

Handbook

Master's Program in Public Humanities

2022-2023



John Nicholas Brown
**Center for Public Humanities
and Cultural Heritage**

Handbook for Graduate Students

M.A. Program in Public Humanities

Brown University

2022-2023

This handbook provides information about policies and practices for students in the Public Humanities M.A. program. Ph.D. candidates seeking an M.A. in Public Humanities should refer to the American Studies Graduate Student Handbook, or seek guidance from the American Studies Director of Graduate Study. The handbook can also be viewed on the Public Humanities website.

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CENTER FOR PUBLIC HUMANITIES VALUES STATEMENT

The John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage's community includes our students, faculty, staff, community fellows and faculty advisory board members, as well as off-campus partners. Public humanities work is by its nature deeply collaborative; it requires mutual respect and a shared commitment to intellectual inquiry, to public service, and to the values of equity, diversity and inclusion.

When we enter into this community together, we commit to holding ourselves and each other accountable to these shared values in our work and in our relationships with each other.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE M.A.

The John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities and Cultural Heritage administers the M.A. program in Public Humanities and the Department of American Studies grants the degree. The degree can be completed either as a terminal Master's Program, as part of the PhD program in American studies, or as part of Brown's Open Master's Program. The curriculum provides students with a thorough understanding of the theory, methods, and history of public humanities. Courses explore subjects related to arts and humanities and enable students to develop the knowledge and skills to facilitate public engagement and partnerships, prepare and manage cultural programs, work with museum artifacts, create exhibits and web sites, and preserve cultural heritage.

Course Work

Completion of the M.A. program requires twelve courses and completion of a summer practicum. Full-time M.A. students typically complete the degree in two years. With permission, students may accelerate degree completion to three semesters. (See Course Load and Sequencing on pp. 4-5 for a chart outlining suggested enrollment patterns). Part-time students may take 1 – 2 courses per semester.

Advising

Academic advising is conducted by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) Steve Lubar. We follow the guidelines of the Graduate School (see [Graduate School Handbook](#), p. 12) in dividing up the different tasks between DGS and Faculty Advisors:

The DGS manages issues related to "admission, academic standing, funding and appointments"; faculty advisors can also help with scholarly and career advice and make connections to colleagues in their respective fields.

All Public Humanities faculty are available to answer questions and advise students in their areas of expertise: Ron Potvin - museums, collections, local history, the Nightingale-Brown House and its collections; Dietrich Neumann - architecture, history of art, historic preservation, exhibitions; Diane O'Donoghue - public history, collective memory, exhibitions, community organizations; Steven Lubar - museums and public history.

Members of our Faculty Advisory board include representatives from six affiliated departments (AMST, ANTH, ARCH, HIAA, HIST and TAPS) and will also be happy to talk to you. There is a current list of Faculty Advisory board members [here](#).

Mentorship

Every Public Humanities M.A. student will be connected to a mentor from our Public Humanities Community Fellows board. Public Humanities Fellows are practitioners in the field. There is a current list of Public Humanities Fellows board members [here](#). We hope that you make use of our offer to go out for lunch or coffee with your mentor and/or go and visit their place of work.

Required Courses

All students must take *PHUM 2010 Introduction to Public Humanities* and *PHUM 2020 Methods in Public Humanities*. Students are strongly encouraged to complete these classes in their first year. Students also must take *PHUM 2025 Semester Practicum in Public Humanities* during a fall or spring semester of the second year (for an exception, see below), nine elective courses approved by their advisor; and complete a summer practicum (uncredited).

Practicum Courses

Students must complete two practicums that integrate research and theory with hands-on practice. One practicum must be completed during the summer following the first year of classes. The summer practicum is required but uncredited, and students will not be charged tuition for this requirement. The second practicum (*PHUM 2025*) can be scheduled during any semester, but generally not during the first year.

Students have two options to complete their required semester practicum. See the Practicum Section of the handbook for details about this requirement, and consult the DGS for more information about these options.

Option 1: Register for *PHUM 2025: Semester Practicum in Public Humanities*.

Option 2: With written approval from the Public Humanities Director of Graduate Studies, students may complete the semester practicum as an unregistered course. Under this option, students will not be charged tuition for this requirement. This option allows students to register for an additional elective course.

Both options require students to meet the expectations of a semester practicum. All students must commit approximately 125 – 150 hours to the practicum and participate in a seminar four times during the semester to discuss experiences and relevant theoretical, practical, and professional issues.

Ph.D. candidates who are also receiving an M.A. in Public Humanities are required to complete only the summer practicum. Part-time M.A. students must complete two practicums, although the duration may be spread over a longer period than described above.

Students will receive an incomplete grade and no credit until all obligations for the practicum are completed and an onsite supervisor submits an evaluation to the Center's practicum coordinator. You can find more information about practicums, including practicum funding, in Practicum Guide on pages 12-15.

Elective Courses

Students must take nine elective courses approved by the DGS. At least three of the nine elective courses must be 2000-level and have the PHUM designation. Electives can also be graduate courses at RISD or at Harvard's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Students are encouraged to explore RISD and Harvard course catalogues and discuss options with the DGS or their faculty advisor. The disciplinary field or departments for electives are not limited, but they should contribute meaningfully to the core tenets of public humanities. Students should aim for a balance of practice, theory, and content among seminars and lecture classes. (Students are advised not to take a course at Harvard in their final semester because Harvard grade will not be available before Brown University's completion deadline.)

