In a world increasingly characterized by the ten-second soundbite, our understanding of world events is often limited to the superficial. Despite the speed and intensity of these events, the conflicts and achievements of our times emerge from long-established influences and sequences of events. The study of history adds both breadth and depth to an individual’s understanding of our fast-changing world.

History provides the means to discover how the past shapes and affects the present and how seemingly unrelated events and forces connect to frame human endeavors. There is something profoundly enduring about the study of history, as it allows us to realize the complexity of human affairs from a multitude of perspectives. It is both an intellectually satisfying and eminently practical pursuit. History majors at Western acquire and sharpen skills that enrich educational experiences and increase employment opportunities in a number of fields. Such skills include: cause and effect analysis, critical evaluation and organization of evidence, document and data base research, development and understanding of analytical frameworks, and organization and synthesis of information—all skills essential to solving problems and presenting results.

The History League student club and the Iota Nu Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the national history Honor Society, are active on campus.

Program Goals

- Build historical knowledge.
- Develop historical methods.
- Recognize the provisional nature of knowledge, the disciplinary preference for complexity, and the comfort with ambiguity that history requires.
- Apply the range of skills it takes to decode the historical record because of its incomplete, complex, and contradictory nature.
- Create historical arguments and narratives.
- Use historical perspective as central to active citizenship.
- History Comprehensive Major: Secondary Licensure Emphasis (with a 3+2 Master of Arts in Education) (https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/history-comprehensive-secondary-licensure-3-2/)
- History Major: Standard Program (https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/history-standard-program/)
- History Minor (https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/history-minor/)
- Public History Emphasis (with a 3+2 Master in Environmental Management) (https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/public-history-3-2-mem/)
- Public History Emphasis (with a 3+2 Master of Arts in Gallery and Museum Management) (https://catalog.western.edu/undergraduate/programs/history/public-history-3-2-mgmm/)

Capstone Course Requirement

The following course in the History Major fulfills the Capstone Course Requirement: HIST 402 Engaging the Past.

History Courses

HIST 101. World History to 1500 (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)
A survey of the cultural, political, religious, artistic, technological and philosophical journeys of human beings, from the prehistoric age, the birth of civilization and emergence of agriculture to the establishment of great empires and the impact of the great religious and philosophical revolutions of the ancient and medieval world. GT-HI1

HIST 102. World History Since 1500 (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)
A continuation of HIST 101 and a survey of the transformation of human development as a result of modernization. Students consider the rise and fall of empires and shifting regional influences as a result of the emergence of the transatlantic region, Europe's revolutionary transformation and its impact on the world; the rise of global interaction and conflict; the colonial and post-colonial eras and the resulting tensions and achievements of these events are examined within the context of modernity. GT-HI1

HIST 126. U.S. History to 1865 (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)
A survey of American history from its European beginnings to the Civil War, providing description and analysis of the historical development of politics, economics, society, and foreign policy. Attention is given to the people and forces that influenced these developments. GT-HI1

HIST 127. U.S. History Since 1865 (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)
A survey of American history from the Civil War to modern times, providing description and analysis of the major developments and trends in politics, economics, society, and foreign policy. Attention is given to the people and forces that influenced and shaped the American experience. GT-HI1

HIST 197. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)

HIST 200. Historical Inquiry. (3 Credits)
Students examine the ways scholars have studied, interpreted, debated and represented the past through time. This course introduces students to History as not only a discipline of study and scholarship but as an inquiry into human experience and a public pursuit. Students develop the research and writing skills required in the field of History across a variety of formats and topics. It is recommended students complete this course no later than sophomore year.

HIST 254. History of Africa (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)
A survey of sub-Saharan African history from earliest times to the present, with particular emphasis on social, cultural, economic, and political responses to imperialist or other outside influences. GT-HI1

HIST 257. History of East Asia. (3 Credits)
A study of the civilization of China and Japan. The course offers a survey covering ancient, medieval, and modern developments, including cultural, religious, political, military, and economic factors.

