

Administration of Museums and Historic Sites
History 6301, Fall 2011
University of West Georgia and Atlanta History Center

Dr. Ann McCleary, History Department, UWG
678-839-6041/6141

amcclear@westga.edu

Office hours: Monday, 1-3; Wednesday, 12:30-1 at the Atlanta History Center (as needed);
Thursday, 1-4, and other days by appointment.

Class meetings: 10-12:30 in the Garden Conference Room, Atlanta History Center

Course Objectives

The goal of this class is to introduce students to the wide range of administrative responsibilities that one might encounter at a museum or historic site. Directors and administrators wear a variety of hats in their daily interactions with staff, volunteers, board members, and the general public. While overseeing the daily operations of the museum or historic site, the director must also develop strategic plans as well as plan for projects and events, ensure funding for programs and exhibits, educate the board about issues that the museum is facing, market the museum to the public, and find resolution to controversial ethical or legal issues.

But it is not only the museum director who holds administrative responsibilities. As Hugh Genoways and Lynne Ireland argue in their book *Museum Administration*, *all* museum staff members participate in administrative duties of some type. They may participate in the process to plan an exhibit, market a program they develop, write a proposal for corporate funding for a particular project, or supervise other museum staff members, volunteers, and interns. Every professional staff member at a museum or historic site can benefit from learning good administrative practices.

This class will cover a variety of topics faced in administration: governance, working with a board, strategic planning, budget and fundraising, marketing, ethics and legal issues, daily operations, human resources management, insurance and risk management, and accreditation. As a graduate seminar, this course will emphasize class discussion and participation and the preparation of five administration “exercises” that one might encounter in a museum. These assignments will provide the basis of class discussion on the dates they are due. At the end of the semester, students will gather these assignments into a portfolio.

The collaboration with the Atlanta History Center offers several benefits to our students. First, students have the opportunity to become acquainted with and to learn from professional staff at the Atlanta History Center as well as other museum professionals around the region. Second, students will undertake assignments that are not hypothetical; these will be real-life projects at the AHC or another historic site. We guarantee that you will leave this class better prepared to work effectively as an administrator in the many tasks that you might have at a museum, archive, or any other type of historic site or organization.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will explore the range of organizational and governance structures used in museums and become familiar with the primary roles and responsibilities of the governing board and the director.
2. Students will learn basic principles and techniques of strategic planning, marketing, financial management, fundraising, and personnel management for museums.

3. Students will become familiar with key ethical and legal issues surrounding museums and public history organizations
4. Students will learn the basic elements of risk management and the types of insurance applicable to museums.
5. Students will learn the process of museum accreditation.
6. Students will become familiar with the range of career opportunities available in museum administration.
7. Students will gain experience in working in collaborate team projects.
8. Students will gain experience in presenting their work to reviewers and peers.

Required Readings

- Cilella, Salvatore, *Fundraising for Small Museums: In Good Times and Bad*, Altamira Press, 2011,
- Genoways, Hugh H. and Lynn M. Ireland, *Museum Administration: An Introduction*. Walnut Creek, California: Altamira Press, 2003.
- Skramstad, Harold and Susan, *A Handbook for Museum Trustees*. American Association of Museums, 2003.
- Bryant F. Tolles, Jr., editor, *Leadership for the Future: Changing Directorial Roles in American History Museums and Historical Societies*. American Association for State and Local History, 1991.

Recommended:

The Foundation Center's Guide to Proposal Writing, Available through the Foundation Center's website at www.fdncenter.org/atlanta/ One copy of this book is also available for student use in the Center for Public History at UWG, but it may not be checked out from the Center.

Course Requirements

This course is designed to offer students the opportunity to undertake several types of administrative projects in which a director or staff member at a museum or historic site might become involved. More details about all assignments will be provided in the class. Students will turn in these assignments throughout the class for a grade (see course schedule).

Students will include two copies of each finished assignment in the final class portfolio. We encourage students to revise their assignments, responding to our comments and the course readings, for the final portfolio. We believe that this revision process will help students learn more and refine their skills. We will re-evaluate the assignment grades based upon your revisions. ***If you revise an assignment, you must submit the original copy, with my comments, in order for me to reassess the assignment grade.*** The second copies will be distributed to the Atlanta History Center or the site for whom the project was completed.

