

TO: The Board of Regents Addendum XI-A-3  
Academic Affairs Committee

MEETING DATE: December 2, 2022

SUBJECT: Creation of a Master of Arts (MA) in Public History within the Department of History in the College of Arts and Sciences at UNK

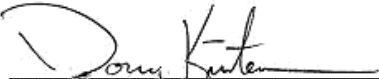
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Approve creation of a Master of Arts (MA) in Public History within the Department of History in the College of Arts and Sciences at UNK


PREVIOUS ACTIONS: August 11, 2017 - Expedited approval of the Public History graduate certificate in the Department of History in the College of Natural and Social Sciences at the University of Nebraska at Kearney was reported to the Board.

EXPLANATION: The UNK College of Arts and Sciences proposes to establish an online 36-credit hour MA in Public History that can be completed in two years. The program will serve students preparing for careers in public history, a subfield of historical study and practice defined by its emphasis on doing history in and with public audiences. This includes careers in museums, historic preservation, digital history, oral history, cultural resource management, heritage tourism, and archives. The new degree is designed for both recent graduates from undergraduate History programs and related disciplines, as well as those currently employed in public history positions who are looking to expand their expertise. The curriculum is designed for employment outside of academia. No new coursework will need to be developed, and while the entire curriculum is available through UNK, students can broaden their expertise by taking approved graduate history coursework at any of the NU campuses.

This proposal has been reviewed by the Council of Academic Officers; it also has been reviewed by the Academic Affairs Committee.

SPONSORS: Kristen L. Majocho, Ph.D.  
Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
University of Nebraska at Kearney

APPROVED:   
Douglas A. Kristensen, Chancellor  
University of Nebraska at Kearney

  
Walter E. Carter, President  
University of Nebraska

DATE: October 28, 2022

# UNK<sup>®</sup>

## OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

October 3, 2022

Ted Carter, President  
University of Nebraska  
3835 Holdrege Street – Varner Hall  
Lincoln, NE 68583

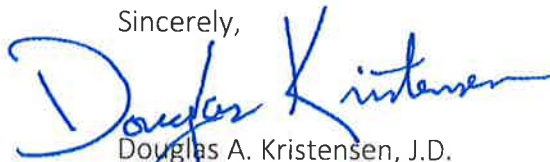
President Carter:

The University of Nebraska at Kearney Department of History has submitted a proposal to offer a Master of Arts Degree in Public History. Dr. Will Stoutamire, UNK Assistant Professor of History and nationally recognized public historian, will lead this program with broad professional support from Department of History graduate status faculty, all of whom are experienced online teachers.

The proposal calls for a 36-credit-hour program intended as a graduate-level option for baccalaureate graduates and for historians working in the public sector (in venues such as museums, archives, state and national parks, and government agencies, for example) who seek expertise and/or career advancement opportunities. No additional courses or resources will be needed, and the program will be offered fully online or with an in-person option. In her letter of support, Senior Vice Chancellor Kristen Majocha states that, if approved, this will be the only fully online public history MA program in Nebraska and in the nation. A notable point.

I agree with the recommendation of Dr. Majocha that positive consideration be given to UNK's Master of Arts Degree in Public History proposal. Thank you for your attention and assistance.

Sincerely,




Douglas A. Kristensen, J.D.  
Chancellor

bjm



DATE: October 3, 2022

TO: Douglas A. Kristensen  
Chancellor

FROM: Kristen L. Majocha, Ph. D.   
Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Proposed University of Nebraska at Kearney Master of Arts in Public History

I am writing regarding a proposal for a Master of Arts degree in Public History in the Department of History, in the College of Arts and Sciences. I concur with the recommendations from the respective Deans and Chair in requesting that positive consideration be given to this proposal.

This program is designed to provide students with a theoretical grounding in the principles of public history, practical training in public history methods, and substantial experiential learning opportunities designed to prepare students for the competitive job market. No additional courses are needed as UNK already offers the curriculum through a primarily online format.

The proposed MA in Public History is significant as it is completely online with a regional and national scope. If approved, it will be the only fully online public history MA program in Nebraska as well as the nation.

With your approval, we will submit this proposal to the University of Nebraska Council of Academic Officers.

If you should need additional information, please let me know. Thank you.

tlp



October 1, 2022

Dr. Kristen Majocho  
Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
University of Nebraska at Kearney

Dear Dr. Majocho

I am writing in support of the UNK History Department's proposal to offer a Masters of Arts degree in Public History. Public History is the applied field of history where historians work with public audiences in public venues such as museums, archives, state and national parks, and government agencies. Those working in public history need applied and experiential types of training that is not typically offered in traditional academic MA programs. This program will provide graduate-level training for freshly minted undergraduate students and those already working in the field who are seeking career advancement opportunities. The proposed Public History program will be offered entirely online but students will have the option of taking courses on campus where they can gain experiential training, working on public history projects with faculty at local historical venues on campus and in the community.

The Department of History is well prepared to offer this program. The department is a leader in online graduate education and has offered an online MA in History for 15 years. The department has fourteen faculty members with graduate faculty status and all are trained and experienced online teachers. Four faculty members have training or experience in public history and the program will be led by Dr. Will Stoutamire, a nationally recognized public historian. All of the proposed courses in the program have been developed and are currently being taught on a regular basis. No new resources are needed to offer this program but the Graduate Office will allocate one of its existing graduate assistant lines to the department.

I enthusiastically support this proposal and look forward to working the Department of History to launch this program. There are no public history programs in Nebraska and this will be the first fully online graduate program in the nation. It will not only be attractive to Nebraskans but those working in public history venues across the nation will find this online degree beneficial to professional development and career advancement. As outlined in the letters of support from prospective students and employers, there is high demand for such a program in Nebraska.

As a history faculty member for 19 years and department chair for 6 years, I can attest that public history is a growing field with high student demand. I am excited about UNK offering such a program that will help enhance the training of current and future public historians in Nebraska and beyond. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further commentary on this program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark R. Ellis', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Dr. Mark R. Ellis  
Dean of Graduate Studies & Academic Outreach



September 30, 2022

Dr. Mark Ellis  
Dean of Graduate Studies  
University of Nebraska at Kearney  
1901 University Drive  
Kearney, NE 68849

Dear Dean Ellis,

As the Interim Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, I am writing in support of the Masters of Arts Degree in Public History currently being proposed by Department of History. I believe the proposed degree program meets an increasing need across the state for an affordable, accessible, and timely graduate degree option for students interested in public history and many other professions. This program will be the first of its kind in our state and will fulfill a significant need for history students and to preserve Nebraska artifacts and stories.

The University of Nebraska at Kearney provides excellent preparation in history professions for students at the undergraduate level. There are however many students at our institution, and across the state and region, who choose to pursue graduate-level work in this field. These students need a graduate program that provides additional preparation in public history and especially digital history, historic preservation and curation and archival work. The proposed Masters in Public History would offer these students an opportunity to boost their academic credentials in a timely program that is both affordable and accessible. To ensure the success of the program, the History Department will convert an existing open faculty line into a Public History position.

The curriculum proposed by History Department has been designed to provide students with a solid foundation in history, while also allowing them the flexibility to engage in electives that will enhance their application to professional school and their professional development as historians, State and National Park workers, museum employees, and archivists. The program has four goals: to communicate specialized historical knowledge to the public, to enable the analysis of public history texts, to enable the demonstration of specialized knowledge of the theories and principals of public history, and to enable students to critically examine public history and make changes that improve public history practice. I believe that these values and objectives are in line with the NU system, but also with the strategic plans laid out by President Carter and UNK.

The College of Arts & Sciences is looking forward to the development of the Master's Degree in Public History and excited about the possibilities it offers our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Twigg', with a flourish at the end.

Paul Twigg, PhD  
Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
The University of Nebraska at Kearney

October 28, 2021

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
Department of History

To Whom It May Concern,

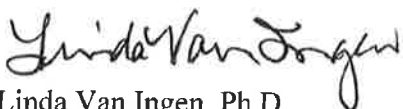
We whole heartedly support this new MA degree in Public History at UNK. It is a 36-credit hour program that is fully online and therefore will serve students and practicing professionals across the country. Students will learn about the theories and practices of public history through a curriculum that provides them with training and knowledge to become practitioners in museums, historic preservation, state parks and related fields.

This program is significant because it is fully online with a regional and national scope. If approved, it will be the only fully online public history MA program in the country. As compared to the History Department's existing concentration in public history for graduate students, this new degree program provides enhanced, hands-on training in the principles of public history to pursue public history careers. Nebraska has a need for trained professionals with a degree like this to work in state and local archives, museums, and parks. This degree will also provide UNK with the opportunity to develop enhanced partnerships with organizations in need of this expertise, both in Nebraska and wherever our online students are located.

UNK's History Department faculty is well prepared to lead this program because of a broad training and expertise as well as experience in online education. We have a public historian on our faculty who will lead the program, and others on the faculty who have the knowledge and training to complement the core curriculum of the new degree.

We appreciate your consideration in approving this program. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Linda Van Ingen, Ph.D.  
Professor and Interim Chair of History  
[vaningenL1@unk.edu](mailto:vaningenL1@unk.edu)



David D. Vail, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor and Interim Assistant Chair of History  
[vaildd@unk.edu](mailto:vaildd@unk.edu)

October 3, 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

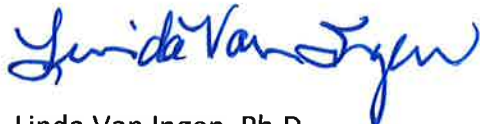
The History Department whole heartedly supports the creation of a new MA degree in Public History at UNK. It is a 36-credit hour program that is fully online and will serve students and practicing professionals both in Nebraska and across the country. Students will learn about the theories and practices of public history through a curriculum that provides them training and knowledge to become practitioners in museums, historical societies, state parks and related areas.

