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1. PREPARING FOR THE INTERNSHIP

1.1. Purpose of the Internship

The Museum Internship is a supervised work experience designed to complement the theoretical, methodological, and practical instruction received in IUPUI’s Museum Studies courses, and to assist in preparing students for professional careers in museums. Ideally, the internship will be a guided practical experience in museum work in which the student, the student’s Museum Studies faculty advisor, and a museum staff member (mentor) design a learning experience for the mutual benefit of all. The goals are to maintain quality in the development experience, to uphold academic standards in the student’s training, and to provide a practical service to the larger museum community.

1.2. Planning for the Internship

During the first semester in the program, each student devises a program plan that represents a general overview of their intended coursework and learning experiences while in the Museum Studies program. Be aware that the program plan may change during the course of the program. In addition to selecting intended courses, students should begin to consider the kinds of internships that might be of interested in pursuing. The type of internship depends on the student and as such it will vary greatly based on areas of interest. The program plan allows students to create an academic plan that reflects their interests and helps them to plan for a timely graduation.

Decisions as to when to complete the internship depend on the student’s readiness, as well as opportunities that have emerged during their time in the program. In general, the faculty recommend that students with minimal professional museum experience begin their internships at least after the first semester or later in the program. For students who have some prior museum experience, an internship in the first semester may be allowed.

Many internship experiences will require an interview prior to acceptance. Keep this in mind while planning the internship experience. Students may not register for internship credits without a completed formal proposal. A completed formal proposal is one that includes all required elements and contains the signatures of your museum mentor and your faculty advisor (see section 4.1 in this handbook).
1.3. Types of Internships/Credits/Policies/Paid-Unpaid

Internships are required and should be one of the most important learning experiences during a student’s tenure in the program. They are individually arranged in consultation with a faculty advisor, and may be completed at any accredited museum, as long as the project meets the criteria.

Internship projects are done in a museum under the supervision of a museum mentor and focus on a professional level project. Unless part of a paid internship, the time commitment is 50 hours of internship work for each credit hour earned. Authorization is required for registration, and undergraduate students must have completed the appropriate prerequisites before doing an internship.

The following materials may be helpful in organizing your project.

1.3.1. Criteria

Internship projects must be:
1. conducted in a museum or related organization (ex. a library with an exhibition program, an arts council with educational programming, an exhibit design firm, etc. See section 1.5 in this handbook for examples.)
2. completed under the supervision of a museum mentor, preferably a paid employee with museum professional training
3. focused on a professional level project that contributes to the development of the students museum skills and/or knowledge
4. approved prior to the beginning of the internship based on a proposal developed by the student and signed by the faculty advisor and the museum mentor (See section 1.6 for proposal development information.)

1.3.2. Credits and Time Commitment

Unless part of a paid internship (see below), the time commitment is 50 hours of internship work for each credit hour earned. Students are required to complete a total of 6 credit hours of internship work, and may complete more than one internship for 1 to 6 credits at a time. Authorization is required for registration, and undergraduate students must have completed the appropriate prerequisites before beginning an internship. The prerequisites include MSTD A403 and A405, or consent of the student’s faculty advisor. Internships may be completed during Fall, Spring, Summer I, and Summer II.

Students who have fulfilled their internship requirements may do internships without receiving credit (i.e. without registering or paying
tuition) if they wish to gain additional professional experience and they may also volunteer at museums. Students may also take internships beyond the required 6 credits to be counted as an elective, but they must first discuss this with their academic advisor.

1.3.3. Policy regarding financial compensation for internships

The general arrangement for paid internships (called Museum Assistantships) the Museum Studies department has established with area museums are 10 months in duration and require 20 hours of work per week. Students complete the internship for 3 credits each semester, receive a stipend and, where possible, also tuition scholarship. These paid internships are funded by fellowships, support from museums, by funding given to the program by the school in the form of “block grants” and “tuition scholarships,” or a combination of these sources. Paid internships for less than 20 hours a week are pro-rated according to university guidelines.

The Museum Studies department distinguishes these intensive 10 month paid internships from unpaid internships. Unpaid internships are calculated on the basic formula of 50 hours of internship work for each credit hour earned (namely, a 3-credit internship is 150 hours of internship time, which over a standard 15 week semester, works out to about ten hours a week).

There are cases where students may complete a 3-credit, 150 hour internship even if they receive financial support from the museum. Three such cases are described below.

1. Some museums have work study support for eligible students or small honoraria for internships. Students receiving such awards may also use the experience as their internship credit where the project is appropriate and meets established guidelines.

