

***It is easy for a museum to get objects,  
it is hard for a museum to get brains ... – John Cotton Dana, 1920***

The University of Kansas (KU)'s graduate program in Museum Studies responds to the museum profession's current and future needs, while preparing graduates for leadership and innovation in museums, historical societies, and related institutions.

KU Museum Studies students master the interdisciplinary and collaborative qualities of museum work along with thorough understanding of the concepts and theories that shape contemporary museum studies. They contribute insights generated through disciplined and creative scholarship as they develop expertise in specialized areas of museum practice. A complete description of the program can be found at [museumstudies.ku.edu](http://museumstudies.ku.edu).

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

With guidance from academic advisors and program staff, Museum Studies students craft individualized programs of study tailored to their interests and reflecting current museum standards. The wide-ranging academic resources of the University of Kansas are available in fields as diverse as learning theory, social media, audience evaluation, nonprofit leadership, psychology, theater, and public administration – as well as in history, anthropology, art history, natural sciences, and visual arts. Students also have opportunities to engage with the staff and resources of numerous museums in the Lawrence area as well as in Kansas City and Topeka.

The KU Museum Studies Program has six components:

- Museum Studies Core – 9 credits
- Museum Professional Areas – 9 credits
- Museum Conceptual Domains – 6 credits
- Electives – 9 credits
- Museum Experience (Internship) – 3 credits
- Final Product (Research)

**Museum Studies Core (9 credits)** The Museum Studies Core consists of a suite of three courses designed to ensure that all students in the KU Museum Studies Program gain a comprehensive understanding of theory, history, techniques, and problems common to museums, historical societies, and related institutions.

**Museum Professional Areas (9 credits)** Each student in the KU Museum Studies Program will develop expertise in at least one of the principal areas of museum work: *Leadership and Management*, *Interpretation*, *Collections*, and *Community Connections*. These courses incorporate training in best practices, policy development, legal and regulatory concerns, and future trends.

*Leadership and Management* addresses avenues for building resilient institutions through administration, planning, collaboration and fundraising, as well as the legal issues related to the management of contemporary nonprofit organizations.

*Interpretation* considers the processes and practices of making meaning through exhibition design and installation, graphics, marketing, public programs, and innovative approaches to the use of new and emerging technologies.

*Collections* focuses on expertise in the practices and policies associated with the management and care of the wide range of objects and materials in museum collections.

*Community Connections* encompasses the ways museums can engage and collaborate with different publics through programming, curriculum planning, visitor studies, and audience development.

**Museum Conceptual Domains (6 credits)** Courses concerning the conceptual domains of museum work – materiality, engagement, and representation – place museological subjects in broad historical and intellectual frameworks and provide students with an understanding of the historical and theoretical foundations of museums.

**Electives and Other Museum Studies Courses (9 credits)** Electives enable students to deepen their knowledge in a particular area of museum work by taking courses pertinent to their area of specialization.

**Museum Experience (3 credits)** Internships and other museum experiences are a critical component of the KU Museum Studies Program. Upon graduation, each student will have gained at least 500 hours of museum experience, including at least 250 hours in a supervised internship in a local, regional, national, or international setting.

**Final Product and Examination** Each KU Museum Studies student will develop a final product, based on research or other creative activity, which contributes to the museum studies field and demonstrates the student's ability to engage conceptually and professionally with the discipline. Students defend their final product as part of a comprehensive master's examination.

## **APPLICATION TO THE KU MUSEUM STUDIES PROGRAM**

Students are admitted to the program each fall. To be considered for admission to the KU Museum Studies Program, a candidate must have a bachelor's degree and a grade-point average of at least 3.0 in previous college work. A detailed description of application requirements can be found on the Museum Studies Program website (<http://museumstudies.ku.edu/how-apply>). We welcome questions from prospective students – please use the information below to contact us by telephone, email, mail, or social media.

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