

Research School for Political History (RSPH) /
Onderzoekschool Politieke Geschiedenis (OPG)
Training program for PhD-students 2021-2022



The Research School for Political History (RSPH) offers a balanced program for PhD students in political history, history of international relations/conflict studies, military history, areas studies, global history and other subdisciplines in history with an emphasis on politics, in year 1, 2 and 3 of their PhD trajectory and for Research Master students who specialize in political history. Participation in all parts of the program is compulsory for all PhD students who are registered with the RSPH, unless it is explicitly stated that a part is optional. Participation/attendance of Research Master students is optional.

Central to the PhD program are the various aspects of conducting PhD research in the broad field of early modern and modern political history, including the history of international relations. The educational program is a program with a clear internal coherence, and can be taken alongside and in addition to the program of the local Graduate Schools.

The Teaching and Examination Regulations articulate the final objectives, teaching and assessment methods and the evaluation of the individual components. A course syllabus will be made available for all courses.

End terms/learning objectives and competences

To PhD-students the RSPH offers training in the following competences, aiming at the specified learning objectives

- 1 **Disciplinarity and Interdisciplinarity:**
Student have an informed and critical awareness of the historical and conceptual underpinnings and contexts of political history as an intellectual tradition and academic discipline, and its of its relationship to other fields of study. They have knowledge and understanding of the foundations and insights of other disciplines relevant to the study of political history.
- 2 **Theories and concepts:**
Students have specialized knowledge and critical understanding of theoretical, conceptual and analytical notions relevant to political history. They have the ability to reflect on the principal theoretical approaches to political history, to evaluate the state of the art of political history, and to recognize and develop innovative research orientations in political history.
- 3 **Methods and techniques:**
Students have focused knowledge and critical understanding of relevant methods and techniques for the study of political history, and the ability to apply proper methods and techniques to research problems. Students have an advanced and critical understanding of sources and data for political historical research and of their associated conceptual frameworks.

- 4 Communication:
Students have an informed and critical awareness of the specific methods used to communicate information about one's field in scholarly / academic and public contexts. They have the ability to use and apply the proper means of communication, suited to the aims of their scholarly and public interventions.
- 5 Professional Development:
Students have an informed and critical awareness of the concrete ways that the political-historical perspective can be developed in professional situations and be of benefit to society.

Program

The program is structured in accordance with the end terms and competences:

- Tutorials in year 1 discuss disciplinarity and Interdisciplinarity, theories and concepts, and methods and techniques on an advanced level
- Workshops in year 2 are devoted to the application of methods and techniques, disciplinarity and Interdisciplinarity, and introduce outreach and science communication
- The seminars in year 3 are devoted to the individual application and assessment of disciplinarity and Interdisciplinarity, theories and concepts, and methods and techniques as well as science communication and professional development.
- In addition, the OPG offers several Masterclasses per year (independently or in collaboration with Departments of History and Research Institutes) that are open to ReMA students and PhD-students of all years.
- In June 2022, the RSPH organizes a larger international conference devoted to the state of the art in political history.

Responsible for content and organisation are the Director of Studies and the Special Committees for the Tutorials, Workshops, Seminars and Master Classes

Year 1: Tutorials

Tutorials are mandatory for 1st year PhD-students, and open for RMA-students. PhD-students receive dispensation if they have done a tutorial in their RMA program.

Course aims

- Disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity
- Theories and concepts
- Methods and techniques

Organization

Tutorials consist of a 3-4 hour meeting, prepared in a limited set of readings, with an open discussion based on the input and research interests of the participants. The Tutorial Committee (consisting of all teachers involved in the tutorials) proposes a specific set-up of the tutorials to the director of studies, and supervises the tutorials

Committee Tutorials

Dr Marijke van Faassen, Huygens ING

Dr Joris Gijsenbergh, Radboud University Nijmegen

Dr Karin van Leeuwen, Maastricht University
Dr Matthijs Lok, University of Amsterdam
Prof.dr Geertje Mak, University of Amsterdam
Prof.dr Wim van Meurs, Radboud University Nijmegen
Prof. dr. Dirk Jan Wolffram, Groningen University
Dr Jeroen van Zanten, University of Amsterdam

Requirements and credits:

One ECTS roughly equals 28 hours (3,5 days).

