

## Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about the Undergraduate Program

- How do I become a History major?

You can declare a major in History by visiting in person with Amy Lampe, the department's advising specialist, in 3650E Wescoe. Her office hours are in the afternoons, from Monday to Friday and her email is [amylampe@ku.edu](mailto:amylampe@ku.edu). No appointment is necessary. The process takes between 15 and 30 minutes.

- What happened to HIST 396?

As of Spring 2008, this course became HIST 301: The Historian's Craft. HIST 301 is one of two courses required for the major and should be taken in the sophomore year.

- Do transfer credits count toward my major?

In some cases they do. First, they must appear on your ARTS form, which is to say that the university must have accepted them. Then, in order for them to qualify for credit to the major, they must be approved by a major advisor or the Director of Undergraduate Studies. For this purpose it is best to bring a syllabus with you so that your advisor will have a good sense of whether the course is similar to any course offered in this department. Remember that no more than two lower-level courses (i.e. those taken at a junior college) may count for major credit.

- I'd like to major in History but my parents are pushing me to major in business because they say I will be more employable. What types of jobs can I get with a Bachelor's degree in History?

History majors are well prepared to follow a variety of career paths from international business and journalism to law and public service. Students in this program are trained to do research, conceptualize problems and write clearly and forcefully for a broad audience. Recent graduates have gone on to law school and graduate programs in sociology and history, while others have worked in sales and marketing and for National Public Radio, a psychological consulting firm, a university research center, and a variety of non-governmental organizations. For an introduction to possible career trajectories, see the link to the AHA pamphlet on Careers in History posted on this webpage.

- Once I've become a major, how do I get help in selecting my courses and planning a future career?

Pre-enrollment advising takes place in October and in March. Sign-up sheets are available outside of the Undergraduate Office. You do not have to meet with the same advisor each semester, though some students find that this is helpful. A Course Description Packet is available before advising, containing descriptions of courses to be offered in the upcoming semester, often with details about assignments and texts. General advising appointments to see the Director of Undergraduate Studies can be made throughout the semester by contacting Amanda Contreras at [acon@ku.edu](mailto:acon@ku.edu) or in 3650D Wescoe.

- What is the difference between a course numbered in the 300s and a course numbered in the 500s?

300-level courses tend to be focused on a particular theme and may range fairly widely over space and time. 500-level courses tend to be focused on a particular country and are usually delimited by a specific era. They may form part of a sequence that can be followed. The level of the course does not signify a relative degree of difficulty or size of workload. Some 300-level courses require more reading or more writing than some 500-level courses. 300-level courses tend to be larger, are open to enrollment by freshman, sophomores, juniors and seniors, and may include the work of Graduate Teaching Assistants while 500-level courses are open to graduate students who generally have to fulfill a different set of requirements than undergraduates (they are also open to sophomores, juniors and seniors).

- I intend to graduate this semester, and I only need to take the two core courses so can I enroll in History 396 at the same time that I take History 696?

No. History 396 should be taken during the sophomore or junior year. Delaying it does not remove the requirement that it be completed before enrolling in the senior seminar. You have two more semesters to go before you can graduate.

- Do independent study courses taken through KU Continuing Education count toward the History major?

Only one KUCE course is allowed in fulfillment of the major or minor requirements in History (beginning in January 2008).

- I took History 303 last semester and it is not showing up under either Category I or Category II on my ARTS form. How do I know that I am getting the proper credit for this course?

A few courses in the department are “wild cards” and fit under either category and cannot be coded for the computer. This is also true of topics courses, such as History 510. As long as they are listed on the left-hand column of your ARTS form, you will be given credit for them. The important thing is to meet each semester with your advisor during the pre-enrollment period so that your progress will be charted on the internal department major advising sheet where each course is listed by its category. This is the form that counts. In order to see what category a certain class belongs in, please consult the Recent Course list on this webpage or pick up a Course Description Packet during pre-enrollment from the Undergraduate Office.

- Will a course that I took in Art History fulfill a major requirement in History?

No. Only courses taken with a History course number or cross-listed with a History course qualify for consideration as major courses.

- I took a course at another university on the History of Spain and I would like it to count for my HT General Education requirement. How do I go about getting this approved?

You must petition the Director of Undergraduate Studies. We require a copy of the syllabus for the course taken and a written statement from you explaining how the course meets the requirement of a principal course in the College. Be advised that very few such petitions are approved. You may file the petition with Amanda Contreras in the Undergraduate Studies office in 3650D Wescoe.

- I'm planning on taking a position as an intern this summer for a local historical museum. Is it possible to get course credit for this experience?

Yes. You must enroll in History 494 during the same term as the internship and you must have a KU History faculty sponsor. You will be asked to provide documentation of your service and to produce

some written work for the course. Contact Professor Kim Warren for more details.

- I'm completing all of my coursework this semester. What else do I need to do to graduate?

You need to formally apply for graduation, preferably in August for Fall graduation and in January for Spring graduation. You can also apply in the semester before your intended graduation date. To begin this process, you need to come in to the main History Dept. offices and meet with Amy Lampe who will help you complete the Major Certification Form and give you an Exit Survey. She has office hours most afternoons.

- I'd like to go on a Study Abroad Program to Argentina next spring. How can I be certain that the courses I take there will count toward my degree requirements?

You should meet with the department's Study Abroad Advisor, Professor Robert Dekosky, to go over your projected program and get pre-approval for courses that you intend to enroll in.

- My TA didn't like me and I got a "D" in my history class last semester, but I worked really hard and I believe that I deserved a "B". Can I get the grade changed?

First, talk to the professor who gave the course and have him or her explain to you how the grade was computed. If you feel that the grade was computed in a manner that is inconsistent with the one stated on the course syllabus, then you can follow the steps outlined in the Grade Appeal Policy on this website. Grades on individual assignments or exams cannot be appealed.

- Does the History Department offer scholarships for undergraduates?

There are a few small scholarships and awards that are given to undergraduates who have outstanding records or who produce excellent senior theses. They are highly competitive and some require an application. Applications to be considered for these honors are due in March and will be available from the Undergraduate Office. Awards are announced at the annual student reception in May.

- I'm thinking about continuing my education in graduate school, but I am not sure how to select the right program. How do I go about this process?

You can meet with your major advisor or with the Director of Undergraduate Studies. Either of them can help you find information about graduate work in History, and they can guide you toward assessing what types of programs will fit your specific intellectual needs. In order to find out whether your GPA is high enough to qualify for admission, you must consult with individual graduate school or professional school programs, since these vary widely and are sometimes evaluated alongside other factors such as test scores, related work experience, etc. There is also a very useful workshop held during the fall semester, sponsored by the University Honors Program, on "Taking the Crooked Path or Thinking Twice About Graduate School" which explores ideas about the timing of a graduate education within one's life work. It is co-organized by Professor Tony Rosenthal.