



## Public History Internships History 6486

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### UWG Public History Internship Faculty Advisors:

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**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 in the public history concentration may consider these internships an opportunity to learn more about the field and to consider whether they would like to pursue this type of career opportunity. Social studies education students may discover ways they can work with public history institutions to more effectively educate their students.

Public History Internships are *required* for all students completing a concentration in public history in the history M.A. graduate program, a graduate Public History Internship, or the graduate Museum Studies Certificate. Internships are a critical component of public history training. Students completing the thesis/project option may elect to use their internship to accomplish much of the “project” component of this graduation requirement. Please see the Graduate Handbook for details on the thesis/project option and discuss with the UWG faculty advisor if you are interested in pursuing this type of internship opportunity, as there are special issues to consider in advance.

Internships require students to complete 150 hours of work experience for three hours of graduate course credit. Some internships may offer compensation, but that is the discretion of the sponsoring organization. The primary goal of the internship is to offer an educational opportunity for the student that meets the rigorous requirements established for all graduate-level coursework.

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 principle 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 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 their training in history and public history in the classroom applies to and connects with 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 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 type of institution where the student works, so students should choose their internship location carefully. These skills will be useful as work experience when building a resume for a public history or history career, including teaching.

**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.

## **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 the student plans 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 establish the student's educational objectives.

Students should then complete the UWG Public History Internship Application and submit that application to the UWG public history faculty member 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 the student's reasons for want to pursue an internship, the student's educational goals in completing the internship, and 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. 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 descriptions on the internet. When such information is not available on-line, interested students should make contact with the organization to inquire about their internship positions and 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

require interviews to determine whether the student is a good fit for that organization 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 be 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 guidelines for the internship. Interns must ensure that all required information is included on the Contract.

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 intern should also share the “Guidelines and Information for Graduate Internship Sponsors” with the internship sponsor (available on-line) to familiarize them with the internship requirements at UWG.

The Internship Contract must be completed as fully as possible. Please include the specific work requirements the student will complete, required dates for completing this work, and the student’s weekly work schedule. Also, be sure to record sufficient 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 (20) 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, s/he will sign it, put in the intern’s file, and return signed copies to the intern and the internship sponsor.

### **Course Requirements**

All students must:

**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 any 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. Please note that *failure to complete and document 150 hours of internship work experience will result in an “F” grade for the class.*

**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.

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 greater discussion among interns and the faculty advisor, 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 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, including an essay reflecting on the experience, and submit to the UWG faculty advisor by the date established by the faculty 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. 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. Faculty advisors are available to help guide students, as needed, and to help them in whatever way they can. Also, if there are any problems with the internship sponsor, students are expected to contact the faculty advisor as soon as possible so that s/he can resolve these issues quickly to ensure a productive internship experience for the student.

### **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 Internship Contract, and to act professionally and collegially at all times.

Interns represent the University of West Georgia and their conduct reflects upon the university, the history department, and the public history program. Student success ensures that opportunities may be available to students from our school in the future. After an unsuccessful internship, the sponsor may choose

not to accept another student intern from this institution again. We expect every student to be a good ambassador for the University of West Georgia.

Students who act unprofessionally may be removed from their internship at the discretion of the internship sponsor and/or the faculty advisor and may receive an “F” grade, depending on the severity of their conduct.

### **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 Den postings,
  - b. the weekly journal posted to Course Den,
  - c. meetings and personal discussions with the faculty sponsor,
  - d. the midterm evaluation
  - e. the final internship essay in the portfolio
  - f. the faculty advisor’s communication with the internship sponsor
2. The student’s development of public history skills, as demonstrated in:
  - a. the assignments and essay 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

Students must complete 150 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, students may request an “incomplete” grade 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.

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