- Minimum: 1 EC per tutorial. Preparation: reading the literature and writing a preparatory paper of 750 words with main ideas, comments and question; Active participation in the discussion.
- Additional 1 EC per tutorial: Writing an additional paper of 3000 words on the central topic of the tutorial, to be submitted after the meeting.
- Additional 2 EC: a publishable academic article based on three additional papers on 'Crucial concepts...' and/or 'Theories...'; on 'Methods...', and on 'Themes', in which original source material is presented. The RSPH will provide supervision and advise on a suitable publication platform.

Maximum of credits to be earned in Tutorials is 10 EC.

Program tutorials 2021-2022

1. Introductory meeting and opening academic year

Friday 24 September 2021

Meeting of the new first-year PhDs with the members of the Tutorial Committee and the Directors. Presentation by the PhDs of their individual research, presentation of the OPG/RSPH-programme, explanation of the aims, assignments and practical aspects of the Tutorials, followed by the opening of the academic year and an informal get-together.

2. Tutorial Introduction to the Discipline: What is Political History?

Friday 8 October 2021 (Wim van Meurs)

In this tutorial, we will discuss the very general, yet at the same time crucial question 'what is political history?' The discipline of political history has changed quite dramatically in the last couple of decades. From a well-established, yet also rather stuffy history of national political institutions, it has become a vibrant study of the political as it manifests itself at a variety of places and in a multiplicity of forms, and informed by a various disciplines, ranging from law and philosophy, to political science and anthropology. In this tutorial we discuss reflections on the history of 'the political', and invite you to reflect on your use of the term, the way in which your research is a contribution to an interdisciplinary political history, and how you account for processes like politicization and depoliticization.

3. Tutorial Crucial Concepts in Political History

Friday 5 November 2021 (Karin van Leeuwen and/or Matthijs Lok)

In spite of their crucial importance for defining a subject, concepts often receive only little attention in historical research projects. While the lessons on conceptual change learnt from scholars such as

Koselleck and Skinner have resulted in the establishment of an entire subfield of conceptual history, many historians working on politics in practice are easily tempted to leave conceptual reflections entirely to these specialists. Yet, it is hard to imagine research projects in political history that do not in one or another way engage with concepts such as power, violence, rule of law, institutions, identity, colony, democracy, ideology, representation etc. PhDs working on international topics, like the history of international relations, often do work with concepts, often borrowed from the social sciences. In this tutorial, we will briefly introduce you to the various ways in which both historians and social scientists deal with the challenge to define and/or reflect upon their central concepts, and invite you to reflect upon the concepts central in your research project.

4. Tutorial Methods and Techniques in Political History

Friday 14 January 2022 (Joris Gijzenbergh and/or Dirk Jan Wolffram)

This tutorial is dedicated to research methods: the trajectory from historiographical debate through research question to an effective research strategy. In this interactive tutorial, the central questions are: what is the use of historical methodology, what is your methodological approach, how does your topic legitimize your research methods, and what are the major methodological challenges of your research project? In the tutorial, PhD candidates reflect on the abovementioned questions, present their most urgent methodological bottleneck and try to find the best strategy to solve their problems together with other PhD candidates and senior researchers.

5. Tutorial Sources in Political History

Friday 11 February 2022 (Marijke van Faassen and/or Jeroen van Zanten)

The increasing use of digital techniques for researching both analogue and digital texts, archival sources and dataclouds requires a new research methodology in which traditional knowledge is closely interwoven with digital skills. In this tutorial an interdisciplinary team of political historians and information scientists will use case studies from their own research in order to provide insight in this current methodological discussion and to more practically discuss ways to find, criticize, contextualise and finally prepare such complex sources in order to use them for research. To prepare the tutorial, the PhD-students are requested to write a text in which they describe the digital and 'paper' sources they use in their own research and reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of using them. During the tutorial there will be ample time to interactively discuss the problems they experience and to create awareness for alternative sources to work around problems they face.

