

# DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

## SOPHMORE PAPER FOR THE CLASS OF 2009

### COURSE OFFERINGS AND PREREQUISITES

The courses and seminars offered by the History Department attempt to give students a sense of the past; an acquaintance with the social, cultural, and institutional developments that have produced the world of today; and an understanding of the nature of history as a discipline. The discipline of history is a method of analysis that focuses on the contexts in which people have lived and worked. Our courses and seminars emphasize less the accumulation of data than the investigation, from various viewpoints, of those ideas and institutions—political, religious, social, economic, and cultural—by which people have endeavored to order their world. The History Department's curriculum introduces students to historical methodology and the fundamentals of historical research and writing.

The study of history prepares students for a wide range of occupations and professions because it develops their analytical, writing, and research skills. Former Swarthmore history majors can be found in all sectors of the economy, ranging from Wall Street to the world of medicine, from elementary and high schools to trade unions and public interest foundations and institutes, from journalism and publishing to consulting, and from the private to the public sector. In particular, many of our former majors find that studying history was excellent preparation for law school and enabled them to succeed as attorneys.

Courses and seminars offered by the History Department are integral to most interdisciplinary programs, such as Black Studies, Francophone Studies, German Studies, Latin American Studies, Peace Studies, and Women's Studies as well as to the majors in Asian Studies and Medieval Studies. Students interested in these programs should consult the appropriate statements of requirements and course offerings. In addition, we encourage students who wish to obtain teaching certification to major in history. (See the section on teacher certification for more information.)

*Survey Courses:* Survey courses (002–011) are open to all students without prerequisites and are designed to serve the needs of students who seek a general education in the field as well as to provide preparation for a range of upper-level

courses. Survey courses provide broad chronological coverage of a particular field of history. Although these entry-level courses vary somewhat in approach, they normally focus on major issues of interpretation, the analysis of primary sources, and historical methodology.

*First-Year Seminars:* First-year seminars (HIST 001A-001Z; 1 credit) explore specific historical issues or periods in depth in a seminar setting; they are open to first-year students and are limited to 12 students. Students who are not admitted to first-year seminars in the fall will receive priority for seminars in the spring.

*Upper-Division Courses:* Upper-division courses (HIST 012-099; 1 credit) are specifically thematic and topical in nature and do not attempt to provide the broad coverage that surveys do. They are generally open to students who have fulfilled one of the following: (1) taken one of the courses numbered 001-011; (2) received an Advanced Placement score of 4 or 5 in any area; (3) received the permission of the instructor; or (4) taken Classics courses 031, 032, 042, 044, or 056. Exceptions are courses designated "not open to first-year students" or where specific prerequisites are stated.

*Double-Credit Seminars:* Admission to these seminars is selective and based on an evaluation of the student's potential to do independent work and to contribute to seminar discussions. A minimum grade of B+ in at least two history courses and a record of active and informed participation in class discussions are required of all students entering seminars. In addition, recommendations from department faculty members who have taught the student are solicited.

Sophomores hoping to take history seminars in their junior and senior years should give special thought to the seminars that they list in their sophomore papers. The department will weigh the merit of each request on the basis of the importance of the seminar to the student's proposed program as well as the student's qualifications. Seminar enrollments are normally limited to 10. If you are placed in a seminar at the end of your sophomore year, you will be one of 10 students guaranteed a space and you are, in effect, taking the space of another student who might also like to be in the seminar. Consequently, you should not list any seminar in your sophomore paper without being quite certain that you intend to take it if you are admitted.

## REQUIREMENTS

### Major and Minor

Admission to the department as a major or minor normally requires at least two history courses taken at Swarthmore with a B average and a satisfactory standard of work in all courses. In addition, admission to double credit seminars and the Honors Program as either major or minor requires a B+ average in at least two Swarthmore history courses, a record of active and informed participation in class discussions, and recommendations from History Department faculty members. Courses in Greek and Roman history offered by the Classics Department count toward this prerequisite. Students who intend to continue the study of history after graduation should bear in mind that a reading knowledge of one or two foreign languages is generally assumed for admission to graduate school.

All majors (course and honors programs) in history must take at least 9 credits in history that fulfill the following requirements:

1. At least 6 of the 9 credits are normally done at Swarthmore.
2. At least one course or seminar at Swarthmore from each of the following categories: (a) all courses and seminars before 1750 (including CLAS 031, 032, 042, 044, and 056) and (b) all courses and seminars in areas outside Europe and the United States, specifically Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Near East. This distribution requirement is designed to have students explore various fields of history and engage in comparative historical analysis. A list of these distribution courses is on file in the department office.

### *Course Major*

Complete the Senior Research Seminar (HIST 091) in which students write a research paper based on primary sources. This course satisfies the College's requirement that all majors and concentrations have a culminating exercise for their majors and is only offered during the fall semester. *The department encourages students to suggest possible research topics in their sophomore papers and to select topics by the end of their junior year.*

### *Course Minor*

Complete 5 history credits at Swarthmore College (AP, transfer credit, and foreign study courses do not count). Two of the 5 credits must be from courses above the introductory level, and one credit may be in a history course offered by the Classics Department.

