Post-Graduation and the History Degree

“What can I do with a History degree?” There are many career paths and possibilities, depending on your interests and goals. Below is a list of some of the diverse paths recent Drury history majors have chosen after graduating. If you’d like to contact any of the names below for mentorship, let the Department of History know.

What are the central skills of a historian? Historians are those who seek to understand the past in terms of a modern context. They understand cultural differences, how historical actors shape history, and interpret source material by placing it within the context of the period under study. In addition, historians synthesize vast amounts of material, perform problem-solving, and think holistically. One of our most important skills is shared empathy that allows us to see others in light of the historical context. More than many other majors—you have the ability to write well, research, and compile information in a professional manner. You have engaged in projects that require teamwork and have managed multiple projects at a single time. These are skills that will serve you well.

The skills of a historian match many of the essential skills that employers desire. These include: writing skills, oral communication, critical reading, thinking fast on feet, research, analysis skills, interpersonal skills, and honesty and integrity.

Feel free to mention any of these impressive skills in a job interview or on a resume. Frequently, you’ll need a way to make sense of what historians do in order to convince others of your expertise and applicability of history to other professions.

I. Graduate School as a Gateway to the Professions

History

• Diana J. and Diana R. received their Master’s Degrees from Missouri State Univ.
• Stan is working on his Master’s Degree in History from Univ. Missouri-Columbia
• Jessica is near completion of her Ph.D. in History from Florida International Univ.
• Chassica is pursuing her Ph.D. in Medieval Studies at University of Kansas
• Ashley is working on her M.A. program in Russian and E. European history at Indiana University

Law

• Shawna received her Juris Doctorate from University of Tulsa
• Derek from Drake; Pete from Boston University; Scott from Washington University
• Lucy received her JD from Washburn and Maastricht University
• History majors are members of firms, or have their own practices, in Springfield/Boonville/St. Louis, MO; Oklahoma; and Texas

Museum Studies

• Rose Mary received her Museum Studies degree from George Washington

Library Science/Information

• A.J. is pursuing his Ph.D. degree from University of Missouri

Divinity Degree

• Matt received a Divinity degree from Vanderbilt Divinity School
• Emily received a Divinity Degree from Princeton Theological Seminary
Other:
• Tom and Jay are pursuing Ph.D. degrees in Political Science
• Ryan is pursuing a Master’s Degree in Teaching in Arkansas
• David is getting his Ph.D. in Communications from Penn State University
• Amy received an MA in Public Administration from Missouri State University
• Kaicee earned a degree in Paralegal studies from Drury
• Garrett went to medical school and is employed at Bolivar Memorial Hospital
• Stan is at University of Maryland-College Park, pursuing a Ph.D. in U.S. History
• Chassica is at University of Kansas, pursuing a Ph.D. in Medieval Studies

Education:
Teaching Social Studies and History
• Lisa is teaching high school history in Lee’s Summit-North, Missouri
• Shelby is teaching U.S. history and government at Greenwood Laboratory Schools, MSU
• Molly leads the history program at Central High School (across the street)
• Amy is teaching history at Fair Grove High School
• Stephanie teaches history and psychology at Buffalo High School
• Matt teaches social studies at Willard Junior High School
• Alan is teaching at the UNO - Garcia, Charter High School in Chicago, Illinois

Teaching Abroad
• Stan lived in South Korea teaching English at a kindergarten
• Aaron taught in Taiwan
• Sample companies to consider are: World Teach; Fulbright English Teaching Assistant; Japanese Exchange and Teaching Programme; English Program in Korea; CIEE (China; Spain; Thailand, etc.); Hess International Education Group; Central European Teaching Program

Advising and Human Resources
• Michael works in academic advising for Drury University
• Diana is the Assistant Registrar at Missouri State University
• Amanda is Program Specialist for the Assoc. of American Medical Colleges in Wash. D.C.
• Robby is an Applications Specialist for the Assemblies of God Missionaries
• Camille is an Administrative Coordinator for Discovery Garden Montessori School

Teach for America [http://www.teachforamerica.org](http://www.teachforamerica.org)
• Rachel won this prestigious opportunity and taught kindergarten in Oklahoma

Museum/Archives/Library
• A.J. was an Archives Digitization Assistant for the Missouri Historical Society and is a research librarian for the Missouri Department of Transportation
• Haley and others are employed by the Discovery Center
• Stan was employed by the State Archives in Jefferson City
• Several students are employed by the Springfield Greene-County library
• Robby works for the Assemblies of God archives
• Sarah works for the Lorain County History Museum
• Rosemary worked at the Native American museum, Evanston, Illinois
Politics and Public Policy
- Dominick worked for the Advance Team of the Office of Governor Jay Nixon
- Tim is a Senior Consultant with Booz, Allen, Hamilton in Washington DC (speech-writing; reports for Congress)
- Adam works for the Department of State as an Issuance agent in Washington DC
- Gary Matthews, Director, United States Institute of Peace [Class of 1960]
- Rebekah worked as Deputy Communications Director for Matt Blunt