All students are strongly encouraged to take at least one class related to nonprofit management, one class related to digital humanities, one GIS class such as Principles of Geographic Information Systems or Spatial Thinking in the Social Sciences, and one project-based course. We try to offer one class in Non-Profit Management at the Center every second year, but other departments offer comparable classes as well, in particular the [Nelson Center for Entrepreneurship](#). Most courses sponsored by the Center for Public Humanities combine subject-matter expertise with the opportunity to apply ideas and skills to a project. Other courses at the university, in the Department of American Studies, Anthropology, History, History of Art and Architecture, Archeology, Theater and Performance Arts and others, are also project-based or could be modified to focus on projects. Consult the list of relevant courses provided by the advisors at the start of each semester to find nonprofit management or project courses.

To help students and the advising faculty in their selection and recommendations, we have introduced three tracks, which reflect the areas which students in the past have typically chosen for their career paths. These tracks and their recommended courses are meant as guidelines and are not compulsory. Of course, there will be a certain amount of overlap among the three tracks. There will also be a certain fluctuation in the courses offered, as faculty take leaves or create new courses. We try our best to stay up to date with our list, but please talk to us if you see a course that seems to fit into any of the tracks.

Recommended Tracks:

Cultural Management

- Community art organizations, issues in public art, non-profit institutions, public policy.

Historic Preservation and Heritage

- Public history, architectural history, public policy, critical heritage studies, digital heritage

Museum Studies

- Museum education, curatorship, archives, collections management, digital engagement.

For a list of sample courses for each track, consult the list [here](#).

Course Load and Sequencing

The course schedule and sequence of classes taken by public humanities students can vary. Below are suggested registration patterns:

	Four Semester Track	Three Semester Track
Semester 1	<i>PHUM 2010 Intro</i> + 2 electives	<i>PHUM 2010 Intro</i> + 3 electives
Semester 2	<i>PHUM 2020 Methods</i> + 2 electives	<i>PHUM 2020 Methods</i> + 3 electives
Summer	Summer practicum	Summer practicum
Semester 3	3 electives	<i>PHUM 2025 Second practicum</i> + 3 electives
Semester 4	<i>PHUM 2025 Second practicum</i> + 2 electives	

Regardless of the registration pattern assumed, the university issues final tuition bills based on actual course enrollment. Course enrollment must be reconciled by the Registrar's office to ensure that students are billed correctly. Scholarship support from the Center for Public Humanities will be adjusted to match the course enrollment and tuition bill. To ensure that bills are correct, students must communicate their actual course enrollment to the Center Manager, Sabina Griffin, following each registration and shopping period, or immediately following any subsequent changes mid-semester. Questions about tuition billing should be directed to Sabina Griffin.

According to the Graduate School, full-time status entails enrollment in two or more classes each semester. Students should consult the [Master's Funding](#) page of the Graduate School website for information about the impact of a reduced course load on scholarships and outstanding educational loans.

Projects in Public Humanities (PHUM 2060)

This elective course, *PHUM 2060*, allows students to earn credit for projects that they initiate, design, and execute independently or as part of a group. Projects should result in a graduate level initiative—an exhibition, website, public program, tour, etc.—that will significantly enhance a student's education and make a contribution to an identified community. Any regular or adjunct faculty member can serve as the faculty advisor and instructor of record. If students do not have a faculty advisor, the DGS can serve as the advisor and instructor of record for *PHUM 2060*. Professionals can serve as project co-advisors. Students who enroll in *PHUM 2060* should commit a minimum of 125 hours over a semester (approximately 10 hours/week). Students can work on a project individually, as part of a team, or in a leadership role on a larger group project.

To enroll in *PHUM 2060 Projects in Public Humanities*, students should have successfully completed *PHUM 2010 Introduction to Public Humanities* and must receive prior approval by submitting a proposal outlining the project and describing the intended outcomes/products and assignments. This proposal should list all participants, including any community or university partners, collaborators, and sponsors; it should also include a tentative weekly schedule, work plan and bibliography. If the project involves multiple students, the proposal should describe how work will be shared or divided within the group. Project proposals should be submitted to the DGS by the end of the first full week of classes each semester. Once approved, students must register for *PHUM 2060* with an S/NC grading option. Projects undertaken in this class cannot simultaneously count toward a practicum or the requirements of another credit class. *Project in Public Humanities* is limited to public humanities students and can be taken no more than two times (but not during a single semester).

Limited funding is available from the Center for Project Courses. Permission to register for the class does not guarantee financial support from the Center for the proposed project. Projects requiring funding must include a budget specifying any funds requested from the Center and outlining how additional money will be raised. Funding from the Center is available for PHUM 2060 course projects. See [Funding for Public Humanities Classes and Independent Projects](#) on page 10 for details.

Independent Reading and Research in Public Humanities (PHUM 2065)

This is a course that allows you to work on a specific project or your master's thesis with a faculty member. It can function like a seminar with only one or just a few students in it, who meet regularly with the supervising faculty, or it can be conducted with more independence. In each case, you should find a faculty advisor willing to work with you on it. The advising faculty member can come from any of our six affiliated departments. Funding from the Center is available for PHUM 2065 research. See [Funding for Public Humanities Classes and Independent Projects](#) on page 10 for details.

