

THE HISTORY MAJOR'S HANDBOOK

April 2003

WELCOME

Congratulations on selecting History as your undergraduate major at the United States Naval Academy. You are embarking on an academic adventure that is challenging and rewarding. As a History major you will travel long distances through time and investigate peoples of different and diverse cultures. You will learn to think critically, to assess objectively, and to write with both fluency and flair. You will come to understand both the world in which you live, and the way that world got to be the way it is.

In your plebe year, you took a one-semester course on American Naval History (HH104). Other quests await you; more, in fact, than you will have room for in your schedule. One of the great advantages of being a History major is the wide variety of course offerings. You might study the military democracy of ancient Athens; the politics of Charlemagne's court; Irish nationalism and rebellion; the American Civil War; or the emergence of the modern Middle East to see, for example, how the past still grips that tortured section of the world. A full list of the courses available is in the Naval Academy catalogue and is online at the Department's web site.

As the Naval Academy catalog states: "A clear understanding of the events of the past provides a more acute awareness of contemporary issues and problems, as well as a context ... for evaluating those problems." Indeed, historical understanding is an essential tool for the modern officer in the United States Navy or Marine Corps. Many of you will be, at one time or another, stationed overseas, among peoples with languages, customs, traditions, and world views quite different from your own. In addition, your understanding of history will give you a keener appreciation of your own country and its place in the world. And finally, there is no better resource for coming to understand human nature itself.

As a History major, you will acquire a great deal of historical *information*. But more importantly, you will acquire the skills and the habit of dealing effectively with this information. You will learn to read more effectively, to assess information more efficiently, to reason more clearly, and to write with greater clarity and impact. These are life-long skills that will help you become a better citizen, as well as a better officer.

It is important to appreciate at the outset of your academic adventure as a History major, that it is not your job simply to ingest a vast amount of data and regurgitate it on demand. It is what you do with the information you acquire that matters. History, in the end, is less a **product**, like a body of information, than it is a **process**. One graduate of the Naval Academy who later became one of the country's leading historians said this about the process of history:

I always send undergraduates as well as graduate students off into the bowels of the library to read other people's mail.... Students return from such trips into the unknown ecstatic, engaged, and confused.... The play of the mind with the evidence. The coming to terms with causes and consequences. The joy of making one's own sense of the documents. And then the hard talk about who makes the best sense of the documents, and how to act upon that provisional truth. This is doing history.... History is dialog, not consensus. (William A. Williams, "Thoughts on the Fun and Purpose of Being an American Historian," OAH Newsletter [February 1985]. Dr. Williams, USNA '45, served as president of the Organization of American Historians.)

This handbook is designed to help you navigate your way through the rocks and shoals of "doing History."

YOUR TOOLKIT

As you advance in your study of History, you will necessarily become familiar with several tools that will help you become more efficient, and the work you produce more substantive.

Nimitz Library

Your most important tool, itself a collection of other tools, is the Nimitz Library. Libraries contain not just the "history books" that you have no doubt relied upon in the past, but also scholarly **journals** on a wide variety of topics that are filled with articles which historians write to engage one another in scholarly discussion. Some of these journals have been published for more than a century, so there are virtually thousands of articles on a wide variety of historical subjects and issues. Libraries also contain **primary sources** such as published memoirs, collections of correspondence, diaries, battle reports, official records, and diplomatic correspondence. In the microform room, there are reels of **microfilm** that contain many **newspapers** and other documents. Elsewhere on the Library's main deck there are historical and contemporary **atlases**. On the ground floor of the library are the collected **records of the U.S. Congress**. These have changed their name over time from the *Annals of Congress* to the *Congressional Globe* to the modern-day *Congressional Record*. Here you can read the debates over declaring war on Britain in 1812, or abolishing slavery, or joining the League of Nations. Finally, in the **Special Collections and Archives** division (3rd floor) are many collections that exist only in Nimitz Library, such as donated papers, diaries, and other documents (including the archives of the Naval Academy), as well as many rare books.

