



CENTER FOR CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Major Possibilities: History

Quick Facts

- Historians research, analyze, and interpret the past. They usually specialize in a country or region, a particular period, or a particular field, such as social, intellectual, cultural, political, or women's history.
- Usually, advanced study, such as a Master's degree or even a Ph.D., is required for higher level positions.
- Numerous local museums and other organizations offer internships and research opportunities. Archaeological field schools instruct future anthropologists, archaeologists, and historians in how to interpret historical sites.
- Learning a second language related to your area of interest will be beneficial to you in your career.
- Internships (including research experiences) help shape professional identities, develop 21st century career-readiness skills, and make meaning of the academic experience.

History Major Synopsis

The History program at Southwestern University provides students with a global perspective and a solid grounding in the methods and fields of history, while also encouraging interdisciplinary connections. Students take courses in world history, historiography, a course with a pre- or early modern component, and a Senior Seminar (Capstone). One upper-level course must be taken from four of the six geographical areas: Africa, East Asia, Europe, Latin America, the United States of America, and transregional; two additional courses of your choice must be taken for a total of nine courses (36 credit hours). History may be paired with Feminist Studies for a 15-course major or may serve as a disciplinary major paired with an area concentration as part of an International Studies major. See the education department for information on teacher certification.

Sample Occupational Areas

EDUCATION

A degree in History can lead to a job as an educator in secondary or post-secondary education. All teachers of grades K-6 also need to complete a general studies curriculum. For high school teachers, a broader range of history courses is required because of the sole emphasis on a specific area of history, such as American History, World History, Western Civilizations, etc. History majors can also continue their education to become a professor. Jobs are available for educators in museums and historical sites. Educators are needed at such sites to interpret the past to visitors with a wide range of education and experience. Those who teach at museums and historic sites may need more than traditional history courses to qualify for their positions.

RESEARCH

Research in museums includes authentication, verification, and description of items; more basic research that focuses on the meaning, significance, and context of artifacts; and research (usually team-based) that is aimed at assembling an exhibition or educational program based on the museum's collections. A BA may suffice for these jobs in small museums. Other options are cultural resources management (CRM) and historic preservation, which enable historians to research the pasts of these historic places. Independent research is also possible, especially if one is a professor at a research university. Historians publish their research in many forms. They can use monographs, academic articles, documentary films, brochures, exhibits, reports on historic buildings for federal agencies, or documents to help businesses or government agencies understand their past when making decisions to display their research.

LIBRARY

Librarians use the latest information technology to perform research, classify materials, and help students and library patrons seek information. A master's degree in library science is the main qualification for most librarian positions, although school librarians often need experience as teachers to meet State licensing requirements. Librarians can act as both educators and researchers. Librarians are classified according to the type of library in which they work: a public library; school library media center; college, university, or other academic library; or special library.

LAW

Students of history can also go on to law school or become a paralegal. A background in history would be useful for the research required for working in law. Historians can work in litigation support by being witnesses in court. They can also be important staff members for government officials who are responsible for making laws. Ability to conduct primary source research is invaluable when seeking to determine the original intent of a law or regulation under scrutiny.

BUSINESS

Within a particular company, those with a background in history may find careers in the areas of external relations, marketing, information resource management, legal affairs, finance and control, administration, human resources, and operations. In almost every type of business, archivists and records managers are employed to oversee current and archival records, using them to provide information and archival services. In the area of human resources, historians with knowledge of foreign languages and foreign cultures, working in an international company, can help employees and customers communicate effectively.

Another option is to be a contract historian. In order to become a consultant, an entrepreneurial attitude and determination are mandatory. Museums, nonprofit organizations, federal agencies, businesses, and individuals all may hire consultants who contract for particular projects. Contract historians can own or work for history businesses--firms that specialize in providing history services for a variety of clients, from providing litigation support to preparing text for a museum exhibit, researching a historic site for a cultural resources management project, or declassifying documents for a government agency.

Sample Job Titles

Anthropologist	Correspondent	Historian	Paralegal
Archaeologist	Criminologist	Information Specialist	Preservation Advocate
Archivist	Curator	Intelligence Analyst	Professor
Art Gallery Director	Demographer	International Relations Specialist	Public Administrator
Biographer	Exhibit Designer	Journalist	Public Relations Officer
Community Relations Director	FBI/CIA Agent	Judge	Technical Writer
Congressional Aide	Foreign Service Officer	Lawyer	Travel Agent
Conservator	Freelance Writer	Librarian	Urban Planner
Consumer Advocate	Genealogist	Market Research Analyst	
Contract Historian	Geographer	News Reporter	

Sample Internship Employers of SU Students

Art Institute of Chicago - Chicago, IL	Magazine Publishers of America
Boston National Historic Park - Boston, MA	Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza - Dallas, TX
Congressman Pete Sessions - Washington, DC	Smithsonian Museum of American History - Washington, DC
Federal Bureau of Investigation - Washington, DC	Southwestern University Special Collections - Georgetown, TX
Fort Caspar Museum/Historic Site - Caspar, WY	Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation - Austin, TX
Georgetown Palace Theater - Georgetown, TX	The Museum of Modern Art
Georgetown Cultural Citizen Memorial Assn. - Georgetown, TX	The Museum of Texas University - Lubbock, TX
Institute for Diversity and Civil Life - Austin, TX	Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site
Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy - Washington, DC	Williamson County Historical Commission - Georgetown, TX
<i>Laredo Morning Times</i> - Laredo, TX	Williamson Museum - Georgetown, TX
Long Center for the Performing Arts - Austin, TX	US Citizenship and Immigration Services - Washington, DC

Sample Full-Time Employers of SU Grads

Background Investigator (Omniplex World Services)	Law Clerk (Dunaway Law Firm, PC)
Business Analyst (Hewitt Associates)	Legal Assistant (Law Offices of Richard Pena)
Client Services Director (Solari Law Group)	Membership and Guest Services (Houston Museum of Fine Arts)
English Teaching Assistant (Fulbright Program)	Office Assistant (Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee)
Gallery Assistant (Texas State Preservation Board)	Office Clerk (United States Census Bureau)
Gallery Educator (Austin Children's Museum)	Paralegal (Ihfe and Associates, PC)
Freelance Writer (Self-Employed)	Refugee Resettlement Specialist (Caritas of Austin)
Information Coordinator (Houston Museum of Natural Science)	Teacher (Various Public/Private Schools, Teach for America, etc.)
Junior Fellow (Library of Congress)	Technical Writer (National Instruments)

Professional Associations

American Alliance of Museums

American Association for State and Local History

American Cultural Resources Association

American Historical Association

Association of Science-Technology Centers (Science Museums)

International Students of History Association

Organization of American Historians

Phi Alpha Theta – American honor society for historians

Society for American Archaeology