

History Department Internship Syllabus

History 609: Internship I & History 610: Internship II (graduate)

Course Overview:

History Internship is a specialized class where graduate students enrich their historical education through experiential learning at a historical institution or sites approved by the History Department and the College of Arts and Sciences. Prior to beginning the internship, students must complete the required internship application form, submit a detailed description of their planned activities and educational objectives for the internship, and make arrangements with an internship site to host them for the internship. In order to pass the internship, students must fulfill their original educational objectives, receive a favorable review from their internship site supervisor, and submit all required assignments.

Course website: <http://blackboard.ship.edu>

Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students will:

- Understand how his or her academic training as a historian can be applied in professional workplaces and to advance the work of public history institutions and organizations.
- Have gained professional-level, workplace experience that has utilized the intern's historical training.
- Appreciate the nature of the professional work environment at public history institutions.
- Be familiar with operations of a public history institution, including such things as the institution's mission, vision, leadership structure, staffing, finances, and programming.
- Complete at least one project that the intern planned and executed under their site supervisor's direction that allows the intern to demonstrate professional competency.
- Have received information and mentorship regarding professional careers, professional organizations, and future employment.
- Fulfill their personalized educational objectives as defined in their internship application. These should reflect their educational interests or professional career objectives.

Evaluation: All internships are pass fail. The intern's supervising faculty member will evaluate the intern's performance based on the following criteria:

- Weekly Journal Entries: These journal entries should describe the intern's activities at their internship site. The entries should clearly explain how the internship experience is fulfilling the intern's learning objectives. Each bi-weekly entry should conclude with a section marked "Reflections" where the student reflects on what they have learned through their internship experience. The instructor may have these submitted via email or Blackboard.
- Exploratory Modules: These mini-research projects are designed to help interns to better understand the site where they are working. Submit these as an email attachment at the internship's end. It is the responsibility of the intern and the faculty supervisor to set a timetable for completion of these modules (approximately one per week for a summer internship, one every two weeks for a semester-long internship). The modules questions are listed below.
- Final Paper: This analytic paper should clearly explain how the intern's learning objectives were accomplished through the internship process. It is important that the paper be analytic rather than descriptive and make a clear case how the internship fit into the student's historical education at Shippensburg University. Please submit this as an email attachment by the last day of classes.
- Written Evaluations and Feedback from Site Supervisor. Feedback from the on-site supervisor is a critical component in determining whether or not the student has fulfilled their responsibilities as defined in the internship application.

Required Reading: A site-specific reading list will be developed in consultation with your faculty supervisor and on-site coordinator. The total readings should be approximately 150-300 pages in length.

Guidelines for Graduate Internship Projects, Reading Lists, and Final Papers

Internship Project

In designing your internship, you should discuss with your on-site supervisor the feasibility of focusing your energies on one or more discrete projects that you can complete within your allotted time. Ideally, the project(s) would allow you to gain intensive experience in some historical skill and yield a tangible final product that you could take with you once the internship was completed. Examples of projects with tangible end-products might include:

- Fully processing a small to medium archival collection (finding aid)
- Researching and writing a guided tour (script, brochure)
- Designing a small exhibit (photographs of exhibit, catalogue)
- Research on a historic site (historic site report)
- Production of a lesson plan for teachers visiting the site (lesson plan)
- Research on a historical publication (brochure, book, article)

The above list is only meant to be suggestive. Feel free to be creative in the type of project and the type of end-product it might produce, but try to develop something that will assist you in pursuing your ultimate educational and career goals.

Reading List

While the heart of any internship will be the hands-on experience and on-the-job training you will receive from working with professionals in the field, it is also important to be familiar with the historical topics, methodological issues, institutional policies, and current scholarly literature associated with your internship. To that end, you should develop a reading list tailored to your particular internship and interests. In consultation with your on-site supervisor and faculty coordinator, you should identify a series of readings that will prepare you for your work and broaden the educational value of your experience. While the exact number of works or pages of reading will be at the discretion of the faculty coordinator, it should represent roughly 150 to 300 pages or more of reading. Readings may include:

- Historical monographs on topics covered by the site or relating to projects you may be undertaking (i.e.: Civil War, Cumberland County History)
- Policy manuals, institutional histories, websites, or in-house publications designed to provide background on the site and its operations
- Articles or books detailing particular methods or skills you will be employing during your internship (i.e.: archival methods, walking tours)
- Works that deal in a general fashion with a particular field of public history relevant to your internship (i.e.: historic preservation, museums).
- Other works deemed relevant to the internship experience

Students should consult with their on-site supervisors and faculty coordinator to determine if there are readings which should be completed prior to beginning the internship.

Final Paper

This paper is meant to describe the work you did during your internship and explore how it connected to your overall graduate education. You should make explicit connection to particular coursework, readings, projects, or skills (including historical writing and research) that you drew on during your internship. The paper should culminate in a discussion of the specific knowledge, skills, or insights you gained from your graduate education (including the internship experience) and how your graduate history training will serve you in your post-graduate career. The paper should also include an annotated bibliography.

