

Historical Perspectives

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In exploring the many facets of the human condition across time and space, the study of history invites students to encounter the past for its own sake and to understand ways in which the past bears upon the present. Historical perspectives on the past help students develop an appreciation for the variety of human experiences, and to recognize similarities and differences, continuities and discontinuities, between past and present. Finally, historical perspectives on the past require approaching it critically, applying the tools and practices of historians that students develop in the course of their study, including: the analysis of evidence; interpretation of events, issues, and experiences based on appropriate contextualization; and the development of reasoned arguments and explanations based on both primary sources and existing historical scholarship.

Overview of the Concentration

The concentration in historical perspectives is an opportunity for integrative learning. Students combine a core of history courses with coursework in at least one other discipline to broaden and enrich the understanding of an epoch, event, region, or theme of their choice. An historical perspectives concentration enables students to highlight and develop a coherent focus of interest across the arc of their entire program, to identify points of intersection in their coursework, and to reflect upon the distinctive and complementary contributions of interdisciplinary study. Recently completed concentrations have focused on the Reformation era in Europe, the development of national identities along the Franco-German border, and African-American studies. **Note: the historical perspectives concentration is in the process of being discontinued. Students graduating in 2016 are the only ones still eligible to complete this concentration.**

Requirements

Available only to students through the class of 2016.

The historical perspectives concentration has no courses of its own. Instead, it is a cluster of five courses that constitute a coherent focus on an epoch, event, region, or theme. At least two, but no more than three, of the five must be history courses. At least one course must be from the student's major. At least one course must be at level III.

To propose a concentration in historical perspectives, students must:

1. Prepare a rationale that explains the internal coherence of the proposed concentration, including how each course contributes to the integrative learning experience.
2. Obtain approval of their selection of five courses from a faculty committee of three, one of whom must be a member of the History Department, who chairs the committee.

Proposals should be made in a timely fashion and before all of the course work has been completed. Students may initiate the approval process by contacting any member of the History Department.