

Job Description and Selection Criteria

Post	Rhodes Professor of American History
Department/Faculty	Faculty of History
Division	Humanities
College	St Catherine's College

Overview of the role

The Faculty of History is seeking applications from leaders in the field of the history of the United States of America, for the position of Rhodes Professor of American History.

Oxford has historically had an important national role in teaching and research in American History, dating back to the establishment of the visiting Harmsworth Professorship in 1922. American History at Oxford today is a vibrant field providing world-leading research and teaching in American History with a proven track record in successfully educating the next generation of DPhils whose work will shape the field in the future. The distinction of Oxford's US historians, the strength of the Vere Harmsworth Library, and the fantastic resource of the Rothermere American Institute (RAI) mean that this is an area of significant and ongoing strategic investment for the Faculty, as well as for the Division and the University. The Rhodes Professorship of American History plays a key role in making the faculty a leading international centre for the study of US history.

The Faculty expects to appoint a historian with an exceptional international profile and an outstanding record in academic leadership, citizenship, and collaboration who will maintain and enhance the University's intellectual reputation in this field. Providing leadership in teaching and research, the Chair will help the Faculty attract the best graduate students, develop ambitious plans for generating income through donors and research funding, and deliver high-quality impact via, for example, engagement with public audiences or policymakers.

The Chair exists to further teaching and research in United States history, including the colonial period, and we would seek to appoint the best candidate in any relevant sub-field. The History Faculty has a core group of five postholders who teach across United States history from the eighteenth century to the present day, as well as a larger community of historians whose work intersects with the History of the United States. We have existing research strengths in the history of American politics, race, religion, gender, slavery, capitalism, Empire, and the US's role in the world, which the new postholder could reinforce. But we would especially welcome applications from those working on the twentieth century, where there is considerable student demand. We would also be pleased to receive applications from those whose work offers synergies with the Beit Chair in Global and Imperial History (Faisal Devji), the Hillary Clinton Chair in Women's History (Sarah Knott), and the Jonathan Cooper Chair of the History of Sexuality (Matt Cook), as well as with the Faculty's

long-standing strengths in modern British and European history and the Bodleian's archival resources, especially in the Revolutionary era.

The post is a statutory professorship (for a description of the different types of academic posts at Oxford, please see <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/academic-posts-oxford>). There are currently 12 statutory professors in the History Faculty. Statutory professors are expected to take a prominent part in the administration and leadership of the Faculty, serving regularly on the Board, and being prepared to hold major offices.

Applications for the post are particularly welcome from women and from black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in academic posts in Oxford. The History Faculty received a bronze Athena SWAN award in 2019 after a rigorous process of self-analysis. We are fully committed to creating an environment in which everyone can fulfil their potential: more details on the Faculty's work on equality, diversity and inclusivity are provided below.

If you would like to discuss this post and find out more about joining the academic community at Oxford, please contact the Chair of the History Faculty Board, Professor Martin Conway (martin.conway@history.ox.ac.uk) or for specific queries related to the field of American History, Professor Uta Balbier (uta.balbier@history.ox.ac.uk). All enquiries will be treated in strict confidence and will not form part of the selection decision.

Duties of the post

As Rhodes Professor of American History, you will be a member of the University and a professorial fellow of St Catherine's College. You will be part of a lively and intellectually stimulating research community and will have access to the excellent research facilities that Oxford offers, as well as support from administrative staff in the History Faculty.

The main duties of the post are as follows:

Research and public engagement

- Maintain and enhance an internationally-recognised research profile, with a strong and sustained record of relevant academic publications in the field of American history that will be eligible for inclusion in the next REF ([Research Excellence Framework](#)) exercise;
- Develop and submit grant proposals to support your own research portfolio and that of the Faculty, and contribute to the collective research culture of the History Faculty;
- Work closely and collegially with other colleagues in the field, to lead the development of American history in Oxford;
- Develop international connections in research, working with colleagues in Oxford and at universities around the world;
- Disseminate research through participation in, and organisation of, University, national and international conferences and seminars, and through other media;
- Encourage research achievement among colleagues, manage and collaborate with research teams, and enhance the status and quality of the work produced by such teams;
- Strengthen the Faculty's impact and public engagement profile in the field, demonstrating the public value of research into American history and maximising its practical applications beyond academia.

