Instructions for the A.M. Essay

The master’s essay is ordinarily a revised or expanded version of a paper written for a course in the history of science—usually a graduate seminar or an independent study (HISTSCI 301) — taken during the A.M. year. Candidates for the A.M. must submit the A.M. Essay Topic Proposal form, available on the Graduate Program web site by March 1 of the A.M. year. The essay itself must be handed in to the Graduate Program Coordinator by the last day of reading period. It must previously have been read and commented on by the instructor of the relevant seminar or independent study and revised on the basis of those comments. This process should be unproblematic for papers written in fall courses, which will have been returned with comments by the beginning of the spring semester; essays written in spring courses are to be submitted to the instructor by the last day of classes in order to allow for comments and revision by the last day of reading period.¹ (Note: deadlines will be adjusted for November and March degree candidates. Please see graduate program coordinator for more information.)

The essay will be read by a department faculty member who is neither the student’s graduate advisor nor the instructor of the seminar for which it was written. It will be passed based on the following criteria:

- It must present an original argument based on research in primary sources.
- It must be accompanied by a complete bibliography of works cited and references in an appropriate scholarly format (University of Chicago, MLA, APA, etc.), including the format used by Isis.
- It must be 7500-10,500 words in length, exclusive of bibliography.
- It must receive a grade of B+ or higher from the reader.

Note for A.B./A.M. students: The A.M. essay must be on a different topic from the A.B. thesis.

¹ TIMELINE for 2017: (linda please check dates—2016-2017

Wednesday, April 26 (last day of classes): essay submitted to instructor for comment.
Wednesday, May 3: instructor returns essay with comments to student for revision
Friday, May 6 revised essay submitted to Graduate Program Coordinator
Thursday, May 12 : grade on A.M. essay due to Coordinator.
Tuesday, May 13: coordinator submits degree recommendations to FAS Registrar