

DEPARTMENT OF

HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, & POLITICAL SCIENCE

1. History

Introduction

The goal of History at BYU-Idaho is to encourage students to develop a solid understanding of both American and World History, and to foster a sense of the complexities of human experience. This History Department offers BA degrees in History, History Education, and Social Studies Education Composite. The department also sponsors a chapter of Phi Alpha Theta, the National History Honor Society. Upon graduation students should have a capacity to do quality research using primary and secondary source materials—along with strong reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. In addition, History Education graduates should have developed a sizeable repertoire of lessons, pedagogies, and approaches to history for teaching at the secondary level.

4+1 Program

Select students at BYU-Idaho may work towards a graduate degree in Historical Resources at Idaho State University while completing their BA in History at BYU-Idaho. Contact the Department for more information about this program.

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DEPARTMENT CHAIR

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Department Requirements:

- Education Majors must maintain a 2.8 cumulative GPA.
- Students must earn a C- or better in all courses.
- No double counting of Major courses.

Career Opportunities

Graduates in History are valued in any career in which research, critical thinking, nuanced understanding, or clear writing is necessary. Past graduates have successfully obtained employment in “non-history” fields as diverse as business, government, journalism, and law. Careers with a more specific history focus may be found in archives, libraries, museums, or national parks. More academically oriented students often pursue graduate education in History, English, foreign languages, or the humanities to name a few. And then there are, of course, teaching opportunities at secondary and higher education levels.

2. Geography

Introduction

Geography’s ancient intellectual heritage continues today as we examine the complexities and interrelationships of the world’s physical and cultural systems. Geography functions as a synthesizing discipline, providing a “bridge” between the physical and social sciences. We strive to perpetuate this long-standing objective by providing classes which investigate both the physical and cultural world. Geography students are taught to think in spatial terms, considering where physical and cultural phenomena are located, why they occupy this space, and the implications of these patterns.

Career Opportunities

It is recommended that those with an interest in becoming geographers seek a broad background in many fields, especially in the Social and Earth Sciences. Geography majors may choose from careers in travel and tourism, cartography, business, government, education, planning and resource management, or Geographic Information Systems.

Programs offered through our History Department:

- [American History \(Cluster\)](#)
- [History \(BA\)](#)
- [History \(Minor\)](#)
- [History \(Concentration\)](#)
- [History Education \(BA\)](#)
- [History Education \(Minor\)](#)
- [Social Studies Education Composite \(BS\)](#)
 - [American Government Endorsement](#)
 - [History Endorsement](#)
- [World History \(Cluster\)](#)

Department Requirements

Students must earn a C- or better in all courses.

Programs offered through our Geography Department:

- [Geographic Information Systems \(Minor\)](#)
- [Geography \(Cluster\)](#)
- [Geography \(Minor\)](#)
- [Geography Education \(Minor\)](#)

Our courses are designed to fulfill several purposes:

1. Provide exposure to the thinking of influential scholars of the discipline, both past and present.
2. Prepare prospective teachers in geographic fundamentals to facilitate teaching those fundamentals to their students.
3. Encourage an understanding of geographic research and practice.
4. Introduce students to research methodology and “leading edge” technology in geographic research and practice, in areas such as GIS and land-use planning.
5. Help students gain geographic literacy and certification as teachers of Geography at the secondary level.
6. Support the mission of BYU-Idaho and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

3. Political Science

Introduction

The goal of Political Science at BYU-Idaho is to challenge students to develop an understanding of governmental institutions and political systems. This major invites students to critically evaluate the LDS members’ roles in national and international politics. Majors are exposed to the different subfields and associated theories in the academic study of political science. Upon graduation, students should have a practical understanding of how each level of government functions (local, state, national, and international) as well as a solid foundation in the academic study of politics and government.

Further Education

A geography-based, “Travel and Tourism” four-year degree program is available at BYU. This program is for students interested in careers as travel agents or tourism related careers. You can complete two of the core courses of this program (GEOG 101 and GEOG 120), while at BYU - Idaho. Contact BYU Department of Geography for further information.

BYU-Idaho students may obtain a Bachelor of Science degree in geography from the University of Montana through a 2+2 arrangement (two years at BYU-I and two years at the University of Montana). Contact the BYU-Idaho Geography Department for more information.

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4+1 Program

Select students at BYU-Idaho may work towards a graduate degree in Political Science at Idaho State University while completing their BA in Political Science at BYU-Idaho. Contact the Department for more information about this program.

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Career Opportunities

Students should work closely with their advisor to choose an emphasis that best suits their long-term goals. In addition to preparation for graduate school, students may wish to become teachers, lawyers, or serve as public officials. Others may want to become public affairs professionals in government or with major corporations. Some may choose to become reporters, campaign managers, or lobbyists. Potential international careers include working for an international, intergovernmental or non-governmental organization, international law, or employment with a multi-national corporation.

ETS Political Science Exit Exam Required for Graduation

All seniors in Political Science are required to take the ETS Political Science Major Field Test (MFT) in their last semester before graduation. The Department will fund the exam for all students, but those who choose to take the test off-campus may incur additional costs such as a proctor fee. Even though all majors must complete the MFT, there is no minimum score required at this time. You will receive exam instructions from the Department during the semester you apply for graduation.

A Note Regarding Law School

BYU–Idaho, like many universities, does not have a specific major called “Pre-Law.” This is because no specific major is required to enter law school. Students who wish to enter law school after completion of a Bachelor’s Degree at BYU–Idaho are encouraged to choose Political Science or any major of interest to them. Students developing a Political Science major may choose a minor or cluster in International Studies, Economics, or other related disciplines. Please consult with one of the Political Science faculty to determine which cluster or courses would be best for you.

Programs offered through this Department:

- [American Government Education \(Minor\)](#)
- [International Studies \(Cluster\)](#)
- [Political Science - American Politics \(Cluster\)](#)
- [Political Science - International Politics \(Cluster\)](#)
- [Political Science \(BA\)](#)
 - [Foreign Affairs](#)
 - [American Government](#)
- [Pre-Law \(Cluster\)](#)
- [Public Administration \(Minor\)](#)
- [Public Policy and Administration \(BA\)](#)
 - [Public Administration](#)
 - [Public Policy](#)

Department Requirements

- Students must earn a C- or better in all major coursework.
- Major courses may not be used to fulfill multiple requirements (no double counting).

BYU-Idaho Campus Map

History, Geography, and Political Science courses are primarily held in the Ricks building.

