Nebraska Wesleyan University

Historical Studies (Graduate)

Catalog

2012-2013

About the Program

The Nebraska Wesleyan University's historical studies program is designed to allow K-12 teachers to expand their content knowledge in American history. Historical studies aims to help teachers improve the classroom performance of their students through an intensive curriculum of courses examining particular content areas relevant to K-12 classrooms.

Majors, Minors & Degrees

Majors

1. Master of Arts in Historical Studies

Courses

HIST 501 Fundamentals of American History I

3 hours

An intensive study of the origins and the development of what is now the United States from 1450 to 1865/1877. Learning with the primary documents and historical scholarship is emphasized. The course is designed to develop knowledge needed for successful teaching of U.S. history in the schools and emphasizes the National History Standards.

Prerequisite(s): Baccalaureate degree and teaching experience, or permission of the instructor.

HIST 502 Fundamentals of American History II

3 hours

An intensive study of the origins and the development of what is now the United States from 1865/1877 to the present. Learning with primary documents and historical scholarship is emphasized. The course is designed to develop knowledge needed for successful teaching of U.S. history in the schools and emphasizes the National History Standards.

Prerequisite(s): Baccalaureate degree, teaching experience, HIST 501 Fundamentals of American History I or permission of the instructor.

HIST 503 Comparing Colonial American Frontiers

3 hours

An examination of the interaction between native cultures and the interlopers, or colonial powers, from Spain, France, and Russia. Students will examine precontact tribal societies in the Americas, precontact colonial powers and motivations for expansion, legal issues, contact and reactions, developing relations and power structures, issues of sovereignty and dominance, religion and religious conversion, shifting or resilience of social structures, economic development of the colonial powers, miscegenation, and long-term interaction.

Prerequisite(s): HIST 501 Fundamentals of American History I.

HIST 511 American Indian History

3 hours

This seminar will focus on North America's indigenous history up till 1890. Topics and readings will span the continent, incorporate Native relationships with a number of Euro-American empires, and cover chronology from pre-contact to the end of the 19th century. The history of North America's indigenous inhabitants is a complex network of thousands of distinct and unique peoples. Thus, we will attempt to simultaneously represent the diversity in Native history and identify general themes of Native experience.

HIST 515 U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction

3 hours

An examination of the causes, conduct and outcome of the Civil War in the United States. The course will explore various topics related to the war including its causes, military operations, technology, foreign relations and the political, social and economic tensions within the Union and Confederacy and will conclude with a study of the political, constitutional and social consequences of the Reconstruction period.

Prerequisite(s): HIST 501 Fundamentals of American History I and HIST 502 Fundamentals of American History II.

HIST 518 The U.S. in the Era of World Wars

3 hours

This course examines the United States from the close of the Great War through the conclusion of World War II, an era of sweeping changes that in significant ways represents the maturation of both modern America and the modern world. The changes associated with this shift toward modernity were often painful and convulsive for the American nation and yielded new political, economic, social and cultural realities that continue to shape our contemporary era. The culmination of this period was the onset of a war of such scale as to eclipse all others in the history of humanity. This course will focus on creating a cohesive narrative that can do justice to an era made up of so many disparate trends, events and developments.

HIST 520 Recent American History, 1945-present

3 hours

Examination of the United States since 1945. Major topics include: The Cold War and its aftermath, the American war in Vietnam, the collapse of Great Society liberalism, the emergence of the new conservatism, the struggle for minority rights, second-wave feminism, the rise of identity politics, the Reagan presidency, the role of media in the so-called Information Age and the post-9/11 American wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Special attention is paid to placing recent events and trends in a larger historical context.

HIST 521 History Strategies I

3 hours

A hands-on, interactive course that focuses on the historical content and methods teachers need to understand to teach social studies and motivate students to think historically. The course will utilize a textbook as well as primary documents. Teachers will learn how to apply historical thinking to the classroom, assess student learning, and adjust curriculum for special needs of students.

Pass/Fail only.

Prerequisite(s): Baccalaureate degree and teaching experience, or permission of the instructor.

HIST 522 History Strategies II

3 hours

An advanced, hands-on, interactive course that continues the focus begun in History Alive I on the historical content and methods teachers need to understand to teach social studies and motivate students to think historically. The course will utilize a textbook as well as primary documents. Teachers will learn how to apply historical thinking to the classroom, assess student learning, and adjust curriculum for special needs of students.

Prerequisite(s): Baccalaureate degree and HIST 521 History Strategies I, or permission of the instructor.