This program is significant because it is fully online with a regional and national scope. If approved, it will be the only fully online public history MA program in the country. Compared to the History Department's existing concentration in public history for graduate students, this new degree program will provide enhanced, hands-on training in the principles of public history to pursue public history careers. Nebraska has a need for trained professionals with a degree like this to work in the preservation of archives in all their variety and to create public history exhibits that are both digital and actual. This degree also will provide UNK with the opportunity to develop enhanced partnerships with organizations in need of this expertise in Nebraska and wherever our online students are located nationally and even internationally.

UNK's History Department faculty is well prepared to lead this program because of our broad training and expertise as well as over ten years of experience in online education. We have a public historian on our faculty who will lead the program as well as a newly opened faculty line that enables the hiring of a second public historian using existing resources. Others on our faculty have the knowledge and training to complement the core curriculum of this new degree.

We appreciate your consideration of this MA Public History proposal. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Linda Van Ingen, Ph.D.  
Professor and Chair of History  
[vanningenL1@unk.edu](mailto:vanningenL1@unk.edu)

**Public History**  
**Master of Arts Degree**  
**University of Nebraska at Kearney**

**Descriptive Information:**

**Name of institution proposing the program:** University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK)

**Name of the master's degree proposed:** Public History

**Degree to be awarded graduates of the program:** Master of Arts degree

**Other programs offered in this field by this institution:** Minor in Public History, Master of Arts in History

**Administrative unit for the program:** Department of History

**Proposed delivery site:** University of Nebraska at Kearney

**Date approved by governing board:** Pending

**Proposed date the program will be initiated:** Upon Approval

**Additional faculty/resources necessary to initiate program:** The Department of History will be able to initiate the program with existing faculty and resources; however, new faculty members hired by the department will be expected to contribute to the program. Both UNK Online and the UNK College of Arts and Sciences have pledged resources to support this program (see budget).

**New coursework needed to initiate program:** None. All coursework for the program is existing.

**Description and Purpose of Proposed Program:**

The Department of History is proposing a new Master of Arts in Public History at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. The MA in Public History will serve students preparing for careers in public history, a subfield of historical study and practice defined by its emphasis on doing history in and with public audiences. The program is designed to provide students with a grounding in the principles of public history, practical training in public history methods, and substantial experiential learning opportunities designed to prepare students for the competitive job market. This includes careers in museums, historic preservation, digital history, oral history, cultural resource management, heritage tourism, and archives. This program is supported by History Nebraska, Humanities Nebraska, the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, the Nebraska Museums Association, and our local museum partners, all of whom are potential employers for program graduates. Letters of support from these organizations, speaking to the need for more qualified public historians in Nebraska, have been included with this proposal. Employment opportunities for students in this program are further explored below.

The new degree is a 36-credit hour program that can be completed in two years, culminating in either a thesis or capstone project. No additional courses will need to be added as UNK already offers the curriculum through an online format. The program will accept up to 15 new students per year who will progress through the program design as described below. The curriculum will contain a heavy emphasis on public history courses, but students will also be required to develop a strong foundation in either US or non-US history through courses currently offered in our MA in History program. This reflects the department's belief that public historians must be trained to



communicate history with the public, but equally well versed in traditional historiography and research methods.

The MA in Public History will be an excellent choice for recent graduates from undergraduate programs in History and related disciplines, as well as nontraditional students and those currently employed in public history positions who are looking to expand their training and credentials in order to position themselves for advancement in the field. The Department of History's MA in History currently offers a public history concentration, which has attracted a growing number of public history professionals with employers ranging from small museums and historical societies to the National Park Service. Because of the nature of public history work, many of these professionals live in remote or isolated locations. There are currently no programs in Nebraska and few programs in the United States positioned to serve this community of students.

A standalone MA in Public History will better serve these prospective students than the existing concentration, as it offers a substantially different core curriculum focused on preparing students for employment outside of academia. Only one course in the existing MA in History (HIST 801 – America Interpreted) will remain a core course in the new curriculum. The core classes are essential for all trained public historians, focusing on public history theory and practice, historiography, digital history, and application of principles through a substantial internship experience. Students can also select electives that will enhance their training depending on the sub-fields of public history in which they are most interested, including related courses offered at other NU campuses. This combination of academic learning and practical, interdisciplinary training makes the MA in Public History markedly different than the traditional MA in History, a difference that is recognized by employers in public history.

The program is designed so that it can be completed entirely online, but students wanting a classroom experience may take some courses offered on campus, as well as work closely with faculty through a select number of graduate assistantship opportunities offered by the Department of History. While several MA in Public History programs exist throughout the United States and increasingly across the globe, this degree will be attractive for its affordability, accessibility, timeliness, and strong foundation in public history theory, methods, and practice. Similar programs are more expensive and require on-campus learning, which is not feasible for many students balancing a career and family with their desire for further training. These potential limitations make this program uniquely different from its competitors and an attractive option for Nebraska students, as well as students from across the United States. Lastly, the proposed program contributes to the University of Nebraska Five-Year Strategy by providing access to an affordable, online degree in public history and by being inclusive in intercampus and statewide collaborations.

### **Proposed Curriculum:**

Educational and career opportunities in public history are increasing nationwide. This new program is a 36-credit hour fully online curriculum, culminating in either a thesis or a public history project. The UNK Department of History currently has a History MA program that is thriving. This new MA in Public History will provide a unique dynamic for students and early professionals and will complement the existing History MA. The curriculum for this MA in

Public History was chosen to provide students with broad training in the theory and practice of the discipline of public history, as well as opportunities to gain more specific training and hands-on experiences in the sub-field(s) of public history (digital history, museums, historic preservation, archives, etc.) in which a student may be most interested. The core curriculum is comprised entirely of existing coursework at UNK.

The curriculum for the MA in Public History can be found below. Students will begin the program after having completed a BA degree in History, or a related discipline, with at least 18 credit hours in History, as well as the required prerequisite coursework. The program requirements are designed to ensure that students have the necessary academic background in content, theory, and methods to be successful in a 36-credit hour MA program. It is anticipated that some students will enter this program directly after completing their undergraduate degree, while others may be currently employed in public history or a related field and pursuing additional education to open opportunities for career advancement.

Students enrolled in this MA program will take a common core of coursework (15 credit hours) that provides them with a background in historiography, public history theory & practice, and digital history, as well as applied experience through a dedicated internship. Those students who are currently employed in a public history position will be able to substitute another course for the internship with Graduate Program Chair (GPC) approval. The remaining credit hours are electives in public history and either US or non-US History, which will be agreed upon in consultation with the student's academic advisor. The number of elective credit hours will depend on if the student chooses the thesis or public history project option. If a student chooses to partake in the thesis option, they will be required to take 12 credit hours of electives and 9 credit hours of required thesis courses [Introduction to Thesis – 3 credits (HIST 894); Thesis – 6 credits (HIST 896)]. Those students choosing the public history project will take a total of 15 credits hours of electives and 6 credits focusing on a public history project (HIST 897). In order to promote cohesion between graduate cohorts and avoid bifurcation between the tracks in traditional history and public history, students in the existing MA in History will continue to be required to take at least one public history course during their time in the program.

As the MA in Public History develops, key programs at other NU system campuses will be contacted for their participation in the curriculum. Students will be allowed to take related courses from other NU campuses. These intercampus course offerings will supplement the courses offered by the UNK History Department, allowing students to customize their program of study for need and desired career path. This will also avoid unnecessary replication of existing courses offered by other programs and model the interdisciplinary nature of public history training. Intercampus transfers can include courses from UNO's graduate program in Anthropology (such as ANTH 8216 Cultural Anthropology and ANTH 8226 North American Archeology). From UNL, they can include courses in Finance (such as FINA 871 Nonprofit Financial Management), courses from the UNL Anthropology program (such as ANTH 804 Curation of Archeological Collections), and courses from their Digital Humanities initiative (such as HIST 861 Geospatial Approaches in Digital Humanities and Social Sciences). From UNMC, these can include courses from the MA in Public Health (such as CPH 500 Foundations of Public Health). Within UNK, students will also have the option of taking courses from the existing Museum Emphasis within the MAE in Art Education (such as ART 844 History,

Theories, and Philosophies of Art Education) or courses in archives and data management offered by the University Archivist. Incorporating these opportunities for interdisciplinary learning will significantly expand career opportunities for students. An Advisory Board including representatives from across the NU system (see below) will provide the program with further input on potential intercampus collaborations.

The program is designed to be rigorous to demonstrate that the student will be successful in an intensive public history career. The program is designed to be completed in two years, although it is expected that students already employed in public history careers and seeking further education will take longer to complete the coursework if they enroll part-time while working. A suggested outline for completing the program in two years is below.

### **Summary of Hours Required for MA in Public History Degree:**

#### **Degree Requirements: 36 credit hours**

Students will be required to take all of the core courses (15 credits), which include a core course in historiography (America Interpreted), a seminar on the theory and principles of public history, a project-based course in public history methodology, a digital history course, and an internship. Students already employed in a public history position or possessing substantial and substantive experience in public history work may substitute the internship for an additional elective in public history with the approval from the Graduate Program Chair (GPC). The Public History GPC will determine if a student's outside experience is significant enough to merit this course substitution. Lastly, students will have the option of choosing the following track options: (a) thesis or (b) public history project.

