

Internship Requirements for Undergraduate Students

HIST 491

Guidelines: Undergraduate students wishing to do an internship for credit in the Department of History must pursue work that has a strong historical component, defined here as a public history internship. Other types of internships may be considered but must be approved by the Undergraduate Studies Committee. Public history internships come in many forms but generally they draw upon history students' skills in researching and documenting history and extend those skills to presenting history in a public setting. Internships may include work in an archive cataloging historical documents; in a museum helping with exhibition development, educational programs, or collections management; with a media company (such as the History Channel) doing historical research for programming; or in the field of historic preservation at a site (like Mount Vernon), with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, with the HABS-HAER Program in the National Park Service, a State Historic Preservation Office, or with a cultural resource management firm. Students interested in an internship for credit in History must consult compile a list of possible internships and then consult Dr. Franz, the Internship Coordinator in the Department of History.

Credit Hours: 3 credit hours/15 hours a week for 12 weeks during the semester. Students can count only one, 3-credit internship toward the History Major.

Procedure

Prerequisites: Students must complete 6 hours of required course work in public history before embarking on the internship.

Identify an internship and a professional supervisor: Students should work with the public history coordinator to identify appropriate internships. Internships must include a well-defined project that furthers both the professional training of the intern and the mission and/or programmatic needs of the host institution.

Proposal: (Due April 15 for summer internships and Nov. 15 for spring internships) Students must write a **proposal** (1-2 pages) giving a detailed overview of the project, identifying their career goals, and explaining how a particular internship will further these goals. The coordinator will review proposals. Proposals must also include a bibliography. This bibliography should include readings done in courses at American University that help the student frame the internship experience.

Job Description Form: Students must also have the internship supervisor fill out the AU Internship Job Description Form.

Permission: The proposal must first be reviewed and approved by the Director of Public History who is also the Internship Coordinator.

Consent Form: AU requires that all student interns sign a signed Consent and Release Form to register.

Evaluation

Grading: Internships are assign a grade based upon the supervisor's evaluation and successful completion of all written work.

Project/Time on the Job: We expect students to treat the internship like a job. This means keeping regular hours, observing the rules and deadlines of the institution, and attending regular staff meetings. Attending staff meetings allows students to see how their work fits into the larger program of the organization and it gives them an opportunity to network.

Journal: Each student must keep a work journal (one entry per week) reflecting on their experience. The journal will be considered a formal writing assignment and will be graded.

Final Paper/ Oral Presentation: Students are required to write a final paper (8-12 pages) critically evaluating the internship experience. The paper must be submitted at the end of the term in which the internship is taken. A grade for the course will be given upon submission of the paper. This paper should place the internship experience within the current literature and debates within the field and draw on the bibliography set forth in the proposal. The paper should include a thesis statement, footnotes, bibliography, and appendix of supporting materials, such as illustrations.

Graduate students should be prepared to make a formal presentation of his/her internship project. This presentation will be open to faculty, professional mentors, and student peers.

Evaluation by professional supervisor: The mentor is required to evaluate the student's performance. Evaluation form is attached to internship agreement. The intern should give this form to the site supervisor, asking s/he to return it to the public history coordinator. If the mentor so desires, s/he may also write a general letter of recommendation at this time. Letters of recommendation and evaluations will be considered confidential and will be kept on file in the coordinator's office.

Internship Requirements Checklist

Section One: Prior to Internship

___ Search for internships, create a list of internships with deadlines, and then meet with Dr. Franz. You should plan ahead and begin the process one semester before you plan to start the internship.

___ Consult the **Academic Regulations** for Internships

___ Complete an **Internship Proposal** (Due to Dr. Franz prior to the beginning of the semester)

___ Have your intern supervisor fill out the **Job Description Form** (to Dr. Franz)

Once approved, you must register for the internship. Fill out the following forms:

___ **Registration Form** (to Registrar)

___ **Consent and Release Form** (to Registrar)

Section Two: During Internship

___ Meet with Dr. Franz in the first week to get a copy of the Syllabus for HIST 691.

___ keep a work journal reflecting on experience (one entry per week)

___ write final paper (8-12 pages) critically evaluating internship experience

___ prepare an oral presentation of internship project

___ provide evaluation form (included in packet) to mentor at host institution

FORM

Internship Proposal
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Please fill out the following form, attach your proposal statement, and return to the Director of Public History

Name: _____
Degree/ Department: _____
Expected Date of Graduation: _____

Proposed Internship

Place of work:

Address: _____

Professional Supervisor

Name and Title : _____
Phone number: _____
Email Address: _____

Begin and End Dates:

(On what dates will you begin and end your internship?)

Number of Hours per Week: _____
(How many hours do you plan to work each week?)

Will you be able to attend staff meetings? _____
(Ask supervisor for permission.)

Project Description: (1-2 typed pages)

Please provide a detailed description of the project you will work on during the internship. Address the following questions as part of your proposal.

I. What kind of project will you work on? What will be the final product? Will you work alone or as part of a team?

II. How does the project build upon the courses that you've taken in the History Department?

III. How does the proposed project further your career goals?