

Doctoral Internships as Pathways for Professional Growth and Publicly Engaged Scholarship in the Humanities and Social Sciences

Joseph Stanhope Cialdella, Laura N. Schram,
John Gonzalez, and Jandi L. Kelly

Abstract

This article examines a longstanding university-sponsored summer internship program for doctoral students in the humanities and social sciences at the University of Michigan's Rackham Graduate School. Four years of student reflection data suggest that an internship is an enriching experiential learning opportunity that contributes to both students' career development and their trajectories as publicly engaged scholars. Specifically, students shared that summer doctoral internships helped them hone their career interests, make connections between their scholarship and the public good, and expand their professional networks. Internships have potential as a promising practice for a more student-centered doctoral education that prepares students for a range of career paths. Graduate schools and universities can inspire students to impact the greater public good over the course of their careers, both within and outside academe. Rather than being a distraction from doctoral training and research, internships may further hone doctoral students' scholarly and career development.

Keywords: graduate education, internships, public scholarship, experiential learning, partnerships



Since 2010, the Rackham Graduate School at the University of Michigan (Rackham) has coordinated a summer intern fellowship program for doctoral students at the intersection of students' professional development and publicly engaged scholarship. The program started as one of several public scholarship training opportunities offered by Rackham to provide graduate students learning and experiences in the principles and practices of publicly engaged scholarship—scholarship put into practice through collaboration with communities and publics outside the university. As Imagining America, a national professional organization supporting public scholarship, defines it, public scholarship includes

scholarly and creative activity that aims to produce new knowledge and elevate a diversity of voices and

wisdom with and for diverse publics and communities beyond higher education. Through purposeful and often collaborative research and artmaking, public scholarship produces concrete artifacts of intellectual, creative, social, and political value to diverse constituents and communities beyond the boundaries of specific scholarly and artistic disciplines. (Kohl-Arenas et al., 2022, p. 1)

When the summer internship fellowship program began, it was intended to be one type of learning experience in public scholarship, where students would work with organizations beyond higher education in order to learn how to bring their scholarly expertise and skills to bear on challenges and projects identified by communities.

In its first summer, the program supported one student completing an internship at a local museum. It has since evolved into a program that supports approximately 35 doctoral students annually who participate in internships at 10–15 partner organizations. As a part of the summer intern fellowship, students participate in learning communities with their peers during their fellowship and complete prompts to reflect on their experiences and growth at the beginning, middle, and end of their internships. Today, there is continued interest among faculty and administrators in expanding career options for doctoral students through professional development opportunities, as well as interest on the part of students to grow as publicly engaged scholars who can contribute their expertise to community needs and the greater public good. With this in mind, this summer intern fellowship program can serve as a promising practice for other institutions as they seek ways to reimagine graduate education while also remaining committed to serving the public good through outreach and engagement in higher education.

Literature Review and Context

Traditionally, graduate education in the humanities and social sciences has been located at the department level, with students learning under the supervision of their primary advisor, and aimed at training students for a faculty career that values disciplinary scholarship over applied work with impact outside the university. In recent years, this model has been critiqued both because it limits publicly engaged work and because fewer graduates are pursuing tenure-track roles (Cassuto & Weisbuch, 2021; Rogers, 2020). For more than two decades, the rate of academic employment commitments in the humanities and social sciences has declined for many reasons, including fewer tenure-track positions (Day et al., 2012; National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, 2021). Alongside this trend, students and leaders in U.S. higher education have come to understand the long-established fields and practices of public scholarship and community engagement as one of many ways to diversify graduate student career development (Day et al., 2012). Leaders in U.S. higher education are also interrogating the purpose of the PhD and examining which learning experiences help faculty, staff, and students to achieve a reimaged doctoral degree with expanded career horizons and public engagement in

mind (Cassuto & Weisbuch, 2021; Rogers, 2020; Smith, 2015). Many faculty, students, and administrators have partnered to offer a vision for the future of humanities doctoral education through national projects. Examples of such initiatives, many funded by the Mellon Foundation, include the American Historical Association's Career Diversity initiative launched in 2011, the Modern Language Association's Connected Academics program that began in 2015 with funding from the Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities Next Generation Humanities PhD project created in 2016 (McCarthy, 2017), and the Council of Graduate Schools Humanities Coalition that was formed in 2021.

As part of this shift, many scholars have argued for increased opportunities for both public and community engagement as forms of experiential learning that can better prepare humanities PhDs for careers within and beyond the professoriate, while also demonstrating the relevance and value of the PhD to the public (Balleisen & Chin, 2022; Carlin, 2002; Cassuto & Weisbuch, 2021; Rogers, 2020). Specifically, in addition to more traditional forms of experiential learning through research and teaching assistantships, some have proposed that internships may provide an opportunity for experiential learning that is particularly valuable in preparing students to apply their scholarly skills in a range of settings (Balleisen & Chin, 2022; Faber et al., 2020). Indeed, internships are considered a high-impact career practice for undergraduates (Career Leadership Collective, 2022), and research is needed to explore whether internships have similar effects on doctoral students' career development. Furthermore, research on undergraduate internships suggests that internships are more than a high-impact practice for students' career development. For example, many community-engaged internships connect undergraduate students to the civic mission of public universities and benefit community partners as a part of the community-engaged and service-learning ecosystem on university campuses (Kuh, 2008; Sweitzer & King, 2013; Trager, 2020). Internships and career diversity are not synonymous with the field of publicly engaged scholarship. Yet researchers have found that internships and experiential learning may contribute to doctoral student career and skill development for diverse careers, as well as their scholarly expertise and advanced research

skills as publicly engaged scholars (Bartha & Burgett, 2015; Day et al., 2012; Eatman, 2012; Ellison, 2005, 2013; Woodson, 2013).

As part of efforts aimed at reimagining doctoral education in the humanities, doctoral internships have been touted as a potential opportunity for students to engage in experiential learning outside their departments in the wider humanities ecosystem and to learn about the possible broader impacts of their scholarly work and expertise (Brown, 2019; Cassuto, 2020; Hartman & Strakovsky, 2023). Although there is research and evaluation on the impact of internships on undergraduate students, there is scant program evaluation or scholarly research on doctoral students' experiences with internship programs, despite their growing participation in such initiatives. The most rigorous studies to date focus on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) internships (Chatterjee et al., 2019; Schnoes et al., 2018), and data from this research suggests that internships have a significant impact on students' career confidence, decision making, skill development, and overall preparation for diverse careers. Chatterjee et al. reported that more than 80% of students in their sample indicated that they transferred learning from their academic context to an industry context for their internship, and the vast majority of internship participants indicated they were able to transfer their industry learning back to their academic lab context upon completing their internship experiences. Schnoes et al. found that internships did not increase the time it took STEM students at their institutions to complete their degrees. We are lacking comparable studies on the impact of internships on the scholarly development of humanities and humanistic social science doctoral students. Moreover, these studies on STEM doctoral internships did not explore internship programs in the context of university–community partnerships. In sum, there is significant interest in internships as a potentially promising practice for the future of graduate education in the humanities and humanistic social sciences, but little qualitative or quantitative research on this experiential learning practice.

Our analysis of data from Rackham's summer intern fellowship program explores how internships contributed to humanities and social science students' career development and scholarly development as publicly engaged graduate students. We use an expansive definition of public scholarship developed by

Eatman (2012) to refer to scholarly or creative activity that “encompasses different forms of making knowledge about, for, and with diverse publics and communities. Through a coherent, purposeful sequence of activities, it contributes to the public good and yields artifacts of public and intellectual value” (p. 29). The data for this study is derived from qualitative program evaluations investigating the impact of summer internships on doctoral student development in the humanities and social sciences. A case study of the program can offer graduate programs, graduate colleges, and professional organizations a deeper understanding of internships' value in doctoral training. As internships become more widespread in doctoral education, learning how these experiences contribute to students' development and their efficacy as a means of university–community partnership will be important for developing mutually beneficial internship programs guided by best principles and practices for outreach and engagement.

