

UNDERGRADUATE HANDBOOK

FOR STUDENTS IN HISTORY



clas.uiowa.edu/history



History at University of Iowa



The History of History @ Iowa



IOWA

Department of History

HISTORY DEPARTMENT CONTACTS:

[CLAS.UIOWA.EDU/HISTORY/PEOPLE](https://clas.uiowa.edu/history/people)



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For a listing of current History Department faculty and staff, including advising,
please see: clas.uiowa.edu/history/people

LEARN MORE

clas.uiowa.edu/history

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT:



Welcome to the study of history at the University of Iowa! Our faculty look forward to helping you explore the origins of today's world—its economic, social, and political structures, its varied cultures, and its clashing ideas. Where and how did the challenges, conflicts, and opportunities we face today originate? How did people, in other historical moments, try to make sense of their world and resolve the challenges confronting them? Exploring these and other questions can help prepare you for citizenship in a complex, interdependent, and rapidly changing global society.

Students of history acquire knowledge of the past, but more importantly they learn critical thinking, analytical, and writing skills that are valuable in a wide range of careers. In our classes, you will learn to conduct research, analyze evidence, and construct arguments ([see here for a fuller description of History BA learning objectives](#)). UI History students have won prestigious fellowships and academic honors, gained admission to competitive graduate and professional schools, and obtained internships at places like the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, and the National Archives. Our alumni pursue successful careers in law, business, politics and government, journalism, archives & museums, and education, among other fields.

You will work with some terrific professors! Not only have many of them won teaching awards, but UI's History faculty are nationally and internationally recognized experts in their fields. Their teaching and research agendas span the globe and the ages, from the classical era to the present. Whatever region and time period they study, historians share common concerns and questions about equality, citizenship, democracy, and justice, and about the ways in which power is wielded, contested, and resisted. They explore broad themes such as migration and diaspora; energy and environment; science, medicine and technology; slavery and abolition; empire and decolonization; genocide and human rights; authoritarianism and democracy; law and punishment; politics and public policy; race and ethnicity; gender and sexuality; religion and culture; and many others. In examining such topics, our faculty collaborate closely with other UI programs and departments, including African American Studies; Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies (GWSS); Latina/o/x Studies; Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS); and Global Health Studies.

Like our faculty, History majors have wide-ranging interests. Many double-major with another department (for example, Political Science, Journalism and Mass Communications, a world language), and many complete a certificate (for example, in Ethics and Public Policy, Sustainability, Human Rights, Elementary or secondary Education, Museum Studies, Global Health Studies, NAIS, Medieval Studies). Some choose to complete the Senior Honor's Thesis in History; others edit our undergraduate journal, the Iowa Historical Review. Some become active in our undergraduate club, the Hawkeye History Corps.

Prospective and new majors may want to begin by meeting with History's Senior Academic Advisor, Colleen Kelley (colleen-kelley@uiowa.edu; 172 SH). You can also visit History faculty during drop-in hours, which are posted outside the History Department office, 280 Schaeffer Hall (319-335-2299) and on [individual faculty web pages](#). Stop by 280 to meet our friendly office staff and to browse through recent faculty and alumni publications. For announcements of upcoming events and opportunities, please follow us on Facebook: [UI Department of History](#), or on Instagram, [ui_history](#).

We look forward to getting to know you!

Colin Gordon
Professor and Chair, Department of History

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE UNDERGRADUATE HISTORY MAJOR (BA)

Total Semester Hours: 36. See [General Catalog](#) for a full list of History courses.

INTRODUCTORY COURSE:

HIST:2151 Intro to the History Major (must be taken at UI)

AREA COURSEWORK:

American History

Two courses; at least one numbered 3000+:

Courses: 1200-1299, 2200-2299, 3200-3299, 4200-4299

Non-Western History

Two courses; at least one numbered 3000+:

Courses: 1500-1999, 2500-2899, 3500-3899, 4500-4999

European History

Two courses; at least one numbered 3000+:

Courses: 1400-1499, 2400-2499, 3400-3499, 4400-4499

Pre-1700 History

One course; may be counted toward geographical area:

See [History General Catalog](#) for list of pre-1700 History courses

ELECTIVE COURSES:

Elective HIST coursework to total 36 s.h.:

PORTFOLIO:

HIST:3193 Undergraduate History Portfolio

- 0 s.h., S/U course, taken in final semester

- Students upload three graded History papers (one from HIST:2151) **OR** paper from HIST:2151 plus History honors thesis

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

- 2.00 GPA or better in all major coursework and all UI courses toward major
- 18 s.h. towards major must be taken at UI
- May count maximum of 18 s.h. in American History courses toward major
- Must complete 24 s.h. in courses numbered 2000+
- May count maximum of 3 s.h. in courses numbered 1002-1099 toward the major

HONORS IN THE MAJOR:

- 3.33 GPA or better in major coursework
- Complete honors thesis
- HIST:3995 History Honors Research Seminar
- HIST:3996 History Honors Thesis

To be used as a planning tool only. To confirm specific graduation requirements, consult your degree audit.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MINOR IN HISTORY

The undergraduate minor in history requires the following:

- Minimum of 15 s.h. in history courses, including 12 s.h. earned in courses numbered 2000 or above.
- At least 12 s.h. must be earned in courses taken at the University of Iowa.
- Students must maintain a grade-point average (GPA) of at least 2.00 in all courses for the minor.
- Course work in the minor may not be taken pass/nonpass.