Teaching

- Provide a significant undergraduate teaching contribution which will include running an undergraduate paper (theme paper, optional, further or special subject) and/or undertaking a minimum of 2 tutorial hours a week across a minimum of two terms;
- Organise, teach on, and develop the History Faculty's taught Master's strand on US history ensuring that it remains competitive with other leading Master's courses;
- Supervise a number of graduate research students, focusing on a broad range of topics across the field of American history; participate in managing the progression of graduate research students;
- Contribute to undergraduate lecturing and the supervision of undergraduate theses; participate in supervision, marking and examining as appropriate.
- Engage in the teaching of undergraduates and graduates by giving no fewer than 36 lectures or classes per academic year, in at least two of the three university terms, and not less than twelve in each of two terms;

Administration

- Serve *ex officio* on the Board of the Rothermere American Institute and work with the Director of the RAI to develop/sustain a vibrant research culture among US historians at the RAI;
- Take on senior administrative roles relating to research, teaching and student admissions within the US History strand of the History Faculty and, if requested, the wider History Faculty;
- Support the development and alumni relations work of the History Faculty and the Humanities Division;

Headship of Department/Faculty Board Chair

Every professor who is employed by the University, unless individually exempted, has an obligation to accept headship of the department or faculty in which their post is held, if invited to do so by the divisional board.

Selection criteria

Your application will be judged only against the criteria which are set out below. You should ensure that your application shows clearly how your skills and experience meet these criteria.

The University is committed to fairness, consistency and transparency in selection decisions. Members of electoral boards (selection committees) will be aware of the principles of equality of opportunity, fair selection and the risks of bias. There will be both female and male board members wherever possible.

If, for any reason, you have taken a career break or have had an atypical career and wish to disclose this in your application, the electoral board will take this into account, recognising that the quantity of your research may be reduced as a result.

You will demonstrate the following:

Qualifications and experience	
Essential	An outstanding research and publication record in US history, with a substantial international reputation that will contribute to and enhance the profile of the field at Oxford
Essential	Experience of academic leadership
Research and public engagement	
Essential	Outstanding and innovative current and projected research in US history with an international level of recognition and on-track for inclusion in the next REF (Research Excellence Framework) exercise in 2029
Essential	Broad vision and sufficiently wide interests to contribute effectively to the long-term development of American history as a subject at Oxford and to communicate effectively the importance of the subject within academia and beyond, including internationally and through the media
Desirable	Success in securing major external research funding, as well as the ability to encourage and assist others in making such applications
Desirable	Success in promoting a wide public understanding of US history and/or in demonstrating the impact of research in the field beyond the academy
Teaching	
Essential	Ability to educate and inspire students in history at all levels, and a proven ability to foster a high level of achievement in graduate and undergraduate students
Essential	A demonstrable record of successful doctoral supervision and a commitment to both undergraduate and graduate-level teaching, underpinned by the necessary technical skills to be able to teach and guide research on a broad range of themes within American history
Essential	A commitment to the leadership and development of Oxford's postgraduate programmes in US history, ensuring that they continue to be rigorous, exciting and internationally competitive
Personal effectiveness	
Essential	Outstanding interpersonal skills and the intellectual ability to engage with, inspire and mentor colleagues, students and researchers at all levels, and to foster a positive, inclusive and productive environment in which to work and study
Essential	Professionalism as a colleague, and evidence of interest and effectiveness in promoting a culture of equality and diversity in the workplace
Essential	Willingness to take on senior administrative and leadership roles
Desirable	Interest and effectiveness in alumni relations, fund-raising for academic posts, student support and/or other relevant projects

How to apply

To apply, visit https://my.corehr.com/pls/uoxrecruit/erq_jobspec_details_form.jobspec?p_id=184166, then click on the **Apply Now** button on the 'Job Details' page and follow the on-screen instructions to register as a new user or log-in if you have applied previously. Please refer to the "Terms of Use" in the left hand menu bar for information about privacy and data protection. Please provide details of three referees and indicate whether the University may contact them without seeking your permission. Referees should not write directly to the University, but may be contacted at any stage in the recruitment process if the electoral board requests your references.