#### **Core Courses – Required (15 credits):**

HIST 801 – America Interpreted (3 credits)  
 HIST 864 – Public History Seminar (3 credits)  
 HIST 865 – Public History Methods (3 credits)  
 HIST 868P – Digital History (3 credits)  
 HIST 875 – Internship (3 credits)

#### **Electives**

Students must take at least 6 hours of required US History (HIST 848 or other 800-level US History) or non-US History (HIST 849 or other 800-level non-US History) readings courses, as well as at least 6 hours of Public History electives. Electives must be approved by each student's Academic Advisor. Students may take related courses at UNL, UNO, or UNMC with GPC approval. Elective courses include:

Thesis Track: 12 credit hours of electives

Project Track: 15 credit hours of electives

#### **List of Existing US History Electives:**

HIST 800 – New Perspectives in History  
 HIST 803 – Historical Methods  
 HIST 805P – The Plains Indians

HIST 810P – Methods and Historiography  
 HIST 816 – Colloquium: Colonial and Revolutionary America  
 HIST 817: Colloquium: Nineteenth Century US  
 HIST 821P – Women in America  
 HIST 822 – Colloquium: Twentieth Century US  
 HIST 829P – Religion in America  
 HIST 831P – Colonial America, 1492-1750  
 HIST 832P – Revolutionary America, 1750-1800  
 HIST 833P – The National Period, 1800-1850  
 HIST 841 – Seminar: History of the American West  
 HIST 842 – Seminar: American Revolution and Confederation Period, 1763-1789  
 HIST 843 – Seminar: The American Indian  
 HIST 844 – Seminar: Nineteenth Century US  
 HIST 845P – The Civil War and Reconstruction  
 HIST 846 – Seminar: Recent American History  
 HIST 848 – Readings in American History<sup>1</sup>  
 HIST 858P – Great Plains Studies  
 HIST 873P – American Constitutional History I  
 HIST 874P – American Constitutional History II  
 HIST 877P – American Thought and Culture, 1620-1865  
 HIST 878P – American Thought and Culture, 1865-1990  
 HIST 879P – Nebraska and Great Plains History  
 HIST 881P – North American Frontiers, 1500-1850  
 HIST 882P – The American West, 1850-Present  
 HIST 883P – The Gilded Age, 1870-1898  
 HIST 884P – The United States, 1898-1941  
 HIST 885P – The United States Since 1941  
 HIST 891 – Directed Research  
 HIST 895P – Topical Studies  
 HIST 898 – Historical Themes: Special Topics  
 HIST 899 – Directed Readings

**List of Existing Non-US History Electives:**

HIST 800 – New Perspectives in History  
 HIST 802P – Age of Alexander the Great  
 HIST 803 – Historical Methods  
 HIST 806P – History and Film  
 HIST 807P – History of Sea Power  
 HIST 808P – War and Society  
 HIST 809P – The High Middle Ages, 1050-1350

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<sup>1</sup> A graduate readings course examining major historiographic issues in key periods and topics in American history. Topics will include (but are not limited to) Colonial America, the Early Republic, Civil War and Reconstruction, Gilded Age/Progressive America, Western and Native American history, the Great Depression, World War II, Environmental history, the Cold War, Civil Rights, and Recent America. May be repeated with each new offering.

HIST 810P – Methods and Historiography  
 HIST 811P – Saints and Sinners  
 HIST 812P – Society and Gender in the Middle Ages  
 HIST 816P – History of Christianity  
 HIST 820P – Women in Europe  
 HIST 823 – Colloquium: English History  
 HIST 824 – Colloquium: Latin American History  
 HIST 828 – Colloquium: Soviet Union  
 HIST 830 – Colloquium: Modern China and Japan  
 HIST 839P – Pre-Hispanic Colonial Latin America  
 HIST 841P – Modern Latin America  
 HIST 847 – Seminar: Contemporary Europe  
 HIST 849 – Readings in World History<sup>2</sup>  
 HIST 850P – Variable Topics in Latin American History  
 HIST 851P – Comparative Colonialism: Asia and Africa  
 HIST 852P – Colonial India  
 HIST 853P – Modern India  
 HIST 855P – Comparative Studies in Ethnic Conflict  
 HIST 857P – British Empire  
 HIST 859P – European Expansion and Exploration  
 HIST 860 – Seminar: English History  
 HIST 861P – Renaissance and Reformation  
 HIST 862P – Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Europe  
 HIST 863P – French Revolution and Napoleon  
 HIST 871P – History of the Pacific Rim  
 HIST 886P – Imperial Russia  
 HIST 888P – Nineteenth Century Europe  
 HIST 889P – Fascism and Communism in Twentieth Century Europe  
 HIST 890P – Twentieth Century Europe  
 HIST 891 – Directed Research  
 HIST 892P – Soviet Russia  
 HIST 893P – Modern Eastern Europe  
 HIST 895P – Topical Studies  
 HIST 898 – Historical Themes: Special Topics  
 HIST 899 – Directed Readings

**Public History Electives:**

HIST 838 – Issues in Public History<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> A graduate readings course examining major historiographic issues in key periods and topics in European and World history. Topics will include (but are not limited to) ancient/medieval history, Renaissance/Reformation, early modern Europe, nineteenth and twentieth century Europe, Latin American history, African and Asian history. May be repeated with each new offering.

<sup>3</sup> A graduate course examining contemporary issues and practices in the field of public history. The format of this course will vary depending on the topic, instructor, and the needs of the students. Topics

HIST 866 – Museums and Material Culture

HIST 867 – Historic Preservation

HIST 875 – Internship<sup>4</sup>

HIST 891 – Directed Research

HIST 899 – Directed Readings

**Track Options:**

Students may choose to pursue one of two track options for completing this program of study: (a) thesis or (b) public history project. Working with their academic advisor, students will be individually advised to determine the best route based on their needs and professional or academic ambitions.

***Thesis Track*** (9 credits):

HIST 894 – Introduction to Thesis (3 credits)

HIST 896 – Thesis (6 credits)

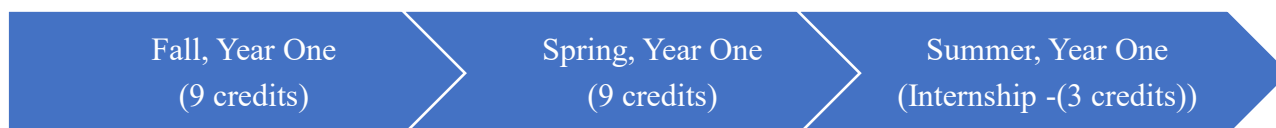
***Project Track*** (6 credits):

HIST 897– Public History Project (6 credits)

**Program Completion Outline Example:**

This program is designed to be completed with two years of intensive coursework culminating in a thesis or public history project. Students will not be required to complete the program in two years and, additionally, students who are currently employed in public history work and are pursuing further training for career advancement will be encouraged to apply for this program. It is unlikely that these students will complete the program in two years.

Below is one suggested outline for how a student entering the program in the Fall could complete all the required coursework within two years. Students will be admitted on a rolling basis and HIST 875 (Core course – Internship) is offered every semester, so this outline should be read as a suggestion, not prescriptive.




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will include (but are not limited to) National Parks, History and Memory, Heritage Tourism, Archives Administration, and Historic Site Interpretation. May be repeated with each new offering.

<sup>4</sup> HIST 875 – Internship may be taken as an elective course for an additional six credits beyond the required minimum as part of this program. Approval for additional internship credits is at the discretion of the GPC.

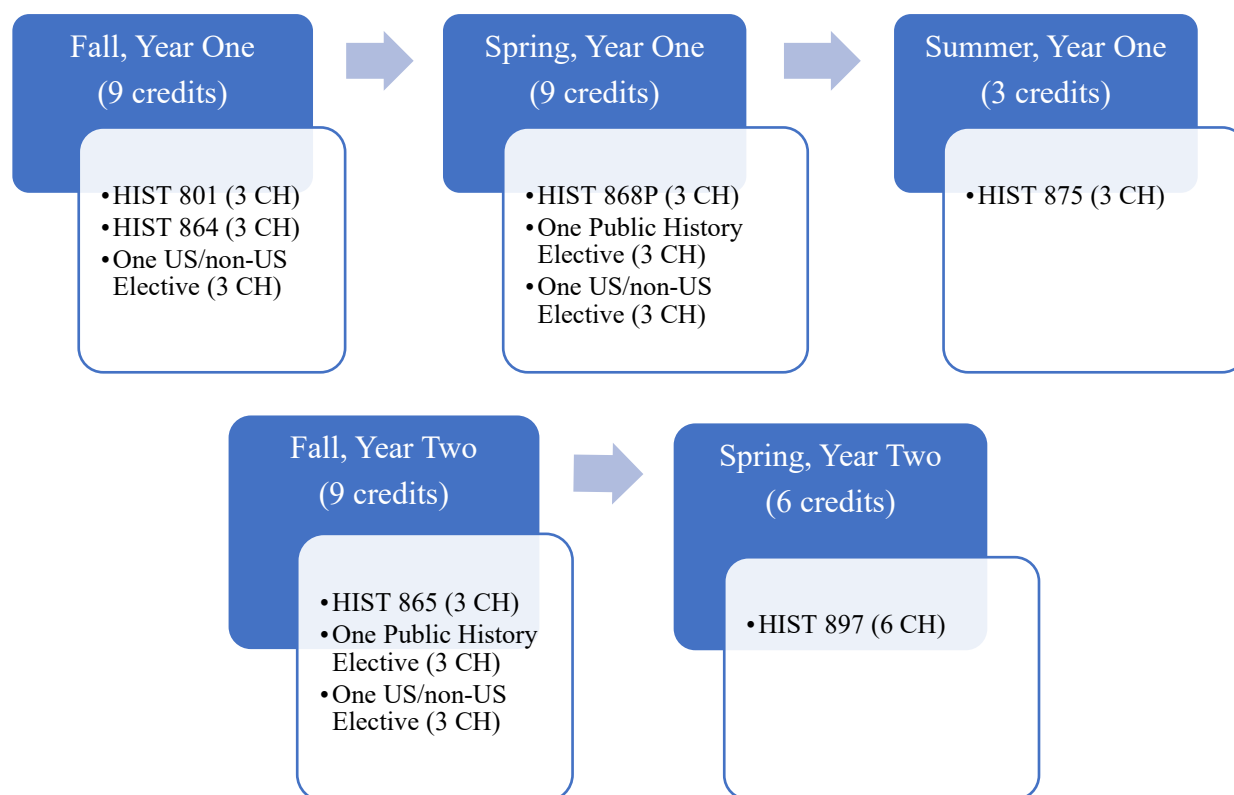


### Plan for Degree Completion:

All required core classes will be available online. Elective classes will be available online and/or on-campus. The entire degree can be completed online if the student chooses. Students will be able to complete the required classes in two years. Please see the template below for an example of how students may progress through this program.