While all of the professionals in the Library are ready to help you in your research, the History Department's contact person in Nimitz Library is Ms. Barbara Manvel. You can ask for her in

the Library, call her on the phone (x36925) or e-mail her at manvel@usna.edu

You should also visit the Library's web page for History majors at www.usna.edu/Library/History/History.htm. And you should familiarize yourself with other parts of the Nimitz Library website, especially the items on the "Midshipmen Gateway" at www.usna.edu/Library/Midshipmen.htm.

The Internet/World-Wide Web

The use of internet sources requires special caution. The internet is a powerful research tool that can complement, though never replace, more conventional repositories of evidence and ideas. And, increasingly, journal articles, newspaper articles, government documents, various collections of primary documents (and even a few books) are all available via the World-Wide Web. Often these are virtually identical to the paper versions that reside on library shelves. Libraries purchase many such resources, and make them available to their students and faculty via the library's web site.

As you know, the scope of the Web goes far beyond the publications and other materials that libraries make available to their patrons. There are millions of sites that make information freely available to everyone. These sites are maintained by a wide variety of organizations and individuals, including highly respected scholarly associations, special interest groups with a range of motives, and grade school students. *Caveat emptor*. The sources and reliability of materials on the Web are often unclear and even misleading; anyone can create a web site and put on it whatever he or she chooses. The explanation that you obtained information "off the internet" carries no more authority than if you claimed you got it "over the telephone." Just as you need to appraise critically the traditional print-on-paper books, articles, and documents that

you encounter, you need to give at least as much scrutiny to the information that is so readily available through channels on the Web. When used carefully, the Web can provide an important and convenient source of academically credible information. Nevertheless, some of your History professors may limit the acceptability of sources you may use from certain portions of the Web; follow your professor's guidance on this matter.

Other Library Sources

While the Nimitz Library has an excellent collection, especially in naval history, you may well discover that there are books or documents you want to refer to that are not in Nimitz Library. These may be obtainable from **Interlibrary Loan**. In general what this means is that many additional volumes from other libraries are available to you here at the Naval Academy. For details see the Nimitz Library page at www.usna.edu/Library/Il.htm.

You may also visit other libraries in the local area including those at St. John's College, the University of Maryland, the Library of Congress, or the National Archives in Washington D.C. to use their collections on site. Consult with Ms. Manvel about your specific circumstances.

Writing Center

You may already know about the Writing Center; it is a resource not just for History majors, but for all midshipmen who want to improve their writing. The Writing Center can help you strengthen your writing whether or not you are having difficulties. Administered by the English Department, the Writing Center is conveniently located in Sampson Hall. For information, see www.usna.edu/EnglishDept/wcenter.htm.

Multimedia Support Center Graphics Lab

The Multimedia Support Center offers classes and individual assistance on its graphics lab software and equipment. Knowledge of various graphics applications may help you illustrate your presentations, both oral and written, with photographs and other graphics as well as with words. Look at www.usna.edu/MSC/Technosessions.htm. This facility is located on the main deck of the Nimitz Library.

TAKING ADVANCED HISTORY COURSES

You are aware by now that college history courses differ significantly from high school history courses. As a History major, you will discover that upper-level History courses differ even more.

The following are some of the ways you can expect your upper level History courses to be different from your survey courses:

1. While knowing **what** happened remains important in upper-level History courses, it will become increasingly important (and a lot more fun) to figure out **why** it happened. Learning facts is important in history (as in any subject), but that is merely the beginning of the process. After learning the facts, an historian (even a beginning historian) must learn to ask "so what?" In other words: what does it mean? Why does it matter? What can I learn from this? This does not mean that the facts are any less important, only that they are the beginning rather than the end of your academic adventure. Knowing is only the first step to understanding.

2. Another difference is that after you have completed your three core courses in History (HH104, HH205, and HH206), most of your advanced history courses will focus on a narrower

time period and will therefore venture deeper into the issues of that period than is possible in survey courses. Instead of studying a thousand years of western history in one semester, you might spend a semester studying only 100 years in one country; in U.S. History courses, you might focus on a period of only fifty years or less. Obviously the purpose of such a narrow focus is to allow you to investigate a subject with more attention to detail and a more sophisticated level of understanding.

