



Public History Internships History 6486

Information and Guidelines for Graduate Internship Sponsors

Thank you for agreeing to sponsor an undergraduate student intern from the University of West Georgia. We hope that this will be a successful and memorable experience for both you and the student and that the student will make a meaningful contribution to your institution.

Public History Internships provide an opportunity for students to apply knowledge gained through their graduate academic training in history and public history to a meaningful, practical 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 needs of the student with the partnering sponsor, while satisfying the UWG internship requirements.

Public History Internships are open to all graduate students in history and, upon approval, to graduate students in fields related to history, such as Social Studies Education. The learning experience will vary, depending on the background the student brings to the position. Students who are not currently in the public history concentration may consider these internships as an opportunity to learn more about the field and to consider whether they would like to pursue this type of career. Social studies education students may use internships to discover ways they can work with public history institutions to more effectively educate their students.

The majority of students taking this course are concentrating in public history, where the internship is a critical part of their training. Public History Internships are *required* for all graduate students completing a concentration in public history in the history M.A. program, a Public History Certificate, or a Museum Studies Certificate. These graduate students will likely bring both knowledge of and some skills in public history as well as graduate-level training in historical research, writing, and historiography. Some students completing the thesis/project degree option—an internship designed demonstrate public history skills and to speak to a popular audience and a thesis essay intended for an academic audience--may elect to use their internship to accomplish much of the “project” component of this graduation requirement.

Internships require students to complete 150 hours of work experience for three hours of graduate course credit. Some institutions may offer compensation, in the form of a stipend or hourly wage, but payment is not required. Because students are earning course credit, internships must be designed with clear educational objectives and rigorous assignments comparable to graduate-level courses. Work performed by the intern should supplement the existing staff of an institution or provide assistance to institutions that do not have paid staff members for certain tasks. Interns should not be used to replace work normally done by a paid staff member.

Educational objectives of the Public History Internship:

1. *To gain knowledge about the practice of public history in a professional work setting.*
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. Students will also be able to identify some of the ethical and practical challenges and opportunities in the field in which they are

interning. Students will reflect on how public history methods and theory learned in the classroom are utilized in the practice of public history in the field.

2. *To develop and strengthen skills in public history.* Students will engage in at least one major project and/or several smaller projects, tasks, or ongoing activities for the sponsoring organization that will utilize and develop skills in public history according to a written contract with the sponsoring organization. In addition, most internships will require collaboration and teamwork, important skills in the practice of public history. The type of project and skills will vary depending on the institution where the student works, so students should choose their internship location carefully. These skills will be useful in building a resume for a public history career.

3. *To gain insights into the public history profession and practice through mentorship and networking with the internship sponsor, sponsoring organization, and other public history practitioners.* Internships provide an excellent opportunity to gain knowledge and insight about the practice of public history from the sponsoring organization and other professionals involved in the internship experience. In addition, students will have occasion to build their networks in the public history profession by meeting and interacting with a wide range of practitioners.

Internship sponsor responsibilities

1. Develop the position description for the intern. In some cases, the job description has been developed by the institution in advance of the opening. In other situations, the intern supervisor will develop the description in association with the intern to meet both his or her goals and those of the institution. Students should have the opportunity to produce a significant work product exemplifying their internship experience, but they may also participate in a variety of on-going operations, activities, and tasks at the institution. Some students may ask to use the internship as part of their thesis/project graduate requirement.
2. Sign the Internship Contract before the intern begins but no later than twenty (20) hours into the internship.
3. Supervise the intern during the course of the internship, ensuring that students receive sufficient training to successfully complete their work and that they are exposed to methods and procedures that are consistent with the best practices in the field. Supervisors are encouraged to meet regularly with interns to answer questions, to provide feedback on their work, and to mentor the students.
4. Inform the student of the organizational policies and procedures that govern their work. In particular, site sponsors should communicate any expectations related to dress, work culture, and ethics.
5. Complete the mid-term and final evaluation forms for the intern. The UWG faculty advisor will send these evaluation forms by email at the appropriate time in the semester, and intern supervisors may return them by email or by snail mail. The site sponsor is encouraged to review the evaluation with the student and to create a plan to address any problems or concerns.
6. Meet with the student and the UWG faculty sponsor once during the semester at the internship site, at a date and time agreed upon by all three parties.
7. Communicate with the UWG faculty advisor if there are problems with the internship as soon as possible. Whenever possible, the supervisor should address the concern with the student first.

Professional expectations

All interns are informed in the syllabus that they must act professionally while working at your institution. Interns are told consider an internship a job experience. They are expected to abide by the policies and requirements of the sponsoring organization, to report to work according to the schedule

specified in the Internship Contract, and to complete the work assigned to them according to the schedule agreed upon in the Internship Contract. Interns should also act collegially, particularly in collaborative, team projects. Students who act unprofessionally or unethically may be removed from their internship at the discretion of the internship sponsor and/or the faculty advisor.

Intern requirements

1. ***Complete 150 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 other work-related tasks defined in the Contract. All hours must be completed by the last class day of the class for the semester in which the student has enrolled.
2. ***Keep a daily journal documenting their 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.
3. ***Participate in weekly on-line discussion about the internship experience through Course Den.*** To encourage discussion among interns and the faculty advisors, each student will post at least two comments on Course Den each week. 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.
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 must 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 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.
7. ***Prepare a portfolio of the internship work, including an essay reflecting on the experience, and submit to the UWG faculty advisor by the 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 on the internship projects.*** Internships are most successful with there is regular communication with the faculty advisor.

Evaluation and grades

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

1. The student's understanding and knowledge of the field of public history, as demonstrated in:
 - a. the quality of the student's weekly Course en postings,
 - b. the weekly journal posted to Course Den,
 - c. meetings and personal discussions with the faculty sponsor,
 - d. the student's midterm evaluation
 - e. the final internship essay in the portfolio
 - f. the the internship sponsor's midterm and final evaluation
2. The student's development of public history skills, as demonstrated in:
 - a. the assignments in the internship portfolio
 - b. the mid-term and final evaluations of the student's work by the internship sponsor
 - c. the faculty advisor's observations of the student's internship work
3. The student's ability to perform work collaboratively and collegially in a work setting, as demonstrated in:
 - a. the internship sponsor's midterm and faculty evaluations
 - b. the faculty member's observations of the students work
 - c. the student's midterm evaluation and final essay

Last updated 05/02/2010 am