2. Where students are current museum employees, the department allows them to do internships at the same museum as long as the internship project is something different than their regular duties. For example, a museum store employee could do an internship in the collections or conservation department, or a gallery assistant could work in the exhibit development department).

3. Students may do their internships at any accredited museum in the world as long as the project fits our criteria. If a student receives funding, such as a university travel fellowship, a museum paid summer fellowship, or other funding, that helps underwrite the costs of
relocation to complete the internship experience, the student may receive 1 credit hour for each 50 hours of internship work even if they receive a fellowship.

1.4. Where to Look for Internship Opportunities

The Indianapolis area provides a rich array of museums and institutions of all sizes emphasizing nearly every area of museum work. Each museum’s internship program is different and will have different methods of application, types of experiences, and expectations.

*Museum Websites*
Internship information is often available on the museum’s website, and most frequently these will be listed under the heading “Volunteers.” Keep in mind that not all museums post their internship information on their websites and students may have to contact the museum directly to obtain information.

*Museum Listservs*
Museum listservs (Museum-Ed, and Museum-L) are often good places to find internship announcements for summer opportunities. In addition, several museum job websites will post internship opportunities. Be sure to pay attention to deadlines. Many paid summer internships are posted beginning in January and have March deadlines.

**Remember:** Many internships at major museums can be competitive. Be prepared for alternatives. It is recommended that if students are intent on completing an internship during a specific semester (typically outlined in the student’s program plan) that they apply for multiple internships to increase their chances of getting a desired internship during that semester and to ensure that the student’s academic plan stays on track.

**Questions to consider:**
While planning for the internship, students should ask themselves the following questions:

- What area of museum work are you most interested in gaining experience? E.g. collections, exhibits, education, administration, etc.
- What size of museum do you envision yourself working in after you graduate? If you prefer small museums, you may want to focus your internship around small museum settings. Frequently small museum professionals often must operate as a generalist multiple areas of work, where as larger museum professionals tend to specialize in one area.
• What kind of museum do you want to work in? Art, history, science center, children’s museum, historic houses?

1.5. Student Internship Experience Examples

Students have completed internships at a wide variety of museums and institutions. The following list provides examples that may inspire you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internship Project Title</th>
<th>Museum of Internship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Services Office Internship</td>
<td>Indiana State Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership Management</td>
<td>Eiteljorg Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mardi Gras Event Development</td>
<td>Mathers Museum of World Cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogues w/the Insane: Working in a Small Museum</td>
<td>Indiana Medical History Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black Expo Collections Inventory</td>
<td>Indiana Black Expo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Summer with the First Lady’s Arts Program</td>
<td>The First Lady’s Arts Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Methods</td>
<td>Indianapolis Museum of Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fossil Mammal Collection</td>
<td>Field Museum of Natural History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collections Management: Ethnographic Textiles</td>
<td>The Children’s Museum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Learning</td>
<td>The Children’s Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art Camp – The Experience</td>
<td>Indiana State Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measuring Success in Museum Interactive Elements</td>
<td>The Children’s Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials and Methods: Mounting an Exhibit</td>
<td>Indiana Medical History Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Label Copy Project</td>
<td>Eiteljorg Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Exhibit Development</td>
<td>Eiteljorg Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Writing Internship</td>
<td>The Children’s Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Theatre Research</td>
<td>Indiana Department of Natural Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material Culture Research and Writing</td>
<td>Mathers Museum of World Cultures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.6. Proposal development and assessment process

The internship proposal process combines the goals and expectations of the museum the student’s own expectations and experiences. Most frequently these will be closely aligned. It is the student’s responsibility to discuss with the internship mentor what the job responsibilities will be, what their interests are, and in what ways these ideas can work in concert.

1.6.1. Step One: Selecting a location for your project

Development of an internship proposal should be initiated well in advance, ideally in the beginning of the semester prior to the internship. At least three months prior to the start of an internship, students should meet with their faculty advisor to discuss their interests, goals, experience, and skills, and to identify a focus and basic parameters of the internship (where, when, how many credits, etc.).
Many museums have formal internship programs with a variety of projects available. If there is a particular institution at which a student would like to intern, the student may contact them directly regarding internship possibilities and application procedures. The student’s faculty advisor can also provide a list of internship coordinators and contacts for area museums.

Students should discuss possibilities with their faculty advisor if they know what type of project on which they would like to work, but do not have a strong preference as to a specific museum. Faculty often have connections within the museum network in Indianapolis, and may know of an individual or institution which is looking for a student to do the type of project that interests them.

This process should begin **well in advance** of the semester students intend to register for internship credits, so that there will be no delays in the development of the formal proposal.