Museum governance role playing assignment (10 points)

Students will be assigned a role-playing scenario in the book *A Handbook for Museum Trustees*. For this scenario, a team of students will present the issue to the class. In addition, each student will prepare a written statement about how s/he would respond to one of the scenarios for which s/he is leading the discussion. Depending on the number of students in the class, each group may have one or possibly two scenarios to present. Students will be graded both on the presentation and the paper.

Strategic Plan (15 points)

In this era of challenging financial resources, strategic planning has become even more essential to museums to set priorities and timetables for their work. In this exercise, students will work as a team to develop a strategic plan. Guidelines and a template for the strategic plan will be presented in class.

Foundation proposal (15 points)

Each student will research and write a foundation proposal for an upcoming traveling exhibit entitled *1968*.

To prepare for this task, all students will attend the ninety-minute workshop “Grantseeking Basics.” The Foundation Center website describes this course as: “Learn how the Center’s resources can help you become a more effective grantseeker! For beginners, this introduction to the library provides instruction in foundation research and identification of potential funders. The formal presentation is followed by a tour of the library.” If you cannot attend on this day, the same workshop is being offered at other times.. All students must register for the workshop on-line. Please do this promptly as these workshops will fill up quickly.

The Foundation Center has prepared a book *The Foundation Center’s Guide to Proposal Writing* that you should use as you complete this assignment. A copy of this book is available in the Center for Public History for use there. We ask that you use the foundation proposal formula provided in the book in preparing your proposal.

Writing a foundation proposal is a process, so we have established several deadlines by which this process will proceed:

October 12—submit the name of the foundation you have selected

November 9—submit draft of foundation proposal for class critique

December 7—submit final proposal in your portfolio

Marketing Plan (15 points)

Each student will develop a marketing plan for an upcoming event at the Atlanta History Center. We will follow the AHC marketing plan template, which the marketing staff will provide. This year, the class will work on developing a marketing plan for an upcoming exhibit entitled “*Clean Old Fashioned HATE: The Georgia-Georgia Tech Football Rivalry,*”

Human Resources Plan (15 points)

For this assignment, each student will develop a staffing plan for a proposed museum, the Williams Farm (proposed Goldworth Farm Park) in Villa Rica. This site include a historic home, related agricultural outbuildings, historic gardens, and a Civilian Conservation Corp camp site as well as two archaeological home sites, all located on approximately 20 acres.

Students will develop three scenarios for staffing this new museum at different budget levels: a \$50,000, \$100,000, and \$150,000 annual budget. You will choose how you will staff the museum. What positions will you hire? What salaries will you pay? What knowledge, skills, and experience will you expect for each position?

The plan for each scenario must include the titles of each position as well as a brief job description, qualifications, and salary for each position. Your plan must also include whether these staff members are full-time with benefits or part-time, and if the latter, how many hours they will work and for what hourly wage. You may also include interns, graduate research assistants, and contractual services, if you choose to go that route, as well as unpaid volunteers, being realistic about what volunteers can accomplish. More details on the farm park and this assignment will be provided.

Operations Plan (5 points)

One of the most important tasks of any museum administrator is to develop an operations plan for an event. Using a scenario that we provide, you will work as a team, in class, to develop an operations plan for the week leading up to and including the big event. We will provide a description of the event and the staff with which you can work. You will need to develop a plan for the six days leading up to the event and an hour-by-hour plan for the day of the event. This will begin as an in-class team exercise, but then each student will take home the plan the team developed, refine it as s/he sees fit, and include the final version in his or her portfolio.

Portfolio essay (10 points)

The portfolio essay should be a 2,000 to 3,000 word essay on what you have learned from the class. Please provide insights that you will take from the class, not simply a discussion of what you did. All students must incorporate discussion of and references to the readings, using footnotes as appropriate. You are welcome to be creative in this essay, if you like.

Class participation and attendance (15 points)

This course will be taught as a graduate seminar in which discussion and participation are very important. Some classes will focus more on discussion of the readings, other sessions will involve guest speakers, and on other days, students will present their ideas and projects for critique and discussion. We hope that you will make the most of the class experience and engage the guest speakers by asking questions and raising issues of interest to you.

Excessive absences will lower your final course grade.

Tentative Class Schedule

Please note: class schedule and readings are subject to change.

