Hiring: Public Humanities Project Assistant, UW-Madison Center for the Humanities

Application Deadline: July 30, 2020
Title: Public Humanities Project Assistant
Start date: August 19, 2020; this is a 12-month, 50% Project Assistantship

Organization Description: Through its Public Humanities programming, the Center for the Humanities partners with schools, museums, libraries, nonprofits, and cultural organizations to demonstrate the value of the humanities outside of the university and prepare students to transform society, from within the classroom or beyond it.

Position Description: The Public Humanities Project Assistant will work under the supervision of the Center’s Assistant Director of Public Humanities to coordinate the Public Humanities Exchange for Undergraduates (HEX-U) program for the 2020-21 academic year. The Public Humanities Project Assistant will also provide support for Great World Texts and professional development programs. We anticipate that virtually all of this work will happen online.

HEX-U Program: HEX-U is a program of the Center for the Humanities that supports undergraduate students who wish to translate their scholarship into community projects implemented in partnership with a local organization. This program supports students as they design, implement, and complete translational projects based in humanities fields and methods. HEX-U is predicated on the notion that student creativity, rather than pre-existing placements and internships, are a source of successful engagement for the student as well as for community partners and the individuals they serve. Many HEX-U projects have outcomes related to racial justice and self-expression, gender rights, environment and land-use, historical preservation, and health disparities.

Specifically, the Project Assistant will provide guidance and oversight to help undergraduates design and implement community projects that draw upon humanities scholarship and methods. This includes working with students to develop local partnerships, advising them on how to successfully translate their humanities education to the public sphere, and providing training in all aspects of non-profit partnership, including budgeting and scheduling, team management, communication, and assessment and evaluation. The Project Assistant will also be responsible for publicizing HEX-U including marketing and outreach and encouraging applications, and for renovating the once physical HEX-U Project Lab at our offices into a virtual experience where students will receive mentorship and professional development in community engagement, as well as collaboration with likeminded students.
Great World Texts: The Project Assistant will work with the team at the Center for the Humanities to support the logistics and potential virtual innovations for our high school global literature program. Now entering its sixteenth year, Great World Texts has reached thousands of students and teachers in dozens of school districts throughout the state of Wisconsin. Drawing from world literature throughout the ages, the program’s selection of texts reflects a capacious understanding of the idea of the “literary classic.” In 2020-21, schools will be reading Dream of Ding Village by Yan Lianke, which tells the prescient story of a public health crisis in the 1990s when rural Chinese villagers selling their blood led to an AIDS outbreak. The novel is the result of three years of undercover work by the writer, who once worked as an assistant to a well-known Beijing anthropologist in an effort to study a small village decimated by HIV/AIDS as a result of unregulated blood selling. This year, we seek to provide a virtual experience of our program to participating schools who are partially using this program to help students process the pandemic through the lens of the humanities. In addition to providing targeted logistics, the Project Assistant will play a role in shaping the new online experience in collaboration with the Assistant Director of Public Humanities.

Public Humanities Professional Development: The Public Works Workshop Series is the primary programmatic vehicle for graduate professional development at the Center for the Humanities, but much professional development also occurs informally through workshop and meeting requests, web site resources, and collaboration with other campus units and global public humanities networks. The Project Assistant will support the Assistant Director of Public Humanities in rethinking and renovating digital materials to better provide graduate students with current resources, opportunities, and mentorship, particularly in the context of the pandemic and the years beyond.

Qualifications:

- Strong background in the public humanities, as demonstrated by coursework, extracurricular engagements, or professional experience, including the ability to talk about and translate the humanities to various audiences, especially undergraduates.
- Successful record of working with and mentoring undergraduates, and a specific understanding of UW-Madison undergraduate populations’ demographics, interests, and locations across campus.
- Understanding of Madison and Dane County and their underserved populations, and an interest in learning more.
- Existing skills or willingness to learn skills in basic web design, and also graphic design and video (desired, but not required). Applications and software used regularly include: Craft CMS, Asana, Airtable, Google Suite, Adobe Suite, iMovie, Vimeo, Constant Contact.
- Ability to identify and effectively collaborate with non-academic community partners.
- Experience with project management, including project management methods, tools, and technologies.
• Some experience with financial reporting; ability to maintain a budget and track expenses.
• Attention to detail, flexibility, and ability to meet deadlines.
• An ability to work both independently and as part of a team.
• Excellent communication skills, both written and spoken.
• Ability to think creatively about projects and see them through to the end, as well as to identify challenges and potential solutions.

**Eligibility and Application Procedure:** This position is open to UW-Madison graduate students in the humanities and related fields. Applicants will be reviewed based on their relevant experience and skills and their academic accomplishments. This is a 12-month, 50% project assistantship which includes tuition remission and eligibility for health benefits.

To apply, please submit a cover letter, CV, and the names and contact information for two references, in a single PDF document, by email to applications@humanities.wisc.edu. The deadline to apply is July 30, 2020.