



THE SIXTH FLOOR MUSEUM
AT DEALEY PLAZA

Oral History Internship

Background:

The Sixth Floor Museum at Dealey Plaza opened in 1989 inside the former Texas School Book Depository building at the site of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The Museum's exhibits explore the life, assassination and legacy of President Kennedy within the context of 1960s history and culture.

The Museum's robust collections includes more than 50,000 items related to the assassination, its local and global aftermath, the Kennedy legacy and the turbulent culture of the 1960s. A significant part of these ever-growing collections is the institution's ongoing Oral History Project. This audio-visual project captures a wide variety of personal insights from individuals around the world. Interviews are divided into twenty-five thematic categories and are made available to students, teachers, researchers and historians interested in primary resources that characterize the time period. To date, more than 1,700 oral histories have been recorded, and approximately one hundred new interviews are completed each year.

Summary:

The Oral History Intern will report to the Curator, in the Museum's Collections and Interpretation Division. Professor Jill Kelly will serve as the Academic Advisor overseeing this intern. This is an unpaid internship that will last for 15 weeks during the Spring Semester and will account for 3 credit hours. Intern must be able to commit to 8 hours per week.

The Oral History Intern will take part in a series of experiential learning activities as the student assists with every aspect of the ongoing Oral History Project. As part of this experience, the intern will actively participate in various aspects of the Oral History Project including research (archival and current media); personal interactions; appointment scheduling; question development and general interview preparation; equipment handling; lighting and videography; paperwork (releases and interview logs); uploading, storage, and media production; transcription; and generating content for Museum catalog records. The culmination of this internship will result in a final project listed below.

Each oral history recording typically includes the following steps:

Pre-Interview

- Research and subject identification
- Initial contact with subject, explanation of project, and scheduling
- Additional research as needed, question preparation

Interview

- Equipment setup and lighting
- Videography
- Oral History Interview Agreement (release)

Post-Interview

- Uploading, converting, and archiving master HD video files
- Producing HD data discs for Collections, DVD copy for subject
- Updating lists, including website with concise description of interview
- Generating TMS content for cataloging
- Transcribing video recording

Special Project:

After a period of observation and assistance with the steps listed above, the Oral History Intern will be responsible for creating two new oral history recordings and carrying the task through from start to finish (following the above steps), under the supervision of the Curator.

The intern will select a single thematic category of the Oral History Project and pinpoint two local individuals who fit within this category. After following the pre-interview, interview and post-interview steps, the intern will utilize the video recording and the complete transcript to create a written or audio-visual piece that showcases this original work.

The end-result could include one of the following:

- A video presentation combining interview sequences with original narration and/or content from the student. If appropriate, this video could be featured on social media or the Museum's YouTube Channel.
- A paper or article that synthesizes the thematically-connected interviews and summarizes the overall experience and significance of oral history recording.
- A workshop-style multimedia presentation to an appropriate audience regarding the process and value of recording oral history interviews.
- Or other product proposed by the student and approved by the intern's supervisor and academic advisor.

Desired Learning Outcomes:

- Student will gain hands-on experience in, and an amplified understanding of, multiple facets of collections and curatorial work in an active museum environment.
- Student will be able to hone advanced research methods utilizing a variety of primary and secondary sources.
- Student will have improved communications skills through diverse types of interactions.
- Student will be able to recognize the benefit and practical application of primary source material in professional presentations.

Requirements and Educational Qualifications:

- Declared History Major; minimum 2.5 GPA.
- Interest in local and national 20th century history and culture.
- Demonstrable attention to detail and advanced social skills.
- Ability to carry and handle videography equipment (up to 20 pounds).
- Prior experience with videography preferred.
- Ability with standard office software applications (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel, etc.).

To Apply:

Email HR@jfk.org. Interested students should submit a resume and writing sample, with a cover letter explaining their interest in and qualifications for this internship.