

COLS Special Reports: Setting the Course

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<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/9870/cols-special-reports-setting-the-course-with-kercher/>

Dr. Stephen Kercher is an associate professor in the department of History at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. Dr. Kercher, who earned his Ph.D. in history and American studies at Indiana University at Bloomington, specializes in post-WWII American history.

He has received the Distinguished Teaching Award in 2008 and has directed history projects such as “Black Thursday,” “The Algoma Riots” and “Earth Day.” He co-founded and formerly directed the Northeast Wisconsin Teachers Academy for the Study of American History, a project funded by more than \$1.7 million from the U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Kercher has been teaching at UW Oshkosh since 2000.

For this Setting the Course story, we asked Dr. Kercher a few questions about his passion of history, projects he has been a part of and his love for teaching.

What first got you interested in history?

"I came to an appreciation of history rather late. History as it was conveyed to me in middle and high school—with its specific attention to the rote memorization of names and dates—bored me to tears. As my intellectual curiosity grew in college I gave history another chance. In college history classes, as I began to study how popular attitudes, political ideologies and social movements evolved over time, the world around me became more relatable. Historical insights were suddenly revelatory, and I was hooked for life."

[Read the full story and listen to the podcasts at College of Letters and Science Special Reports.](#)

Setting the Course is a series of podcasts in which instructors in the College of Letters and Science at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh describe a favorite course they love to teach and what they hope their students would take away from that course.