History

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Academic Programs

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Historians study the past in its variety and complexity. With such an analysis, students of history gain multiple perspectives for the future. Although the lessons to be learned from the past are rarely simple, solutions to present-day problems rest on comprehension of historical forces and events. History deepens our understanding of other peoples and cultures. All courses offered in the History Department seek to examine the issues of race, gender, class, and cultural diversity.

The study of history and its methods prepares students for a wide range of careers while also sensitizing them to the complexity and diversity of the past and present. History is an excellent foundation for a broadly based education in the liberal arts.

Undergraduate Programs

BA History

A degree in history is excellent preparation for students interested in a teaching career, the legal profession, or advanced work in the discipline. Students wishing to become business executives, administrators, and public servants profit immensely by gaining the methodological skills of the historian. Historians learn to gather, synthesize, analyze, and interpret evidence; they become skilled in presenting their conclusions to a general audience in a lucid and logical manner.

Asian Studies Minor

Provides interdisciplinary understanding of Asia — particularly its rich and varied histories, arts, languages, philosophies, religions and social patterns. Details and application forms are available from the History Department.

History Minor

Students choosing to add a strong historical dimension to their major field may enroll in the minor program in history. The curriculum stresses reading and writing skills as well as the ability to weigh evidence and think critically. Details and application forms are available from the History Department.

Master of Arts Degree in History

General Characteristics

The program in history emphasizes concentrated study in area specialties, with students gaining a thorough grounding in the latest historiography. In addition, the program maintains that historical study must be predicated upon sustained research, engagement with historical problems, and written communication. Completion of the MA program in history will allow students the following options:

- Teach history at the elementary, secondary, or community college level.
- Give students the critical skills and knowledge to enter into the worldwide information economy.
- Allow community members to expand their historical knowledge.
- Prepare students for transfer to Ph.D. programs at other universities.

Prerequisites

Admission to the MA program requires:

1. Possession of an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university.
2. An overall grade point average of 3.0 for the last 90 units of undergraduate work.
3. Submission of a writing sample, in the form of a senior project or upper division paper.
4. Related undergraduate coursework. Students without an undergraduate degree in history are required to demonstrate adequate preparation for graduate study in history, as determined by the Graduate Coordinator.

Program of Study

- 48 units of graduate work in areas specified (49 units for those students writing a MA Thesis).
- a grade point average of at least 3.0 after 12 units of graduate coursework.
- MA Thesis or Comprehensive Examinations in two distinct areas of study.

Foreign Language Study

Students are encouraged to learn and use foreign languages in the MA program. Students who plan further graduate study in history are particularly encouraged in this direction since proficiency in two foreign languages is usually required in doctoral programs.

Applications

Applications for admission and requests for further information should be directed to the Admissions Office or the Graduate Coordinator of the MA History program. All applications should include a writing sample (preferably an extended research paper) and undergraduate transcripts.