Background: Summer Doctoral Intern Fellowship Program Description

In 2010, the founding faculty director of Rackham's summer intern fellowship program learned through conversations with community partners that practitioners working for community organizations, nonprofits, museums, and local governments had a need for the research skills and expertise of doctoral students. Likewise, doctoral students were also eager to shape their graduate education and professional growth in ways that were publicly oriented with community needs in mind. To meet these two distinct needs necessitated moving beyond the traditional apprenticeship model of doctoral training in which students primarily seek mentorship and navigate their professional development with one faculty mentor. Therefore, the summer fellowship program was created to enable students to engage with community-based organizations outside the university while simultaneously learning from a diverse set of professional mentors outside the classroom. Scholars focused on reenvisioning graduate education to be more publicly oriented have since argued for the importance of imagining and creating a more student-centered model of graduate studies through public scholarship by creating “integrative professional experiences of collaboration, teamwork, and mentoring” (Bartha & Burgett, 2015, p. 39) in the humanities and social sciences (Bartha & Burgett, 2015; Cassuto & Weisbuch, 2021; Rogers, 2020).

The summer intern fellowship program's structure initially involved the Rackham Graduate School providing a summer stipend of \$5,000–\$10,000 to students selected to complete an internship at a partner organization. During the time period under study, most doctoral students at the University of Michigan received some form of summer funding support, though it was not guaranteed. The fellowship stipends for internships mirrored typical summer support that doctoral students would receive from their departments or the graduate school for research projects or other summer research activities. The program started small, offering support for two to five internships during the summer term annually. In 2015, Rackham leadership applied for and received a grant from Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to significantly grow the program's capacity to offer 10 to 20 summer intern fellowships annually. Following the Mellon Foundation grant, the graduate school raised and allocated funds to continue the program, which now has 15–18 students completing summer intern fellowships with partner organizations annually each summer (May–August). In the landscape of U.S. graduate education, this is one of the most mature doctoral internship programs for humanities and humanistic social scientists, as it has existed for over a decade and grown annually.

In imagining a new model for doctoral professional development, the initial structure of Rackham's summer intern fellowship program grew from the overarching value of mutual benefit as a guiding principle for publicly engaged scholarship. To create internship projects that are mutually beneficial, educators at the university worked with staff at the internship host organizations to connect the expertise of communities with doctoral students, collaboratively identifying projects that meet community needs. Projects required a range of skill sets and experiences, such as curating exhibits; developing, writing, and editing communications materials and strategies; conducting program evaluation; and designing and facilitating public programs.

After internship projects are identified, university staff educators recruit students through a competitive application process. Following an initial screening for eligibility by university staff, the hiring manager at the internship host organization decides which students to interview and select for

the internship. The student then works alongside a supervisor at the internship organization to contribute to the project, often in a deeply collaborative way where the student and partner cocreate or redesign a program, product, or service, yielding a result that the organization would not have had the immediate capacity to achieve without the partnership. This model aims to foster longer term, mutually beneficial relationships between host organizations and students while alleviating the burden on students of designing, searching for, and securing an internship. Most internship partner sites that have participated in the program return annually, demonstrating how the program is a model for sustained community–university partnerships.

This centralized internship program situated within the University of Michigan's graduate school has proven to be a sustainable structure within the institution. Rather than individual faculty members or graduate programs attempting to start their own internship support for students, the graduate school serves as a centralized place for outreach, application process, and point of contact for students and site partners, while allowing students from multiple graduate programs across the university to apply. The disciplinary diversity among student applicants further expands the kinds of expertise, skill sets, and problem-solving perspectives brought to bear on the projects identified by host organizations. An additional objective of the internship program is to align with Rackham's efforts to better prepare students for the diverse career options available to them while serving the graduate school's public-facing mission to impact the public good through the scholarship of its students.

In 2015, staff educators at the graduate school implemented a robust program evaluation in which they assessed students at the beginning, middle, and end of their internships. In addition to providing valuable insight on program effectiveness, the evaluation became part of an educational and reflective scaffolding for students, which scholars have identified as important to experiential and service-learning opportunities like internships (Hatcher et al., 2004). Two additional elements of the program contribute to such scaffolding: (1) an internship planning process in which students use a project planning template to set expectations and deadlines with their

internship supervisor and (2) monthly learning community meetings led by graduate school staff educators over the course of students' internships that provide a space for regular group reflection on learning throughout the internship experience.

Research Questions, Purpose, and Impact Measures

The purpose of this study is to better understand how summer doctoral interns' fellowship experiences shape the professional and scholarly development of graduate students in the humanities and social sciences. This study seeks to answer two overarching research questions:

1. What impact, if any, does participation in the internship program/experience have on students' career development (i.e., career interests, career self-efficacy/confidence, career outcomes)?
2. What impact, if any, does an internship experience have on students' scholarly development, particularly as publicly engaged scholars (research trajectory/interests, scholarly products, scholarly identity development, mentor network, skill acquisition, skill development, etc.)?

Data

The data in our study is derived from two sources. First, we have 4 years of qualitative data (2016–2019) from the journal entries of 67 graduate students in the summer internship program (see the Appendix for the journal entry reflection prompts). The graduate students self-reported graduate programs include American Culture ($n = 11$), Anthropology ($n = 1$), a joint program in Anthropology and History ($n = 2$), Architecture ($n = 1$), Architecture and Urban Planning ($n = 2$), Classical Art and Archaeology ($n = 2$), Creative Writing ($n = 1$), Educational Studies ($n = 4$), a joint program in English and Women's Studies ($n = 3$), English Language and Literature ($n = 17$), Environment and Sustainability ($n = 2$), Epidemiology ($n = 1$), Greek and Roman History ($n = 1$), Higher Education ($n = 1$), History ($n = 9$), a joint program in History and Women's Studies ($n = 3$), Near Eastern Studies ($n = 1$), Romance Languages and Literature ($n = 1$), Screen Arts and Cultures ($n = 1$), Slavic Languages and Literature ($n = 1$), Social Work ($n = 1$), and Urban and Regional Planning ($n = 1$). Because it was gathered for program evaluation purposes,

the data was determined to be exempt by the campus Institutional Review Board in spring 2015 when the program was significantly expanded with the support of a grant from the Mellon Foundation. Journal entries were completed by students at the beginning (after 2 weeks), middle (after 5 weeks), and end of graduate students' internship experiences. In our journal entry prompts at the midpoint of participants' internships, we also included a closed-ended question that asked students to identify from a list of 47 transferable skills what skills they had developed through their internships. Note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, internships in summer 2020 shifted to fully remote opportunities. Beginning in 2022, internships again shifted to a mix of remote, hybrid, and in-person. Given this qualitatively different learning modality, we limit our analysis to the first 4 years of data collection, when internships were all in-person. We discuss possibilities for analyzing the postpandemic student reflection data in the Next Steps section.

To analyze the qualitative data, the research team developed a codebook based on the research questions under examination and the literature and theory that informed our study. The sensitizing concepts that guided the development of the codebook and the inherent definitions for the preliminary codes were public scholarship (Eatman, 2012) and social cognitive career theory (SCCT; Lent et al., 1994; Schnoes et al., 2018). We define "public scholarship" as scholarly or creative activity that "encompasses different forms of making knowledge about, for, and with diverse publics and communities. Through a coherent, purposeful sequence of activities, it contributes to the public good and yields artifacts of public and intellectual value" (Eatman, 2012, p. 29). SCCT describes the process through which people develop and achieve professional goals. Derived from general social cognitive theory, SCCT incorporates individual and environmental variables involved in the process of career development, including career interests, self-efficacy, career outcome expectations, career goals, and contextual supports or barriers (Lent et al., 1994; Schnoes et al., 2018). SCCT framed and contextualized the career-related concepts represented in the codebook reflecting students' participation in the internship program: career interests and goals, self-efficacy, career outcome expectations, and contextual supports and barriers.