- August 24: **Introduction to Museum Administration**
Mission Statements
Guest discussant: Gordon Jones
- August 31: **Museum Director’s Roundtable**
Roundtable participations: Dr. Sal Cilella, President and CEO of the Atlanta History Center; Trey Gaines, Director of the Bartow History Museum;
Organizational Structure of Museums
Read: Genoways/Ireland, chapters 2-3; Tolles, chapters 1-2; John Durel, “A New Director’s First Year,” on e-reserve; Franklin W. Robinson, “Advice to a New Director,” on e-reserve
- September 7: **Governance**
Guest speaker: Dr. Sal Cilella, CEO and President, AHC
Class discussion time to prepare for the role-playing assignment next week
Read: Tolles, chapter 3, 4, 11.

- September 14: **In the Trenches: Working with Your Board**
Guest discussant: Gordon Jones
Due: Role-Playing Assignment, presentation and paper
Read: Skramstads, A Handbook for Museum Trustees
- September 21: **Strategic Planning**
Guest speaker: Casey Steadman
Discussion of class planning project
Discussion of class foundation proposal assignment
Guest: Don Rooney
Read: Genoways and Ireland, chapter 4; Tolles, chapter 10
- September 28: **Introduction to Development**
Guest speaker: Aaron Berger, CFRE, Turning Point
Fundraising for Museums
Guest speaker: Dr. Sal Cilella, Atlanta History Center
Read: Genoways/Ireland, chapter 6; Tolles, chapter 9; Cilella, Fundraising for Small Museums
- October 4 :** at 5:30 p.m.:**“Grantseeking Basics: An Orientation to the Funding Research Process,”** 9:30 a.m. at the Foundation Center-Atlanta, Suite 150, Grand Lobby, 50 Hurt Plaza, Atlanta, GA 30303. *You must pre-register for the workshop. Space is limited! Please visit their website at www.fdncenter.org/atlanta to register and obtain directions to the* *Review: The Foundation Center website to learn more about their resources. There is also a free course on “Finding Funders” right after the Grantseeking class, and this may be of interest to you as well. If you are unable to attend the workshop on this day, the same is offered the first Tuesday of September and on select mornings. See the Foundation Center website.*
- October 5: **Planning Presentations**
Guest reviewer for planning presentations: Gordon Jones
Marketing project assignment description
Guest speaker: Paul Crater
Due: Team presentations on strategic planning exercise
Read: Genoways and Ireland, chapter 5;
- October 12: **Marketing 101**
Guest speaker: Hillary Hardwick, Vice President of Marketing and Communications
Budgeting 101
Guest speakers: Casey Steadman, Chief Operating Officer, and Jeff Rutledge, Vice President of Finance, Atlanta History Center
Read: Genoways and Ireland, chapter 11; Tolles, chapter 13
Due: one-page summary of the foundation you chose and why you think it would fund this project
- October 19: **Museum Operations and Facilities Management**
Guest speakers: Jackson McQuigg, Vice President of Properties, and Sean Thorndike, Vice President of Operations

- Operations plan (in-class exercise)**
Read: Tolles, chapter 12, 6, 11, 15
- October 26: **Museum Accreditation**
Read: American Association of Museums website on accreditation, accessible at <http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/accred/index.cfm>
Operations and the Visitor Experience
- November 2: **Student presentations and critiques of marketing ideas**
Preliminary discussions of foundation proposal ideas
Guest reviewers for marketing plans: Hillary Hardwick and Paul Crater
Due: Marketing plan
- November 9: **Foundation proposals: student presentations and critiques**
Guest reviewers Don Rooney and Gordon Jones
Due: Foundation proposal draft
- November 16: **Human Resources**
Guest speaker: Casey Steadman
Read: Genoways and Ireland, chapter 7
- November 23 **No class, Thanksgiving Break**
- November 30: **Human Resources: student presentations and critiques**
Insurance and Risk Management
Due: Staffing plan
- December 7: **Ethics and Legal Issues in Museums**
Read: Genoways and Ireland, chapters 10 and 13; Marie Malero, “Why Ethics,” on e-reserve; AAM Code of Ethics for Museums, available at <http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/ethics/coe.cfm> ; David Carr, “Balancing Act: Ethics, Mission, and the Public Trust,” on e-reserve
- End-of-semester lunch after class**
- Due: Portfolio with all assignments and portfolio essay**