3. Finally, you will discover (if you haven't done so already) that not all historians agree with one another about the meaning or significance of what happened. Occasionally they will even disagree about what happened, though this is more rare. Disagreements among historians do not prove that historical analysis is simply a matter of someone's opinion. It is an historian's obligation to keep an open mind about the meaning of history and not to let preconceptions, assumptions, or political bias affect one's judgment about the meaning of the past. Not all historians are successful in doing this. It is tempting to select facts to support a particular view and some writers succumb to this temptation. It is therefore essential to develop the ability to discriminate between opposing viewpoints, and recognize those writers or speakers who select facts to fit their views rather than the other way around. Becoming a good historian thus involves the ability to identify special pleading in historical evaluation.

HOW DO PROFESSORS EVALUATE GOOD HISTORY?

(OR: HOW TO GET GOOD GRADES)

By now you are familiar with essay exams and the writing of research papers and essays. You will get used to this method of enquiry and evaluation as a History major. All three are essential

tools of both learning and testing. What follows, after a brief definition of each of these forms of evaluation, are a number of useful tips about how to do them well.

1. **Essay Exams:** Most of your in-class (and often out-of-class) exams will require you to respond to an essay question. Instead of asking you to regurgitate facts, you will be asked to establish a thesis (or argument) and to use the facts you know to illustrate why your thesis is correct.

2. **Research Papers:** In some of your upper level courses you will be asked to write (or be given the option of writing) a research paper. This can be a great adventure which draws you into your subject and allows you to be a real historian. A major component of your first upper-level history course (HH 262) will provide you with the tools you need to master this approach to the writing of history.

3. **The History Essay (Thought Piece):** This is the most common type of writing assignment that you are likely to get as a History major at the Naval Academy. Instructors will assign you the task of writing an "essay" (typically 3 to 5 pages) on an historical issue. As in a research paper, you need to get your facts straight, but the final goal is less to assemble facts than to construct a thoughtful argument based on the material available in a few specific sources.

How to Write a Successful Answer on an Essay Exam

As noted above, most of the in-class exams you take as a History major will involve responding to one or more essay questions. Learning to handle these effectively will make you more successful as a test taker. Some instructors will give you a choice of questions; others will assign the same question to all students. Either way, the following guidelines are pertinent:

1. Start by determining your thesis. If the question asks for an either/or response, decide

which one you can support better, and make that your thesis statement. In short, figure out the answer.≡ If, for example, you are asked to discuss the causes of World War I, decide what you think was the most important cause and jot it down: "Alliances" or "Militarism" or "War Planning." Don't forget that sometimes your answer can be: "all of the above."

2. Make an outline. This may seem like squandering valuable time when you have only 30 or 40 minutes, but it pays large dividends. Your outline does not need to be a formal one, but rather a quick list of items you want to be sure to cover in your essay. To continue with our example of World War I, make a quick list of causes, then next to each one note a specific example you can cite to "prove" how important it was. Then number your list in the order you want to discuss these topics. Only after you have done this should you then write your first paragraph.

3. Answer the question: Do this in the very first paragraph. This is where you state your thesis (see # 1 above). Do not wander around stating generalities only to summarize at the end. You may be rushed at the end. Besides, it is always a good idea to get your straightforward answer into the first paragraph.

4. Give Examples: After your thesis paragraph, continue with subsequent paragraphs in which you cite the topics from your "outline" and provide specific historical examples in support of each one. Don't forget to start a new paragraph when you shift to a new topic. Your paragraph structure should reflect your outline.

5. Reiterate your answer (thesis) in the final paragraph as a conclusion.

How to Write a Successful Research Paper or Historical Essay

As a History major, you will have many opportunities to write about a variety of historical issues. Although no two history courses will be identical, there are some common elements

about writing that will help you achieve your goal. From the start you should remember that essay writing should be a process that informs your reader about ideas, information, and viewpoints. Just as in writing an in-class essay, your ultimate goal should be to present historical material in support of a clear thesis statement.