### Suggested Sequence of Key Courses:

The following is an example of suggested sequence of courses for the MA in Public History degree (public history project track option).



### MA in Public History Admission Criteria:

Admission to the MA in Public History program is based upon the completed undergraduate degree and GPA, at least two letters of recommendation, a writing sample, and a letter of intent. Screening of applicants will include an assessment of the student's career goals and their ability to be successful, given the rigorous nature of this program. Applications will be reviewed by a committee comprised of the GPC and a minimum of two faculty members from the Department of History. The admission process is similar to the existing UNK MA in History.

An applicant interested in pursuing an MA in Public History should meet the following criteria:

1. The requirements for admission set forth by the Office of Graduate Studies,
2. Have completed an undergraduate program containing at least 18 semester credit hours of history,
3. Have a 3.25 undergraduate GPA in their undergraduate history courses. In lieu of meeting the GPA requirements, GRE scores may be submitted for consideration by the admissions committee,
4. Submit to the GPC a letter of intent that describes the applicant's interests, goals, and plan for obtaining an MA in Public History. The letter of intent should address any deficiencies that may hinder the student's success in the program and explain how this is to be or has been rectified. The letter of intent will be evaluated to determine (a) if the candidate has realistic career goals for which the program will improve competitiveness and (b) high probability for the student's potential success in this program.
5. Submit to the Graduate Program Director at least two letters of recommendation,
6. Submit to the Graduate Program Director evidence of the writing and analytical skills necessary for graduate level coursework. Evidence of past work on a project in the field of public history is preferred, but not required.

### **Student Advising and Support:**

Students accepted into the MA in Public History program will be assigned a History Advisor. The student will be strongly encouraged to meet with their advisor every term to discuss academic progress and issues relating to their program of study. Students will also work closely with the GPC on issues specifically relating to their focus in public history.

**History Advisor** – The History Advisor will guide the student through specific course choices in the US/Non-US History electives based on the student's areas of interest, providing the student with a foundation in the content most closely associated with their current or desired areas of employment in public history.

**Graduate Program Chair** – The GPC will be able to discuss specific course choices in public history based on the student's stated career goals, as well as recommend and facilitate internships, directed research/readings, and other volunteer opportunities. Advice and assistance with the application and interview process for careers in public history will also be provided by the GPC. Per department policy, the GPC will receive a course release or stipend.

In addition to the History Advisor and GPC, students will be encouraged to work directly with other History Department faculty to enhance their academic success within the program. Per university policy, faculty will receive a course release for every 36 credit hours of internships and directed research/readings courses they have supervised. Students will also have access to additional support through their individualized advising sessions, the Writing Center, Academic Success Coaching, and other student support services. The History Department has more than 15 years of extensive experience working with and mentoring online graduate students in the MA in History program. Additionally, the Department has been offering courses and internship opportunities in public history since 2013.



### **Assessment and Outcomes:**

Assessment data will be gathered in HIST 896 and HIST 897. Both the thesis and public history project require a written paper. Thesis defenses and project presentations will be evaluated by faculty and used for assessment purposes. The assessment will be conducted by three of the department's graduate faculty who are members of the department's Public History and Community Engagement Committee. This assessment will be aligned with measuring whether the program is achieving the goals listed below in this section.

The course of study offered by the UNK History Department provides students with the theoretical knowledge, research skills, and practical applicability to advance in their career conscientiously and competently. The MA in Public History program will focus on helping students build skills within the public history field. The program will achieve this through ensuring that course content (and the structure of the curriculum in general) challenges students to excel in one or more of the goals below.

**Goal #1:** UNK Public History graduates are effective at communicating specialized historical knowledge to the public. Review Criteria (to be developed later in conjunction with UNK assessment)

**Goal #2:** UNK Public History graduates understand how to critically analyze public history texts and apply the theories and principles of public history to real-world practice in public history institutions. Review Criteria (to be developed later in conjunction with UNK assessment)

**Goal #3:** UNK Public History graduates can use and demonstrate specialized knowledge of the theories and principles of a subfield of public history. Review Criteria (to be developed later in conjunction with UNK assessment)

**Goal #4:** UNK Public History graduates understand how to apply theory to both critically examine public history and make changes that improve public history practice. Review Criteria (to be developed later in conjunction with UNK assessment)

### **Advisory Board:**

An Advisory Board will be created to support this program and ensure that it remains in touch with both developments in the field of public history, as well as the needs and concerns of potential employers. This Advisory Board will consist of key individuals and institutions within and beyond Central Nebraska. This will include representatives from major state agencies, such as History Nebraska, Humanities Nebraska, and the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission. It will also include members from major regional institutions, such as the Stuhr Museum of Prairie Pioneer, the Durham Western Heritage Museum, the Strategic Air Command & Aerospace Museum, and the Great Plains Black History Museum, as well as local organizations, such as the Buffalo County Historical Society. From the NU system, Advisory Board members will include at least one representative from each campus, enhancing the possibility for intercampus and interdisciplinary collaborations for curriculum and training.

This Advisory Board will build on existing partnerships that the UNK History Department has developed over the years. The History Department has long-standing relationships with History Nebraska, Humanities Nebraska, and the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, through faculty service, grants, student internships, and course projects. Several UNK History graduates are currently employed by these agencies. The Department also has existing collaborations with UMNC, through both course offerings and research, as well as UNL's Landscape Architecture program, through work with the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission. The Advisory Board will ensure that such relationships with employers and other NU campuses continue to develop as the program grows. It will also help the MA in Public History develop stronger connections with people and institutions engaged in urban public history work, as well as create an internship and employment pipeline for both active students and program graduates.

### **Review Criteria:**

#### **A. Centrality to Role and Mission of the Institution**

**UNK Mission:** The University of Nebraska at Kearney is a public, residential university committed to be one of the nation's premier undergraduate institutions with excellent graduate education, scholarship, and public service.

**UNK Vision:** UNK will achieve national distinction for a high quality, multidimensional learning environment, engagement with community and public interests, and preparation of students to lead responsible and productive lives in an increasingly diverse, interconnected, interdependent, and technological society.

**Contribution to the University of Nebraska's Five-Year Strategy:** The proposed graduate program contributes to the five-year strategy set forth by President Carter by providing potential students across Nebraska and the country access to an affordable online MA in Public History, one of few such programs globally. The program's partnerships will additionally contribute to the five-year strategy by providing a variety of educational opportunities through the other NU campuses as well as in collaborations with local and statewide public history institutions and professionals, which will greatly contribute to the student experience and better prepare students for the workforce.

The program also closely aligns with UNK's Strategic Vision for a "multidimensional learning environment" that engages students with the community and enables them to lead productive lives in an increasingly "diverse, interconnected, interdependent, and technological society." Specifically, this program supports all four values of UNK's strategic plan, creating a climate of intellectual exchange both within and outside the classroom ("Learning Matters"), extending access to the development of professional skills and knowledge that will benefit the Kearney community and beyond ("Learning Environment Matters"), supporting an inclusive environment that supports diversity and opportunity for individuals with respect to culture, thought, and expression ("People Matter"), and ensuring long-term sustainability by offering a unique program that efficiently and effectively leverages available university resources ("Responsible Stewardship").

Lastly, the program is a unique addition to the Department of History, which has a rich history of being a leader in online graduate education. The existing online MA in History has brought many students and new faculty to the department, providing an existing cohort and breadth of faculty mentorship for students pursuing an MA in Public History. Public history courses have proven to be especially popular within the existing MA, operating at or above capacity each semester with current faculty. As such, the MA in Public History is proactive and low risk, with a proven ability to attract students and expand upon existing community and NU system collaborations.

## **B. Evidence of Need and Demand**

The need for qualified public historians across the state of Nebraska and throughout the nation is significant and continues to rise. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment in museums, archives, and related public history careers is expected to grow by 19% from 2020 to 2030, much faster than the national average for all occupations (8%).<sup>5</sup> In Nebraska, the Nebraska Department of Labor anticipates an 8% growth in the need for curators and museum technicians over the next decade (See attached Market Assessment). Employment in a public history career remains highly competitive and typically requires a master's degree and substantial practical experience in the form of internships and other graduate-level work.

The need for a competent and passionate public history workforce is also vital to our communities. This program will help Nebraska achieve several of the goals outlined in the recently released Blueprint Nebraska report, as a vibrant public history workforce can help to rejuvenate communities, provide opportunities for economic development, promote diversity and inclusion, and connect people with their pasts. As noted in the report, many Nebraskans “believe that rural Nebraska, in particular, needs help reimagining and developing its communities,”<sup>6</sup> particularly through the arts, entertainment, and recreation. Museums, heritage tourism, and other forms of public history are a vital part of this effort. As a member of the state's premier rural-serving educational institution, UNK's History Department is uniquely positioned to work with and serve rural communities in these efforts.

