HISTORY (HIS)

A major in history is a good foundation for a number of professional careers. The study of history puts one in touch with all past human achievements. It is desirable for anyone planning to enter such fields as law, business, government, or education to be familiar with how humans in the past have carried on these activities. A major in history also prepares a student for graduate work in this discipline.

Course of Study

A major will consist of at least 39 credits in history:

1. Core courses: At least two of the following: HIS 101, 102, 103; and at least two of the following HIS 111, 112, 113; and HIS 401
2. American History: At least three of the following: HIS 371, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 391, 394
3. European History: At least three of the following: HIS 301, 302, 303, 305, 320, 322, 324, 325, 331, 333, 334, THE 441 or 442
4. World History: At least two of the following: HIS 341, 342, 343, 352, 355, 357, 363

A minor will consist of at least 21 credits in history:

1. Core courses: HIS 101 and 111
2. American History: At least two of the following: HIS 102, 103, 371, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 391, 394
3. European History: At least two of the following: HIS 112, 113, 301, 302, 320, 322, 324, 325, 331, 333, 334.
4. World History: At least one of the following: HIS 341, 342, 343, 352, 355, 357, 363

*For students admitted to the Honors program, two of the following may be taken in place of HIS 111, 112, or 113: HON 101, 103, 201, 203, 403.

Course Descriptions

HIS 101 American History 1, 1492 - 1865. 3 cr.
A survey of American history from the colonial era to the end of the Civil War. The social, political, cultural, and economic developments of our country are studied.

HIS 102 American History 2, 1866 - 1945. 3 cr.
A survey of American history from Reconstruction to the end of World War II. The social, political, cultural, and economic developments of our country are studied.

HIS 103 Modern America, 1945 - Present. 3 cr.
A course designed to study the most recent period in American history, from the end of World War II to the present. The key events, individuals, and themes of this era will be studied.

HIS 111 European History 1, to - 1500. 3 cr.
An introductory study of the origins of European civilization from the beginnings of recorded history through the Renaissance. The course surveys the origins of western civilization in the ancient Near East and then turns to the classical civilizations of Greece and Rome, concluding with an exploration of the medieval period and the Renaissance. Designed for freshmen and sophomores.

HIS 112 European History 2, 1500 - 1850. 3 cr.
An introductory study of the early modern period in European history, continuing the story of the development of European history from the period of the Reformation through the mid-nineteenth century. The course surveys the impact of the Reformation, European exploration and discovery of the “New World”, absolutism, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution and Napoleon, and the period of romanticism and reaction in the early nineteenth century. Designed for freshmen and sophomores.

HIS 113 Modern Europe, 1850 - present. 3 cr.
A study of the late-nineteenth century, First World War, the worldwide depression, the rise of the dictators, the Second World War, the Cold War, and European society, economics, and politics toward the end of the twentieth century. Designed for freshmen and sophomores.

HIS 301 Classical Greece. 3 cr.
A study of the origins of Western Civilization in the Greek, and Hellenistic periods, focusing on the development of the city, culture, thought, and the continuing impact of the Greek experience on modern life.

HIS 302 Rome and its Empire. 3 cr.
A study of Rome during the periods of the Republic and Empire; the spread of Graeco-Roman Civilization; the rise and influence of the Christian Church; and the continuing legacy of Rome in the modern world.

HIS 320 Medieval History, 500 - 1450. 3 cr.
A study of medieval history from the fall of Rome, the rise of the church and states, medieval society and education, and the continuing influence of this period on modern times.

HIS 322 The French Revolution and Napoleon, 1789-1815. 3cr.
The French Revolution represents one of the greatest transformative periods in modern history. This course studies the origins of the revolution in European thought, society, and politics, and then traces its moderate beginnings, its turn toward radicalism in the Reign of Terror, and its international impacts. We then turn to a detailed study of Napoleon Bonaparte as a military dictator, consolidator of the revolution, and conqueror. Finally, the course concludes with Napoleon’s defeat and the effort to put the pieces of Europe back together after over twenty years of revolution, upheaval, and war.

HIS 324 World War I, 1900 - 1925. 3 cr.
This course will cover the first quarter of the Twentieth Century in Europe. Focus will be on Europe prior to the war, the causes of conflict, the war itself and its impact on the future of Europe and the world.

HIS 325 World War II. 3 cr.
A program of study on the era of the Second World War. Emphasis will be on the political, economic, religious, social, and military trends that started, furthered, and ended the war. It will also show how the war altered the course of the world history and set the Soviet Union and the United States on a collision course that ended in the Cold War.
HIS 331 Selected Topics in European History. 3 cr.
Courses may include various national histories including Modern Germany from 1815 to the present; Modern Russia from 1700 to the present; and special issues in European history.

HIS 333 England: Renaissance, Reformation, and the Tudors. 1485-1603. 3 cr.
This course will explore the history of England during the turbulent reign of the House of Tudor. Beginning with the struggle for the throne known as the Wars of the Roses and the triumph of Henry Tudor, the course examines the society, economy, and politics of the period along with its many interesting and colorful personalities including Henry VIII and his six unfortunate wives, the boy-king Edward VI, Bloody Queen Mary, and the “Virgin Queen” Elizabeth I. The course also studies the culture of Renaissance England, including the influence and life of William Shakespeare.

HIS 334 Germany: Rise, Fall, and Reunification, 1850-Present. 3 cr.
In 1850, there was no country called Germany. This course will begin with the building of the German Empire under Otto von Bismarck, and trace that empire’s destruction under Kaiser Wilhelm II. Much of the course will focus on the tragic consequences of Germany’s resurgence after World War I under the influence of Adolph Hitler’s Nazi regime. The course concludes with an overview of Germany conquered and broken into East and West during the Cold War and until its final reunification in 1990.

