In the best spirit of the liberal arts college, the major and minor concentrations in the Department of History provide students not simply with a “useable past,” but also with skills and abilities directly bearing on their ability to cope with an ever-changing world. A solid grounding in the forces that have shaped the modern world may equip graduates with capacities that transcend a more narrow grounding in technological knowledge. History, by providing a rich context for the changes our society experiences, equips its students with the most important capacity of all—a facility for learning.

The Major Program
The department’s offerings are divided into the following fields: Africa, Europe, East Asia, South Asia, Latin America, and the United States. Students may, with departmental approval, define fields that differ from these.

Before electing to major in history, a student should have completed or have in progress at least two college-level courses in history. The major consists of ten courses, including four in a primary field of concentration. At least one of the courses in the field of concentration must be a 300-level seminar or a 400-level advanced independent study. Students must also take one intermediate seminar in any field of history, preferably by the end of the sophomore year. It is recommended that students complete at least one 200-level course prior to taking an intermediate seminar. Both the intermediate and advanced seminars must be taken at Bowdoin. The major also requires a total of three courses in at least two of the following regional fields: East Asia, South Asia, Africa, or Latin America, as well as one pre-modern course.

History majors are encouraged to develop competence in one or more foreign languages and to use this competence in their historical reading and research. Knowledge of a foreign language is particularly important for students planning graduate work.

The Minor Program
The minor in history consists of five courses. Three courses are to be taken in one field of concentration and two in a subsidiary field; both fields should be chosen from the list specified by the department for a major.

The Curriculum
The department offers courses at five levels:

- **First-year seminars** do not require any prior knowledge of history. These courses emphasize reading, writing, and oral presentations. Enrollment is limited to sixteen students.
- **Introductory-level lecture courses** (100s) are intended particularly for incoming students and non-majors. These lectures introduce core concepts of history, foster an active engagement with the past, and promote a familiarity with key historical events, people, and places. These courses provide excellent starting points for further coursework in history. They are generally closed to seniors and are limited to an enrollment of fifty students.
- **Lecture/survey courses** (200s) form the core of our offerings, ranging from survey courses to more in-depth studies, and spanning a wide variety of historical perspectives, thematic areas, and interdisciplinary approaches. They provide all students, from first-years to seniors, with an introduction to new materials and an opportunity to develop historical thinking and writing skills. Enrollment is limited to 35 students.
- **Intermediate seminars** (300s) expose students to historical method and theory, offer an extensive pattern of discussion and writing, and prepare students for more advanced work to come. Intended for majors and non-majors alike, previous related course work or permission of the instructor may be required. These courses are generally not open to first-year students. Enrollment is limited to sixteen students.
- **Advanced seminars** (300s) engage advanced students in the close investigation of certain historical “problems” through critical reading of primary and secondary texts, class discussion, independent research, and analytical writing. Students develop specialized research projects, culminating in oral presentations and a written essay of substantial length. Enrollment is limited to sixteen students.

Independent Study and Honors Projects
Honors projects offer students a semester- or year-long experience in intensive research and writing. Do you have a passion for Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain? Are you fascinated with...
medieval France? Are you interested in taking your study-away experiences in Latin America or Africa one step further? Honors will give you the opportunity to work extensively on a project of your own design in close consultation with faculty advisors.

History majors seeking departmental honors will enroll in at least one semester of the Honors Seminar. Its primary requirement is the research and writing of the honors thesis. In addition to a primary advisor, students will work with a committee of several other faculty members and have opportunities to share their work with other honors students. To be eligible to register for the opportunity to work extensively on a project of your own design in close consultation with a committee of several other faculty members and have opportunities to share their work with other honors students, a student must have a B+ or higher average in courses taken in the department.

Faculty

Connie Y. Chiang, assistant professor of history and environmental studies, B.A. (California–Santa Barbara), M.A., Ph.D. (Washington), specializes in the history of the U.S. West, and social and environmental history.

Thomas Conlan, associate professor of history and Asian studies, B.A. (Michigan), M.A., Ph.D. (Stanford), teaches courses that span the range of Japanese history, but specializes in ancient and medieval Japanese history.