In both Nebraska and across the United States, museums, historical societies, historic preservation agencies, private consulting firms, and similar institutions can benefit from hiring professionally trained public historians who are knowledgeable in the latest methods in local and community history research, digital history, the preservation of historic materials (archives and material culture), and interpreting history for modern audiences. A standalone MA in Public History will better prepare students for these careers than the existing MA in History with a public history concentration, as the core curriculum of the new program focuses on developing the practical skills and principles necessary for employment outside of teaching and academia.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/education-training-and-library/curators-museum-technicians-and-conservators.htm#tab-6>

<sup>6</sup> [https://blueprint-nebraska.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/BlueprintNE\\_Public.pdf](https://blueprint-nebraska.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/BlueprintNE_Public.pdf)

Given the unique nature and purpose of this program, it will be attractive to students from the existing public history minor at UNK, as well as graduates of other colleges and universities in our state and across the nation. Based on existing experience with the public history concentration in our History MA, we also anticipate the program being attractive to early career professionals in public history, who need to earn an MA degree in order to expand their career opportunities. The letters of support from existing students clearly demonstrate their interest in and desire for such a standalone program. The online accessibility of this program, coupled with its affordability, will make the MA in Public History especially attractive to students who are currently underserved by many in-person programs across the country. The flexibility of our program and the asynchronous nature of online courses enables early career professionals and others unable to relocate for an in-person education to complete a degree that would otherwise be unavailable to them, since there are currently few online public history opportunities.

Evidence of demand for a fully online MA in Public History can be found in the strong record of our existing public history concentration, which is offered through our History MA program. There are currently 21 students pursuing the public history concentration as part of their MA in History. Our public history concentration has had an additional 47 inquiries from prospective students in the past two academic years. These strong numbers have developed with minimal marketing initiative on the part of the History Department. With marketing and promotion, it is anticipated that the program will attract up to 15 new students each year.

This stands in contrast to the public history graduate certificate program at UNK, which has not admitted any students since its inception as both students and employers prefer the additional training and experience that comes with a standalone degree. Most of the students in our existing concentration, as well as prospective students inquiring about our programs, would prefer to earn a standalone MA in Public History, since their career aspirations lie outside of teaching and other, more traditional forms of employment for History MAs. This necessitates a substantially different curriculum and program structure, as the traditional History MA is primarily geared towards those students interested in academic and teaching careers.

## **C. Required Resources**

### **1. Faculty and Staff Resources**

This graduate program is comprised entirely of existing online coursework. UNK Online has online trainings and tutorials available for new online students seeking guidance for success in online education and help navigating all of the software used at UNK. UNK also provides 24-hour assistance with technical issues. The Calvin T. Ryan Library has training services for online students, a huge number of electronic resources, and dedicated library staff for digital databases which are utilized by both campus and online students. All of these resources have been created specifically to support online education at UNK.

This program will also work closely with the Director of the G.W. Frank Museum of History and Culture, an on-campus historic house museum, and the Special

Collections Archivist at the Calvin T. Ryan Library for internships and project opportunities for students.

The Office of Graduate Studies has committed to the use of existing resources to provide the program with a part-time program coordinator, who will assist with the management of program recruitment, retention, marketing, and alumni. The program coordinator will also aid in identifying and facilitating internships and, with the help of the GPC, provide advising for both career counseling and job placement. The College of Arts and Sciences, as well as the Graduate Dean, have additionally committed to use existing resources to hire a second tenure-track faculty member in public history. This second faculty member will be expected to contribute to teaching the core courses in the MA in Public History, as well as electives within their area of specialty. There was an unexpected departure from the History faculty in Summer 2022, which opens a line for this purpose. This commitment from the deans and the existing open line promise to turn the need for a second tenure-track public history faculty member into reality without requiring additional allocations to the university.

An ongoing cost-sharing initiative with the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission (NGPC) promises further support for the MA in Public History program. As part of the Rural Engagement Center launched by UNK, this cooperative venture will provide a repository for NGPC collections that will be professionally managed by MA in Public History graduate assistants and interns. The Graduate Dean has made a commitment for more graduate assistantships to help in this endeavor. Also, upon approval of an MOU, the NGPC will support the costs of a director for the site to oversee the day-to-day operations of the facility. This director will serve as additional public history faculty in the UNK History Department and will actively contribute to the program through oversight of graduate assistants, interns, and student/class projects.

## **2. Physical Facilities**

This program will be housed within existing facilities. All of the coursework will be offered online using existing online teaching resources or in existing classrooms. There is no need to add additional facilities to support this proposed program.

## **3. Instructional Equipment and Informational Resources**

No new instructional equipment or informational resources would be necessary for the implementation of this program. UNK Online provides instructional designers and training seminars, as well as recording equipment and video production for the development of online courses.

## **4. Budget Projections**

The MA in Public History is comprised of existing coursework. As public history is distinct from traditional academic history and demands expertise most historians do not possess, a separate Graduate Program Chair (GPC) will be

required. The Public History GPC would be expected to continue advising students, to arrange and supervise internships, and to promote the program during the summer.

The proposed budget accounts for a GPC stipend, one Graduate Assistantship (GA) position, and \$2,500/year in marketing funds to be provided by UNK Online. The GA position would assist with community-based public history projects, as well as the teaching of undergraduate public history courses. The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) has pledged an additional \$5,000/year in operating costs, which will contribute to marketing the program and conference travel expenses. All other expenses, including commitments for additional staff and faculty, will be covered by existing resources.

#### **D. Avoidance of Unnecessary Duplication and Impact on Other Programs**

There are no other MA in Public History programs in Nebraska, whether on campus or online. While there are a growing number of Master's Degree programs across the country that provide training in public history, most only offer public history as a concentration (as UNK does currently) or field of study. According to the National Council on Public History (NCPH), there are currently just 39 programs worldwide that provide a dedicated MA in Public History.<sup>7</sup> The closest programs are at Fort Hays State University (Hays, KS), Southeast Missouri State University (Cape Girardeau, MO), Wayne State University (Detroit, MI), and the University of Minnesota (Minneapolis, MN). Fort Hays State University's program is part of a smaller department with a single faculty member specializing in public history. By comparison, the UNK Department of History currently has at least four faculty capable of offering courses in this proposed program. The next closest program, at Southeast Missouri State University, focuses almost exclusively on historic preservation rather than public history as a broader discipline. The programs at the University of Minnesota and Wayne State University are both traditional MA programs, offering limited enrollment and not available online.

Even fewer programs identified currently offer an online MA in Public History. Fort Hays State University provides an online option, but their thesis students must complete at least nine hours of on-campus coursework before they can be approved to take courses online. While their non-thesis option can be pursued entirely online, it requires a more traditional written comprehensive exam rather than a project-based experience. The only other online MA in Public History in the United States is offered by Southern New Hampshire University. Additionally, the Universidad Nacional de Quilmes in Buenos Aires, Argentina, offers a new Postgraduate Diploma in Public History and Social Dissemination of History.

The recently submitted MA in History and Government proposed by UNO and existing History programs at UNL, UNO, and UNK will complement the proposed program by providing students with opportunities for collaborative learning and engagement with students and faculty across the NU system.

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<sup>7</sup> [https://ncph.org/program-guide/?fwp\\_degrees\\_offered=m-a-in-public-history](https://ncph.org/program-guide/?fwp_degrees_offered=m-a-in-public-history)

In summary, this MA in Public History is unique and different in the following ways: 1) The curriculum for this program provides students with a broader public history foundation, as well as substantial opportunities for real-world application through internships and an optional practicum; 2) This program is available completely online and, therefore, accessible to all students, including students currently employed in public history and related fields; 3) Other such programs in the nation are, with few exceptions, exclusively on-campus programs, making this program more accessible to students with a variety of work-life complications and those looking for a more flexible degree program; 4) The UNK Department of History has several faculty with training and experience in public history, while many programs rely on a single faculty member to teach the majority of their public history courses; 5) Only one other comparable program is available in the Great Plains and few comparable programs exist in the broader Midwest region.

#### **E. Consistency with the Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education**

The proposed program is consistent with the Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education. The program is an attempt to properly leverage the potential of the Department of History at UNK in service to the State of Nebraska and its citizens. It has been designed to be efficient and effective. The program takes care to avoid unnecessary duplication of other programs. Additionally, as an online program it will allow students from across the state and beyond to benefit from its existence. Below are specific ways in which the proposed program is consistent with the statewide plan for postsecondary education.

**Meet the Educational Needs of the Students:** The UNK MA in Public History program clearly aligns with the needs of Nebraska students to enhance their knowledge and skills in public history. The online component meets the goal to ensure that access to higher education programs and services is not restricted by factors such as geographic location, economic status, age, culture, ethnicity, disability, national origin, or gender identity. The program is accessible, affordable, and does not require residency. It will provide skills that students need in order to advance in their careers and to have an impact in their communities, both rural and urban. Because of demand, people currently employed in these positions often come from other backgrounds and require Public History education to excel in their existing positions or advance in the field. The faculty teaching in the program are well established and have the necessary experience and education to deliver high quality instruction to students of the proposed program. Additionally, there are limited online providers nationwide who have successful completion rates. UNK, by contrast, typically sees high retention in online graduate-level courses, ensuring that the vast majority of students are able to successfully complete their program of study.

**Meet the Needs of the State:** Employment in public history is projected to grow in Nebraska up to 8.5% by 2028.<sup>8</sup> Students could receive positions as curators, historic preservationists, cultural resource managers, museum technicians, registrars, archivists, local historians, and history teachers. Nebraska sees these needs in locations such as collections, archives, curation, libraries, exhibitions, and museum studies. Additionally, the program will meet the needs of the state by providing graduates with the skills and

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<sup>8</sup> See Appendix 1: Market Assessment, Public History, MA, conducted by University of Nebraska Online.

knowledge needed to succeed as capable employees and responsible citizens. The skills taught in this program are the essential skills that employers need. The letters of support included in this proposal clearly show this. The focus on critical thinking and media literacy also empowers students to be responsible citizens. Additionally, the Public History graduate program clearly meets the goal that higher education in Nebraska be effective in meeting the needs of students and the state, while also being efficient in its expenditure of the state's resources. The program requires no additional expenditure of resources since the department already offers many online courses. It will be a self-sufficient program.

