

**Request to Plan a Doctoral Program in Public History
by North Carolina State University**

Introduction

This is a request from North Carolina State University for approval to plan a doctoral program in Public History (CIP: 54:0105).

Program Description

Public History is a way in which historians provide an essential public service: making history accessible to the broad public in a form that will be readily acceptable and useful. The field emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as the outreach branch of the History discipline. It expands on the methods of academic history by emphasizing a wider variety of applications and by responding to publicly-generated questions. In doing so, it expands the influence of History, extending research, interpretations, and lessons beyond the academy's walls. As James O. Horton, president of the Organization of American Historians, wrote in 2005, "Some might call it a matter of patriotism, that is, an act of education geared to strengthen the social and political fabric of the nation."³

The Ph.D. in Public History program will offer doctoral training that integrates historical knowledge, scholarly research and writing, and preparing graduates for jobs framed by interaction with the public. These jobs include researching and writing community, government, and corporate histories; establishing and operating archives, records management systems, museums, and historical agencies; conducting historic site interpretation and preservation endeavors; developing heritage tourism; editing historical manuscripts; producing historical documentaries and other media projects, including online documentary and encyclopedic web sites; conducting oral history interviews; serving as independent consultants; and working in government agencies related to historical and heritage issues.

Public History employs a wide variety of applications because, as one Public Historian explained, "People consume history for a variety of reasons: some for nostalgia, some out of academic interest, for personal enrichment, and so on. Public history teaches us that we can't expect there to be only one message." (Jim Horton, quoted in Beverly Sanford and Hadass Sheffer, "Careers for Humanities Phil's in Museums," *Chronicle Careers* 11 March 2002, http://chronicle.com/jobs/2002/03/200203_1_I0lc.htm) As a consequence, students wishing to pursue careers in History beyond academia must receive preparation in more than one manner. The Ph.D. in Public History will prepare students well in the skills and methodologies of more traditional History and complement that education with training in a specialized Public History field and additional courses in Public History methodologies and Nonprofit Administration skills.

In training future Public Historians, we are training ambassadors for the history profession. Their preparation in History empowers them to produce and convey cutting-edge historical scholarship into public arenas. Their preparation in Public History enables

them to do so with the skills and methodologies required to educate beyond the audiences of academia.

The proposed doctoral program in Public History will build upon an already established and very well-regarded M.A. program in Public History. The Ph.D. program will be a highly structured, on-campus program with a dissertation and a residency internship that will provide thorough grounding in Public History methodologies, applications, and administration as well as historical research and writing. Graduates will be well prepared to join and succeed in the Public History job market for positions above entry-level, and to compete in the History market for academic positions identified as Public History. Additionally, with the development of the Heritage Preservation track, many graduates will apply their degrees in Public History to cultural and economic development in the private and public sectors.

The doctoral program in Public History will produce students who are highly qualified to provide leadership in research, innovation, and development of Public History initiatives in higher education and the private and public sectors. In higher education, they will be qualified for positions in Departments of History. Public History is one of the fastest growing fields in History, and there is a steady demand for qualified applicants. In the private and public sectors, they will be qualified to manage Public History organizations and develop historical content and interpretation for public audiences.

Doctoral students in this program will achieve the following objectives:

1. Pose and solve research problems pertaining to the uses and interpretations of historical knowledge, especially as they apply to Public History venues.
2. Master the central theories and concepts from traditional disciplinary approaches to historiography, historical writing, and public application of historical knowledge.
3. Acquire detailed historical and critical understanding of the changing interpretations of historical knowledge.
4. Gain experience with a variety of research and analytical methods, both quantitative and qualitative, and understand their epistemological orientations and limitations within public history venues.
5. Gain experience in, and detailed historical and critical understanding of, archival management, museum studies, and heritage preservation. (The latter field will give special attention to Public History's impact on economic development in the private and public sectors.)
6. Apply training in nonprofit administration to Public History venues.
7. Become professional historians who can effectively relate historical and historiographical knowledge to undergraduate, graduate, and public audiences.

8. Become professional historians who are themselves exemplary scholars, effective members of the discipline, and experienced researchers.