Our second data source is time-to-degree data made available through the Rackham Graduate School. This data represents the experiences of 36 students who completed the internship program and finished their degree requirements between 2010 and 2020. Since 2010, we have time-to-degree data on 36 interns who participated in the Doctoral Intern Fellowship Program. Of those, we were able to match 33 students that completed their PhD by September 2020 (15 of whom also completed the journal entries discussed in our qualitative data analysis). Some participant records could not be matched with time-to-degree data because of an incorrect email identifier, participation by a non-Rackham graduate student (graduate students in non-Rackham professional degree programs are eligible to participate in the program), or a student not meeting the rule of the data set being matched. To provide context, nearly 800 PhDs are awarded each year by the Rackham Graduate School. Median time to degree varies by discipline at our institution. For example, students in the engineering and physical sciences are likely to finish faster than students in the arts and humanities. Given these differences and because we know that intern fellows in our sample are situated in the humanistic social sciences and humanities, we excluded engineering and the health and biological sciences from the overall comparison groups. Further, we know a handful of programs have no interns across the time period in this analysis, and thus for a more accurate comparison we exclude students from these programs. With these exclusions, we compared the 33 students in the internship program to 838 students that graduated between these same years across the social sciences and humanities.

Qualitative Methodology for Journal Entry Analysis

The research team consisted of two staff educators at the graduate school (one with a PhD in a humanities field, the other with a PhD in the social sciences) and a graduate student research assistant (GSRA) in the higher education doctoral program. Given the staff educators' positionality as designers and leaders of the internship program, the GSRA was hired to enhance the trustworthiness of our program evaluation. The GSRA used the literature guiding our work to develop the initial codebook, with the following Level 1 codes: (1) "Skill develop-

ment for career exploration"; (2) "Sources of career exploration skill development"; (3) "Skill development for professional practice"; (4) "Cultivation of career-related values," "Interests, outcome expectations, goals"; (5) "Values"; and (6) "Career path." The first-level codes consisted of multiple subcodes, which were also informed by the SCCT literature.

The GSRA then tested the initial codebook on three journal entries, which resulted in the identification of emergent and redundant codes and subsequent revisions to the codebook. The two additional members of the research team then reviewed the codebook for minimally used and redundant codes, which were removed or collapsed, respectively. This iterative process continued until each of the journal entries was fully coded, at which time the GSRA drafted high-level summaries of the preliminary findings for each journal entry. The research team together reviewed and refined these preliminary findings and selected illustrative quotes for each emergent theme. Throughout this process, the research team also engaged in intentional and reflexive conversations about our coding decisions. We then implemented the same process when coding each journal entry. Once this process was completed, each member of the research team reviewed each journal entry to ensure coding was consistent across all the data and with the final codebook.

The final codebook consisted of the following four Level 1 codes: (1) "Skill and knowledge development for career exploration"; (2) "Skill development for professional practice"; (3) "Scholarly identity conceptualization"; and (4) "Next steps." These final codes also consisted of Level 2 codes (themes within the Level 1 codes), which were informed by the literature and ongoing data analysis. Level 2 themes for each of the Level 1 codes are summarized in Table 1.

Journal Entry and Data Analysis Findings

Student Career and Scholarly Development at Beginning of Internships

Because participants completed journal entries about their career and scholarly development at the beginning, middle, and end of their internships, we were able to analyze this data at multiple points in time. In this section, we share themes that were most prominent at the start of the internships. A substantial number of participants noted

Table 1. Codes and Definitions

Level 1 code	Definition	Level 2 themes
Skill and knowledge development for career exploration	The cultivation of skills that assist in exploring and pursuing professional options and paths.	Self-awareness, Professional field, Work environment, Career path, Professional network
Skill development for professional practice	The cultivation of skills that participants currently or may use in their professional work.	Interpersonal skills, Communication skills, Creative skills, Project management skills, Technical skills
Scholarly identity conceptualization	The cultivation of one's skills, values, interests, and identity as a researcher/scholar.	Research interests and trajectory, Pedagogy skills, Research skill development, Grants, Interviewing and focus groups, Survey skills, Resources, Synergies, Translating scholarship, Scholarly products, Public scholar identity development
Next steps	Next steps for career path.	

that they were in the process of clarifying their understanding of and interest in career fields more broadly as they considered their potential career paths ($n = 15$). Representative quotes related to this theme of defining career interests at the start of the internships are below (please note that where necessary, quotes were redacted to anonymize names of individuals, their workplaces, and the university):

“I was surprised to learn about how many different positions there are in publishing, especially around electronic publishing. I had previously thought of publishing work as being primarily editing-based, so it was surprising to learn that there are many other opportunities around development, design, and accessibility. I was also surprised to learn that there were teams, centers, and organizations focusing specifically on digital accessibility (consulting, conducting accessibility and usability evaluations, developing resources and standards, etc.). It’s been helpful to see the wide variety of careers that might be available in this area.”

“I will develop an in-depth understanding of what it means to work in the humanities from the schema of national funding. As a scholar in training already invested in the notion of an accessible humanities,

the challenges, biases, and issues of such a shared vision at this level are coming into view.”

“I have a much better idea of the huge scale of collections assessment; the different roles people have within the department ([Supervisor name] and I have sat down to talk individually with nearly everyone); the unique and mundane challenges of working in a library/archives. Before starting, I only had a hunch that this would be good work for me—now I know that it is, and I am starting to think about how I can tailor my job search, cultivate my experience, and pursue similar opportunities.”

As these reflections suggest, from the beginning of their internships, participants perceived that they were gaining an increased understanding of new career fields.

Another theme that emerged at the beginning of the internships was that participants aspired to develop a more thorough understanding of work environments and organizational structures in career fields of interest to them ($n = 14$). Participants also noted the differences between organizational norms at the sites of their internships and the norms they were accustomed to in academia. Following are several representative quotes on participants’ new insights about work environments:

“I think what was most surprising to me about the settling in process was how intent my supervisors were on making me familiar with the publishing process. It would have been entirely possible for them to only allow me to attend one or two meetings, but instead they gave me a window onto the operations of the organizations for two whole weeks.”

“Going behind the scenes of an organization is always refreshing. I was mostly surprised at the relatively flat structure and cohesiveness of [the museum]—I thought it would be a lot more hierarchical. I did not expect to see so many different departments working together on the museum’s programming. The cross communication that goes on a daily basis is really great to see.”

“Already I feel like I have gained a lot of experience on how museums operate and what is involved behind the scenes. Before, I really thought of museums more in terms of exhibits and events, but now I see how museums also function as archival repositories and provide a way to connect the public with information.”

Participants linked their internship experiences to new revelations about how different organizations function, often in surprising ways.

Finally, at the start of their internships, participants also reported their eagerness to develop specific skill sets ($n = 45$), with many participants speaking about communication skills ($n = 19$) and project management capacities ($n = 17$) that they wanted to expand further. Several representative quotes reflect doctoral interns’ desires to hone such skills through internship experiences:

“I have really had the opportunity to see how the analytical skills developed in PhD programs can be incredibly important in the work world.”

“Seeing ‘transferable skills’ from PhD training being used. Mostly research and project management related. I’m not especially knowledgeable when it comes to art history, but I’m pretty confident in

my research skills when it comes to creating teaching resources for [the museum].”

“I believe I will get a lot better at juggling multiple projects and advising on them. I have four projects running simultaneously with youth and they will not all be on the same projects. This will definitely build my leadership skills and advising skills.”

From the beginning of their participation in the intern fellowship, participants saw how they could apply existing skills from their doctoral training to these new settings, as well as how they may develop new competencies through these professional experiences.

