

The study of history at Bates offers both intellectual understanding and practical skills. We try to explain how people all over the globe have developed societies, governments, businesses, and cultures to express their interests and ideas. We range far into the past and bring the story to the most recent times, always seeking the connections between historical events. We focus both on the crucial political upheavals that have shaped our world, like the French Revolution and the American Civil War, and on the structures of daily life in medieval China and colonial Latin America. Understanding history means being able to understand people with different beliefs, diets, customs, and institutions than our own. We hope that an increased knowledge of human experience in other times and places leads to the maturation of perspective, cosmopolitan tolerance, and ability to deal with change that make a global citizen.

At the same time as history students here are absorbing information and making intellectual connections, they are developing lifetime skills. We teach how to read critically, how to discuss analytically, and how to write effectively. These skills go well beyond the practice of history; they are the basis for postgraduate success in business, education, or public service. The senior thesis, the capstone of a history major at Bates, represents the integration of understanding and skills. Students select a topic that excites their interest and, in close consultation with a faculty advisor, create a written project that displays detailed knowledge, thoughtful analysis, and well-organized writing.

As a small college, Bates offers particular strengths in the Department of History rather than complete coverage of the world's history. The Hirasawa Professor of Japanese History, ATSUKO HIRAI, holds an endowed chair named for a Japanese journalist who studied at Bates before returning to his homeland for a distinguished career. Her interests range from Japan's early modernization efforts to contemporary women. DENNIS GRAFFLIN, a historian of China, adds to Bates's strong offerings in East Asian history by focusing on both the medieval and modern periods. KAREN MELVIN teaches about Latin America and is a specialist of Mexican and colonial history.

In American history, we offer many of the courses that you might expect--and some you might not. JOSEPH HALL is a colonial historian who specializes in American Indian history; MARGARET CREIGHTON is a nineteenth-century social historian who teaches about both men and women in the Civil War and the American West; HILMAR JENSEN integrates the experiences of black and white Americans into his courses on the twentieth century.

In European history, MICHAEL JONES teaches very popular courses on medieval Europe and on the Vikings, as well as on ancient Rome. LIZ FOSTER offers courses in nineteenth- and twentieth-century European and colonial history, including World War I and French colonialism in West Africa. JOHN COLE divides his teaching between the great writers of classical Greece and the revolutionary thinkers of eighteenth-century France. This year, BOB BUNSELMAYER offers a course on modern Britain.

This quick survey of our faculty only begins to describe their wide interests and expertise. We consider ourselves to be historians by practice and teachers by inclination. Our work with students takes place in lecture halls, seminar rooms, and in our offices, but also on trips here in Lewiston and as far away as the Shetland Islands. We encourage students to take control of their

own history curriculum by learning from each other, by designing their own concentrations within our strengths, and by selecting a thesis topic. Gradually shifting from the traditional lecture style in introductory courses to the one-on-one collaboration of the thesis project, we try to prepare our students to make their own way in the world after Bates.

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