M.A. Thesis

Students are strongly recommended to complete a Master's Thesis. Theses can be a public facing project or an academic research paper. Theses can be completed in the second year by registering for an independent studies course (*PHUM 2060* or *2065*). Students may also complete thesis projects/paper **in addition** to their required 12-credit course work, in which case no course registration or tuition payment is required. Typically, a Master's Thesis has a length of 30 pages or more (12pt. Times Roman double spaced), and proper academic footnotes (Chicago Style) and bibliography. In consultation with the advisor and the DGS, an exhibition project with a scholarly component can also be submitted. Students are encouraged to begin thinking about their thesis in the first year, as part of the *Methods in Public Humanities* course and have a thesis topic/project in mind as they enter the second-year of the program. Students are required to have two advisors of record. At least one advisor of record must be a regular or adjunct Brown faculty at the Center for Public Humanities or an affiliate department. A Master's Thesis is not required for completion of the program. Completion of the Master's Thesis will not be reflected on the student's academic transcript, but will be acknowledged at the program's graduation. Funding from the Center is available for M.A. Thesis research. See [Funding for Public Humanities Classes and Independent Projects](#) on page 10 for details.

Grades

Grades lower than C do not count for credit at Brown. Students graded Incomplete will have to set up a new date with the instructor to submit all required coursework. Per the Registrar's guidelines "grades of 'INC' must be made up as follows: for Semester I, by mid-semester of Semester II; for Semester II, by the first day of the following semester. [The grades automatically revert to an NC at that point.] Extensions beyond these dates

for any period of time up to but no more than one year from the end of the semester in which the course left incomplete was taken may be granted by the instructor who will indicate this in writing to the Registrar.” After one year, any grade change needs the approval of a dean. In general, students should take courses for a grade. Students may register “Satisfactory/No Credit” only for one elective course. A student who wants to take additional courses for S/NC must get an approval from the DGS.

Evaluations

Students are evaluated at the end of their first academic year of Graduate School and at the end of the fall semester of the second year. Part-time students are evaluated at the beginning of each fall semester in which they are enrolled. These written evaluations will be drawn from faculty feedback on the student’s performance, practicum supervisor evaluations, fellowship and job supervisors, and/or perspectives from program staff or fellows with whom the student has worked. Student’s academic standing is determined at the end of each semester. The grad school suggests three levels of academic standing: good, satisfactory and warning. Good standing will typically be indicated by B or higher in all courses, not more than one Incomplete and, if applicable, the satisfactory completion of any practicums. Students with warning or satisfactory standing are evaluated at the end of each semester.

Credit for Classes at Other Institutions

Students should expect to take most of their classes at Brown University. However, the Graduate School allows students to transfer one graduate-level course taken at another school (with the exception of RISD and Harvard, see below) for credit towards an M.A. degree. The form to request transfer of graduate credits is available on the Office of the Registrar website [here](#). The form requires the approval of the DGS. Undergraduate courses from other institutions are not accepted for graduate credit. (An exception is made for two courses taken at Brown previously by students enrolled in the Fifth Year Master’s program.)

As the result of a cross-registration agreement, Brown University students may enroll in courses offered at Rhode Island School of Design. Students who wish to enroll in a RISD class must seek permission from the instructor and follow the directions of the Office of the Registrar regarding [RISD cross-registration](#). Brown also allows students to cross-register for classes at the Harvard University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. To enroll in a Harvard class, students must secure permission from the instructor. Students can register for Harvard courses via [UFunds](#), which utilizes an on-line process for electronic approval from the DGS, the Brown Graduate School, and the Harvard faculty member before submitting the form to the Harvard registrar. For further information about credit for classes taken at other institutions, students should consult with their DGS and the Graduate School.

Students should take no more than four courses for credit toward their degree at RISD and Harvard.

STUDENT STATUS AND TYPES

M.A. for Ph.D. Students

Students who enrolled in the Ph.D. program in the American Studies department in the Fall 2020 may elect to receive an M.A. in Public Humanities en route to the doctorate. This entails completion of *PHUM 2020 (AMST 2540) Methods in Public Humanities*, *PHUM 2010 (AMST 2650) Introduction to Public Humanities*, a summer practicum, and an examination field in some aspect of public humanities. For further information, students should refer to the American Studies department graduate handbook or contact the DGS in the American Studies.

Graduate Certificate for Ph.D. Students

Ph.D. students who are currently enrolled a graduate certificate in public humanities are required to complete the following four courses: *PHUM 2020 Methods in Public Humanities*, *PHUM 2010 Introduction to Public Humanities*, one practicum (uncredited summer practicum or *PHUM 2025 Semester Practicum in Public Humanities*), and one Public Humanities (PHUM) elective. Academic advising for the Graduate Certificate program in Public Humanities is conducted by Professor Steve Lubar.

Part-Time Students

In exceptional cases, a student may opt for part-time status in the M.A. program, taking two or fewer courses a semester. Students who seek acceptance as a part-time student, or who need to shift to part-time status because of personal or professional demands, should consult with the DGS about this possibility and implications for completing the degree. M.A. degrees must be completed within no more than five years.

