Why Study History?

History courses form a vital part of a well-rounded undergraduate education. They enable you to deepen your understanding of both the past and present while gaining important skills to prepare you for future careers in a wide range of fields. In their own research, faculty in the History Department use original documents and other primary sources to question, interpret, and build arguments about the past. As instructors, they provide you with outstanding training in the broader practices of research, analysis, and documentation while introducing you to societies, cultures, and time periods very different from your own.

By teaching you how to think critically, write persuasively, consider a problem from multiple perspectives, engage theory, and ask questions, your study of History helps you develop the core intellectual skills that many employers demand.

Q: What can I do with a Major in History?

A: What CAN'T you do?! Employers don't hire you for your major, they hire you for your skills and experiences! As a History Major, you will be able to:

- Manage a project from beginning to end.
- Consider situations from various perspectives.
- Analyze information.
- Evaluate research.
- Utilize knowledge of different societies and cultures.
- Read discriminately.
- Challenge assumptions.
- Collect relevant evidence to support assertions.
- Think critically.
- Understand human institutions.
- Communicate an argument persuasively, orally and in writing.
- Be aware of multiculturalism and diversity.
- Compare and contrast past and present.

Because the history major offers a broad social sciences and liberal arts education, there are many different types of careers available for a History graduate. Here are just a few examples:

- Sales Representative
- Secondary School Teacher
- Advertising
- School Counselor
- Social Services Administrator
• Museum Director
• Health Educator
• Employment Agency Counselor
• Account Executive
• Corrections Officer
• Archivist
• Police Detective
• Speech Therapist
• Public Health Administrator
• Media Planner
• Fundraising/Development
• Pastor/Religious Counselor
• Loan Officer/Bank Manager
• Policy Analyst
• Author
• Digital Media Specialist
• Social Media Manager
• Recreation Specialist
• Marketing Manager
• Urban Planner/Researcher
• Labor Relations Manager
• Copy Editor
• Education Psychologist
• Law Enforcement
• Government Accountability
• Probation Officer
• Press Liaison
• Journalist
• Real Estate
• Social Worker
• Grant Writer
• Community Relations
• Event Planner
• Retail Management
• Medical Researcher
• Entrepreneur
• Nonprofit Director
• Editorial Director
• Adoption Specialist
• Local Council Member
• Project Manager
• Financial Adviser
• Lobbyist
• Immigration Officer
• Facilities Manager
• University Professor
• Sales Manager
• Elementary School Teacher
• Human Resources/Employment
• Customer Service Representative
• Public Relations
• Industrial or Organizational Psychologist
• Case Management
• Market Researcher
• Public Affairs Coordinator
• Politician
• Lawyer
• Librarian
• Park Ranger

For more information about Career Planning/Exploration, please visit:

• College to Careers
• History Advising
• Career & Internship Center
• Alumni Association

If you are interested in taking courses or declaring a major or minor in History, please do not hesitate to contact our Undergraduate Advising Office at histadv@uw.edu. Our Undergraduate Advisor, Shannon Vacek, and our Director of Academic Services, Tracy Maschman Morrissey, would be glad to assist you. For more information on why you should study history from the American Historical Association, click here.

Department of History
University of Washington
318 Smith Box 353560
Seattle, WA 98195-3560

Phone: (206) 543-5790
Fax: (206) 543-9451
histmain@uw.edu

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