

## **HIST 5402: Introduction to Archival Theory and Practice**

Fall Semester 2010

University of West Georgia

Dr. Keith S. Hébert

*[Note: By remaining in class students agree to adhere to the policies and expectations as outlined in this syllabus. A syllabus is a legal contract between the course professor and the student. Students who violate this contract will receive a lower grade and/or be dismissed from the course.]*

### **Class Meeting Time and Place**

University of West Georgia Campus, Carrollton,

Pafford Hall Room # 206, Wednesdays 5:30-8:00pm

### **Professor Contact Information**

Dr. Keith S. Hébert, UWG Department of History

Office Location(s): TLC #3245 and Pafford Hall #207

Office Hours: M,W: 8:30-11:30; 1:30-2:30 and by appointment

E-mail: [khebert@westga.edu](mailto:khebert@westga.edu) [e-mail is the best way to contact me.]

Course Website: <http://uwgintroarchives.wordpress.com/> [Site will be updated one week prior to the start of the fall 2010 semester.]

### **Course Description and Objectives**

This course introduces students to the art of archival theory and practice. Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. be familiar with standard archival theories and practice;
2. be able to identify archival theorists who have shaped the profession;
3. understand archival terminology;
4. understand each of the 11 elements of the archival cycle;
5. read, comprehend, analyze, and discuss assigned readings on a weekly basis;
6. process a collections at the UWG Center for Public History while working as a group;
7. create an archival portfolio containing examples of your archival work that can be shown to potential employers;
8. visit the Georgia Archives during the semester;
9. learn about the archival profession generally and its various employment opportunities;
10. students will work in small groups;
11. students will complete hands-on assignments (archival practicum) that will require additional work outside of our normal class period.

Class meetings will include the following:

1. Analysis and discussion of weekly assigned readings;
2. Hands-on experience working with archival documents/ collections;
3. Group analytical assignments that reinforce the weekly assigned readings;
4. Student presentations.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students who have a disability that might affect their performance in this class should consult with the course professor as soon as possible. The course professor will arrange appropriate accommodations when the student provides him with adequate documentation of their disability provided by the University of West Georgia.

## Academic Honesty

All work completed in this course must be the original work of each student. Students who commit acts of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade for the semester. Students must familiarize themselves with the University of West Georgia Department of History's academic honesty policies: <http://www.westga.edu/~history/statementonplagiarism.pdf>

## Required Textbooks

1. Hunter, Gregory. *Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives: A How to do It Manual*. 2d Edition.

## Attendance/ Class Participation

Students are expected to attend class and to participate in class discussions/ activities. Students that do not contribute to class discussions/assignments will receive a failing grade for the semester. Participation is defined by providing verbal evidence that the student has completed, analyzed, and understood the weekly reading assignments and/or asks appropriate questions related to course content. Students will receive a zero on all assignments/activities/discussion grades assigned for the class missed.

## Electronic Devices Policy

Students should turn off all cell phones prior to the start of class. If your cell phone interrupts our class I will ask you to leave and you will receive a zero on all assignments completed during that class. Students should store all cell phones and electronic devices prior to the start of class. Do not leave your phones on your desk. Students who text during class will be asked to leave and will receive a zero on all assignments completed during that class. By remaining in this class, students agree to adhere to the regulations and expectations included in this course syllabus.

## Grading

100-89.5=A

89.4-79.5=B

79.4-69.5=C

69.4-59.5=D

59.4 and below=F

\*I do not give extra credit

\*All assigned grades are final

## Assessments (Graduate Students)

### 1. Midterm Exam

**[20 percent of graduate final course grade]**

Students will complete an in-class midterm exam. The exam will include one or two essays on topics related to class discussion and assigned readings. The exam will also include a number of identifications. A study guide will be provided one week prior to the exam on the course website.

**The midterm exam will take place on October 6.**

### 2. Final Exam

**[20 percent of graduate final course grade]**

Students will complete an in-class final exam. The exam will include one or two essays on topics related to class discussion and assigned readings. The exam will also include a number of identifications. A study guide will be provided one week prior to the exam on the course website.

**The final exam will take place on December 8.**

### 3. Georgia Archives Fieldtrip

**[10 percent of graduate final course grade]**

Students must attend a class fieldtrip to the Georgia Archives. The trip will take place on Saturday, November 13. The Georgia Archives will provide us with a full tour of their facilities

beginning at 9:30AM. Students who miss this fieldtrip or are tardy will receive a ten-point reduction in their final class average—no exceptions allowed and no excuses permitted. Following the fieldtrip, students will complete a series of assignments at the archives to better familiarize themselves with how an archives is arranged and managed on a daily basis.