Humanitarian, Social Work, and Religion
- Amanda served as an Education Volunteer in Mauritania, Africa, and as a Librarian in Antigua with the Peace Corps: http://www.peacecorps.gov
- Zach is a program manager for Halo Trust (de-mining) in Laos and many places around the world http://www.halotrust.org
- Emily is a Young Adult Ministry Specialist at Presbyterian Mission Agency in Kentucky
- Matt is a Staff Chaplain at Vanderbilt Medical Center in Nashville, TN

Business and Human Resources:
- Andy is employed by a downtown Springfield business
- Jay works for Empire Bank
- Amy serves as Program Director for Environmental Studies at Auburn University
- Andrew is Vice President at HappyFeet Legends International (soccer in Kansas City)
- Margaret is a personal assistant to the Bishop of Springfield-Cape Girardeau
- Maggie works for Boston University School of Medicine as a Finance Assistant
- Patrick works for International Insurance Brokers in Tulsa
- Kylee is Operations Coordinator for the Global Law Team at Monsanto

Ranger and Park Services
- Meghan worked for the National Park Service on an island off South Carolina

II. What Can I Do to Prepare for Post-Graduation as a Drury Student?

1. **Be involved on campus.** This will provide important tools for you to discuss in your job interview. You will be competing with other involved students—going beyond your major will show others that you have additional interests, work well with others, and have prized leadership skills. The student with more extra-curricular activities will be more likely to get the job.

2. **Be involved with your department.** You will need to have your professors write letters of recommendation for you. The better we know you, the better letters we can write. In addition, you build important social skills and make connections.

3. **Discuss career options and professional programs with your adviser at your semester advising session.**

4. **Consider an internship** in your junior or senior year. An internship linked with your major can be a great resume builder, provides professional experience, and sometimes serves as an entryway towards future employment. Again, it is a way to set yourself above other applicants, or simply to compete alongside them. [Beth, Allison and Kelly interned at the Springfield-Greene County]
History museum; Lyndy interned in Kuala Lampur, Indonesia; Jenn interned in Washington DC with a museum; Rose Mary at the Smithsonian—there are many options!

5. **Develop a stellar resume in your freshman year.** Keep revising it, and building it. We recommend that you bring a copy of your professional resume to each of your advising sessions so that you get constant feedback on your resume. Professional resumes are extremely important for getting a job, and harder than you think. Any errors or misstatements might place you in the wrong pile. Working on this is worth the effort; consult with your faculty for feedback because it's a simple tactic to get well-positioned.

6. **Develop a LinkedIn Account and manage your professional identity** [likewise, google your name and see if there are open accounts that need to be deleted]. Connect with your Drury professors.

7. **Keep a portfolio of your best work.** [At a job interview, interviewers might wish to see some of your sample ungraded work, if it applies to your job.]

8. **Seek out the Drury Career Center** that has a wide array of useful resources. [http://www.drury.edu/career/]

9. **Learn the lingo.** Every cover letter and resume you send out should include the skills and experiences you have developed as a History major. Here are some:

   - “I have a portfolio of writing varied in its forms, themes, and language. I can digest information and write analytically for a wide array of audiences and for a variety of purposes.”
   - “History classes have taught me how to enter into conversations, agree and disagree productively, gracefully turn the conversation to new directions, look for consensus and challenge conventional views with assertiveness. More than anything, discussions about literature and writing have taught me how to make room for all voices and viewpoints before making important decisions.”
   - “I have learned how to work on several projects at once and complete those projects on deadline.”
   - “I have read more widely than most college-educated students. I understand how cultures are different, and how those differences shape history.”
   - “My education has introduced me to challenges and controversies in social, scientific, and cultural arenas, and has prepared me to see problems and tasks in a larger framework.”
   - “I can analyze data, research and prepare analytical reports, and participate in grant writing”

Do you want to talk some more? Contact any other member of the History Department to discuss your options in more detail.

Revised 9/15
“History majors learn to think critically. There is a huge amount of reading required, and you have to distill vast volumes of materials to see the larger themes. I’ve been hiring interns here at ABC News since 2001, and I appreciate the curiosity of the liberal arts students, their interest, and their awareness of what is going on. History majors in particular know how to find relevant documents. They are not only interested in the world around them, but when there is a current event, they know there is also a long history related to the event, a clear recognition that it wasn’t just this week’s news that caused something to happen. Added to that understanding, they have great reading and writing skills.” -- Charles Herman, Producer ABC News [history major] (qtd. in Dunham and Vollmer 10)