M.A. in History with an Emphasis in Public History

History is the research, interpretation and presentation of the past.

Public history at SFA connects history-minded individuals and groups of the East Texas community with the university’s faculty members and students.

Together, we have completed numerous oral history, historic survey, historic marker, National Register, tour, publication and conference projects.

sfasu.edu/publichistory

Explore Public History.
Discover the context and significance of local and regional historic events, sites and individuals. Present the past to the public and explain its relevance to the 21st century while preserving the integrity of our historic resources.

Careers in Public History:
- publishers and manuscript collections
- government agencies and policy advisors
- historic associations, societies and activists
- independent consultants and law firms
- museums, archives and repositories
- K-12 schools
- Main Street and heritage tourism
- private corporations and media companies
- college instructors
The Public History Program is Now Accepting Applications

Directed by the department’s two public historians, and with the participation of numerous other faculty members and local specialists in public history, the program prepares students for jobs in a variety of fields such as archives, museums, historical organizations and historic preservation.

Public History Master’s Program

Each student completes 30 hours of coursework and then a public history project as a culminating assignment. The program gives students a firm grounding in the subject, experience working on a project and material for a portfolio to show future employers.

Public History Courses

The Department of History offers a variety of public history courses to match the career interests and desires of students, as well as to ground students in the best practices, methodology and general fields of public history. These include:

- collections management (archives and museums)
- oral history
- historic preservation
- cultural resources management
- and historical memory.

Other courses are offered based on specific student interests such as digital history, grant writing and nonprofit management, and local history.

Public History Projects

Students completing a public history project can choose to do many things:

- an archival project that includes processing a collection and producing a finding guide with historical context related to the collection’s content.
- a historic preservation project entailing the completion of a National Register of Historic Places nomination or a historic neighborhood survey, or the compiling of a condition assessment report and preservation plan.
- a museum project involving the completion of an actual exhibition, including several exhibits and displays.
- an oral history project consisting of multiple interviews, their transcription and accompanying material that follows oral history best practices.
- other projects, such as historical documentaries, cultural heritage tourism literature, web-based historical atlases, published historical guidebooks or municipal/institutional policy reports.

Explore Resources and Internships

Nacogdoches (the oldest town in Texas), the SFA campus and the surrounding East Texas region offer numerous historically significant landmarks and resources for public history graduate students. Students also often intern at these places, providing practical “on-the-job” experience and networking opportunities. Some of these places include:

- East Texas Research Center
- Stone Fort Museum
- Millard’s Crossing Historic Village
- Sterne-Hoya House
- Durst-Taylor House
- Nacogdoches Railroad Depot
- East Texas Historical Association
- Center for East Texas Studies
- Center for Regional Heritage Research
- Texas Forestry Museum

Assistantships and Financial Aid

Graduate assistantships are available, as well as scholarships and financial aid. Many SFA scholarships are offered only to graduate students, and you may qualify. Contact the graduate advisor for more information on assistantships, and log on to sfasu.edu/aid to search scholarships and browse financial aid information.

Meet Your Mentors

Dr. Perky Beisel and Paul J. P. Sandul direct the public history program. Among their areas of expertise are architecture, archives, collections management, cultural resources management, historic preservation, grant writing, material culture, oral history and museums. In addition, many faculty members in the Department of History contribute to the training of our public history students, with expertise in areas ranging from ancient to modern times. You’ll learn from award-winning authors and researchers who genuinely care about you and your success.