6. Tutorial Themes in Political History: governmentality and gender

Friday 11 March 2022 (Geertje Mak)

In the final tutorial of the year, we bring together conceptualizations of the political, relevant concepts for the study of politics, methodologies and sources, by focusing on a specific theme in political history. Based on readings and presentations by senior researchers, the participants will practice the integration of these various aspects of research in political history in a coherent research outline. This year's tutorial departs from Foucault's notion of governmentality – the capacity of any administration to direct and transform people governed. Crucial to this notion is that you cannot govern people when you do not know them, but you cannot know them if you don't have any control over them. Power and knowledge (over people) is thus entangled. As James Scott explained in his seminal *Seeing like a State*, reordering the population and the land is a necessary precondition for rule or 'development'. Therefore, categorizations – even in very mundane techniques of

administration - are key to governmentality (see for example Peter Miller and Nikolas Rose *Governing the Present*). For this tutorial, we specifically consider the crucial role of gender and sexuality in colonial categorizations.

Year 2 Workshops

Workshops are mandatory for 2nd year PhD-students, and open for RMA-students. PhD-students may receive dispensation if they have done a workshop in their RMA program.

Aims

- Disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity
- Methods and techniques
- Communication
- Professional Development

The Workshops are an advanced follow-up on the Tutorials. Based on the PhD-projects of the participants, interdisciplinarity and advanced methodology are explored and links with topical issues and practical applications are elaborated. PhD-students learn to present their project in front of a forum of experts and discuss key choices in their research design.

Organization

A workshop is a one-day meeting, focused on practical training and interactive learning, based on the input and research interests of the participants. Preparation consists of practical assignments in relation to the individual research project of the PhD-students.

Specific topics may change, depending on the expertise of the workshop conveners and requests of the PhD-students. Topics for the workshops are proposed to the director of studies and supervised by the Workshop Committee.

Workshops are co-organized by PhD-students, under the supervision of staff members. Workshops require active preparation, involvement and participation.

Committee Workshops

Dr Stefan Couperus, University of Groningen
Prof.dr Beatrice de Graaf, Utrecht University
Dr Liesbeth van de Grift, Utrecht University
Dr Carla Hoetink, Radboud University Nijmegen
Dr Maartje Janse, Leiden University
Dr Harm Kaal, Radboud University Nijmegen
Dr Iva Pesa, University of Groningen
Dr Jan Julia Zurné, Radboud University Nijmegen

Requirements and credits

- 1 EC per workshop: Preparing assignments and presentations; active participation in the discussion.

1. Introductory meeting and opening academic year

Friday 24 September 2021

Meeting of the PhDs in their second year with the members of the Workshop Committee. Explanation of the aims, assignments and practical aspects of the Workshop, followed by the opening of the academic year and an informal get-together.

2. Workshop Advanced Research Methods and techniques

Friday 22 October 2021, Liesbeth van de Grift, Carla Hoetink

This Workshop poses the question: 'What exactly am I doing and how can that be justified?'. Based on a short, advanced paper on the methodology of their own projects, PhD-students explore opportunities, challenges and limitations of their theoretical and methodological choices, and of alternatives presented in class.

3. Workshop Interdisciplinary Approaches

Friday 19 November 2021, Iva Pesa, Christian Wicke

This Workshop looks beyond the limits of the discipline of political history. How do/can other scientific disciplines inspire and inform political history research? Which debates outside the confines of political history are of interest, and to which debates can your PhD-project contribute? We will look at relevant examples of interdisciplinarity in political history research, for example political anthropology and political economy approaches.

4. Workshop Seminars and International Conference

Friday 4 February 2022, Ido de Haan a.o. t.b.c.

This workshop prepares PhDs for the organization of a 3rd year Seminar, for participation in international conferences in general and this year specifically for participation in the OPG/APH-International Conference, end of June. How to formulate a panel- or seminar-proposal, how to organize a seminar, how to present a paper, how to engage in sessions discussions, how to make use of the occasion for networking etc.

5. Workshop Applied History and Current Affairs

Friday 11 March 2022, Beatrice de Graaf, Stefan Couperus, Harm Kaal

This Workshop has a dual goal. First of all, it invites PhD-students to reflect on the links between their own research project, their research methodologies, and current affairs. Students are asked to rethink the relevance and the methodologies of their project from the perspective of current social and political concerns. What is the 'big question' that you are trying to respond to? Second, in interaction with people working in the sphere of policy making, heritage, the press and think tanks students reflect on how they can develop methods of 'applied history', how their research can be considered 'usable history' for others outside academia, and/or how they may present their academic skills and knowledge to the world beyond academia, also with an eye towards their post-PhD-career.