Student Career and Scholarly Development at Midpoint of Internships

Addressing their career development at the midpoint of their internship experiences, a number of participants stated that they had a more thorough understanding of the professional fields and environments in which they were working ($n = 9$), as well as related career paths that might be of interest to them ($n = 6$). For example, students said the following about their deepening knowledge of professional career paths:

“I’ve developed the ability to better understand the nonprofit world, understanding the machinations of larger foundations. Other than that I’ve been able to strengthen my interpersonal and organizational skills.”

“In general, my fellowship has provided an opportunity to learn about an array of careers that I am qualified for after graduation, including being a librarian, curator, archivist, or library specialist.”

“The fellowship is also providing me with a window into a possible career path that is connected to my field of study.”

In other words, these students were gaining greater clarity in terms of their career interests and potential career paths. At this time, several participants ($n = 11$) indicated that they had networked or developed interpersonal and collaboration skills as a result of their work. As one student put it:

"The most critical skill I've developed thus far is networking. Part of my job is reaching out to potential collaboration partners in the community and in other academic units and other universities. This is a difficult thing for me to do and is significantly outside of my comfort zone. However, with support from my supervisors, I have felt empowered to reach out and take ownership of the work we're doing."

Appreciation of the importance of the skill of networking emerged as especially important to students' career development midway through their internships. By the middle of their internship experiences, many ($n = 23$) of the participants shared that they were developing as public scholars in some way, such as by fostering a deeper commitment to focusing on the public good in their research or cultivating their knowledge about and skills in conducting public scholarship. In our analysis, we define public scholars as "individuals who conduct research and involve themselves in engaged community work both in the academy and in the larger society" (Eatman, 2012, p. 27). This finding speaks directly to our research question regarding the ways that the internship experiences might impact students' scholarly development. Students said the following about how they perceived their internship work to make a public impact:

"My scholarship has always been driven by an interest in how people develop creative ways to challenge the status quo and the power structures in which they are entangled. Much of the work that [the organization] supports is about using creative outlets developed through the humanities, to educate people about histories that have shaped our current social reality, with the objective of bringing about a more just and equitable society."

"My fellowship experience has allowed me to situate my scholarly focus on spatial politics, urban life, and engaged pedagogy in the context of [city]. Specifically, by planning a socio-political exhibit and symposium on engaged pedagogy in the city, I have been able to seek new connections between my academic work and public scholarship training around questions of race, power,

and privilege between and among the [university] and [city] communities."

"I see a lot of connections. My scholarship is focused on Black youth activism and community engagement. My fellowship site is with a community-based organization that advocates for educational justice and has a lot of Black membership. I am learning so much more about [city], the community, and the ways in which they advocate for educational equity."

Through their internship projects, several students perceived that they were able to apply their scholarly expertise to make an impact in communities where they were working.

Participants also identified a number of connections between their internship experiences and their scholarly endeavors halfway through their internships. Such connections included opportunities to apply their research skills or identify synergies between their professional practice and research areas ($n = 34$). Students said the following about how they applied and connected their scholarly skills in new contexts:

"At my Fellowship, I am part of a team that has designed and is executing a research study. I see this as connected to my scholarship because that is essentially what I have done with my dissertation (design a study). I find that my scholarship has helped me be effective with qualitative research (the portion of the [organization's] study that I work on) as well as have a good grasp of the 'big picture' of the study."

"My fellowship work is directly related to my scholarship, as I work in the field of environmental humanities. The fellowship is helping me to explore the field from a much broader perspective than my own research would normally let me. I've also started to have the chance to network with faculty and staff who engage with my field from different disciplines, which will prove useful for long-term contacts."

"Like my scholarship, my Fellowship involves extensive archival research.

I also hope to make my scholarship more accessible to the public, through a variety of venues, and the Fellowship will be useful experience in preparing materials for museum and online exhibits.”

Notably, over half of the participants ($n = 42$) shared that by the midpoint of their intern fellowships they were developing stronger research skills and honing specific research-related skills, including both qualitative (e.g., interviewing) and quantitative (e.g., survey methodology) research skills. When prompted to contemplate any associations between their internships and insights about the research process, participants noted that they were developing their abilities to translate the importance of their research to others or the general public ($n = 13$). For example, students said:

“Completing the Public Humanities [intern] Fellowship while writing my prospectus has helped me to make my dissertation accessible to communities and conversations outside of the academy.”

“In recent weeks, I’ve noticed several direct parallels between the synthesizing work that I need to do as a graduate student/researcher and the work required for writing webpages for the [organization’s] project. I

need to pull together multiple sources and foreground the most relevant ideas, while also making the material accessible to a public audience.”

Participants perceived that they were learning how their research skills and scholarly knowledge can contribute to meeting the needs of diverse organizations.

Transferable Skill Development at Midpoint of Internships

In addition to open-ended questions about skill development, we also asked our 67 student interns at the midpoint of their internships to respond to a closed-ended question in which they were asked to identify skills they perceived they had developed thus far from a list of transferable skills. Guided by SCCT, the transferable skills list was developed by staff educators leading the program. Students could select as many skills as they wished from the list of 47 skills. Table 2 details the responses to this question in order of frequency of skills students reported that they had developed by the midpoint of their internships. The two top transferable skills that students perceived they developed through their internships were the ability to comprehend large amounts of information quickly and the ability to work effectively with limited supervision. Students reported developing their skill of working in a self-directed way to synthesize large amounts of data in their internships.

Table 2. Student Self-Reports of Transferable Skills Developed Through Internships

Transferable skills sets	Number of responses (Total $N = 67$)
Comprehend large amounts of information quickly	87% ($n = 58$)
Work effectively with limited supervision, self-directed	79% ($n = 53$)
Cooperate and collaborate on team projects	73% ($n = 49$)
Maintain flexibility in the face of changing circumstances	73% ($n = 49$)
Prioritize tasks while anticipating potential problems	67% ($n = 45$)
Network and form new collaborative relationships in or outside org	67% ($n = 45$)
Comprehend new material and subject matter quickly	66% ($n = 44$)
Prepare concise and logically-written materials	66% ($n = 44$)
Exercise discipline to complete tasks, meet deadlines	64% ($n = 43$)
“Manage up”; forge effective relationships through proactive communication	60% ($n = 40$)

Table continued on next page

Table 2. Continued

Transferable skills sets	Number of responses (Total <i>N</i> = 67)
Identify sources of information applicable to a given problem	57% (<i>n</i> = 38)
Manage projects from beginning to end	57% (<i>n</i> = 38)
Effectively convey complex information to non-expert audiences	57% (<i>n</i> = 38)
Link ideas; connect seemingly unrelated phenomena	55% (<i>n</i> = 37)
Respond appropriately to positive or negative feedback	54% (<i>n</i> = 36)
Understand and synthesize large quantities of data	52% (<i>n</i> = 35)
Advocate for something or someone you believe in	48% (<i>n</i> = 32)
Edit and proofread effectively	48% (<i>n</i> = 32)
Form and defend independent conclusions	48% (<i>n</i> = 32)
Define a problem and identify possible causes	48% (<i>n</i> = 32)
Keen ability to observe and remember	46% (<i>n</i> = 31)
Organize and present ideas effectively to small or large groups	46% (<i>n</i> = 31)
Design an experiment, plan, or model	43% (<i>n</i> = 29)
Think on feet; react quickly and effectively to problems	43% (<i>n</i> = 29)
Develop organizing principles to effectively sort and evaluate data	40% (<i>n</i> = 27)
Tell stories that convey themes and messages	39% (<i>n</i> = 26)
Provide critical or constructive feedback	36% (<i>n</i> = 24)
Write at all levels—brief abstract to book-length manuscript	36% (<i>n</i> = 24)
Maintain hope and open mindset when facing difficult challenges	34% (<i>n</i> = 23)
Navigate complex bureaucratic environments	31% (<i>n</i> = 21)
See the world from another's perspective and show empathy	31% (<i>n</i> = 21)
Participate in group discussions, debate issues in a collegial manner	30% (<i>n</i> = 20)
Facilitate group discussions or conduct meetings	28% (<i>n</i> = 19)
Implement plans or solutions	28% (<i>n</i> = 19)
Use emotional intelligence to persuade others	25% (<i>n</i> = 17)
Test potential resolutions to a problem	25% (<i>n</i> = 17)
Identify and delegate tasks to others, establish timelines, and follow up	19% (<i>n</i> = 13)
Use logical argument to persuade others	18% (<i>n</i> = 12)
Work effectively under pressure or in competitive environment	16% (<i>n</i> = 11)
Cope with or manage complicated/difficult personalities	13% (<i>n</i> = 9)
Teach skills or concepts to others	13% (<i>n</i> = 9)
Design and analyze surveys	12% (<i>n</i> = 8)
"Close the deal," finish large endeavors	12% (<i>n</i> = 8)
Effectively advise or mentor subordinates and/or peers	7% (<i>n</i> = 5)
Interview individuals or groups	6% (<i>n</i> = 4)
Supervise the work of others or motivate others to complete projects	4% (<i>n</i> = 3)