Dallas G. Denery II, assistant professor of history, B.A. (California–Berkeley), M.A. (Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology), Ph.D. (California–Berkeley), specializes in medieval and early modern European intellectual, cultural, and religious history.

Paul Friedland, associate professor of history, B.A. (Brown), M.A. (Chicago), Ph.D. (California–Berkeley), specializes in 18th-century France, and also teaches classes on European subjects from the eighteenth century to the present day.


K. Page Herrlinger, associate professor of history, B.A. (Yale), M.A., Ph.D. (California–Berkeley), specializes in Korean history, and teaches courses on modern European history, religious identity and revolutionary change in Russia, and Germany, 1918–1945.

Matthew W. Klingsie, assistant professor of history and environmental studies, B.A. (California–Berkeley), M.A., Ph.D. (Washington), teaches courses in American urban history, social and cultural history, the environmental history of North America, and the American West.

Daniel Levine, Thomas Brackett Reed Professor of History and Political Science Emeritus, A.B. (Antioch), A.M., Ph.D. (Northwestern), specializes in modern American history.

Sarah F. McMahon, associate professor of history, A.B. (Wellesley), Ph.D. (Brandeis), teaches colonial and early national U.S. social history; the history of women, family, community, and utopia in the U.S.; and the environmental history of Maine. She is chair of the department.

Bethany E. Moreton, instructor in history, B.A. (Williams), M.Phil., Ph.D. (Yale), teaches courses on the United States since World War II, the transnational relations of modern America, and the intersection between religion and economic life.

Patrick J. Rael, associate professor of history, B.A. (Maryland–College Park), M.A., Ph.D. (California–Berkeley), teaches courses in African-American history, the Civil War and Reconstruction, comparative slavery and race, and military history.

Kidder Smith, Jr., professor of history and Asian studies, A.B. (Princeton), Ph.D. (California–Berkeley), teaches on East Asia, especially China, and the intersection of religion and society.

Rachel L. Sturman, assistant professor of history and Asian studies, B.A. (Chicago), M.A., Ph.D. (California–Davis), teaches courses on gender, sexuality, and the body in India; violence and identity in modern South Asia; and imperialism, nationalism, and human rights.

Susan L. Tannenbaum, associate professor of history, B.A. (Trinity), M.A., Ph.D. (Brandeis), specializes in British, Jewish, and European history, and teaches British surveys, the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as courses on sports and culture and public health.

Allen Wells, Roger Howell, Jr., Professor of History, A.B. (SUNY–Binghamton), A.M., Ph.D. (SUNY–Stony Brook), focuses on modern Mexican history, especially the Yucatán, and teaches colonial and modern Latin American history.

After Bowdoin

The value of a concentration in history is evident in the wide range of occupations Bowdoin graduates have pursued: from high school teaching, to work in art galleries, to assisting in law offices. The concentration in history is perhaps most valuable to those contemplating a return to school for graduate or professional training. In these cases, an undergraduate background in history may provide a rich foundation of learning upon which more specialized knowledge can be built. Our students have gone on to law and other professional schools and to graduate programs in history and related disciplines.

Honors Projects

Recent honors projects completed by majors in the department have included:

- Outpost of Idealism: The Amalgamated Housing Cooperative and the Pursuit of a Just Society
- Before the Love Boat: The Origins of Modern Leisure Travel aboard British Steamships
- Everyone’s “Black Swan”: Elizabeth Greenfield and the Debate over Black Uplift in the Antebellum North
- The Tsarist Ideal in Revolutionary Russia: Popular Devotion to Nicholas II, 1905–1917
- “A Personal Share in This Great Contest”: The Civil War and Maine’s Fessenden Family
- The Problem of Rescue: Rethinking the British Government’s Response to the Holocaust, 1942–1944
- Making Choices, Sowing Division: Chile’s Jewish Community during the Allende and Pinochet Eras
- Prayer and Politics from the Podium: A Spectrum of African American Female Resistance in the Antebellum North

For more information, visit:
http://academic.bowdoin.edu/history/

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