

## A Brief Historical Timeline of the MTSU History Department

- 1960s
  - 1963
    - History Department founded from the Department of Social Science; the founding faculty members of the department were
      - Professor Robert E. Corlew (who started in 1949), who chaired the new department
      - Professor Roscoe Strickland Jr. (who started in 1949)
      - Professor Newell Moore (who started in 1954)
      - Professor William T. Windham (who started in 1955)
      - Professor Ernest W. Hooper (who started in 1960)
      - Professor Norman Ferris (who started in 1962)
    - M.A. and M.A.T. degrees in History established by Professor Roscoe Strickland
  - 1964
    - Professor Frederic Crawford joins the History Department faculty
  - 1965
    - Professor James Huhta joins the History Department faculty
  - 1966
    - Professor Thelma Jennings joins the History Department faculty
    - Professor Roscoe Strickland is elected as the first President of the Faculty Senate
  - 1967
    - Professor Patricia Sharber joins the History Department faculty
    - Professor Bill Windham is elected President of the Faculty Senate
  - 1968
    - Professor James N. Leonard dies in accident. His father's gift to the department led to the creation of the James N. Leonard History Scholarship to promote racial understanding
  - 1969
    - Professors Fred Colvin and Lee Sikes join the History Department faculty
    - Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) approves Doctor of Arts (D.A.) degree for MTSU
    - Professor Norman Ferris is elected President of the MTSU Faculty Senate
    - University of Tennessee Press publishes first edition of Professor Robert Corlew's *Tennessee: A Short History*
- 1970s
  - 1970
    - First students admitted to D.A. program in History



- American Culture minor started
    - Professor Patricia Sharber teaches first course on American women's history during the summer semester
    - MTSU hosts Phi Alpha Theta regional conference; MTSU students Mary Wilgus and Michael Gigandet read papers
    - History major Beverly Vaughn receives Tennessee Historical Commission's Outstanding History Student award
    - Professors Huhta, Sikes, Jones, and Corlew are appointed to Rutherford County Bicentennial Commission, which is headed by Professor Corlew
  - 1976
    - M.A. in History with emphasis in Historic Preservation established
    - Professor Bob Jones is elected President of the Faculty Senate
  - 1977
    - Professor Ron Messier wins MTSU's Outstanding Teacher Award
    - European cultural history program started developed by Professor Ron Messier
    - Section of American History survey classes for international students established by Professor Jim Neal
    - Professor Norman Ferris' book, *The Trent Affair*, is nominated for the Pulitzer Prize
  - 1978
    - Professor William Windham becomes Chair of the History Department
  - 1979
    - Professor Fred Colvin is elected President of the Faculty Senate
- 1980s
  - 1980
    - Professor Jerry Brookshire is named State Director of History Day
  - 1981
    - MTSU History Department hosts the annual meeting of the Tennessee Conference of Historians featuring an address by former Senator George McGovern, the presidential nominee of the Democratic Party in 1972
    - Doctoral program in Historic Preservation is approved
    - Professor David Rowe joins the faculty
  - 1982
    - Professor Jim Neal establishes Rutherford County Archives from hundreds of volumes of Rutherford County records previously located in an underground vault beneath the Country Clerk's office; first series of exhibits document the histories of different small communities in the county
    - Professor Patricia Sharber retires from the MTSU History faculty after 15 years of service
  - 1983
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- 1984
  - Tennessee History Day contest was the biggest ever, with the entire state represented for the first time
  - Professor Sally McMillen and Nancy Rupprecht join the faculty
- 1985
  - Professor Carroll Van West joins the faculty
  - Professor Ernest Hooper retires after 25 years; the History Department awards the first Ernest Hooper Scholarship to Sonja Smith
  - Professor Thelma Jennings retires after 19 years of service to the University; the History Department awards the first Jennings Scholarship to Joel Wallace
  - 3 new courses offered: American Religious History, the History of Sport in America, and Germany Since 1914
- 1987
  - Professor Fred Rolater awarded a Fulbright lectureship to teach at the University of Kyushu in Japan, where he gave lectures on the American Indian and American history
  - Professor Norman Ferris is elected President of the Faculty Senate
- 1988
  - Professors Kenneth Scherzer and Thaddeus Smith join the History Department faculty
  - New courses offered in France since 1870 and American Medical History
  - The course “Historian’s Craft” replaces “Discovering and Interpreting Local History” and is now required of all History majors.
  - Professor Sally McMillen accepts position at Davidson College in North Carolina, leaves MTSU
  - Lecture by Dr. Spencer Crew of the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History to celebrate Black History Month
  - Professor Ronald Messier leads students on an archaeological survey and excavation of the fabled city of Sijilmasa, Morocco, a medieval Islamic city in southern Morocco
- 1989
  - Professor William Windham retires from the university after 34 years of service to MTSU and 11 years as Chair of the History Department
  - Professor Bart McCash starts his term of acting Chairperson
  - Professors Ed Beemon, Jan Leone, and Robert Hunt join the faculty
  - Shirley Reed retires after 11 years of service to the History Department; Marge DeBoer becomes new administrative assistant in the department
- 1990s
  - 1990
    - The History Department opens a computer lab for History majors

