, evidence (sources), and historiographical interventions
- Explains how skills obtained through the research and writing process might apply to research on different subjects

_____ / 20 points

III. Historians and historical methodologies

- Submits list of five major historians from Historiography course and/or History Seminar
- Describes and assesses scholarly significance of selected historians, their major works, and their historical methodologies
- Discusses application of ideas and skills from Historiography course and History Seminar to their course of study and professional goals

_____ / 30 points

IV. Communication and Reflection

- Communicates ideas with clarity and precision
- Makes meaningful connections between the historical discipline and their religious beliefs and practices, calling, and/or other interests, including the evolution of the latter during their course of study at Southern

_____ / 10 points

V. Resume/CV

- Submits a complete CV representing all the categories listed on the sample CV
- Has clear record of departmental, work, international and volunteer experiences
- Explains how languages, projects, software, communication, and other skills developed through coursework and other experiences at Southern contribute to their professionalization

_____ / 10 points

_____ / **100 points total**

Grading scale:

90-100 points

80-89 points

70-79 points

0-69 points

A

B

C

F

Examiner comments: