

Internship Information Packet

The information contained herein outlines the policies and procedures of the Museum Studies Program. The Program Head of the Museum Studies Program must approve any exceptions to these policies and procedures.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Purpose: The George Washington University Museum Studies Internship Program offers Museum Studies graduate students the opportunity to apply knowledge learned in the classroom in a structured, supervised environment.

Eligibility: The Museum Studies Internship Program is available to graduate-level Museum Studies students at GWU who have completed at least one semester of full-time coursework.

Requirements: All students must register for at least one [1], three-credit internship as a requirement for the MA degree. The internship is arranged at a museum or a museum-related institution (exhibition design firm, art handler). Students may register for up to a total of six [6] credit hours of internship. For students with little to no work experience in museums, we recommend that students participate in two, three-credit internships. You should discuss what makes most sense for your program and career goals with your supervisor.

Length: To receive credit for the internship, students must complete **200 working hours** in an approved institution. You must not start the internship prior to registering for the semester.

Registration: Students register for an internship the same way they register for other courses. The course number for Museum Studies Internships is CMST 6501. When registering, please confirm that you are registered for three [3] credit hours. Internships are tuition-bearing just like any other three-credit class.

Students do have the option of registering for two internships (6 credits total) in one semester. For each semester, there are two [2] sections of CMST 6501 offered. To complete both internships at once, the student must register for 6501 AND 6502.

Supervision: The Museum Studies Program and the sponsoring museum jointly supervise the internship. The museum provides direct supervision through regular scheduled meetings and ongoing mentoring. The Museum Studies Program monitors the internship through correspondence with the museum supervisor and the student, and through the Mid-term Evaluation.

CMST Paperwork: Prior to starting the internship, the student and the museum supervisor should complete the **Statement of Expectations**, and the **Internship Timetable Agreement**, located in the [Internship Packet](#). In addition, new museum supervisors (those who haven't previously supervised a GW Museum Studies intern) must provide their curriculum vitae or resume. **The student must upload these materials to Blackboard prior to the start of the internship. You should then send the Internship Checklist to your advisor for sign-off.** Once they have done so, they will return the signed form to you, which you should also load up to Blackboard (we use Blackboard for document storage and tracking).

Although these materials require the museum supervisor's participation in order to complete, it is ultimately the intern's responsibility to ensure that all appropriate paperwork reaches CMST in a

timely manner. No student may receive academic credit for an internship unless a Statement of Expectations is on file with the Museum Studies office.

Internship Report: At the end of your internship, please submit a 5-7 page internship report. This report should include a brief description of the institution where you worked, an account of your internship responsibilities, and a description of the tasks you were assigned and the work you completed. Also include a sample of your work product. Depending on the internship, this could include samples of cataloguing sheets, a description of a program you developed, or an account of the research you completed for an exhibition project. Finally, provide a reflection on the internship experience that addresses what you learned both in terms of content and work process, the work culture where you interned, and what was most useful to your professional development. If applicable, you may also discuss any challenges you may have faced and how you handled them.

Evaluation: The museum supervisor must complete a mid-term evaluation and a final evaluation letter for each intern. The Information Packet includes a form for each report. Timely submission of these evaluations is essential since the Museum Studies Program cannot award a final grade to the student without them.

- The mid-term evaluation is due after half (100 hours) of the internship hours have been completed.
- The final evaluation letter is due within one (1) week of the final day of the internship.

With the approval of your Museum Studies advisor, an internship may extend past a normal semester time period. In such a case, the student receives as IPG (in progress) grade at the end of the semester. When the internship is complete, and all paperwork is submitted to Blackboard, your final grade will be updated. **Please make sure you notify your Museum Studies advisor when your paperwork is submitted.**

University Contact: All questions and correspondences should be directed to your Museum Studies advisor:

- Laura Schiavo, lschiavo@gwu.edu
- Suse Anderson, suse@gwu.edu
- Max van Balgooy, mvanbalgooy@gwu.edu
- Schillica Howard, schillica.howard@gwu.edu

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS

Planning: When planning an internship, students should take stock of their skills, knowledge and experience gaps, interests, and career plans. Students should review internship opportunities posted on the Museum Studies listserv and newsletter and on various museum websites. Students are encouraged to speak to other students and discuss recent internship experiences.

The student is required to discuss his/her plans with their Museum Studies Advisor before registering for an internship. The Museum Studies advisor counsels and oversees the process of intern placement, and helps monitor the internship.

All questions regarding the structure of internships and basic requirements should be directed to your Museum Studies advisor. Although the Museums Studies faculty are available to assist the student with their internship, it is ultimately students' responsibility to secure an internship and ensure their successful completion of this requirement.

Internship Applications: The student is responsible for locating, completing, and submitting the sponsoring institution's internship application. Many museums and cultural organizations have formal internship application procedures, which students must follow. Deadlines for applications may be months in advance of a starting date, so students should start the process early. Other institutions have less formal procedures. In some cases, a direct inquiry to a potential museum sponsor will be sufficient to identify an internship opportunity. Information on internship procedures is generally available online.

If an institution's internship application requires letters of recommendation, the Museum Studies Program will gladly provide one. Requests to professors and advisors should be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the deadline.

The Museum Interview: Many museums and other cultural institutions require a prospective intern to interview for an available position. Students should conduct themselves in a professional manner and bring a resume to the interview. If the institution offers the position to a CMST student, they should have a general discussion regarding the objectives, hours, and supervision. Before accepting the offer, the student should provide the museum staff member with a copy of this Internship Packet and the attached forms. If the museum staff member has any questions or concerns, they should contact your Museum Studies Advisor.

Student Responsibilities: It is students' responsibility to keep their Museum Studies advisor informed on the progress in obtaining an internship. Before a student starts any internship, the Museum Studies advisor should be generally aware of the placement of the student and of the nature of the internship duties. The Museum Studies Internship Packet should be completed, signed, and submitted to the Museum Studies advisor for approval no later than one (1) week after the internship begins. No student will receive academic credit for an internship unless these materials are received in a timely manner.

Students are encouraged to bring any problems with the internship to the attention of their Museum Studies advisor as soon as concerns arise. It is the responsibility of advisors to help resolve such problems and ensure meaningful educational experiences for students. If students have any questions, they should not hesitate to ask.

Once the internship is completed, the student is responsible for submitting an acceptable final work product to the Museum Studies advisor and ensuring that all evaluations have successfully arrived.

All of the Museum Studies internship information and forms are available on the Current Students Resources section of the website.

We welcome your participation in the Museum Studies Internship Program, and are here to facilitate a successful and rewarding internship experience.