

HISTORY

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The History major is for students who understand that shaping the future requires knowing the past. History courses explore many centuries of human experimentation and ingenuity, from the global to the individual scale. History majors learn to be effective storytellers and analysts, and to craft arguments that speak to broad audiences. They make extensive use of Yale's vast library resources to create pioneering original research projects. Students of history learn to think about politics and government, sexuality, the economy, cultural and intellectual life, war and society, and other themes in broadly humanistic—rather than narrowly technocratic—ways.

History is one of Yale College's most popular and intellectually diverse majors, encompassing nearly every region and time period of the global past. The study of history is excellent preparation for careers in many fields, including law, journalism, business and finance, education, politics and public policy, social activism, and the arts.

COURSE NUMBERING

Courses numbered HIST 001–099 are first-year seminars, with enrollment limited to eighteen. Remaining course numbers are organized by region, not by rigor or difficulty. Courses numbered in the 100s explore the history of the United States or Canada; those in the 200s, Europe, Russia, and Britain; and those in the 300s, Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Courses numbered in the 400s address global topics. Most of these courses are lecture courses, although some are seminars. Courses whose numbers end with the letter “J” are departmental seminars, which are research focused; all departmental seminars are available for preregistration by History majors and are capped at fifteen students.

PREREQUISITE

The prerequisite for the major is two term courses in History. Courses completed in fulfillment of the prerequisite may be applied toward the requirements of the major.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

Ten term courses in History are required, including prerequisites, and in addition to the senior essay.

Upon declaration, all History majors select either the global or the specialist concentration. The global concentration is designed for students seeking a broad understanding of major trends in the history of human societies throughout the world. The specialist concentration is for students seeking to focus in a particular geographic region, such as the United States, or in a thematic pathway, such as empires and colonialism. Majors may change concentrations until the end of the course selection period in the second term of the junior year.

The global concentration requires one course in five of the six different geographic regions (see below). Students must also take two preindustrial courses, covering material

before the year 1800, and two departmental seminars, identified by a "J" suffix to the course number (such as HIST 156J).

The specialist concentration requires at least five (and up to eight) courses in a particular geographic region or in a thematic pathway (see list below). Courses appropriate for each region and pathway are listed on the department website. Students must also take at least two courses outside their area of specialization, and their overall coursework must include at least three geographic regions. Like students in the global concentration, students in the specialist concentration must take two preindustrial courses, covering material before the year 1800, and at least two departmental seminars, identified by a "J" suffix to the course number (e.g. HIST 156J). Students in the specialist concentration may design an area of specialization with the approval of a faculty adviser and the director of undergraduate studies (DUS).

Regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, and United States

Pathways: cultural history; empires and colonialism; environmental history; ideas and intellectuals; international and diplomatic history (formerly international history); politics, law, and government (formerly politics and law); race, gender, and sexuality; religion in context; science, technology, and medicine; social change and social movements; war and society; the world economy

Students in either concentration may count the same courses toward geographical, preindustrial, and seminar requirements. For instance, a departmental seminar on premodern Japan simultaneously fulfills the preindustrial, seminar, and Asia geographical requirements.

Departmental seminars All students who declare the History major are entitled to preregister for two departmental seminars (designated by a course number ending in J, such as HIST 156J). Many seminars are popular and fill up quickly. Students may use their preregistration privileges at any time after declaring the major, in their sophomore, junior, or senior years. Sophomores contemplating study abroad are urged to consider taking at least one seminar in the sophomore year. Residential College Seminars, study abroad courses, and courses in other departments that count toward the History major do not fulfill the departmental seminar requirement. Please note that the department offers seminars that are not J seminars and do not satisfy the departmental seminar requirements, although they can satisfy other requirements (preindustrial, region, pathway, etc.) Such non-J seminars are either a) cross-listed with other departments, or b) do not require the primary source research that departmental "J" seminars require. Students cannot preregister for non-J seminars during departmental preregistration.

Distinction in the major Students who receive an A or A- on the two-term senior essay and who receive the requisite grades in their remaining coursework are awarded Distinction in the Major. (See The Undergraduate Curriculum, Honors.) Students who do not complete the two-term senior essay are not eligible for Distinction.