1. **Organization:** Any historical essay is composed of three main parts: the introduction, the main body of the paper, and the conclusion. Each of these parts plays an important role in the overall success of your essay. In the **introduction** (usually no more than a few paragraphs) you need to introduce the subject, and state your thesis. This part of the paper is critical because it will set up the basic framework for the rest of the paper. **The body** of the paper should offer support for the thesis statement in your introduction. In particular, you want to include a variety of examples from different kinds of sources. Here is where you might consider offering quotations from some of your sources as a kind of evidence. Finally, in your paper's **conclusion** you should present the logical summary of your arguments, showing how your examples and source material prove the validity of your original thesis.

2. *The Introduction:* The introduction to a paper does more than merely state the topic of the essay. One purpose is to tell you readers why they should want to look at the question that you have proposed in your essay. Some assignments will be case-specific. For example, you instructor may ask you to write a **review** of a book, film, or journal article. In that case, your objective would be to study that source and develop a perspective, a point of view, about that source. This becomes your thesis.

Or you might be asked to write a **comparative essay** that requires weighing the viewpoints of several authors and determining what each author contributes to a meaningful discussion. One example of this might be an assignment where you have to compare the viewpoint presented by

one author in a book, with that of another author in a journal article, and compare both of these to a memoir by someone who lived at the time. In this case, you have to distill the main argument in each and then see if they are different, and if so, how.

Or you might be asked to write a **research paper**. Most research papers are ten to fifteen pages long and require you to use a variety of sources including (whenever possible) both **secondary sources** (history books and articles) and **primary sources** (contemporary accounts). In this case your introduction would consist of (1) a statement that introduces your topic by providing background and content, and (2) a thesis statement in which you present your argument.

Whether you are writing a three-page essay or a fifteen-page research paper, the most important thing in your introduction is to develop your central analytical point or thesis statement. By doing so, you commit yourself to a clear line of enquiry, much like a detective who is searching out the answer to a mysterious crime. As the historian, you are the detective, trying to uncover (and clearly present) the meaning behind the events that are before you. In your introduction, you intentionally limit the scope of your investigation so that you can provide the appropriate level of detail in the body of your paper.

3. *The Body of the Paper*: Once you have determined your analytical point or thesis, and have drafted at least a preliminary version of your introduction, you can begin to assemble the main body of your paper. The purpose of this section is to provide substance and support for the argument you have already asserted. In some cases, your main body will have two or three clear examples, along with evidence, that support your argument. In a research paper you may have many more examples. In either case, each section of the main body should proceed logically from the previous point. Sometimes there is no inherent logical order to your various examples.

The key is to develop an order (a sequence) that works for your argument.

Each new topic should begin with a **topic sentence**. (Just as you have an introduction for your overall essay, so, too, your topic sentence introduces each paragraph.) Ideally you should develop one distinct and important idea in each paragraph; one idea should lead to the next. (Hint: One way to do this is to signal your reader that you are shifting to a new example by using connective words such as: Moreover..., Furthermore..., or Another example of this is...,) The ideas you present in these paragraphs should be supported by **evidence**. Sometimes (but not always) this involves citing quotations or facts (See the next section on "The Use and Abuse of Evidence").

As you write the body of your paper, think about what will be interesting and convincing for your readers. You do not need to find the most shocking or bloodthirsty stories, but pick those facts and quoted passages that most accurately and fairly explain the topic. Remember that although you are presenting an argument, you should not conceal evidence that contradicts your thesis. Rather, you should present it, then show why it is less convincing than other evidence.

4. The Conclusion: Your conclusion is an integral part of the essay X no matter its length X because it unifies all that you have previously discussed. The concluding paragraph (or paragraphs in a longer research paper) should be the final logical moment when the reader can see what you, the author, have accomplished. This requires that you restate the purpose of your paper and the main points that support your analysis. The easiest way to construct your conclusion is to go back and re-read your own argument. Once again, as in the introduction, you will need to explain why the reader should care about the subject. In other words: "So what?"

