

ESTABLISHMENT OF A MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN PUBLIC HISTORY

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve a new Master of Arts in Public History, effective Fall 2015.

Background

For historians, job opportunities have grown in the past thirty years in the field of public history, which refers to the various ways history is created for and consumed by audiences outside of a traditional classroom. It is “applied history.” Public historians provide an essential service by making historical scholarship accessible to a broad public audience. Public history degree programs have proliferated nationally since the 1990s, but they remain underrepresented in the state and region. In the state of Michigan and the Great Lakes region more generally, there are no terminal graduate degree program specifically in public history. A Master of Arts in Public History (MAPH) at Wayne State would address this gap and provide students in Southeast Michigan and beyond opportunities to earn a terminal public history degree in an urban setting with a wide range of internship possibilities.

Program Description

The MAPH leads to employment in occupations as diverse as museum work, library and archival research, public policy analysis, documentary filmmaking, state and national parks, tourism, and other applied history fields. The curriculum will provide students with core courses in public history, supporting courses in one or more historical/geographic fields, and specialized courses within public history. The program will be unique in the state and should draw a wide range of students from a presently-untapped audience of students who seek to complete a professional degree program.

Admission Requirements

Admissions standards for the MAPH are the same as those for the existing Master of Arts in History. The grade point average required for regular admission to the program will be a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 overall and at least a 3.25 GPA in advanced undergraduate courses in history and related subjects. Qualified admission will be considered for students with an overall undergraduate GPA of 2.74-2.99.

Curriculum Requirements

The MAPH program requires students to complete a minimum of thirty-three credits using master’s degree Plan B: a minimum of twenty-seven credits in course work plus a three-credit internship and a three-credit final project. The coursework includes two core public history courses, a 135-hour internship, a methodology course, and a minimum of eighteen credits of electives (at least three courses of which must be taken at the 7000-level or above) that support

their specialization and professional goals. Elective courses will be available in various disciplines, including: anthropology; gender, sexuality, and women's studies; history; art history; library and information science; political science; and urban studies and planning. No later than the end of the first semester, students will select a track from among the following: museum studies; cultural resource management; public policy; African American history and culture; labor and urban history; and gender, sexuality, and women's studies.

Graduation Requirements

All coursework must be completed in accordance with the Graduate School and the regulations governing graduate scholarship and degrees. Students may enroll on a full-time or part-time basis but must complete requirements within six years of admission.

Program Administration

The director of graduate studies, together with the graduate committee, in the Department of History has responsibility for recruitment, admission decisions, student advising, and oversight of student progress and internships for the MAPH program. The Internal Advisory Board of the MAPH will have responsibility for curriculum development and program evaluation, resource and internship development, as well as any fund-raising and alumni relations in consultation with the External Advisory Board.

Budget and Resource Requirements

The MAPH program will work in tandem with the already existing Master of Arts in History, and it will be sustained by the existing structure within the Department of History. The MAPH will fall under the responsibilities of the director of graduate studies, and its courses will be staffed by current faculty.

Accreditation

No specialized accreditation is required.

Approvals

The proposal was approved by the faculty and Chair of the Department of History, the faculty and Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the Graduate Council.