

WABASH COLLEGE

Department of History Chair's Message

Greetings! My name is Michelle Rhoades and I am the Chair of the History Department at Wabash College. If you are a new student trying to select classes, I hope this message will help. If you are still deciding whether Wabash is right for you, this message should give you a sense of what our history courses are like. Let's get started!

First, you will find most history courses are small. Our introductory, 100-level World History surveys usually have about 35 students in them; they include some lectures. Our department's other courses are smaller seminars, surveys, or reading courses. In these classes students encounter a good amount of discussion, banter, and a demand for critical thinking. Each member of the History Department has high standards and expects the best from his or her students. We also recognize that students are individuals. The small size of our classes allows us to get to know students' strengths and learning styles; this is to your benefit. We can help you to understand difficult readings, hone your skills, and reach your goals, whatever they may be. Our majors do just about everything after they graduate. Past majors have earned law degrees, become doctors, entered professional school, joined the Peace Corps, started businesses, and/or traveled the world. Almost all of them stay in touch with us too.

For a small department, we offer a remarkable variety of courses in different fields of history. Professor Morillo offers courses in world, medieval, and military history. Professor Warner teaches classes in Latin American and African history...and the occasional course on the history of food. Professor Salisbury teaches all of our courses in US history. She focuses many of her classes on the African-American experience and sports. Professor Pullen teaches courses on Modern China and seminars on Chinese popular culture. She also teaches Chinese in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. As for me, I teach courses on modern Europe, medical history and the history of gender and sexuality. I also teach seminars on twentieth-century warfare and France. Generally, the department rotates course offerings so that new topics are available every semester.

Apart from our high expectations for students in class, the department also expects that students and the History Faculty will have some fun together. Each year we have a picnic for seniors and our faculty members have led the campus in offering immersion trips for our students. Dr. Warner has taken several groups of students to different destinations in Latin America and Africa. Dr. Morillo has taken his students to local military museums and to Spain as part of his courses. I am in something of a rut and keep taking my students back to Paris and other parts of France (I haven't had any student complaints about this, so if it's not broken...).

There's a saying around Wabash College: "It won't be easy, but it will be worth it." The professors in our department are like all Wabash College professors: we expect a lot from our students because we know they can accomplish a lot. More than anything, as a department, we want students to learn that the past is not a collection of names and dates to memorize. It is a

complex and rich exploration of human successes and failures...and so much more. Come study history with us. It may not be easy, but it will be worth it!

Best Wishes—

Michelle K. Rhoades

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