



HISTORY

HISTORY.RICHMOND.EDU

Introduction to History

In studying history, we learn about the past in all its complexity. In small classes on topics that can range from the materiality of tobacco to the abstractions of communism, we place evidence into context, consider it from multiple perspectives, assess its significance, and draw on it to understand the world of past and present.

All of this allows us to understand agency — how people make things happen — and its limits. History students think effectively about change, both change that has already happened, and change they seek in the world. Working with evidence, students develop reading, interpretive, and research skills vital to many future professions. History students learn to ask constructive questions. Studying history hones skills in listening, speaking, writing, and communicating analysis and insights.

History at UR

The major: History majors learn research, analytic, and communication skills — and become aware of diverse contexts and perspectives. Over at least ten courses, majors study historical contexts around the globe and chronological periods from the Medieval world to the twenty-first century. Students often emphasize specific regions — tracking the development of the United States from its origins to the present or Europe from the Middle Ages to the European Union. The department offers an array of courses on particular themes, with courses on World War, colonialism, the medieval crusades, food, gender and sexuality, and beyond.

In colloquia, majors explore specific controversies, such as the negotiations of the US constitution, Food and Power in Africa and Asia, American Identities, and the History of Madness. Whether through a senior capstone seminar or an honors project, majors also complete original research and interpretation, working with primary evidence and learning to write historical analysis. Internships and special initiatives in the humanities, digital history, and more, are available for summer research and further explorations.

The minor: Students may also minor in history. History minors celebrate an interest in history by taking five courses on anything in the major. These courses must move beyond the introductory level, but can combine regions, themes, and ideas, or alternatively focus on a particular geographic, chronological, or thematic interest.

Students who combine a history minor with other majors see history's emphasis on context, change, and the interpretation of evidence being worth extended study even if they expect to focus principally on business, chemistry, global studies, PEEL, or another major.

Career Paths

What can you do with a history major? What can't you do with a history major! Directions that history graduates take include graduate or professional school, education, business, government service, and much more. Employers from many fields have said that what impresses them is that Richmond history majors have learned to think through complex human problems and to express themselves clearly.

Graduate School Acceptances

American University (history)
Columbia University (social work)
Duke University (law)
Georgetown University (law)
Johns Hopkins University
Michigan State University (history)
Northwestern University (history)
Princeton University (religion)
Syracuse University (architecture)
Tufts University (history)
Tulane University (medicine)
University of Denver (law)
University of Maryland (medicine)
University of North Carolina (history)
University of Pennsylvania (education)
University of Texas, Austin (classics)
Vanderbilt University (history)
Virginia Commonwealth University (history)

Recent Graduate Employment

CapitalOne
The Chapin School, Manhattan, N.Y.
Charleston, S.C., Police Department
Cine Mosaic Films
Citibank, New York
Delaware Museum of Natural History
Droga5 (advertising)
FD MorgenWalke
Freehold Township Schools, N.J.
Grey NY (advertising)
Hearst Magazine
Historical Foundation of Hillsborough, N.C.
Lincoln Law Partners, Chicago
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
(history professor)
NBCSports.com
University of Cincinnati (Classics professor)
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
(history professor)
Ventura County (Calif.) Public Defender's Office
Virginia Department of Historic Resources

Scholarships for History Majors

The History Department offers a number of generous scholarships for History Majors. They include:

- Helen G. Stafford Scholarship for a Westhampton College student
- Jacob Billikopf Scholarship for a Richmond College student
- Harry M. Ward Scholarship for University of Richmond students from either college
- Spencer & Margaret Albright Scholarships
- Maude Howlett Woodfin-Susan Lough Grant for a Westhampton alumna attending graduate school (preferably in history but also in allied fields such as archaeology, library sciences, social work and law.)