### *Thesis*

A student who wishes to write a thesis should state her or his intention by submitting a proposal at the beginning of the senior year. The department must approve the topic before the student can enroll in HIST 092 (Thesis). The thesis should be a work of about 10,000 to 15,000 words (50–75 pages), and a brief oral examination will be conducted upon completion of the thesis.

### *Major and Minor in the Honors Program (External Examination Program)*

Seminars are the normal mode of preparation for students majoring in history in the Honors Program. Majors in the Honors Program will complete three double-credit seminars and revise one paper per seminar for their portfolio submitted to external examiners. Revised papers will not be graded but will be included in the portfolio to provide examiners a context for the evaluation of the written examination taken in the spring of the senior year. Students may substitute Honors Thesis (HIST 180) for one of their seminars. The thesis and revised seminar papers are due by April 24.

Minors in the Honors Program will complete one double-credit seminar in addition to 3 credits taken at Swarthmore (AP, transfer credit, and foreign study courses do not count) and include one revised paper from that seminar in their portfolio.

Students in seminars take a three-hour written examination at the end of each seminar and will receive a grade from the seminar instructor for their overall performance in the seminar, including the written examination. Seminar instructors will not normally assign grades during the course of the seminar, but they will meet periodically with students on an individual basis during the course of the semester and discuss their progress.

Seminars are a collective, collaborative, and cooperative venture among students and faculty members designed to promote self-directed learning. Active participation in seminars is, therefore, required of all students. Evaluation of performance in the seminar will be based on the quality of seminar papers and comments during seminar discussions, in addition to the written examination. Because the seminar depends on the active participation of all its members, the department expects students to live up to the standards of honors. These standards include attendance at every seminar session, submission of seminar papers according to the deadline set by the instructor, reading of seminar papers before coming to the seminar, completion of all reading assignments before the seminar, respect of the needs of other students who share the reserve readings, and eagerness to engage in a scholarly discussion of the issues raised by the readings and seminar papers. The department reminds students that the responsibility

for earning honors rests squarely on the students' shoulders and will review on a regular basis their performance in the program. Failure to live up to the standards outlined previously may disqualify students from continuing in the Honors Program. Students earn double-credit for seminars and should be prepared to work at least twice as hard as they do for single-credit courses.

The revised seminar papers are written in two stages. During the first stage, students must confer with their seminar instructor as to what papers they are preparing for honors and what revisions they plan for these papers. Seminar instructors will offer advice on how to improve the papers with additional readings, structural changes, and further development of arguments. The second stage occurs when the student revises the papers independently. Faculty members are not expected to read the revised papers at any stage of the revision process. Each revised paper must be from 2,500 to 4,000 words and include a brief bibliography. Students will submit them to the department office by April 24. Students who fail to submit their revised papers by the deadline will not complete the Honors Program.

The department encourages students to form their own study groups to prepare for the external examinations. Although faculty members may, at their convenience, attend an occasional study session, students are generally expected to form and lead the study groups, in keeping with the department's belief that honors is a collaborative, self-learning exercise that relies on the commitment of students.

Students enrolled as minors in history will submit one revised paper as part of their portfolio. It is due by April 24.

### **FOREIGN STUDY**

The History Department encourages students to pursue the study of history abroad and grants credit for such study as appropriate. We believe that history majors should master a foreign language as well as immerse themselves in a foreign culture and society. To receive Swarthmore credit for history courses taken during study abroad, a student must have departmental preapproval and have taken at least one history course at Swarthmore (normally before going abroad). Students who want to receive credit for a second course taken abroad or elsewhere in the United States must take a second history course at Swarthmore. Students must receive a grade of C or higher to receive history credit at Swarthmore.

### **ADVANCED PLACEMENT/INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE**

The History Department will automatically grant 1 credit to students who have achieved a score of 4 or 5 in either the U.S., European, or World History Advanced Placement examinations (or a score of 6 or 7 in the International Baccalaureate examinations) once they take any course number 001 through 011 and earn a grade of C or higher. Students who want credit for a second Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate examination (in a different area of history) must take a second history course at Swarthmore (any course number) and earn a grade of C or higher. A score of 4 or 5 for Advanced Placement (or a score of 6 or 7 for International Baccalaureate) allows students to take some upper-division courses in the History Department. The History Department will grant up to 2 credits for Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate work.

Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate credit may be counted toward the number of courses required for graduation and may be used to help fulfill the College's distribution requirements.

### **LANGUAGE ATTACHMENT**

Certain designated courses offer the option of a foreign language attachment, normally for 0.5 credit. Arrangements for this option should be made with the instructor at the time of registration.

### **TEACHER CERTIFICATION**

History majors can complete the requirements for teacher certification through a program approved by the state of Pennsylvania. Because of a change in teacher certification regulations that occurred in November 2000, students completing certification in 2004 and beyond will complete the requirements for Citizenship Education. For further information about the relevant set of requirements, please contact the Department of Educational Studies director or see the Department of Educational Studies Web site: [www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/Education/](http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/Education/).