

Shannan Catherine Mason, Ph.D.
University of Missouri | History Department
615 Locust Street | Columbia, MO 65201
Shannan.Mason@mail.missouri.edu
618-616-9717

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Dr. Krista Sigler
Department Chair
Department of History, Philosophy, and Political Science
University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College
9555 Plainfield Road | Blue Ash, OH 45236

Dear Dr. Sigler and Members of the Search Committee,

I am thrilled to apply for the tenure-track Assistant Professor of United States and Environmental History position at the University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College. With a Ph.D. in History from the University of Missouri (2024), certifications in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Museum Studies, and nearly a decade of experience teaching in both online and in-person formats, I am eager to contribute to your mission of fostering innovative and accessible history education. My research, teaching, and public history work reflect a strong commitment to interdisciplinary learning, community engagement, and the practical application of historical knowledge—principles that align with UC Blue Ash's dedication to personalized student support and academic excellence.

At the University of Missouri and McKendree University, I have taught a wide range of courses in person and online including U.S. history surveys, environmental history, and upper-level writing-intensive seminars. In my course *Nature's Nation: Disease, Disaster, and Ecology*, students used environmental data alongside traditional history sources and political transformations to analyze historical environmental crises, connecting ecological change to political and economic developments. Similarly, in *Between the Borderlands*, students create digital story maps that explore the relationship between geographic boundaries and cultural exchange. These classes and assignments not only engage students with interdisciplinary methods but also develop transferable skills such as critical analysis, digital literacy, and collaborative problem-solving. My ability to adapt to diverse student needs is informed by my prior experience in K-21 special education, which has strengthened my instructional strategies and enhanced my ability to provide robust supports to students of varied backgrounds.

My online teaching experience, supported by Quality Matters certification, ensures that I can design and deliver courses that meet rigorous pedagogical standards. This certification, combined with my participation in lifelong learning workshops at the University of Missouri, reflects my dedication to professional growth and delivering high-quality instruction. Whether teaching online or in-person, I prioritize accessibility, active learning, and inclusivity to foster an engaging and supportive classroom environment.

My research bridges environmental, intellectual, and economic history, examining how human-environment interactions shaped early American and transatlantic economies. Awarded the Top Dissertation in the Humanities at the University of Missouri, my dissertation has evolved into a monograph project titled *Reciprocities Market: Ecology and Economy of John Bartram's Trans-Atlantic*

Botanical Subscription Service. This work explores the commodification of ecological knowledge through Bartram's botanical exchanges, demonstrating how natural resources were transformed into economic commodities within a globalizing Atlantic world. By utilizing digital humanities tools such as ArcGIS, NVivo, and Gephi, I situate environmental history within broader themes of market development, scientific exchange, and ecological transformation. These methodologies enable me to visualize and interpret complex data, fostering both innovative research and practical, hands-on applications for students.

My publishing record similarly reflects a commitment to advancing scholarship in environmental, intellectual, and public history. I have published an award-winning journal article, "*Nature Much Improved: The Curation of a 19th Century Greenspace and Neighborhood*," that examines the intersections of urban environmentalism and cultural identity, as well as co-edited an annotated book project. Additionally, I have authored four digital encyclopedia articles and a forthcoming book review in *Agricultural History*. I look forward to maintaining an active researching and writing agenda at Central Arkansas.

In addition to my teaching and research, I have a robust record of departmental and community service that demonstrates my commitment to academic collaboration and public engagement. At the University of Missouri, I co-led a curriculum redesign to align departmental learning objectives with accreditation standards, updating core courses such as U.S. history surveys and senior historical methods to reflect contemporary pedagogical goals. I also served on the Speaking and Lecture Series Committee, helping to organize events that connected faculty, students, and the public around diverse historical themes.

Outside the university, I have a longstanding commitment to public history and historic preservation. As an executive member of the O'Fallon Historic Preservation Commission, I have worked on National Register of Historic Places nominations, facilitated community outreach programs, and produced digital and video projects showcasing local architectural and cultural history. For example, my work on the Hillesheim Building nomination emphasized its historical and architectural significance while fostering public interest and civic engagement through public history education initiatives. Similarly, my leadership on the Madison Historical digital archive project connected students with local communities, training them in oral history collection, metadata creation, and digital curation. These experiences underscore my ability to build meaningful bridges between academic institutions and their surrounding communities.

Cincinnati's rich environmental and industrial history offers exciting possibilities for teaching environmental history in ways that connect students to their local landscapes. For example, courses could explore the environmental impacts of industrial development along the Ohio River or examine the evolution of urban green spaces within the city. By incorporating site visits, fieldwork, or collaborations with local archives and museums, I aim to provide students with immersive learning experiences that deepen their understanding of both environmental history and their community.

I am excited about the opportunity to join the faculty at UC Blue Ash College, where I can bring my expertise in environmental history, interdisciplinary pedagogy, and public history to your students and academic community. Thank you for considering my application. I welcome the opportunity to discuss how my background and skills align with the needs of your department.

Sincerely,
Shannan Catherine Mason, Ph.D.