### 1.6.2. *Step Two: Developing a formal proposal*

The formal internship proposal must be approved before the semester in which the student registers for the internship. The proposal may need to be revised upon examination by the student’s faculty advisor and/or mentor, so allow plenty of time for this. See section 3.1 and the Internship proposal checklist for more information.

Important points to note:

- Be aware that the internship project may evolve or change in scope somewhat over the course of the semester. The final report will detail this progression.
- The formal proposal sets forth measurable goals and defines what the student is expecting from the mentor and what the mentor is expecting from them. It will include:
  - a basic timetable of when you expect to complete each phase of your project
  - the specific learning objectives you hope to achieve through completion of the project
  - a list of "deliverables" which you are expected to turn in to your mentor and your advisor at the end of the project
  - a schedule defining when you are expected to be working on the project
1.6.3. *Step Three: Doing the Work*

Using the internship proposal document as a blueprint, students will spend a prescribed amount of hours working on the internship project at the chosen institution. Students are expected to keep track of hours, document their experiences, and touch base with their mentor and faculty advisor frequently to let them know how they are doing and if they have questions or concerns. If the project is not going in the direction originally anticipated and outlined in the proposal, students should discuss this with their mentor and faculty advisor to adjust the project accordingly.

1.6.4. *Step Four: The Final Report*

The internship experience should culminate in the creation of a final report that contains concrete documentation of the student’s performance in the form of a summary report prepared by the student at the end of the project. This report includes all of the deliverable materials produced during the project, as well as the student’s reflections on the success of the project and what they have learned through the experience. The student must present a copy of this work to their advisor and their mentor. There are many project reports from previous years on file in the Museum Studies office—feel free to come in and look through them to get a sense of how to structure and compose the report.

At the end of the internship, the student is expected to submit the following to their faculty advisor for evaluation, assessment, and grading:

- Original and any revised internship proposals
- Internship products
- Final Project Report
- Intern Self-Evaluation of IUPUI Museum Studies Internship Experience
- Mentor Evaluation of Intern

See section 3.2 and the Internship Checklist for more details.

1.7. Internship Timeline

- *First semester in the program:* The student should consider areas of interest for their internships and identify types of experiences they would like to have.
• **3-4 months (or more for competitive summer internships) prior to the registration deadline:** The student should identify possible museums and experiences, get information about application processes and requirements, and discuss ideas with their academic advisor.

• **2-3 months prior to the registration deadline:** Apply for the internship with the museum, and participate in interviews as necessary.

• **1-2 months prior to the registration deadline:** On acceptance of the internship, students should begin the proposal development process. Students must identify a faculty internship advisor. NOTE: This advisor does not need to be the student’s regular academic advisor. The student should discuss their plans with both the museum mentor and the internship advisor.

• **2-3 weeks prior to the registration deadline:** Finalize the internship proposal, and obtain signatures and permission to register. A final, approved proposal must be submitted to the Museum Studies Program at least two weeks before the beginning of the internship semester, and registration for the internship will not be granted until the internship proposal is approved. Once the proposal is approved and permission to register is granted, the student may register for the internship credits.

• **Start of the internship:** The student must be sure to document their experiences, meet regularly with their mentor, and meet with their faculty advisor at least once during the internship.

• **1 month prior to the end of the semester:** The student should begin to assemble the internship documentation. It is recommended that the student schedule a time with their mentor and faculty advisor for the final present of their work. The student should be sure to give their mentor plenty of time to complete the assessment materials.

• **2 weeks to the end of the semester:** The student’s final project report must be submitted for evaluation and assessment at least two weeks before final grades are due.

### 1.8. Registration requirements

The Museum mentor and Museum Studies faculty advisor must review and approve the internship agreement prior to implementation. Once approved, the advisor authorizes registration for MSTD A408 or MSTD 508 by notifying the department secretary via email. The department secretary then grants electronic permission to register and notifies all parties involved. The authorization period
expires, so please register promptly once approval is granted. Agreement can be renegotiated should the circumstances of the internship change. Re-negotiation can be initiated by the student, community museum, or faculty advisor.

The student is responsible for checking the IUPUI Office of the Registrar’s website for current registration dates. On occasion, the timing of an opportunity may not coincide with the IUPUI registration calendar. In these situations, you may petition the faculty to begin an internship and registering for credits in the next semester cycle. The same expectations apply: a full proposal with signatures is required before you may begin.

Remember: Late fees will apply if the proposal is delayed because of approvals, so plan ahead!