You will also be asked to upload a CV, a supporting statement. The supporting statement should explain how you meet the selection criteria for the post using examples of your skills and experience. This may include experience gained in education or employment, or during career breaks (such as time out to care for dependants).

The University and colleges welcome applications from candidates who have a disability or long-term health condition and are committed to providing long term support. The University's disability advisor can provide support to applicants with a disability, please see www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/disab/ for details. Please let us know if you need any adjustments to the recruitment process, including the provision of these documents in large print, audio or other formats. If we invite you for interviews, we will ask whether you require any particular arrangements at the interview. The University Access Guide gives details of physical access to University buildings www.admin.ox.ac.uk/access/.

Please upload all documents as **PDF files** with your name and the document type in the filename.

All applications must be received by **12.00 noon** UK time on **Monday 9 March**.

To return to the online application at any stage, please go to: www.recruit.ox.ac.uk. Please email recruitment.support@admin.ox.ac.uk should you experience difficulties using the online application system. Further help and support is available from www.ox.ac.uk/about_the_university/jobs/support/.

All applications will be acknowledged after receipt by automatic email from our e-recruitment system. **Please check your spam/junk mail** to ensure that you receive it.

All applications will be considered by the electoral board as soon as possible after the closing date. The electoral board is free to search for other candidates at this or any subsequent stage in its proceedings. You will be kept informed of the progress of your application at each stage, but in some cases there may be a delay while deliberations are ongoing. All shortlisted candidates will be interviewed and will be asked to give a short presentation before the Faculty as part of the interview. The composition of the electoral board will be published in the University Gazette (www.ox.ac.uk/gazette/) when it is finalised.

The Faculty of History

The Faculty of History in Oxford is the largest in the UK, and one of the largest in the world. It has a very strong international reputation for its scholarship and its teaching of undergraduate and graduate students, with particular strengths that reach from late Roman times to the contemporary world, in the history of the British Isles, the history of continental Europe, imperial and global history, the history of the United States, economic and social history, intellectual history, and the history of science, medicine, and technology. Within the Faculty there is also a department for the History of Art. With the size of its History Faculty, its lively and varied research seminars and the major resources for research, which include, among others, the outstanding collections of the Bodleian Library and the University museums, Oxford offers a uniquely attractive research environment. Since September 2025, the Faculty has been based at the Schwarzman Centre for the

Humanities, a state-of-the-art cultural centre, which is the location of seven of the constituent units of the Humanities Division.

The Faculty of History provides a robust and supportive framework for research, including:

- Financial support for research travel, research assistance, and editorial help;
- A standard sabbatical leave system, with the possibility of additional special leave;
- Peer mentoring and career development review of research plans and progress;
- Research collaborations with other institutions;
- Energetic encouragement and support of externally-funded research projects, and for internal and interdisciplinary collaborations, through research centres;
- Support of, and engagement with, interdisciplinary teaching;
- Assistance in the formulation of research plans and funding bids.

The Faculty enables all its postholders to request up to £800 per year for research expenses, and makes additional funds available for organising conferences in Oxford. Annual career conversations identify those staff who may need extra support in achieving their research objectives, e.g. through relief from teaching or administrative burdens. Postholders can apply for seed-corn funding for specific research projects from the University's John Fell Fund, which can then help applicants to secure major external funding. In addition, to assist newly-appointed postholders in the development and publication of their research, Faculty funds are available for each new postholder to hold a workshop at which colleagues can discuss drafts of their next monograph.

