



Public History Internships History 4486

UWG Public History Faculty Advisors:

Dr. Ann McCleary
Professor of History
amcclear@westga.edu
678-839-6041

Dr. Keith Hebert
Assistant Professor of History
khebert@westga.edu
678-839-6047

Public History Internships provide an opportunity for students to learn about the practice of public history through a meaningful, hands-on work experience under the mentorship of experienced and knowledgeable public history professionals. No two internships are exactly alike; all internships should be designed to balance the interests and abilities of the student with the partnering sponsor, while still satisfying the UWG internship requirements.

Public History Internships are open to all undergraduate history majors and to students in related fields upon approval of one of the UWG faculty advisors. Interested students should have completed at least two of the history survey classes (1111, 1112, 2111, or 2112) and two upper-level history courses and should have at least a 2.75 GPA in their history courses. Additional course work in related fields, such as archaeology, anthropology, or art history, is beneficial and may also be considered. Students in other majors should have completed the two history courses required for the core curriculum and at least two upper-level courses that would relate to their intended internship experience.

Internships require students to complete 125 hours of work experience for three hours of undergraduate course credit. Some internships may offer compensation, but that is at the discretion of the sponsoring organization. The primary goal is that the student have an opportunity to earn course credit for a rigorous internship work experience.

Sponsoring organizations may include museums, historic preservation agencies, historical societies, archives, state humanities councils, state and regional parks, the National Park Service, and other government and private agencies and community-based organizations which document, present, and interpret history to the public. The UWG campus has several potential internship partners, including the Center for Public History, the Annie Belle Weaver Special Collections, the Antonio Waring Archaeology Lab, and the Georgia Political Heritage Program. A list of some of the past and present internship sites for UWG students is available on the Public History internship webpage, but students may also select another organization of interest to them, as long as it is a public history organization. The primary requirement for any potential internship site is that *the organization has a professional public historian available to direct the student's internship experience.*

Educational objectives of the Public History Internship:

- 1. *To identify and describe some of the careers available in public history.*** Students will be able to identify the various types of positions in public history, the work and academic experience needed for these positions, and the types of tasks that these positions perform.
- 2. *To gain knowledge about the practice of public history.*** Students will be able to identify some of the challenges and opportunities in the field in which they are working. In addition, students will be able to identify and discuss some of the ethical issues involved in the field of public history. Students will gain insight into the profession through mentorship by the internship sponsor, other staff in the sponsoring institution, and other public history practitioners with whom they may interact during the internship.
- 3. *To develop skills in the practice of public history.*** Students will engage in at least one major project along with other smaller projects, activities, or tasks for the sponsoring organization. Through this hands-on experience, students will be able to identify some of the skills needed in public history practice and they will gain experience in developing these skills. These skills will be useful as work experience when applying for positions in the history field, including not only public history but other history related careers such as social studies education.
- 4. *To demonstrate professional skills in a history related work setting.*** Students will learn about and be able to describe the professional expectations in a public history work environment. In public history settings, practicing public historians are expected to perform in a collegial and collaborative work environment, often in a team setting, and to act and dress appropriately. Students are also expected to report to work according to the work schedule established in the Internship Contract and to report absences and communicate changes in this schedule in advance.

Application process

The first step in pursuing an internship experience is to arrange an appointment with one of the public history faculty advisors, Dr. McCleary or Dr. Hebert, several months in advance of the semester you would like to take this course. This meeting will be an opportunity for students to discuss their career interests and their public history and academic history training, to identify potential internship sponsors, and to develop the student's particular educational objectives.

Students should then complete the UWG Public History Internship Application and submit that application to the UWG public history faculty advisor who will direct the internship during the *early registration period* for the semester they hope to enroll. This application requires students to include a written statement presenting their reasons for pursuing an internship and the student's educational goals in completing the internship. The application must also include a copy of the student's resume.

With the submission of the Internship Application, the faculty advisor will complete the form required for pre-registration and submit it to the Registrar's Office. This form is required for students to register for the class. At this meeting, the faculty advisor and student will discuss the three potential internship sites that the student has listed on the application.