Similar to several themes that emerged in students' open-ended responses, a vast majority of students perceived that they developed the skills to cooperate and collaborate on team projects and to network and form new collaborative relationships within or outside their organization. In addition to networking, another interpersonal skill that the majority of the students reported developing was the ability to "manage up" through proactive communication to work with supervisors. Although project management did not emerge as a top theme in response to our open-ended question about skill development, a majority of the students reported the development of a range of project management skills in response to our closed-ended question about skills. For example, over half of the students indicated that they were learning to maintain flexibility in the face of changing circumstances, prioritize tasks while anticipating potential problems, and manage projects from beginning to end.

Only a small number reported that they had the opportunity to develop skills related to leadership and management of others. For example, some of the least reported skills included supervising the work of others, advising or mentoring others, teaching skills or concepts to others, persuading others (through the use of logical argumentation or emotional intelligence), and identifying and delegating tasks to others.

Student Career and Scholarly Development at the Conclusion of Internships

Internships concluded after 8 to 12 weeks, depending on the organization and internship project needs. At the end of their internships, we found that students perceived several benefits to their scholarly development as a result of their internship experiences, and these themes echoed those related to their scholarly development at the midpoint of the internship. For example, students noted that they cultivated and honed their scholarly research skills ($n = 10$):

"This fellowship gave me experience with conducting archival research and helped me to improve my interviewing skills. I also gained more practice with producing polished written content under tight deadlines."

"I gained skills like doing background and historical research, developing interview guides and conducting oral history interviews. I don't think the content or network of what I did applies specifically to anything I will do later, but the skills I picked up hopefully will."

"I feel that this fellowship has taken me outside of my disciplinary 'wheelhouse' in the best possible way. From a research perspective, I've gained new insights about historical and archival methods. It's been exciting for me to trace links and find unexpected connections among a variety of sources, whether these have been from the [library]'s files, the [organization]'s papers, or the number of interviews I've conducted. It's given me a new appreciation for the work historians do, as well as taught me how to incorporate archival methods into my own work and teaching."

Participants perceived that they gained new skills, and that they applied their existing scholarly skills in new professional settings.

Similar to their reflections at the midpoint of their internships, students once again perceived that they developed a clearer understanding of the synergies between their scholarship and the work being done beyond academe ($n = 23$). Many students ($n = 16$) noted a stronger identity as a public scholar and a desire to take on more opportunities related to publicly engaged scholarship both within and beyond academe.

"I think I want to talk with trusted professors about my goals and what that might mean about maybe doing a portfolio dissertation with some public humanities aspects incorporated. Luckily I have a third term review coming up that will be a good place to start."

"Because the nature of my fellowship entailed detailed communications and work with professors and community partners from across the university and beyond, I was exposed to a broad swath of career trajectories, willing mentors, and big ideas about the possibilities for life and work as a public scholar."

"I'm really grateful I chose to do this project at the mid-point of my program, because I think this gives me an opportunity to think more carefully about how to incorporate public engagement into my research and teaching. I do think I want to pursue academia for now, but I am eager to build on my partnerships with the [organization] as I plan my Winter 2020 course and begin my dissertation research. My next steps are to find as many opportunities for public engagement in my work as I can."

As these participants' comments suggest, the internship experiences shaped students' sense of what was possible in terms of their future scholarly work.

With respect to students' career development—and consistent with students' comments in earlier journal entries—many participants ($n = 32$) expressed that their internships were particularly helpful for developing a clearer understanding of a career field or work environment, as well as their desire to pursue future work in these spaces. In addition to affirming desired career paths, students perceived their internship experiences as equipping them to obtain a sense of clarity regarding their career interests that they would not have gained through academic studies alone. Several quotes speak to this finding:

"My internship was extremely beneficial for exploring new career trajectories. I feel like I got excellent exposure to how a digital humanities center works and what is entailed."

"After completing the fellowship I feel that I have a much better sense of the kinds of careers I might be interested in. This experience has helped me realize that I work best in an office setting and when I can collaborate with other people, and that I enjoy working in academic settings but in a role that focuses on technical support, design, and development rather than on producing my own research."

"This fellowship was an incredibly clarifying experience, which helped me gain a better sense of the field of public humanities (via the fact I was at a national grant giving

organization). This helped me understand how to better position my work and my potential career trajectory within the field, helping me to rethink things like how I want to structure my dissertation, what other sorts of experiences I should try to have at [the university], and what sort of place I might end up."

As in the midpoint journal entries, students at the end of their internship experiences ($n = 16$) reported that they formed a professional network as a result of their work, including relationships that they would not have forged through their academic studies alone. Illustrating these sentiments, participants said:

"I have always been convinced that I'm TERRIBLE at networking. Any kind of professional, social setting (such as staff meetings, conference calls, district assemblies, etc.) has always felt extremely awkward and forced to me. Through this fellowship, though, I've found ways to navigate those settings more smoothly and more confidently."

"One aspect of my Fellowship experience that surprised me was realizing the strong network of individuals and organizations that are committed to dealing with environmental challenges in [urban region]."

"This fellowship was an amazing experience for me. It allowed me to directly do the type of work I hope to do after graduation. I learned so much about the field of community engagement and was able to meet so many new folks who do similar types of work."

Internships provided participants with valuable networking opportunities in organizations and communities outside the university.

Finally, students were asked to describe what they anticipated as their next steps related to their career and professional development. Two themes emerged in their responses. First, students intended to continue their career exploration to discern what fields were a best fit for them ($n = 35$), particularly by continuing to build their professional networks ($n = 14$). For example, two students commented:

“Finishing my dissertation and continuing to look for opportunities to work in public history (attend conferences, talks, volunteer at museums etc.). I am still interested in academic paths but I am also very open to alternative paths that would allow me to continue doing public history work in some capacity.”

“While this fellowship gave me insights into the museum world, it also showed me some of the areas that do not fit my career interests (e.g. the departments that design visitor experience are sometimes the farthest removed from engaging with the public). My next step is to research job/opportunities similar to this fellowship that would expose me to more areas where the arts and public engagement intersect.”

As these comments suggest, participants noted their intention to gain additional professional experience in fields of interest through future experiential learning opportunities.

Second, students noted their intention to further cultivate their professional skills ($n = 20$), especially technical skills ($n = 5$) that they believed they often did not have exposure to through their home department’s curriculum. Illustrating this point, two participants said:

“I’m looking into the Masters program at the School of Information to gain more skills and knowledge around digital accessibility and development. I will also be working with professor [name redacted] this fall on digital design and communications for the [university] Initiative on Disability Studies and have talked with the library accessibility specialist [name redacted] about potentially continuing with accessibility testing work for the library in the winter.”