THE USE AND ABUSE OF HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

(OR: HOW TO QUOTE SOURCES WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT PLAGIARISM)

As noted in the previous sections, essays that answer a question or address an historical problem make an argument. They are thesis-driven. The thesis or argument is supported by logic and evidence. Logic simply means that there is a consistent, causal relationship between the evidence presented and the conclusions drawn. Evidence is the building material of history, the individual bricks with which one constructs an argument. The logic is the architecture that informs the placement and function of the bricks.

Evidence may be categorized in several different ways. It may consist of **facts or opinions**. It may be **primary or secondary**. It may be **direct or circumstantial**. For a historical argument to withstand scrutiny, the evidence on which it is based must be gathered carefully, analyzed critically, handled scrupulously, and presented logically. That evidence may be written, but it may also be oral, visual, or even physical. The twisted hull of the battleship *Maine* is still the best evidence of how the ship was sunk.

Facts and Opinions

Both facts and opinions can be used to support an argument. Historical **facts** are those statements about the past that are demonstrably true and incontrovertible. We know, for example, that Abraham Lincoln delivered the Gettysburg Address on 19 November 1863 because multiple witnesses were there, heard it, and reported their experience. It is therefore, a *fact*. The statement that the Gettysburg Address was one of the most important speeches in American history is an *opinion*.

Historians can and do use **opinions** in constructing their arguments. The weight of these

opinions is determined by the authority of the source voicing the opinion. A listener at Gettysburg on that November day in 1863 might well have felt that Lincoln's address was among the most important in American history, but that opinion would carry less authority than one from a modern scholar who had devoted a distinguished career to studying the rhetoric of American presidents. Both opinions are evidence; the latter is stronger evidence. Good historians always try to find the best possible evidence to support their argument.

Primary and Secondary Evidence

Primary evidence is first hand. It comes from sources in a position to experience or witness the historical events to which they attest. The journals of Lewis and Clark, housed at the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia, are a primary source on their historic journey. Stephen Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage*, a book about Lewis and Clark, is a secondary source on the same topic published 190 years later. It may be just as accurate. Indeed, sometimes historians know more about the events they describe than the participants themselves did. But sometimes historians get it wrong, and errors in their books get picked up and repeated by subsequent historians who rely on their secondary account instead of checking the primary sources.

In most historical research, particularly the research you do here at the Naval Academy for your course work, it is not possible to verify every statement against primary sources. You must rely upon previous historians for some of your facts and most of your opinions. But the rule-of-best-evidence applies here: For the most important facts in your argument, it is always best to go back to the primary sources when you can.

You should not assume, however, that primary source evidence is always better than

secondary source evidence. Memoirs are a classic example. They are without question a primary source, but they are also a biased source for we are all the heroes of our own lives. Julius Caesar's *Commentaries* are an invaluable primary source for his campaign in the western European hinterland beyond the Mediterranean basin. But they were written for the deliberate purpose of serving Caesar's ambitions and therefore very likely exaggerate Caesar's accomplishments. Like all evidence, they must be used with caution.

Direct and Indirect Evidence

The best evidence is direct. Today we can listen to Winston Churchill's famous "Iron Curtain" speech, delivered at Westminster College on 5 March 1946. That is the best evidence for Churchill's views on the emerging Cold War. Listening to the recording allows us to catch nuances of meaning that may not be captured in the printed word. Often, however, historians must rely on indirect evidence. We do not know for a fact that Thomas Jefferson sired children by his slave servant Sally Hemings, but there is a significant body of circumstantial evidence pointing to that conclusion. This evidence includes his presence at Monticello at the times he children were presumably conceived, his DNA among their descendants, his documented favoritism to Hemings, and the stories that circulated among his contemporaries. None of this evidence is direct; none is conclusive. But together it builds a powerful circumstantial case from which a historian might legitimately infer an argument.

Quote Passages Accurately

Striving always to obtain the best evidence to support their arguments, historians must strive equally to use that evidence fairly. This means presenting the evidence with scrupulous

accuracy, making clear the provenance (source) of the evidence, and ascribing appropriate credit.