**Meeting Educational Needs through Partnerships and Collaborations:** The program will require a high degree of collaboration given that this is a professional degree. The Department of History currently has good relationships with other departments at UNK as well as History Departments at other NU campuses, providing the option to diversify elective offerings. Additionally, the Department of History has strong connections with local and statewide organizations like History Nebraska, Humanities Nebraska, the Nebraska Museums Association, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, the Museum of Nebraska Art, the Stuhr Museum, Hall County Historical Society, Buffalo County Historical Society/Trails and Rails Museum, and the G.W. Frank Museum of History and Culture. These strong partnerships provide numerous opportunities for collaborations that will benefit both MA in Public History students and the state of Nebraska.

**Statewide Facilities Plan:** The program is offered entirely online, so it will require no additional facilities. Additionally, the Department of History can support this program with current faculty.

**Off-Campus and Graduate Program Plans:** Finally, the Comprehensive Statewide Plan for Postsecondary Education states that “off-campus programming, in particular, provides an important educational service to place-bound students within its geographic service area” (7-29). Given that this degree will be offered online, it will fit well into the Nebraska statewide plan for UNK. The statewide plan also explains that new Master's degrees are to be developed “when a definite need exists and UNK has demonstrated the capacity-including fiscal, human and physical resources-to meet that need” (7-29). This need clearly exists since there is no public history program in the NU system and limited programs worldwide that offer this degree in an online format.

### **Cited Sources:**

“Guide to Public History Programs.” National Council on Public History. Accessed March 5, 2021. [https://ncph.org/program-guide/?fwp\\_degrees\\_offered=m-a-in-public-history](https://ncph.org/program-guide/?fwp_degrees_offered=m-a-in-public-history)

“Occupational Outlook Handbook: Archivists, Curators, and Museum Workers.” Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. Last modified September 1, 2020. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/education-training-and-library/curators-museum-technicians-and-conservators.htm>



## **MA in Public History Course Descriptions**

### **HIST 800 – New Perspectives in History (3 credits)**

Recent trends in the field of the instructor's specialty, to assist teachers and to improve teaching. May be repeated with each new offering.

Total Credits Allowed: 15.00

### **HIST 801 – America Interpreted (3 credits)**

An introductory (required) graduate readings course in American historiography. The class examines the leading schools of historical opinion from the founding of American society through the modern era.

### **HIST 802P – Age of Alexander the Great (3 credits)**

This course will focus on the change between the Classical age and the Hellenistic age. The course will cover the period from the end of the Peloponnesian war to the Jewish independence of the Maccabees. This time period is crucial to Western Civilization since we witness the collapse of the independent Greek city states and the rise of the great national monarchies.

### **HIST 803 – Historical Methods (3 credits)**

This required course will introduce graduate students to the history profession and to the tools and methods used by historians.

### **HIST 805P – The Plains Indians (3 credits)**

A history of those Indians who call the Great Plains their home.

### **HIST 806P – History and Film (3 credits)**

This course will look at history through the lens of feature films produced in the United States and abroad. Particular emphasis will be placed on how historical representation and interpretation has changed with each generation of film makers. The topics of this course will vary depending on the instructor and needs of the students.

### **HIST 807P – History of Sea Power (3 credits)**

This course seeks to introduce students to different themes in the history of the evolution of sea power.

### **HIST 808P – War and Society (3 credits)**

This course is designed to introduce students to the field of military history. Students will tackle the debate on 'old' vs 'new' military history. In particular, students will examine the impact of social studies on the evolution of military history. A considerable portion of the course will also be spent examining military history in a non-western setting.

### **HIST 809P – The High Middle Ages, 1050-1350 (3 credits)**

This course examines the cultural, political, economic, and social developments of the High Middle Ages, a period of dramatic and important change in the western world, focusing on the religious reformation of the eleventh century, the twelfth-century renaissance, and the rise of towns and urban commerce, and the growth of centralized governments.

**HIST 810P – Methods and Historiography (3 credits)**

Writers of history, their works and philosophies; theories of historical development and research.

**HIST 811P – Saints and Sinners (3 credits)**

This course examines the social organization and cultural institutions that shaped the western world between late antiquity and the Renaissance, focusing on the interaction between major institutions, such as family and religion, and the lives of medieval women and men.

**HIST 812P – Society and Gender in the Middle Ages (3 credits)**

This course is designed to introduce students to the ways that gender and sexuality were defined, understood, and enacted in medieval society. The course examines both accepted and deviant sexual behaviors as well as notions of masculinity and femininity. Attitudes toward these ideas and behaviors are considered within the social, political, and religious contexts of the Middle Ages.

**HIST 816 – Colloquium: Colonial and Revolutionary America (3 credits)**

This course will introduce advanced students to the most important interpretations of colonial and revolutionary America.

**HIST 816P – History of Christianity (3 credits)**

A broad overview of Christian history from antiquity to the present, with special emphasis upon the complex social, economic, and political forces which have made Christianity a global religion of incredible diversity. Special attention will be given to Christianity in the non-Western world, as well as the central role of women in Christian tradition.

**HIST 817 – Colloquium: Nineteenth Century US (3 credits)**

This course focuses on developing an in-depth knowledge of the US between 1800-1899, including the methodological and historiographical trends in recent American history.

**HIST 820P – Women in Europe (3 credits)**

A history of European women will explore the roles and influence of women from earliest times to the present.

**HIST 821P – Women in America (3 credits)**

A history of American women from the Colonial Period to the present.

**HIST 822 – Colloquium: Twentieth Century US (3 credits)**

This course focuses on developing an in-depth knowledge of the US since 1900, including the methodological and historiographical trends in recent American history.

**HIST 823 – Colloquium: English History (3 credits)**

This course will look at the development of English history starting in 1900, including the methodological and historiographical trends.

**HIST 824 – Colloquium: Latin American History (3 credits)**

This is an intensive reading and writing course that will focus on the history, historiography, and historiographical issues of Latin America.

**HIST 828 – Colloquium: Soviet Union (3 credits)**

This course will look at the development of Soviet Russia, focusing on the history and historiography of the subject.

**HIST 829P – Religion in America (3 credits)**

A historical introduction to the various religious communities of the United States from Pre-Columbian times to the present. The course gives special attention to religious influences upon social and political institutions, changing patterns of church-state relations, and the challenges posed by religious pluralism throughout American history.

**HIST 830 – Colloquium: Modern China and Japan (3 credits)**

This course will look at the development of Modern China and Japan, focusing on the history and historiography of the subject.

**HIST 831P – Colonial America 1492-1750 (3 credits)**

Examines the development of Colonial British America from the First English explorers to the French and Indian War.

**HIST 832P – Revolutionary America 1750-1800 (3 credits)**

Examines the American Revolution from its origins through its culmination in the adoption and implementation of the Constitution.

**HIST 833P – The National Period 1800-1850 (3 credits)**

Explores the expansion and development of the American nation from the Louisiana Purchase through the Mexican-American War.

**HIST838 – Issues in Public History (3 credits)**

This graduate course examines contemporary issues and practices in the field of public history. The format of this course will vary depending on the topic, instructor, and the needs of the students. May be repeated with each new offering.

Total Credits Allowed: 36.00

**HIST 839P – Pre-Hispanic Colonial Latin America (3 credits)**

Political, social, economic, and cultural dynamics of Amerindian civilizations and colonial Latin America up to independence.

**HIST 841 – Seminar: History of the American West (3 credits)**

This course will familiarize students with the major historiographical trends (since the 1890s) and the most important historians and their works on the American West.

**HIST 841P – Modern Latin America (3 credits)**

Examination of political, cultural, social, and economic dynamics of Latin American nations and regions from independence to present.

**HIST 842 – Seminar: American Revolution and Confederation Period, 1763-1789 (3 credits)**

This course is designed to introduce students to recent trends and research methodologies in the history of the revolutionary period and to guide them through the completion of a major research and writing project.

**HIST 843 – Seminar: The American Indian (3 credits)**

This seminar examines recent Native American history focusing on the themes and topics in the historiography.

**HIST 844 – Seminar: Nineteenth Century US (3 credits)**

A research seminar in nineteenth-century American history. Special attention will be devoted to the development of the characteristics of modern US society.

**HIST 845P – The Civil War and Reconstruction (3 credits)**

A study of the causes leading to the Civil War, the War itself, and the attempt to reunify the social, economic, and political framework of America.

**HIST 846 – Seminar: Recent American History (3 credits)**

This seminar allows students to pursue research in a topic dealing with the political, cultural, intellectual, or social history of the United States.

**HIST 847 – Seminar: Contemporary Europe (3 credits)**

This seminar allows students to pursue research in a topic dealing with the political, cultural, intellectual, or social history of Modern Europe.

**HIST 848 – Readings in American History (3 credits)**

A graduate readings course examining major historiographic issues in key periods and topics in American history. Topics will include (but are not limited to) Colonial America, the Early Republic, Civil War and Reconstruction, Gilded Age/Progressive America, Western and Native American history, the Great Depression, World War II, Environmental history, the Cold War, Civil Rights, and Recent America. May be repeated with each new offering.

Total Credits Allowed: 36.00

**HIST 849 – Readings in World History (3 credits)**

A graduate readings course examining major historiographic issues in key periods and topics in European and World history. Topics will include (but are not limited to) ancient/medieval history, Renaissance/Reformation, early modern Europe, nineteenth and twentieth century Europe, Latin American history, African and Asian history. May be repeated with each new offering.

Total Credits Allowed: 36.00

**HIST 850P – Variable Topics in Latin American History (3 credits)**

In-depth study of a country or region in Latin American or an in-depth analysis of a specific topic of historical or contemporary importance in understanding Latin American History and Culture.