HIS 341 History of Latin America. 3 cr.
A study of the social, economic, and political development of Latin America from the conquistadors to the present.

HIS 342 Colonial Latin America. 3 cr.
This course studies the development of Latin America from European discovery through the independence movements of the early nineteenth century, with special attention paid to Mexico, the Andes, the Caribbean and Brazil.

HIS 343 History of Piracy. 3 cr.
This course studies the role of piracy in world history, from ancient to modern times. Piracy’s role as an economic and social institution in a variety of cultural settings will be discussed. The course also explores the importance of piracy in the present day’s cultural and historical memory.

HIS 352 Islam and the Middle East. 3 cr.
A study of the origins, teachings and spread of Islam. Special focus will be given to the various Islamic sects in the modern Middle East and their tensions with the West.

HIS 355 Selected Topics in World History: 3 cr.
Courses may include various national histories from across the globe from the 1700s to the present and special issues in world history.

HIS 357 Women in History 3 cr.
A comparative survey of the contributions of women in world history. The course will include elite and non-elite women in Western European, Eastern, Middle Eastern, and American traditions from the ancient to the modern era. Students will access these histories through textual and material sources, exploring broader concepts such as the historical importance of women in political, social, and religious contexts.

HIS 363 Sleeping Dragon: History of China. 3 cr.
After acquainting students with Chinese geography and culture, the history of China from the early imperial period to the end of the twentieth century will be surveyed. Special attention will be placed on Chinese religions and culture, the introduction of Christianity, China’s relationship to the West, and the Communist period. Students will read and analyze various primary source material in translation, as well as viewing films from and about China.

HIS 371 Native American History. 3 cr.
A study of Native American cultures and histories and the impact of European/American civilizations upon them. Course covers pre-Columbian history to the present day.

HIS 379 Witchcraft and Culture in the Atlantic World. 3 cr.
In the years from roughly 1500-1800, thousands of women and men in Europe and the Americas were put on trial and executed for the crime of witchcraft. The people of this period sincerely believed in the physical presence of the Devil, whose rampant minions lurked behind the masks of friends, neighbors, and family members. This course examines the history of popular culture, witchcraft beliefs, and occult practices in the early modern Atlantic World. Lectures will provide students with necessary background information for each section. The first section covers the popular culture of Western Europe, followed by a detailed examination of witchcraft and occult beliefs, criminal justice, and the great European witch hunts. Next, the course moves out into the Atlantic, exploring how European culture, religion, witchcraft, and occult beliefs converged with those of Indian and African peoples in the Americas. Finally, the course moves to British America, where the infamous Salem Witchcraft Trials provide a detailed case study using the original court records.

HIS 380 Colonial America, 1480-1763. 3 cr.
This course explores the rise and development of Britain’s American empire, including the thirteen North American colonies, Canada, and the West Indies. We begin with early efforts at exploration and colonization, including Massachusetts Bay and Jamestown in Virginia and conclude with Britain’s triumph in the “Great War for Empire” or French and Indian War in 1769, setting the stage for the years of imperial crisis, revolution, and independence that followed.

HIS 381 American Revolution and Early Republic, 1763-1815. 3 cr.
John Adams once wrote, “Posterity! You will never know how much it cost the present Generation to preserve your Freedom!” Americans indeed witnessed great struggles and challenges in this era and fought, often with each other, to define liberty, patriotism, equality, the rule of law, and ultimately what it meant to be a nation. This course will cover the crucial founding period of United States history, including detailed explorations and discussions of the fracturing of the British Empire, the long war for independence, the framing and ratifying of the constitution, the expansion of slavery, and the new republic tested by the dangers of a world at war in the early nineteenth century. The contributions of major figures including Adams, Jefferson, Washington, Hamilton, and Madison will also be discussed in depth.
HIS 382 Jacksonian America, 1816 - 1848. 3 cr.
This course continues a study of the United States following the formation period. This course looks at the development of the United States from an era of the common man to the end of the Mexican-American War.

HIS 383 American Civil War, 1848 - 1877. 3 cr.
This course surveys the causes for the Civil War, the military, political, social, and economic events of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

HIS 391 Selected Topics in American History: 3 cr.
Courses may include American military history, African-American history, women's history, and other topics in American history.

HIS 394 The Vietnam War Era. 3cr.
This course focuses on America’s longest and most divisive military conflict—the Vietnam War. The War came to symbolize the tumult of the 1960s and 1970s, a period of rapid and often difficult change in American history. This course explores these transformations, including America’s long military ordeal in Southeast Asia, political radicalism and violence, the victories and defeats of the Civil Rights movement, the expansion of government under Lyndon Johnson, and the rise and fall of Richard Nixon. The cultural transformations of the period, including movies, television, music, and sports, will also be explored in detail.

HIS 401 History Thesis. 3 cr.
This course is intended to be a capstone course for students majoring in history. Students will be required to produce a substantial thesis based on independent research in primary and secondary sources. At the discretion of the instructor, the course may focus on a specific historical topic or include discussions on the nature of history, methodology, and the discussion of various historiographical traditions.

HIS 490 Internship. 1-3 cr.
By arrangement with department and internship coordinator.

HIS 91 Special Topics. 1-3 cr.
Selected topics in History.

HIS 199-499 Independent Study. 1-3 cr.
By arrangement with department.