

History

Degrees Offered

- Master of Arts
- Doctor of Philosophy

Nature of the Program

The Department of History offers graduate work in the history of Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, public history, the United States including Appalachia/regional, and world history. In addition to our core areas of strength, the department encourages research that is comparative and transnational in perspective and scope. Faculty research and teaching interests are clustered thematically around four areas: Gender and Kinship, Imperial and Postcolonial Societies, Labor and Political Economy, and War and Society. Our program is designed to give students flexibility to create a plan of study that matches their interests, while at the same time provide a breadth of training in different fields that will prepare students in historiography, research methods, and teaching approaches. Students can select concentrations leading to preparation for careers in teaching and scholarship and as specialists for various branches of government, business, and public service. Students in the program are normally expected to pursue the degrees of master of arts or doctor of philosophy.

TRANSATLANTIC OPTION FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS

The Department of History has launched a new transatlantic program in international history and security studies in partnership with Collegium Civitas, located in Warsaw, Poland, beginning fall 2018. The program is designed as a two-year plan of study consisting of 60 U.S. credit hours, or 120 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System credits. Students completing the program earn half of these credits at WVU and the other half at Collegium Civitas. Following a successful completion of all requirements, including the thesis defense, two master's degrees will be conferred—one in history from WVU, and the other in international relations from Collegium Civitas.

WVU students will normally spend their first year of studies at WVU and their second year at CC. Students from Collegium Civitas will spend their first year in Warsaw and their second year in Morgantown. Defense of the joint MA thesis will be held on the premises of both institutions, physically and virtually, with participation by both WVU and CC faculty.

All requirements of the program must be met and credits transferred between the institutions before either the U.S. degree from WVU, or the European degree from Collegium Civitas can be issued. As a result, the two degrees, though coming from separate institutions, are awarded simultaneously.

FACULTY

CHAIR

- Kate Staples - Ph.D. (University of Minnesota)

ASSOCIATE CHAIR

- Matthew Vester - Ph.D. (University of California, Los Angeles)

DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES

- Jason Phillips - Ph.D. (Rice University)

DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

- William Gorby - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)

PROFESSORS

- Joseph Hodge - Ph.D. (Queen's University at Kingston)
Regular Graduate Faculty, Modern Britain, British Empire, Decolonization, International Development, Africa
- Brian Luskey - Ph.D. (Emory University)
Regular Graduate Faculty, 19th-century U.S., Social and Cultural History
- Jason Phillips - Ph.D. (Rice University)
Regular Graduate Faculty, Eberly Family Professor of Civil War Studies, Civil War Era, 19th-century U.S., Southern History, Material Culture
- James Siekmeier - Ph.D. (Cornell University)
Regular Graduate Faculty, U.S. Diplomatic, Modern Latin America
- Matthew Vester - Ph.D. (University of California, Los Angeles)
Regular Graduate Faculty, Early Modern Europe, Italy, France

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Melissa Bingmann - Ph.D. (Arizona State University)
Regular Graduate Faculty, Public history, 20th-century U.S.
- William Gorby - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
Associate Graduate Faculty, West Virginia, Appalachia, Immigration
- Tamba E. M'bayo - Ph.D. (Michigan State University)
Regular Graduate Faculty, West Africa, Colonial and Postcolonial, African Diaspora and Pan-Africanism
- Kate Staples - Ph.D. (University of Minnesota)
Regular Graduate Faculty, Medieval, Gender, England, Material Culture
- Jessica Wilkerson - Ph.D. (University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill)
Regular Graduate Faculty, Joyce and Stuart Robbins Chair, Appalachia and the South, Women, Gender, and Sexuality, 20th-c U.S., Labor and Working Class History

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Max Flomen - Ph.D. (University of California, Los Angeles)
Regular Graduate Faculty, Early American History, Native American History
- Sean Lawrence - Ph.D. (University of California, Santa Cruz)
Regular Graduate Faculty, Germany, Colonialism, Middle East, Environment, Political Economy
- Austin McCoy - Ph.D. (University of Michigan)
Regular Graduate Faculty, 20th-Century U.S., African-American, Labor, Social Movements
- Betsy DiSalvo Osborne - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
Associate Graduate Faculty, Social Studies Education
- Devin Smart - Ph.D. (University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign)
Regular Graduate Faculty, Africa, World/Global, Environmental

EMERITI FACULTY

- Robert E. Blobaum - Ph.D. (University of Nebraska)
- William I. Brustein - Ph.D. (University of Washington)
- Elizabeth Fones-Wolf - Ph.D. (University of Massachusetts)
- Kenneth Fones-Wolf - Ph.D. (Temple University)
- Jack Hammersmith - Ph.D. (University of Virginia)
- Barbara J. Howe - Ph.D. (Temple University)
- Elizabeth K. Hudson - Ph.D. (Indiana University)
- Ronald L. Lewis - Ph.D. (University of Akron)
- Mary Lou Lustig - Ph.D. (Syracuse University)
- Robert M. Maxon - Ph.D. (Syracuse University)
- Stephen C. McCluskey - Ph.D. (University of Wisconsin)
- A. Michal McMahon - Ph.D. (University of Texas)
- John C. Super - Ph.D. (University of California, Los Angeles)
- Mark B. Tauger - Ph.D. (University of California, Los Angeles)

Admissions for 2026-2027

The History program admits students to either the M.A. in History, the M.A. in Public History, or the Ph.D. in History. GRE scores are not required but will be considered if they are provided.

