

New York City College of Technology, CUNY

CURRICULUM MODIFICATION PROPOSAL FORM

Title of Proposal	Academic Minor in History
Date	October 1, 2022
Major or Minor	Major
Proposer's Name	Kyle Cuordileone
Department	Social Science
Date of Departmental Meeting in which proposal was approved	December 1, 2022
Department Chair Name	Randall Hannum
Department Chair Signature and Date	 1/23/2023
Academic Dean Name	Justin Vazquez-Poritz
Academic Dean Signature and Date	 1/23/23
Brief Description of Proposal (Describe the modifications contained within this proposal in a succinct summary. More detailed content will be provided in the proposal body.)	Proposal for the creation of a 15 credit Academic minor in History.
Brief Rationale for Proposal (Provide a concise summary of why this proposed change is important to the department. More detailed content will be provided in the proposal body).	The Academic minor in History provides students with the opportunity to study history more intensively than would otherwise be permitted. The minor in History will require 15 credits of coursework: (3) courses at the HIS 1000 or 1100 level; (2) courses from a selective menu of HIS, AFR or LATS history courses at the 1300, 1400, 1500, 2000 or 3000 level; one of those two courses in the latter group must be a 3000 level course (the 3000 level will require a research paper as a culminating project). The menu of courses for this minor fulfills many General Education requirements, and can also fulfill requirements for Interdisciplinary (ID), Writing Intensive (WI) or Capstone courses.
Proposal History (Please provide history of this proposal: is this a resubmission? An updated version? This may most easily be expressed as a list).	This is the initial submission.

Please include all appropriate documentation as indicated in the Curriculum Modification Checklist. For each new course, please also complete the New Course Proposal and submit in this document. Please submit this document as a single .doc or .rtf format. If some documents are unable to be converted to .doc, then please provide all documents archived into a single .zip file.

ALL PROPOSAL CHECK LIST

Completed CURRICULUM MODIFICATION FORM including:	
• Brief description of proposal	X
• Rationale for proposal	X
• Date of department meeting approving the modification	X
• Chair's Signature	X
• Dean's Signature	X
Evidence of consultation with affected departments List of the programs that use this course as required or elective, and courses that use this as a prerequisite.	X
Documentation of Advisory Commission views (if applicable).	N/A
Completed Chancellor's Report Form .	

EXISTING PROGRAM MODIFICATION PROPOSALS

Documentation indicating core curriculum requirements have been met for new programs/options or program changes.	
Detailed rationale for each modification (this includes minor modifications)	

Proposal for an Academic Minor in History Sponsored by the Social Science Department

Major Curriculum Modification

Rationale

Historical thinking is an increasingly important skill in the twenty-first century. As the US transitions toward a post-industrial, information-based society, the ability to produce and assess high quality information and to contextualize the rapidly changing circumstances of the present have become vital to both the career development of young adults and the creation of a well-informed and ethical society. The field of History prioritizes factual investigation and credibility, a deliberately rigorous approach to interpretation and argumentation, and chronological contextualization; all important in a technological environment defined increasingly by the ability to access and influence information through media. By studying history, students will develop the intellectual tools to understand the archaeology of knowledge and the lineage of ideas, social categories, and power.¹ Ultimately, a history minor will enable students to effectively navigate and shape the rapidly-changing twenty-first century in a meaningful way.²

The development of a history minor at City Tech carries a very specific significance. In the now classic debate about technical education between W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington, DuBois advocated for a broader-based approach that emphasized integrating liberal arts with technical skills in order to create leaders, while Washington focused more narrowly on the technical skills required of specific occupations.³ Obviously, this debate had deep racial implications for the careers and positions that minority students could obtain, and the social impacts of their lives. At a school like City Tech, a Hispanic Serving Institution and a college that US News and World Report consistently ranks as one of the most ethnically diverse in the northern portion of the United States, the broad importance of Liberal Arts opportunities and specifically of history, cannot be understated.⁴ The student body at City Tech should receive the same opportunities for intellectual development, career advancement, and social importance that students at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Rochester Institute of Technology receive in their educations. A history minor will highlight social, cultural, and political aspects of human affairs that are essential to fully understanding technology, but might not be emphasized in technical or applied majors.

