

History – Pre-Law

Department of History, College of Arts & Sciences



Career Opportunities

As the only History – Pre-Law degree offered by a public college or university in Illinois, Western's Pre-Law degree prepares students for success in law school, after which they may pursue careers as attorneys in public or private legal fields; as civil rights or immigration attorneys; corporate or tax lawyers; defense or prosecuting attorneys; real estate or tax attorneys; sports or entertainment lawyers; employment or labor advocates; or specialists in constitutional, education, environmental, family, health, international, or intellectual property law. WIU's History alumni are partners or associates in a variety of major law firms, own their own small law firms, or work in a variety of other private and public settings.

The Department of History cosponsors WIU's Annual Pre-Law Symposium, which features a keynote speaker from the legal world as well as a panel of law school admissions counselors, faculty, and students, who provide advice on applying to law school and pursuing legal careers.

Program Objective

The successful and varied legal careers of Western's History graduates stem in part from the nature of their undergraduate preparation in history. History's Pre-Law degree focuses on the historical origins and evolution of Anglo-American legal traditions. Like WIU's other History degrees, it provides graduates with the skills to formulate logical arguments, support those arguments with a wealth of critically evaluated and corroborated evidence, and present their conclusions clearly and cogently in oral and written forms.

Faculty

The 16 members of the Department of History faculty are award-winning teachers and scholars, with advanced degrees from some of the finest universities in the world. Although many of Western's outstanding History faculty have gained national and international reputations as scholars through their publications and conference presentations, all History faculty regularly teach classes at all levels, including freshman surveys, sophomore seminars, specialized upper-division courses, and senior seminars. As a result, all WIU History courses are taught by full members of the History faculty dedicated to contributing to the success of our students. Graduate student assistants, selected from among the most outstanding graduate students pursuing the M.A. in History, provide individualized tutoring for those students needing it through the department's Academic Assistance Center.

Student-Faculty Interaction

The History department stresses excellent teaching, outstanding professional advising, and close student-faculty interaction. Student evaluations of faculty in all classes reflect the department's and University's emphasis on outstanding teaching. The department's academic adviser meets with each student each semester to plan and adjust their course of study. Small class sizes and individualized independent research and reading courses enrich students' educational experiences as History – Pre-Law majors. Students and alumni have consistently praised the quality of instruction and advising they receive from the History faculty at Western because of this attention.

Program of Study

The History – Pre-Law degree is designed to introduce students to the origins of the American legal system as well as to its development over the centuries. The major also incorporates some study of the law from other disciplinary perspectives.

History – Pre-Law Major

The Pre-Law degree includes 36 semester hours (SH) of History courses, 12 SH of courses in other fields, and a minor field.

Students majoring in Pre-Law may also enroll in the Honors Pre-Law Minor (if a member of the Centennial Honors College) or the Interdisciplinary Minor in Law and Society, or may minor in Legal Studies, Public Administration, or other fields related to their interests.

Legal History Minor

The History department's Legal History minor (18 SH) complements many other majors for pre-law students not majoring in History – Pre-Law. In addition, the department offers a general minor in History and a minor in Modern Global History.

Transfer Students

Students may become History – Pre-Law majors after beginning their higher education at a community college or another four-year college or university. Prospective transfer students are encouraged to contact the History department as early as possible in their academic career to ensure a smooth transition to WIU.

Research, Presentation, and Publication Opportunities

History – Pre-Law majors are eligible for research funding through Department of History and College of Arts & Sciences Undergraduate Research Grants to cover the costs of conducting or presenting their historical or legal research. Each year, the History department provides opportunities for its students to give presentations on-campus at WIU's Undergraduate Research Day and off-campus at various academic conferences. In addition, the *Western Illinois Historical Review* publishes articles each year representing the most outstanding research produced by WIU History majors.

History and Pre-Law Scholarships

Thanks to our generous alumni and faculty, the Department of History is able to offer 11 scholarships with stipends of \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year (for four years) to the most outstanding History – Pre-Law majors and other History majors. History – Pre-Law majors enrolled in the Honors Pre-Law Minor are also eligible for the Keith Webb Pre-Law Memorial Scholarship, which is awarded by the Centennial Honors College.

Facilities

The Department of History is located in Morgan Hall, a modern structure with electronic ("smart") classrooms, seminar rooms, and computer laboratories. Morgan Hall, like all WIU academic buildings, has wireless Web access throughout all floors.

Leslie F. Malpass Library

Malpass Library contains more than one million catalogued volumes, more than 3,000 current journal subscriptions, and access to thousands of online databases, including WestLaw, LexisNexis, and the Congressional Serial Set. WestLaw Campus Research contains all state and federal *Court Reporters*, *American Law Reports*, *The Decennial Digest*, *American Jurisprudence*, and more than 700 law review journals. LexisNexis Academic contains all of the state and federal *Court Reporters*, *Shepard's Citations*, and more than 600 law review journals. The U.S. Congressional Serial Set includes all reports and other periodicals issued by the US Congress from 1817 through 1980. The Library also provides a wealth of legal references in print, including the *Illinois Compiled Statutes Annotated*, *U.S. Code Annotated*, *Illinois Digest*, *Northeast Reporter*, *Illinois Legal Forms*, all of the Illinois Institute of Continuing Legal Information treatises, and many other treatises on a variety of legal topics. For a guide to the legal resources WIU offers, see wiu.edu/library/govpubs/legal.

In addition, the Library provides computer access to legal and historical resources worldwide, including 800 other Illinois libraries with more than 22 million volumes. Moreover, the Library's Interlibrary Loan Program brings materials from across the state and nation to WIU students within a day or two.

Campus Visits

The Admissions Reception Center (Sherman Hall 115) is open most weekdays from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM when the University is in session. Group information sessions are available at 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM, and campus tours are conducted at 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM daily. Individual appointments with an admissions counselor, advisers/faculty, or a financial aid adviser may be arranged during the week. The Admissions Reception Center is open from 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM most Saturdays when the University is in session. A group information session is available at 10:00 AM, and a campus tour is conducted at 11:00 AM. An individual appointment with an admissions counselor may be arranged. You may schedule your visit or tour online at admissions.wiu.edu by selecting "Visit Campus." You may also schedule a visit, tour, or individual appointment by calling toll free (877) PICKWIU [742-5948] or (309) 298-3157, or by e-mailing admissions@wiu.edu.



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