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Comparative History of Ideas University of Washington



The Comparative History of Ideas is an interdisciplinary program that draws on a wide variety of disciplines to examine the interplay of ideas and their cultural, historical, and political contexts.

depts.washington.edu/chid

what is CHID?

CHID is an undergraduate major and minor that has been around since 1978. The participating members (students, staff and faculty) of CHID collectively construct a dynamic, creative learning community that mobilizes collective and individual passions. We encourage our members to pursue self-knowledge through participation in the changing world in which their selves are shaped and which they will shape for their own and future generations.

what can you do with a CHID major?

Program graduates have gone on to postgraduate studies in the humanities and social sciences as well as to professional training and careers in a wide variety of fields including law, international relations, administration and public policy, medicine, education, journalism, the fine arts, new media and film. CHID alum teach English around the world, work as interior designers and personal trainers, run their own pottery studios, are librarians, musicians, dentists, social workers, and museum curators. They've written speeches for former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, owned hostels in Cape Town, and opened up coffee shops in Arkansas. They've joined the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, and the Marines. The possibilities for what you can do with a CHID major is limited only by your imagination.

CHID's statement of principles

- The questions are the content.
- Inter-disciplinarity is disciplined knowledge.
- Students are the agents of their own education.
- Education is a dialogical process within a learning community.
- Experience is the best teacher.
- Critical thinking and self-understanding are tied to knowledge of the world.

study abroad is possible

Visit the CHID website to see what programs we're sponsoring (past programs include Iceland, India, New Zealand, Peru, South Africa, Germany, Cuba, Rome, and Viet Nam), stop by the CHID International Programs Office for details on our programs and information on financial aid and scholarships, and chat with the CHID Advisor to figure out how you can use study abroad to fulfill degree requirements.

meeting with your advisor is crucial

The CHID advisor knows about a broad range of resources that can help you get through all kinds of difficulties, including financial problems, child care issues, and physical and emotional well-being. The CHID program has been working with non-traditional college students for over 30 years, so we have a lot of experience to draw on. Don't ever assume that you can't do something—study abroad, go to school, get into a specific class, drop a class, and so on. Make an appointment or drop by to talk with her to find out *all* of your options.

Comparative History of Ideas Program Requirements

Major Requirements (55 Cr)...

- **CHID 101: Introduction to CHID** (required course)
- **Gateways to CHID** (2 courses required)
- **Cultural and Historical Engagements**
This requirement can be fulfilled in 1 of 3 ways:
 - CHID Study Abroad (1 quarter);
 - Local/Global Engagements (1 course); or
 - Encounters Across Cultures (2 courses)
- **Ideas in the World** (1 course required)
- **Power and Difference** (1 course required)
- **CHID 390: Junior Colloquium** (required course)
- **Electives** (to bring total CHID credits up to 55)
- **Senior Thesis/Capstone Project** (one 5-credit course, required; option to expand up to 15 credits)

Minor Requirements (30 Cr)...

The requirements for the minor are similar to those of the major:

- **Gateways to CHID** (1 course required)
- **Cultural and Historical Engagements**
This requirement can be fulfilled in 1 of 3 ways:
 - CHID Study Abroad (1 quarter);
 - Local/Global Engagements (1 course); or
 - Encounters Across Cultures (2 courses)
- **Ideas in the World** (1 course required)
- **Power and Difference** (1 course required)
- **CHID 390: Junior Colloquium** (required course)
- **Upper Division CHID Course** (1 course required)

CHID Honors Requirements...

There are two kinds of Honors degrees—departmental and college honors. For information on how to apply to the College Honors program, visit <http://depts.washington.edu/uwhonors/>. In order to receive departmental honors in CHID, candidates must exhibit advanced reading knowledge of a foreign language; complete two 300/400-level Honors courses related to the CHID major; write a 15-credit senior thesis; and achieve a grade-point average of 3.5 in the major (3.3 overall).

Major Requirements Explained...

...CHID 101: Introduction to CHID (required course)

This course introduces students to the CHID learning community. It incorporates discussions about the program's philosophy, structure, resources, faculty and students. It is an introduction to the content and logistics of learning in CHID.