Though quotations should be used sparingly in historical writing, it is critical that quotations present exactly the words that appeared in the original. Ellipses (. . .) may be used when you omit a section of a quotation, or words may be added to the quotation inside brackets [] to harmonize the syntax of the quotation, and capitalization may be altered to match the sentence structure. Otherwise, the material within the quotation marks must appear exactly as it did in the original. If you find that a word is misspelled in the quotation you wish to use, keep the original spelling and insert "[sic]" in brackets afterward. This is a notation that means "this error is in the original quotation."

Give Credit to your Sources

The provenance of evidence is where it came from. For published books and articles, this means simply noting the publication data for the source, taking special care to note the edition that you used. For less traditional sources such as government reports, occasional publications, and especially unpublished material, it is essential to make clear where interested readers may view the document themselves. The goal is not only transparent documentation (allowing the reader to know all the sources that were used), but also a guide to replication of the author's research. Readers need to know not only the sources invoked but how to get to those sources themselves.

Finally, and most importantly, historians must credit the sources from which they have drawn their evidence and their ideas. Failure to do so results in plagiarism, a cardinal sin in the scholarly community and an honor offense at the Naval Academy. The test is whether you have represented the words or ideas of others as your own. If in doubt, give credit.

Sometimes, the line between your work and someone else's blurs, even to you. As historians familiarize themselves with the existing literature on a subject, they absorb ideas and concepts that inform their thinking. Great care must be taken to distinguish between the ideas and concepts borrowed from others and those that are an original synthesis by the author. It is not necessary to document every statement made in an historical work; those that are common knowledge, to be found in multiple existing works, need not be footnoted. But when using ideas derived from a single source, or when presenting evidence culled from other works, acknowledgment is necessary. **Quotations must always be documented.** If in doubt, err on the side of disclosure.

The Internet

As noted earlier, you should be particularly careful in using sources from the Internet. The ability to select passages from electronic documents and remove them from their provenance increases the risk of confusing your words with the words of others. To lose control of the electronic materials you have captured is to risk inadvertent plagiarism if those materials find their way unacknowledged into your own text. To avoid this danger, be sure that you capture the URL and the date for any document you download or print out from the web. Do not lift passages from a web site without clearly marking the material with the web site and the date. And search around the web sites from which you are taking material to find out its original source, its reliability, and any restrictions, such as copyright, that may apply to its usage.

For more specific guidance about plagiarism, see the History Department statement on plagiarism on its Home Page.

THE REQUIRED HISTORY MAJOR SEMINARS -- HH262 & HH462

HH 262: Perspectives in History

This course is required of all history majors and is normally taken in the 3/c year, though a few majors take it in 2/c year. It is the foundation course of the History curriculum. It will introduce you not only to the study of History, but to something called *Ahistoriography*≡ which is the study of the historical process and historical interpretation. You will learn to approach historical issues from different **perspectives** (hence the name of the course) and analyze how historians ask questions and select evidence. You will learn various **methods** for constructing an historical argument: these might include quantification (a method in which scholars attempt to find numerical support for a particular interpretation), or it might involve the use of historical artifacts, an examination of government documents, or a close reading of popular press accounts, as well as many other possibilities.

At the end of this handbook is a page listing the “goals” of the History Major at USNA. One of those goals is to encourage the development of **lateral awareness**: "appreciation of the inter-relationships of social, economic, political, cultural, and intellectual factors; ability to consider a range of methodologies and to understand multiple causes and implications of historical phenomena," as well as the higher-order goal of **evaluating open-ended problems involving human systems**: "acquiring strategies for approaching new problems, finding and assessing evidence, determining relevant variables and defensible conclusions."

All History majors will leave this course with not only increased knowledge, but heightened sensitivity to recognizing and categorizing methods and interpretations used in historical scholarship. This new sensitivity will enable you to recognize historical method and

interpretations in your 300-level history courses, and thereby benefit even more from the courses you choose.

