

FIND YOUR

CREATIVE OUTLET

MUSEUM STUDIES





The Museum Studies courses at West Chester University were critical in engaging me in conversations about the purpose of museums, their obligations, and the importance of the study of museums, which helps me to address the goals, challenges, and expectations of my local and broader communities. The experience of creating an exhibition with my peers helped me to understand the entire process, from planning, to research, to marketing/accessibility. I often have responsibilities outside of my dedicated role, a massive task that my experiences with the Museum Studies courses and Anthropology program have prepared me for.

**—Michaela Zaborowski ('16),
Boyertown Antique Car Museum**

Why Museum Studies?

Museum studies prepares you for a career in museums, heritage, public history, arts administration and related non-profit organizations in the “culture sector.” It is ideal for those who want to work with the community, educate the public, design impactful exhibits, and care for artistic, historical, and cultural artifacts. It gives you the ability to communicate complex ideas accessibly through speech, text, image, and objects. It provides highly transferrable skills ranging from design and interpretation to education and administration, from curation to collections management.

Our region is a strong growth area for museum jobs. With a \$3.3 billion nonprofit and arts sector, the Philadelphia region boasts one of the largest concentration of museums—and jobs are growing by a rate of 38% in the last 10 years.

Museum Studies provides highly transferrable skills. You will learn to communicate complex ideas to the public through text, image, objects and speech; lead tours for people of all ages; hone your organizational abilities; care for ancient and fragile artifacts; and manage community-facing events.

Megan Gunzelman explains her exhibit on microplastic pollution to visiting middle schoolers.





Aaron Stoyack interviewed on 6 ABC News Philadelphia.

WCU's Museum Studies Edge

WCU's Museum Studies Program stands out as one of the most impactful in the region.

We provide the most hands-on experience around. You will learn to curate an exhibition from start-to-finish—from research to sourcing and caring for artifacts, to designing and installing an exhibition. And it doesn't stop there: you can create 3D virtual exhibitions, publish catalogs, lead tours and conduct audience research in our own Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology!

Interdisciplinary. Our interdisciplinary Minor in Museum Studies complements your major by coupling theoretical and hands-on learning in curation, education, communication, archival work, conservation science and audience research. From art + design to history to education, you'll be able to find creative avenues to apply your major

Networking opportunities. Our students apply their skills in internships across the Philadelphia region at organizations such as the Penn Museum, Chester County History Center, Global Philadelphia Association, WCU Special Collections, and the Weitzman Museum. Students also have also presented their work at conferences sponsored by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the Eastern Analytical Symposium, the American Anthropological Association, and the Society for Applied Anthropology.

We give you high visibility. Our exhibitions have played a central role in the WCU community, drawing crowds and generating TV, newspaper and online press. From recording virtual tours to being interviewed in the media, you can put your name out there, giving you an edge in a competitive job field.

“I wish my university had a program like this” is something museum professionals repeat when they see the success and skillset of our graduates!

Jackie Armao puts the finishing touches on her exhibit on ethnic foodways in Philadelphia.





Throughout my time in the West Chester University Museum Studies program, I got to learn and explore aspects of museum work that truly fascinated me and encouraged my interests. One of the coolest parts was the opportunity to participate in a summer internship as a Curatorial Intern with the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia. Having the chance to implement what I learned in the classroom regarding proper storage, handling, research, and more in a professional museum setting allowed me to get a better understanding of how museum curation and overall collection management functions and what aspects I enjoy and could learn more about moving forward in my career.

— Lilli Benson ('26)

Facilities and Opportunities

As a Museum Studies minor, you will benefit from

- Award-winning faculty
- Small classes
- Personalized attention
- Behind-the-scenes site visits to area museums and heritage sites
- Interactions and guest lectures from museum professionals
- Hands-on research, curation and collections management
- Career-focused internships and field schools
- State-of-the-art laboratory and conservation workshop
- Museum catalog library
- Archaeological reference library
- Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology and its collection of 300,000 archaeological and ethnographic artifacts

Dr. Heather Wholey helps Katie Dowling install salt marsh specimens loaned from the Delaware Museum of Nature and Science.





*WCU President Chris Fiorentino and Dr. Sue Fiorentino (far right) attend the ribbon-cutting to inaugurate the university's sesquicentennial exhibition, **WCU 150: History and Heritage**, with student co-curators, alumni, and State Senators Carolyn Comitta and Tommy Tomlinson.*

The Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology

As a Museum Studies minor, you have unparalleled access to the Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology, a unique teaching laboratory and a hub for the WCU community. Lead tours as a docent, conduct visitor studies or analyze artifacts as an intern—and, of course, curate an exciting exhibition in one of our three galleries!