Leaves of Absence

In accordance with the policy of Brown University's graduate school, students may request a leave of absence (typically for one semester) through application to the Graduate School. Because the Graduate School requires that M.A. degrees be completed within five years, a leave may affect students' progress toward completion. The appropriate DGS must approve all requests for leaves submitted by Public Humanities students. For further information about leave requests and deadlines, see information regarding [leaves of absence](#) on the Graduate School website.

FELLOWSHIPS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Tuition Scholarships

Public Humanities M.A. students are eligible for partial tuition scholarships provided by the Center for Public Humanities. In recent years, most admitted students who request program aid at the time of application have been awarded a tuition scholarship equal to up to 40% of tuition. In the 2022-2023 academic year, all students in the program are awarded a 50% tuition scholarship.

In addition to tuition scholarships, the Center for Public Humanities provides other forms of support for student activities.

Practicum Funding

Summer Practicums: The Center for Public Humanities, through the generosity of a donor, has been able to award some summer funding to partially defray M.A. students' summer living expenses. To apply, complete the Summer Practicum Funding Request and Budget Form **no later than April 1**. Students will be notified about funding decisions and amounts by April 15. Any costs or expenses in excess of the funding provided by the Center for Public Humanities are the responsibility of the student. Ph.D. students are not eligible for practicum stipends because they receive summer funding from the Graduate School. Funds will be distributed at the end of June.

Academic Year Practicums: If free public transportation is not available to a practicum site, students can request up to \$350 in commuting cost reimbursement. To apply for this funding, submit a memo describing the reason for your request and an anticipated travel budget to Sabina Griffin within two weeks of beginning your semester practicum. Your budget should reflect the most cost-effective form of transportation or justify why another option is necessary. Students will be notified of academic year travel funding within one week of request. If your request is approved, you must save receipts and submit them monthly for reimbursement. This funding cannot be used to supplement the summer practicum funds. No reimbursement is possible without valid documentation of your travel expenses.

Conference and Professional Development Funds

Public Humanities M.A. students are awarded up to \$1,000 to be used for participation expenses in conferences during the 2022-2023 academic year. Students who **present** at a conference are eligible (and are encouraged to apply) for Graduate School [Conference Travel](#) funds first and use the Center's funds to supplement external funding. All pre-approved funding will be dispersed as reimbursements (i.e., you pay for the expenses, provide receipts, and Brown reimburses you for your expenses).

In addition, Public Humanities M.A. students are awarded up to \$500 to be used for professional development during the 2022-2023 academic year. Some examples of professional development funding included, but are not limited to, participation in workshops not offered by the Center, professional organizations membership fees, digital platform for professional on-line profiles, and others.

To request use of conference funds or professional development funds from the program students must complete the [Public Humanities Conference/PD Funding Request Form](#). Students will be notified of funding approval within 5 business days of the request.

Students must submit receipts showing payment of all approved reimbursable expenses to Sabina Griffin within 30 days after the payment date or end of travel to allow time for processing. Examples of eligible travel expenses: air/train/ground transportation, per mile reimbursement for personal car use, lodging, and conference registration fee. Receipts older than 60 days cannot be reimbursed. Students must be enrolled at Brown to qualify for funding. Therefore, students who complete the program in December, must use professional development funds and submit all receipts by December 15. Students who complete the program in May, must use their professional development funds and submit all receipts before the Commencement. Brown University has strict regulations about reimbursements, and we must comply with all the rules.

Ph.D. students are not eligible for conference funding from the Center, as they have funding through their departments.

External Support for Travel

Students who are making presentations at conferences and students who are traveling abroad for public humanities projects or practicums may be eligible for support from the Graduate School and Graduate Student Council. For eligibility and application information, see the [Conference Travel](#) page and [International Travel Fund](#) page at the Graduate School website; and [Conference and External Travel Funding](#) page on the Graduate Student Council website.

First-Year M.A. in Public Humanities Class Trip

If COVID-19-related travel restrictions have been lifted, starting with AY21-22, first-year Public Humanities M.A. students who are enrolled in *PHUM 2020 Methods in Public Humanities*, will participate in one class trip during the Spring recess or at the end of the semester. The Center for Public Humanities will cover travel expenses for the first-year Public Humanities M.A. students. The covered expenses will include round-trip air travel, lodging, expenses related to group activities organized by the Center, such as museum entry fees and transportation to activities organized by the Center, and reasonable meals expenses. Ph.D. students in transitional M.A. and Graduate Certificate programs are not eligible for the program's funding for the class trip.

Public History of Slavery Fellowship

One fully-supported two-year fellowship is available each year for a student pursuing an M.A. in Public Humanities who is dedicated to working in museums and other cultural institutions on issues related to the history and legacy of slavery. The fellowships are intended to help prepare future professionals to help museums and cultural institutions address controversial issues, teaching the public and initiating broad conversations about slavery, race and racism, and retrospective justice. The fellowship covers tuition, fees, and includes a stipend.

Curatorial Fellowships

Many Public Humanities M.A. students are awarded Curatorial Fellowships to bring their expertise in exhibit design, digital scholarship, and public programs to Brown departments, centers, galleries, and libraries. Fellows receive a yearly \$15,000 stipend and work 12-15 hours a week during their two years in the M.A. program. The fellowship stipend is paid in nine equal installments, at the end of each month, September – May. Curatorial fellowship opportunities change each year, depending on the funding department's needs and available funds. All students who demonstrate financial need will automatically be considered for an available fellowship opportunity. Fellowships are awarded based on a student's experience and expertise specified in the admission application. Additional paperwork is not required.