#### 4. Group Processing Project/ Archival Portfolio

##### [30 percent of graduate final course grade]

Graduate students will be divided into small groups. Each group will be assigned a collection from the Center of Public History archives. Students will process this collection, creating a portfolio of their work that will demonstrate their work experience to prospective employers.

**This assignment will be due at the start of class on December 9.** Additional instructions will be provided. The course professor will meet with the graduate students separately early during the semester to discuss these group projects. Each group will complete the following tasks:

- a. Arrange the collection to the item level
  - a. Prepare to process the collection;
  - b. Discuss the history of this collection with Dr. Ann McCleary;
  - c. Go through the entire collection without rearranging anything;
  - d. Develop a processing plan;
  - e. Sort the collection into series;
  - f. Process each series to the filing unit level;
  - g. Process each filing unit level to the item level;
  - h. Lock in final arrangement;
  - i. Prepare a rough box and folder listing;
- b. Describe the collection to the filing unit level
  - a. Create a finding aid that includes a container listing
- c. Digitize a selection of documents from the collection
  - a. Chose five documents per person in group to digitize
  - b. Create appropriate file names for each digital file
  - c. Archive the digital files in a media box that will become part of the final collection. Be sure to include your digital files in your finding aids.
- d. Locate an entry-level job announcement/ advertisement for work at an archives
  - a. Write a one-page professional letter of introduction to your prospective employer. This is typically referred to as a cover letter. You must format this letter in a professional manner and turn in your final copy on resume paper. Additional instructions will be discussed in class.
- e. Create a professional resume to support your application to the job you applied for above. Be sure to include the work experience you gained through this course and any other archival course you have completed.

#### 6. Class Participation

##### [10 percent of graduate final course grade]

Graduate students are expected to participate in class and set an example for undergraduate students. Students who do not contribute to class discussions/ assignments will receive a failing grade for the semester.

#### 7. Student Research Presentation A

##### [5 percent of graduate final course grade]

Graduate students will be assigned an archives randomly. The following archives will be assigned this semester:

- a. National Archives and Records Administration-Southeast Region
  - a. **September 8**
- b. Emory University Special Collections
  - a. **September 15**
- c. Georgia State University Special Collections

- a. **September 22**
- d. University of Georgia Special Collections
  - a. **September 29**
- e. Mercer University Special Collections
  - a. **October 13**
- f. Georgia Historical Society Archives—Savannah
  - a. **October 20**

Students will prepare a 10-15 minute class presentation that will address the following questions/topics:

- a. What is the history of this archives? (summarize the general history of this archives and place it within the context of the history of American archives)
- b. What are the strengths of this archival collection?
- c. What procedures do visitors need to follow in order to use this archives collections?
- d. How effective is this archives website?
- e. How many people does this archives employ?
- f. How does this archives organize its staff?
- g. What is this archives collection policy? Summarize the scope of its collections policies.
- h. What type of public programs does this archives provide?

#### 8. Student Research Presentation B

**[5 percent of graduate final course grade]**

Graduate students will be assigned an archival research topic randomly. Students will prepare a 10-15 minute class presentation that will present a summary of their research findings on this topic and suggest to other students potential sources for additional information.

- a. Acid Free Archival Products—September 29
- b. Hurricane Katrina and Archives—October 13
- c. Digitization: Positives and Negatives—October 20
- d. History of Photograph Technology—October 27
- e. History of Audio Recording Technology—November 3
- f. The Present and Future of the Archival Profession—December 1

### Course Schedule

\*The course professor reserves the right to alter this course schedule. Students will be provided an updated course syllabus whenever alterations are made. All alterations will be made at least two weeks in advance of the affected changes.

\*All assigned readings are to be completed prior to the start of class.

#### Week One: August 18<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM

Introduction to Archives and Manuscripts and Starting an Archival Program

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapters 1-2;

#### Week Two: August 25<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM

Selection and Appraisal

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapter 3;
  2. [Archival Appraisal, What to Keep and What to Destroy](#)

3. [Depauw University, Archival Appraisal, Ppt Presentation](#)
4. Frank Boles and Mark A. Greene, "Et Tu Schellenberg? Thoughts on the Dagger of American Appraisal Theory," *The American Archivist* 59:3 (Summer, 1996), 298-310. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]
5. Reto Tschan, "A Comparison of Jenkinson and Schellenberg on Appraisal," *The American Archivist* 65:2 (Fall-Winter, 2002), 176-95. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]

