

# MASTER OF ARTS IN PUBLIC HISTORY

*Exploring the past to inform our understanding of the present*

Public history students are trained in traditional historical skills (research, analysis, communication) but with an emphasis on creating and delivering historical scholarship to diverse audiences. Graduate work in public history prepares students for careers in museums, historical societies, archives and libraries, historic preservation organizations, government agencies, corporations, and historical consulting firms.

The public history program at IUPUI offers students a combination of classroom instruction and practical experience in applying the historian's skills in the public arena. The curriculum is also designed to inform students of career options and make them aware of the professional and ethical dimensions of public history. Dual degree programs in library science/history and philanthropic studies/history permit students to combine study for two degrees and thus take fewer credit hours than would be required for the separate degrees. Students may also enroll in some courses offered in Museum Studies.

## CURRICULUM

The public history curriculum (36 credit hours) allows students to create their own areas of specialization based on personal interests and career goals. All students in their first semester take Introduction to Public History. In this seminar students investigate the principles of delivering historical scholarship to diverse audiences in various formats: museum exhibits, collections of papers, oral histories, and historic preservation projects. In subsequent semesters students choose electives in public history specialties like historic preservation, community history, archives, editing, and material history. Electives in allied areas like library science and museum studies may also be taken.

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students who wish to be admitted to the public history M.A. program for the fall semester should submit their completed applications by February 1 if they wish to receive full consideration for all forms of financial aid. Other applications will be considered as space permits.

Prerequisites for admission include a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, a minimum grade point average of 3.0 and an appropriate level of achievement on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test. Students concentrating in European history will be expected to demonstrate competence in a relevant foreign language. An undergraduate history major is not required, but a student must have experience in upper-level history before being admitted.

## INTERNSHIPS

Internships are an important part of the public history curriculum at IUPUI. They add challenging work assignments and practical experience to student training. Students in public history must complete four credit hours in an internship at an appropriate historical agency or organization. Generally, students work half-time (twenty hours per week) for ten months for a total of four hours of credit, although in special circumstances one-quarter time (ten hours per week) internships can be arranged. Summer internships are also available in limited numbers.

The Department of History makes all internship arrangements and assigns students based on institutional need and student merit and preference. Interns can gain experience in areas such as museum curation and interpretation, historic preservation documentation and planning, oral history, researching and writing institutional histories, editing, and library/archival work. Monthly seminars provide opportunities for discussion.

In recent years internships have included Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, Conner Prairie (a living history museum), the Indiana Medical History Museum, the Morris-Butler House Museum, the Indiana State Library, the IUPUI University Archives and Special Collections, the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, the Indiana Historical Society, the Frederick Douglass Papers, and the executive offices of the National Council on Public History.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### Internships

A number of half-time, ten-month internships provide stipends of approximately \$9,500 and substantial tuition waiver. Students often complete multiple internships during the program. In order to receive full consideration, applications should be complete by February 1.

### Fellowships

IUPUI Graduate Fellowships are available in limited number to first-year graduate students. These fellowships are for twelve months. They carry a stipend of \$12,000 and include a substantial tuition waiver. The deadline for completed applications is February 1.

## JOB PLACEMENT

Throughout the master's program, public history students meet with local and visiting professionals. Beginning with their first internship and seminar, students learn to enhance and extend their skills and to perfect their resumes. As students near completion of the program faculty and guest speakers conduct workshops on searching for professional positions, applying, interviewing, and negotiating an employment contract.

While some graduates have established consulting businesses or work for private historical organizations or state agencies in Indianapolis, others have accepted jobs further afield. One works for a county historical society in New York; another works for the Ohio Historical Society. One graduate is a ranger for the National Park Service. Several are directors or curators at museums. Graduates with joint degrees with library science work in a variety of archives.

## CONTACT US

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## SPECIAL RESOURCES IN INDIANAPOLIS

Benjamin Harrison Home  
Charles Sanders Peirce Edition (*critical editing*)  
Children's Museum  
City-County Building (*city and county records*)  
Conner Prairie (*living history museum*)  
Division of Historic Preservation and  
Archaeology (*state agency*)  
Eiteljorg Museum of Native American &  
Western Art  
Frederick Douglass Papers (*documentary  
editing*)  
Herron School of Art and Design  
Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana  
(*private organization*)  
Indiana Historical Bureau

Indiana Historical Society  
Indiana Medical History Museum  
Indiana State Archives  
Indiana State Library  
Indiana State Museum  
Indiana State Supreme Court Library  
Indianapolis Museum of Art  
James Whitcomb Riley Home  
Morris-Butler House Museum  
National Council on Public History  
The Polis Center (*Indianapolis research center*)  
University Library (*archives/special collections*)

## EXTRACURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Many students attend the annual O'Brien Conference on Historic Preservation, the statewide Careers Workshop for history students, and state and local historical conferences. Teams of student volunteers have researched and mounted exhibits on historic lighting and servant life for local house museums. On occasion the entire program (students and faculty) volunteers one weekend to help with artifact stabilization at a local or regional museum.