2. COMPLETING THE INTERNSHIP

2.1. Documentation of internship experiences

Throughout the process be thinking about appropriate ways to document your experiences. Plan to keep a daily log or journal of your work duties and experiences. Consider taking photographs where appropriate, keeping copies of important documents, etc. Be sure to check with your mentor on any internal documents that you might want to use—some museums have proprietary information that must be protected.

2.2. Meetings with the mentor

Make arrangements with your mentor to check in weekly or bi-weekly during your internship. Use this as an opportunity to keep your mentor apprised of your work, and any issues, questions, or challenges that might arise. Be sure to ask your mentor to keep you in mind for any kind of meetings or museum-wide experiences that you can take part in.

2.3. Meetings with the faculty advisor

The student should contact the faculty advisor at least once mid-semester regarding the student’s progress and activities. The student may ask to meet with the advisor more often if desired or necessary. Use this as a time to talk about more of your learning experiences, resources that might support your work, or if necessary, troubleshooting problems that may come about.

2.4. Internship Assessment Process

- Student: The student will complete the Intern Self-Evaluation of IUPUI Museum Studies Internship Experience form at the end of their internship experience.
• Museum Mentor: The museum mentor will complete the Mentor Evaluation of IUPUI Museum Studies Internship form and write a letter of evaluation based on the criteria outlined in this handbook.

• Faculty Advisor: The student’s Museum Studies faculty advisor will review the documentation of the internship experience (see section 4 below) and assign a letter grade based on the final report, internship products, the student’s self-evaluation, and the museum mentor’s evaluation. This grade will be the student’s final grade for the course.

3. INTERNSHIP DOCUMENTS

3.1. Internship Proposal

• Write a description of the internship project including the objectives and the specific task(s) which the student will be expected to complete. It is expected that projects may evolve during the course of the internship, but be as specific as possible about the work plan.

• Specify the product(s) which will be the outcome of the student’s project (ex. An exhibit element prototype, curriculum guide, catalogue records for 150 newly accessioned objects, workshop plan, visitor study report, etc.).

• Articulate the benefits of the project for the community museum and the student.

• Be as specific as possible about the schedule which will be expected of the student in working on the project. (For unpaid internships fifty contact hours are the equivalent of one credit hour. A minimum of 150 hours is expected for a three credit internship).

• Detail arrangements for compensation for any expenses incurred by the student while working on the project.

• Specify the member of the museum staff or museum mentor and the Museum Studies faculty who will supervise and evaluate the student’s work. Describe the role of these persons in developing the student’s knowledge and skills. Include a schedule of training, feedback, and supervision. The student must arrange to meet (in person or by phone) with the Museum Studies faculty member at least once over the course of the internship project.

• Specify the standards that will be used to evaluate the quality of the student’s efforts.

• Include a signature page with space for the student, the museum mentor, and the Museum faculty advisor to sign and date thereby signifying their approval of the proposal.
3.2. Internship Documentation Requirements and Final Report

The final report should minimally include:

- A title
- An abstract summarizing the project in one to two paragraphs
- A log, diary, journal, or other record of the time and tasks completed
- A narrative which summarizes the project purposes and activities, and which details the useful knowledge and skills developed in the project.
- A reflection on the experience, its benefits to the museum and to the student, and any commentary or analysis of the experience the student wishes to make
- A bibliography of relevant sources
- Visuals relevant to the project such as slides or photos of the student at work or of the work produced (ex. exhibit cases, design sketches).
- The product(s) produced by the student. (ex. labels, catalogue records, curriculum design)
- A written evaluation by the member of the community museum responsible for supervising the student's work, indicating the time and energy invested by the student in the project, the quality of the student's work and of the product produced by the student, and the quality of the student's personal and professional development as a result of the experience.

3.3. Internship Evaluation Tools

At the end of the internship, the student is expected to complete a self-evaluation regarding their internship experience. In addition, the student must provide a copy of the Mentor Evaluation of IUPUI Museum Studies Internship form for their internship mentor/supervisor to complete. These forms must be submitted with the final internship report and documentation.

Internship Self-Evaluation Form

Internship Mentor Evaluation Form
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Q: Where can I do an internship?
A: Internships can be done at any accredited museum in the world as long as the project meets the criteria, a museum mentor at the institution agrees to supervise you, and a Museum Studies faculty approves the proposal.

Q: How many hours does an internship take?
A: Internships may be taken for variable credit, but the basic formula is 50 hours of work for one hour of credit. For example, you can work on a large project that takes 150 hours to earn three credits or do a small project that takes 50 hours to earn one credit.

