Academic Update  
Fall 2013

Union’s history program includes courses in American, European, Latin American, and church history, at the base of which is a core course in world civilization. History students encounter a diversity of teaching styles, learn about the methods of the discipline, and deepen their understanding of the integration of one’s Christian faith and history. Students may major or minor in history.

Full-Time Faculty

Henry Allen, visiting professor, teaches world civilization and American history courses. His areas of research are the Anglican Church in early modern times and nineteenth-century American church history.

Keith Bates, associate professor, teaches courses on world civilization, the history of Christianity, and historiography. His research interests include Christian fundamentalism, religion and politics in America, and Reformation Europe. Dr. Bates received Union’s Faculty of the Year Award in 2011.

Stephen Carls, university professor and chair, specializes in modern European history. He teaches courses on world civilization, the French Revolution and Napoleon, England, Russia, and twentieth-century Europe. His research deals with World War I and modern France.

Terry Lindley, university professor, teaches courses on twentieth-century America, American foreign policy, American church history, ancient history, and Reformation Europe. His research interests include Christian fundamentalism, Southern Baptist reactions to the Vietnam War, and the Jesus Movement.

David Thomas, professor, teaches American history classes from the colonial period through the Progressive Era. His current research focuses on the philosophy of history.

Student Organizations

The Delta-Psi chapter of Phi Alpha Theta National History Honor Society, chartered in 1953, is the oldest in the state of Tennessee. The chapter has won eleven straight national Best Chapter Awards for the quality of its program.

The Rutledge Honorary History Club, organized in 1929, is the oldest continuously functioning department student club on Union’s campus. It celebrated its 80th anniversary at the department’s Annual Awards Banquet in May, 2009.

Special Opportunities

Colton Gebben ’14 (St. Charles, MO) and Lowell Van Ness ’14 (Hoover, AL) are enrolled in the Discipline-Specific Honors Program in History. Both are writing honors theses that involve much interpretive analysis and considerable use of primary sources.

Allie Durham ’14 (Collierville, TN) spent a part of her 2013 summer studying French at the Catholic University of the West in Angers, France.

Patricia Dawson ’13 (Jackson, TN) won the Lynn W. Turner Prize of $500 given by the national office of Phi Alpha Theta for having the best undergraduate paper submitted by a student member in the 2013 nationwide competition.

Mary Ellen Poe ’13 (Jackson, TN) spent the spring semester of 2012 in the United Kingdom studying at Regent’s College, Oxford University. She received a scholarship from Union’s Institute for International and Intercultural Studies to help support this endeavor.

Rebekah Anderson ’12 (Jackson, TN), David Conway ’12 (Brownsville, TN), Savannah German ’12 (Brownsville, TN), Elaura Highfield ’12 (Culleoka, TN), Mary Ellen Poe ’13, (Jackson, TN), Caraline Rickard ’12 (Henderson, TN), and Caitlin Roach ’12 (Jackson, TN) presented papers at the Phi Alpha Theta Biennial Convention in Orlando, Florida, in January, 2012.

Internships

Colton Gebben ’14 (St. Charles, MO) worked as a history intern in the Union University library archives in the fall of 2012.

Patricia Dawson ’13 (Jackson, TN) carried out an internship at the Madison County Archives in Jackson, Tennessee during the spring of 2013.

Mary Thompson ’08 (Millington, TN) did an internship at Green Frog Historic Village in Alamo, Tennessee, in the fall of 2007.

History Majors After Union

Alan Mitchell ’13 (Jackson, TN) is in a management training program with a large food store chain.

Logan Smith ’13 (Knoxville, TN) is working on a Master of Divinity program with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Elaura Highfield ’12 (Culleoka, TN) is in her second year of a master’s program in public history at Middle Tennessee State University. She received an assistantship from MTSU and the 2012 A. F. Zimmerman Scholarship from Phi Alpha Theta to help her with expenses.
Kaleb Noblett ’12 (Henderson, KY) is in his second year of studies at the University of Louisville Law School. He was the recipient of a law school scholarship.

Caroline Rickard ’12 (Henderson, TN) is a second-year law student at Vanderbilt University.

Hunter Bragg ’11 (Birmingham, AL) is in a Master of Divinity Program as a scholarship recipient at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama.

Betsy Davis ’11 (Henderson, KY) is a third-year law student at the University of Kentucky.

Noah Arnold ’10 (Geneva, AL) completed an M.A. in history at the University of Mississippi in the spring of 2012. He currently teaches at a university in Laos.

Shelby (Johnson) Baker ’10 (Memphis, TN) received an M.A. in literature at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville in the spring of 2012. She is now working on a Ph.D. in English literature at Vanderbilt University.

Joshua Abbotoy ’09 (Hartsville, TN) is in his second year of law school at Harvard University. He completed an M.A. in Medieval and Byzantine Studies at the Catholic University in America in 2011.

Trista (Rowland) Havner ’09 (Jackson, TN) teaches history courses at Jackson Central-Merry Academy of Medical Technology in Jackson, Tennessee.

Nathan Tilly ’09 (Dyersburg, TN) graduated from the Law school of the University of Tennessee in 2012. He practices law in Dyersburg, Tennessee.

Cameron Armstrong ’08 (Howell, MI) graduated from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity in missiology in 2011 and a Master of Theology in 2012. He currently serves as a missionary in Bucharest, Romania.

Mary Beth (Johnson) Pavlik ’08 (Hendersonville, TN) graduated in 2011 from the law school of American University in Washington, DC. She works as a senior management analyst at the Chicago regional office of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Affairs.

John Crawford ’07 (Jackson, TN) finished an M.A. at the Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce at the University of Kentucky in 2008. He works as a defense analyst for the Government Accountability Office in Huntsville, Alabama.

Jared Myracle ’07 (Pinson, TN) is the supervisor of instruction for grades 9-12 in the Gibson County Special School District in West Tennessee. He earned his doctorate in education at Trevecca Nazarene University in the spring of 2012.

Gayra (Jones) Hall ’06 (Jackson, TN) graduated from the law school of the University of Memphis in 2009. She is an attorney in Jackson, Tennessee.

David Patterson ’04 (Jackson, TN) works as an account executive in San Francisco, California, for a public relations firm. He graduated from the law school of the University of Tennessee in 2007.

Joshua Moore ’03 (Dresden, TN) is the Director of Church Relations at Union University and the Minister of Education at a Baptist church in Dresden, Tennessee. He completed a Master of Divinity program at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2011.

Jeff Stehle ’01 (Bartlett, TN) earned a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 2003. He serves as a chaplain at a federal prison in New York State.

Geoffrey Lindley ’98 (Jackson, TN) graduated with a law degree from the University of Tennessee in 2001. He practices law in Jackson, Tennessee.

Jason Williams ’96 (Lexington, TN) graduated from Vanderbilt University Law School in 2005 and currently works for a law firm in Atlanta, Georgia. He earned a M.S. in biology from the University of Louisville in 1999.

The cities listed for students were their hometowns when the students were enrolled at Union University.

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Annual History Lectureship
With the Carls-Schwerdfeger History Lecture Series, the department every fall has a widely-known historian deliver a public lecture on a topic in his/her area of expertise. The lecturers of the past 12 years, along with their school affiliation, their lecture topic, and the year they spoke, are:


George C. Rable, University of Alabama, “God as General: Was There a Religious History of the American Civil War?” 2012.

Pauline Maier, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, “Ratification of the U.S. Constitution: Why Should We Care?” 2011.


