

# Public History

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## Department Information

- **Department Location:**  
Minard Hall
- **Department Phone:**  
701-231-8654
- **Department Web Site:**  
[www.ndsuhprs.org/](http://www.ndsuhprs.org/) (<http://www.ndsuhprs.org/>)
- **Credential Offered:**  
B.S.; B.A.
- **Official Program Curriculum:**  
[bulletin.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/public-history/](http://bulletin.ndsu.edu/undergraduate/program-curriculum/public-history/)

Do you like to study history but wonder what you can do with a history degree? If so, the public history program at North Dakota State University may be for you. This innovative program is the first and only one of its kind in the Upper Midwest for undergraduates. It provides students with the opportunity to explore a variety of careers and prepares them for employment or graduate school in the expanding field of public history. Examples of new opportunities for public history majors in recent years include employment in historical societies, museums, archives, historic preservation, corporations, municipalities, labor and farm organizations, and state and federal government agencies.

## THE PROGRAM

The department developed this program after careful examination of successful public history programs at such institutions as the University of Connecticut, the University of Delaware, Arizona State University and the University of California Santa Barbara. In addition, local and regional historical agencies, including the State Historical Society of North Dakota, were consulted on the development of the program. The core is the major of 51 credits, which consists of a well-integrated combination of courses designed to provide students with training in the general field of history as well as the specific field of public history. The intent of the program is to provide a structured framework of courses and allowance for some flexibility to reflect personal interests.

## INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The public history major provides students with a solid foundation in history content and methodology, and introduces them to such fields as archival and museum work, collections management, historic preservation, and archaeology. A crucial part of the program is an approved internship of nine credits at a historical agency, often local museums such as Bonanzaville or the Historical and Cultural Society of Clay County. This internship is designed to provide students with practical on-the-job experience in public history.

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Recent graduates in public history are employed at the State Historical Society of North Dakota, the National Park Service, and several county museums and historic sites. Currently, the U.S. Department of Labor predicts that openings for archivists and curators is “projected to grow 13 percent from 2016 to 2026, faster than the average for all occupations.” Further information on career opportunities can be found in the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* published by the U.S. Department of Labor. Some students decide to pursue further graduate study after completing a Public History degree at NDSU. Several of our recent graduates have been admitted to graduate school in leading public history programs.

## THE CURRICULUM

Students begin with nine to 15 credits at the 100-200 level to provide a foundation for their later work. Public history courses at the 200 level may be used to meet this requirement. Year-long survey courses in U.S. history and western civilization are provided to give students a basic knowledge of the history of the United States and of the wider cultural heritage of the western world. After completing their 100-200 level courses, students complete a course on historical research and writing. At the junior or senior level, students take a sequence of courses in American, European, and World history.

These courses provide students with in-depth historical content that they will need in their careers. Courses in museum collections management, archival theory and practice, and archival preservation are required to give students necessary experience in the processing of archival material and the care of artifacts. Archival preservation deals with the preservation of archival materials, a major source of understanding of America’s social past. The resources of the North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies at the NDSU Archive are used in these classes. Three to nine more credits of history at the junior or senior level are required to gain further historical knowledge; these courses are chosen after consultation with an advisor. A three-credit senior seminar is required of all history majors as a capstone experience.

Courses such as introduction to public history, museum studies, and collections management provide knowledge of related areas within the broader field of public history. The introduction to public history course provides an overview of the field and provides students with an opportunity to conduct a public history project. The museum studies course is intended to familiarize students with the theory and practice of museum work as well as experience creating an exhibit. The collections management course provides an introduction to care and management of museum collections. These

courses and the required historical content courses provide students with an understanding of the cultural, political, social and economic changes within our civilization as a whole. They also teach students how to craft an interpretation of those changes.

Finally, a nine-credit internship provides practical experience in the field of public history. The State Historical Society of North Dakota (and other local and regional historical agencies) provide opportunities in areas such as archival work, historical editing, historical preservation and interpretation of historic sites.

## Plan of Study

Please note this is a sample plan of study and not an official curriculum. Actual student schedules for each semester will vary depending on start year, education goals, applicable transfer credit, and course availability. Students are encouraged to work with their academic advisor on a regular basis to review degree progress and customize an individual plan of study.

<b>First Year</b>			
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Credits</b>
HIST 101 or 103	3	COMM 110	3
ENGL 120	3	HIST 102 or 104	3
GE Social Science Req.	3	GE Social Science Req.	3
GE Science/Technology Req.	3	GE Science/Technology	3
Minor/Elective	3	GE Science/Technology Lab	1
		Minor or Free Elective	3
	15		16
<b>Second Year</b>			
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Credits</b>
HIST 251	3	HIST 252 or 352	3
GE Science/Technology	3	AHSS Fine Arts Req.	3
AHSS Social Science Req.	3	US or Non-US History Req.	3
GE Wellness Req.	2-3	GE Quantitative Reasoning Req.	3
Minor/Elective	3	Minor/Foreign Language/Elective	3
	14-15		15
<b>Third Year</b>			
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Credits</b>
HIST 390	3	HIST 352 or 252	3
HIST 401	3	HIST 403	3
HIST 404	3	HIST 415	3
US or Non-US History Requirement	3	HIST 496	3
Minor/Foreign Language Req.	3	Minor/Foreign Language/Elective	3
	15		15
<b>Fourth Year</b>			
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Credits</b>
HIST 489	3	HIST 496	3
HIST 496	3	US or Non-US History Requirement	3
US or Non-US History Req.	3	Minor/Elective	3
Minor/ Foreign Language/Elective	3	Minor/Elective	3
Minor/Elective	3	Minor/Elective	3
	15		15

Total Credits: 120-121