6. Workshop Advanced Thesis Design.

Friday 15 April 2022, Maartje Janse, Jan Julia Zurné

This Workshop focuses on effectively presenting your PhD-project before an audience of senior political history scholars and experts in your field, and responding to comments, feedback and essential critique. The emphasis is on academic debate, Q&A and presentation technique.

Year 3: Seminars

Seminars prepare for, and practise participation in academia, and prepare for a professional career after finishing the thesis. Active participation in, and contribution to the organisation of a seminar is mandatory for 3rd year PhD-students, attendance and participation is open for all PhD-students and RMA-students. PhD-students attend at least 5 seminars in the course of their program.

Aims

- Disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity
- Concepts and theories
- Methods and techniques
- Communication
- Professional Development

Organization

Seminars are one-day (and if required two-days) meetings on professional development or a specific topic. The meetings consist of a variety of activities: keynote lectures, paper presentations, panels, roundtables, poster presentation, etc. Seminars can be organized on site, integrating the potential of the site into the event (e.g. an archive, exhibition). Seminars are proposed to the director of studies and supervised by the Seminar committee. PhD-students are invited to propose a theme, and prospective participants, for a seminar.

Committee Seminars:

Dr Lars Behrisch, Utrecht University

Dr Anne Heyer, Leiden University

Dr Hanneke Hoekstra, University of Groningen

Dr Ronald Kroeze, Free University Amsterdam

Dr Adriejan Van Veen, Radboud University Nijmegen

PhD-candidate

Requirements and credits

- PhD-students attend at least 5 seminars in the course of their program. This participation is not rewarded with credits.
- Organisation: students participate in the organisation of one of the seminars. Active participation in the organisation of a seminar is rewarded with 2 EC (3 EC for a two-day seminar).
- Contribution: students contribute to seminars by presentation of their research. This is rewarded with 1 EC.
- Report: students can write a 500 word report on a seminar, to be published on the website of the OPG. Writing a report is rewarded with 1 EC.
- Presentation of individual research on an international Association of Political History seminar or APH PhD workshop is rewarded with 3 ECTS

1. Introductory meeting and opening academic year

Friday 24 September 2021

Meeting of the PhDs in their third year with the members of the Seminar Committee. Explanation of the aims, assignments and practical aspects of the activities. Followed by the opening of the academic year and an informal get-together.

2. Seminar History at the Intersection of Sports and Politics (optional)

Date 30 September 2021. Coordination dr. Marjolein van Bavel (Antwerp University)

This webinar consists of two sessions: The first session will consider different ways of conducting historical research into sports history, both from more 'top down' as well a more 'bottom up' approaches. Consequently, this session will consider the place of sports history within the broader history discipline and the domain of political history more specifically. Attention will be paid to the types of sources and methodologies that are of interest to the political sports historian as well as the methodological difficulties that one may encounter. Sport being a global phenomenon, the second session will also ask the question to which degree and in which ways sports history may help to make political history more global.

3. Seminar Science Outreach and Communication,

Friday 29 October 2021. Coordination Adriejan Van Veen (RU Nijmegen).

Theme: publishing your PhD, spin-off articles, writing for a non-specialist audience.

4. Seminar Professional Development

Friday 28 January, 2022. Coordination Hanneke Hoekstra (RUG)

Theme: knowledge utilization, CV, participating in research consortia and –networks for grant applications, career opportunities outside academia (also optional for 4th year PhD-students), with participation of OPG-alumni.

5. Seminar Military History (optional)

Spring 2022, Wim Klinkert and Samuël Kruizinga

One-day seminar on current research in military history and the relevance of military historians in public debates on imperial history and war remembrance. The aim of the seminar is threefold: (1) to present current and discuss current research by PhD students in military history; (2) to debate current issues in societal debates surrounding military history; (3) to provide opportunities to connect with and learn from fellow academics from Belgium and the Netherlands.

6. Specific topics.

Fridays, dates to be set with organizing PhDs

Senior scholars in collaboration with PhD-students organize seminars, based on a shared interest in specific topics in political history. Topics may include the theme of specific (NWO-, FWO- or ERC-funded) research projects in which PhD-students participate. Specific topics may be combined in a single conference.

