Welcome to the HISTORY Department

History Department Location:
Main Office: Tillinghast Hall 233
Phone: 508-531-1388
General Information

History is one of the great traditional liberal arts majors.

History students engage in a sustained investigation of the record of humanity’s existence. From this intellectual exertion, students can develop a more rich and sophisticated understanding of human nature and human potential, and in the process enhance their skills in critical thinking and argumentation.

Since historians work primarily with words, students read and write a lot in the major, doing substantial reading assignments and papers. A benefit of this experience is that a successful history student can be assumed to have superior reading comprehension and writing ability, things of great use in any walk of life.

Unlike the pre-professional majors, but like most of the others in the humanities and social sciences, history does not prepare the student for any particular occupation, and students should not chose it if they want a straight and obvious career path. That having been said, Bridgewater State University in particular has had a long and successful record in the preparation of history teachers at the K-12 level, and many of our students have continued into graduate programs in history. In addition, history is one of the classic majors for people who plan to go to law school.

The History Department at Bridgewater State University boasts a large and accomplished faculty for a school of its size. The undergraduate major is designed to give students breadth and depth, and requires them to work with faculty in different time periods, various parts of the world, and using diverse historical methods. A particular benefit of the Bridgewater history program is that class sizes are relatively small (capped at 35 for introductory courses, 30 for regular upper-level lecture courses, and 10 for seminars and colloquia), so students and faculty work closely together and get to know one another well on a professional level.
Co-Curricular Opportunities

The History Department actively facilitates undergraduate research projects as well as the senior honors thesis, and many of our students do these.

The History Department supports an honors society for its most successful students, and there is also a History Club open to all purely on the basis of interest.

Bridgewater history students have done internships at museums, historical sites, archives and government offices from the local to the federal level.

Bridgewater history faculty have been active in organizing study abroad courses in many parts of the world, including Canada, East Asia, and Europe.
How does advising work in the department?

When declaring the history major, each student is assigned an individual adviser from among the fulltime history faculty.

Throughout the semester, fulltime faculty hold regular office hours, posted outside their office doors and at the history department website. During advising, which begins in early November and early April, several weeks before online registration for the following semester, fulltime faculty post extended office hours, and most of them use a sign-up sheet for students to select times for appointments. Students should bring printouts of their degree audits and at least a preliminary course selection to their advising appointments. Advisers will check to see that students are progressing successfully through the major and choosing the correct courses. Each student MUST see his or her adviser to have course selections approved and for the adviser to clear the student for online registration. It is VERY IMPORTANT for students to meet advisers BEFORE web registration. Upper-level history classes tend to fill up very quickly, and if a student has not been cleared by his or her adviser to register along with his or her class, that student will very likely NOT get into all selected courses. If a student lets it slide, and goes past the web registration period, that student will have a very hard time getting all needed classes.

Aside from registration, students are encouraged to see their advisers about academic issues, career plans and other matters related to their educational success.
Recommended Courses for New Students and Transfer Students

Students begin the History major with three introductory-level courses, one in U.S. history and two in Western Civilization or World History. These courses are the prerequisites for upper-level history courses. They also fulfill several CORE requirements (see Infobear for which in particular).

New students and transfer students coming in with no college-level history should begin by taking as many of these as they can fit in their first semester: for a fulltime student with other CORE courses to take, at least one and preferably two would be good. For example: taking HIST 131 (World History to 1500) and either HIST 221 (U.S. History to 1865) or HIST 222 (U.S. History Since 1865) would be a good choice for a student’s first semester.

Students coming in with college-level history courses should see which of our introductory courses they have already taken. Most schools organize their introductory courses the same way as Bridgewater does, and Massachusetts community colleges have courses that match Bridgewater’s exactly.

In most cases, especially if a student is coming from a Massachusetts community college, the degree audit will show which courses have transferred as equivalents to the Bridgewater history major (if a history course has not transferred, the student will need to consult with the History Department at transfer orientation).
Transfer students should see which of our introductory courses they still need, and in designing their schedule they should make a priority of taking as many of those courses as they can.

**NOTE:** Students can take either the Western Civilization or the World History sequence, and have the option of taking half of one and half of the other. However, they should be careful not to take two halves covering the same time period, because only one will count toward the major.

- HIST 111 and HIST 131  Cover the same time period, **DO NOT** take both.
- HIST 112 and HIST 132  Cover the same time period, **DO NOT** take both.

**Elementary Education** students are required to take HIST 131 (World History to 1500). However, if they have already taken the first half of Western Civilization at another school they can get a waiver for that.

If a student is coming in with all introductory courses completed they can begin taking upper-level classes.
Recommended Courses for New Students and Transfer Students

Required Lower Division Courses – Three courses must be taken before moving on to the upper division courses.

- **HIST 111**
  West. Civ. to the Reformation
  OR
  - **HIST 131**
    World History to 1500

- **HIST 112**
  West. Civ. since the Reformation
  OR
  - **HIST 132**
    World History since 1500

- **HIST 221**
  U.S. History To 1865
  OR
  - **HIST 222**
    U.S. History Since 1865

BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY
Required Upper Division Courses - One course from each area must be taken to complete the major requirements.

History majors take eight upper-level history courses, covering different parts of the world and different periods in history, called Areas in the major. (Please see the next chart for the areas).

Students **DO NOT** need to take the upper-level Areas in numerical order, but by the time they are done they need to have completed all the areas.

**VERY IMPORTANT NOTE FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS** selecting upper-level courses: History 495 Colloquium and HIST 496 Seminar are designed as challenging capstone courses to be taken at the end of a student’s undergraduate career. Students **SHOULD NOT** enroll in HIST 495 or HIST 496 in their first semester.

**VERY IMPORTANT NOTE** (not for first semester, but for later in the major): Some courses may potentially count in more than one Area, so the Degree Audit is not necessarily reliable for course selection. Infobear shows officially which Area(s) a course covers in any given semester. In choosing courses, students need to go to Infobear and see which courses fit which Areas. Students **SHOULD NOT** enroll in HIST 495 or HIST 496 in their first semester.
Required Upper Division Courses - One course from each area must be taken to complete the major requirements.

**UPPER DIVISION COURSES**
24 CREDITS

**AREA III**
ANCIENT MEDIEVAL EARLY MODERN HISTORY

**AREA IV**
MODERN EUROPE

**AREA V**
UNITED STATES TO 1877

**AREA VI**
UNITED STATES SINCE 1877

**AREA VII**
THE TRADITIONAL WORLD

**AREA VIII**
THE MODERN WORLD

**AREA IX**
HISTORY ELECTIVES
2 COURSES

300 or 400 level
Must be taken at a 4-year college

BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY
HISTORY 396 Proseminar Requirement

Students are eligible to take the proseminar after completing at least two (2) lower division survey courses. The proseminar must be taken before the completion of three (3) upper level classes.
HIST 495 or HIST 496

These are intended as capstone courses. Students should enroll in one during their final two semesters at Bridgewater.
Overriding a Prerequisite

If you want to enroll in an upper-level course without having the exact prerequisite, you must complete the following form, allowing you to enroll in the course.
Make sure you have the correct CRN numbers for registration.

*noted in the yellow box on the sample registration form*
BEFORE LEAVING

Please feel free to ask any question about transferring courses or courses you have chosen.

Please see Caroline Aronoff to be assigned an advisor and to hand in your file.

Thank you and welcome to the History department.