The Faculty has recently successfully received renewal of its Athena SWAN bronze award (first awarded in 2019), and we seek to provide a fully equal, inclusive and diverse environment for staff and students alike. There are working groups on gender equality, race equality and equality for people with disabilities, and an Equality and Diversity Committee which considers and implements policy. The Faculty has measured its performance against the recommendations of recent Royal Historical Society reports on gender and race equality and we regularly and actively implement policy to address inequalities.

For more information about the Faculty please see www.history.ox.ac.uk.

American History at Oxford History

Oxford is one of the largest and most vibrant centres for the study of American history anywhere outside the US. We have four permanent posts in US History: Uta Balbier, Stephen Tuffnell, and Emily West. Emily Brady currently occupies the fourth post as a fixed-term Departmental lecturer. Adam Smith, the Director of the Rothermere American Institute, also contributes to teaching in the History Faculty. The RAI currently hosts four post-doctoral researchers in American history, currently Tom Arnold Forster, Aisha Djelid, Gwion Jones, and Robin Bates. And we also benefit from the teaching and intellectual contributions of Ruth Percy and Grace Mallon, US historians with fellowships in colleges. In addition, we benefit from an annual senior visiting professorship – the Harmsworth Chair in American History – which was established in 1922 as the first chair in American history in the UK. For more details, see <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/academic>.

At undergraduate level, US history is among the most popular options. We currently offer two outline papers: 'From Colonies to Empire: US History, 1763-1898' and 'United States History since 1863'. Students can also choose from a range of specialised American History courses, including the first-year Optional Subject, 'Imperial Republic: The United States and Global Imperialism, c1867-1914'; second-year Further Subjects 'The Lives of Enslaved People in the Southern United States' and 'America's Hidden Empire: Soft Power and US Influence during the Cold War'; and third-year Special Subjects on 'Slavery, Emancipation and the Crisis of the Union' and 'Race Religion and Resistance in the United States, from Jim Crow to Civil Rights'. Undergraduates must also research and write a dissertation for Finals, and American history is a very popular subject area. More details on the undergraduate programme can be found at <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/ba-history>.

At Master's level, there is a dedicated, team taught, US History 'strand' in the History Faculty's one-year Master of Studies (MSt) and two-year Master of Philosophy (MPhil) programmes in History that recruits 10-15 students per year from the UK, US and elsewhere. Students in the US strand take a core course, 'Sources and Historiography in the History of the United States' as well as an optional course from any part of the MSt in History options. Master's students also write a dissertation. The postholder will be expected to supervise master's students, as well as to contribute to teaching on the MSt core course. Details of the courses can be found at <https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/us-history>.

We have a very lively doctoral programme, with c.20 students currently pursuing DPhils in American history. Doctoral study is enriched by participation in the rich range of seminars and other activities at the Rothermere American Institute, including a weekly doctoral student workshop. The strength of the doctoral group is maintained by a dedicated annual award for doctoral study in American history (the Oxford-RAI scholarships), as well as by additional support for fourth-year students and funds to support travel and research, available both from the RAI and the Faculty. The RAI also provides dedicated funding for doctoral students to host research workshops.

The Rothermere American Institute

The RAI is Oxford's centre for the study of the United States and its place in the world. Its mission is to support research in Oxford and beyond, to act as a catalyst for interdisciplinary work and research collaboration, and to engage non-university audiences, all with the aim of improving the scholarly and public understanding of America. Its academic programme includes more than a hundred lectures, seminars and conferences a year, it provides research grants and an academic home for around ten Fellows-in-Residence each year and it currently employs five postdoctoral researchers (three in American history). For more information please visit: www.rai.ox.ac.uk.

Humanities Division

The Humanities Division is one of four academic divisions in the University of Oxford, bringing together the following faculties: Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Classics; English; History; Linguistics, Philology and Phonetics; Medieval and Modern Languages; Music; Philosophy; Theology and Religion; and the Ruskin School of Art. The Division has over 500 members of academic staff, with over 4000 undergraduates (more than a third of the total undergraduate population of the University), 1,100 postgraduate research students, and 880 students on postgraduate taught courses. Our faculties are among the largest in the world, enabling Oxford to offer an education in Arts and Humanities unparalleled in its range of subjects, from music and fine art to ancient and modern languages.

