The Old Idaho Penitentiary “Old Pen” is a division of the Idaho State Historical Society, a state agency, whose primary mission is to preserve and promote Idaho history. The “Old Pen” accepts one intern per semester and up to three in the summer months. Interns are expected to be professional (in manner and appearance), punctual, and courteous. Staff works closely with interns to ensure they have a quality experience and learn valuable resources and hone their researching skills. Interns, however, are also expected to work independently. When tasks are completed the intern should check in for the next set of instructions.

Docent Training – Learn how to become a tour guide at the Old Idaho Penitentiary and perform regularly scheduled education programs. This requires detailed research about the site’s 101-year history. The student will be expected to understand the comprehensive history of the site. This would also include learning to conduct a presentation on a particular topic of interest (guards, female inmates, Prohibition, etc.) for special programs. All research, writing, outlines, and editing would be conducted by the student with the guidance of Old Idaho Penitentiary staff.

Exhibit Creation – Students select a site-specific topic, with the guidance of the Site Administrator, and creates an original exhibition. Student is responsible for all research (newspapers, Warden Reports, photographs, oral histories, etc.), writing, and most editing. Old Idaho Penitentiary staff will provide guidance and assistance, but the student is expected to produce a final exhibit draft and design layout proposals by the end of their internship.

Special Projects – Depending on need and staff availability, special projects like scanning, cataloguing, video presentation creation, and other projects sometimes arise. Some projects like video/audio tours require prior knowledge or experience in programs like Adobe. Scanning and cataloguing projects are done in partnership with the Idaho State Archives (also a division of the Idaho State Historical Society). Due to limited staffing and resources these are developed on a case by case basis. Examples include the scanning/digitization of the entire Warden’s Reports on file, documenting inmate graffiti in #4 Cell House, and more.