“One of the things I’ve been considering is taking finance/accounting classes online to round out my skill set.”

Participants felt that it would be valuable to continue developing skill sets that would position them for careers that aligned with

their interests, and were seeking courses or experiential learning opportunities to fill those gaps.

Limitations of Journal Entry Data Set

One drawback of the journal entry data set is that it only captured students’ self-reflections and self-perceptions during and immediately upon concluding their internship experiences. How these self-perceptions translate into actual skill acquisition remains unclear. In addition, the program is voluntary, and students who apply to participate in the program may assume that internships would be helpful to them, so they may be predisposed to find them helpful. Finally, students may reflect differently on the impact of the experience on their long-term career interests, values, and scholarly identities as they gain new knowledge and skills later in their doctoral studies and beyond.

In addition, participants had internships in a wide variety of settings and contributed to a range of projects. Accordingly, it was challenging to assess the potential influence of exposure to distinct professional fields (museums, nonprofit organizations, foundations, etc.) or project types (such as communications, public and community programs, research, grant writing, program evaluation, and translation) on students’ reflections about their internship experiences.

The effect of fellowship funding on students’ decisions to pursue these internships is another limitation of this initial study. At the time under examination, most doctoral students at the university received some amount of summer funding support from their departments or the graduate school. Completing an internship was thus one among many options available to students for summer funding support; however, the survey did not include questions about the impact of funding on students’ decisions to pursue an internship. Fellowship funding is likely one factor among many that influenced students’ decisions to complete an internship during their doctoral studies.

Finally, another limitation is that our available data set does not reflect the perspectives of students’ supervisors and colleagues at their internship sites. Consequently, this article cannot thoroughly address the influence of community partners and their perceptions about what contributes to positive internship experiences. Given the long-term partner-

ships between universities and many internship host organizations, further research is needed to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of internships on communities in addition to students.

Time-to-Degree Data Analysis

Internships appear to have value for students' career and scholarly development. However, it is important to consider the potential impact that internships may have on lengthening students' time-to-degree. As noted earlier, Schnoes et al. (2018) found internships did not increase the time it took STEM students to complete their degrees. However, similar research has not been conducted in the humanities and social sciences. Therefore, in addition to our journal entry analysis, we examined the milestone metrics (time-to-degree and time-to-candidacy) for those who participated in the internship program. As noted earlier, we compared 33 students who participated in the doctoral internship program to 838 students who graduated between these same years across the social sciences and humanities.

In general, comparing students across the years, students that participated in the summer internship program tended to take slightly longer to graduate, 6.4 versus 6.8 years. This is a difference of 4.8 months, or roughly one semester. Overall, the time-to-candidacy is identical (2.7 years). Because of differences across disciplines, we performed the same analysis at the division level. Here we find that intern fellowship participants in the social sciences have slightly higher median time-to-degree (6.9 versus 6.2 years) than other PhD students. They also have a slightly higher median time-to-candidacy (2.8 versus 3.0 years). This trend is reversed in the humanities, where students participating in the intern fellowship have a slightly lower median time-to-degree and equivalent time-to-candidacy (6.2 years versus 6.6 years and 2.3 years to candidacy).

Limitations of Time-to-Degree

The standard caveats to the analyses of milestone times apply to this analysis. Time-to-degree and time-to-candidacy are complex and dynamic metrics affected by a multitude of variables. Highlighted disciplinary differences are one of many levels at which times differ. Program-by-program variability is an inherent reality of these data, and a program-by-program analysis is impractical given the small size of the intern fellowship

cohorts and the small sizes of several PhD programs. Further, any analyses where the sizes of comparative groups are disproportionate are susceptible to misinterpretation. With only 33 students to pool together, an analysis of difference can be disproportionately affected by outliers in either group and by the complexities of the time calculations, which account for time spent on leaves of absence and do not consider time spent on a master's program as part of the time calculations. In sum, for these students, time-to-degree is extended slightly. That said, we cannot conclude that this difference in time-to-degree is due solely to internships. Therefore, caution is urged in interpreting these differences as more than mere descriptions of the given populations.

Discussion and Implications of the Early-Stage Assessment

The findings from this evaluation of the summer doctoral intern fellowship program have both local institutional implications for creating programmatic improvements and broader implications for practitioners and leaders in graduate education at U.S. colleges and universities committed to supporting public scholarship, experiential learning, and resources for students to explore the wide range of careers available to them.

For doctoral students in the humanities and social sciences, this study finds that internships are a valuable form of experiential learning in terms of supporting both career and scholarly development. Internships have not traditionally been integrated into doctoral training, particularly in the humanities and humanistic social sciences. However, many of our study participants reported that internship experiences honed their scholarly skills and broader professional development. Specifically, students reported that these learning experiences helped them apply research skills in new settings, find new connections between their scholarly research and community needs, and develop their ability to translate their work to new audiences. They perceived that such learning experiences and expanded professional relationships would not have been possible through research or teaching assistantships within the university context. In addition to shaping students' research interests and methodologies, our preliminary analysis suggests that doctoral internships have the potential to cultivate students' commitments to public scholarship.

Students reported that inspiration from work in the public sphere and communities outside academia deepened their understanding of their research field and enabled them to apply their scholarly expertise and research skills in collaboration with organizations and communities with impacts beyond academia. Individuals, institutions, and publics all might gain from this model, which cultivates partnerships and connections between humanities students and communities outside the university (Rogers, 2020).

In addition to their scholarly development, students indicated that they gained greater career clarity and access to professional networks unavailable through traditional modes of doctoral learning (i.e., teaching assistantships, academic research assistantships). In particular, they learned about new career fields and work settings while building professional networks and connections that they could not have accessed through their department's intellectual communities alone. Students also grew in their career development, particularly in the area of transferable skills applicable to a range of engaged work. By participating in an internship, they perceived that they were learning how their research skills and scholarly knowledge can contribute to meeting the needs of diverse organizations, and they reported developing stronger research skills and honing specific research-related skills, including both qualitative (e.g., interviewing) and quantitative (e.g., survey methodology) research skills. Participants also noted that they were developing their abilities to translate the importance of scholarly research to communities and the general public.

Although we cannot generalize our findings about the impact of doctoral internships on time-to-degree, we found in our population as a whole that time-to-degree was slightly longer for students who completed the summer internship program (by approximately one semester). New models for doctoral internships, such as fellowships that allow students to engage in this experiential learning during the academic year rather than only in summer, might mitigate the potential for lengthening time-to-degree for doctoral students who wish to engage in this type of experiential learning. At Rackham, we began to offer such opportunities beginning in 2020 to enable students to pursue internships as a replacement for a semester when they might normally have been teaching.

In terms of local implications for our early-stage program evaluation, at our institution, these program evaluation findings have helped to shape the topics in the Rackham-facilitated learning community meetings. Specifically, Rackham staff educators lead sessions for students on topics such as project management, informational interviewing, and transferable skills. Staff educators ensure that the learning community provides a space to discuss themes that emerged as most important to students' development, including the importance of cultivating a professional network, applications of the internship experiences to their interests as public scholars, and experiential learning opportunities that are available beyond the intern fellowship.

Next Steps

We plan to sustain our current program evaluation efforts, and we see value in expanding them further. First, we would like to develop a more rigorous mechanism to periodically assess program impact from the vantage point of our community partners. This might include a brief, annual survey coupled with several closed-ended and open-ended questions. For sites who have partnered with the university for several years, we could invite reflections on the long-term impact of the program on their organizations as a way to understand the benefits to community partners of further engagement in partnerships with higher education, which could in turn help leaders in graduate education advocate for new partnerships to be formed on the basis of similar results and potential.