Funding for Public Humanities Classes and Independent Projects

The Center for Public Humanities will provide up to \$1,000 to be used for projects/research combined expenses associated with Projects in Public Humanities (PHUM 2060), Independent Research in Public Humanities (PHUM 2065) and/or the M.A. Thesis. Funding is only available for approved projects/research. Funding to support project-based activities that occur within a course must relate to class requirements and involve extraordinary expenses. Only M.A. students may seek these funds. The Center's contribution towards a project or a combination of projects/research will not exceed \$1,000.

To request funds, students should submit a written request to Dietrich Neumann (with a copy to Sabina Griffin) for approval by the end of the second week of the semester. The request must include a note from the faculty member teaching the class or thesis faculty advisor, a detailed budget listing reasonable costs associated with the activity specifying any funds requested from the Center, and outlining how additional money will be raised. Expenses may include materials, equipment, design, graphic services production, publicity, commuting travel to project sites outside of Providence, and other expenses directly related to the project/research. Non-reimbursable expenses include food for meetings, class parties, salaries, or expenses incurred on class field trips that appear on the course syllabus. Approved budgets for Graphics Service orders, publicity, and catering will be paid by the Center directly. Please consult with Sabina Griffin to make arrangements for direct payment.

JOHN NICHOLAS BROWN CENTER FOR PUBLIC HUMANITIES AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

Extracurricular Learning Opportunities

In addition to program requirements, students are strongly encouraged to participate in extracurricular and informal learning opportunities. Every year, the Center for Public Humanities organizes dozens of events like workshops, lectures, conferences, field trips, and presentations by scholars and professionals working in the field of public humanities, as well as evening conversations with local artists, architects, composers, writers and thinkers. Interaction with visiting speakers also helps students build professional networks and learn about innovative work in the field. Students are expected to take full advantage of the extracurricular learning opportunities, and are invited to recommend speakers and suggest topics for programs or special projects to the Center's Director

The Nightingale Brown House

The Nightingale-Brown House, built in 1792, is a National Historic Landmark and serves as the headquarters of the Center for Public Humanities. The house, its complex history and its collections including furniture and fine and decorative arts are available for research, study, and interpretive programs. The building also contains a seminar room, a public humanities library, and spaces for formal and informal gatherings by students and members of the Brown and Providence communities. Areas on the third floor are designated for graduate student use including offices equipped with computers, meeting spaces, and a kitchen. Students should be conscientious in their use of the building, respecting its multiple purposes as staff offices, classrooms, study and social spaces, and repository of historical collections.

For more information about the Nightingale--Brown House and its historical collections, students should contact Ron Potvin. To reserve space for meetings or programs, contact Sabina Griffin.

Gallery Spaces

The Nightingale-Brown House contains formal and informal gallery spaces for exhibits and programs. The Center sponsors an active program of exhibitions developed by Public Humanities students, faculty, and staff; by other Brown students; and occasionally by artists and organizations from the greater Providence

community. For more information about the Center galleries, students should contact Dietrich Neumann or Ron Potvin, and complete the [Gallery Space Request Form](#), if interested in using the space.

Public Humanities Library

The Public Humanities Library, which is independent of the holdings of the Brown library system, contains over 2,500 volumes and is accessible to M.A. students, fellows, and faculty. The library is used by some Public Humanities faculty to hold reserves for students enrolled in classes sponsored by the Center for Public Humanities. A searchable catalogue of the Public Humanities Library is available at [Library Thing](#). Students in the M.A. program may sign out texts for short term loans.

PRACTICUM GUIDE

This guide describes the curriculum requirements for practicums undertaken by public humanities students, discusses the process for setting up and evaluating a placement, and outlines the obligations of students and of onsite practicum supervisors.

Overview

Practicums are significant professional training experiences, chosen to complement coursework, prior work experiences, and career interests. Practicums allow students to apply theory and practice in a real world setting and encourage fresh insights into their interests and aptitudes. They help students build a resume and portfolio that demonstrates their skills and experiences. Practicums expand students' professional networks as they work alongside and under the supervision of experienced professionals. Practicums constitute a partnership between students, the Center, and a public humanities organization and are meant to be useful to the sponsoring organization and beneficial to students. The general parameters should be determined in advance, with students' learning objectives and institutions' goals clearly agreed upon before the practicum begins.

Requirements

Students must satisfactorily complete two practicums, typically undertaken at two different organizations, to fulfill M.A. requirements. For summer practicums, students should expect to work full-time over the span of 8 – 10 weeks, totaling 300 – 375 hours. Students must commit approximately 125 – 150 hours to their second practicum, which may be completed over the span of one or two semesters. At least one experienced professional should supervise and mentor the practicum student, providing consistent instruction and attention. Since the summer practicum is uncredited, registration is not required. For the second practicum, students will register for *PHUM 2025* and should select the S/NC (Satisfactory/No Credit) option. A satisfactory rating depends upon the quality of work performed at the sponsoring institution and other aspects of the practicum such as blogging, written reports, presentations, and (for academic-year practicums) participation in a practicum seminar. For more information, see [Requirements for the M.A.](#) on page 3.

Looking for a Placement

The process of identifying a practicum should begin several months before its anticipated start. Practicums during the academic year typically are fulfilled at organizations within Rhode Island or Massachusetts, or are completed remotely. During the summer, it is more common to select a practicum that requires residence

outside New England. Applications for summer placements, particularly at large institutions, are often due as early as December.