The study of history should not be equated with the simple acquisition of historical knowledge. As scholar-teachers, it is not our objective to facilitate the rote recitation of “interesting” historical facts. As our learning outcomes for a History minor suggest, historical study requires the cultivation of close reading, writing and analytical skills, the ability to conduct research, evaluate credible sources of information and make arguments using logic, evidence, and clear, effective prose. Undoubtedly the honing of these intellectual skills will assist City Tech graduates—no matter what their major—as they navigate the professional world and seek advancement within it. Particularly among students majoring in STEM areas but generally for all

¹ Paul Rabinow, Ed., *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon, 1984), 32-100.

² “Historical Thinking Skills,” American Historical Association, accessed February 25, 2021 <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/teaching-and-learning-in-the-digital-age/the-history-of-the-americas/the-conquest-of-mexico/for-teachers/setting-up-the-project/historical-thinking-skills>

³ W.E.B. DuBois, “Industrial Education – Will It Solve the Negro Problem, VII. The Training of Negroes for Social Power,” *The Colored American Magazine* 7 (May 1904): 333-339. Booker T. Washington, “Industrial Education – Will It Solve the Negro Problem, II,” *The Colored American Magazine* 7 (February 1904): 87-92.

⁴ “Campus Ethnic Diversity Regional Colleges,” *U.S. News and World Report*, accessed August 12, 2021 <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/regional-colleges/campus-ethnic-diversity>. New York City College of Technology ranks first for Campus Ethnic Diversity in 2021.

students, there is an urgent need for our graduates to achieve greater competency in these areas. Poor research and communication skills, and especially substandard writing skills, can hold college graduates back as they seek not just entry level professional jobs but advancement in their careers over time. Even in highly technical and/or clinical fields, employers generally expect college graduates to be competent writers, analysts and presenters of information in institutional and professional settings. A history minor is an especially useful compliment to a STEM major in which a premium is placed on the acquisition of technical knowledge.

While we do not have a “target” student population in mind for the history minor, we expect that students in certain majors may be especially attracted to a history minor given its intellectual compatibility with their fields. For example, students who major in Architectural Technology study the architectural achievements of past in terms of their technical, cultural, and aesthetic dimensions; a minor in history would give students enhanced knowledge of the broader historical context with which they can interpret various modes of architecture and identify their sources. Architecture or Engineering majors who focus on sustainability would gain valuable knowledge by taking courses such as the History of Technology or the Environmental History of the United States. Another example is students majoring in Law and Paralegal Studies who could enrich their understanding of the legal system in the United States by examining the historical context within which legal traditions and precedents have been established and shaped over time. Moreover, as the American Historical Association has emphasized, the study of history can help prepare students for a variety of career paths should they transition into fields such as management, business, sales, law, administration and education.⁵

Apart from sheer career utility and enhancement, however, the establishment of a history minor reflects a strong sense among City Tech’s history faculty that *all students*—no matter their major or career aspirations--would benefit from the study of history at a crucial point in the 21st century when historical literacy appears to be waning and misinformation and disinformation is rampant. In the digital age, the educational imperative to cultivate well-informed, thoughtful, active participants in our local, national, and global civic life who are historically literate and able to recognize credible sources of information, is especially acute. This imperative underlies our mission as historians and educators; indeed, it is at the core of the liberal arts tradition.

The courses proposed for this history minor combine broad-based survey courses in US and World History with more focused upper division courses such as History of Technology, US Immigration History, and Topics in Modern World History that require advanced research and writing from students.⁶ In addition, many of the courses dovetail with General Education requirements at City Tech. They fulfill multiple categories in CUNY’s Flexible Common Core, Interdisciplinary requirements, the Liberal Arts Capstone requirement, and Writing Intensive requirement. The organization of courses in the minor provides both focused developmental historical inquiry as well as flexibility to complete a variety of college requirements.

In the CUNY system, undergraduate minors in History are offered in several colleges including:

⁵ See the [American Historical Association](#) on career options and transitions for students of history.

⁶ “Social Science Course Listings,” New York City College of Technology, accessed February 26, 2021 <https://www.citytech.cuny.edu/socialscience/course-listing.aspx>

- [Hunter College](#)
- [John Jay](#)
- [The City College of New York](#)
- [College of Staten Island](#)

Undergraduate minors in History are offered at many universities and colleges across the nation, including colleges similar to City Tech which have a technological orientation.

