The Department of History offers a program which has four principal objectives:

1. to provide a general knowledge of the history of the United States, Europe, and the wider world (as we have defined our fields of concentration);
2. to teach students to think and read critically and thereby to develop the ability to analyze historical documents and to appreciate the nature of historical interpretations;
3. to improve students’ ability to communicate both orally and in writing; and,
4. to foster the ability to conduct historical research.

The Department offers a broad spectrum of courses in U.S., European, and wider world history; in the ancient, medieval, and modern periods; in social, cultural, political, economic, intellectual, military, and diplomatic history; the history of science; and in a variety of special topics including gender, sexuality, witchcraft, and terrorism.

The History Major prepares students for career opportunities in a wide range of employment, where liberally educated minds can be turned to fruitful account. It offers an excellent general background for later, more specialized studies in fields such as law and journalism. A number of history majors go on to work in public service at the local, state, and federal levels or find employment in those areas of the private sector where a premium is put on a sound general education. Finally, many history majors employ their skills more directly: in the teaching profession (from the primary through graduate school levels), in museums and archives, or in the expanding field of historical preservation work.

The department offers programs leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree in history, a M.A. in History, a M.A. in History with a Museum Studies concentration, and a Ph.D. in history. The Public History Program (Museum Studies) works in partnership with the Department of Interior Architecture, cross-listing many core classes. Classes in each of our programs are generally small and, through an intensive mentoring program, faculty-student interaction has become a hallmark of graduate study in the department.

Although the department does not formally restrict admission to its courses with regard to level, it recommends its 300-level courses to sophomores and above and its 400-level courses to juniors and seniors.