

The Undergraduate Study of History at SFState

Bachelor of Arts, History Historical Research (Honors Certificate) Minor in History

THE STUDY OF HISTORY provides a way of knowing, a mode of understanding human behavior by examining things in the light of their origins, of the changes they have undergone during their existence, and of the processes by which they have reached their present state. Students who major in history will learn how to apply such an approach to the study of human communities. History students can expect to encounter such issues as these: How did the Depression of the 1930s influence changes in American government? How has the communist revolution affected the Chinese family? Why did European nations create empires in the 19th century?

STUDENTS OF HISTORY can expect to develop both knowledge about the past and skills of analysis and interpretation. They learn how to assess the adequacy of evidence, how to compare and contrast, how to synthesize, and how to draw conclusions. Some history majors will find careers teaching history, and others will present history to the public through archives, museums, writing, preservation programs, and the like. Other history majors will choose fields such as foreign service or will pursue professional studies in fields such as law, business, library science, or journalism. Because the skills learned in the study of history can be applied to a variety of circumstances, they will prove useful throughout life regardless of one's eventual choice of career.



THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT at SFState offers several programs designed to meet the needs of different groups of students interested in history. The history major provides a foundation in the history of Western Civilization or World History, the history of the United States, and historical analysis, plus advanced work in the history of three regions of the world. The Honors Concentration builds upon the history major by adding an honors thesis. The Waiver Program for the Secondary Teaching Credential in History/Social Science builds upon the history major by adding courses designed to provide appropriate subject competency for the prospective secondary teacher. The history minor allows majors in other fields to pursue a structured introduction to history. Within any of these four undergraduate programs, ample opportunity exists for students to develop special interests, for example, urban development, diplomatic history, women's history, or the history of ideas. Students may choose to pursue interests in depth or to explore a wide variety of concerns within their major. History faculty members have earned their doctoral degrees at leading universities throughout the nation and the world. Many have achieved significant recognition for their contributions to their fields.

What Do Our Alumni Say?



I learned that History as discipline is informed by our present and that drawing connections and thinking critically about how History is created is as important as understanding general change over time.

Aliyah Salahuddin

SFSU History BA '10 MA'12

Department Chair of African-American Studies at
College of San Francisco

What did I learn in the History Department at SFSU that serves me today?



- The ability to methodically and thoughtfully, yet quickly, digest and synthesize massive amounts of content and data.
- A true sense of collaboration and collegiality, two of the most sought after “soft skills” by HR departments.
- Impeccable writing skills, a cornerstone of effective communication in the digital realm.
- An abiding respect for the coexistence of theory and practice.

Rob Alper SFSU US History, BA '05

Currently a Subject Matter Expert at Cengage Learning and Technology

Bachelor of Arts, History — 39 units

Lower Division Requirements (12 Units):

History majors must take twelve lower division units in History. Classes numbered 100-299, with the exception of History 107, can be counted towards this requirement.

Upper Division Requirements (27 units):

Required Courses (6 units)

History 300 GVAR with a grade of "C" or better. (3 units)

History 696 Seminar with a grade of "C" or better (3 units)

NOTE: Successful completion of History 300 GVAR is required before you can take History 600

Upper Division Electives (21 units)

The elective course of study must include:

- 3 Upper Division units of "US History"
- 6 Upper Division units of "Area Studies" (No more than 3 of which may be European History)
- 3 Upper Division units of "Chronological Breadth"

A single course may be used to fulfill more than one of these requirements. For example: HIST 604 Islamic World I: 500-1500 would count as an "Area Study" as well as fulfill the "Chronological Breadth" requirement. A full course listing including attributes is available on the department website (history.sfsu.edu)

History majors may not choose CR/NC grading in more than two history courses for their major, nor elect CR/NC grading in HIST 300 GW or their proseminar. With the approval of their advisor, students may use up to three units from other departments to count toward their history major.

