

HISTORY (HIST)

In a world increasingly characterized by the ten-second soundbite, our understanding of world events is often limited to the superficial. Despite the speed and intensity of these events, the conflicts and achievements of our times emerge from long established influences and sequences of events. The study of history adds both breadth and depth to an individual's understanding of our fast-changing world. History provides the means to discover how the past shapes and affects the present and how seemingly unrelated events and forces connect to frame human endeavors. There is something profoundly enduring about the study of history, as it allows us to realize the complexity of human affairs from a multitude of perspectives. It is both an intellectually satisfying and eminently practical pursuit. History majors at Western acquire and sharpen skills that enrich educational experiences and increase employment opportunities in a number of fields. Such skills include: cause and effect analysis, critical evaluation and organization of evidence, document and data base research, development and understanding of analytical frameworks, and organization and synthesis of information—all skills essential to solving problems and presenting results.

The History League student club and the Iota Nu Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the national history Honor Society, are active on campus.

Program Goals

- Build historical knowledge.
- Develop historical methods.
- Recognize the provisional nature of knowledge, the disciplinary preference for complexity, and the comfort with ambiguity that history requires.
- Apply the range of skills it takes to decode the historical record because of its incomplete, complex, and contradictory nature.
- Create historical arguments and narratives.
- Use historical perspective as central to active citizenship.
- History Comprehensive Major: Public History Emphasis (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/history-comprehensive-public-history/>)
- History Comprehensive Major: Secondary Licensure Emphasis (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/history-comprehensive-secondary-licensure/>)
- History Comprehensive Major: Secondary Licensure Emphasis (with a 3+2 Master of Arts in Education) (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/history-comprehensive-secondary-licensure-3-2/>)
- History Major: Standard Program (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/history-standard-program/>)
- History Minor (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/history-minor/>)
- Public History Emphasis (with a 3+2 Master in Environmental Management) (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/public-history-3-2-mem/>)
- Public History Emphasis (with a 3+2 Master of Arts in Gallery and Museum Management) (<https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/public-history-3-2-mgmm/>)

Capstone Course Requirement

The following course in the History Major fulfills the Capstone Course Requirement: HIST 402 Engaging the Past.

History Courses

HIST 100. Topics in World History (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)

An introduction to the major themes of world history, addressed through a focus on a special topic. Themes include organization and reorganization of human societies, technological and environmental transformation, and regional, transregional, and global interaction. Course content will vary; topics may include food, drugs, human-animal relations, the environment, sport, etc.

HIST 126. American History through Reconstruction (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)

A survey of American history from before European contact through European settlement and the establishment of the United States, ending with the Civil War and Reconstruction, providing description and analysis of the historical development of politics, economics, society, and foreign policy. Attention is given to the diverse peoples and their social landscape that influenced these developments. GT-HI1

HIST 127. U.S. History from the Civil War (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)

A survey of U.S. history from the Civil War to modern times, providing description and analysis of the major developments and trends in justice and equity, environment, politics, economics and capitalism, society, and foreign policy. Attention is given to the diverse people and forces that influenced and shaped the American experience. GT-HI1

HIST 128. Introduction to Environmental History (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)

A survey of the relationship between humans and the non-human world, engaging topics such as human migrations and population development, life in the predominantly urban environments that characterize contemporary societies, the meaning and role of wilderness and outdoors, and how systems of supply and consumption function. Students explore how the natural environment shaped the patters of human life in various parts of the world and the shifting attitudes towards nature held by various peoples during different periods of history. GT-HI1

HIST 200. Historical Inquiry. (3 Credits)

This course introduces students to History as not only a discipline of study and scholarship but as an inquiry into human experience and as a public pursuit. Students explore, learn, and apply the tools and techniques Historians use to study and understand the past. Through exposure to the theory and craft of History, students learn the relevance and possibilities of a History degree beyond the classroom. It is recommended students complete this course no later than their sophomore year.

HIST 250. HIST OF THE MIDDLE EAST GH11. (3 Credits)

A survey of the history of the greater Middle East, emphasizing the modern period (roughly 1798-present). The focus is on the Ottoman Empire and its successor states (from Algeria to Iraq), with additional discussion of the adjoining countries (Morocco, the Arabian Peninsula, and Iran). Important themes include Ottoman reform and autocracy; European colonialism and decolonization; Zionism and the State of Israel; Arab nationalism; and political Islam.

HIST 251. History of Europe (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)

A survey of European history, from the Bronze Age to the present. Major themes include Europe's historical connections with Western Asia and North Africa; the changing nature of social and political systems; the emergence of modern states and nationalism; empire and colonization; and the cataclysms of the twentieth century.