### **Week Three: September 1<sup>st</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

#### Acquisitions and Accessioning

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapter 4;
  2. [Clay County, Georgia, Archives Collection Policy](#)
  3. [Georgia Historical Society, Collections Development Policy](#)
  4. [Agnes Scott, McCain Library, Collections Development Policy](#)
  5. Timothy Ericson, "At the "rim of creative dissatisfaction": Archivists and Acquisition Development," [Available on the course website]
  6. Shauna McRanor, "A Critical Analysis of Intrinsic Value," *The American Archivist* 59:4 (Fall, 1996), 400-11. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]

### **Week Four: September 8<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

#### Arrangement

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapter 5;
  2. T. R. Schellenberg, "Archival Principles of Arrangement," *The American Archivist* 24:1 (Jan., 1961), 11-24. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]
  3. David A. Bearman, "The Power of the Principle of Provenance," [Article will be posted as a PDF on the course website].
- Graduate Student Presentation: **National Archives and Records Administration-Southeast Region**

### **Week Five: September 15<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

#### Description, Part One

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapter 6
  2. Heather MacNeil, "Picking our Text: Archival Description, Authenticity, and the Archivist as Editor," *The American Archivist* 68:2 (Fall-Winter, 2005), 264-78. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]
- Graduate Student Presentation: **Emory University Special Collections**

### **Week Six: September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

#### Description, Part Two

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Mark A. Greene and Dennis Meissner, "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing," *The American Archivist* 68:2 (Fall-Winter, 2005), 205-63. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]
  2. Michelle Light, Tom Hyry, "Colophons and Annotations: New Directions for the Finding Aid," *The American Archivist* 65:2 (Fall-Winter, 2002), 216-30. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]

- Graduate Student Presentation: **Georgia State University Special Collections**

**Week Seven: September 29<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

Preservation

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapter 7
  2. Tyler O. Walters, “Contemporary Archival Appraisal Methods and Preservation Decision-Making,” *The American Archivist* 59:3 (Summer, 1996), 322-38. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]
- Graduate Student Presentation: **University of Georgia Special Collections**
- Graduate Student Presentation: **Acid Free Archival Products**

**Week Eight: October 6<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

Midterm Examination

**Week Nine: October 13<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

Security and Disaster Planning

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapter 8
  2. [Records and Disasters, Georgia Archives, ppt. presentation](#)
  3. [Disaster Prevention and Safety Checklist](#)
  4. Vincent Totka, “Preventing Patron Theft in the Archives: Legal Perspectives and Problems,” *The American Archivist* 56:4 (Fall, 1993), 664-72. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]
- Graduate Student Presentation: **Mercer University Special Collections**
- Graduate Student Presentation: **Hurricane Katrina and Archives**

**Week Ten: October 20<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

Access, Reference, and Outreach

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapter 9
  2. Glenn Dingwall, “Trusting Archivists: The Role of Archival Ethics Codes in Establishing Public Faith,” *The American Archivist* 67:1 (Spring-Summer, 2004), 11-30. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]
- Graduate Student Presentation: **Georgia Historical Society Archives—Savannah**
- Graduate Student Presentation: **Digitization: Positives and Negatives**

**Week Eleven: October 27<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

Photographs & Digital Records

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapter 10
  2. Andrea Watson and P. Toby Graham, “CSS Alabama ‘Digital Collection’: A Special Collections Digitization Project,” *The American Archivist* 61:1 (Spring, 1998), 124-34. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]
  3. Leon Stout, “Reimagining Archives: Two Tales for the Information Age,” *The American Archivist* 65:1 (Spring-Summer, 2002), 9-23. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]
- Graduate Student Presentation: **History of Photograph Technology**

**Week Twelve: November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

Audiovisual Archives

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapter 11
  2. Christopher Ann Paton, "Preservation Re-Recording of Audio Recordings in Archives," *American Archivist* 61 (Spring, 1998), 188-219.
- Graduate Student Presentation: **History of Audio Recording Technology**

**Week Thirteen: November 10<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

*Class will not meet on Wednesday November 10<sup>th</sup>. The class will meet on Saturday, November 13 at the Georgia Archives in Morrow, Georgia, at 9:30AM.*

**November 13<sup>th</sup>, Saturday, Georgia Archives Fieldtrip, 9:30AM**

**Week Fourteen: November 17<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

Management

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapter 12
  2. Randall Jimerson, "Redefining Archival Identity: Meeting User Needs in the Information Society," *American Archivist* (1989). [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]

**Week Fifteen: December 1<sup>st</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**

Archival Profession

- Assigned Readings:
  1. Hunter, chapter 13
  2. Maygene Daniels, "On Being an Archivist," *The American Archivist* 59:1 (Winter, 1996), 6-13. [Available on J-STOR via UWG Library]
- Graduate Student Presentation: **The Present and Future of the Archival Profession**

**Final Exam Period: December 8<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:00PM**