

History – Teacher Education

Department of History, College of Arts and Sciences



Career Opportunities

Since history claims the study of all elements of the human past and their impact on the present as its domain, it is not surprising that Western Illinois University Department of History graduates have entered a variety of careers. History majors who pursue a teacher education degree have successfully acquired positions teaching history and social studies in middle schools and high schools throughout Illinois, as well as elsewhere in the nation. Many have gone on to positions of leadership in their schools, as well.

Program Objective

Western Illinois University's state and nationally accredited history – teacher education program prepares students to teach all fields and periods of history, as well as other social studies courses as required by the state of Illinois. Courses in history, other social sciences and teaching methods, as well as field experiences teaching in the classroom, prepare students for their final semester as a full-time student teacher. Upon graduation, students are licensed to teach in high schools.

Department Scholarships

The history department offers six scholarships for undergraduate majors with annual stipends between \$1,000 and \$5,000 each. One of these scholarships, the Larry T. Balsamo Scholarship, is specifically set aside for history – teacher education students only. In addition, the department awards annual paper writing prizes and provides financial support for student research and professional travel.

Program of Study

The history – teacher education major leads to a Bachelor of Arts degree from Western Illinois University. Western's program has been designed to prepare students to pass the State's subject matter license test in history/social studies.

The history – teacher education program includes six required history courses and eight additional history courses chosen from a variety of areas of specialization. In addition, as required to pass the state licensure exam in history/social studies, WIU's program also includes a course on Illinois history; additional history or political science courses focusing on politics and international relations; and courses in geography, economics and other social science disciplines. A variety of professional education courses and field and clinical experiences, including teaching methods courses and student-teaching experiences, prepare students for successful careers teaching history and other social studies subjects in secondary schools after graduation.

Student-Faculty Interaction

WIU history faculty members are award-winning teachers and scholars with advanced degrees from the finest universities in the world. Although many of Western's outstanding history faculty have gained national and international reputations as scholars through their publications and conference presentations, all history faculty regularly teach classes at all levels, including freshman surveys, sophomore seminars, specialized upper-division courses and senior seminars. As a result, all WIU history courses are taught by full members of the history faculty dedicated to contributing to the success of our students. Graduate student assistants, selected from among the most outstanding graduate students pursuing the M.A. in History, provide individualized tutoring for those students needing it through the department's academic assistance center.

The history department stresses excellent teaching, outstanding advising and close student-faculty interaction. Student evaluations of faculty reflect the emphasis on teaching. The department's academic advisor works closely with students in planning their course of study. Small classes and individualized study courses are available to all students. Due to this attention, students and alumni have consistently praised the quality of instruction and advising they received from the history faculty at Western.

One recent history graduate wrote, "The strongest aspect of my experience at Western was the ability to relate directly to my professors."

At Western, student-faculty interaction extends beyond the classroom. Students can join the Associated Students of History (ASH), which regularly holds professional development seminars, takes field trips and plans many social events for both students and faculty. If they qualify, students can also join Western's chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the international history honor society. Western's history education students regularly present their research at regional Phi Alpha Theta conferences, and our local chapter sponsors an online journal of students' original historical research papers, the "Western Illinois Historical Review." History department faculty regularly lead short-term study-abroad programs for interested students, and students also have opportunities to spend a semester studying abroad.



Western's history education students have many opportunities to participate in individual undergraduate research projects with history faculty members. Our students participate each year in the University's Undergraduate Research Day and win Undergraduate Research Grants from the College of Arts and Sciences each semester.

Honors College Admission Requirements

The history department is proudly and actively engaged with WIU's Centennial Honors College. History faculty regularly teach Honors courses and supervise Honors research projects; history students have served as prestigious Centennial Honors College Scholars; and the department's Gordon W. Kirk Honors History Scholarship is reserved for history Honors students. To be eligible for the Centennial Honors College, entering freshmen must have an ACT composite score of at least 28 OR have a 26 or 27 composite ACT and be in the top 15 percent of their graduating class OR have an ACT composite score of at least 24 and be in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating class. Comparable SAT score is acceptable. Transfer and current WIU students who wish to join the Honors College (including the Quad Cities Honors Program) must have a 3.4 grade point average on a 4.0 scale based on 12 or more semester hours. Honors credit is given for honors coursework completed at other accredited institutions. Honors history students who complete a thesis are also eligible to compete for the department's Honors Thesis Award. To find out more, visit wiu.edu/Honors.

Transfer Students

Many students enter our history program after attending a community college. Many community colleges in Illinois and eastern Iowa have transfer agreements with Western. Prospective transfer students should contact Western as soon as possible to ensure a smooth transition to WIU. We'd like to help make your transfer as easy as possible. It is especially important for teacher education majors to be aware of courses they must take as freshmen and sophomores in order to complete their history – teacher education degree at Western on schedule.

University Libraries

University Libraries consists of the Leslie F. Malpass Library, which is the main branch, and four other branches: the Physical Sciences Library, the Music Library, the Curriculum Library and the Quad Cities Library. Students are offered access to a variety of resources in print and online. Research assistance is available in person at the reference desk and via instant messaging. Check out our website for hours, events and services available: wiu.edu/libraries.

Campus Visits

The Admissions Reception Center (Sherman Hall 115) is open most weekdays from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. when the University is in session. Group information sessions are available on Mondays and Fridays at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., and individual appointments can be made on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Campus tours are conducted at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., Monday through Friday. Appointments with advisors, faculty or a financial aid advisor may be arranged separately during the week. The Admissions Reception Center is open from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. most Saturdays when the University is in session. A group information session is available at 10 a.m., and a campus tour is conducted at 11 a.m. Schedule a visit or tour online at wiu.edu/admissions by selecting "Visit Campus." You may also schedule a visit, tour or individual appointment by calling toll free (877) PICKWIU (742-5948) or (309) 298-3157, or by emailing admissions@wiu.edu.

wiu.edu/history

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