Credit/D/Fail Departmental seminars cannot be taken Credit/D/Fail.

SENIOR REQUIREMENT

Students in the History major are not passive consumers of historical knowledge: they create original works of history themselves. As seniors, History majors complete

a work of original research in close consultation with a faculty adviser. The range of acceptable topics and methodological approaches is wide. The aim is to take on study of a significant historical subject through research in accessible primary source materials.

Most students choose to write a two-term independent senior essay, for two course credits toward the major. The two-term essay is required to earn Distinction in the Major. A smaller number of students choose to write an independent one-term senior essay, for one course credit toward the major.

The one-term senior essay History majors may choose to write a one-term independent senior essay during the fall term under the guidance of a faculty adviser. However, students who choose the one-term option are not eligible for Distinction in the Major or history prizes. The one-term essay is a substantial research paper (roughly half the length of the two-term senior essay) based on primary sources, along with a bibliographic essay. Seniors receive course credit for their departmental essays by enrolling in HIST 497 during the fall of senior year. In rare circumstances, with permission of the adviser and senior essay director, a student enrolled in HIST 497 during the fall term may withdraw from the course in accordance with Yale College regulations on course withdrawal and enroll in HIST 497 during the spring term. Additional details about the senior essay are provided in the Senior Essay Handbook, available on the History website.

The two-term senior essay History majors seeking to earn Distinction in the Major must complete a two-term independent senior essay under the guidance of a faculty adviser. The typical senior essay is 40–50 pages (no more than 12,500 words), plus a bibliography and bibliographical essay. Seniors receive course credit for their departmental essays by enrolling in HIST 495 (first term of senior year) and HIST 496 (second term of senior year). The grade for the final essay, determined by an outside reader in consultation with the faculty adviser, is applied retroactively to both terms. Additional details about the senior essay are provided in the Senior Essay Handbook, available on the History website. History majors graduating in December may begin their two-term senior essay in the spring term and complete the senior essay during fall term.

Additional option for the senior essay Some students embark on the two-term essay but discover that their choice is not a good fit. Students who enroll in HIST 495 during the first term may opt out in consultation with their faculty adviser and the senior essay director. This decision must be made in accordance with Yale College regulations on course withdrawal. Instead, the student will enroll in HIST 497 in the spring term to write a one-term senior essay. Students who opt out will not be eligible for Distinction in the Major or History prizes. Additional details about the senior essay are provided in the Senior Essay Handbook, available on the History website.

ADVISING

All students who declare the History major are assigned an adviser from among the departmental faculty. The adviser is available throughout the year for consultation about courses and the major. Students in the global concentration are assigned an adviser from the general History faculty. Students in the specialist concentration are assigned an adviser in their area of specialization. At the beginning of each term, students majoring in History must have their schedule signed and approved by

their departmental adviser or by the DUS. Students may request a specific adviser in consultation with the DUS, though the department cannot always accommodate such requests. In addition, a small group of advanced undergraduate students serve as peer advisors and are available to assist students in navigating the major.

Course substitution History majors are permitted to include up to two courses taught outside the department toward fulfillment of the major, with the approval of the DUS. Nondepartmental courses may fulfill geographic, region/pathway, and preindustrial distribution requirements. They may not fulfill departmental seminar or senior requirements.

Combined B.A./M.A. degree program Exceptionally able and well-prepared students may complete a course of study leading to the simultaneous award of the B.A. and M.A. degrees after eight terms of enrollment. See Academic Regulations, section L, Special Academic Arrangements, "Simultaneous Award of the Bachelor's and Master's Degrees." Interested students should consult the DUS prior to the sixth term of enrollment for specific requirements in History.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Prerequisites 2 term courses in History

Number of courses 10 term courses (incl prereqs, not incl senior essay)

Distribution of courses *Both concentrations*—2 courses in preindustrial hist as specified; 2 departmental sems; *Global concentration*—1 course in each of 6 geographical regions (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, U.S.); *Specialist concentration*—at least 5 courses in specific region or pathway; at least 2 courses outside region or pathway; overall course work must include 3 regions

Substitution permitted 1 or 2 nondepartmental courses approved by DUS

Senior requirement Two-term senior essay (HIST 495 and 496) or one-term senior essay (HIST 497)