Some public humanities organizations provide structured and competitive programs and offer a stipend or salary or cover some expenses. In these cases, the sponsoring organization often will determine the internship project(s) in advance and typically have a formal application process with preset deadlines. Other students prefer to tailor opportunities that specifically fit their interests.

Part-time students should think creatively and strategically about how to balance their goals for the practicum with their other obligations. If currently employed at a public humanities institution, part-time students can use this opportunity to take on a clearly-defined project that falls outside typical responsibilities and involves new skills, subjects, or collaborations. Other part-time students design practicums that provide a chance to become familiar with a new organization.

In most cases, students should complete their two practicum requirements at two different organizations. Students should complete their summer practicum at a single organization, although there may be exceptions based upon a student's interests, practical considerations, and the need to work the necessary number of hours. All students should consult with Center staff, faculty, and advisors about their goals, particularly Ron Potvin who oversees the practicum program.

Students are responsible for contacting potential sponsors, negotiating the general parameters of a project, and seeking input from faculty advisors. Before the practicum begins, the goals and expectations should be defined by the student and the practicum supervisor at the host organization in the Practicum Agreement. This agreement articulates mutually acceptable expectations and specifies any programs, materials, or reports you will be responsible for completing. The agreement should include a beginning and ending date, a weekly work schedule, total hours that will be completed during the practicum, and any compensation, and must be completed before the practicum begins.

Sources of information for practicum opportunities include classmates and public humanities [alumni](#), center staff, faculty advisors, JNBC [fellows](#), and other humanities professionals at Brown University and elsewhere. Professional organizations often advertise opportunities for practicums. These include [National Council on Public History](#); [Society of American Archivists](#); [Smithsonian Office of Research Training and Services](#); [American Alliance of Museums](#); [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#); [New England Museum Association](#); and the [National Park Service](#). Brown's [Career LAB](#) supports student internships by serving as a clearinghouse for listings and maintaining databases and online networks that connect Brown students and alumni. The center also maintains a list of [current practicum opportunities](#).

Doing the Practicum

Students should look upon practicums as professional work experiences and comply with expectations established by supervisors including appropriate dress, work hours, and prioritization of tasks. Host organizations must provide an enriching educational experience. Assume a proactive, rather than a passive, approach to an internship experience, and work to establish a clear dialogue with the supervisor and mutually supportive relationships with other interns and members of the staff. Seek out a broad range of experiences during a practicum, expanding involvement into as many areas of the organization as possible. Through these efforts, students will find that practicums can play an important part in developing skills and building a network of professional contacts. Plan to keep in touch with people from the practicum organization after the assignment is complete.

As with any work experience, students may find that their experiences differ from expectations. Issues such as funding and organizational and personnel changes can alter assigned projects and affect the ability to complete assignments. Practicum supervisors will value flexibility and willingness to handle changing circumstances or follow new directions. Good communication with the organization's staff is important to ensure understanding of the nature of institutional priorities and enable students to perform to the best of their capabilities. The Center staff also can be consulted for advice in handling unexpected situations that occur during a practicum.

Students should take advantage of practicums to produce materials to show to prospective employers. These may include letters of recommendation, press coverage of events or programs, exhibit labels or photographs of exhibits, or other work that students produced. Take the time to document work and accumulate examples of products to add to a professional portfolio.

Successful completion of the summer practicum includes posting to a [Practicum Blog](#). Completion of the second practicum (PHUM 2025) requires participation in a practicum seminar.

Reflections

Engagement in thoughtful reflective practice is a critical component of a successful practicum experience. Through reflection, students connect their practicum work to theoretical and practical learning in the classroom. This reflection should entail honest assessments of competencies, weaknesses, and interests, and attempt to understand a practicum project as it relates to the obligations, challenges, and opportunities of public humanities institutions. Even negative experiences can provide opportunities to reflect upon the organizational, professional, financial, or personal factors that affected outcomes and can help to shape professional goals. Students should consider reflection an integral part of a practicum assignment, not an additional activity, and make it a part of their regular work schedule.

Reflection is built into the practicum experience in three ways:

1. During summer practicum placements, students will submit regular postings to a practicum blog. In these postings, students will reflect on critical problems and issues in the field and on their own and classmates' work.
2. This blog is an opportunity to reflect upon the work that you are doing during the summer and to share insights about that work. The people who have been invited to use this blog represent a community that should offer each other support and advice. When posting and making comments, remember important public humanities skills. Consider your audience. Who are the people that you are addressing? What are their concerns and sensibilities? Consider the types of responses your post might elicit. Is your post constructive? Is it likely to lead to constructive dialog? Consider the world and the culture around you. Does your post acknowledge and include other communities and points of view?
3. During academic year practicums, students will participate in a seminar (*PHUM 2025*) to discuss experiences and relevant theoretical, practical, and professional issues. By participating in these discussions and learning from each other's experiences, students can expand their understanding of the challenges and opportunities that public humanities professionals face.
4. All practicums will conclude with a capstone project or presentation that will be shared with center staff, faculty, or students. Past projects have included presentations, digital portfolios, job search materials, or written case studies.