HIST 523 History and Place

3 hours

This course will allow students to visit places that interpret history (memorials, monuments, museums and historical sites) as a means to discuss how history is presented at those places. Todays teachers increasingly have access to interpretative materials in the classroom, through both field trips and virtual technology, but are not always adequately trained to critically analyze the accuracy of facts and interpretations presented. By choosing a particular topic or place (variable depending on the semester) as the theme, this course will allow teachers to examine and criticize how history is interpreted at particular historic sites, memorials and museums. The theme for a particular semester might be historic places in and around Lincoln or a remote location. Through participation in this course, students will: 1) Engage in research regarding historic places prior to visiting those places, thereby developing research skills that can be applied in their own teaching, 2) Recognize how interpretative sites frame and contextualize historical events, and 3) Create teaching modules that can accurately use place to teach history.

Prerequisite(s): HIST 501 Fundamentals of American History I and HIST 502 Fundamentals of American History II, or permission of the instructor.

HIST 550 Nebraska Institute for the Study of US History

3 hours

An exploration of the resources and methods available to teachers for teaching American history through the history of Nebraska and meeting the Nebraska State Social Studies Standards requiring the use of Nebraska and regional examples in the teaching of social studies. The course examines the uses of artifacts, documents and place as appropriate means for engaging students in a hands-on approach to learning about United States history, Nebraska and the Great Plains. Utilizing the expertise of scholars from various disciplines including History, Literature, Political Science, Folk Culture, and Geography, as well as the resources of the Nebraska State Historical Society and Museum and historic sites within driving distance, the course provides the opportunity for teachers to learn more of the history of Nebraska and the United States, and to experience and experiment with resources and techniques for developing effective lesson plans.

Prerequisite(s): Baccalaureate degree and certification to teach in History, Political Science, or Social Studies Education.

HIST 559 The Evolution of Civil Liberties in the United States

3 hours

This course engages participants with historical episodes in Nebraska dealing with civil liberties, civil rights, and social justice. Students will use documents, objects, place, and the wisdom of elders to explore the relationships between Nebraska, the United States, and its Constitution.

HIST 561 U.S. Constitutional History

3 hours

An intensive study of the origins and development of key principles and practices of constitutional democracy in the United States. Teaching with core texts and primary documents is emphasized. A substantial amount of each class session will involve class discussion focusing on United States Supreme Court decisions assigned by the instructor. The course will examine the origins of the U.S. Constitution, its development since 1787, its stature as the "supreme law of the land," the meaning of the separation of powers inherent in the U.S. federal system, how the Supreme Court became the "final arbiter" of constitutional meaning, the manner in which constitutional issues are presented to the courts for adjudication and the juridical techniques used by the courts to decide issues.

Prerequisite(s): HIST 501 Fundamentals of American History I and HIST 502 Fundamentals of American History II.

HIST 562 American Creeds: The Idea of an American Nation

3 hours

This course examines what one scholar has called "the story of American freedom." We will explore the different ways that the concept of freedom has been defined and contested by different people or groups in the American past and will attempt to improve our understanding of the political ideas and ideologies that have shaped the way Americans have understood themselves and their national enterprise. In exploring these topics, we will gain a better understanding of whether the ideological assumptions that continue to shape American political culture actually make the United States exceptional.

HIST 563 Shifting Power on the Plains

3 hours

This course examines the Great Plains emphasizing the historical moments in which various human groups sought to stake their claim to its abundances and avoid its harsh scarcities. In exploring this history we will pay special attention to the ways in which events in the region have been both reflections and shapers of larger trends in both the American and global experience.

Prerequisite(s): Baccalaureate degree and be teacher certified.

HIST 564 Nebraska History

3 hours

This course will explore Nebraska from the time of its first inhabitants to the present. We will examine Indian activity, geography, agriculture, politics, business and social history. There will be some lecturing, but a strong emphasis on class discussion. There will also be videos and guest speakers.

Prerequisite(s): HIST 501 Fundamentals of American History I and HIST 502 Fundamentals of American History II.

HIST 565 Western Myth in American History

3 hours

An examination of America's oldest and most characteristic myth-the western or frontier myth and four recurring myths that stem from it: American exceptionalism, heroic individualism, regeneration through violence, and inevitable American progress. Students will: 1) examine and evaluate these myths and the ideals that the United States claims to embody, 2) understand how these myths have influenced the history of the United States, 3) investigate the extent to which reality matches these myths, and 4) write reflectively, critically, and analytically.

Prerequisite(s): HIST 501 Fundamentals of American History I.

HIST 566 America in the 1960s

3 hours

This course examines perhaps the most contentious and divisive decade of the twentieth century. It begins with the confident liberal vision expressed in John F. Kennedy's inaugural speech that the United States would "pay any price" and "bear any burden" to halt the spread of communism abroad and promote reform at home. The course goes on to account for the fate of this liberal agenda in the face of internal contradictions and external challenges, including the civil rights movement and black power, the new left, the counterculture, the rebirth of feminism, the sexual revolution, and the Vietnam war. It ends by exploring the rise of a more conservative order at the decade's end, in response to both the emerging reality of limited national power and wealth, and rising demands for rights and opportunities.