The proposed program will be enhanced by inter-institutional cooperation with the State Archives and the Library of the State Supreme Court, as well as existing relationships with the School of Information and Library Sciences at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the School of Library and Information Sciences at North Carolina Central University. Additionally, students will benefit from proximity to divisions of the North Carolina Office of Archives and History—the North Carolina Museum of History, the Historic Preservation Office, the Office of State Archaeology, Historical Publications, the Highway Marker Program, and a range of historic sites and museums—and local resources (including Wake County Parks, multiple private museums, and private Cultural Resource Management organizations).

The proposed Ph.D. in Public History program also fits into NC State's strategic plan by building a graduate/professional program in a dynamic and still emerging field that will strengthen NC State's commitment to a broader, more comprehensive range of disciplines.

UNC Tomorrow Relevance

Primarily fits under Outreach and Engagement (Rec. 4.7) and Communities and their Economic Transformation (Rec. 4.4) by providing cultural and economic enhancement of cultural and historical sites and contributing graduates for curatorial work, interpretation and preservation of sites, document, and artifacts.

Disciplinary Panel

In addition to representatives of NCSU, there were representatives of ASU, ECU, FSU, UNCC, UNCG, UNC-CH as well as representatives of UNC-GA. Representatives of the program described the background and the overall program. The sub-field of Public History has grown nationally and there are many baccalaureate and master's programs in public history with only a small number of doctoral programs. NCSU has a master's in public history and seeks to develop a doctoral program that would prepare people for teaching in other Public History programs and for working in the museum-historical site-curatorial arena, an area where they have had success placing their master-level graduates.

The panel discussed the degree production and employment opportunities in history generally and there was agreement that for many areas the prospects were far from good. The issue then becomes whether there can be good prospects for graduates of public history doctoral programs while the prospects for most other areas of history are not good. The concern by some panel members was that graduates of this proposed program would be competing with the excess production in history generally for many of the positions, since many people trained at the doctoral level in history work outside the academy.

Response

Representatives of the program made the case that the public history doctoral programs, though small in number, were having good results in placing their graduates and that the graduates of NC State's program would compete well because of their specialized preparation.

Student Demand

Students want to do doctoral work in history as is evidenced by the growing numbers who are being produced by doctoral programs even though it is an area which has a very difficult situation in regard to employment. NCSU has had good demand at the master's level and suggests that will occur at the doctoral level as well.

Opportunities for Graduates of the Program

This issue is not clear and turns on whether a program in a specialty area can draw students and find opportunities for them when the general field has a depressed job market.

Resource Implications

The resource needs are typically specified more fully in the proposal for establishment. By the time the program is fully ramped up which would likely be at least six years from now, the estimated cost to be provided by State funding would be approximately \$325,000 dollars, or approximately \$65,000 per year over the five-year ramp up period.

Issues to Address in Planning

A core issue will be the continuing analysis of the condition of the field of history overall and how public history is faring within that context as that relates to starting another history program.

Recommendation

I think there is no question but that NCSU would mount a high quality program. The issue is balancing considerations. On the one hand, NCSU has long experience in public history, has a strong master's program on which to build, has institutional commitments to broaden the academic range of doctoral education, and makes the case that the public history job market is independent of the overall market. On the other, the history profession is widely recognized as a field that is overproducing doctoral students. A typical comment is that of Robert Townsend, made at the beginning of 2010 in an American Historical Association publication, that "it appears that the discipline is entering one of the most difficult academic job markets for historians in more than 15 years." There are also disagreements about how independent the public history job market is from the field generally.

Given the competing considerations a recommendation to plan is tempered by the likelihood that all these considerations will continue to be relevant to a proposal to establish.

The staff of the General Administration recommends that the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approve the request from North Carolina State University to plan a doctoral program in Public History.

Approved to be Recommended for Planning to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs



Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

August 2, 2010

General Information Template for Academic Program Review

Degree Area and Level:

Ph.D. in Public History (CIP 54.0105) at NCSU

Addressing UNC Tomorrow:

This proposed program would address several Recommendations within the UNC Tomorrow Report including the components to enhance Our Global Readiness (Recommendation 4.1), Our Communities and Their Economic Transformation (Recommendation 4.4), and Our University's Outreach and Engagement (Recommendation 4.7).

