

Anthropology Department Internship Program

Statement of Purpose (SOP) Instructions

Be sure to visit the Internship Gallery at <http://anthropologyinternships.wp.txstate.edu> to confirm your eligibility to receive course credit for your internship and to read up on what our students have done in the past.

The SOP is a chance to put ideas about your future into an organized form, quite possibly for the first time. Send me your statement of purpose as the body of (not attachment to) an e-mail message: n.hadder@txstate.edu. Please don't write a huge essay about your childhood, etc. Be concise.

I begin working with students only after I receive and approve your statement. It need not be too formal, but does constitute a sample of your writing. So, edit and proofread! Failure to do so may result in my asking you to resubmit it; additionally, I'll be less likely to offer internship organizations a strong recommendation of you, because attention to detail and communication ability are requirements of most internships.

Most importantly, though, the SOP simply reminds me what I'm helping you do!

I would hope to get your SOP within a week of our initial office visit. The quicker you return this document to me after our initial meeting, and the more well-edited it is, the stronger my recommendation of you will be to internship placements. If I am not comfortable offering my personal recommendation, I'll still point the way to internships and their application procedures; I just can't give supervisors my personal word vouching for students who haven't yet demonstrated superior abilities.

At the top of your email, please include the following information for my reference:

- student ID#
- a contact phone number (I'll probably never use it, unless I need to cancel an appointment or the like)
- the semester for which you're seeking an internship
- the city where you live (because I need to know if you are restricted to Austin or San Antonio internships).
- If you are seeking the Departmental certificate in Curation of Anthropological Materials, be sure to indicate this. See the eligibility requirements on the Internship Gallery first, though.
- Are you intending to graduate at the end of your internship semester? This factor has a lot of ramifications, particularly in terms of what we can do if things happen that make it difficult to complete the internship on time.

The Statement of Purpose should comprise 2-4 paragraphs that address several questions, listed below. This list does not constitute an outline, however, and you should organize your SOP as you see fit.

- What kind of career do you want? Your Statement is a chance to reflect on this question. Don't feel pressured to present an image of having a more specific direction than you actually do. If you know precisely, great. If not, begin thinking in terms of industries, work environments, skill sets, social issues, etc.: public sector ("non-profits"), private sector, State agencies, research, direct community service, avoiding the office cubical at all costs, make money, help people, go to grad school, etc. Be as specific as you can, though.
- What kind of internship am I helping you find? I need reminding, even if we discussed it in my office. At the end of your document, it's helpful if you can list organizations that you have looked into already and, if possible, prioritize them. See the "Find an internship" page on the Internship Gallery for tips.
- Describe the steps you've taken to become competitive as a job candidate in the kind of career and internship you want. What in your personal or work experience, as well as your choice of coursework, prepares you for this kind of work? Don't tell me about courses that aren't relevant here, but do tell me about relevant courses, relevant previous internships, or skills such as fluency in a second language.
- What skills and experiences will you need, but don't yet have, in order to be successful in your career goals? We should settle on an internship that helps you move in this direction.
- Why did you decide to major in anthropology? What has this major given you of value to the rest of your life, or what do you want to get out of it? This question might give me clues about other internship areas that might interest you.