Throughout the practicum the Center will maintain communication with students' on-site supervisors, asking for midpoint and final evaluations. Supervisors are encouraged to share their assessments with students. When possible, center staff will arrange site visits during the practicum.

Expectations of Workplace Respect during Practicums

Most practicums provide exciting and stimulating work as well as the chance to meet interesting practitioners. But sometimes things don't go as planned. If you ever experience disrespect on the job, we want to know and we will help change your situation, with no consequences for you or your course of study. On the job disrespect might be sexual harassment, including physical, verbal, visual harassment, or sabotage of your work. Work discrimination might also include race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, or national origin. If you are feeling uncomfortable in your workplace, for any reason, reach out right away to Ron Potvin or Dietrich Neumann, who will provide feedback and advice, work with you to improve conditions, or help you find a new placement.

Practicum Stipends

Because many public humanities institutions do not provide paid compensation to interns, the Center offers some financial support to help M.A. students defray living expenses during their summer practicums. For more information, see Practicum Funding on page 9.

Information for Sponsoring Organizations

Students may find it useful to share the Information for sponsoring institutions provided below. Completed practicum agreement forms should be submitted to the Center's practicum coordinator before the practicum begins.

- The mission of the Center for Public Humanities is to conduct education, research, and public engagement initiatives to connect individuals and communities to art, history, and culture.
- A practicum should represent a substantial educational experience for public humanities students, who bring graduate level knowledge. They hope to apply their theoretical and practical studies in an organizational setting and develop important professional skills.
- At least one experienced professional should supervise and mentor the practicum student, providing consistent instruction and attention. Most students have worked in professional settings before, but they will benefit from clear expectations, thorough orientation to policies and practices, and the chance to learn broadly about the mission and structure of the organization.
- A written work plan, developed by and mutually agreeable to supervisors and students, should be finalized prior to the start of the practicum. Supervisors are encouraged to consult with Center staff for information and assistance at any point during the creation or completion of a practicum.
- In addition to providing regular feedback directly to the student, supervisors will be asked for formal written evaluations during and at the end of the practicum. These evaluations provide important feedback for students and the public humanities program. Evaluations are used as the basis for formally assessing the student's work for academic credit or for completion of the summer practicum requirement.
- Any concerns, questions, or comments about the practicum are welcome. Contact the Center's practicum coordinator, Ron Potvin.

CULTURE AND CONDUCT

The John Nicholas Brown Center for Public Humanities is committed to maintaining an environment in which students feel safe, supported, included and respected. We expect our community of students, faculty, fellows, advisory board members and off-campus partners to treat each other with consideration and with respect at all times. While we all support vigorous academic discourse and welcome different opinions, any hostility motivated by racism, religious or other prejudice will not be tolerated.

All members of our community are expected to refrain from behaviors that constitute sexual or gender-based harassment or violence, as specified by Brown University's [Policy Statement](#).

The University has developed a Code of Student Conduct that helps maintain a campus environment where ideas are freely exchanged, University processes and property are respected, and conflicts are peacefully resolved. The [Code](#) is administered by the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards and applies to all students.

Brown's [Academic Code](#), administered through the Office of the Dean of the College, is separate from the Code of Student Conduct and governs the academic conduct of students.

Grievance Procedures

If it turns out to be impossible or inappropriate to resolve a difficulty among members of the Public Humanities Center's community through respectful discussion, students are encouraged to consult with the DGS and/or Director. In the event that an incident cannot be resolved satisfactorily within the Center, a student or student group with a grievance can choose to seek counseling, mediation or redress with the appropriate office at Brown outside of the Center (see below). Students do not need the approval or intercession of Public Humanities staff to consult with these offices.

What actions are available to a student who has been impacted by a bias incident in the classroom or at a JNBC event?

- If the incident took place within the classroom, it is recommended that the student consult with the course instructor. This conversation should be documented by the instructor with detailed notes. If this conversation does not resolve the issue, or if the issue involves the course instructor, it is recommended that the student consult with the DGS or the Center's Director. This conversation should be documented with detailed notes.
- If this incident took place outside of the classroom or at a Public Humanities Center program or event, it is recommended that the student consult with the DGS and/or the Director. Again, this conversation should be documented with detailed notes.
- At any time, the student may bypass the above steps and file a bias incident report with Brown's [Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity](#), and/or contact either/both the Associate Dean of Diversity Initiatives at the [Graduate School](#) for advice or consultation or the [Associate Dean and Director of Student Conduct](#). These Associate Deans can counsel the student on further actions, including the formal complaint process. The Associate Dean and Director of Student Conduct can work with students informally to assist in resolving issues, and/or would oversee an investigation arising from a formal complaint. More information about this process is available in Brown's [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#).
- Any punitive action/administrative response lies in the hands of the appropriate deans of the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies.

What can a student do who experiences sexual or gender-based harassment from someone inside or outside of the JNBC community?

- If a student is the victim of sexual assault, he/she/they should call Brown's Sexual Assault Response Line, offering 24x7 on-call confidential support and resources at 401-863-6000. The on-call counselor is also available to accompany a survivor to the hospital. All interactions with this office are confidential.
- If a student experiences issues related to sexual assault, sexual and/or gender-based harassment, domestic/dating violence, relational abuse or stalking, he/she/they should contact the Sexual Harassment and Assault Resources and Education ([SHARE](#)) staff for support and advice navigating available options. All interactions with this office are confidential.

