

CORRESPONDENCE

HISTORY AND BUSINESS

Allan Erasmus, a first year History student writes:

There are many misconceptions about history that have been circulated in the past ranging from "history is boring", "history is irrelevant", to "Why learn about the past?". Those who are foolish enough to believe that they are omnipotent and able to proceed in history without understanding from where they come and how events have been shaped so far in the course of human history will not be able to place themselves and understand the full implications of the events that take place around them. I study history to understand the world, its people and its problems. We do not often perceive the forces at work within the world as we have not seen the origin and genesis of those problems and thus do not understand them. History is a search for the truth. It seeks out the reality that is often buried beneath myth and legend and exposes the reality of the facts at hand. Myths created by ideologies seek more often than not to obscure the truth and prevent the realization of the essence of the truth.

Why may you ask is the truth so vital to business? Well the simple answer to that is that if you build your business on a myth (for example a holding company) it will I can guarantee you, come apart at the seams. As well as that you should remember that long term planning is of vital importance to any business or industry should it wish to survive and prosper in the years to come.

For that you need scenario planning and to effectively utilise that you need history. The philosopher Santanyana once said that those who did not study history were destined to repeat its mistakes. That is a terrible curse for any individual, corporate body or nation to suffer under.

Why then still study history?

Even if you do not accept the two former arguments presented to you then maybe the third one will convince you. History is the most analytical and one of the most logical subjects presented. Analytical, because it teaches you discernment to be able to sort through myriads of confusing information and discern what is relevant and what is not. Logical because it teaches you to format and present logical arguments out of a mass of information and to see everything within its correct context.

Subjects such as theology, philosophy, music, art, economics, literature and psychology place a large emphasis on history within their respective fields as well as using the methodology of thought and lay out of history.

History is a fascinating subject and should be enjoyed and used by all. Do not confine it to obscurity.

DIE VERLEDE LEEF OM EN IN MY

Die verlede is daar of jy hom ken of nie. Om hom te ken, of minstens iets van hom te ken, bring voldoening en

sin. Dit bevredig my nuuskierigheid, dit laat my een voel met my omgewing, dit omlin my identiteit.

As ek loop of ry, is daar name en dinge wat verklaring vra. Ek sien en hoor, en ek dink en vra: hoekom? Baie van die vrae bly vrae, gewoon omdat die tyd nie genoeg is om antwoorde te vind nie. Die naam of die ding het sy eie geskiedenis, maar meesal is hy ook verbind aan 'n geskiedenis. Hy vertel iets of hy is 'n voorbeeld van iets. Kommunikasie met die verlede kan saaklik

wees of intens persoonlik: 'n geskiedenis, die geskiedenis of my geskiedenis.

Prof. J.P. Oberholzer, Fakulteit Teologie, Universiteit Pretoria, op die FAK se Geskiedenis-simposium, 21 Augustus 1992.

M A-GRAAD IN ALGEMENE GESKIEDENIS

Die volgende kennisgewing word op versoek van die Departement Geskiedenis van die Universiteit Stellenbosch geplaas:

'n Gestruktureerde M A-kursus in Geskiedenis word op 'n voltydse en deeltydse grondslag deur die Departement Geskiedenis aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch aangebied. Die kursus bestaan uit drie komponente nl. 'n reeks seminare wat onder leiding van 'n dosent voorberei word, twee eksamenvraestelle en 'n tesis van beperkte omvang. Die kursus word by wyse van selfstudie met behulp van 'n gestruktureerde program aangebied. Daar is geen gewone lesings nie, maar wel persoonlike onderhoude en seminaarbesprekings wat volgens die aantal studente en die program waarop besluit word, gereël word. Dit is dus vir studente moontlik om oor redelike afstand te reis om die periodieke ontmoetings by te woon. Benutting van biblioteekgeriewe vorm

die belangrikste fisiese komponent van die studie.

Die kursus is spesifiek op die ontwikkeling van die Algemene Geskiedenis gerig en aard van die programinhoud word van tyd tot tyd deur die Departement bepaal. Tans is die inhoud soos volg:

1. Die Koue Oorlog, 1945 - 1992.
2. Europese Samewerking ná 1945.

Vier seminare word in elke afdeling voorberei. Voltydse studente doen altwee afdelings en dus agt seminare per jaar, deeltydse studente een afdeling en vier seminare. Eksamens word in Januarie afgeneem. Daarna word 'n tesis geskryf oor 'n onderwerp uit een van die twee afdelings. Die seminare dra 25%, die eksamen 25% en die tesis 50% tot die student se finale punt by.

Vir nadere besonderhede skakel prof. P.H. Kapp by die Departement Geskiedenis, Universiteit Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch 7600. Tel. (02231) 77-2179.