Students are then responsible for contacting the potential internship sites to inquire about any positions that are available for the semester they have selected. Some organizations, such as the Atlanta History Center, post their internship opportunities on the internet. When such information is not available on-line, interested students should contact the organization to inquire about their internship positions and any deadlines for applications. UWG public history faculty will also post additional internship positions on the UWG Public History list-serve and the public history bulletin board in the History Department, located on the third floor of the TLC building.

Students are responsible for meeting all of the sponsoring institution's application requirements for internships. Some institutions may have their own applications that students will need to complete, and many organizations require interviews to determine whether the student is a good fit for them and the position under discussion. Students should also be aware that partnering organizations may establish application deadlines in advance of the pre-registration period at UWG, so it is important to become aware of these guidelines and to apply in time to be considered for the position. Remember that sponsoring organizations often have applications from students from a variety of colleges and universities. They will choose the individual who is most appropriate for their organization.

Internship Contract

Once the internship site has been determined and the intern selected by the sponsoring organization, the student must ensure that the Internship Contract is completed. The Internship Contract is an opportunity for the intern, the sponsoring organization, and the UWG faculty advisor to establish clear and specific educational objectives and work guidelines for the internship.

It is the responsibility of the intern to share the work contract with the sponsoring agency; to discuss his or her educational goals in the internship; and to develop, with the internship sponsor, the specific conditions of the internship. The internship must be completed as fully as possible. Please include the specific work requirements the student will complete, any required dates for completing this work, and the student's weekly work schedule. Also, be sure to record all contact information for the internship supervisor, including email and phone number, so that s/he can be easily contacted when necessary.

The internship contract should be submitted to the UWG public history advisor before the internship begins but no later than the completion of twenty hours of the internship experience. If the intern is unable to negotiate this contract with the sponsor by that time, s/he must contact the UWG faculty advisor for assistance.

When the internship contract is submitted to the UWG faculty sponsor, the advisor will sign it, put in the intern's file, and submit signed copies to the intern and the internship sponsor for their records.

Professional expectations

Internship sponsors view an intern as they would one of their own employees. Interns should return the respect of their employer and consider an internship a job experience. They are expected to abide by the policies and requirements of the sponsoring organization, to report to work as determined by the Internship Contract, to complete the work assigned to them according to the schedule agreed upon in the Contract, and to act professionally at all times. Interns must also act collegially, particularly in collaborative, team projects.

Interns represent the University of West Georgia and their conduct reflects upon the University, the History Department, and the Public History program. Your success ensures that opportunities may be available to students from our school in the future. If you are not successful, the sponsor may choose not to accept another student intern from our institution. We expect you to be a good ambassador for the University of West Georgia.

Students who act unprofessionally or unethically may be removed from their internship at the discretion of the internship sponsor and/or the faculty advisor and may receive an "F" grade for the course, depending on the severity of the infraction.

Course Requirements

All students must:

1. ***Complete 125 hours of work experience.*** These hours include any activities related to the internship, including writing the internship journal, participating in on-line discussion with fellow interns, meeting with the UWG faculty sponsor, attending required meetings with other interns, preparing the internship evaluations and final portfolio, completing any required readings or research for projects, and any other work-related tasks identified in the Contract. All hours must be completed by the last class day of class for the semester in which the student has enrolled. Please note that *failure to complete and document 125 hours of internship work experience will result in an "F" grade for the class.*

2. ***Keep a daily journal documenting the internship experience.*** Students will write a journal entry for each day worked and record the specific hours worked, the types of work performed, and the student's reflections regarding the experience that day and how that experience relates to the practice of public history.

Journals will be submitted to the UWG faculty advisor in two ways. First, students will submit their journals to Course Den weekly. All journals must be submitted by Saturday at 5 p.m. Comments will be provided by the UWG public history advisor. Failure to submit your journals in a timely manner may lower your final course grade. Second, students will include a hard copy of the entire journal and a full tally of the work hours completed in the final portfolio.