HIST 254. History of Africa (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)

A survey of the major events and themes of African history from earliest times to the present day, touching upon important developments and themes such as migration, trade, environment, gender, religion, slavery, state building, European colonialism, African nationalism, Pan-Africanism, impact of the Cold War and current issues facing the continent.

HIST 257. East Asia, 1500 - present. (3 Credits)

A survey of East Asia from 1500 to present, which covers a vast region including the modern states of China, Japan, Korea, North and South Korea, Russia, and border regions of countries in Central, Southeast, and South Asia. In this course, students will learn about state formation, ethnic identities, gender traditions, class structure, and global connections in East Asian history.

HIST 258. Southeast Asia, 1500 - present. (3 Credits)

A survey of Southeast Asia from 1500 to present, which covers a vast region including the Philippines, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, and border regions of China and India. In this course, students will learn about state formation, ethnic identities, gender traditions, class structure, and global connections in Southeast Asian history. Central focus will be devoted to the influence of India and China and to the impact of colonialism.

HIST 260. History of Latin America GHI1. (3 Credits)

A survey of the major events and themes of Latin American History from pre-Columbian times through the modern era with special emphasis on the interaction of New and Old World cultures and the impact of colonization and the construction of national identity after independence into the modern era. GT-HI1

HIST 280. History and Philosophy of Travel (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)

Be it wanderlust, adventure, curiosity, healing, escape or immersion, this course explores the significance of travel for human beings from antiquity to the 21st century. Students explore why and how we travel and the power and impact of travel and tourism as influential cultural forces through time. Examining travel sources which span genres and time periods, students will consider the relation of travel to human existence; the construction of self and Other; and how travel has caused us to expand, question and rethink what we know. GT-HI1

HIST 281. Past Visions: History on Film (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)

This course examines historically oriented motion pictures and documentaries as both primary and secondary sources of information about the past. Beginning from the premise that the content in films, as with written sources, can (and should) be critically analyzed for perspectives, interpretive choices, biases, and reliability. The course examines the relative successes or failures that major films and documentaries have had in portraying the past; what happens to history when it is recorded in film rather than words; and analyzes how present events, cultures and attitudes shape our view of the past. GT-HI1

HIST 300. History Lab. (3 Credits)

An introduction to tools of historical research, both traditional and digital. Topics include archival theory and the use of archival materials; digital repositories of historical books and newspapers; how to use and understand metadata; and basic historical data analysis and visualization. Students are encouraged to apply the tools introduced in this course to their research projects for other courses. Prerequisite: HIST 200 or instructor permission.

HIST 301. Ancient History: Topics. (3 Credits)

Studies of the ancient world. This course is a rotating topic which may include regional studies (e.g. Mediterranean world), studies of specific cultures or empires (e.g. the Maya, Greece, Rome, Egypt), or thematic studies (e.g. gender or religion). Course may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 302. World History: Topics. (3 Credits)

Studies in world or global history. This course is a rotating topic which may include broad thematic studies, such as the global history of the book or the history of settler colonialism, or chronologically more specific studies which are inherently transnational, like the medieval Afro-Eurasian ecumene. Class may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 311. Medieval Europe: Topics. (3 Credits)

Studies of medieval Europe (approximately 500-1500). This course is a rotating topic which may include studies of specific cultures or empires (e.g., the Norse or the Byzantine Empire) or thematic studies (e.g., religion or art and architecture). Class may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 313. Early Modern Europe: Topics. (3 Credits)

Studies of early modern Europe (approximately 1500-1789). This course is a rotating topic which may include studies of specific countries or empires (e.g., England or the Hapsburg Empire) or thematic studies (e.g., religion or empire). Class may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 317. Modern Europe: Topics. (3 Credits)

Studies of modern Europe (approximately 1798 to the present). This course is a rotating topic which may include studies of specific countries or empires (e.g., France or the British Empire) or thematic studies (e.g., revolution or nationalism). Class may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 327. Colorado History. (3 Credits)

A study of the history of Colorado from prehistoric times to the modern era, emphasizing the Native American and Spaniard, mining, cattle, transportation and farming frontiers, and problems of the 20th century involving water, energy, and growth. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 330. The Atlantic World. (3 Credits)

A history of colonial North America and its dynamic relationship with Europe and Africa, covering the growing intercontinental trade systems, the exchange of technologies and ideas, and the mass movement of peoples throughout the spaces and nations comprising the Atlantic World, from the fifteenth century through the eighteenth century.