Role of Program in Relation to State and Regional Needs:

According to the proposal, "The doctoral program in Public History will produce students who are highly qualified to provide leadership in research, innovation, and development of Public History initiatives in higher education and the private and public sectors. In higher education, they will be qualified for positions in Departments of History. Public History is one of the fastest growing fields in History, and there is a steady demand for qualified applicants. In the private and public sectors, they will be qualified to manage Public History organizations and develop historical content and interpretation for public audiences."

US Labor Department Analysis:

- *Summary* – Employment of archivists, curators, and museum technicians is expected to increase 18 percent over the 2006-16 decade, faster than the average for all occupations. Jobs for archivists are expected to increase as public and private organizations require organization of and access to increasing volumes of records and information. Public interest in science, art, history, and technology will continue, creating opportunities for curators, conservators, and museum technicians. Museum attendance has held steady in recent years, many museums are financially healthy, and many have pursued building and renovation projects.

Source: http://www.occsupplydemand.org/OSD_UnitOfAnalysis.aspx?CLUSCODE=186A-03&ST=NC&PathNo=1

Availability of Program Statewide (Enrollment and Degrees Awarded in Last 3 Years):

- *Public universities* – The two degree programs listed below are listed in the CIP 54.0101. The UNCG program started enrolling students in Fall 2004.

Enrollment			Academic Year					
			Fall 06	Spr 07	Fall 07	Spr 08	Fall 08	Spr 09
UNC-CH	History	PhD	100	99	113	105	123	112
UNCG	History	PhD	17	16	23	23	28	26

Number of Degrees Awarded			Academic Year		
			2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
UNC-CH	History	PhD	13	24	18
UNCG	History	PhD	N/A	N/A	N/A

- *Private universities* – Not available

Available in Online or Distance Format from UNC institutions:

Not available

Available or not from Academic Common Market:

Not available

APPENDIX M

NCSU Campus enrollment and degrees awarded in similar programs at the Doctoral level:
 (Based on two CIP digits – 54 CIP is the summary group for History under which Public History is a program.) NCSU does not offer any doctoral programs in the 54 CIP category.

Campus Average of enrollment and degrees awarded in this degree area at the Doctoral level:
 (Based on two CIP digits – 54 CIP is the summary group for History under which Public History is a program - over the last 3 Academic Years, Fall 2006-Fall 2009)

Campus Average			
	Number of Active Programs	Enrollment per Semester	Degrees Awarded per Year
UNC-CH	1	109	18
UNCG	1	22	N/A * Program started in Fall 2004
Campus Average:		66	18

NCSU Campus Degree Programs added in the past three years:

- Bachelor
 - BS Agricultural Science (06/08/2007)
 - BA German Studies (06/08/2007)
 - BA Design Studies (03/16/2007)
 - BS Genetics (11/13/2009)
 - BS Soil and Land Development (04/09/2010)
- Master
 - MS Analytics (02/09/2007)
 - MAT - Master of Arts in Teaching (10/17/2008)
 - MGIM - Master of Global Innovation Management (01/11/2008)
 - Master of Geospatial Information Science and Technology (02/12/2010)
 - Master of Environmental Assessment (02/12/2010)
 - Master of Environmental Engineering (04/09/2010)
 - MS Environmental Engineering (04/09/2010)
- Doctoral
 - PhD Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences (01/12/2007)

NCSU Campus Degree Programs discontinued in past three years:

- Bachelor
 - BS Health Occupations Education (03/20/2009)
- Master
 - MS Agricultural and Resource Economics (03/20/2009)
 - MEd in Special Education, Behavior Disorders (03/20/2009)
 - MS Behaviorally/Emotionally Handicapped (03/20/2009)
 - MEd Mentally Handicapped (03/20/2009)
 - MS Mentally Handicapped (03/20/2009)
 - MEd Specific Learning Disabilities (03/20/2009)
 - MS Specific Learning Disabilities (03/20/2009)
 - MS School Psychologist (05/11/2007)
- Doctoral
 - PhD School Psychologist (05/11/2007)