

**Administration of Museums and Historic Sites**  
History 6301, Fall 2009  
University of West Georgia and Atlanta History Center

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*Class meetings:* Wednesdays, 10-12:30 at the Atlanta History Center  
*Office hours:* Monday and Thursday, Center for Public History, Pafford Hall 207, and by appointment.

### **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. Museum 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 short-term planning 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 ethnical or legal issues.

But it is not only the museum director who holds administrative responsibilities. As Hugh Genoways and Lynne Ireland argue in their new book *Museum Administration*, all museum staff members participate in administrative duties of some type. They may participate in planning 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 museum professional can benefit from learning good administrative practices.

This class will cover a variety of topics faced in museum administration: governance, working with a board, planning, budget and fundraising, marketing, ethics and legal issues, daily operations, human resources management, insurance, 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, we will 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 some assignments that are not hypothetical; these will be real-life projects at the AHC. We guarantee that you will leave this class better prepared to work effectively as an administrator or in the many administrative tasks that you might have at a museum, archive, or any other type of historic site.

### **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.

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
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.

### **Required Readings**

- 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, Third Edition*. Available through the Foundation Center's website at [www.fdncenter.org/atlanta/](http://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.
- Slaying the Financial Dragon: Strategies for Museums*. American Association of Museums, 2000. Selected readings from this book will be placed on electronic reserve.

### **Course Requirements**

This course is designed to offer students the opportunity to undertake several types of administrative projects that a director or staff member at a museum or historic site might undertake. 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 Williams farm.

#### ***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 planning project (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 for the “Center for Southern Garden History,” a new project idea on the drawing board at the Atlanta History Center. Guidelines and a template for the strategic plan will be presented in class. AHC staff members Michael Rose, Travis Spilker, and Stacy Catron will be our staff resources to provide information on the project concept.

### ***Foundation proposal (15 points)***

Each student will research and write a foundation proposal for the “Mirror of Race” exhibit which is being developed by the Atlanta History Center. Michael Rose is our staff contact for this exhibit, and he will provide the information that he has thus far.

To prepare for this task, all students will meet at the Foundation Center in Atlanta on Tuesday, September 22 at 9:30 a.m. in lieu of our class that week to 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 on Tuesday night, October 6, at 5:15 p.m. *You must attend one of these two days, so please adjust your schedule accordingly.* 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 has a formula to follow for preparing these proposals. A copy of this book is available in the Center for Public History for use there (it may not be checked out). Use this formula in writing your proposal.

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

***October 21—submit the name of the foundation you have selected***

***November 11—submit draft of foundation proposal for class critique***

***December 9—submit final proposal in your portfolio***

### ***Marketing case study (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 a series of three related events at the AHC: a fall 2010 exhibit on Abraham Lincoln entitled “With Malice Towards None,” and two January 2011 events, a Civil War symposium and the “Mirror of Race” exhibit (for which you are also working on the foundation proposal). The AHC staff believes that there is a distinct marketing opportunity to market all three of these inter-related events. Your challenge will be to develop your own proposal to do just that

The Atlanta History Center staff will provide information on the Civil War symposium and the “Mirror of Race” exhibit. For more on the Lincoln Bicentennial exhibit that will travel to the AHC, visit the website <http://www.loc.gov/today/pr/2008/08-199.html>

### ***Human Resources case study (10 points)***

For this assignment, each student will develop a staffing plan for a proposed museum, the Williams Farm in Villa Rica. This is a museum being proposed in Villa Rica that will include a historic home, related agricultural outbuildings, historic gardens, and a Civilian

Conservation Corp site as well as two historic 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. We will be working under the assumption that the City of Villa Rica will provide the funding for the museum staff and thus will be paying benefits for full-time staff members museum will be operated by the City of Villa Rica. More details on the farm park will be provided.

