

# HIST 595: PUBLIC HISTORY RESEARCH PROJECT (CAPSTONE) GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

**What is HIST 595?** HIST 595 is the capstone course for the M.A. in Public History. It is designed to give students hands-on experience in the career field of their choice. Students should therefore choose a project that compliments both their course of study and career ambitions.

**What kinds of projects are encouraged?** Projects should incorporate client-based and/or academically-based research and should communicate their findings to a non-academic audience. It is expected that many students will choose their final projects based on their internship experience. Potential projects include, but are not limited to:

- Exhibitions
- Walking Tours
- Local or Institutional Histories
- Oral History Projects
- Curriculum Projects
- Preparation of Archival Finding Aids
- Visitor Surveys
- Workshops
- Grant Applications
- Public Programs/Events

## **How do I enroll in HIST 595?**

**Step 1:** Identify a potential project and a faculty sponsor in the History Department. The faculty sponsor will locate an appropriate faculty member to serve as a second reader who will assist in determining the project's final grade.

**Step 2:** Submit project proposal to faculty sponsor. All proposals should be submitted as both an electronic document (Microsoft Word) and as a hard copy. Proposals should be 4-5 pages in length, include a project title, and address the following issues:

- *Project Goals:* What do you hope to achieve with this project? Why do you think it is important?
- *Project Format:* What format will the final project take? (e.g. exhibition, walking tour, local or institutional history, curriculum project, etc.)
- *Project Team:* Are you working alone or are you completing this project in conjunction with another institution? For what specific parts of the project are you responsible? What do you expect from the organization? What steps have you taken to ensure that the organization will be able to meet your needs?
- *Project Resources:* While you do not need to include a complete bibliography as part of the proposal, please indicate what resources you will use to complete this project and where they are located. Resources might include collections of artifacts, manuscripts, photographs, institutional records, as well as appropriate secondary source materials.
- *Work Plan:* Identify specific tasks that you will complete and provide a schedule for completing these activities. As part of this work plan, identify times for you to meet with your faculty sponsor and discuss your progress.

**Step 3:** The proposal must be reviewed by the sponsoring faculty member and the Public History Advisory Committee. Once the project has been approved, students must also complete the “Capstone Project Request” form and send it to the Graduate School by second week of classes.

**By what date must I submit my project proposal?** Unless prior arrangements have been made, students must submit their proposals to the sponsoring faculty members at the beginning of pre-registration. Normally, the Public History Advisory Committee will meet to approve projects during the first week of registration. Students will be notified of the committee’s decision immediately.

**What should I submit for the final project and how will my project be evaluated?**

Projects will be graded based on the submission of the following materials:

*Full documentation of the project itself.*

Including, exhibit scripts, photos of exhibits, walking tour scripts, curriculum plans, oral history transcripts, and any other supporting materials created specifically for the project.

*A 10-15-page paper* that explains the significance of the completed project and how the project was carried out. Papers should address:

- *Project Goals:* What are the goals of this project? Why do you think this project was needed? How does the project achieve those goals?
- *Project Format:* Describe the format of your project. How did you structure the project to achieve your intended goals?
- *Audience:* Who was the intended audience for this project? How is this project designed to reach that audience?

*An annotated bibliography.* The bibliography must include works that address both the historical content of the project and the specific public history methodology used in its production.

While finals grades are issued at the discretion of the faculty sponsors and second readers, faculty members are encouraged to consider both the scholarly quality of the project and its presentation to a non-academic audience.

**When is my project due?** Your project will be due on the last day of classes in the semester in which you enrolled in HIST 595. Alternative arrangements may be made upon the mutual consent of both the student and the sponsoring faculty member.