Second, we have yet to conduct a large-scale assessment of the entire pool of alumni. However, we did conduct interviews with 10 program alumni in 2021. This preliminary research revealed that alumni of the program emphasized the longer term importance of mentors from their internship organizations in providing guidance on possible career paths. Alums also discussed how exposure to new fields and types of careers provided through their internships was critical to their professional development in several ways. In particular, alumni felt that internships introduced them to a range of career possibilities which, in turn, instilled a greater sense of confidence as they navigated their professional development. In fact, several alumni shared a moment during their internship when they "realized" they could be successful in a range

of professional settings. Such intellectual self-confidence might also contribute to participants' scholarly development. Given that many of our past intern fellows are now in their early careers (both as faculty and in diverse career contexts), we would like to conduct a more rigorous and extensive alumni survey to assess their perceptions of the impact of these experiences on their longer term scholarly and career development, as well as how their internships may have shaped their commitment to public and community engagement as a part of their careers, whether in academia or beyond. Anecdotally, we have heard from alumni that not only do internships and other "nontraditional" experiences make students better candidates for faculty positions, but the career pathways of doctoral students participating in experiential learning like internships may not be preordained or linear (i.e., internships can prepare students for both faculty positions and diverse careers outside the professoriate). Additionally, future longitudinal research could explore the impact of internships by following doctoral students not just during their internship experiences, but from the beginning of their doctoral studies into their early careers. Scholars could document all students' varying experiences during doctoral education—internships, research assistantships, teaching assistantships, and so on—and explore whether some combination of these experiences presents different patterns in terms of scholarly and career development. This type of study could also include questions to address how fellowship funding for internships relative to other funding opportunities factored into students' decisions to pursue an internship.

Given students noted the importance of networking as part of their experiences, staff educators also intend to invite more community partners to learning community sessions to create space for more intentional conversations about building relationships with partners working in diverse career fields. Finally, in both open-ended and closed-ended responses, few students reported perceiving that they developed their skills as leaders. Staff educators will develop a session that creates space for students to reflect on leveraging these experiences to augment their leadership skills. Although interns do not have opportunities to supervise the work of others or formally delegate tasks, they often do have opportunities to "manage up," persuade and motivate others,

and teach skills or concepts to others. Given that students may not have perceived their internships as opportunities for leadership development, more guided instruction by staff experts on leadership skills may help students to better leverage internships as opportunities for leadership development.

Finally, data collection continued in 2020 and beyond. In this period internships shifted first to a fully remote format due to the global COVID-19 pandemic for 2 years, followed by a mix of remote, hybrid, and in-person internships in 2022. One next step would be to analyze these more recent data to assess differences in the impacts of remote and hybrid work, versus in-person experiences, on students' career and scholarly development. Given changes in the broader workforce postpandemic, this future exploration may be useful in understanding how community partners and the university can partner to ensure mutually beneficial experiences that may include a range of modalities of working together, both virtual and in-person.

Conclusion: Lessons Learned and Best Practices

We contend that one best practice of the program has been to compensate students through fellowship stipends for these publicly engaged internships, much as students are compensated for other forms of professional learning like teaching and research assistantships. This practice reflects a shift in how doctoral students are funded that some scholars in the field of public and community engagement have called for in order to advance a new vision for graduate education that trains students for diverse career outcomes. Nationally, in the last decade, several universities have offered fellowships and funding for doctoral students completing internships (Balleisen & Chin, 2022; Day et al., 2012; Lafond, 2023). This funding model allows doctoral students to choose to participate in internships in the same way they would a teaching assistant position, gaining professional experience and mentorship outside the academy while also being fully supported to make progress toward their degree.

We have also found that the program's location within a graduate school, and not in a single department, has been important to success. Building and sustaining partnerships to "match-make" between students' skills and organizations' needs has been

central to the program's success. By serving as the connector and sustainer of community partnerships between the university and organizations like local museums and nonprofits, the program serves student and partner needs by making it easier for partner organizations and students to find opportunities. Graduate students bring valuable skill sets to community partner organizations, but because they often relocate geographically for graduate school, they typically do not have established deep local community connections. If outreach and engagement are central to reimagined graduate education in the humanities and social sciences, then one lesson we have learned is that the graduate college can play a role in facilitating these connections and opportunities for students. The graduate school serving as a central hub for the program also means that the learning communities that students participate in as a part of the program are interdisciplinary, drawing students from across programs to connect and learn with one another.

Integrating experiential learning and publicly engaged research into doctoral education is also connected to broader disciplinary examinations of what counts as research inside the academy, as well as the relationship between the academy and the rest of society (see, for example: <https://www.historians.org/resource/guidelines-for-broadening-the-definition-of-historical-scholarship/>). Academic departments at some higher education institutions have implemented curricular changes and alterations to the dissertation format requirements, making room for scholarship informed by increasingly diversified experiential learning with the public, communities, and workplaces outside academia (Balleisen & Chin, 2022; Rogers, 2020; Smith, 2015). Rogers has argued that the cyclical relationship between the internship and scholarship goes beyond the student or department themselves, promoting a public reinvestment in the humanities in higher education.

The success of the summer intern fellowship program led to significant growth at our institution. Since analyzing and collecting the data used in this study, Rackham built on the program's success. Beginning in 2020, the graduate school launched a pilot program to expand the intern fellowship program into the fall and winter terms, in addition to summer. This transformation

of the summer program into the Rackham Doctoral Intern Fellowship Program means that the program now offers a robust fellowship package to students, including a stipend, tuition, and health insurance at the same levels as doctoral students receive for teaching or research assistant positions on campus. Academic year internships have the potential to align better with graduate program curricula when students are often engaged in teaching or research assistantships, rather than being additive during a summer period, when many students in the humanities and social sciences focus on their fieldwork. In 2023, Rackham and University of Michigan also began offering guaranteed summer funding to doctoral students. This form of support further solidified internship fellowships as one option among many that doctoral students can choose to pursue at multiple times of year (summer, academic terms) as part of their funding package and professional development. In 2024, 101 students across all fields at the university and 67 in the humanities and social sciences received a Rackham Doctoral Intern Fellowship. Future work will explore the impact of this expanded internship program on students' career and scholarly development.

We hope this model can be replicated and adapted to impact graduate education broadly. At the same time, we recognize that institutional contexts can vary greatly. For example, smaller institutions need not replicate a program at the scale discussed in this article in order to have an impact on students' professional development and community partner organizations. Another lesson we learned from our program's growth was to start small. With only one intern in summer 2010, program staff and faculty leadership were able to advocate for the importance of the program over time and thoughtfully build relationships with community partners who were interested in working with the program.

As a part of a reimagined version of doctoral education, internships are a promising practice that demonstrates one way graduate schools and universities can train students to impact the greater public good over the course of their careers, whether they pursue careers inside or outside the academy (Eatman, 2012). Rather than a distraction from doctoral training and research, as a traditional view of doctoral education in the humanities and social sci-

ences might view them, internships appear to be a promising avenue to further hone doctoral students' scholarly development. Leaders in higher education thus might consider these internships a tool to better prepare students for the current reality of diverse career options.

One purpose of graduate education, particularly at public institutions like the University of Michigan's Rackham Graduate School, has been to advance excellence in graduate education while serving the greater

public good through research and scholarship. To enact this commitment, doctoral internships can be an additional way for students and graduate schools to advance their commitment to serving society. In the 21st century, internships can provide powerful experiential learning opportunities for doctoral students and position them to apply their disciplinary expertise and skills in service to society.



Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the following individuals for their insights and expertise in reviewing drafts of this article: Neeraja Aravamudan, Carrie Brezine, Rita Chin, Alyssa Park, Emily Swafford. We would also like to thank the peer reviewers for their helpful comments strengthened our article, as well as team at JHEOE for their work in stewarding this manuscript through the publication process. Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the financial support of the Mellon Foundation, Rackham Graduate School, partner organizations, and individual donors that make funding the program possible.