HIST 258. History of Southeast Asia. (3 Credits)
A survey of the history of Southeast Asia, which includes the countries of Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. Each regional discussion is organized by cultural, social, and political themes. This course stresses the influence of India and China on the region; cultural exchange in the region through warfare, trade, and religion; Western encroachment and colonialism; nationalistic movements in reaction to colonialism and oppression. The class ends with the effects of WWII.
HIST 260. Latin American History (GT-HI1). (3 Credits)
A survey of the major events and themes of Latin American History from pre-Columbian times through the modern era with special emphasis on the interaction of New and Old World cultures and the impact of colonization and the construction of national identity after independence into the modern era. GT-HI1

HIST 297. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)

HIST 301. The Ancient World. (3 Credits)
Studies of the Ancient World. This course is a rotating topic which may include studies of the Egyptians, Romans, Mayas, Greeks, or specific African and Asian cultures. Class may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 309. Modern Germany. (3 Credits)
Examines the cultural and political forces which led to the creation of Germany and then shaped its behavior through two world wars. Topics include the role of nationalism, the failure of liberalism, the causes of racism, and the nature of the Nazi regime. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 311. The Medieval World. (3 Credits)
Studies of the medieval world. This course is a rotating topic which may include studies of the Black Death and Europe, the Byzantines, Shogun Era in Japan, Irish and Scots, the Vikings or specific African and Asian cultures. Class may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 312. Renaissance and Reformation. (3 Credits)
A course which covers the Babylonian Captivity of the Roman Catholic Church; the artistic, literary, and political developments of Renaissance Italy and Northern Europe; the subsequent emergence of the Protestant Reformation; and the religious wars which engulfed Europe. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 313. Early Modern Europe: Topics. (3 Credits)
An in-depth study into themes and or regions of early modern European history (15th-18th centuries). This course examines the political, cultural, military, social, environmental, and economic evolutions of the era. Class may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 315. France and the Revolution. (3 Credits)
A study of the origins, character, and significance of the French Revolution. This course begins with an examination of the relation of the Old Regime to the failure of absolutism and concludes with a discussion of the general nature of revolution and social change. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 317. Modern Europe: Topics. (3 Credits)
An in-depth study into themes of modern European history (19th-20th centuries). This course examines themes of political, cultural, military, social, environmental, and economic evolutions of the 20th century. Class may be taken twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 327. Colorado History. (3 Credits)
A study of the history of Colorado from prehistoric times to the modern era, emphasizing the Native American and Spaniard, mining, cattle, transportation and farming frontiers, and problems of the 20th century involving water, energy, and growth. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 330. Colonial America. (3 Credits)
A study of the indigenous peoples of North America and European expansion into the region including the French in Canada, Spanish in Florida and the English establishment of the Thirteen Colonies. Topics include colonial development, westward expansion, and conflicts with the indigenous populations, the role of women in the colonies, and social, intellectual, political and military activities from 1607 to the French Indian War in 1754. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 333. American Revolution and the Early Republic. (3 Credits)
A study of the economic, social and political causes of the American Revolution. Focused attention is given to the Articles of Confederation, Hamiltonian and Jeffersonian America, the Constitutional Convention, Bill of Rights, Jeffersonian and Jacksonian Democracy, Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clarke expedition and the early national era. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 336. U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction. (3 Credits)
A study of the causes of the Civil War with emphasis on the differing worlds of the North and the South and the social, intellectual and economic movements of the time. The military actions of the war are examined and the legacy of the war considered. The challenges and issues of the post war years of Reconstruction are explored. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 340. Emergence of the Modern U.S.. (3 Credits)
A study of U.S. history from the end of Reconstruction in 1877 to the Great Depression in 1929. Topics include industrialization, immigration, the Progressive movement, the causes and impact of World War I and the exciting but troubled 1920s all leading to the Great Depression. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 343. Depression and World War II. (3 Credits)
An exploration of the ramifications that the economic collapse had on America’s social, economic, cultural, and political life. The United States entrance into the World War II is also discussed, with major focus on the changes that took place, both internally and abroad, because of the conflict. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 346. Recent American History. (3 Credits)
A history of the United States since 1945 with emphasis on the Cold War, the Eisenhower years, the turbulent decade of the 1960s, and the transformations of the 1970s and 1980s. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 348. History of the Trans-Mississippi West. (3 Credits)
A history of the Trans-Mississippi West from 1800 to the present time, emphasizing the Native Americans, Spanish settlement, and Westward Expansion. Manifest Destiny, mining and cattle frontiers, settlement of the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains, closing of the western frontier, and the New West of today. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.
HIST 349. History of the Hispanic Southwest. (3 Credits)
Students examine the historical development of Hispanic settlement and culture in the American Southwest from its inception to the present day. Students study the interaction of Hispanic communities with nomadic and settled indigenous peoples and with Anglo ranchers, settler and commercial interests. From the 16th century settlements to the Mexican-American War and the territory's incorporation into the United States to the development of the Chicano identity in the 20th century, students analyze the American Southwest, as a patria chica of success and failure, achievement and potential. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 350. Environmental History of the Borderlands. (3 Credits)
