The Senior Exercise in the History Department builds from your experience as a history major. We expect your final research paper and oral exam to build on the courses you have taken, research you have done, skills you developed in Practice and Theory (HIST 387), in some cases, off campus study, and finally, work completed in the Senior Seminar (HIST 490). For these reasons your senior exercise should reflect a topic of interest to you, in which you have acquired sufficient background, demonstrated academic expertise, and completed necessary coursework. The topic cannot be something completely new to you.

The following steps will assure the integration and success of your senior project.

I. Before Senior Year: All History Majors will have competed HIST 387, The Practice and Theory of History, and so will have written at least one extended research paper. Please refer to that paper and material you learned in Practice and Theory as you begin your senior exercise. You should also now own a copy of Kate Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (published by the University of Chicago Press) either the seventh or eighth editions will do. Be sure you are currently taking or have already taken sufficient courses in the area of study necessary for the project you are considering. Over the summer before the senior seminar, you will receive a letter from the Chair with suggestions for formulating some feasible topics to bring with you to the first meeting of HIST 490.

II. Senior Seminar: The Senior Seminar is the capstone experience of the History Major. In it, you begin writing the research paper that will form the basis for your Senior Thesis (Senior Exercise). Your senior seminar instructor will guide you through the process of narrowing your topic, finding appropriate sources, and producing several drafts. Revision is integral to the process of writing. The research proposal (topic or question, argument, and sources) that you submit for your senior seminar will be vetted by the department.

III. Early in the fall, you will have the opportunity to talk about your proposed topic with members of the department. You will be asked to state the argument you believe you are going to pursue and answer questions such as: In your research project, what questions will you ask? What sources will you consult? What background do you have that will enable you to carry out this project? These meetings will also give you the opportunity to get advice from the department and find out who you will need to consult in the course of writing your senior exercise. Experience tells us consultation is critical to the successful completion of the senior exercise.

IV. In December upon completing the senior seminar, you will have a final paper on the basis of which you will revise the thesis and substantially rewrite the project for the senior exercise due on February 24, 2017. (More on that below.)

V. The Annual Senior Research Conference will be held on Sunday, January 22, 2017 from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm, with a break for a catered dinner. Mark your calendars now. All seniors will present their research to one another and to members of the Kenyon community who attend. You will be assigned to one of the panels, organized according to commonalities among paper topics. Each panel will be chaired by a faculty member and consist of three or four papers. Presenters have about 10 minutes to speak. Your presentation should state the argument of your senior paper and provide some key highlights. The more specific your presentation the better it is. After the presentations, there will be time for audience questions.

You may invite friends to attend and you will surely want to hear some of the other papers from members of your seminar, especially those on topics that interest you. This is always an intellectually enjoyable time. In addition, the experience you gain from presenting your work and fielding questions from the audience are valuable in helping you to revise your paper and prepare for the oral exams in March (see below).

VI. Senior Exercise Portfolio is due February 24, 2017. Submit in digital form and two print copies; all copies of the portfolio must contain the following FOUR elements:

A. Your original senior seminar research essay, marked up with the notes/comments from the seminar instructor (the duplicate should be a copy of the original marked-up essay);

B. a revised and expanded senior research project of up to 35 pages, bound for print copies;
Following the senior research seminar, and in consultation with the student’s faculty advisor and faculty members knowledgeable in the subject matter of the essay, students will significantly expand their exploration of the subject they are studying. It is not enough simply to edit the senior seminar project. The revised and expanded research paper must involve significant reconceptualization, additional research (and thus an expanded bibliography), and generally either a profound deepening of the existing theme(s), or taking one or more aspects of the project in a different direction. It should lengthen the seminar paper by approximately 10 pages.

C. a narrative statement of at least one page that explains how and why you arrived at the topic you choose to research, and how you revised and expanded the thesis for submission in February;

D. History Requirement Checklist from Simplicity (print out final version of the online form).

Preparing your portfolio:

- Consult: At any stage of your work, feel free to consult with members of the history faculty about the Senior Exercise. Consultation is the best way to ensure that you pass and produce your best work. You will be advised about which faculty are most appropriate to consult. They expect to hear from you but it is your responsibility to make that contact.
- Review: The project should meet high analytical, stylistic and technical standards. An acceptable Senior Exercise must not only be well researched and thoughtfully designed, but also well written, proofread, and accompanied by proper notes and bibliography. For proper forms, please consult Kate Turabian’s, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations.
- Bind your revised paper. The two print copies of the rewritten research paper should be bound.

Submitting your portfolio:

- Submit one electronic copy and two print copies, each copy containing original essay, revised essay (bound for the print copies), narrative statement, and checklist form. Assemble print copies with a large binder clip. Folders or notebooks are not necessary. In addition, keep a third print copy for yourself, since you may wish to review your work before the oral interview.
- Do not forget to include your checklist. Be sure it is accurate and think about how it reflects your field and experience within the major. This may be part of the discussion at the Oral Interview.

VII. Oral interview

A. In the next week after you submit your senior exercise portfolio, you will come by Seitz House and sign up for an oral interview with the team of two faculty members who have been assigned to read your Portfolio.
B. The Oral Interview takes about forty-five minutes and will focus first on the research project and secondly on its relationship to prominent themes in your field of concentration. The oral interview counts in the evaluation of the senior exercise.
C. Plan to arrive at your oral interview five minutes before its scheduled time, dressed neatly, with a copy of your portfolio with you.

VIII. Evaluation

A. Two members of the history department faculty will read and evaluate each portfolio and conduct an oral interview.
B. Readers will look for demonstrable competence: intelligent formulation of subject, thorough research, original and thoughtful development of interpretation, well supported arguments, fair consideration of alternative views, coherence, and imagination. See attached sheet for criteria.
C. Satisfactory Senior Exercises will be graded “Pass,” “High Pass,” or “Distinction.” Assessments of Distinction or unsatisfactory performance must be reviewed and confirmed by a majority vote of the department faculty before a grade is assigned. Unsatisfactory Senior Exercises will be graded “No Pass.” These must be rewritten. Students will be notified by the team who evaluated the exercise if they have received a “No Pass,” and given directions and a date for revision.
IX. Dates to Remember
   A. Senior Research Conference, Required Presentation, **January 22, 2017**
   B. You must hand in your portfolio on February 24, 2017 Seitz House Room 10, by 2:00 pm, **without exception**.
   C. Oral Interviews will be conducted after Spring Break beginning March 20, 2017.

X. Composition of Senior Exercise for students writing an Honors Thesis.
   Senior Honors students may rework a draft chapter that they submitted to the Honors seminar in the fall for the new revised and expanded paper as described above. In the statement accompanying the revised chapter, they should also explain how it fits into their thesis as a whole, and how the revisions drew on the suggestions and criticism offered in the seminar.
   
   Otherwise, Senior Honors candidates should follow the instructions contained in this handout.