M.A. IN HISTORY

In addition to the university's general admission requirements (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#classificationtext>), applicants to the M.A. program must have a bachelor's degree in history or a related field with a GPA of at least 3.0 in history courses. Applicants with an undergraduate degree in a different subject area may be required to make up deficiencies by enrolling in additional history courses as determined by the graduate program committee. Students who wish to pursue the transatlantic program in international history and security studies should apply to the M.A. in History.

M.A. IN PUBLIC HISTORY

In addition to the university's general admission requirements (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#classificationtext>), applicants to the M.A. in Public History program must have a bachelor's degree in history or a related field with a GPA of at least

3.0 in history courses. Applicants with a degree in a different subject area may be required to make up deficiencies by enrolling in additional history courses as determined by the graduate program committee.

PH.D. IN HISTORY

In addition to the university's general admission requirements (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#classificationtext>), applicants to the Ph.D. program should have the equivalent of an M.A. in history or a related field with a GPA of at least a 3.0 in history courses. Applicants with a degree in a different subject area may be required to make up deficiencies by enrolling in additional history courses as determined by the graduate program committee.

Direct Admission Track to Ph.D. Program

Students who have compiled an outstanding record in an undergraduate history major may apply for direct admission to the doctor of philosophy program. They are not required to obtain a master's degree. Direct admission to the Ph.D. program is highly selective and limited to exceptionally qualified students with superior standing in their bachelor's degree. Students of this caliber are generally expected to have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.9 or higher. In addition, students must provide evidence that they have experience conducting a substantial piece of original historical research, such as a senior honors thesis or major capstone paper.

List of Admission Requirements for all programs:

- See the steps to apply for admissions and access the application here (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/>).
- Transcripts from all institutions attended.
- Three letters of recommendation written by people in a position to evaluate the applicant's academic strengths.
- Resume that indicates past education, professional, and voluntary experiences.
- Statement of purpose that indicates clearly to which program the applicant is seeking admission (e.g., Ph.D. in History, M.A. in History transatlantic program, etc.) and addresses the applicant's goals as a history graduate student in the expected program/concentration area.
 - Students interested in the transatlantic program in international history and security and those interested in the public history program must specifically address their goals and background in those areas/concentrations.
- Writing sample
 - For the M.A., the required writing sample may be a senior honors thesis, major capstone or research seminar paper, or a term paper written for an advanced history course.
 - For the Ph.D., the required writing sample may be a master's thesis, senior honors thesis, major capstone or research seminar paper, or a term paper written for an advanced history course.
- GRE scores are not required but will be considered if they are provided.

International Applicants:

- See the steps to apply for admissions and access the application here (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/>).
- International applicants should view additional requirements here (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#internationaltext>) and here (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/information-for/international-students/>).
- Language proficiency is required in order to hold a graduate teaching assistantship. See here (<https://elli.wvu.edu/testing-resources/english-proficiency-gtas/>).

Application Deadlines:

- The graduate programs in History admit for the fall semester only.
- The priority review deadline for the Ph.D. program is January 15th and for the M.A. program is February 1st.
- Completed applications for the M.A. program may be submitted until April 1st for admissions purposes but will not be considered for funding.
- Exceptional Ph.D. applicants may be nominated by the History program for competitive University Fellowships. Qualified applicants will be notified if they are nominated. More information on WVU fellowships can be found here (<https://graduateeducation.wvu.edu/finances/fellowships/>).

Assistantships

All applicants will be considered for financial support in the form of graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs) and Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs). Graduate research assistantships are sometimes available through funded faculty member research. Students who qualify for available research assistantships will be contacted by the relevant faculty member with details.

For questions, please contact: history@mail.wvu.edu (history@mail.wvu.edu)

Certain application requirements may be waived based on a preliminary review of an application by the program.

M.A. and Ph.D. in History Major Code: 1449

M.A. in Public History Major Code: 14C7

For specific information on the following program, please see the link to the right:

- History, Ph.D.

Degree Progress

All graduate students enrolled in at least one credit hour during the academic year must be provided with a written evaluation from their program following the end of each spring term. This requirement may be waived for students in good standing who are expected to graduate in spring or summer. Specific processes and timelines for each program's evaluation can be found in the graduate handbook. Annual evaluation may result in probation for students either not making adequate degree progress or failing to uphold professional standards.

M.A. IN HISTORY

All students should complete a plan of study by the end of their second semester. Students who choose the thesis option should defend their thesis proposal prior to the beginning of the semester in which they intend to graduate, and submit and defend their thesis during the semester in which they intend to graduate. Students who choose the examination option should take HIST 795 and complete written and oral examinations during the semester in which they intend to graduate.

M.A. IN PUBLIC HISTORY

Student will be evaluated annually by the program coordinator. HIST 614 should be completed by the end of the student's third semester in the program.

PH.D.

- By the end of year 2, students should have completed all coursework and prepared for comprehensive exams.
- By the end of year 3, students should have passed comprehensive exams, defended the prospectus, and entered candidacy.
- By the end of year 4, students should have conducted archival research for the dissertation.
- By the end of year 5, students should have defended the dissertation.