History

The School of Humanities

Chair
Gale Stokes

Professors
John B. Boles
Judith Brown
Ira D. Gruber
Thomas L. Haskell
Allen J. Matusow
Atieno Odhiambo
Patricia Seed
Daniel Sherman
Richard J. Smith
Albert Van Helden
Martin J. Wiener
Richard Wolin

Professors Emeritus
Katherine Fischer Drew
Harold Hyman
R. John Rath

Associate Professors
Peter C. Caldwell
Edward L. Cox
Michael Maas
David Nirenberg
Carol E. Quillen
Paula A. Sanders
Joel W. Wolfe
John H. Zammito

Assistant Professors
Jane Dailey
Eva Haverkamp
Ussama Makdisi
Sarah Thal

Lecturer
Thomas J. Hochstettler

Research Scholar
Alexander X. Byrd

Degrees Offered: B.A., M.A., Ph.D.

The undergraduate program offers courses in the four main areas of ancient-medieval history, modern European history, U.S. history, and the histories of Asia, Latin America, and Africa. The department encourages its majors to acquaint themselves with other humanistic disciplines, such as literature, fine arts, and philosophy; the contributions of political science, sociology, economics, and anthropology are also vital to historical studies. The graduate program, which trains a limited number of carefully selected students, offers studies in a number of areas, with faculty interests ranging from ancient and medieval history to modern British, French, German, and Balkan history, from areas in American history that include Colonial America, the Old and New South, the Civil War, legal/constitutional and intellectual history to world military history, and from the history of science to East Asian, Latin American, and Middle Eastern history.

Degree Requirements for B.A. in History

For general university requirements, see Graduation Requirements (pages 17–19). Students majoring in history must complete at least 30 semester hours (10 courses) in history, with 18 hours (6 courses) at the 300 or 400 level. Students may apply advanced placement credit to no more than 6 of these hours (2 courses). Majors should select two of the required upper-level courses from a departmental list of seminars devoted mainly to writing and discussion. Students are bound to the requirements in effect at the time they declare the major. Departmental distribution requirements are as follows (although students may not use advanced placement credit for these requirements):
Ancient-medieval history—at least 1 course
Modern European history—at least 2 courses
U.S. history—at least 2 courses
Asian, Latin American, and African history—at least 2 courses

Some foreign language proficiency is desirable, and the department highly recommends that students who are contemplating graduate work in history study at least one foreign language in some depth.

Transfer Credit and Advanced Placement Credit. The Department of History grants transfer credit on a case-by-case basis to enrolled undergraduates (the registrar determines the hours to be credited). However, history majors must take at least 18 semester hours (6 courses) of the required 30 hours in history at Rice. No more than 4 courses may be satisfied through advanced placement and transfer credit. Advanced placement credit may not be used to satisfy departmental distribution requirements for a history major.

Rice students who wish to take classes for credit at another U.S. university should allow sufficient time to get advance confirmation from the department that the course is eligible: courses are eligible only if taken at a four-year institution. Rice students planning to study at a foreign university also must get course approval from the Office of International Education.

After completing an approved course from either a domestic or a foreign university, students should submit a request for transfer credit, including evidence of the scope and work requirements of the course to be transferred (e.g., a syllabus, reading lists, and copies of exams and papers), to the department’s director of undergraduate studies.

Honors Program. Qualified undergraduates may enroll for 6 semester hours of directed honors research and writing, completing an honors thesis in their senior year (these 6 hours are in addition to the 30 hours required for the major). Students must complete both semesters of HIST 403–404 to receive credit; the grade for the final project applies to the full 6 hours. Interested students who have a grade point average of at least 3.50 in their history courses should submit a substantial historical essay, an honors thesis proposal, and recommendations from the instructor to whom the paper was submitted and from their proposed adviser. Financial assistance is available for honors students to conduct research on their honors theses during the summer between their junior and senior years. After their admission to the program, a periodic workshop allows honors students to share problems and ideas. Once the adviser and another reader have evaluated the completed thesis, the director of the honors program determines whether to award honors. Students who miss the final thesis deadline (which is well before the end of their senior year) will receive a grade and credit for completed work, but no honors.

Degree Requirements for M.A. and Ph.D. in History

Students who have a B.A. degree (or its equivalent) from an acceptable institution are eligible to apply to the graduate program in history. The M.A. and Ph.D. degrees are offered in limited areas of American, European, and other history. Further information is available on request from the department. For general university requirements, see Graduate Degrees (pages 72–73).

The department awards graduate tuition waivers and fellowship stipends, within the limits of available funds, to qualified students with demonstrated ability. As a part of their training, graduate students are expected to provide limited services to the university as tutorial instructors, research assistants, or editorial assistants for the Journal of Southern History or The Papers of Jefferson Davis, both sponsored by the university.
M.A. Program. Completion of the M.A. degree usually takes two years; no more than three years may elapse between graduate admission and the completion of the degree unless the department Graduate Committee approves an extension. M.A. degrees are awarded in two ways: 1) completion of one year of course work (24 credit hours) and a thesis written and defended in an oral examination during the second year; 2) completion of two years of course work (48 credit hours), normally including at least 8 seminars (32 semester hours), and at least two seminar research papers.

Ph.D. Program. Doctoral candidates must prepare themselves in three fields of history, two in their major area of concentration, whether European, U.S., or other history, and a third in an area outside of that concentration (e.g., if the major area is European history, the third field must be in U.S. or other non-European history, and if the major area is U.S. history, the third field must be in European or other non-U.S. history, and so on). Students who wish to pursue a third field in an area outside the department should petition the Graduate Committee by the end of their second semester.

Ph.D. students do not need to complete a specific number of semester hours, but they must remain full-time students from their entry into the program until they pass their qualifying examination. Passing the qualifying exam allows the student to apply for formal admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree.

For the Ph.D., candidates must:
• Complete enough course work, including directed and independent reading, to prepare them thoroughly in one of their three fields, working with an adviser who has expertise in that field
• Take eight graduate seminars, including methods courses
• Pass reading examinations in the principal language of research (unless it is English) and one other language (not English)
• Perform satisfactorily on written and oral qualifying examinations. For students entering with a B.A., those examinations should be taken before the beginning of the fifth semester and no later than the beginning of the sixth semester. Students entering with an M.A. may take their examinations earlier, with department approval.
• Complete a dissertation presenting the results of original research within three years after passing the qualifying examination (unless an extension is granted by the Graduate Committee)
• Defend the thesis in a public oral examination

See HIST (pages 374–398) in the Courses of Instruction section.