

HISTORY MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Standard major (10 courses)

1 HIST 33000: History Workshop (“the gateway course” for the standard major), to be taken the semester following the major declaration

4 One course from four of the following five areas, with the proviso that one course of the four must contain substantial material on the period before 1500

African/Asian/Middle Eastern history
Ancient/Medieval European history (to 1500)
Modern European history (after 1500)
United States history
Latin American history

3 Three Concentration Area* courses

1 One Departmental Seminar (HIST 43xxx), ideally in the area of concentration

1 One elective (any major-level history course (beginning with a 3, 4, or 5))

10 total courses

*An area of concentration must be chosen by the beginning of the senior year, with the guidance and approval of the major’s departmental advisor. Concentration Areas include – but are certainly not limited to – the following fields:

Geographical

African History
Asian History
Medieval Europe
Middle-Eastern History
Modern Europe
United States
Latin America
Trans-Atlantic history
Borderlands history

Thematic

Political history
Women’s history
Religious history
Intellectual history
Social history
History of Science and Technology

Supplementary major (8 courses)

4 One course from four of the following five areas, with the proviso that one course of the four must contain substantial material on the period before 1500.

African/Asian/Middle Eastern history
Ancient/Medieval European history (to 1500)
Modern European history (after 1500)
United States history
Latin American history

3 Three electives (any major-level history course (beginning with a 3, 4, or 5))

1 One Departmental Seminar (HIST 43xxx)

8 total courses

MAJORING IN HISTORY
at the
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Students interested in majoring in history at the University of Notre Dame have two options.

The standard major option consists of ten three-credit upper-level history courses (those that begin with a 3, 4, or 5), beginning with an exciting introductory seminar (HIST 33000 – History Workshop), which will plunge students into the work of writing history through the intensive interpretation of primary source documents. The History Workshop should be taken as early as possible, though other courses may be taken first. To foster breadth of historical knowledge, standard majors will take a variety of courses emphasizing different chronological periods and geographical areas. Additionally, to encourage depth in a particular field of interest, standard majors will also declare a concentration area consisting of three courses. Standard majors will also take an elective in any field they choose. To complete their course work, standard majors will take a departmental seminar, which will offer the opportunity to conduct primary research and produce a substantial paper.

The second option is a supplementary major, consisting of eight three-credit upper-level history courses (those that begin with a 3, 4, or 5). To encourage breadth of historical knowledge, supplementary majors will take a variety of courses emphasizing different chronological periods and geographical areas. Additionally, to encourage depth in the student's particular field of interest, supplementary majors will take three electives. To complete their course work, supplementary majors will take a departmental seminar, which will offer the opportunity to conduct primary research and produce a substantial paper.

[Note: While nearly all history courses are taught for three credits, students can also fulfill requirements by an accumulation of one-credit mini-courses if they are offered.]

Studying history offers an excellent way to develop the critical thinking, writing, and communication skills necessary to be informed and active citizens in the fullest sense of the term. The educational value of history has been summed up innumerable times in the important observation that people can hardly understand their place in the world if they know nothing about how it got that way. In addition, history can provide a firm foundation for the study of literature, philosophy, theology, economics, science, and business, all of which are better understood when placed in their historical contexts. In other words, history is an excellent skeleton on which to build a broader education. In sum, students of history not only develop a firm knowledge of the past; they also acquire an informed way of thinking about and looking at the world.

Many Notre Dame history majors continue on to graduate or professional school. History has also prepared students for careers in the professions of teaching, government, archival and museum work, and journalism. In recent years, the corporate world has also begun recruiting graduates with liberal arts degrees such as history, emphasizing the importance of critical thinking and writing skills for success in business. But whatever vocational path a person follows, he or she will find that history is useful, indeed necessary, to navigating the increasingly complicated world in which we live and work.

If you would like to declare history as a major, please contact:

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