3. ***Participate in weekly on-line discussion about the internship assignment through Course Den.*** To encourage discussion between interns and with the faculty advisors, each student will post at least two comments each week on Course Den. This communication network will allow students to share their experiences and to reflect on how it connects to their coursework and to issues of public history theory and practice.

These comments can be made in several ways. First, students may open a new discussion topic/thread among their classmates. Second, students can respond to a comment made by another student. Third, students can respond to a new discussion topic or question posed by the faculty member.

4. ***Attend a meeting with all interns at the end of the semester.*** All students will meet at the end of the semester to share their experiences. The faculty advisor will schedule a date for this meeting at the beginning of the semester, and all students arrange their schedules to attend.

5. ***Participate in a meeting with the internship sponsor and faculty advisor.*** All students will schedule a meeting for the faculty advisor to come to the internship site and meet there with the internship sponsor and faculty advisor to discuss the intern's work.

6. ***Complete a written mid-term evaluation, using the evaluation form provided by the UWG faculty advisor.*** For the fifteen-week fall and spring semesters, students will submit the midterm evaluation by the eighth week of class. For the summer semester, students will submit the mid-term evaluation when they have completed half (75) of the internship hours. Students should notify the faculty advisor when they are reaching the half-way mark of their work experience.

7. ***Prepare a portfolio of the internship, including an essay reflecting on the experience, and submit to the UWG faculty advisor by the final exam date established by your advisor.*** The centerpiece of the portfolio is an essay reflecting on the student's internship experience, using the questions provided for the final evaluation. In addition, each student will include the complete internship journal as well as examples of assignments and work projects completed during the course of the internship. Whenever possible, students will include a disk with photographs showing the student at work at the internship site.

8. ***Communicate with the UWG faculty advisor when there are problems, to ask questions, or for assistance or guidance with the internship projects.*** Internships are most successful with there is regular communication with the faculty advisor. Much of this communication will occur weekly through Course Den. However, students are also encouraged to arrange times to meet and discuss any internship questions or issues with the faculty advisor in person or by phone. Faculty advisors are available to help

guide students, as needed, and to provide other assistance as needed. Also, if there are any problems with the internship sponsor, students are expected to contact the faculty advisor as soon as possible so that the advisor can address these issues quickly to ensure a productive internship experience for the student.

Evaluation and grades

All students will receive a letter grade for the internship. The grades will be assigned based on the following factors:

1. Students will be evaluated on their knowledge of careers in public history (*20% of final grade*) through:
 - a. their weekly journal entries posted on Course Den
 - b. their weekly discussion comments posted on Course Den
 - c. their midterm evaluation and final evaluative essay in the portfolio
 - d. discussions and meetings with the faculty advisor
2. Students will be evaluated on their knowledge of the practice of public history (*35% of final grade*) through
 1. their weekly journal entries and discussion comments posted on Course Den
 2. their midterm evaluation and final evaluative essay in the portfolio
 3. their meetings and discussions with the faculty advisor
 4. the mid-term and final evaluations completed by the internship sponsor
 5. the knowledge of the field reflected in their internship projects, documented in the portfolio
3. Students will be evaluated on their acquisition of public history skills (*35% of final grade*) through:
 - a. their internship projects provided in the internship portfolio
 - b. their final evaluative essay
 - c. the midterm and final evaluations submitted by the internship sponsor
 - d. meetings and discussions with the UWG faculty advisor
4. Students will be evaluated on their professional skills appropriate to a public history work setting (*10% of final grade*), as demonstrated through:
 - a. the midterm and final evaluations submitted by the internship sponsor
 - b. discussions with the faculty advisor

Students must complete 125 hours of work for the internship and document that work through the internship journal submitted weekly on Course Den and with the final portfolio. Failure to complete the required hours will automatically result in an "F" grade in the internship course. If there are specific reasons why the internship hours could not be completed, including extenuating circumstances at the sponsoring internship site, students may request an incomplete grade (I) as long as the justification for the incomplete fits the UWG policy for incompletes. In such cases, students will be allowed to complete the internship in the following semester.

Last updated 05/02/2010 am

