

HISTORY MAJOR (B.A.)

<https://cola.unh.edu/history/program/ba/history>

Description

The study of history gives students the analytical and communication skills necessary to succeed in today's workplace. It is also essential for being an informed citizen. The history major covers an array of subjects: the Roman Empire, modern U.S. foreign policy, China's Cultural Revolution, medieval Islam, the American Revolution and many, many others. Every major takes an introductory seminar on historical writing and analysis, and the major concludes with a senior colloquium that allows students to conduct in-depth research on a topic of their choosing. History is a flexible major. That makes history an excellent choice for students who plan to study abroad or who want to complete a double major in another discipline.

Students sometimes ask, "what can you do with a history major?" The answer is practically anything you want. History majors have attended some of the top graduate programs in the country. Many become teachers, but history majors also go into law, medicine and business, as well as careers in technology, international relations, politics and the media. Majoring in history prepares students well for the intellectual flexibility and ability to think outside the box that today's job market demands.

Undergraduate Awards for Majors

The Philip M. Marston Scholarship, an award of \$500, is available to students who are interested in colonial or New England history and have demonstrated financial need. There are course requirements for this scholarship. More details are available from the history office.

Each spring, the members of the departmental undergraduate committee choose history majors to receive the following prizes in history:

- The William Greenleaf Prize is given for the best senior colloquium paper. Award candidates must have a minimum grade-point average of 3.2 in history courses. Individuals may nominate themselves or may be nominated by faculty members.
- The Allen Linden Prize for the best senior history thesis is funded by the Signal Fund.
- The Charles Clark Prize is for the best essay or research paper submitted by a history major and is funded by the Signal Fund.

Phi Alpha Theta, the history honor society, is an international scholastic organization dedicated to promoting historical study on the undergraduate and graduate levels. Admission to the UNH Psi Pi chapter is open to undergraduates with an overall grade-point average of 3.0, a grade-point average of 3.4 or better in history courses, and completion of HIST 500 Introduction to Historical Thinking.

Five-Year BA/MA Program

The History Department offers our majors an opportunity to complete an accelerated Master's Degree in history in as little as one additional year of study. Eligible seniors and juniors are able to take up to 12 credits in graduate history courses, which will count both toward the completion of the history B.A. requirements, and the history M.A. requirements. This accelerated option is available for both the standard track M.A. and the museum studies track.

To be eligible for the program students must have a GPA of 3.2 or higher. Students also must have completed 96 credits by the time they enter the accelerated M.A. program.

Students should apply before April 10th of their junior year. Students interested in applying must complete the [UNH graduate studies application](#). Applications will include two letters of recommendation, a cover letter, a writing sample and a UNH transcript. GRE scores are NOT required. Students should also submit a cover letter and an endorsement from a member of the History Department directly to the graduate director, Professor David Bachrach at david.bachrach@unh.edu.

If you are interested in applying for the accelerated M.A. program, or would like additional information about the program, please contact Professor David Bachrach.

Requirements

To complete a major in history, students must take ten (10) 4-credit history courses or their equivalent. Students who enter the University as history majors, or who declare a major in history, should take the first required course, HIST 500 Introduction to Historical Thinking, as soon as possible. To declare a major in history, students must have completed or be enrolled in two history courses. HIST 500 Introduction to Historical Thinking is a prerequisite for the second required course, HIST 797 Colloquium, which fulfills the Discovery Program capstone requirement for history majors and is taken during the senior year. Students should consult the list of topics for HIST 797 Colloquium advertised each semester.

