

**Profile of the
History Department
University of Wisconsin–Green Bay
2018 Regents Teaching Excellence Program Award Recipient**

Highlights from nomination materials:

- UW-Green Bay’s History Department, chaired by Dr. Heidi Sherman, is a high-impact, student-centered program incorporating hands-on applied learning and community engagement.
- The department’s enrollment has been increasing in recent years – counter to national trends – and currently has 123 students majoring in the program and 29 students declaring history as a minor.
- Faculty have been working to redress gender inequities among the student body. Female student enrollment is now at 47.2%, higher than the national average.
- A growing number of history majors are pursuing internships, from 24% in 2011-12 to 43% in 2016-17.
- The department credits its successes to curricular revisions and a concerted focus on innovative instruction to attract and retain a variety of students.
- Faculty view students as active knowledge producers, and help them to build skills of interpretation, argument, and writing in collaboration with fellow students.
- Upper-level courses employ collaborative digital learning projects. One class partnered with the Brown County Historical Association and the Green Bay Fire Department to research the Great Green Bay Fire of 1880 and mount a live reenactment broadcast via Twitter. Students each researched a historical person who had experienced the fire, and during the reenactment, “tweeted” messages from their persona. The reenactment received local media coverage. Faculty also established an online Encyclopedia of Wisconsin Environmental History, using the same software that undergirds Wikipedia. The website provides a platform for students to share writing and research on historical topics related to the natural environment, including brief histories of Wisconsin state parks and influential figures such as Aldo Leopold and Emma Toft.
- History faculty have a high level of participation in the first-year program Gateways to Phoenix Success.

In the words of graduates:

- “With faculty support, I developed skills in three-dimensional animation, critical thinking, and interpretation of historical documents. These skills have not only helped me become a better informed and well-rounded individual, they are practical skills which I have used in my graduate level studies and within my field.”
—*Benjamin Dudzik*
- “There are many ways to teach history but the History Department at the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay truly inspires students to envision history....I recently had an internship with the General Mills Corporate Archives during their 150th anniversary. Companies that have been around for as long as General Mills have documents and artifacts that tell the story of the 19th and 20th century. Understanding history is essential to understanding why archival artifacts in these types of collections are important and why the preservation of these artifacts is essential.”—*Natasha Bruns*

In the words of a colleague:

- “I have had the honor and privilege to have worked in multiple capacities with all members of the History faculty and have interacted with many of their students. I can easily attest to the fact that the History faculty are all extremely dedicated to education. The faculty are strong not only as individuals ... but collectively as well. This can be seen through their leadership and involvement with SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) activities, individual instruction, and desire to reach students via face-to-face and online programming.”
—*Gregory Davis, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, UW-Green Bay*