The Department of History at Western Illinois University offers a program of study leading to the Master of Arts degree in WIU’s School of Graduate Studies. The Department of History’s MA program is designed to train students in the methods and theories of history and in broad areas of historical study and analysis. The program prepares students for careers in teaching, academia, law, public and government service, publishing, research, and other professions. The program also assists in the professional development of full-time teachers and other educators and provides a firm foundation for further graduate study.

**Admission Requirements**
To be considered for admission to the graduate program, students must meet the admission requirements of the School of Graduate Studies and should have completed a minimum of 18 semester hours (SH) of undergraduate coursework in History. In addition, applicants must have a cumulative undergraduate GPA of at least 2.75 (based on all hours attempted) or a GPA of at least 3.0 for the last two years of undergraduate study. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is not required as part of an application for admission.

**Degree Requirements**
The Master of Arts degree in History may be earned by pursuing one of the following three plans of study: (1) the general coursework option, (2) the special project, or (3) the thesis option. In all cases, the courses chosen to fulfill the student’s major, minor, and elective requirements must include at least one reading seminar in the major field and two research seminars.

**Career Opportunities**
The graduate program serves the needs of a variety of students seeking advanced training in the discipline of history. Some of the approximately 30 active graduate students are part-time students who are pursuing a Master’s degree in conjunction with full-time employment in secondary education. The program also prepares students for careers in higher education at the community college level, trains students in the skills necessary for successful application to doctoral programs, and readies students for additional professional positions. A graduate degree in History offers instructional preparation for the following careers:

- Higher education professional
- Museum curator
- Editor of historical manuscripts
- Archivist
- Historic preservation
- Government research

**Graduate Assistantships and Awards**
- History graduate students are invited to apply for a teaching support assistantship. Teaching support assistantships are awarded through a competitive process to full-time students enrolled for 9 SH of coursework. Recipients of teaching support assistantships receive a tuition waiver and a stipend in exchange for 20 hours of work per week.

- New and returning graduate students with a Bachelor of Arts in History and a GPA in History of 3.25 may also apply for the Darrell and Virginia Dykstra Memorial Scholarship, which grants a stipend renewable for two years.

- Outstanding secondary education teachers working on a Master’s degree are also eligible to compete for the David P. Pasquini Award and the research/conference travel fund.

- Graduate students in good standing in the Master of Arts (MA) in History degree program may apply to the Department Graduate Committee for awards from the Professor Emeritus Fund to help defray the expenses incurred while conducting historical research for Western courses and for their Masters’ thesis. MA students in History may also apply for Professor Emeritus Awards to help defray travel expenses when presenting their own research papers at academic conferences.

Western Illinois University is an Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity employer with a strong commitment to diversity. In that spirit, we are particularly interested in receiving applications from a broad spectrum of people, including, but not limited to, minorities, women, and individuals with disabilities. WIU has a non-discrimination policy that includes sex, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, and veteran status.

**Faculty Expertise**
All department faculty members possess doctoral degrees in History earned at a variety of distinguished North American and European universities. Faculty members 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, Russia/the Soviet Union, Germany, Britain, France, Asia, and the world. The topics of expertise include foreign policy, diplomacy, the Cold War, Ancient Greece and Rome, the Renaissance and Reformation, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, the Progressive Era, labor history, American Indian history, British Colonial America, the Early Republic, Civil War and Reconstruction, Latin American history, the American Revolution, military history, and women’s history.

Distinctive Features

- The History department offers graduate courses at the University’s Macomb campus and is a recognized regional leader in quality and value.

- Students in the graduate program have presented their research at regional academic conferences such as the Missouri Valley Conference and the Illinois History Symposium.

- Graduate students in the program have also completed one-semester internships at the Rock Island Arsenal, the Putnam Museum in Davenport, the Des Moines County Historical Society in Burlington, and the Western Illinois Museum in Macomb.

- Western Illinois University is home to the Omicron Omicron chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. The society is made up of both undergraduate and graduate students in History. Each year, our local chapter sponsors a number of activities for its members and the community at large. Western’s Phi Alpha Theta chapter sponsors an online journal of student research, the Western Illinois Historical Review. The journal publishes selected outstanding student papers nominated by members of the History faculty and selected by the journal’s Editorial Board.

Contact Information

For admissions process and general program information, contact the School of Graduate Studies, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455, (309) 298-1806, (877) WIU GRAD toll-free, Grad-Office@wiu.edu, wiu.edu/grad.

For specific program questions, contact Dr. Edward Woell, Graduate Director, Department of History, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455, (309) 298-2977, EJ-Woell@wiu.edu, wiu.edu/history.