Harrison Warren, Virginia Vinson, and Jackie Armao in their exhibition, "Beyond the Bell: Philadelphia's Global Heritage."



Our Collections

The Museum boasts over 300,000 artistic, archaeological, cultural and historical artifacts that span the globe. As a Museum Studies minor, you will work with our collections, learning to research, catalog, conserve, document, and properly store them.



Our Lab

In addition to a textile conservation lab, you will utilize our state-of-the-art anthropology and archaeology laboratory while working with artifacts. Consult our archaeological and museum catalog libraries, learn to operate our X-ray Fluorescence (XRF) device, and photograph artifacts with our professional grade artifact studio photography station.

Archaeologist Barb Silber teaching Katie Ulmer how to mend a glass artifact. ►

The museum studies program at West Chester University was extremely influential for me. The scholarship changed the way I think about museums, but this program also provided me with opportunities to create and curate real museum exhibitions. As a graduate of this program, I was able to present my research on dioramas at the American Anthropological Association. Currently, I am teaching museum studies for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Pittsburgh.

**— Foster W. Krupp ('20),
University of Pittsburgh ►**





Cohwen Mills and Collections Manager Helen Bilinski examining colonial artifacts from Westtown in the lab.

Curriculum

A Museum Studies minor is easy to accomplish, with just three core courses and three electives of your choosing.

MST 258: Introduction to Museum Studies

Coupling theory with behind-the-scenes site visits and lectures from area museum professionals, this course opens your eyes to the wide variety of jobs in the museum world. *This course counts for General Education Interdisciplinary ("I") requirement.*

MST 355: Collections Care and Management

Learn the ins and outs of caring for artistic, ethnographic and archaeological artifacts in this hands-on course in our state-of-the-art lab. You will learn to catalog, research and properly store museum objects; monitor environmental conditions, and draft loan and accession agreements.

MST 358: Museum Exhibition Curation

Curate a major exhibition from start to finish! Learn to develop a concept and narrative, write labels and catalog text, design interactive exhibits, and carefully install artifacts in our Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology.

I was involved with repatriation compliance projects at the Penn Museum and with the conservation of books and paper artifacts alongside the National Library of Greece. I'm now grateful to be pursuing an opportunity managing historical collections and actively preserving early American architecture at one of the nation's oldest industrial sites, the nearby Newlin Grist Mill.

— Cohwen Mills ('26)

Student co-curators celebrating the inauguration of their exhibition, "Surrounded by the Spirits: Paul Stoller and the Songhay Journey Towards Wellbeing" in front of their faithful recreation of a West African spirit hut. ▼

Elective courses

Choose from a range of courses—both inside and outside of your major—including:

- Art + Design
- American Material Culture
- Digital Humanities
- Anthropology and Archaeology
- Education
- History
- Public Administration
- Business and Marketing
- Scenic Design



See our advising sheet for complete list of courses



Where are they now?

Our program has placed students in jobs such as

- Archival work
- Arts administration
- Consulting
- Cultural Resource Management
- Education
- Parks Service
- Finance
- Historic preservation
- Hospitality
- Museum management and curation
- Non-profit management

Recent graduate school placements include:

- Harvard University
- Johns Hopkins University
- Winterthur
- University of Chicago
- University of Maryland
- University of Delaware

Recent job placements and internships include

- Historic Bethlehem World Heritage Site
- Newlin Grist Mill
- Boyertown Antique Car Museum
- Reading Children's Museum
- Delaware Museum of Science and Nature
- Global Philadelphia Association
- The Penn Museum
- Philadelphia Museum of Art
- The Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History
- The Brandywine Art Museum
- Chester County History Center
- Goggleworks Center for the Arts
- National Parks Service
- Pamplin Historical Park

PANEL BY PANEL



The Museum Studies minor at West Chester expanded both my understanding of my major (Anthropology) and the ways I could use it professionally. The coursework challenged me to become more observant, thoughtful, and aware of the world around me, both within museum spaces and beyond them. Above all, it strengthened my sense of curiosity, which has become one of the most valuable tools I carry with me. That curiosity ultimately led me to an Event Planning job at a visual arts center where I'm able to apply the skills I developed in the Anthropology and Museum Studies departments in a meaningful, real-world setting while engaging with both art and community every day.

**— Natalie A. Fenner ('20),
Goggleworks Art Center**





*Museum Studies Director Michael A. Di Giovine, Aaron Stoyack, and Ashley Wallen installing historical memorabilia for the exhibition, **WCU 150: History and Heritage**.*



**Scan to learn more about the
Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology
and its exhibitions curated by
Museum Studies students**



**Scan to learn more about the
Museum Studies Program at WCU**

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