* "Confidential" means that the designated office or campus professionals can maintain the confidentiality of a complainant's disclosures. They cannot reveal identifiable information shared by an individual to any other person without express permission of the individual, or as otherwise permitted or required by law.

Grievance Procedures: Further Resources

[The Title IX and Gender Equity Office](#) oversees Formal Complaints made by students that involve cases of Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment, Sexual Assault and Interpersonal Violence.

[The Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards](#) oversees Formal Complaints made by students that involve instances in which the Student Code of Conduct has been violated.

[Brown's Graduate School](#) oversees Formal Complaints brought by graduate students at Brown that are not addressed by other offices or processes such as those above.

Student Affinity and Support Groups

[Brown RISD Hillel](#): As the largest student organization on campus, Hillel offers performing artists, lectures, Jewish learning, symposia, community action projects, Israel study, and a safe place for students to be Jewish.

[Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#): All clinicians in Counseling and Psychological Services are required to have experience in working with students from diverse backgrounds. The office provides ongoing programming for students on topics such as ethnic and racial identity and hate crimes.

[Global Brown Center for International Students](#): Global Brown supports the international student community at Brown through orientations, programming, and resources that celebrate and recognize the diversity of international identities.

[Brown Center for Students of Color](#): BCSC sponsors various events for Graduate Students of Color (GSOC) throughout the academic year. They have a weekly newsletter, a student advisory board and run public lectures and programs.

[LGBTQ Center](#): The Center provides counseling, resources and public programs.

[Native Americans at Brown](#): NAB is a student-led organization. We are committed to community building amongst ourselves as students and staff, as well as with the local Narragansett and Wampanoag communities. Our group works toward increasing awareness about Native issues.

[Office of the Chaplains and Religious Life](#): The mission of this office is to ensure that a diversity of beliefs have voice and vitality throughout the University community. This website introduces their work, programs and religious life colleagues, as well as resources available to undergraduate, graduate, medical students, staff, faculty, and alumni/ae.

[Office of the Dean of the College](#): The Office of the Dean of the College connects students with Deans who serve as resources in academics, advising, and a broad range of issues students may face while at Brown.

[Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity](#): The OIED provides leadership for the formulation and oversight of University policies related to pluralism and equity, and initiates programs and practices that promote diversity, inclusion, and fair treatment of all members of the community. The University designates officers who are responsible for issues of compliance and who are available to answer questions and provide advice.

[Office of International Student and Scholar Services](#): OISSS provides support in the development of university policies and programs relating to issues particular to international exchange, and additionally works with organizations that serve the needs of Brown's international community.

[Office of Military-Affiliated Students](#): Programs for student veterans, and for students pursuing military commissions while at Brown.

[Samuel M. Nabrit Black Graduate Student Association](#): The purpose of the Nabrit BGSA is to enhance the intellectual growth, professional success, and social enjoyment of graduate students within the African Diaspora at Brown University. The Nabrit BGSA also seeks to serve as a source of cultural enrichment and moral support for its members. The Nabrit BGSA may also act as an advocate and voice for the social, political, academic, and safety concerns of graduate students within the African Diaspora at Brown University.

[Sarah Doyle Center for Women and Gender](#): The SDC offers to all students, staff, and faculty resources around gender and its intersections with other markers of identity.

[Student and Employee Accessibility Services](#): SEAS coordinates services and accommodations for students, faculty and staff with physical, psychological, sensory, and learning disabilities. SEAS is also available for consultation with Brown community members who are questioning whether they may have a disability, have questions about working with someone who has a disability, or have a temporary condition that may require accommodations or services.

[Title IX and Gender Equity Office](#): This office provides resources on assault prevention, education, reporting, and other matters of sexual and gender-based harassment.

KEY CONTACTS, WEBSITES AND FORMS

Contacts

Dietrich Neumann , Director, Professor of History of Art and Architecture Dietrich_Neumann@brown.edu 401.863.6115	M.A. students advising, lectures and programs, full-time and part-time M.A. student enrollment.
Sabina Griffin , Center Manager Sabina_Griffin@Brown.edu 401. 863.1177	Student affairs (administrative), student payroll, tuition billing, meeting reservations, practicum funding, reimbursements, conference funding.
Steve Lubar , Professor of American Studies, Director of Graduate Studies lubar@brown.edu 401.863.6110	M.A. students advising, advising, Ph.D. student advising, Graduate Certificate program.
Ronald Potvin , Assistant Director & Curator Ronald_Potvin@brown.edu 401.863.5312	Collections, galleries, Nightingale-Brown House, practicums, professional development, advising.

Websites and Forms

Conference Travel: <http://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/conference-travel>

Financial Aid: <http://www.brown.edu/about/administration/financial-aid/>

Graduate School: <http://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/>

Leaves of Absence: <http://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/academics/student-status-issues/leaves-absence>

Master's funding: <http://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/financing-support/masters-funding>

Registrar: <http://www.brown.edu/about/administration/registrar/>

RISD cross-registration: <http://www.brown.edu/about/administration/registrar/course-enrollment/registration#risd>

Transfer credit approval forms: <https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/registrar/degree-guidelines-0/transfer-credit-approval-forms>

Request Form for Public Humanities' Conference/PD Funds: http://bit.ly/PD_request_form

Public Humanities Gallery Request Form: http://bit.ly/Gallery_Request_Form