What will your curriculum look like?

Majors may choose any eight courses they wish, but the faculty strongly recommend that students take at least one of the broad geographical survey courses offered by the department, including:

- History of the United States: 1607-1865 (HIST 51a)
- History of the United States: 1865 to the Present (HIST 51b)
- Europe from 1789 to the Present (HIST 52b)
- World History to 1960 (HIST 56b)
- Latin American History, Pre-Conquest to 1870 (HIST 71a)
- Latin American History, 1870 to the Present (HIST 71b)
- Introduction to East Asian Civilization (HIST 80a)
- East Asia: Nineteenth Century to the Present (HIST 80b)

The department offers other survey courses, less defined by geography than by theme:

- History of the Family (HIST 55b)
- Fire and Ice: An Ecological Approach to World History (HIST 100a)
- Roman History to 455 C.E. (HIST 103a)
- War in European History (HIST 145a)

Students may take as few or as many survey courses as they wish, but most find that only a strong mix of more specialized offerings can do justice to the richness and diversity of history. These offerings invite students to immerse themselves in a place in time, an intellectual or cultural movement, a social crisis or revolutionary upheaval, and they typically introduce students to the practice of historical research and writing full-length papers—skills that will stand them in good stead throughout their Brandeis careers and beyond.

History majors can pursue specialized interests still further, if they wish. They may undertake, for credit, an independent study of a subject not covered in the curriculum with a faculty member of their choice, and may also research and write a senior thesis that will allow them to graduate with honors.

Students are guided through the history major with the help of the undergraduate advising head and faculty advisors. They are not “locked into” a course of study from the day they declare the major, but rather have the opportunity to design a course of study that reflects their vast interests and opens the door onto an almost infinitely varied discipline.

What else does the history major offer?

Versatile by nature, the history major lends itself particularly well to joint programs of study, including double-majors such as history and politics. It can also be combined with many other courses of study in the arts and sciences, such as Latin American, Russian and East European studies, or women’s and gender studies. Additionally, students have the option to write and defend joint honors theses, and thus graduate with double honors.

What kind of career and education options will you have?

History is an excellent general preparation for a range of professional careers, especially in light of the emphasis placed on developing research and analytical skills. Law, business, and graduate schools in other disciplines attract and welcome qualified history majors, and every year, at least one of our graduates goes on to pursue an M.A. or Ph.D. in history itself.

How can you learn more?

Visit the department website at www.brandeis.edu/departments/history.