



Footnotes

Department of History, University of Northwestern – St. Paul
Offering courses in History, Political Science, Economics, and Geography

Fall 2025

Welcome Dr. Benham!

We are grateful to announce that Dr. Kristina Benham has joined the Northwestern faculty as Assistant Professor of US History. Dr. Benham is a specialist in early American history and has earned a PhD from Baylor University, MA from the University of Cincinnati, and BA from Liberty University. She also has experience in the fields of digital history, public history, and archiving.

Her publications include the chapter “British Exodus, American Empire: Evangelical Preachers and the Biblicisms of Revolution” in *Every Leaf, Line, and Letter: Evangelicals and the Bible from the 1730s to the Present* (InterVarsity Press, 2021). Please join us in welcoming Dr. Benham to campus!



Department News

This year begins a new chapter in the story of our department. We have joined together with the Department of English and Literature to form a new unit within UNW: the **Department of English and History**. A recent academic reorganization of our university led to the formation of several new combinations on campus. Dr. Matt Miller serves as chair and looks forward to additional collaboration among students and faculty. The majors offered continue as before: 1) History, 2) Politics, History, & Economics (PHE), and 3) English (with concentrations in Literature, Writing, and Literature & Writing).



Congratulations Graduates!



In May 2025 we celebrated with ten graduates at the completion of their programs! **Christian Watkins, Hanna Sterling, Lillian Smith, Jenny Liang, and David Cairns** are in the front row; **Caleb Phillips, Mark Akert, Zach Kloek, and Hayden Kuiper** are in the back. (Tyson Misegades is not pictured.)

Alumni Updates

- **Matthew Dahlager** ('17 History major) has served with the United States Army for eight years, most recently as Military Intelligence Officer at the National Security Agency in Washington, DC, focusing on ISIS and counterterrorism.
- **David and Kenedi Graske** ('21 History majors) enjoyed living in the United Kingdom for a year while David completed an MA in history at the University of Oxford. David now serves in the Revisor's Office of the Minnesota Legislature, and Kenedi works as a financial aid counselor at Bethel University. This year Kenedi begins her studies in the MA in Theological Studies program at Bethel.
- **Andrew Jantz** ('23 History major) begins his DPhil studies in history this year at the University of Oxford.
- **Piper Mork** ('23 Museum Studies and Public History minor) serves as program associate for the Arts@MSP program of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport Foundation.
- **Adam Seward** ('21 PHE major) graduated from the University of St. Thomas School of Law, passed the Minnesota state bar exam, and now serves as Associate Attorney at River Valley Law.



Alumni Updates (continued)

- **Abbey Stellingwerff** ('20 History and English double major) begins the MA in English program this year at the University of St. Thomas.
- **Hanna Sterling** ('25 PHE and English double major) begins her studies this year in the MA in Literary Studies program at the University of Denver.
- **Christian Watkins** ('25 PHE major and Pre-Law minor) begins his law school studies this year at the University of Wisconsin.
- **Cody Wilde** ('10 History major) serves with Prison Fellowship as Senior Vice President for Correctional Programs. He previously served with the US Army and completed graduate degrees in theology and international affairs from Bethel Seminary and Texas A&M University.

Please write and share your updates with us—we are always glad to hear from you!
Dr. Matt Miller, Department Chair, mlmiller@unwsp.edu

UNW Student Government

Students in our department continue to play key roles in UNW Student Government! This year **Ellis Meyer** serves as Student Body President, while **Lily Crane**, **Belle Manthey**, and **Sophia Nielson** all serve as Senators.

Scholars at the Capitol

PHE major **Jenny Liang** ('25) recently participated in the Scholars at the Capitol program. She presented her research on the recent challenges faced by believers in China at this Minnesota State Capitol event.





Remembering Dr. Kelley

Dr. Adina Kelley faithfully served with the Department of History from August 2020 to February 7, 2025. Her battle against cancer is over, and she is now with the Lord. This past year brought us together to pray for her, support her family, and remember her with gratitude. She brought sharp intellectual skills in the discipline of US history and an ability to engage with a broad range of cultural, theological, and political questions. She developed her talent for teaching during her four years as a student at Northwestern and excelled in her graduate studies at Baylor University.



Dr. Kelley possessed an exceptional ability to connect with a wide range of students through compassion, humor, and joy. She attempted to serve every one of our department's majors—those who were struggling and those who were soaring. She demonstrated that every student is a beloved child of God, and she helped to build a stronger and more encouraging department community. Her final days were marked by serving and lifting others up with faith, hope, and love. Please pray for Prof. Sam Kelley and their children Benny and Lydia, that they would experience God's peace and comfort.

The department thanks Trista Oberle for her assistance in creating this newsletter.