Humanities in Oxford offers world-class teaching and research (second in the most recent QS world rankings), backed by the superb resources of the University's libraries and museums, including the famous Bodleian Libraries, with their 11 million volumes and priceless early book and manuscript collections, and the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology. Such resources are linked to cutting-edge agendas in research and teaching, with an increasing emphasis on interdisciplinary study and digital technologies. [The Oxford Research Centre in the Humanities](#) (TORCH) is the Division's vehicle for promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, international networks, and public engagement with research, with a highly active programme of events, fellowships, and research networks.

In October 2025, the Humanities Division opened its new dedicated building, the [Stephen A Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities](#). This beautiful state-of-the-art facility co-locates seven of the Humanities faculties for the first time under a single roof, and also houses the Institute for Ethics in AI, the Oxford Internet Institute and the new Bodleian Humanities Library. The Centre provides a unique mix of academic teaching facilities for

Oxford students and staff with industry-leading research and public spaces, including the 500-seat Sohen Concert Hall, a 250-seat theatre, a black box immersive performance space, dance studio and cinema, and exhibition space. The performances spaces will host a new public [cultural programme](#), opening in April 2026 and bringing together innovative artists, performers, writers and thinkers from around the world to co-create with Oxford researchers and our wider community.

The Faculty of History is housed in dedicated space in the Schwarzman Centre, with full access to exhibition and performance spaces.

For more information on the Humanities Division please visit: <https://www.humanities.ox.ac.uk/>.

St Catherine's College

There are 39 self-governing and independent colleges at Oxford, giving both academic staff and students the benefits of belonging to a small, interdisciplinary community as well as to a large, internationally-renowned institution. The collegiate system fosters a strong sense of community, bringing together leading academics and students across subjects, and from different cultures and countries.

St Catherine's College is one of the largest colleges within Oxford University and teaches both undergraduate and graduate students. Undergraduates are admitted to read all subjects except Ancient History, Archaeology and Anthropology, Classics, Earth Sciences, Oriental Studies and Theology, and the overall composition of membership is divided more or less equally between arts and sciences.

Although one of the youngest Oxford Colleges, the College can trace its roots back to 1868, when a 'Delegacy for Non-Collegiate Students' was formed. This Delegacy enabled students to gain an Oxford education without the prohibitive costs of college membership. This founding ethos of inclusion is still evident today, and the College has an open, friendly and diverse community amongst its Students, Fellows and Alumni.

A modern college, affectionately known as St Catz, it was founded in 1962 by Lord Alan Bullock.. The College's Grade I listed buildings, and their fittings and furniture, were designed by the Danish architect Arne Jacobsen and attract visitors from around the world. They are located in a peaceful setting adjacent to the University Parks. Whilst treasuring the traditional values of Oxford college life, St Catherine's is committed to evolving with today's society, reflected in the College motto 'Nova et Vetera': the new and the old.

History is a longstanding subject of major importance at St Catherine's, from both a teaching as well as a research perspective. Professor Marc Mulholland, whose research interests concern Irish history since the Great Famine and the history of political thought following the French Revolution, Professor Amanda Power, an historian of religion, power and intellectual life in medieval Europe, and Dr Nancy Thebaut, an historian of medieval art and architecture, are Tutorial Fellows of the College. The College admits around 10 undergraduate students each year to study for Bachelor of Arts Degrees in History and its joint schools, and 2 students each year to study for the BA in History of Art.

Professorial Fellows are ordinarily members of the College's governing body, although they may choose not to serve on that body. As Fellows, they will attend the College's Stated General Meeting and be invited to other College events. St Catherine's expects its Fellows, including Professorial Fellows, to play a full part in College life, taking on some responsibility for its administration (for example, by serving on college committees and assisting with the processes for graduate admissions and scholarships), and to be willing to advise postgraduate students in their field.

For more information please visit: <https://www.stcatz.ox.ac.uk>.