Format: 8-10 pages, 12 point font, one-inch margins, formatting according to Kate Turabian, A Manual For Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. You should submit three copies—one to your site supervisor, one to your faculty coordinator, and one to the department internship coordinator to be maintained on file by the History Department.

EXPLORATORY MODULES

These modules are designed to provide you with opportunities to explore the functions and operations of the site where you are interning. Ideally, the information needed to complete these modules will be gathered through careful observation, research (such as examining the site's website or brochures), and conversations with the professional staff at your site. The write-up for each module should be approximately 250-500 words in length.

Module #1: Professional Expectations (See attached sheet)

Module #2: Overview & Organizational History

For this module, your goal is to write an essay in which you research the organization where you are interning in order to explain its history, its current operations, and how the organization has changed over time. This is your opportunity to "get to know" the background of your site.

Module #3: Mission and Programs

What is the current mission and vision of the organization where you are interning? How does work of the organization and its programming reflect the organization's mission? Please be sure to describe the range of programs undertaken by your institution and how they fulfill its stated mission.

Module #4: Leadership and governance

What is the leadership structure of your organization? Who makes policy? Who is responsible for the organization's day-to-day operations? Does the organization have a board or other governing body? What is the role of the board or governing body? If possible, see if it would be possible for you to attend a board meeting (or another committee meeting) where you can observe the board's governance in action.

Module #5: Financial Operations

How does the organization where you work fund its operations? What are the major sources of revenue? How are they obtained? What are the major operating expenses for the organization? To what extent do financial considerations influence the operations of the organization?

Module #6: Staff: background, training, career path

Who are the staff members that work at your historical institution or organization? What training, education, or experience do they have that has prepared them for the work that they do? What did they do before they began working at your site? What has been their career path? What advice do the staff members at your site have for students who might be interested in pursuing work in their field?

Module #7: Professional Networks & Organizations

Does the organization and its staff see itself as part of a larger community of professionals? Are they involved with professional organizations or networks? What role do those formal or informal connections play in their daily work? How important are they? If someone is a new professional in the field, what advice do they have for establishing such professional networks?

Module #8: Assessing Your Site (please complete in the last two weeks of the internship)

How successful is your internship site at fulfilling its mission? What seem to be the greatest challenges the organization faces in fulfilling its mission? What would you consider to be its greatest successes? What have you learned about the nature of public history institutions and the work of public historians, through your examination of your internship site?

Module #1: Internship Site Professional Expectations

The purpose of this assignment is to help you gain a clearer understanding of the professional site where you will be working during your internship. Each workplace is different, so it is important that you understand the culture, policies, and procedures at your site. Near the beginning of your internship, please schedule a meeting with your internship supervisor to discuss the following topics. It is important you receive answers to all of the questions at your internship's outset so that you have a clear understanding of the site and your supervisor's expectations. Please submit these via Blackboard no later than one week after the start date of your internship. If you need additional time, please let me know.

1. **Work Schedule:** It is important that you establish a work schedule that will fulfill your required internship hours and that adequately considers other commitments in your life (i.e.: classes, paid employment, travel time). You are expected to arrive on time (or early) on the days you are scheduled to work at your internship site, and stay until your hours are completed. If you need to have time off for family or professional commitments (i.e.: a planned vacation, a family wedding, attending a job fair), discuss those in advance with your supervisor. What is your internship work schedule?
2. **Sickness/Absences/Tardiness:** You are expected to be at your internship site on your scheduled days and times. Frequent tardiness or missing work without informing your supervisor are grounds for possible termination of the internship. However, there will be legitimate reason for occasionally missing work, such as illness or family emergencies. Please discuss with your supervisor the site's policies regarding sickness, absences, and tardiness, and especially the procedures you should follow if you are ill or facing a family emergency.
3. **Professional Dress/Appearance:** It is expected that all Shippensburg University interns will dress neatly and groom themselves appropriately for work at their internship site. However, each site may have different expectations about what types of clothing are most appropriate for its staff. What is the appropriate dress for an intern working at this site? Are there any types of clothing, footwear, or accessories that would be inappropriate?
4. **Down Time:** Occasionally you will find yourself with time when you are unable to work on your normal assignments and your supervisor is unavailable to provide additional guidance. How should you spend that time? What task or reading can you perform during these times to assist the site or enrich your own understanding of its operations? What types of behavior would not be appropriate (i.e.: surfing the web)?
5. **Professional Workplace Behavior:** Are there any other activities, behaviors, or practices that would be considered inappropriate in this workplace? What are the site's policies regarding personal telephone calls, cell phones, email, text messaging, and internet use? Would it be appropriate to have friends or family visit you at work? What types of conversations are appropriate or inappropriate at this workplace?
6. **Feedback, Evaluation, and Mentorship:** To ensure that the internship is an educational experience, it is important that you establish times when you can discuss your performance and receive feedback on your work. At a minimum, this should be at the midpoint and end of your internship, but more frequent discussions are welcomed. Also, you may wish to ask your supervisor if you could schedule a time to discuss careers—including their own career path, and any tips or advice they might have for your own post-graduate career.
7. **Supervisor's Expectations of Interns:** What distinguishes an outstanding intern from an ordinary intern? What types of intern behaviors have impressed them most in the past?