**Professional Association Activity**

Student Learning Objectives:

* Understand how knowledge is transmitted within a discipline
* Identify important ethical considerations in your discipline

Building a career can be enhanced by membership in one or more professional associations in your discipline. These groups offer an opportunity to share scholarship and professional concerns with like-minded practioners by sponsoring conventions and other meetings, as well as publishing both scholarly and trade/professional publications in the field.

For this exercise we'll first examine the web site of the American Historical Association ([www.historians.org](http://www.historians.org)) and the types of services it offers its members. Then students will break into their major groups to find associations in their field. This may be done in a few ways:

1) the easiest is to google "associations" and the name of your major, e.g., associations and psychology (note that some groups use “society, or “institute,” instead of “association”); also, some of the subject guides available at [http://infoguides.gmu.edu](http://infoguides.gmu.edu/" \o "link to list of subject guides on library website) have lists of membership organizations.

Each group member should find one association; although this may be difficult for some majors try your best.

When you have located an association, review its web page and find the following information:

* Does it have a job bank (specialized "want ads" for people in your field)?
* Many groups have reasonable student rates, if yours does how much does it cost per year?
* What types of educational services does it provide (usually workshops & conventions)? Provide a few specific examples.
* How often does the group have its major convention? (Some are yearly, some every two or three years). Where is it held?
* Try to find a program from a past conference and briefly mention the title of the association president's speech (they all give one major talk at these meetings), and give a sense of the panel topics (not all! generalize; if your group doesn't list either just say so:)
* What types of publications does it provide for its members? Most associations have a flagship scholarly journal (if the one you found doesn't find another one that does), and any number of trade publications (newsletters, bulletins, or other non-peer reviewed sources of professional information). **List the title** of a scholarly journal (in italics!) and a trade/professional publication (also in italics) your group sponsors. You will need this for later assignments. If you aren't sure which ones are scholarly and which are trade/professional, don't forget you can use Ulrich's database in our library system or check the publication's web site .
* Finally, most associations have codes of professional conduct. Briefly explain a few of the main points of those you found. If you can't readily access this on your association’s web site, write what *you* think ethical practices would entail for your future profession.

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