Major in History

History is an account of our human past and seeks to interpret the course of human affairs through evidence and reason. Historians use written records, images, artifacts, and other materials to understand the past and also the relationship between the past and the present. Historians ask not only what happened and why, but also how the present came to be. History provides insights into how individuals and groups made decisions, exercised power, and responded to change. History helps us to understand how processes—such as revolution, migration, war, ecological disturbance, and globalization—shaped societies over time. It helps us to understand how people grappled with class, ethnicity, gender, and race, and how they conceptualized the world through religion and ideology. History provides a form of knowledge that people in all times and places have used to answer basic questions about the human predicament.

The History major is designed for students to enlarge their knowledge about the past, improve their ability to think logically and critically, and sharpen their powers of written and oral expression. It is an outstanding choice for students planning further professional study in law, medicine, ministry, academia, business, and many other fields.

Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate:

• Ability to analyze and interpret historical materials, such as documents, artifacts, and images
• Ability to engage in chronological reasoning to understand causation and change over time
• Ability to examine critically how people in the past understood their own history, in scholarly works and in popular forms such as myths or commemorations
• Ability to interpret, write, and speak about the past using evidence and according to the standards and expectations of the historical discipline, including honest use of evidence, openness to multiple perspectives, and historical empathy
• Ability to analyze how processes—such as revolution, migration, war, ecological disturbance, and globalization—shaped societies over time and how people grappled with issues like class, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, and ideology.

Potential Occupations

• Government official in foreign service, national security, military, cultural resources management, and other areas;
• History teacher in public and private schools;
• Any professional occupation in business or public service requiring a liberal arts education and skills in research, writing, and the analysis of information;
• With additional graduate training: lawyer, physician, social worker, minister, librarian, museum curator, archivist, professor, educational administrator, or other professional.

Concentrations

• General History Concentration
• Language Concentration
• Social and Behavioral Sciences Concentration
• Social Studies Teaching Concentration