

Contact: Rachel Boon

**REQUEST FOR NEW PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA: MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY (ONLINE)**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa for a Master of Arts in History (online) in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

The Council of Provosts and Board office support approval of this program.

**Description of proposed program.** The Department of History requests approval for a change in delivery format for the Master of Arts (MA) in History at UNI, shifting from a residential program to an entirely online format. The demands for history MA programs have shifted, with many prospective students requiring the flexibility for working professionals to balance continuing education. The online format will add the flexibility and access for both full-time students and working professionals. This is especially true for the large number of working teachers who need a flexible option for continuing education and upskilling.

**Academic objectives.** Graduates will acquire research and investigative skills that will encourage the thoughtful and continuing study of history and its dissemination. They will demonstrate an advanced mastery of the basic methods of historical interpretation and its dissemination through an oral presentation of a portfolio that represents a body of scholarly work. They will enhance and deepen their content knowledge of history.

**Need for program.** The delivery format change for the MA in History is the result of extensive strategic planning on the part of the history faculty in 2022-2023, in conjunction with the Provost, the Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and the Graduate College, to reimagine UNI graduate education in history to attract, retain and graduate students from a wider background including populations unable to attend a traditional on-campus degree. Specifically, market analysis shows that an online delivery format will improve student accountability, scheduling flexibility and program completion. This entirely online option will attract more nontraditional students, including working professionals, particularly Iowa teachers.

**Relationship to existing programs at the institution.** The transition of online delivery of the program will not duplicate any existing programs at UNI as it will replace the residential MA program.

**Relationship to existing programs at other colleges and universities.** No institutions in Iowa offer an MA in history in a wholly online format that serves in-service teachers as its primary focus. The other two Regents institutions have in-person MA programs in history, but they serve different populations as each also has a PhD program.

**Resources to establish a high-quality program.** The Department of History has faculty in a wide variety of academic subspecialties that are valuable to in-service teachers in Iowa, and UNI possesses extensive archival and digital source collections appropriate for online teaching, that allow degree candidates to pursue their objects of study and to develop classroom resources for their own classrooms. No reallocations are necessary.

The UNI Department of History has robust undergraduate majors in History Teaching and Social Sciences Teaching and a vast network of alumni working in the teaching and school administration setting in Iowa. The UNI connection to teacher preparation in history makes it a

logical decision to replace the current MA with an online version that extends this training in history.

Student demand. For high school teachers, completion of UNI's M.A. in History meets the normal qualifications required to teach concurrent enrollment program (CEP) classes in history at high schools for community college credit, which generally requires an MA and 18 credits of graduate level courses in history (For representative examples, see the CEP requirements for Iowa Valley schools [CEP Adjunct Handbook] and for Hawkeye Community College (see links):

<https://www.iavalley.edu/join-our-team/teach-dual-credit-for-iowa-valley/>

<https://www.hawkeyecollege.edu/academics/high-school/collegenow-instructorscounselors>).

Recruitment efforts will focus on in-service teachers seeking career advancement and CEP teaching.

Workforce need/demand. UNI's online MA in History will prepare students for diverse careers including teaching (K-12 public and private schools), archivists, curators, museum work, archival positions, management occupations, legal careers, business and financial positions, and many other professions. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook projects significant growth in these fields for those with history degrees. Postsecondary history teachers alone are projected to grow by 12 percent from 2020 to 2030, with the mean annual wage for those with a history degree at \$60,000. Of those employed in history positions, 50% are in jobs requiring a graduate degree (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/field-of-degree/history/history-field-of-degree.htm>). The U.S. Department of Labor, moreover, projects that until 2030 the employment of archivists, curators and museum workers will grow by 19%, with public interest in science, art and history spurring increased demand for curators, museum technicians and conservators. Jobs for archivists are also expected to increase as public and private organizations require greater organization of, and access to, increasing volumes of electronic records and information.

Funding and Cost. This is a delivery mode change for an existing program, so no reallocation is necessary. The resources exist to service a graduate program in history.

Projected student enrollment.

Graduate	Y1	Y 2	Y3	Y4	Y5
Majors	12	24	28	32	36
Non-majors					

Accreditation. Not applicable.

Date of implementation. August 2024.