HIST 570 The Civil Rights Movement in Modern America

3 hours

An examination of the issue of civil rights for minorities in the twentieth century United States. This course will explore a variety of developments, issues, and trends related to the struggle for civil rights in the twentieth century. Students will: 1) understand the role that issues of race have played in concepts of the American nation and the rights and responsibilities of citizenships 2) examine and evaluate different concepts of race, ethnicity, gender and nation and how they have contributed to the evolution and formation of American society and the role of government 3) investigate the continued place of these issues in American life 4) write analytically and critically.

HIST 571 African American History

3 hours

This course will start with the arrival of Africans to the New World in the 1600's and continue through to the present. Students will examine seven topics: Slavery, Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, Harlem Renaissance, World War II and Segregation. The class will end with an examination/evaluation of twenty-first century racial progress.

HIST 572 U.S. International Relations

3 hours

This course is a graduate-level survey of U.S. international relations from the Revolutionary War period through contemporary U.S. involvement in Iraq, Afghanistan and the United Nations. Students will be introduced to the field of international relations, including its methodological debates, and discuss the history of U.S. relations with other cultures and nations, including diplomatic, military, economic and cultural encounters. Students will also be exposed to differing pedagogical approaches to teaching U.S. international relations in the classroom.

HIST 573 Immigration History

3 hours

This course offers a comparative history of immigration to the United States from colonial times to the present. It explores changing causes and patterns of immigration, the development of nativism and immigration restrictions, and the impact of immigration on the life of the nation. Above all, it focuses on the effects of race, ethnicity, gender, class, religion, and region of settlement in shaping the experiences and identities of immigrants themselves. During the semester, participants will also examine and evaluate conflicting theories of immigration forwarded by historian and other scholars.

HIST 574 History of Technology

3 hours

Since the creation of the United States, Americans have used technology in an attempt to improve lives – at least for some. This course will explore an understanding of the nature, development, and role of technology and analyze its significance in American society. We will look at the role of technological change in society and how innovations, as part of technological systems, affected society and culture, restructuring economic and political life and realigning values. This is a social and cultural history of technology rather than a history of artifacts – people’s interaction with technology is essential to this course.

HIST 585 AP U.S. History Institute

3 hours

A one-week institute designed by College Board and staffed by qualified historians trained and approved by College Board to prepare new AP teachers and teachers of advanced-level high school History courses to 1) select appropriate materials for AP and advanced level History courses, 2) determine appropriate course content, 3) raise student thinking skills to college level, 4) raise student reading and writing skills to advanced levels, 5) master teaching strategies suitable for advanced students, and 6) professionally assess student performance and progress.

HIST 589 Oral History Theory and Methods

3 hours

An examination of the theory and practice of oral history and its relationship to the study of the past. Oral history is primary resource information created in an interview setting with a witness to or a participant in a historical event or way of life. Its purpose is to collect and preserve the person's first-hand information and make it available to others. The oral history course will cover the following: oral history and the study of history, oral history and memory, oral history as an interdisciplinary tool, planning and carrying out an oral history project, legal and ethical issues. The course will also provide students with hands-on experience with equipment, interviewing, and the processing and care of interview materials.

HIST 590 Selected Topics

1-3 hours

A topical course designed to investigate any relevant subject matter not included in any of the standard courses. The title, content, and credit will be determined by the current mutual interests of students and faculty.

HIST 595 Independent Study

1-3 hours

After consultation with the program director, a student may engage in a supervised independent study. Independent study may not duplicate courses described in the catalog.

HIST 599 Applied Project

3 hours

The Applied Project is the culminating project for the Master of Historical Studies degree. The project may take the form of a thesis, curriculum development project, or a resource development project which will build on the coursework that comprised their program. Students will meet with the MAHS program director after completing the three core courses in the MAHS program: HIST 501 Fundamentals of American History I, HIST 502 Fundamentals of American History II, and HIST 550 Nebraska Institute for the Study of US History and propose a program of courses to meet the degree requirements as well as a project. At that time a three member committee (two plus the program director) will be assigned to approve the initial project proposal. The director of the program will provide the ongoing supervision of the student's work with support from the other members of the committee members when and where necessary. The project director will approve the completed project and assign the final grade.

Prerequisite(s): HIST 501 Fundamentals of American History I, HIST 502 Fundamentals of American History II and HIST 550 Nebraska Institute for the Study of US History.