

History

“Through the deep immersion of One Course At A Time study, my students take ownership of their topics through hands-on history making. They complete independent archival research off campus, conduct oral history interviews, or learn on-the-job training through internships at major local historical organizations.”

Catherine Stewart, Professor of History

Cornell's history department concentrates its curriculum into three primary areas of study: American history, European history until 1700, and European history from 1700 to present.

Ideas, institutions, and patterns of behavior develop over time, and an understanding of the historical context of human existence is central to a liberal arts education. Studying history requires the ability to interpret texts and documents of great variety and to develop critical evaluation skills. It is also essential to understand that people of the past did not merely dress and speak differently, but that their understanding of the world was far different from that of today. We make every effort to introduce students to those assumptions that informed individuals of other times and underlay their institutions.

The department judges itself successful when students demonstrate that they can think clearly and write cogently, and we work closely with students to develop these skills. Many history majors pursue graduate school, both in history and in related fields such as law and international relations. Approximately one-third of students become teachers in the secondary schools. Double majors are common at Cornell, and history provides an excellent complement for training in many fields. The department also offers an option to minor in history.

BENEFITS OF ONE COURSE AT A TIME

The department's distinguished history faculty frequently make productive use of

the One Course At A Time curriculum by creating term-long research opportunities for students. Students have the option to develop research skills during a block-long seminar at the Newberry Library in Chicago or by working closely with faculty during independent research blocks.

One Course At A Time also makes in-depth discussions and focused classroom work the norm, as well as a number of unique learning opportunities. Our courses easily integrate films, field trips, in-depth discussions, and focused projects such as documentary filmmaking, online exhibits, and participation-intensive historical simulations. Students learn new technologies (such as Adobe Premiere, iMovie, WordPress) as well as traditional methodologies (oral history interviewing, archival research, and close readings of textual and visual evidence).

Day trips to local and regional history museums, libraries, and historic sites are easily scheduled with One Course. On-site study of material culture and historic ruins helps the past come alive for students, ignites their passion for history, and enhances historical understanding. As a former student wrote, “There is a major difference in reading about a particular history of a subject and actually being at that historical landmark and writing about it. It increases all five senses to work in a way that I never could imagine.”

CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS

The focus is on the history of Western Civilization, particularly European and U.S. history, with occasional courses available in Islamic, Asian and Latin American history. Specific areas covered in U.S. history are the Colonial Period, Civil War and Reconstruction, the New Deal, and the Civil Rights movement. The courses in European

Faculty Bios & Courses

ROBERT GIVENS

Professor of History

Specializes in European history, with particular interests in imperial and soviet Russia, modern Europe, and international relations. His courses include Modern Europe and Its Critics, Diplomacy of War and Revolution, Revolutionary and Soviet Russia, and the off-campus course Russia Today. He taught in Russia as a Fulbright scholar in 2008-09 and 1999-2000. He serves as faculty advisor to Cornell's international relations program. Ph.D., history, University of California, Berkeley.

MICHELLE HERDER

Associate Professor of History

Specializes in medieval and early modern history. Her research interests center on women and religion in late medieval Spain, and her courses include Europe 800-1300 and 1300-1700, Women in Medieval Europe, Women in the Renaissance and Reformation, Persecution and Tolerance in the Middle Ages, and The Crusades. Ph.D., history, Yale University.

PHIL LUCAS

Professor of History

Specializes in U.S. history with particular interests in 19th century American history and the history of the South. His courses include Origins of the American Nation, Colonial America, The Age of Revolution in America, Civil War and Reconstruction, African-Americans in U.S. History, and Baseball: The American Game. Ph.D., history, Cornell University.



history deal with social and institutional history from the middle ages to the present. Spain and modern Russia (including the USSR) are countries of particular interest.