History Major Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
HIST 500	Introduction to Historical Thinking	4
HIST 797	Colloquium	4
At least eight (8) additional courses, following the guidelines below. No more than two (2) may be at the 400-level and a minimum of three (3) must be at the 600-level or above.		32
Total Credits		40

A student's program of study must include two parts:

1. An area of specialization. A student must select at least four courses to serve as an area of specialization within the major. Up to two courses (each four credits or their equivalent) in the area of specialization may be taken in other departments; such courses must be 500-level or above and have the approval of the student's advisor. The area of specialization may be in a nation, region, a time period, global history, or one of the following:
 - * ancient and pre-modern worlds
 - * cultural and intellectual history
 - * empires and colonialism
 - * international and diplomatic history
 - * politics, law, and government
 - * race, gender, and sexuality
 - * religion
 - * revolution and social change
 - * science, technology, medicine, and the environment
 - * war and society
 - * world economy
 - * design your own (with advisor's permission)
2. Complementary courses. A student must select, in consultation with his or her advisor, at least three history courses in fields outside the area of specialization, chosen to broaden his or her understanding

of the range of history. Each major should take at least one course from each of Groups I, II, and III. Group I contains all American history courses, Group II contains all European history courses, and Group III contains all other history courses.

The program must be planned in consultation with an advisor. A copy of the program, signed by the advisor, must be placed in a student's file no later than the second semester of the student's junior year. Courses at the 700-level will be judged by the advisor as to their applicability for area of specialization. The program may be modified with the advisor's approval.

Only one HIST 695 Independent Study may be used to fulfill the 600-level requirement, and no more than two Independent Study courses may count toward the ten-course requirement. No more than two 400-level courses may be counted toward the major requirements. Students must receive at least a C in HIST 500 Introduction to Historical Thinking and at least a C- in the other nine courses. Majors must maintain a 2.0 or better in all history courses.

Candidates for a degree must satisfy all of the University Discovery Program requirements in addition to satisfying the requirements of each individual major program. Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) candidates must also satisfy the foreign language proficiency requirement.

History majors may use history courses to fulfill Discovery category requirements but may not double-count history courses for major and Discovery category requirements.

History majors must satisfy the language requirement for the B.A. degree in an international language that they could use for historical research. That list includes Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Students may petition the department curriculum committee for exceptions.

For transfer students, a minimum of five (5) of the semester courses used to fulfill the major requirements must be taken at the University. One upper-level course may be transferred to satisfy the requirement that a major must take at least three courses numbered 600 or above. Transfer students must complete both HIST 500 Introduction to Historical Thinking (or its equivalent) and HIST 797 Colloquium.

Students intending further work in history beyond the bachelor's degree are urged to take HIST 775 Historical Methods.

Students intending to major in history should consult with the department administrative assistant. Suggested programs for students with special interests or professional plans are available in the department office.

Student Learning Outcomes

History students can:

Build historical knowledge.

- Gather and contextualize information in order to convey both the particularity of past lives and the scale of human experience.
- Recognize how humans in the past shaped their own unique historical moments and were shaped by those moments.

- Develop a body of historical knowledge with breadth of time and place—as well as depth of detail—in order to discern context.
- Distinguish the past from our very different present.

Develop historical methods.

- Recognize history as an interpretive account of the human past—one that historians create in the present from surviving evidence.
- Collect, sift, organize, question, synthesize, and interpret complex material.
- Practice ethical historical inquiry that makes use of and acknowledges sources from the past as well as the scholars who have interpreted that past.
- Develop empathy toward people in the context of their distinctive historical moments.

Recognize the provisional nature of knowledge, the disciplinary preference for complexity, and the comfort with ambiguity that history requires.

- Welcome contradictory perspectives and data, which enable us to provide more accurate accounts and construct stronger arguments.
- Describe past events from multiple perspectives.
- Explain and justify multiple causes of complex events and phenomena using conflicting sources.
- Identify, summarize, appraise, and synthesize other scholars' historical arguments.

Apply the range of skills it takes to decode the historical record because of its incomplete, complex, and contradictory nature.

- Consider a variety of historical sources for credibility, position, perspective, and relevance.
- Evaluate historical arguments, explaining how they were constructed and might be improved.
- Revise analyses and narratives when new evidence requires it.

Create historical arguments and narratives.

- Generate substantive, open-ended questions about the past and develop research strategies to answer them.
- Craft well-supported historical narratives, arguments, and reports of research findings in a variety of media for a variety of audiences.

Use historical perspective as central to active citizenship.

- Apply historical knowledge and historical thinking to contemporary issues.
- Develop positions that reflect deliberation, cooperation, and diverse perspectives.