

HISTORY, B.A. (BEHREND)

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: Erie

Program Learning Objectives

- **Master historical thinking:** To master historical thinking, students must be able to recount and explain the course of events and the relationships between the forces that influenced the ways events unfolded. They need to be able to present events in chronological order, demonstrate a basic understanding of cause and effect among the events they are assessing, and explain the historical significance of their research topic.
- **Master historical and historiographic analysis:** To master historical and historiographic analysis, students must be able to analyze multiple sources for an historical event or issue for their differing perspectives, to assess why they agree or disagree, and to explain how the differing perspectives can inform our understanding of the event and the study of history. The skills required to master historical and historiographic analysis include the development of critical reading skills, the ability to discern bias or prejudice, the ability to evaluate contradictory data and claims, and the ability to effectively utilize quotes.
- **Demonstrate historical research capabilities built upon the analysis of primary and secondary sources:** To master the use of sources in historical research, students must first be able to locate relevant historical records from the time period being studied (primary sources) as well as scholarly research that analyzes and interprets those primary sources and/or the historical topic being studied, and to apply both categories of sources in their papers. While both primary and secondary sources must be utilized, students are expected to base their own analysis and interpretation on the content of the primary sources.
- **Demonstrative skills in effective written communication:** To master written communication, students must be able to express their findings in a clear and articulate manner. They are expected to construct a thesis statement and then advance their thesis through a series of well-developed paragraphs and examples. They should connect each section of their paper with appropriate transitions, while avoiding grammatical errors that detract from their argument. Finally, they need to complete their paper with a short, crisp conclusion.