About the University of Oxford

Oxford's departments and colleges aim to lead the world in research and education for the benefit of society both in the UK and globally. Oxford's researchers engage with academic, commercial and cultural partners across the world to stimulate high-quality research and enable innovation through a broad range of social, policy and economic impacts.

Oxford's self-governing community of international scholars includes Professors, Associate Professors, other college tutors, senior and junior research fellows and a large number of University research staff. Research at Oxford combines disciplinary depth with an increasing focus on inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary activities addressing a rich and diverse range of issues. The current strategic plan can be found at <http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation/strategic-plan-2018-24>.

Oxford's strengths lie both in empowering individuals and teams to address fundamental questions of global significance, and in providing all staff with a welcoming and inclusive workplace that supports everyone to develop and do their best work. Recognising that diversity is a great strength, and vital for innovation and creativity, Oxford aspires to build a truly inclusive community which values and respects every individual's unique contribution.

While Oxford has long traditions of scholarship, it is also forward-looking, creative and cutting-edge. Oxford is one of Europe's most entrepreneurial universities. It consistently has the highest external research income of any university in the UK (the most recent figures are available at www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation/finance-and-funding), and regularly creates spinout companies based on academic research generated within and owned by the University. Oxford is also recognised as a leading supporter of social enterprise.

Oxford admits undergraduate students with the intellectual potential to benefit fully from the small group learning to which Oxford is deeply committed. Meeting in small groups with their tutor, undergraduates are exposed to rigorous scholarly challenge and learn to develop their critical thinking, their ability to articulate their views with clarity, and their personal and intellectual confidence. They receive a high level of personal attention from leading academics.

Oxford has a strong postgraduate student body who are attracted to Oxford by the international standing of the faculty, by the rigorous intellectual training on offer, by the excellent research and laboratory facilities available, and by the resources of the museums and libraries, including one of the world's greatest libraries, the Bodleian.

For more information please visit www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation.

University Benefits, Terms and Conditions

Standard duties

The Rhodes Professor of American History shall undertake research, lecture and give instruction in the history of the United States of America.

It is expected that professors will generally participate in the business and affairs of the relevant faculty or department.

Salary

Your salary will be determined after appropriate consultation. There is an annual 'cost-of-living' review. In addition you will be eligible for consideration, in regular reviews, for Professorial Merit Pay.

An additional pensionable allowance will be payable in respect of any period during which you are Faculty Board Chair. (Any allowance payable for a period of less than three years will not, however, be pensionable.)

Details of University policy in the following areas can be found at the links provided.

Salary

<https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/academic-staff-pay>

Pension

<https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/uss>

Sabbatical leave

<https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/council-regulations-4-of-2004>

Outside commitments

<https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/holding-outside-appointments>

Intellectual Property

<https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/council-regulations-7-of-2002>

Managing conflicts of interest

<https://researchsupport.admin.ox.ac.uk/governance/integrity>

Membership of Congregation

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation/governance>

<https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/statute-iv-congregation>

Family support

<https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/family-leave-for-academic-staff>

<https://childcare.admin.ox.ac.uk/home>

<https://www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk>

Welcome for International Staff

<https://jobs.web.ox.ac.uk/lifeinoxford>

<https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk>

Relocation

<https://finance.admin.ox.ac.uk/relocation-scheme-arrangements#collapse1094916>

Equality and diversity

<https://edu.admin.ox.ac.uk/home>

Other benefits and discounts for University employees

<https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/discounts>

Pre-employment screening

<https://jobs.ox.ac.uk/pre-employment-checks>.

Length of appointment

<https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/academic-posts-at-oxford#collapse1532056>

Retirement

The University operates an employer justified retirement age for academic posts of 30 September immediately preceding the 70th birthday. See <https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/the-ejra>

Data Privacy

<https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/job-applicant-privacy-policy>

<https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/data-protection-policy>

College benefits

This fellowship at St Catherine's College is non-stipendiary. As a Professorial Fellow you will be entitled to:

- membership of the Senior Common Room
- dine in College (breakfast, lunch and dinner on weekdays in periods when the College is open)