

HISTORY OF HEALTH SCIENCES (PHD)

Visit program website. (<https://graduate.ucsf.edu/history/>)

Degree Offered: PhD

Program Leadership:

Dorothy Porter, PhD, Program Director

Admissions Inquiries:

Bonita Dyess, Program Manager

We are not accepting applications for the History of Health Sciences PhD program and currently have no projection as to when we will open admissions again.

Program Description

The History of Health Sciences (HHS) program trains students to examine the history of health sciences – medicine, nursing, pharmacy, public health, alternative healing, and biomedical research – from a variety of critical approaches. With an emphasis on modern (late 19th to 21st century) contexts, the program's faculty and students investigate how medicine, health, and illness are historically perceived, and how these perceptions reflect and shape culture and society.

The PhD program is a five-year degree that is composed of two years of coursework and a three-year dissertation project. Students learn to make use of all aspects of historical research: identifying appropriate sources, evaluating and interpreting the content of published and unpublished documents, contextualizing and analyzing those documents within the broader framework of contemporary knowledge, society, and culture, and writing a thesis that provides both historical narrative and interpretive analysis of the dissertation topic.

Students are admitted to the History of Health Sciences program biennially, in odd-numbered years. This keeps the student-to-faculty ratio very low, enabling students to work closely with their faculty mentors.

Note that the Graduate Division also offers a master's degree program (<https://catalog.ucsf.edu/programs/history-health-sciences-ma/>) in HHS.

Faculty

There are four core faculty and three faculty members with other academic appointments in the HHS program; and 27 other affiliated faculty.

Research Focus Areas

- Public health
- Healthcare systems
- Pharmaceuticals
- Race
- Gender
- Biomedicine

The History of Health Sciences program office at UCSF is located at the Mission Bay campus. Visit the program website (<https://graduate.ucsf.edu/history/>) for more information.

The History of Health Sciences program is offered by the UCSF Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs. The program is administered by the UCSF School of Medicine (SOM), and courses are delivered by faculty members in SOM.

Admission Requirements

B.A in History or a related field or a B.S. in the sciences

Learning Outcomes

- Articulate the dynamic interrelationship between medicine and society through history.
- Demonstrate how to formulate an original argument both in an extended written thesis and in oral form drawing on basic critical skills and the historical record itself.
- Promote a historically informed understanding of the health sciences.

Additional Information

Program Core Faculty

- Find a program faculty list (<https://humsci.ucsf.edu/faculty/>) on the program website.

Career Outcomes

- Find career outcomes and other data on PhD programs (<https://graduate.ucsf.edu/program-statistics/#career>) on the Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs website.

Degree Requirements

- Minimum GPA of 3.0
- All core courses and required activities taken and passed
- Six quarters in residence including a minimum of three registered quarters after advancement to candidacy
- Pass qualifying examination
- Completion and submission of the dissertation
- For additional details, please see: graduate.ucsf.edu/phd-degree (<https://graduate.ucsf.edu/phd-degree/>)

Core Courses

Course	Title	Units
Year 1		
HIST HL SC 200A	Introduction to the History of Health Sciences ¹	2-4
HIST HL SC 200B	Introduction to History of Health Sciences	3
HIST HL SC 204A	Research Methods in the History of Health Sciences	3
Units		8-10
Year 2		
HIST HL SC 204B	Research Methods in the History of Health Sciences	1
HIST HL SC 205	The Science of A Historical Archive	4
HIST HL SC 250	The Anatomy of an Archive	4-5
Units		9-10
Year 3 and Beyond		
Including core courses and possible electives		
HIST HL SC 201A	Disease and the Social Order from Black Death to Covid	2-4
HIST HL SC 215	Crafting the Dissertation Prospectus	2

HIST HL SC 230	Qualifying Exam Research	2
HIST HL SC 297	Special Study	1-4
HIST HL SC 299	Dissertation	0
Units		7-12
Total Units		24-32

Non-course Core Requirements

Dissertation presentation