**HIST 851P – Comparative Colonialism: Asia and Africa (3 credits)**

This course will analyze the primary social, cultural, and political forces that helped create and sustain the vast colonial empires in Asia and Africa.

**HIST 852P – Colonial India (3 credits)**

This course examines the complex social, cultural, political and economic factors that gave birth to the independent nations of Bangladesh, Pakistan and India after centuries of British colonial rule.

**HIST 853P – Modern India (3 credits)**

This course aims to introduce students to the complex cultural, political and economic factors that created the 'nation' of India as it is known today. The course begins in 1947 when India gained independence from Britain. It will examine in detail the major issues that have helped mold the history of contemporary India.

**HIST 855P – Comparative Studies in Ethnic Conflict (3 credits)**

This course is designed to engage students in an intense study of theories of ethnic conflict. Students will also be involved in a comparative study of the militarization of ethnic conflict in various regions of the world.

**HIST 856P – Regional Field Study (1-4 credits)**

Designed to provide students with travel experiences to contribute to their understanding of the history of a particular area of the world.

Total Credits Allowed: 4.00

**HIST 857P – British Empire (3 credits)**

The rise and expansion of the British Empire from its earliest beginnings to the present.

**HIST 858P – Great Plains Studies (1-3 credits)**

Great Plains Studies offers the opportunity to reflect on life through the literature and other lore of the Great Plains. Through a different subject focus each offering, the course integrates literary, historical, and paleontological investigations around issues affecting the plains, with a special focus on prairie.

Total Credits Allowed: 3.00

**HIST 859P – European Expansion and Exploration (3 credits)**

The motivations for European expansion and exploration overseas from 1300 until 1800 and the impact that European contact with the rest of the world had upon the societies of the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Europe.

**HIST 860 – Seminar: English History (3 credits)**

This seminar allows students to pursue research in a topic dealing with the political, cultural, intellectual, or social history of English history.

**HIST 861P – Renaissance and Reformation (3 credits)**

The political, economic, religious and social development of Europe from the Crusades through the era of the European Reformation.

**HIST 862P – Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Europe (3 credits)**

History of Europe from the Thirty Years' War to the French Revolution with special emphasis on the Enlightenment.

**HIST 863P – French Revolution and Napoleon (3 credits)**

The causes of the French Revolution and the political, social, and intellectual impact of the Revolution upon western Europe.

**HIST 864 – Public History Seminar (3 credits)**

This course introduces graduate students to the theory and practice of public history. A growing body of scholarship on public history has emerged over the past few decades, seeking to develop a better understanding of the underlying principles of the field and the challenges of doing history in public. This class will expose students to both classic as well as new scholarship on public history, explore several key issues facing the practice of public history today, and offer hands-on, practical experience through the preparation of a grant proposal and the completion of a real-world public history project.

**HIST 865 – Public History Methods (3 credits)**

This course introduces graduate students to the practice and methodologies of local and community history research. Students will be exposed to key readings and issues in local history scholarship, gain a strong understanding of the characteristics of quality local and community history, and become extensively familiar with the kinds of primary sources used to explore and interpret history at the local level. The course will culminate in a substantial project that results in the production of a real-world product for a community partner.

**HIST 866 – Museums and Material Culture (3 credits)**

This course introduces graduate students to the major themes, debates, and issues in museums and material culture studies. Students will be exposed to key readings and issues in museum studies and material culture scholarship, gain a strong understanding of the history of museums and their evolving role among diverse groups of public audiences, and explore the principles and methods behind the use of material culture in a variety of public history settings. The course will culminate in a major artifact analysis assignment and a substantial project that results in the production of a real-world product for a community partner.

**HIST 877 – Historic Preservation (3 credits)**

This graduate course introduces students to the major themes, debates, and issues in the dynamic field of historic preservation. Students will read several significant works on the history of historic preservation in the United States, the power of history and historic places to shape

communities and a sense of place, relevant historic preservation laws and practices, and the many challenges facing historic preservationists in the twenty-first century. Guided by these readings, students will also conduct original research into a historic property and prepare a National Register nomination.

**HIST 868P – Digital History (3 credits)**

This course explores the use of digital tools and sources in historical research and the sharing of historical information with public and scholarly audiences.

**HIST 871P – History of the Pacific Rim (3 credits)**

This course will examine the development of Pacific Rim nations from 1500 to present. While the entire region will be studied, the emphasis will be on the cultural, political, and economic relations between the United States, Japan, China, and Russia as well as the colonizing powers of Spain, France, and Great Britain.

**HIST 873P – American Constitutional History I (3 credits)**

Tracing the development of the American Constitution from its European antecedents to the Civil War Period.

**HIST 874P – American Constitutional History II (3 credits)**

Continuation of HIST 873P. Period covered is from Civil War Period to present.

**HIST 875 – Internship in History (1-9 credits)**

Emphasizes the professional development of the student in the area of the student's professional interest. Grade will be recorded as credit/no credit.

Total Credits Allowed: 9.00

**HIST 877P – American Thought and Culture, 1620-1865 (3 credits)**

Examines the origins and development of American social, political, and religious ideas through the Civil War.

**HIST 878P – American Thought and Culture, 1865-1990 (3 credits)**

Examines the origins and development of American social, political, and religious ideas after the Civil War.

**HIST 879P – Nebraska and the Great Plains History (3 credits)**

History of natural environment and human settlement of Plains and role of Nebraska and Great Plains in United States history.

**HIST 881P – North American Frontiers 1500-1850 (3 credits)**

European and U.S. frontier expansion and interaction between Whites and Indians and use of natural resources.

**HIST 882P – The American West 1850-Present (3 credits)**

Development and transformation of U.S. west in terms of ethnic interaction, resource exploitation, and industrialization from mid-nineteenth century to present.

**HIST 883P – The Gilded Age 1870-1898 (3 credits)**

An analysis of the transformation of an agrarian America into an urban-industrial society.

**HIST 884P – The United States 1898-1941 (3 credits)**

The rise of America as a world power, and the problems of reform and industrial expansion in early twentieth century America.

**HIST 885P – The United States Since 1941 (3 credits)**

A study of United States history since World War II with special emphasis on the problems arising as a world power.

**HIST 886P – Imperial Russia (3 credits)**

A general survey of the political, social, economic, diplomatic and cultural developments of Russian civilization from 800 A.D. to 1917.

**HIST 888P – Nineteenth Century Europe (3 credits)**

The period from the French Revolution and Napoleon to World War I.

**HIST 889P – Fascism and Communism in Twentieth Century Europe (3 credits)**

An exploration of the commonalities and divergences between fascism, communism, and nationalism and their twentieth century manifestations. After investigating the intellectual roots, social bases and key elements of these ideologies, we will examine their concrete manifestations in Europe, including Hitler's Germany, Soviet communism under Stalin, and postwar Yugoslavia.

**HIST 890P – Twentieth Century Europe (3 credits)**

A treatment of the history of Europe since the Treaty of Versailles with special reference to international relations.

**HIST 891 – Directed Research (1-3 credits)**

Independent original research of a selected topic in history under the direction of a history graduate faculty member.

Total Credits Allowed: 3.00

**HIST 892P – Soviet Russia (3 credits)**

The 1917 revolution and the development of the Soviet state in the twentieth century.

**HIST 893P – Modern Eastern Europe (3 credits)**

This course examines the development of Eastern Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It pays particular attention to the collapse of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires, the rise of nationalism, the efforts to create and preserve nation states, the rise and collapse of Communism, and the impact of World War I, World War II, and the Cold War.

**HIST 894 – Introduction to Thesis (3 credits)**

A required course for graduate students pursuing the thesis option. Prepares students to conduct primary research, construct historical arguments, identify historiographical patterns, and begin



the writing process.

Prerequisite: HIST 801 and HIST 803 and admission to the MA History program.

**HIST 895P – Topical Studies (3 credits)**

Topics are studied which are not assigned or covered in other courses in the department. The format of this course will vary depending on the topic, instructor and the needs of the students.

Total Credits Allowed: 9.00

**HIST 896 – Thesis (1-6 credits)**

Total Credits Allowed: 6.00

**HIST 897 – Public History Project (1-6 credits)**

Total Credits Allowed: 6.00

**HIST 898 – Historical Themes: Special Topics (3 credits)**

A variable themed graduate level course. Topics in American, European, or World history will include both key issues or periods in history as well as historiographic disputes. May be repeated for credit.

Total Credits Allowed: 36.00

**HIST 899 – Directed Readings (1-3 credits)**

Independent readings on advanced history topics. Readings to be selected and directed by a history graduate faculty member.

Total Credits Allowed: 6.00

September 21, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

The UNK Department of History appreciates the thorough review of our proposal for an MA in Public History by the External Review team: Dr. Leisl Carr Childers (Colorado State University), Dr. Seth C. Bruggeman (Temple University), and Dr. Geoffrey C. Friesen (University of Nebraska-Lincoln). We have carefully considered their feedback and made substantive changes to the proposal document. Those changes are summarized below, organized around the primary and secondary concerns raised by the External Review team.

**Primary Concerns:**

- 1. Greater clarification of the resource commitments associated with this proposal. This includes acknowledging and planning for placing a large, unsustainable (and largely invisible) workload on junior faculty members in the department.**

The Office of Graduate Studies has committed to the use of existing resources to provide the program with a part-time program coordinator, who will assist with the management of program recruitment, retention, marketing, and alumni. The program coordinator will also aid in identifying and facilitating internships and, with the help of the GPC, provide advising for both career counseling and job placement. The College of Arts and Sciences, as well as the Graduate Dean, have additionally committed to use existing resources to hire a second tenure-track faculty member in public history. This second faculty member will be expected to contribute to teaching the core courses in the MA in Public History, as well as electives within their area of specialty. There was an unexpected departure from the History faculty in Summer 2022, which opens a line for this purpose. This commitment from the deans and the existing open line promise to turn the need for a second tenure-track public history faculty member into reality without requiring additional allocations to the university.

