Welcome to the history department at UMKC. We love what we do and will endeavor to make your path through college—including your training in history—as rewarding as possible. Before that, however, your first question is probably, “What can I possibly do with a history major?” A common misconception is that the only thing available after graduation is to teach history. That is a possible path, but certainly not your only option.

Among the many jobs you can consider are: advertising, analyst, archivist, broadcaster, campaign worker, consultant, congressional aide, editor, foreign service, foundation staffer, information specialist, intelligence, journalist, legal assistant, lobbyist, personnel manager, public relations... the list is almost endless. It sounds cliché, but the career path for a history majors is limited only by your imagination.

More specifically, with your degree in history you can work as an educator (primary, secondary or post-secondary schools, historic sites and museums); as a researcher (museums, think tanks, cultural resources management, preservation); as a communicator (writers, archivists, librarians); as an advocate (lawyers, legislative staff, foundations); and in business (contract historians, non-profits, corporation staff).

Why so many opportunities? Consider this: the study of history trains us how to think—not in a small or proscribed way, but in an analytical way. In our courses, you will discover that a flexible and perceptive mind is the most practical tool imaginable. You will become excellent writers and communicators with the ability to analyze complex problems with dexterity and finesse, a skill that will help you regardless of your chosen career path. Beyond this—and this remains a much less practical concern—as we hope you discover, history is more than names and dates. At best, the study of history can be a cure for ignorance, prejudice, and provincialism. And at the very least, it is an interesting story about who we are as a community, a nation, and a people.

If your interests remain in the academic world, know that our students have gone on to many top-flight colleges and universities. Recent UMKC history majors have pursued graduate study at the state universities of Virginia, Texas, Connecticut, Iowa, New York, Mississippi, Kansas, Kentucky, Florida, Michigan, and California-Berkeley as well as Ohio State, Southern Methodist, Marquette, Notre Dame, Washington University, University of British Columbia, Texas Tech, Georgetown, Northwestern, London School of Economics, NYU, Queen’s College-Belfast, King’s College-London, and Cambridge.

Once again, welcome to our department. If you have any questions about our faculty, the major, or the field, please contact the undergraduate advisory committee.