- [New Jersey Institute of Technology](#)
- [Rutgers](#)
- [SUNY Binghamton](#)
- [Texas Tech](#)
- [Louisiana Tech](#)
- [Rochester Institute of Technology](#)
- [Rensselaer Polytechnic University](#)

The minors listed above require from five to ten courses and sometimes include a range of secondary requirements involving area studies, upper and lower level courses, and occasionally “tracks” of study along geographical or thematic lines. At City Tech, however, our history course offerings each semester are necessarily limited (due to many upper level courses failing to meet minimum enrollment numbers). In the flexible common core, history courses fall under both the US Experience and its Diversity (USED) and World Cultures and Global Issues (WCGI) categories. Pathways and other General Education Requirements including Capstone, Writing Intensive (WI) and Interdisciplinary (ID) courses can make students’ schedules unusually complicated to plot unless the student knows from their first year at City Tech that they want to minor in History. Thus we have opted for maximum flexibility in the menu of courses for students.

Description of the Proposed Academic Minor

The 15 credit academic minor is designed to provide students with the skills necessary to conduct effective historical inquiry and master the basic elements of historiographical argumentation and research. The Academic minor in History is housed in the Department of Social Science, though the history minor curriculum also includes history courses taught in the

African-American Studies and the Humanities departments. Advisement for the academic minor in history will be conducted by the History Discipline Coordinator (currently Professor Kyle Cuordileone).

Minor Requirements:

This Academic minor consists of (3) required courses at the HIS 1000 or 1100 level plus (2) additional history courses at the 1300, 1400, 1500, 2000 or 3000 level in History, African American Studies or Latin American Studies. At least (1) of the courses in the latter group must be an HIS 3000 level course (almost all of them are taught by full-time faculty) in which the student completes a comprehensive research paper while being mentored by the instructor of the course.

The 3000 level History course is intended to be a culminating class for the student minoring in history. Here, mastery of historiographical research and writing will be demonstrated by the student. Ideally this 3000 level course should be the last class the student takes in History, unless the student's program or the course offerings in a given semester make this scenario impossible. Should course offerings for HIS 3000 courses not meet the student's program needs or requirements, students may take a 3000 level independent study with a full-time history faculty member wherein the research paper will be completed (if this is feasible and a full-time faculty member agrees to an independent study). The History Coordinator (minor advisor) shall work with the faculty member teaching the 3000 level course to ensure that the criteria (below) is met.

Basic criteria for the culminating research paper is as follows:

∞ At the start of the semester the student will select a topic for the research paper in consultation with the instructor, and submit a preliminary bibliography to the instructor (eight or more sources must be used, including at least two primary sources) for evaluation. Secondary sources must be high quality, peer reviewed publications.

∞ The paper shall have an overarching thesis and engage key historiographical issues and debates. Students must avoid purely encyclopedic or narrative treatments of the topic and instead show they are capable of mastering historiographical questions, crafting arguments and using evidence to interpret history.

∞ The paper shall be at least 6-9 double-spaced pages long and follow MLA or APA citation guidelines. The length of the paper is at the instructor's discretion, but it should be within this range.

∞ Students must demonstrate they can write at a college level, and present their ideas with focus, clarity, coherence, and a minimum of errors.

∞ While the research paper grade is determined by the instructor, the student will also submit the final research paper to the History Coordinator/Minor advisor before earning the History

minor designation on their college record. The Coordinator shall review the paper to ensure it follows the guidelines and standards above.

∞The due date of the research paper shall be at least 2-3 weeks before the end of the semester, to account for any revisions that might be required before the end of the term.

∞ Courses at the 3000 level typically require that all students complete a research paper, so that extant assignment can be altered or modified to meet the requirements for the minor. Each instructor shall determine what portion of the final grade that the research paper is worth.

US History (US Experience in its Diversity, Common Core):

HIS 1110 US History to 1865

HIS 1111 US History to present

HIS 2502 History of Foodways*

HIS 3208 Immigration History/HIS 3208ID Immigration History

HIS 3209 History of Technology/HIS 3209ID

HIS 3310 Environmental History of North America*

World History (World Cultures and Global Issues, Common Core):

HIS 1101 World History I

HIS 1102 World History II

HIS 1103 World History III

HIS 1501 The Origins of Islamic Civilization*

HIS 1502 Islamic Empires*

HIS 1503 The Modern Middle East and North Africa

HIS 2000 Modern World History*

HIS 3402/HIS 3402ID Topics in Modern World History

AFR (WCGI and USED):

AFR 1460 Early African History (WCGI)

AFR 1461 Modern African History (WCGI)

