Public History Project
Public Historian or Public History Producer (Summer 2021)
Deadline: May 31 or until filled

Background:
The University of Wisconsin–Madison’s Public History Project is a multi-year effort to uncover and give voice to those who experienced, challenged and overcame prejudice on campus. The project grew out of a campus study group that looked into the history of two UW–Madison student organizations in the early 1920s that bore the name of the Ku Klux Klan. Chancellor Rebecca Blank commissioned the Public History Project as one of several responses to the study group’s findings. The broad intent of the project is to ensure that all students and alumni are aware of the full history of the university, including the accomplishments of campus community members from marginalized populations whose stories previously may have been hidden or not widely known.

Project Description:

We are seeking a student with a vision for how this project could change campus climate and how it could continue a difficult conversation about the university’s past. There are two tracks: research/oral history OR public history production.

In the research track, the work largely consists of independent research in the UW Archives and the Wisconsin Historical Society Archives researching the history of the University and oral history interviews with a diverse group of students, faculty, staff, and alumni. We will be looking at exclusion and discrimination on campus broadly, across the entire history of the university. The types of research topics to be covered include:

- Indigenous history on campus
- History of Black Greek Life organizations
- Higher education diversity programs; affirmative action
- Political activist groups in Wisconsin
- History of ethnic studies programs
- Athletics

In the public history production track, we seek students who have a vision for how histories of racism, discrimination, and resistance can work to change the culture of UW-Madison. Students will collaborate with the Project Director and other researchers to produce a public history product. This product could take many forms. It can be anything that relays complex historical information to the public, campus community. For example, exhibit text, podcasts, video production, art, plaques and markers, event series, etc. are all common public history tools. In this track, we seek a student with a creative vision for how history can be shared with the campus community.
Responsibilities:
- Collaborate with Project Director and researchers to research and/or create a public history product;
- Identify community partners and campus stakeholders; communicate collaborate with community members and stakeholders to complete research and/or product
- Maintain a project plan including a timeline, budget, and overall vision to complete the research or public history product; meet goals and benchmarks determined by Director and researcher

Proficiencies Desired:
- Research and writing skills
- Basic knowledge of UW or Wisconsin history
- Previous project management experience (could be managing a class project or paper)

Potential Transferrable Skills to be Gained:
- Archival research and writing skills
- Oral history interviewing techniques
- Communicating with diverse publics; The ability to transform complex ideas into understandable products for the public
- Lines on CVs/products for portfolios

Timeline:
Four months. Approx. June to September 2021

Compensation:
This position is funded for $2250 total. $1250 will come from the Humanities Responder/HEX program at the Center for the Humanities and $1000 from the Public History Project. If accepted, you will be a scholar in the HEX program, participate in professional development and mentorship throughout the project’s planning, implementation, and evaluation.

To apply:
Please send the following materials in PDF format to both applications@humanities.wisc.edu and klbutcher@wisc.edu. If you have any questions during the process or would like to schedule a meeting to discuss this opportunity, please contact Assistant Director for Public Humanities Aaron Fai (fai@wisc.edu) or Director Kacie Butcher (klbutcher@wisc.edu).
- Cover letter describing your qualifications and interest in the position (1 page)
- Resume (1 page)
- Academic transcript (unofficial)