- Professor Robert Corlew retires from MTSU after 41 years of service, having served as Chair of the History Department, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
  - Professor Andrew Gulliford joins the faculty as the Director of the department's Public History program
  - Professor James Neal elected President of the Faculty Senate
- 1991
  - History Department Chair and Professor Bart McCash dies unexpectedly on February 8th, leaving his legacy of scholarship, leadership, and friendship
  - Professor Jerry H. Brookshire is named Interim Chair
  - Retired Professor William Windham establishes the Windham lecture series in the College of Liberal Arts to bring esteemed lecturers to campus annually; first Windham lecture in October 1991 is dedicated to the memory of "Westy" Windham, who died earlier that year
  - Professor James Neal gives MTSU commencement address
- 1992
  - Professor Walter Renn joins the History Department as Chair
  - Professor Mary Hoffschwelle and Rich Moser join the department faculty
  - Interdisciplinary minor in Southern Studies established by Professor Robert Hunt
  - Tennessee Board of Regents approves naming History Department's computer lab for Professor Bart McCash, and graduate students Kevin Johnston and Steven Sadowsky plant white oak in front of Peck Hall in Professor McCash's memory
- 1993
  - Professor Ron Messier named Professor of the Year in Tennessee by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education
  - Professor Lorne McWatters joins the History Department faculty
  - History Department begins operation of the Gore Research Center with Professor Jim Neal serving as curator
  - Public History and Historic Preservation Program now offers an M.A. in history with three possible tracks: historic preservation, cultural resource management, and museum studies
- 1994
  - Professors Adonijah Bakari and Susan Myers-Shirk join the History Department faculty
- 1995
  - Professor Yuan-Ling Chao joins the department's faculty
  - Manchester University Press publishes Professor Jerry Brookshire's *Clement Atlee*
- 1996

- Professor Thaddeus Smith becomes Chair of the History Department, succeeding Professor Walter Renn, who returns to full-time faculty service
- Professor James H. Williams joins the department faculty
- Professor Sally Howell retires after 26 years of service to MTSU
- Professor Nancy Rupprecht completes six and a half years of service as Women's Studies Director
- Professor Norman Ferris receives national award from the American Association of University Professors for outstanding service to higher education
- Professor Lee Sikes retires after 27 years of university service
- Rutgers University Press publishes Professor Rich Moser's *New Winter Soldiers*
- Professor David Rowe is elected President of the MTSU Chapter of the American Association of University Professors
- 1997
  - Professor Roscoe L. Strickland Jr. passes away in September; he had served as President of the MTSU chapter of the American Association of University Professors and the first President of the Faculty Senate
  - Professor Norman Ferris retires after 35 years on the faculty
  - Professor Susan Myers-Shirk receives a faculty fellowship to Yale University from the Pew Program in Religion and American History
  - The Albert Gore Research Center hosts a conference of Albert Gore's Senate career
  - Professor Lorne McWatters co-chairs the Women's History Month Committee
- 1998
  - Mrs. Lucy Strickland established the Roscoe L. Strickland, Jr. Endowment for advancing the study of history
  - Professors Rebecca Conard and Amy Sayward join the faculty
  - Professor Nancy Rupprecht receives the King-Hampton Award for "outstanding service to women and women's issues at MTSU"
  - Professor Jerry Brookshire is elected President of the Faculty Senate
- 1999
  - Professor James Neal retires from the faculty and as Director of the Albert Gore Research Center
  - Professors Pippa Holloway and Lynn Nelson join the History Department faculty
  - Professor Lisa Pruitt is hired as Director of the Albert Gore Research Center and a faculty member in the History Department
  - Professor Rich Moser leaves the department after 7 years service to work for the national office of the American Association of University Professors

- 2000s
  - 2000
    - Professor Andrew Gulliford leaves MTSU after 10 years service
    - Professor Kris McCusker joins the faculty
    - Professor Ellen Garrison joins the History Department faculty after a previous stint from 1987 until 1993 as Research Collections Coordinator at the Center for Popular Music
  - 2001
    - Professors Marty Foster, Bren Martin, and Louis Haas join the department faculty
  - 2002
    - Professor James Huhta retires from the faculty after 37 years of service to the university
  - 2004
    - Professor Christoph Rosenmüller joins the department faculty
  - 2005
    - Professor Ron Messier retires from MTSU after 32 years of service
    - Professor Jerry Brookshire is elected to a two-year term as President of the Southern Conference on British Studies
  - 2006
    - Professors Thomas Bynum, Sean Foley, and Louis Woods join the department faculty
  - 2008
    - Professor Dawn McCormack joins the faculty
    - Professor Kris McCusker receives the College of Liberal Arts Outstanding Advisor award
    - Professor Thaddeus Smith dies suddenly over the summer, leaving a community of students and colleagues in mourning
  - 2009
    - Fall Honors Lecture Series features History faculty writing about MTSU's history
    - Professors Mark Doyle and Martha Norkunas join the faculty
    - Four students receive their Ph.D.s in Public History at December graduation
- 2010s
  - 2010
    - Professor Sean Foley awarded Fulbright to Malaysia
    - Professor Dawn McCormack receives Outstanding Advisor Award from the College of Liberal Arts
    - Student-developed exhibit “Sowing the Seeds of Change: World War II and Rutherford County” opens at the Heritage Center of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County

- Dr. Christon Archer of the University of Calgary serves as Strickland Distinguished Visiting Scholar
- Professors Jerry Brookshire, Fred Colvin, Ellen Garrison, and Robert Jones retire from the faculty
- Public history students and faculty conduct field school at Fort Vancouver
- 2011
  - Professors Robert E. Corlew and Sally Howell pass away in January
  - Public History Program conducts field school on the historic Cemetery Community at the Stones River National Battlefield

The History enterprise is never complete, and this timeline certainly is not complete. Please send additional milestones, corrections, suggestions, and photographs to [Amy.Sayward@mtsu.edu](mailto:Amy.Sayward@mtsu.edu) so that we can present a more complete history when we celebrate the History Department's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in just two years!