General Education Requirement: Complementary Studies (12 units)

History majors may fulfill the SFState Complementary Study requirement in several different ways:

- Any completed minor.
- Any combination of language and/or upper division courses which are complimentary to the study of history (examples include: Humanities, International Relations, Political Science, Philosophy, Cinema, English, Jewish Studies, Art, and many others). These units DO NOT need to be from a single discipline.

Historical Research (Honors) Certificate

12 Units

The Historical Research Certificate provides majors in any discipline with a way to improve their research skills. The Certificate will show up on transcripts as an independent course of study, and as such is open to anyone earning a Bachelors degree at SFState.

Prerequisites:

For a student to be eligible for admission to the Certificate in Historical Research (Honors) program, they must meet the following requirements:

- Cumulative GPA of 3.25
- Completion of 60 units
- Acceptance of a thesis proposal by faculty member in the History Department.

Required Courses (6 units):

History 697 Honors Thesis (3 units)

History 696 Seminar with a grade of "C" or better (3 units)

NOTE: Successful completion of History 300 GVAR is required before you can take History 600

Elective courses: (6 Upper Division Units)

Six units of upper division courses with a HIST prefix. May include additional History 696 Seminars, but not independent study courses (HIST 699) or internships (HIST 698).

Students enrolled in the History BA program may count courses from that program towards the completion of the Historical Research (Honors) Certificate. Students enrolled in other majors may double count these courses in their major with the permission of their department.

Auxiliary skill

To complete the certificate, a student must demonstrate mastery of an auxiliary skill through one of the three following options:

- Two semester-length courses in college-level language with a grade of B or better, or
- Equivalent proficiency in a foreign language based on successful completion of an examination to be administered by the Foreign Languages Department, or
- Two semester-length courses in auxiliary skills such as digital history/humanities, oral history, statistics, or others, by advisement.

History Minor – 15 Units

The History Minor provides an opportunity for students majoring in fields other than history to pursue a structured course of study in History and to have it reflected on their transcript through designation of history as a minor field of study.

Elective Courses (15 units)

The History Minor requires students take 15 units in History designated courses, no more than three units of lower division work may be counted towards the completion of the minor.

Please note, if you are interested in taking a History 696 Seminar, you must successfully complete the prerequisite: History 300 GWAR with a “C” or better.

History minors cannot choose CR/NC grading in more than one course in their minor.

All coursework used to satisfy the requirements of the minor must be completed with a minimum grade point average of 2.0.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

History Students Association

The History Students Association is an approved student organization, funded by student fees through the Associated Students, and open to all students (both undergraduate and graduate) with an interest in History. Members elect officers annually. Members and officers plan the annual program, which may include discussions by faculty members of work-in-progress, lectures by distinguished visiting historians, films, and social gatherings. The HSA also organizes an annual conference at which students present their own research. To get on the HSA email announcement list, send a message to hsa@sfsu.edu, or leave a message in the HSA mailbox in the History Department.

Phi Alpha Theta (Honor Society for Students in History)

Founded in 1921, Phi Alpha Theta has, as its primary purpose, the encouragement and recognition of excellence in the study of history. Membership in Phi Alpha Theta should be listed among other university honors when applying to graduate or professional schools or when applying for employment in any history-related field. The national organization publishes *The Historian*, a quarterly journal that presents articles from all fields within the discipline of history. Student members, both graduate and undergraduate, are eligible to participate in annual prize paper awards.

Ex Post Facto For over 25 years the History students of SFState have written, edited, and published their work in our beloved student journal, *Ex Post Facto*. Calls for papers go out in the Fall, and all students are encouraged to submit their work. We award annually the Joseph Mullins Prize to recognize the best essay at both the Graduate and Undergraduate level.

Students are also encourage to become editors, and can earn 1-3 units by enrolling in HIST690/890. In addition to earning college credit, the experience of editing provides an opportunity to learn and practice real skills, including the assessment of argument. Editing can help improve ones own writing!