



GUIDE TO MAJORS AT YESHIVA: HISTORY (SCW)

Choosing a major can be stressful, but it is important to understand that you can pursue almost any career regardless of which major you choose. While there are some exceptions, most entry-level positions simply require general transferable skills—those that can be learned in one setting and applied in another. Relevant experience through internships and activities is generally more important to employers than a major. It is best to choose an area that you find interesting and where you have the ability to do well.

What is the History Major?

According to YU's History faculty, "Like travelers in foreign lands, students of History come face to face with the diversity of the human condition. They undergo the unsettling but salutary experience of non-recognition, and so arrive at an understanding that peoples in the past were other, that "then" was different from "now," "there" different from "here." Enriched by that understanding, they are able to view their own time and place in a new light, as the outcome of local and contingent circumstances rather than as the inevitable product of human nature.

Trained in the critical methods of historical interpretation, students of history come to understand that no document provides a transparent window onto the reality that it purports to describe. They are uniquely equipped therefore to deal critically with the unprecedented abundance of documents that circulate electronically in the "information age" of today." In addition, the department encourages students to master at least one language in addition to English and Hebrew. It is virtually essential for a senior thesis on many topics in the history of Europe or the non-western world as well as for those interested in pursuing graduate degrees (M.A. or PhD) in History.

What can I do with a Major in History?

A major in history prepares students not only to teach, work for historical organizations, and work for the government, but also to work in a broad range of careers demanding critical thinking, writing, research and analytical skills. History is one of the recommended majors for pre-law students, and it provides a useful background for those contemplating careers in business, public service, journalism, diplomacy, museums, or archival work. Some of the many career options to consider as a history major include:

Business

- Equity Research Analyst
- Financial Writer
- Human Resources Generalist
- Investment Banker
- Paralegal
- Travel Agent

Communications

- Advertising Executive
- Auctioneer
- Book Publishing Professional
- Editor
- Film Director
- Journalist
- Magazine Editor
- Marketing Professional
- Public Relations Professional

- Television Producer
- Television Reporter
- Tour Guide
- Web Editor
- Writer

- Legislative Aide
- Museum Administrator
- Nonprofit Organization Administrator
- Politician
- Teacher
- Volunteer Coordinator

Government / Social Service

- Customs Official
- Foreign Service Officer
- Grant Writer
- Historic Site Administrator
- Higher Education Administrator
- Historic Preservationist
- Human Rights Advocate

Graduate Study Required

- Lawyer
- Librarian
- Physician
- Professor
- Psychologist
- Theologian / Rabbi

Skills and Abilities

A student of history learns to think critically, analyze information, and develop interpretations. Students also develop the ability to think clearly, interpret sophisticated written material, and articulate their ideas in person and on paper. Some of the additional skills and abilities cultivated through the history major include:

Research

- Analyzing and organizing ideas and information
- Compiling information
- Finding and utilizing resources
- Comparing and contrasting ideas
- Understanding the present and the past
- Understanding different cultures

Communication

- Explaining and interpreting events
- Describing and evaluating issues and problems
- Compiling research
- Writing concisely and analytically
- Presenting thoughts, ideas, and information

Critical Thinking and Analysis

- Analyzing and summarizing ideas
- Comparing information
- Evaluating text, information, and historical events
- Thinking independently

- Writing concisely and creatively