HIST 335. Early America: Topics. (3 Credits)

A history of the foundational ideas, peoples, and events that shaped the early American and/or U.S. experience. This course is a rotating topic which may include temporal studies (e.g., the American Revolution), studies of specific cultures or peoples (e.g., enslaved people), or thematic studies (e.g., religion or politics). Course may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 337. Modern America: Topics. (3 Credits)

A history of the foundational ideas, peoples, and events that shaped the modern U.S. experience. This course is a rotating topic which may include temporal studies (e.g., WWII or the 1960s), studies of specific cultures or peoples (e.g., immigrants or women), or thematic studies (e.g., incarceration or environment). Course may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 348. History of the American West. (3 Credits)

A history of American West emphasizing the diverse people and places who interacted with and in the West, including Native American, Spanish, Mexican, French, Euro-American, and Asian people. The course interrogates the meaning and symbol of "the West" as a way to understand the West as a process, a place, and an idea, encompassing settlement, expansion, mining, colonialism, and struggles for rights and justice. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 349. History of the Hispanic Southwest. (3 Credits)

Students examine the historical development of Hispanic settlement and culture in the American Southwest from its inception to the present day. Students study the interaction of Hispanic communities with nomadic and settled indigenous peoples and with Anglo ranchers, settler and commercial interests. From the 16th century settlements to the Mexican-American War and the territory's incorporation into the United States to the development of the Chicano identity in the 20th century, students analyze the American Southwest, as a patria chica of success and failure, achievement and potential. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 350. Environmental History of the Borderlands. (3 Credits)

Students examine the process of historical development of the Borderlands region between Mexico and the United States and consider its implications for the region's environment. Settlement patterns, a blending of cultural and ethnic identities, economic development and integration and emerging social tensions have resulted in an environmental transformation of the region with far-reaching implications for both nations north and south of the Rio Grande/Bravo. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 355. African History: Topics. (3 Credits)

This course examines a particular topic, era or region in African History thus course content will vary. Rotating topics may include colonialism, conflict, or a country or regional study. Students may take this course twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 367. Latin American History: Topics. (3 Credits)

Studies of Latin American history. This course is a rotating topic which may include studies of specific countries (e.g., Mexico or Cuba), or thematic studies (e.g., revolution, gender, or environment). Course may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore status or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 370. Public History. (3 Credits)

This course explores the ways historians have engaged the public with the past. It provides an introduction to the theory and practice of interpreting history in institutions such as museums, archives, historical societies, and in historic preservation projects, digital projects, and oral histories. The course examines theoretical constructs including memory, heritage, community and commemoration and explores how academic history and public history complement and enrich one another. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 371. Oral History Workshop. (3 Credits)

An examination of the theory and practice of the field of oral history. Through the course of the semester, students will examine the field of oral history, learn how to conduct oral history interviews, and produce an oral history. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 372. Monuments and Museums. (3 Credits)

Students explore the interconnected concepts of memory, change and time through the examination of monuments, memorials and museums. Through readings, discussions and field experiences students consider the representation of past events in public spaces and the ways in which such places can both shape a shared sense of the past and become sites of contention and representations of power. Students trace the evolution of museums and the nature of preservation, interpretation and scholarship of collections and exhibits. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 373. History of the National Park Service. (3 Credits)

Students study the history of the National Park Service of the United States. The course begins with discussions of environmental conservation, preservation, and Wilderness; and traces the development of the guiding principles of the NPS and the evolution of the National Park system. Students discuss the challenges facing the NPS to the present day. Additionally, students will consider the international impact of the NPS and the growth of the National Park movement outside of the United States. This course includes multi-day field trips to National Parks and National Historic Sites. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 374. History of U.S. Public Lands. (3 Credits)

Students study the history of public lands in the United States, including the various agencies that have defined and managed those lands (e.g., National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management), with attention to the social, intellectual, environmental, cultural, political, and economic components of public land, its use, and its management. The course covers the social and political meaning of public lands; the guiding principles of public land management; discussion of access and equity in public lands.

HIST 397. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)

Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 399. Internship in History. (1-3 Credits)

History majors and minors obtain archival, museum and public history experience through direct, supervised contact with archivists, curators and professionals from related areas. Graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory only. Maximum 6 credits can be applied to the major. Prerequisites: HIST 200 and junior standing or instructor permission.

HIST 402. Engaging the Past. (3 Credits)

Students explore the myriad of ways human beings engage with the Past. Through examination of the development and role of historical inquiry to how we preserve, restore, remember, reenact, manipulate and silence the past, students develop an understanding of how we interpret and analyze the Past as individuals, as communities and as Historians. The role of the historian in society and the ethical considerations which guide the Historian's work are woven through the course content. History majors should take this course during or after their second semester of their junior year. Prerequisites: HIST 200 and junior standing or instructor permission.

HIST 492. Independent Study. (1-4 Credits)

A special study in areas of student interest. May be taken for a maximum of four credits. Prerequisites: HIST 200 and junior standing or instructor permission.

HIST 497. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)