7. International conference RSPH/APH

June 2022

Course Oral History (optional)

Supervisor: Selma Leydesdorff

Dates: 18 and 25 November, 2 and 9 December 2021, 1-5PM in Amsterdam (place TBA)

Credits: 4 ECTS (adjustable within reasonable limits via additional assignments)

Registration: before 15 October (bureau@onderzoekschoolpolitiekegeschiedenis.nl)

This course is optional for ReMa- and PhD-students. Historians and others who interview about the past often talk about memory and how they are informed by memory, while they know memory is a difficult and problematic source for historical knowledge. During this course, we shall concentrate on the use of memory in historical research and look at the kind of knowledge we get when we interview. We will investigate various efforts to create a more systematic and theoretically grounded approach than 'just talking about days long gone' or 'having a chat about the past'. How can we create a research pattern that overcomes the incidental and replace it by an integration of the changing character of spoken narratives about the past? When can we trust a story, why? And if we cannot, why can it still be important to listen. In addition, how do we listen?

Master Classes

The RSPH offers master classes by prominent political historians. We aim to have at least two master classes each year. Master classes are open to RMA and PhD-students, and affiliated members of the OPG; others can attend on invitation only.

Aims

- Disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity
- Concepts and theories
- Methods and techniques

Organization

Master classes consist of a meeting of 2 to 4 hours, in which the expert introduces the topic, and several PhD-students and other scholars present their own research in a short position paper and a presentation. Master classes are proposed to the director of studies and supervised by the Master class committee.

Committee Masterclasses

Dr Martijn van der Burg, Open University

Dr. Joris Oddens, Huygens ING

Dr. Marieke Oprel Radboud University Nijmegen

Prof.dr Mathieu Segers, University of Maastricht

Naomi Woltring M.A., Utrecht University

Requirements and grades:

- Participation in master classes is not obligatory, yet when registered, all participants are expected to come prepared and to have read the literature.

- Participation is rewarded with 1 EC when you have prepared a position paper (1000 words) and a short presentation of your comments or questions on the theme of the master class.

Program

Depends on the availability of Masters. Suggestions for interesting scholars to be invited are welcome; please contact the bureau of the RSPH.

Credits

At the end of the program students will receive a certificate, on which the credits obtained are specified. The amount of credits may vary with the demands of the local Graduate School of the student. In general the RSPH offers a basic certificate of 10 ECTS, a regular certificate of 20 ECTS, and an advanced certificate of 30 ECTS.

Credits may be awarded as follows:

Tutorials:

Maximum of credits to be earned in Tutorials is 10 ECTS

- 1 EC: Preparation: reading the literature and writing a preparatory paper of 750 words with main ideas, comments and question; Active participation in the discussion.
- 1 EC: Writing an additional paper of 3000 words on the central topic of the tutorial, to be submitted after the meeting.
- 2 EC: a publishable academic article based on three additional papers on 'Crucial concepts...' and/or 'Theories...'; on Methods...', and on 'Themes', in which original source material is presented.

Workshops:

Minimum of credits to be earned at the 'regular' or 'advanced' level: 4 ECTS, there is no maximum amount of credits to be earned

- 1 EC: Preparing assignments and presentations for a workshop; active participation in the discussion.
- Max 4 EC for the optional Workshop Oral History

Seminars:

Minimum of credits to be earned at the 'regular' or 'advanced' level: 4 ECTS, there is no maximum amount of credits to be earned

- 2 or 3 EC: Active participation in the organisation of a seminar: 2 EC for a one-day seminar, 3 EC for a two-day seminar.
- 1 EC: presentation of individual research
- 1 EC: writing a 500 word report on a seminar, to be published on the website of the OPG.
- 3 ECTS: Presentation of individual research on an international APH seminar or APH PhD workshop

Master classes:

- 1 EC: writing a position paper (1000 words) and a short presentation of your comments or questions on the theme of the master class

Mission Statement Research School Political History

The objectives of the Research School Political History are:

**Promoting the quality of research and (inter)national cooperation*

**Providing high quality training for PhD candidates and Research Master (RMA) students, the next generation in political history*

**Providing a platform for and representation of political historians in the Netherlands and Flanders*

The Research School Political History is member of the Association for Political History

<https://onderzoekschoolpolitiekegeschiedenis.nl/>

<https://www.associationforpoliticalhistory.org/>

bureau@onderzoekschoolpolitiekegeschiedenis.nl