Think Broadly

“Undergraduates who love history but do not want to teach are often thrilled to find out that there are opportunities to work as a historian in a museum, archive, or consulting firm; on documentary editing projects; in historic preservation; and for the government. When told about careers conducting historical research to create exhibits, interpret primary sources for public audiences, develop public policy, plan public events, write a storyline for a documentary, or in a host of other endeavors, these students will often say “that’s exactly what I want to do!” enrolling in a graduate program in public history is one of the best routes to employment in all of the above fields.”

Websites/Journals/Blogs

Visit History@Work to see the vitality of the field.

Read The Public Historian, the recognized academic journal for the field. 
Read free, digitized back issues of Public History News, the NCPH newsletter

AHA: Careers in Public History 
https://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/career-resources

National Council on Public History
http://ncph.org/cms/

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For public historians, there is no such thing as a typical day. I frequently work with reporters, film makers, Congressional legislators and other researchers, educating them on the history of medicine. I love never knowing what questions I will be asked! I also work with Save Ellis Island and other historic sites, helping to preserve and restore these sites. More recently, I curated an exhibit on the history of nursing and I provided an historical analysis of flu pandemics to government officials planning for a new outbreak. I also lecture at universities, historic sites and community centers. Best of all, I am researching and writing a book for both historians and the general public on the history of federally funded sex education.”

- Alexandra Lord

http://ncph.org/cms/careers-training/

For a additional information regarding a Public History Emphasis, please see Jenny Morton, Director of Undergraduate Advising and Curriculum, Department of History. 
573-882-2069 mortonj@missouri.edu

Smithsonian Castle, Washington, DC
The History Department at the University of Missouri offers an undergraduate Public History emphasis for history majors. Public History refers to the theory and practice of history beyond the boundaries of the university. Public History emphasizes the dissemination of history to a wide audience through physical and digital exhibitions, archives, local history projects and interdisciplinary collaborations. The best public history rests on strong scholarship, and practitioners must excel in the craft of history.

Students who pursue this course of study will not only have a strong foundation in historical methods and research, but will also learn to put their skills to work in the world through internships and digital history projects. Training in public history prepares students for a wide range of careers in museums, archives, historic preservation, and education in both the public and private sectors.

“The definitive voice of the public history profession, The Public Historian offers the latest scholarship and applications from the field. From original research and case studies to broad substantive and theoretical issues, The Public Historian will keep you informed about the ever-expanding and increasingly international study and practice of public history.”

http://ncph.org/cms/publications-resources/the-public-historian/

Public History Emphasis Curriculum

I. Introductory Courses 9 hours
Nine (9) hours (numbered below 2000. One course from three of the following four areas:
a) United States to 1865
b) United States since 1865
c) European
d) Third World (Africa, Asia, Latin America, India)

II. Area Specific Courses 9 hours
Nine (9) hours (numbered 1000 level or above, not to include 1100, 1200, 1500, 1510). One course from each of the following areas:
a) United States
b) European
c) Third World (Africa, Asia, Latin America, India)

III. History Electives 9 hours
a) History 4910: History in the Public: An Introduction to the Theory & Practices of Public History (this course is writing intensive)
b) Six (6) hours, history courses at the 3000 level or above.

IV. Capstone 6 hours
Two (2) internship courses (History 4940). At least one internship must involve some sort of public presentation (for example - poster session, conference presentation, museum display, or digital exhibit) based on original research.

V. Public History Projects
Two (2) of the courses above (not to include 4910 or 4940) must include a digital or public history component.

Public History

“Public history describes the many and diverse ways in which history is put to work in the world. In this sense, it is history that is applied to real-world issues.”
http://ncph.org/cms/what-is-public-history/

“Public historians come in all shapes and sizes. They call themselves historical consultants, museum professionals, government historians, archivists, oral historians, cultural resource managers, curators, film and media producers, historical interpreters, historic preservationists, policy advisers, local historians, and community activists, among many many other job descriptions. All share an interest and commitment to making history relevant and useful in the public sphere.”

“Public History is history that is seen, heard, read, and interpreted by a popular audience. Public historians expand on the methods of academic history by emphasizing non-traditional evidence and presentation formats, reframing questions, and in the process creating a distinctive historical practice....Public history is also history that belongs to the public. By emphasizing the public context of scholarship, public history trains historians to transform their research to reach audiences outside the academy.”
http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/history/publichistory/main.htm