

Integrated Baccalaureate and Master's Degree in History



The Department of History at Western Illinois University offers a program enabling students to earn a Bachelor of Arts Degree and a Master of Arts Degree in History in five years—as opposed to the six normally required for both degrees. The program maintains the integrity of these degrees by allowing students to take nine semester hours of coursework that can apply to requirements for both degrees. The program is specifically designed for outstanding students either going on to seek a doctoral degree in History or eager to start a profession that values broad knowledge and a disciplined approach for attaining it.

Admission Requirements

Undergraduate students may apply for admission to the Integrated Degree Program in History at Western Illinois University after completing 60 semester hours (SH) of undergraduate coursework, of which a minimum of 30 semester hours must be earned at WIU. Moreover, a student must be a history major and have a cumulative GPA of 3.25, as well as a GPA of 3.25 in history courses required by the major. Both GPAs are indicative of the academic excellence required to earn the Integrated Degree in History. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is not required as part of an application for admission.

Degree Requirements

Students in the Integrated Degree Program must fulfill current requirements for the Bachelor of Arts Degree in History (120-127 SH for the History option, 126 SH for the Pre-Law option, and 152 SH for the History-Teacher Education option), as well as current graduate requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in History (31 SH for the Thesis plan, 35 SH for the Applied Project plan and 37 SH for the Coursework plan). Given the additional semester hours required for History-Teacher Education, the program cannot guarantee students pursuing this option will complete it in five years.

To enable students to earn both degrees within five years, they may take nine semester hours (usually three “bridge” courses) at the 400(B)-level, by which students normally earn either undergraduate or graduate credit. Students in the Integrated Degree Program in History would take 400 (B) courses for graduate credit, although these

would help fulfill both undergraduate and graduate requirements.

Advantages to a BA/MA Integrated Degree in History

There are several reasons why an accomplished History major would want to enter the Integrated Degree Program in History—as opposed to earning both degrees separately. First, the accelerated pace by which a student would earn both history degrees would be advantageous for those eager either to start a career in numerous fields, including public history, education, public service, non-profits and think tanks, or to pursue a Ph.D. degree in history. The completion of both degrees within the intended timeframe would enable a student to seek such opportunities earlier than those earning these degrees separately. Second, the Integrated Degree Program would be more affordable for most students, especially given how the program would maintain an undergraduate tuition plan for an additional academic year. And third, students would benefit educationally through having a more integrated curriculum; the courses they take as undergraduates are likely to mesh better with those taken at the graduate level, enabling them to make more and better connections between their undergraduate and graduate coursework.

Scholarships, Honors, and Awards

- An additional advantage for students in the Integrated Degree Program is that depending upon their status of matriculation, they may be eligible for either undergraduate or graduate scholarships, honors and awards.

Program Location:
Macomb

Contact Information

Questions about the program:

Department of History
Professor Edward Woell,
graduate director
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wiu.edu/cas/history/graduate.php

General admission questions:

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Educational Opportunity
Personal Growth
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- A full list of History undergraduate and graduate scholarships, honors, and awards are available online at wiu.edu/cas/academics/scholarships/History.php.
- In addition to the scholarships, honors and awards shown online, upon fulfilling their baccalaureate requirements students in the Integrated Degree Program would be eligible for a Teaching Support Assistantship. These positions are awarded to full-time graduate students through a competitive application process. Teaching Support Assistants receive a tuition waiver and a stipend in exchange for 20 hours of work per week.
- Upon fulfilling their baccalaureate requirements, students in the Integrated Degree Program may also apply to the Graduate Committee for awards from the Professor Emeritus Fund, which helps pay expenses incurred while conducting historical research for coursework or a thesis. They may also apply for Professor Emeritus Awards to help pay travel expenses for presenting their own research papers at academic conferences.

Faculty Expertise

All department faculty members possess doctoral degrees in History earned at a variety of distinguished North American and European universities. Faculty have considerable teaching and research expertise in their geographic and thematic areas of specialization and are nationally and internationally recognized for their scholarly research and publications. Faculty areas of geographical expertise include the United States, the Ancient Mediterranean, Germany, Britain, France, the Atlantic World, South Africa, East Asia and the Philippines. The topics of historical expertise include some pertaining to the United States: the Early Republic; the Civil War and Reconstruction; Progressivism; Labor and Social Reform Movements; the Modern Presidency and the Vietnam War; as well as others extending beyond North America: Ancient Militaries and Warfare; the Renaissance and Reformation; the Enlightenment and the French Revolution; Nazi Germany and the Holocaust; Modern War and Imperialism in the Pacific; Diplomacy and Foreign Relations; World Environment and Women and Gender.

Distinctive Features

- The WIU Department of History offers undergraduate and graduate courses at the University's Macomb campus and is a recognized regional leader in quality and value.
- Students in the Integrated Degree Program will have ample opportunity to work closely with the faculty members and develop strong, mentored relationships with them.
- Students in the Integrated Degree Program may be able to present their research at regional academic conferences such as the Missouri Valley Conference, the WIU Annual Graduate Research Conference and the Illinois History Symposium.
- Students in the Integrated Degree Program can apply for internships at local historical sites and institutions, including the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum and Library in Springfield, the Rock Island Arsenal, the Putnam Museum in Davenport, Iowa, the Des Moines County Historical Society in Burlington, Iowa and the Western Illinois Museum in Macomb.
- Western Illinois University is home to the Omicron Omicron chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. The society includes both undergraduate and graduate students in History. Each year it sponsors a number of activities for its members and the community at large. It also sponsors an online journal of student research, the *Western Illinois Historical Review*.



- The history department sponsors the organization, Associated Students of History (ASH), which is open to both undergraduates and graduates. ASH meets periodically and engages in activities promoting study of the past, including field trips to local historic sites.
- Students in the Integrated Degree Program may have the opportunity to study history on site through the history department's travel-study abroad courses. Past travel has included trips to Greece, Rome, Bavaria, Northern Ireland and Turkey.