Q: How do I locate a museum for my internship?
A: That depends if you already know what you want to do. Each internship experience is individualized to meet the student’s learning objectives given the available museum opportunities. The first step is to meet with your advisor. If you have an idea already, talk it over and most likely the advisor will say go for it! If you have no clue, discuss with your advisor your interests and experience and perhaps even the kind of job you might want to do someday. Your advisor can give you ideas on museums that may meet your goals. Either way, your advisor can give you contact information for internship coordinators at area museums. If you want to do your internship in another area, most major museums’ web sites have on-line information about their internship programs.

Q: How do I apply to a museum for an internship?
A: Each museum has its own process. Some are quite formal and require applications and letters of reference. Others involve contacting staff directly and letting them know of your interest. Your advisor can help you with the process for the museums you are interested in.

Q: How do I get an internship approved for credit?
A: Once you have applied to the museum for an internship and have a sense of the project you will be working on, you need to write a proposal to submit to your faculty advisor for approval. The guidelines for the proposals are posted on this web site. The advisor and your museum mentor should have a chance to comment on the proposal and to sign the final version, once you address any comments they have. Once the proposal is approved, your faculty advisor will ask the department secretary to authorize your registration for the course. Don’t forget to send a copy of the signed proposal to the mentor and your advisor, keep a copy for yourself,
and submit the original to the Museum Studies office (CA410) to be added to your file. If there are any questions about the expectations for the internship, you can all refer to the proposal for clarification.

Q: Are there paid internships?
A: Some museums offer paid internships, particularly for full-time summer internships. Check on-line internship listings for museums nationally offering paid internships. Most summer internships are advertised in the late fall with deadlines in the early spring and many are competitive. The Solution Center at IUPUI also supports paid internships for students working with certain community partners, and some area museums have work-study positions arranged through IUPUI. In addition, the IUPUI Museum Studies Program is able to support a small number of graduate students through paid internships. See your faculty advisor for further information.

Q: How is my internship evaluated?
A: The proposal guidelines specify a section on evaluation criteria. The internship should be evaluated based on that criteria by both the museum mentor (reported in writing to the faculty advisor) and the faculty advisor. The faculty advisor submits a grade for the internship based on the work documented in the final report, the mentor’s evaluation letter, and, where appropriate, a site visit or other first hand observation of the work.

Q: What goes in a final report?
A: See the guidelines for more details, but the basic purpose of the final report is both to document and reflect on the internship experience. For documentation you should have a log or other record of your time and tasks as well as visuals, if possible. You may also want to include examples of your work (a curriculum plan, catalogue sheets, exhibit concept documents). The reflection is generally an essay in which you give a narrative of the experience and, with critical self-reflection, connect it to your understanding of the museum field. This is the place to bring up issues you encountered, lessons learned, unexpected aspects (happy or otherwise), and any other insights you gained during the internship experience.

Q: Can I do an internship at a museum where I already work?
A: Yes, provided the internship is focused on work beyond your usual job responsibilities. Some students in this situation have worked in another department than their regular position or have taken on extra duties that inform and enhance their regular responsibilities.
Q: Can I get paid for an internship and still get credit?
A: Yes, but paid internships run through the IUPUI Museum Studies Program and funded as part of the graduate student’s financial support are structured as 20 hours per week internships at 3 credits a semester, and most run for ten months. These paid internships may be “prorated” for less time, but the stipend is then also reduced. See your faculty advisor for further details.

Q: What if the semester ends before my internship project is completed?
A: It is not uncommon for museum internship projects to run beyond the academic definition of a semester. If you know that your project will not be finished by the end of the semester, build that expectation into your internship proposal from the beginning. For instance if you project is to develop and implement the curriculum for a summer camp and the camp won’t take place until three weeks after the end of the spring semester in which you are enrolled, schedule your internship final report submission date accordingly and remind the faculty advisor to submit an “Incomplete” for your grade at the end of the semester. Once your project is done, complete the final report as soon as possible, request your mentor’s letter of evaluation, and the faculty member can file a “removal of incomplete” form to record your final grade. If your project runs long unexpectedly, contact your advisor as soon as possible and negotiate a possible extension.

Q: What if my project takes a dramatic turn, once I get started?
A: Hopefully carefully and thoughtfully developed proposals will work through any issues before the beginning of a project, but sometimes things outside your control will change the internship. A staff member might leave the museum or a scheduled program or exhibit might get cancelled. In that case, meet as soon as possible with the faculty advisor and, if possible, the museum mentor, to figure out an alternative project. You will likely need to revise the original proposal, but in most cases the internship can continue on schedule. Often the “glitch” becomes the most interesting learning experience of the internship!