THINGS I WISH I HAD KNOWN ABOUT CLASSES AND THE HISTORY DEGREE PROGRAM
AT CSUSB (Hints and a Guide for Success):

• Attend all your classes. Your professors will tell you in
class what is important.
• You will need to read! Even if you have limited
time, read
as much as you can, as it’ll make a big difference in your
success in classes.
• Get to know your full-time history professors in case you
need reference letters or need their help for
applications.
• Go to your professors' office hours for help if you need it.
They are there to help.
• If there are courses that are offered that you really
want to take, try to take them when they are offered.
Not all courses are offered every year.
• Be professional when addressing your professors.
Address your professors as Dr. ___ or Prof. ___ and make
sure you sign all your emails. Proofread your messages,
because how well they are written is a reflection of your
intelligence and abilities.
• Take library tutorials at
http://www.lib.csusb.edu/help/onlinetutorials.cfm or ask
library staff for help with finding/ordering books and
articles.
• Go often for advisement with your profs to make sure you
are on the right track so that you can make sure you
graduate on time.
• Plan to spend more time re-reading, editing, and
proofreading your written work. Poor writing reflects
negatively on you, and your professors count the quality
of your written work along with the quality of the
content; in fact, the two are related.
• As most of your history classes are relatively small in
size, class discussion is usually a part of how courses are run; push yourself to participate by making comments and
asking questions, especially those that show you have
reflected on what you have been reading for a given
course.
• Your contributions to your classes—written, oral, and
visual—should reveal that a thinking (as opposed to a rote
regurgitating) person is the force behind them.
• Books for classes are usually available in the bookstore,
but you can sometimes find cheaper second-hand books at
UBE on University Ave, or on Amazon.com (sometimes for
just a $1). A list of required texts are usually available on
the bookstore site.

• Sometimes classes are filled quickly, but you can try
Emailing a professor to see if they have a waiting list, or
attend the first class to see if the professor will sign you
in.
• Look out for HIST395 Topics in History courses that are
innovative and new courses offered by faculty that can
often count towards one of your requirements. They will
be advertised around the SB building and on the website.
• Going to university is like having a full-time job. Dedicate
at least 5 hours each week per class for reading and
completing assignments.
• It's not enough to simply just take courses, you need to
get involved in extracurricular activities as well in order
to make yourself competitive for jobs/future applications.
• We have an award-winning history journal, History in the
Making that is published each Spring. Students can apply
to be an editor or submit an article for publication—read
old copies online to see the standard that is required for
publication.
• Join the CSUSB History Club/Phi Alpha Theta Honors
Society for fun activities and good professional
experience.
• Give your professors plenty of time (a minimum of 2
weeks) to write letters of reference for you.
• Don't plagiarize! If you are confused about what
constitutes plagiarism, check the history website or ask
your professor before your assignment is due.
• Try not to take HIST 494 and HIST 594 before your
final year.
• Try to maintain a high GPA so that your options for
further study/employment are left open.
• If you need to hand in a late assignment, you can drop it
off at SB327 (Five Chair Suite) and they will date stamp
it up in your professor's mailbox. But remember,
late penalties will most likely apply (and some professors
won't accept late assignments).
• Use the Writing Lab (third floor, SB building) for writing
assistance if you need it.
• The ASI has a student survival guide online for further
questions that you may want to consult.
• Have fun, enjoy your classes, and welcome!!!