Students examine the process of historical development of the Borderlands region between Mexico and the United States and consider its implications for the region's environment. Settlement patterns, a blending of cultural and ethnic identities, economic development and integration and emerging social tensions have resulted in an environmental transformation of the region with far-reaching implications for both nations north and south of the Rio Grande/Bravo. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 351. History of Russia. (3 Credits)
A study of Russia which may include topics such as the development of Kievan Rus, the invasion and occupation of the Golden Horde, the Romanov line, Revolutionary Russia and the Soviet Union. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 355. African History: Topics. (3 Credits)
This course examines a particular topic, era or region in African History thus course content will vary. Rotating topics may include colonialism, conflict, or a country or regional study. Students may take this course twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 360. Mexico. (3 Credits)
A broad survey of Mexican history from pre-Columbian times to the present, with particular emphasis on social, cultural, political and economic issues. This course also examines Mexico's relations with Europe during the colonial and early national periods and with the United States during the 19th and 20th centuries. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 365. Latin American Revolutions. (3 Credits)
Beginning with an examination of theories of revolution, students explore how the theoretical relates to events in Latin American history. Students examine the development of revolutionary consciousness and the role of women, indigenous peoples and the rural and urban masses in revolutionary movements throughout the region. Students consider the influence of revolution on Latin American artistic expression. Finally, students investigate specific historical case studies of Latin American revolutions. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 366. Modern Latin America. (3 Credits)
This class examines the modern era of Latin America tracing the transition of the region from colonies into free and independent nations. Students follow the development of Latin America through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and explore the political, social, economic, and cultural changes that occurred throughout the region. The course explores how and why this region has changed and how Latin America has dealt with the challenges of the last 200 years. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 367. Latin American History: Topics. (3 Credits)
This course examines a particular topic, theme or region in Latin American History thus course content will vary. Topics may rotate between women and gender, film and history, travel accounts, environmental history or a country or regional study. Students may take this course twice for credit. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore status or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 370. Public History. (3 Credits)
This course explores the ways historians have engaged the public with the past. It provides an introduction to the theory and practice of interpreting history in institutions such as museums, archives, historical societies, and in historic preservation projects, digital projects, and oral histories. The course examines theoretical constructs including memory, heritage, community and commemoration and explores how academic history and public history complement and enrich one another. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 371. Oral History Workshop. (3 Credits)
An examination of the theory and practice of the field of oral history. Through the course of the semester, students will examine the field of oral history, learn how to conduct oral history interviews, and produce an oral history. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 372. Monuments and Museums. (3 Credits)
Students explore the interconnected concepts of memory, change and time through the examination of monuments, memorials and museums. Through readings, discussions and field experiences students consider the representation of past events in public spaces and the ways in which such places can both shape a shared sense of the past and become sites of contention and representations of power. Students trace the evolution of museums and the nature of preservation, interpretation and scholarship of collections and exhibits. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 373. History of the National Parks Service. (3 Credits)
Students study the history and development of the National Parks Service of the United States exploring the social, political and economic attitudes towards Wilderness, preservation and conservation. Students trace the development of the guiding principles of the NPS and the evolution of the National Parks system over time while examining the development of national parks systems outside of the United States. This seminar also includes a number of weekend field trips to regional National Parks and National Historic Sites during the semester. Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.

HIST 397. Special Topics. (6 Credits)
Prerequisites: minimum sophomore standing or instructor permission. HIST 200 recommended.
HIST 399. Internship in History. (1-3 Credits)
History majors and minors obtain archival, museum and public history experience through direct, supervised contact with archivists, curators and professionals from related areas. Graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory only. Maximum 6 credits can be applied to the major. Prerequisites: HIST 200 and junior standing or instructor permission.

HIST 402. Engaging the Past. (3 Credits)
Students explore the myriad of ways human beings engage with the Past. Through examination of the development and role of historical inquiry to how we preserve, restore, remember, reenact, manipulate and silence the past, students develop an understanding of how we interpret and analyze the Past as individuals, as communities and as Historians. The role of the historian in society and the ethical considerations which guide the Historians work are woven through the course content. History majors should take this course during or after their second semester of their junior year. Prerequisites: HIST 200 and junior standing or instructor permission.

HIST 492. Independent Study. (1-4 Credits)
A special study in areas of student interest. May be taken for a maximum of four credits. Prerequisites: HIST 200 and junior standing or instructor permission.

HIST 497. Special Topics. (1-6 Credits)