In addition, History majors in HH262 will also learn how to identify, frame, and solve an historical problem by writing a research paper. In meeting this requirement, you will acquire basic skills in conducting research in electronic databases, primary sources of all kinds, as well as recent scholarly books and journal articles. You will also apply these skills in the compilation of a 15-page research paper, the writing of which will be a significant element in HH262. As in your appreciation of historiography, the skills you acquire in this project will prove valuable in your future History courses. The goal here is to acquire practical knowledge of applied historiography as well as research methods, all in the service of improving your **communications skills**: ∇sensitivity to language and audience, understanding of the differences between information and argument . . . [and the ability to] articulate views orally and in writing and construct arguments." (see Department Goals)

HH 462: The Capstone Seminar

Sometime in your 1/c year you will take a second required seminar: HH462. This "capstone seminar" experience will allow you the opportunity to take stock of the disciplinary expertise you have acquired as a History major. In this course, you will not write a major research paper, but instead you will explore with your classmates the frontiers of the historical discipline and the various arguments about the meaning and applicability of History. Students will engage in a graduate-level seminar discussion about a variety of focused historical issues, prepare and defend short thought pieces, and critique one another's work.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS FOR HISTORY MAJORS

(HONORS, HONOR SOCIETIES, AND GRADUATE STUDY)

The Honors Program

The Honors Program in History offers high-performing students the opportunity to pursue a more challenging curriculum and earn a designated honors degree. Students who meet the CQPR requirements listed below are invited to apply for admission to the program at the beginning of the spring semester of the 3/c year. Those who are accepted into the program follow the normal history matrix except that they will take two seminars (HH507 and HH508) in lieu of two 300-level electives. They will also choose a faculty member to be an adviser for their senior thesis: a 30-page research paper. This project takes place beginning in 2/c year and is submitted and defended in 1/c year. All successful theses are bound and placed in Nimitz Library.

Requirements:

3.0 CQPR (with no D's or F's)

3.5 CQPR in all History courses (maximum of 2 C's)

2.75 CQPR in Professional courses (with no F's)

2.5 CQPR in conduct (with no F's)

2.0 CQPR in Physical Education (with no F's)

For more information about this program, ask your History Department adviser.

Phi Alpha Theta

Phi Alpha Theta is the National Honor Society in History. Membership in Phi Alpha Theta is not related to participation in the History Honors program. The national organization, founded in

1912, has more than 700 chapters in all fifty states. Omega Kappa chapter of Phi Alpha Theta at the Naval Academy is the largest chapter in the Mid-Atlantic region, and sponsors several meetings a year at which invited speakers share their expertise. Phi Alpha Theta has a symbiotic relationship with the History Club at USNA and Phi Alpha Theta officers are automatically the officers of the History Club.

To become a member of Phi Alpha Theta you must have completed 12 hours of history with a grade point average of at least 3.0 overall and a 3.1 in History courses.

Graduate Study

Up to twenty midshipmen a year are selected to begin their graduate degree under the VGEP program (Voluntary Graduate Education Program) while they are still at the Naval Academy. They take graduate courses at local universities during their second semester in 1/c year, then stay on in a TAD status to finish their graduate degree in the fall. On average, two History majors per year are accepted into the VGEP program. To be eligible, you need a CQPR of 3.2 or higher with no F's and a military conduct record of B or better in the 2/c and 1/c years. In addition, you must be ahead of the matrix so that all (or most) of your USNA graduation requirements are completed by the end of your fall semester 1/c year. For more information see the Senior Adviser in the History Department.

Other Graduate School Opportunities

The History major at the Naval Academy prepares you to enter a wide variety of graduate study programs, quite independent of the formal programs offered by the institution. Obviously graduate work in History is a possibility for those who are interested (and more than a few USNA

History majors have gone on to become History professors, including one who is a professor here). But in addition, USNA History majors have been successful in Law School and M.B.A. programs as well as programs in Public Policy, Public Administration, and a wide variety of other graduate programs in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The combination of analytical skills and writing ability along with your background in technical core courses makes USNA History majors both desirable and successful in graduate programs of all kinds.