

## **BA Honours in History**

### **Program Outcomes**

#### **Graduate Attributes in B.A. History (Honours)**

B.A. Honours in History programme (under CBCS), has a balanced course content adequately covering the evolution of human civilization from time immemorial to recent times. Though there are four papers on Indian History, students have sufficient exposure to the Far East, the U.S.A. and the Modern West. On completion of the course, students are expected to have acquired the skills of critical thinking, rational enquiry, effective communication and exploring the relationship between the past, present while remaining sensitive to the larger historiographical debates that are important in the study of human societies. The attributes expected from the graduates of B.A. Honours in History are:

- 1) Knowledge of multiple perspectives through which significant developments in the history of the Indian subcontinent from earliest times up to the period after independence.
- 2) Familiarity with the significant patterns of development in certain parts of the modern and early modern world as well as certain non-Indian ancient societies.
- 3) Ability to carefully read a complex historical narrative, evaluate its deployment of evidence, and understand its argument as well as critically analyse the same
- 4) Ability to identify patterns of change and continuity with regards to issues of contemporary significance over long durations as well as across diverse geo-cultural zones
- 5) Greater ability to distinguish between that which is historical that is time-place context driven, hence changeable and challengeable - from that which is not.
- 6) Sensitivity to gender and social inequities as well as acquaintance with the historical trajectories of these issues.
- 7) Greater respect for basic human values and ideals of equality, freedom, respect for diversity, and other constitutional values.

8) Skill of picking up disparate sets of information from varied sources and weaving them into a coherent argument with a view to reveal identifiable patterns of development.

9) Capability to assume leadership roles and apply the above mentioned analytical abilities in various other non-familiar contexts.

10) Possess knowledge of the values and beliefs of multiple cultures so as to effectively engage in a multi-cultural society and interact with diverse groups.

### **Qualification Descriptors:**

Upon successful completion of the course, the students receive a B.A. degree in the history. The course helps students in careers relating to teaching and research, administrative assignments, foreign assignments for building international relations, policy making and governance, journalism, mass communication, archives, museum studies and archaeological research.

### **Course Learning Objective:**

The three year undergraduate programme with honours offered by the Department of History in various colleges of the University of Delhi aims to familiarise students with significant developments in the history of South Asia and certain other parts of the world, through different time periods. While the primary focus remains on the Indian subcontinent, students also study about other parts of the world, European as well as non-European. The course aims to make the students challenge the idea of history as seamless, or historical knowledge as a fixed/finished product that the textbooks at the school level create. It seeks to expose students to various problems and conflicts that are an inherent part of the historical exercise of reconstructing the past. The purpose is to sensitize students to the existence and desirability of multiple perspectives through which knowledge about the past is constructed. Probably the most important goal is to enable students to cultivate a historically sensitive way of thinking with due regard to time, place, context and roles of human agencies involved. Thus, the students are encouraged to think critically, analyse different perspectives and actively process information about the past rather than become passive recipients of singular historical knowledge. In the process of helping them achieve the above goals, we hope to enable them to engage critically with the extant historical scholarship in the field, available in the form of secondary texts. By the end of the three years of the undergraduate programme, the students would have obtained elementary ideas of some of the more important

issues that crop up in a historian's reading and interpretation of primary sources. Certain thematic courses like those on gender and environment are designed to sensitise students to contemporary concerns and equip them with the theoretical foundations so that they can formulate and pose relevant questions to the sources.

In the course of their engagement with historical material, we also aim to equip students with an 'appropriate' vocabulary of the discipline, while sensitising them to the importance of specific terminology, such that they may be able to articulate their own complex ideas regarding various themes in History. The objective is that they should be able to do this through their written work – essays, projects, research papers, etc. as well as in the oral form – presentations, debates and discussions. It is also intended that while doing so students should be able to formulate cogent arguments, presenting the necessary evidence to establish these, all based on a training in the rigorous methods of the discipline of History. Besides these objectives regarding the intellectual development of the pupil, the larger goals of this programme are those that are common to any other educational programme, particularly in the field of humanities and social sciences. These are goals such as developing a sense of active citizenship, making responsible political choices and democratic conduct in public life. The programme also aims to enable them to intervene meaningfully in debates regarding matters of public concern, while developing the ability to generate public opinion on the same. The objective is also to inculcate a humanitarian spirit within learners, such that they may develop empathy and compassion, while being discerning critical thinkers, all at the same time.

Graduates of the department do often branch out to different spheres of knowledge, and domains of professional work, besides pursuing higher studies within the discipline. It is expected that besides the skills specific to the discipline, these wider life skills of argumentation and communication, attitudes and temperaments, would ultimately enable learners to live rich, productive and meaningful lives.

### **Course Learning Outcomes:**

After completing the undergraduate programme in History, the student is expected to:

#### **A. Construct historical narratives**

- Describe significant developments within the historical contexts, covered in the syllabus,

- Identify and analyse the significance of historical changes that take place within a society or culture,
- Explain the patterns of such transitions,
- Assess patterns of continuities within such historical contexts.

#### **B. Formulate arguments based on a historiographical engagement**

- Formulate, sustain, and justify a historical argument,
- Support and establish such arguments with historical evidence drawn mainly from secondary sources and wherever possible also from primary sources,
- Situate historical arguments within a larger scholarly narrative,
- Explain that while chronology and knowledge of the basic facts of history are necessary, the study of history involves critical evaluation and processing of those facts to arrive at coherent interpretations of the past,
- Exhibit a familiarity with “the historian’s craft” – methods and rigours of the discipline.

#### **C. Engage with scholarly writings and presentations**

- Abstract the main arguments/concepts/ideas embedded in scholarly writings in History,
- Comprehend, and explain the structure of arguments and claims made in such writings,
- Note the empirical evidence used to establish such claims.

#### **D. Answer questions, write essays and research papers**

- Access and identify reliable and appropriate source materials,
- Evaluate source materials,
- Incorporate ideas from these sources,
- Synthesize arguments and facts culled from scholarly writings,
- Articulate a persuasive and well-structured historical argument on the basis of such synthesis, Employ multiple forms of evidence in this historical argument,
- Formulate relevant and meaningful historical questions,
- Read and interpret primary sources, at least at an elementary level, wherever there is an opportunity or requirement,
- Interpret appropriately and answer questions based on the above,
- Write clear, cogent, and well – researched essays and academic papers, to make an argument based on appropriate evidence about a selected topic or question in history (evidence could include secondary and/or primary sources), avoiding plagiarism,
- Use proper citations and footnotes within formal written assignments,

- Deliver presentations based on such well – researched material orally as well,
- Participate in debates and other forms of verbal historical discussion.

**E. Work collaboratively**

- Make presentations,
- Listen attentively to presentations made by peers,
- Participate in discussion and ask thoughtful questions,
- Provide formal feedback to peers in the course of such discussion,
- Learn the formal protocol of academic engagement in a seminar and conference.