### ***Operations Plan (10 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 1,000 to 2,000 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. 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 19:	Introduction to Museum Administration; Mission Statements; Museum Accreditation <i>Guest speaker: Michael Rose, Executive Vice President, Atlanta History Center</i>
August 26:	The Museum from a Director's Point of View: A Director's Roundtable; Organizational Structure of the Museum

*Roundtable participations: Dr. Sal Cilella, President and CEO of the Atlanta History Center; Trey Gaines, Director of the Bartow History Museum;*  
*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 2: In the Trenches: Working with Your Board  
*Guest discussants: Pam Meister and Gordon Jones*  
***Due: Role-Playing Assignment, presentation and paper***  
*Read: Skramstads, A Handbook for Museum Trustees*
- September 9: Governance  
*Guest speakers: Dr. Sal Cilella, CEO and President, AHC*  
*Dr. Patrick Brennan, museum consultant*  
Discussion of “Mirror of Race” exhibit  
*Read: Tolles, chapter 3, 4, 11.*
- September 16: Strategic Planning  
*Guest speaker: Pam Meister*  
Presentation of class planning project by Michael Rose  
*Read: Genoways and Ireland, chapter 4; Tolles, chapter 10*

***Tuesday***

***September 22 :*** “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 register for the workshop. Space is limited! Please visit their website at [www.fdncenter.org/atlanta](http://www.fdncenter.org/atlanta) to register and obtain directions to the  
*Review: The Foundation Center website to learn more about their resources.*  
If you are unable to attend the workshop on this day, the same one is being offered on *Tuesday, October 5, at 5:15 p.m.*

- September 23: No class (to compensate for Grantseeking workshop)
- September 30: Planning Presentations  
*Guest reviewer for planning presentations: Michael Rose*  
Budgeting 101  
*Guest speaker: Casey Steadman, Chief Operating Officer, and Jeff Rutledge, Vice President of Finance, Atlanta History Center.*  
***Due: Team presentations on strategic planning exercise***  
*Read: Genoways and Ireland, chapter 5;*
- October 7: Introduction to Development  
*Guest speaker: Aaron Berger, Alexander Haas Martin and Partners*  
Courting Business and Corporate Sponsors  
*Guest speaker: Kathy Egan, Vice President for Development, AHC;*  
*Read: Genoways/Ireland, chapter 6; Tolles, chapter 9; Paulette V. Machara, “State of Fund Raising: Individual Giving, Trends, and*

- Forecasting,” on e-reserve; Judith Jedlicka, “Business Giving,” on e-reserve
- October 14: Marketing 101  
*Guest speaker: Hillary Hardwick, Vice President of Marketing and Communications*  
 Marketing project assignment description  
*Gordon Jones*  
*Read: Genoways and Ireland, chapter 11; Tolles, chapter 13*
- October 21: Museum Operations and Facilities Management  
*Guest speakers: Jackson McQuigg, Vice President of Properties, and Sean Thorndike, Vice President of Operations*  
*In-class assignment: Operations plan*  
*Read: Tolles, chapter 12, 6, 11, 15*  
***Due: one-page summary of the foundation you chose and why you think it would fund this project***
- October 28: Student presentations and critiques of marketing ideas  
 Preliminary discussions of foundation proposal ideas  
*Guest reviewers for marketing plans: Gordon Jones and Hillary Hardwick*  
***Due: Marketing plan***
- November 4: Human Resources  
*Guest speaker: Casey Steadman*  
*Read: Genoways and Ireland, chapter 7*
- November 11: Foundation proposals: student presentations and critiques  
*Guest reviewer: Gordon Jones*  
***Due: Foundation proposal draft for review***
- November 18: Human Resources: student presentations and critiques  
 Insurance and Risk Management  
***Due: Staffing plan***
- November 25 *No class, Thanksgiving Break*
- December 2: Ethics and Legal Issues in Museums  
 End-of-semester class lunch after class  
*Read: Genoways and Ireland, chapters 10 and 13; Marie Malaro, “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*
- December 9: Final exam day  
***Due: Portfolio with all assignments and portfolio essay***  
 Please turn in to Ann McCleary’s office at UWG (TLC 3211) by 12:30 p.m.