The Richard H. Thomas History Scholar Awards for Off-Campus Research provide generous funding for majors by covering a large part of the cost for student participation in a Cornell off-campus research-based course, providing funding to support student internships at historical societies, libraries, and museums, or funding students' independent research for honors projects in history. Recipients have studied abroad in the Bahamas, Ireland, and eastern Europe; conducted archival research at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library; and completed a summer internship with the Council on American-Islamic relations.

INTERDISCIPLINARY MAJORS AND PROGRAMS

The Department of History cooperates in offering several interdisciplinary majors and programs: Ethnic Studies; Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies; International Relations; Latin American Studies; and Russian Studies.

INTERNSHIPS/FELLOWSHIPS

Students have completed internships at Iowa Museums, done archival research, and worked with curators and museums, such as the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum, African American Museum of Iowa, Naperville Settlement, Newberry Library, and various historical societies, as well as the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. The department has strong ties to local public history museums and libraries. Former students have also participated in the SHEAR/Mellon Undergraduate Fellowships in Early American History at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, and the Gilder Lehrman History Scholars Program in New York City.

AFTER CORNELL

ALUMNI CAREERS

Museum education assistant, Colorado Springs (Class of 2018)

Middle school teacher, James Irwin Charter Schools, Colorado Springs (Class of 2017)

Constituent Relations, U.S. Senator Joni Ernst, Davenport, Iowa (Class of 2015)

Fellow, Manhattan Institute for Public Policy, Washington, D.C. (Class of 2015)

Department head, Hobby Lobby, Round Lake, Illinois (Class of 2015)

Research and communications specialist, ImmigrationWorks, Washington, D.C. (Class

of 2014)

Senior vice president, Lhotse Management Solutions, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (Class of 2014)

Math educator, Teach For America, Houston, Texas (Class of 2013)

Head baseball coach, Anamosa Community School District, Anamosa, Iowa (Class of 2013)

Historic interpreter, Prince William County, Manassas, Virginia (Class of 2012)

Recruitment and program coordinator, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Ringwood, Illinois (Class of 2012)

Legal intern, Levy, Leff & DeFrank, PC, New Haven, Connecticut (Class of 2011)

Executive director, Access 2 Independence, Iowa City, Iowa (Class of 2011)

Kindergarten teacher and librarian, Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic School, Arvada, Colorado (Class of 2010)

Head of cataloging and archives, 9/11 Memorial and Museum, New York City, New York (Class of 2009)

Administrative coordinator and central office manager, Frank Lloyd Wright Preservation Trust, Chicago, Illinois (Class of 2009)

Coordinator, Iowa Cultural Corridor Alliance, Coralville, Iowa (Class of 2009)

Family medicine resident, Advocate Lutheran General Hospital, Park Ridge, Illinois (Class of 2007)

GRADUATE SCHOOLS ATTENDED

MLIS (master's of library and information science), University of Illinois (Class of 2018)

M.A. in museum studies, University of Cork, Cork, Ireland (Class of 2018)

J.D., University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa (Class of 2018)

M.Sc. Social and Public Policy, Cardiff University, Cardiff, Wales (Class of 2017)

J.D., DePaul University College of Law, Chicago, Illinois (Class of 2017)

Ph.D., University of California at Santa Barbara (Class of 2016)

J.D., University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas (Class of 2015)

M.P.A. (Master of Public Affairs), Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas (Class of 2014)

CATHERINE STEWART *Professor of History*

Specializes in modern U.S. history with particular interests in African American history, cultural history, and social history. Teaches courses in history and ethnic studies that include Public Memory and Public History; U.S. Social History Since 1940; The Documentary Imagination During the Depression; Work and Leisure in Modern America; African American Lives; Reel History - The Cold War and American Film; Reel History - African Americans and Film; Slavery and the Environment in a Comparative Context (taught at the Gerace Research Centre in the Bahamas); and Chicago: The Transformation of America's Second City, 1880-1940 (offered in Chicago at the Newberry Library). Her book, "Long Past Slavery: Representing Race in the Federal Writers' Project," was published by the University of North Carolina Press in 2016. Ph.D., history, State University of New York at Stony Brook.