...Gateways to CHID (2 courses required)

Each of these courses will offer students a particular approach to the comparative history of ideas. Classes in this category examine a particular topic/idea from a variety of disciplinary, theoretical, and methodological perspectives. In taking at least two courses in this category, students will begin to think comparatively and from a range of perspectives. Students can choose from a variety of courses taught by CHID faculty.

...Ideas in the World (1 course required)

Through this requirement, students will explore various systems of belief, conceptual frameworks, paradigms, historical understandings, and ways of knowing. For example, these courses can include such diverse areas as science and technology, European intellectual history, indigenous intellectual production, and post-structural theory.

...Power and Difference (1 course required)

Oppression, injustice and efforts to combat forms of domination work through the cultural politics of identity in various ways. Such a course should emphasize the ways in which categories like gender, race, class, sexuality, and religion structure the terrain of social orders and struggles.

...CHID 390: Junior Colloquium (required course)

The core course for all majors, this course introduces students to central concepts like culture, identity, and power, and to the cross-disciplinary study of these concepts. Organized as a seminar, students are expected to shape the direction of these explorations in a collaborative fashion and are encouraged to engage in both oral and written exchanges with their peers. Prereqs: CHID 101, Gateways to CHID, Ideas in the World, and CHID 390.

...Cultural and Historical Engagements

(1-2 courses required)

This requirement asks students to engage in rigorous and comparative cultural analysis, which may or may not involve international study. It can be fulfilled in one of three ways:

1 CHID Study Abroad (1 quarter) Students spend one quarter studying in one of the various CHID study abroad programs. If a student feels that a non-CHID study abroad program may also satisfy this spirit of comparative cultural study, he/she may consult with CHID's academic advisor for approval.

—or—

2 Local/Global Engagements (1 course) Though based at the UW, these courses use a transnational theme and structure to explore the links between local and global forces. For example, a course which uses communication technology (e.g. webcasts, online learning, etc.) to link students at the UW with other communities outside of the U.S. would satisfy this requirement. Alternatively, a course that provides students with out-of-classroom experiences (field visits, community work, field research, etc.) tracing the global and local intersections in areas such as immigration, agriculture, transnational advocacy, artistic production, etc., would also fulfill this requirement.

—or—

3 Encounters Across Cultures (2 courses, 1 of which can be a non-CHID study abroad program) Students may satisfy this requirement by taking at least two courses on different peoples, places, spaces, or moments. The goal of such exposure to different contexts is to provide the opportunity to make cross-cultural comparisons regarding power, difference and belonging. As with the CHID study abroad requirement, students will be asked to write a brief 1-page, single-spaced paper based on the courses taken for this requirement, detailing the value of comparative research.

...Electives (to bring total CHID credits up to 55 credits)

Each student is expected to complete at least 13 elective credits by taking courses that contribute to her/his focus for her/his degree and incorporate an historical perspective. The only stipulations for this requirement are that the courses be at the 300-level or above and that the CHID advisor has agreed that the courses fit into the student's course of study.

...Senior Thesis/Capstone Project (one 5-credit course, required; option to expand up to 15 credits)

This requirement asks students to solve specific intellectual problems, ensuring a form of specialization that goes beyond simply a narrowing of academic focus. The senior project should demonstrate that the student has attained the educational objectives of the major. It can be fulfilled in one of two ways:

1 CHID 490: Research Seminar

This seminar is designed to help students conceive of, undertake, and finish significant research projects within the limited time of a single quarter. Each seminar will take up a broad theme around which the readings and research projects will be organized. This theme will change each time the course is offered.

—or—

2 CHID 491: Senior Thesis (CHID 492 / CHID 493 optional)

CHID currently allows for three versions of a senior research project: a 5, 10, or 15-credit senior thesis. Students who have planned and finished a large-scale academic project will not only have the ability to finish similar projects in their chosen field of work; they will also have developed the communication skills necessary for the successful dissemination of their ideas.

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Visit the CHID website for a list of suggested classes for each of these requirements and meet with the CHID advisor to discuss which classes will work best in YOUR course of study.