HONORS IN HISTORY



Honors in the History Major gives students the opportunity to conduct independent research on a topic of their choosing and to write an original piece of scholarship based on that research. The product is a thesis, a 30-35 page paper on the study of a historical problem. Think of the thesis as part of becoming an historian. You will put to use all the tools that you have learned in your history classes, devise your own research questions, and explore them through primary source research and analytical writing. For more information, visit the [Honors in History Major](#).

BA WITH TEACHER LICENSURE

History majors interested in earning licensure to teach in elementary and/or secondary schools must complete the College of Education's [Teacher Education Program \(TEP\)](#) in addition to the requirements for the major and all requirements for graduation. Students must apply to the TEP, and admission is selective. To learn more, students can speak to their advisor or contact the College of Education, [Office of Student Services](#) for details.

ADVISING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA AND IN HISTORY

Advising for first-year students: First-year students and those with fewer than 30 semester hours earned are advised at the Academic Advising Center. The Center's team of advisors specializes in transitioning students to academic and student life at Iowa. Working with an assigned caseload, the advisors help each student plan for a successful academic start at Iowa.

Advising during sophomore through senior years: Colleen Kelley serves as the academic advisor for history students who have earned at least 30 semester hours.



How to contact your advisor: For quick questions, email Colleen at: colleen-kelley@uiowa.edu.

For adding and dropping courses and other immediate issues, Colleen's virtual appointment and drop-in hours can be found on [Colleen Kelley's page](#). Appointments are scheduled on-line through [MyUI](#), or via email request.

We recommend scheduling an individual appointment if you would like to review your degree audit, map out a plan to graduation, or have other questions for which you would like to have an extended conversation. To schedule a virtual appointment with Colleen, please use the online scheduler (link available through [MyUI](#)).

The departmental advisor is available to assist students with the following:

- Advisor signatures on add/drop and other university forms
- Questions about course registration
- Questions or problems with your degree audit
- Academic probation
- Review of study abroad courses for major credit
- Discussions regarding adding second majors, minors, and certificate programs
- Information regarding campus resources for students
- Questions about navigating campus resources

When you achieve junior standing, you are encouraged to work with a faculty mentor. While you will continue to see Colleen Kelley for routine advising functions, your faculty mentor is available to:

- Provide disciplinary guidance for research projects
- Serve as a mentor for honors theses and projects
- Discuss your graduate and professional school aspirations

RESOURCES FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN HISTORY AT UI

Visit [Undergraduate Program](#) on the History website for links to the following resources:

- Scholarships and Awards
- Internships
- Careers for History Majors
- Teaching and Writing Center
- Study Abroad Programs
- Iowa Historical Review (Undergraduate History Journal)
- History Course Catalog

Visit [Academic Resources](#) on the History website for links to the following resources:

- History Major Course Planner
- B.A. with Teaching Licensure
- Interdisciplinary Programs: Certificate, Minors, Second Majors
- Hawkeye History Corps (UI Undergraduate History Club Facebook page)
- Nearby Archives
- History Facts and Resources

HISTORIANS ARE:

EDUCATORS

Primary/Secondary/Post-Secondary
Historic Sites and Museums



RESEARCHERS

Museums and Historical Organizations
Cultural Resources Management
Historic Preservation
Public Policy Institutes



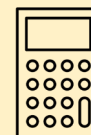
COMMUNICATORS

Writers and Editors
Journalists
Artists
Producers of Multimedia Material



INFORMATION MANAGERS

Archivists
Records Managers
Librarians
Data Analysts



ADVOCATES

Lawyers and Paralegals
Litigation Support
Legislative Staff
Foundations
Social Work



PUBLIC SERVANTS

Diplomatic Corps
Non-Governmental Organizations
Human Rights Workers
Elected Officials
Health Professions
Policy Makers



WHY STUDY HISTORY?

Thinking about majoring in History? Did you know that...

-
- History majors' mid-career salaries are on par with those of business majors.
- Employers in tech, business, law, communications, health care, and public policy want people with humanities backgrounds.
- Double majoring makes you even more versatile (History BA requires 36 hours; many combine with PoliSci, JMC, IS, ANTH...).
- Political experts consider historical education to be key to a successful democracy.