Recent Senior Honors Theses

John Spencer Jones, "Noble Pagans and Satanical Saracens: Literary Portrayals of Islam in Medieval Italy and Iberia"

Charlie Tabor, "Moctezuma and the Emergence of Sixteenth-Century New Spain's Historical Dialogue"

Eric Bossert, "The Long Arm of Medicine: Creation of the Turkish Medical Infrastructure, Legitimacy, Governmentality, and the Rockefeller Foundation"

Rowan Cai, "Authors of Identity: Negotiating Press and Personhood in the Jewish South, 1893-1899"

Maggie Castelli, "Redstockings Rising: Why the White, Class-Conscious, New York Redstockings Left a Mark on the Women's Liberation Movement, 1960-1980"

Bryan Carapucci, "Governance in a Multi-Ethnic Republic: Nationalist Rule and Response in Xinjiang and the Frontier, 1933-35"

Alexis Hills, "Crossing Cultures: The Negotiation of Gender and Racial Norms from New England to Cherokee Country"

Nadia Neman, "Competing Conceptions of Humanitarianism: Enemy Civilians and Ottoman-American Diplomacy in the Great War, 1914-1918"

Mike Laposata, "'And so they abandoned it and went to Cyprus': The Lusignan Kingdom of Cyprus and Expressions of Military and Economic Power, 1291-1306"

Will Wasta-Werner, "Victory in Defeat: The Power of Loss and the Construction of the Myths of Cato Uticensis and Robert E. Lee" 1980"

Spencer Yacos, "Empire on Trial: The Rise and Fall of Republican Resistance in Early Augustan Rome"

Special Resources

- Summer research support is available through the Richmond Guarantee.
- UR History Majors and Minors have studied all over the world: England, Scotland, Ireland, Italy, France, Germany, the Czech Republic, South Africa, Russia, Japan, South Korea, India. With History programs widespread, these are just some of the options!
- Boatwright Library offers deep and wide-ranging support with books, media, online collections, rare book collections, and excellent interlibrary loan access.

- Digital Scholarship Lab provides access to cutting edge digital history initiatives.
- Archives held in Richmond include the Virginia Historical Society, the Library and Archives of Virginia, the Museum of the Confederacy, Virginia Baptist Historical Society, as well as special collections of papers at Virginia Commonwealth University and Virginia Union University.
- Museums and public history locations in Richmond include The Valentine, the American Civil War Museum, Virginia Holocaust Museum, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Virginia Museum of History & Culture, Agecroft Hall, and more.
- The Douglas Southall Freeman Visiting Professorship allows the department to bring a distinguished visiting historian to the campus annually to teach a class, give a series of talks or a mini-conference, and expand our department's range. Combined with other endowed lectureships, this support ensures a vigorous program of talks and events.

Faculty

Edward L. Ayers

Ph.D., Yale University

Tucker-Boatwright Professor of the Humanities

President emeritus

Areas of specialty: southern history, American Civil War

Christopher Bischof

Ph.D., Rutgers University

Area of specialty: Britain and the World

David Brandenberger

Ph.D., Harvard University

Area of specialty: Russia/Soviet Union

Joanna Drell

Ph.D., Brown University

Department Chair

Area of specialty: Medieval and Renaissance Europe

Pippa Holloway

Ph.D., The Ohio State University

Distinguished Douglas Southall Freeman Chair of History

Areas of specialty: U.S. legal, U.S. gender & sexuality

Michelle Kahn

Ph.D., Stanford University

Area of specialty: Modern Europe

Tze May Loo

Ph.D., Cornell University

Areas of specialty: Japan, East Asia

Manuella Meyer

Ph.D., Yale University

Area of specialty: Latin America

Nicole Sackley

Ph.D., Princeton University

Areas of specialty: United States and the world, U.S. culture

Samantha Seeley

Ph.D., New York University

Area of specialty: Early America

L. Carol Summers

Ph.D., Johns Hopkins University

Samuel Chiles Mitchell-Jacob Billikopf

Professor of History and International Studies

Area of specialty: Africa

Sydney Watts

Ph.D., Cornell University

Areas of specialty: Early modern Europe, France 1650-1800

Yücel Yanıkdağ

Ph.D., The Ohio State University

Areas of specialty: Modern Middle East, Ottoman Empire, modern Turkey

Eric Yellin

Ph.D., Princeton University

Area of specialty: 20th century U.S.



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