AFR 1465 Early African American History (USED)

AFR 1466 Modern African American History (USED)

AFR 1467 Afro-Caribbean History (WCGI)

AFR 2402 The Heritage of Imperialism/AFR 2402ID (WCGI)

LATS (WCGI):

LATS 1461 Latin American History

LATS 1462 History of Puerto Rico*

**Courses that are rarely or never taught but hopefully could be revived.*

Programmatic Learning Outcomes

Students minoring in history will:

- Conduct effective historical inquiry through careful and close analysis of primary and secondary source materials
- Evaluate sources of historical change, cause and effect relationships and historical complexities in order to draw conclusions
- Demonstrate knowledge of the past and competing historiographical debates and claims
- Demonstrate general research skills as well as competency in identifying and evaluating credible sources of historical information
- Articulate nuanced interpretations of history using evidence, logic and effective prose
- Appreciate humanistic values, critical thinking, intellectual rigor and social responsibility

Assessment Statement

Since the ability to master historiographical argumentation and research is crucial to our primary learning outcomes, we regard the student's final research paper as the most valuable indicator of the extent to which our educational outcomes have been ultimately achieved. Thus, the student's final research paper is submitted to the History Coordinator not simply to ensure that it demonstrates passable work but also as a way of assessing how successful our faculty have been in cultivating students' skills so that they may conduct effective historical inquiry and express their research findings clearly in writing. The History Coordinator will share this work with other members of the discipline in order to discuss and evaluate our strengths and/or weaknesses as history educators. Enrollment trends in the Minor will also be tracked by the History Coordinator, in addition to rates of retention, completion, and grade distributions.

Diversity and Inclusive Education Statement

This academic minor welcomes students from all backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. In accordance with the City Tech and CUNY missions, this academic minor intends to provide an atmosphere of inclusion, respect, and the mutual appreciation of differences so that together we can create an environment in which all students can flourish. It is the instructor's goal to provide materials and activities that are welcoming and accommodating of diversity in all of its forms, including race, gender identity and presentation, ethnicity, national origin, religion,

cultural identity, socioeconomic background, sexuality and sexual orientation, ability, neurodivergence, age, and etc. Your instructor is committed to equity and actively seeks ways to challenge institutional racism, sexism, ableism and other forms of prejudice. Your input is encouraged and appreciated. If a dynamic that you observe or experience in the courses included in the academic minor concerns you, you may respectfully inform your instructor without fear of how your concerns will affect your grade. Let your instructor know how to improve the effectiveness of the courses for you personally, or for other students or student groups. We acknowledge that NYCCT is located on the traditional homelands of the Canarsie and Lenape peoples.

Sample Curriculum Maps

<i>Gen Ed Requirements and Electives for BS in Paralegal Studies</i>	<i>Sample Courses for Proposed Academic Minor</i>
<i>Flex Core/USED</i>	<i>HIS 1100 US History Survey</i>
<i>Flex Core/Additional Course</i>	<i>HIS 1111 US History Survey</i>
<i>Lib Arts Elective</i>	<i>HIS 1103 Modern World History</i>
<i>Advanced Lib Arts Elective</i>	<i>AFR 2402 Heritage of Imperialism</i>
<i>Interdisciplinary Course (ID)</i>	<i>HIS 3408ID US Immigration History</i>

<i>Gen Ed Requirements and Electives for B. Arch in Architecture</i>	<i>Sample Courses for Proposed Academic Minor</i>
<i>Flex Core/WCGI</i>	<i>HIS 1101 The Origins of Western Civilization</i>
<i>Flex Core/Additional Course</i>	<i>HIS 1102 Foundations of the Modern World, 1400-1900</i>
<i>Lib Arts Elective</i>	<i>HIS 1103 The Modern World Since 1900</i>
<i>Advanced Lib Arts Elective</i>	<i>HIS 3209/ID History of Technology</i>
<i>Interdisciplinary Course (ID)</i>	<i>HIS 3402ID Topics in Modern World History, 1945-Present</i>

Support:

Ann Delikan, Chair, HUM

Dear Kyle,

The Humanities department voted in full support of your proposed History Minor on 12/1/2022, at our monthly department meeting. It was agreed that reinforcing the value of understanding the past is important for our students' education—and that rewarding their efforts with a minor

on their transcripts is a clear way to do so.

All best,

Ann

Ann Delilkan, Ph.D.

Chair and Associate Professor, Department of Humanities