April 1, 2013

Contact:

Dr. Gerald Prokopowicz, Chair of the Department of History
252-328-1027, prokopowiczg@ecu.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

East Carolina University Offers Public History Opportunities for Undergraduate and Graduate Students

GREENVILLE, N.C. (April 1, 2013) — East Carolina University is one of the UNC system’s leaders in Public History, the professional field that trains students to work in museums, archives, battlefields, historic homes, libraries and other history-related institutions. Since 1985, when ECU’s Department of History began offering master’s and bachelor’s degrees in Public History, many alumni have gotten jobs at the NC Museum of History, the Holocaust Museum (Washington, D.C.), Bentonville Battleground, the N.C. Tobacco Farm Life Museum, Hope Plantation, the National Park Service and at many other history-based organizations.

To meet the changing conditions of the market and the reality of reduced resources, ECU is expanding its course offerings (with existing faculty) while consolidating its separate undergraduate degrees in Public History and in History into a single Bachelor of Arts degree in History, with a minor in Public History for students who want to prepare for a career in that field.

“We looked at the catalog and saw there was essentially no difference in requirements between a History degree with a Public History minor, and a separate Public History degree. So it made sense to streamline the program and bring Public History fully under the History umbrella,” said Provost Marilyn Sheerer. “This is part of our strategic focus on finding ways to operate more efficiently with the resources available.”

By collaborating to offer cross-listed courses with other programs, including Anthropology, Planning and Maritime Studies, ECU graduate students will have more Public History course options than ever before, without any additional faculty hiring, according to Dr. Gerald Prokopowicz, chair of the Department of History.

“History, like other liberal arts disciplines, trains students for a wide range of careers,” said Prokopowicz, “but Public History specifically produces job-ready graduates who go to work as practicing historians. We’re proud to continue the tradition of training ECU students who love history to find employment while following their passion.”

ECU’s public history faculty includes Prokopowicz; Dr. John Tilley, director of public history since 1985; and Dr. Lawrence Tise, one of the founders of the field of public history in the mid-1970s when he served as director of the NC Division of Archives and History.

For additional information, contact Prokopowicz at 252-328-1027, or via email at prokopowiczg@ecu.edu.