About the Authors

Joseph Stanhope Cialdella is assistant director for experiential learning at the Rackham Graduate School, University of Michigan. His research and practice focus on publicly engaged scholarship and professional development for graduate students. He received his PhD in American Studies from the University of Michigan.

Laura N. Schram is senior academic director of Rackham Graduate School at the University of Michigan. Her research focuses on graduate student career and professional development. She received her PhD in political science from the University of Michigan.

John Gonzalez is the director of institutional research at the Graduate School at the University of Michigan. He leads the Michigan Doctoral Experience Study (MDES), a longitudinal exploration of the doctoral student experience. His work focuses on understanding how interventions, policies, and disciplinary context shape the experience, well-being, and development of graduate students. He received his PhD in the learning sciences from Syracuse University.

Jandi L. Kelly is a qualitative researcher and seasoned university instructor, administrator, and consultant. She currently serves as the founder of A Talk to Remember, a boutique production company that helps families and organizations preserve their legacy stories in documentary film and oral history projects. She received her PhD in higher education from the University of Michigan.

References

- Balleisen, E., & Chin, R. (2022). The case for bringing experiential learning into the humanities. *Daedalus*, 151(3), 138–152. https://doi.org/10.1162/DAED_a_01934
- Bartha, M., & Burgett, B. (2015). Why public scholarship matters for graduate education. *Pedagogy*, 15(1), 31–43. <https://doi.org/10.1215/15314200-2799148>
- Brown, J. (2019, January 29). A PhD in the humanities? It's not just for teaching anymore. BU Today. <https://www.bu.edu/articles/2019/a-phd-in-the-humanities-its-not-just-for-teaching-anymore/>
- Career Leadership Collective. (2022). *National Alumni Career Mobility (NACM) annual report: Transforming career practices to increase ROI and equitable career success*. https://www.wisconsin.edu/student-success-leadership-groups/download/NACM_Annual_Report_Sept2022_Final.pdf
- Carlin, D. (2002). Graduate internship programs in the humanities: A report from one university. *Pedagogy*, 2(2), 213–228. <https://doi.org/10.1215/15314200-2-2-213>
- Cassuto, L. (2020, August 27). Doctoral training should include an internship. *Chronicle of Higher Education*. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/doctoral-training-should-include-an-internship>
- Cassuto, L., & Weisbuch, R. (2021). *The new PhD: How to build a better graduate education*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Chatterjee, D., Ford, J. K., Rojewski, J., & Watts, S. (2019). Exploring the impact of formal internships on biomedical graduate and postgraduate careers: An interview study. *Life Sciences Education*, 18(2). <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.18-09-0199>
- Day, K., Becerra, V., Ruiz, V. L., & Powe, M. (2012). New ways of learning, knowing, and working: Diversifying graduate student career options through community engagement. In C. Cramer, A. Gilvin, C. Martin, & G. M. Roberts (Eds.), *Collaborative futures: Critical reflections on publicly active graduate education* (pp. 63–182). Syracuse University Press.
- Eatman, T. (2012). The arc of the academic career bends toward publicly engaged scholarship. In C. Cramer, A. Gilvin, C. Martin, & G. M. Roberts (Eds.), *Collaborative futures: Critical reflections on publicly active graduate education* (pp. 25–48). Syracuse University Press.
- Ellison, J. (2005). From the director: The naming of cats. *Imagining America Newsletter*, No. 6, pp. 1–2. https://surface.syr.edu/ia_newsletter/11
- Ellison, J. (2013). Guest column—The new public humanists. *PMLA*, 128(2), 289–298. <https://doi.org/10.1632/pmla.2013.128.2.289>
- Faber, A., Patel, T., & Shannon, H. (2020). Internships for graduate students: Lessons learned from career diversity. *Perspectives on History*, 58(5A). <https://www.historians.org/perspectives-article/internships-for-graduate-students-lessons-learned-from-career-diversity-september-2020/>
- Hartman, S., & Strakovsky, Y. (Eds.). (2023). *Graduate education for a thriving humanities ecosystem*. Modern Language Association of America.
- Hatcher, J., Bringle, R., & Muthiah, R. (2004). Designing effective reflection: What matters to service-learning? *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 11(1), 38–46. <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3239521.0011.104>
- Kohl-Arenas, E., Alston, K., & Preston, C. (2022). *Critical intersections: Public scholars creating culture, catalyzing change: An Imagining America research report*. Imagining America. https://imaginingamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/LLI_Year_Three.pdf
- Kuh, G. D. (2008). *High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter*. Association of American Colleges and Universities.
- Lafond, B. (2023, October 27). Exploring career pathways while in graduate school. *GradLife: The Graduate Student Experience*. <https://blogs.illinois.edu/view/6397/136787254>
- Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D., & Hackett, G. (1994). Toward a unifying social cognitive theory of career and academic interest, choice, and performance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 45(1), 79–122. <https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1994.1027>

- McCarthy, M. T. (2017). *Promising practices in humanities PhD professional development: Lessons learned from the 2016–2017 Next Generation Humanities PhD Consortium*. Council of Graduate Schools. https://legacy.cgsnet.org/publication-pdf/5049/NEH_NextGen_LessonsLearned.pdf
- National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, National Science Foundation. (2021). *Doctorate recipients from U.S. universities: 2020* (NSF 22–300). <https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf22300/>
- Rogers, K. (2020). *Putting the humanities PhD to work: Thriving in and beyond the classroom*. Duke University Press.
- Schnoes, A. M., Caliendo, A., Morand, J., Dillinger, T., Naffziger-Hirsch, M., Moses, B., Gibeling, J. C., Yamamoto, K. R., Lindstaedt, B., McGee, R., & O'Brien, T. C. (2018). Internship experiences contribute to confident career decision making for doctoral students in the life sciences. *Life Sciences Education*, 17(1). <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.17-08-0164>
- Smith, S. (2015). *Manifesto for the humanities: Transforming doctoral education in good enough times*. University of Michigan Press.
- Sweitzer, F. H., & King, M. A. (2013). *The successful internship: Personal, professional, and civic development in experiential learning*. Brooks/Cole.
- Trager, B. (2020). Community-based internships: How a hybridized high-impact practice affects students, community partners, and the university. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 26(2), 71–94. <https://doi.org/10.3998/mjcsloa.3239521.0026.204>
- Woodson, S. E. (2013). Specifying the scholarship of engagement 2.0. *Public: A Journal of Imagining America*, 2(1). <https://public.imaginingamerica.org/blog/article/specifying-the-scholarship-of-engagement-2-0-skills-for-community-based-projects-in-the-arts-and-design/>

Appendix. Journal Entry Questions

Journal Entry 1 (Completed at Week 2 of the experience)

- Q1. Settling in to your Fellowship, comment on things that were unexpected or surprising.
- Q2. Which capacities do you see yourself developing now or a bit down the road in your fellowship experience?
- Q3. Are there challenges, everything from interpersonal issues to the content of your work, for which you'd appreciate help from the graduate school?

Journal Entry 2 (Completed at Week 5 of the experience)

- Q1. What connections do you see between your Fellowship experience and your scholarship?
- Q2. What challenges (if any) have you encountered? How did you handle those challenges?
- Q3. In your own words, what skills have you developed through your Fellowship thus far?
- Q4. From the list below, what skills would you say you have developed thus far in the experience (check all that apply)? [List of skills appears in Table 2.]

Journal Entry 3 (Completed at end of the experience)

- Q1. Did you learn anything that surprised you from your Fellowship experience?
- Q2. What challenges did you encounter, if any?
- Q3. What could you have done differently to get the most out of the experience?
- Q4. What did your site supervisor do that was most helpful? And what could they have done to better support you, if anything?
- Q5. Are there aspects of your work at your site for which you feel your academic training at U-M prepared you? What aspects of your work did your academic training not prepare you?
- Q6. What do you see as your next steps in terms of achieving your career goals?
- Q7. Is there anything else that you would like to share?