MORE REASONS TO STUDY HISTORY

"Students of history develop an understanding of change – how it happens and why it happens the way it does – that enables them to engage the world they inhabit. Employers value history students' ability to analyze human and social behavior, to research pressing problems, and to express themselves clearly." [Lisa Heineman, UI History Professor](#)

"By studying people and places far removed from our current lives, we become aware of other ways to be human. The strangeness of the past enables us to step back and look at our society and ourselves from a new perspective—indeed, we might start to look a bit strange to ourselves! Making sense of other societies also encourages empathy for different cultures around the world. We thus study history to simultaneously situate ourselves in the present and to distance ourselves from it."

[Johann N. Neem, "Connecting Past to Present"](#)

On the dangers of not understanding history: "From Turkey to China, strongmen rewrite the past to suit their ends. But democracies are not immune to this revisionism...Learning about history, and being able to question some of the narratives advanced in the name of politics is as important as knowing where to get reliable news." [The Guardian](#)

In times of political crisis, citizens need "not just access to new narratives about the past, but also a broader ability to weigh evidence, balance competing arguments, and consider emotionally charged topics... Effective teaching can prepare and empower students for their role as citizens in ways that weaken the power of demagogic appeals."

[American Historical Association](#)

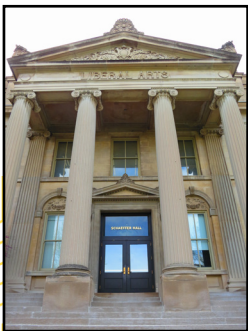


WHAT CAN I DO WITH A HISTORY DEGREE?



JUST ABOUT ANYTHING!

- ✓ Explore a [LIST OF SKILLS](#) or “competencies,” that history undergraduates learn in the course of their studies. *American Historical Association*
- ✓ [FIGHTING MYTHS WITH DATA](#): History majors are NOT underprepared for gainful employment or doomed to a life of low earnings. *American Historical Association*
- ✓ [HISTORY MAJORS' MID-CAREER SALARIES](#) are on par with those holding business bachelor's degrees. Notably these salary findings exclude those who went on to attain a law or other graduate degree. *James Grossman Op-Ed, Los Angeles Times*
- ✓ [HISTORY MAJORS DO THE BEST IN THE HUMANITIES](#), and better than students in a majority of the other fields – with regard to earnings. *AHA blog*
- ✓ [ON LIBERAL ARTS MAJORS IN THE DATA AGE](#): “From Silicon Valley to the Pentagon, people are beginning to realize that to effectively tackle today's biggest social and technological challenges, we need to think critically about their human context—something humanities graduates happen to be well trained to do. Call it the revenge of the film, history, and philosophy nerds.” *Harvard Business Review*
- ✓ [A CAREER IN CORPORATE FINANCE](#) “My history degree helped me get there.” *American Historical Association*
- ✓ [STEM COMPANIES NEED YOUR SKILLS TO GROW](#) “Opportunities have opened up for liberal arts majors ...” *EdSurge*
- ✓ [TO UNDERSTAND SCIENCE, STUDY HISTORY](#). *Chronicle of Higher Education*
- ✓ [WHY HISTORY MATTERS FOR BUSINESS EXECUTIVES](#): “If the quality of executives’ judgment is to improve and if executives are to be able to draw with confidence and intelligence on the experience of others, they must first know how to read the lessons embedded in that experience. Here...lies the value of history in management... The heart of [Harvard Business School's] curriculum has always been the case study, and the case study is precisely what a historian is trained to do.” *Harvard Business Review*
- ✓ [PROFILES OF HISTORIANS](#) in the Classroom, Publishing, Museums, Archives, Historic Preservation, Consulting and More. *American Historical Association*



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APPLY TO GRADUATE



Finally, although this is not a History requirement per se, students must apply for their degree on [MyUI](#), before the appropriate date within the semester they plan to graduate. For more information, visit the [Degree Application](#) page of the Office of the Registrar.

KEEP US INFORMED

➔ HISTORYDEPT@UIOWA.EDU

If you're applying for graduate school or professional school, or applying for jobs after graduation, it is useful for us to know that. And you never know what knowledge or opportunities we may be able to pass on to you.

The History Department sends out a weekly newsletter during the academic year to highlight students, alumni, faculty, and local events. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please let us know [here](#)!

EXPLORE OUR HISTORY

➔ [THE HISTORY OF HISTORY @ IOWA](#)

Deepen your personal connection to history by exploring the history of where you study it. Browse our [HH@I](#) website, which is dedicated to documenting and displaying the evolution of the History program at the University of Iowa going back to 1855. This digital exhibit is a work in progress, to be updated over time with ongoing research and analysis. UI undergraduate History majors spearheaded the initial collection and organization of materials, which include documents, publications, letters, newsletters, course materials, testimonials, memorials, photos, and oral histories. The ["Share Your Stories"](#) part of the website is another place to keep us informed about your life beyond Ulowa.

