

HISTORY, PHD

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

The Department of History is committed to training our students to develop skills required for a variety of careers both in and outside the academy. Although a large network of our alumni teach at colleges and universities in the U.S. and across the world, a number of our PhDs have enjoyed considerable success outside the academy. They include recent graduates who are currently a museum curator, teachers at prestigious preparatory academies, a historian with the U.S. Secretary of Defense's POW/Missing Persons Agency, a CEO of an investment firm, an analyst for a defense contractor, an editor at a small press, and consultants working with non-profits in the human services, education, and public policy fields. In recent years we have undertaken a number of initiatives, detailed below, to broaden the training of our students for a wide array of careers.

Much of the preparation for the job market occurs informally and over the course of the student's graduate career—in the mentoring relationship between faculty advisor and student, in the presentation of student research in department venues, in the student's participation in professional conferences, and in early forms of professional publication. Coursework, such as for the minor requirement or certificates, can be an avenue to expanded competencies. The Center for Humanities, for example, offers a Public Humanities certificate (<http://humanities.wisc.edu/public-humanities/graduate-certificate/>). Be sure to explore the Graduate School's resources such as "The Versatile PhD" (<https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/versatilephd/>) and its Professional Development pages (<http://grad.wisc.edu/pd/>).

Whatever career paths interest you, we encourage you to plan ahead and discuss your options—early and often—with your faculty advisor(s), with the Director of Graduate Studies, or with the Graduate Coordinator.

Professional Development Seminars (HISTORY 710)

This topics seminar is offered every semester. It emphasizes building skills that are valuable both inside and outside the academy, such as managing the writing process, teaching college history, or communicating historical research to a broad, non-specialist audience. Since it is a topics course, more than one may be offered in a given semester. Recent topics include "Writing for Academy and Beyond," "Digital History," and "On the Job Market."

Professional Development Events

Throughout the year, the Graduate Program sponsors various workshops intended to help students negotiate specific milestones of graduate study and to assist them in preparing for and going on the job market as they near completion of the PhD. Our programming currently includes:

Preliminary Examination Workshop

This offers a discussion of the various requirements for preliminary examinations: how to assemble committees, compiling reading lists, Graduate School requirements, and more.

Curriculum Vitae Workshops

These workshops are designed for students at all levels, ranging from first-year students writing CVs for campus positions to advanced dissertators on the job market.

Mock Interviews

The Graduate Program offers a series of opportunities to practice with a committee of our faculty for AHA interviews and on-campus job talks. They are open to a limited number of students who expect to be actively on the job market in the fall.

Careers in History Workshops

Our program is committed to helping its graduates seek and secure employment following the completion of their PhDs. Since the financial crisis in 2008, the academic job market has softened markedly. While the Graduate Program continues to provide outstanding preparation for academic jobs, we also encourage our students to think more broadly about their career prospects and the transferability of their skills. As funds permit, we occasionally bring to campus History graduates who are working in the non-profit, private, or public sector to meet with current graduate students and share their experiences. We also offer opportunities to learn best practices for post-doctoral fellowship applications.