- 2. More concrete plans to build out stakeholder relationships, including an advisory board that connects the program to individuals and institutions beyond Central Nebraska.**

An Advisory Board will be created to support this program and ensure that it remains in touch with both developments in the field of public history, as well as the needs and concerns of potential employers. This Advisory Board will consist of key individuals and institutions within and beyond Central Nebraska. This will include representatives from major state agencies, such as History Nebraska, Humanities Nebraska, and the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission. It will also include members from major regional institutions, such as the Stuhr Museum of Prairie Pioneer, the Durham Western Heritage Museum, the Strategic Air Command & Aerospace Museum, and the Great Plains Black History Museum, as well as local organizations, such as the Buffalo County Historical Society. From the NU system, Advisory Board members will include at least one representative from each campus, enhancing the possibility for intercampus and interdisciplinary collaborations for curriculum and training.

This Advisory Board will build on existing partnerships that the UNK History Department has developed over the years. The History Department has long-standing relationships with History Nebraska, Humanities Nebraska, and the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, through faculty service, grants, student internships, and course projects. Several UNK History graduates are currently employed by these agencies. The Department also has existing collaborations with UNMC, through both course offerings and research, as well as UNL's Landscape Architecture program, through work with the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission. The Advisory Board will ensure that such relationships with employers and other NU campuses continue to develop as the program grows. It will also help the MA in Public History develop stronger connections with people and institutions engaged in urban public history work, as well as create an internship and employment pipeline for both active students and program graduates.

**3. Articulating a plan for greater integration with existing resources within the NU system, including faculty expertise and existing online courses at UNO, UNMC, and UNL.**

As the MA in Public History develops, key programs at other NU system campuses will be contacted for their participation in the curriculum. Students will be allowed to take up to 3 credit hours of courses from other NU campuses. These intercampus course offerings will supplement the courses offered by the UNK History Department, allowing students to customize their program of study for need and desired career path. This will also avoid unnecessary replication of existing courses offered by other programs and model the interdisciplinary nature of public history training. Intercampus transfers can include courses from UNO's graduate program in Anthropology (such as ANTH 8216 Cultural Anthropology and ANTH 8226 North American Archeology). From UNL, they can include courses in Finance (such as FINA 871 Nonprofit Financial Management), courses from the UNL Anthropology program (such as ANTH 804 Curation of Archeological Collections), and courses from their Digital Humanities initiative (such as HIST 861 Geospatial Approaches in Digital Humanities and Social Sciences). From UNMC, these can include courses from the MA in Public Health (such as CPH 500 Foundations of Public Health). Within UNK, students will also have the option of taking 3 credit hours from the existing Museum Emphasis within the MAE in Art Education (such as ART 844 History, Theories, and Philosophies of Art Education) or courses in archives and data management offered by the University Archivist. Incorporating these opportunities for interdisciplinary learning will significantly expand career opportunities for students. An Advisory Board including representatives from across the NU system will provide the program with further input on potential intercampus collaborations.

**4. Providing clarity on future hiring plans to support a growing program.**

An ongoing cost-sharing initiative with the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission (NGPC) promises further support for the MA in Public History program. As part of the Rural Engagement Center launched by UNK, this cooperative venture will provide a repository for NGPC collections that will be professionally managed by MA in Public History graduate assistants and interns. The Graduate Dean has made a commitment for more graduate assistantships to help in this endeavor. Also, upon approval of an MOU, the NGPC will support the costs of a director for the site to oversee the day-to-day operations of the facility. This director will serve as additional public history faculty in the UNK History Department and will actively contribute to the program through oversight of graduate assistants, interns, and student/class projects.

## Secondary Concerns:

- 1. How will the History Department promote public history without bifurcating history training into two tracks – traditional and public history?**

To promote cohesion between graduate cohorts and avoid bifurcation between the tracks in traditional history and public history, students in the existing MA in History will continue to be required to take at least one public history course during their time in the program. This reflects the department's existing belief that traditional MA students can benefit from public history training as much as public history students can benefit from taking courses alongside those pursuing the more traditional degree track.

- 2. How will elevating Public History in the curriculum reshape how we think about the discipline of History?**

As noted by the External Review team, public history requires a fundamentally interdisciplinary approach that necessitates rethinking history education beyond the graduate seminar. In addition to a public history curriculum that emphasizes experiential learning, students in the MA in Public History will be able to take courses at other NU system campuses and from related departments at UNK, avoiding replication of coursework and exposing students to additional faculty and perspectives.

- 3. Career and job placement relies on developing relationships with prospective employers. Developing an Advisory Board will help facilitate this need. Will there be additional career counseling and job placement resources?**

In addition to the Advisory Board, both the Graduate Program Chair (GPC) and part-time program coordinator will provide career counseling and job placement resources. They will maintain alumni lists, inform students of job opportunities, and assist students with the application and interview process, as needed. These resources are already provided to students within the existing public history concentration and will be enhanced significantly through the additional support provided by a standalone program.

- 4. Given the potential of this online program to reach beyond a regional student audience, is the faculty adequately diverse to serve a broad range of students?**

Through partnerships with other NU campuses and across UNK, students will be exposed to a diverse range of faculty working in both rural and urban environments.

- 5. Is UNK History willing to reach out to other NU departments to expand its resources and expertise? UNK is well-positioned to serve rural populations, but what about urban ones?**

Through partnerships with UNO and UNL, as well as public history institutions in Omaha and Lincoln (such as the Durham Western Heritage Museum and History Nebraska), students in the UNK MA in Public History from urban areas will be well served by both course offerings, public history projects, and internship opportunities. The curriculum in the core public history courses also addresses issues of concern in both rural and urban public history work.

**6. Most public history experience in the department comes from junior faculty. How will this faculty be supported and retained?**

The External Review team noted that having the core courses of a public history program predicated on a single faculty member leaves the program vulnerable to continuity issues should that faculty member depart from the university. With support from the College of Arts and Sciences, the department will use existing resources to hire a second faculty member in public history who will be equipped to offer the core curriculum, as well as courses in their area(s) of specialty.

Junior faculty in the department are supported by tenure and promotion guidelines that recognize the labor and significance of public history work. These guidelines model a report co-authored by the National Council on Public History, the American Historical Association, and the Organization of American Historians, available here: <https://ncph.org/wp-content/uploads/Engaged-Historian.pdf>. Many peer institutions offering public history courses and degree programs have yet to adopt these guidelines, placing UNK in a superior position for supporting junior faculty working in public history.

**7. What would the GA position be for? What does the operating costs cover? These elements were unclear in the proposal and should be clarified to the degree possible.**

The GA position would assist with community-based public history projects, as well as the teaching of undergraduate public history courses. The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) has pledged \$5,000/year in operating costs, which will contribute to marketing the program and conference travel expenses.

**8. Has the program fully anticipated the costs of:**

**a. Administering the program**

As public history is distinct from traditional academic history and demands expertise most historians do not possess, a separate Graduate Program Chair (GPC) will be required. The Public History GPC would be expected to continue advising students, to arrange and supervise internships, and to promote the program during the summer.

Per department policy, the GPC will receive a course release or stipend. The proposed budget accounts for a GPC stipend.

**b. Advertising the program to target students**

The proposed budget accounts for \$2,500/year in marketing funds to be provided by UNK Online. The \$5,000/year in operating costs pledged by the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) will contribute to marketing the program and conference travel expenses. All other expenses, including commitments for additional staff and faculty, will be covered by existing resources.

**c. Internship supervision**

The Graduate Program Chair (GPC) and part-time program coordinator will oversee the internship program, working with community partners to develop internship and employment pipelines and ensure student success. Other faculty in public history may also supervise internships as the program grows.

Per university policy, faculty will receive a course release for every 36 credit hours of internships and directed research/readings courses they have supervised.

**d. Online course development**

UNK Online provides instructional designers and training seminars, as well as recording equipment and video production for the development of online courses.

**9. How does this program align with UNK's priorities and strategic plan?**

The proposed graduate program contributes to the five-year strategy set forth by President Carter by providing potential students across Nebraska and the country access to an affordable online MA in Public History, one of few such programs globally. The program's partnerships will additionally contribute to the five-year strategy by providing a variety of educational opportunities through the other NU campuses as well as in collaborations with local and statewide public history institutions and professionals, which will greatly contribute to the student experience and better prepare students for the workforce.

The program also closely aligns with UNK's Strategic Vision for a "multidimensional learning environment" that engages students with the community and enables them to lead productive lives in an increasingly "diverse, interconnected, interdependent, and technological society." Specifically, this program supports all four values of UNK's strategic plan, creating a climate of intellectual exchange both within and outside the classroom ("Learning Matters"), extending access to the development of professional skills and knowledge that will benefit the Kearney community and beyond ("Learning Environment Matters"), supporting an inclusive environment that supports diversity and opportunity for individuals with respect to culture, thought, and expression ("People Matter"), and ensuring long-term sustainability by offering a unique program that efficiently and effectively leverages available university resources ("Responsible Stewardship").

Lastly, the program is a unique addition to the Department of History, which has a rich history of being a leader in online graduate education. The existing online MA in History has brought many students and new faculty to the department, providing an existing cohort and breadth of faculty mentorship for students pursuing an MA in Public History. Public history courses have proven to be especially popular within the existing MA, operating at or above capacity each semester with current faculty. As such, the MA in Public History is proactive and low risk, with a proven ability to attract students and expand upon existing community and NU system collaborations.

Respectfully submitted,

Will Stoutamire, PhD  
Assistant Professor of History  
University of Nebraska at Kearney