



An Introduction to History

The faculty in the Department of History believe the history major is both enriching and practical. No major covers more territory: it spans the globe and every kind of human activity from planting crops to creating philosophies. And what could be more practical than trying to understand how people create and respond to change? As students study how people construct, try to live in and alter their social, political and symbolic worlds, they become more adept at understanding our changing world—a skill that any wise employer will value highly.

A concentration in history consists of nine courses (33–35 semester hours), appropriately distributed to assure both breadth and depth. The department also offers a history minor, which consists of five courses (18–20 semester hours).

The Learning Environment

The Department of History seeks to offer a rigorous intellectual experience in a congenial environment of small classes and close interaction between students and faculty.

The department has 15 full-time professors—all of whom hold doctorates from leading universities—in a wide variety of fields. In addition, a distinguished visiting scholar occupies the Douglas Southall Freeman Professorship of History for one semester each year.

Majors have access to a rich and varied offering of courses (the University's catalog lists over 80) in American, British, European, African, Asian, Latin American and Middle Eastern history. All must take a research seminar involving extensive work in primary source materials. Internships are available to majors at various historical museums in the Richmond and Washington, D.C., areas. For those who qualify, there is

an honors program culminating in the writing of a senior thesis.

Career Paths

The directions in which students with a history major can go are many and include graduate or professional school, education, business, government service and much more. Employers from many fields have said that what impresses them about history majors from the University is that they have learned to think through complex human problems and to express themselves well. Most graduates will agree that the history major has helped them to do their jobs well. A history graduate may become a teacher, professor, lawyer, doctor, public relations officer, entrepreneur, stockbroker or physical therapist.

A Sampling of Schools Accepting Recent Graduates

Boston College (history)
Brown University (history)
Case Western Reserve University (law)
Columbia University (law)
Emory University (history)
George Washington University (political management)
Georgetown University (law)
Harvard University (law)
Indiana University (law)
Tulane University (medicine)
University of Rochester (education)
University of Virginia (medicine)

Examples of Employers Hiring Recent Graduates

American Academy of Otolaryngology
American Institutions for Research
Capital One Financial Corporation
Charleston, South Carolina, Police Department
Citibank, New York

de Matha High School, Maryland
FD MorgenWalke
Freehold Township Schools, New Jersey
Henrico County, Virginia, Police Department
National Republican Senatorial Committee
Public Defenders' Office, Ventura, California
Schering Plough
Virginia Department of Historic Resources

Scholarships for History Majors

The Helen G. Stafford Scholarship for a Westhampton College student
The Jacob Billikopf Scholarship for a Richmond College student
The Harry M. Ward Scholarship for University of Richmond students from either college
The Agnes and Garland Gray Scholarships for students from Virginia, especially Southampton, Surry and Sussex counties
The Maude Howlett Woodfin-Susan Lough Grant for a Westhampton alumna attending graduate school in history

A Sampling of 2005–2006 Undergraduate Honors Theses

Mark Carney, "Okinawa: Monuments to Peace and Military Bases"
Beth Massie, "Consorting Disaster: Women, Romance, and Novels in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Britain"
Przemyslaw Polaski, "Pilgrimage of Dignity"
Matthew Scutari, "American Travelers in Palestine: Experience and Discourse in the Nineteenth Century" *Selected best research paper in the humanities in the School of Arts and Sciences.*

Facilities

- Access to research collections in the Library and Archives of Virginia, the Virginia Historical Society Library, the Museum of the Confederacy Library and the Virginia Baptist Historical Society Library
- Strong campus library holdings, especially in American and British history
- Classrooms located in historic Ryland Hall

Faculty

Joan L. Bak

Ph.D., Yale University
Distinguished Educator Award, 1983, 1988
Areas of specialty: Latin America, modern Brazil

David Brandenberger

Ph.D., Harvard University
Former fellow, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University
Area of specialty: Russia/Soviet Union

Joanna Drell

Ph.D., Brown University
Former fellow, American Academy in Rome
Winner of the Howard R. Marraro Prize, 2003
Area of specialty: Medieval Europe

John L. Gordon

Ph.D., Vanderbilt University
Areas of specialty: Modern Britain, British Empire, Canada

Woody Holton

Ph.D., Duke University
Winner of the Merle Curti Award, Organization of American Historians, 2000
Areas of specialty: American colonial and revolutionary history

Robert C. Kenzer

Ph.D., Harvard University
William Binford Vest Professor
Areas of specialty: 19th-century U.S. history, Civil War, reconstruction, American social history

Kibibi V. Mack-Shelton

Ph.D., State University of New York at Binghamton
Area of specialty: African-American experience

Nicole Sackley

Ph.D., Princeton University
Area of specialty: United States and the world

L. Carol Summers

Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University
Former fellow, Davis Center for Historical Studies, Princeton University and National Humanities Center
Distinguished Educator Award, 2001
Area of specialty: Africa

John D. Treadway

Ph.D., University of Virginia
Samual Chiles Mitchell-Jacob Billikopf Professor
Distinguished Educator Award, 1985, 1988, 1991, 1995, 1999
Virginia Outstanding Faculty Award, 1993
Former fellow, Woodrow Wilson Center
Areas of specialty: European diplomacy, Eastern Europe

Sydney Watts

Ph.D., Cornell University
Areas of specialty: Early modern Europe, France 1650-1800

Hugh A. West

Ph.D., Stanford University
Distinguished Educator Award, 1985, 1996
Former fellow, National Humanities Center
Area of specialty: Modern European intellectual history

Yucel Yanikdag

Ph.D., Ohio State University
Areas of specialty: Modern Middle East, Ottoman Empire, Modern Turkey

Eric Yellin

Ph.D., Princeton University
Area of specialty: 20th-century United States

The Department is conducting a search in the history of East Asia.