Instructor: Dr. Julia Brock  
Email: jbrock@westga.edu  
*note: please email me through the UWG account, not CourseDen (I’m quicker to respond that way!)

Phone: TLC office—678-839-3087; Center for Public History—678-839-6141  
Office hours: Tuesday, 8:30-10:30, Center for Public History (Ingram Library); Thursday, 12-2, TLC 3210; and by appointment

**Course Description**

This course serves as an introduction to the field of public history. ‘Public history’ is shorthand for a profession that draws upon specific sets of methodologies and skills, and is a way of engaging the past in which the historian is in direct dialogue and partnership with the public. In short, public history puts history to work in the world. Public historians work in museums, historical societies, state and federal government, nonprofits, businesses, archives, preservation offices, arts agencies, cultural resource management firms, universities, and other settings in which the public encounters the past.

In the course, you will complete readings, participate in discussions, and undertake hands-on work that will begin your engagement with the field of public history. By the end of the course, you will be familiar with major debates that engage public historians; the professional workplaces of public historians; new directions in the field; and the ways in which practitioners accomplish their goals of making the past accessible to public audiences and working in partnership with stakeholders.

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Identify and explain key issues and challenges within the field of public history  
2. Identify best practices in collaborative relationships between public historians and stakeholders  
3. Recognize the venues and modes in which public historians work  
4. Analyze primary and secondary sources for their historical content and interpretations  
5. Demonstrate writing skills that reflect persuasive historical arguments based on evidence and proper citation  
6. Perform public history work (archival research, collaborative work, and writing and interpreting for a public audience)

**Course Assignments and Requirements:**

**Course Participation** (20%)  
due weekly  
This class relies upon your ideas and insights as communicated through in-class discussion and reading responses. Though I will lecture on certain subjects, I will use more class time to explore issues in dialogue with you. It is critical, therefore, to engage with reading and exploratory material listed each week.
Participation will be assessed in two ways:

- **In-class participation (10%)**: You will share informed responses to the reading during in-class discussion. This means that in each class meeting you will be expected to contribute commentary and discussion about readings and course content. Each of your voices is essential to critical engagement with the material!

- **Reading responses (10%)**: Each week I will pose questions designed to help you read purposefully—that is, that will direct your attention to particular themes/issues in course material. You will provide short answers to these questions on CourseDen threads that correspond to the week. These answers should reflect direct engagement, drawing out specific points/arguments in the readings as related to the question. There will be no reading responses due during weeks that we read longer monographs, though I will still provide guiding questions.

**Short papers (15%)**

**Due Feb. 1, Feb. 15, March 1**

We will read three monographs (a detailed study about a specific subject) this semester. For each of these, you will write a 2-3 page review based on guidelines given in the course. These are due during before class on Thursday during the week we discuss each respective book. All of these must be turned in to earn a passing grade for the course, and plagiarism on any assignment results in a failing grade.

**Midterm (10%)**

**Due 2/22**

You will complete an in-class midterm exam based on short IDs and an essay question. A bluebook will be required for the exam.

**Site visits (10%)**

**First by Feb. 1; Second by March 8**

In this particular course, the concepts and practices you are learning are much more meaningful when you can see them as implemented in public history settings. You will make two site visits, on your own time, to relevant public history sites of your choice. You can go with a group from the class, and you can also use one of these visits for your site review. I will give you guidelines that help you analyze the interpretation at the site, and you will report back via a CourseDen thread.

**First site visit**: Will be in conjunction with our reading of Andrew Denson’s *Monuments to Absence*, about the public history of Cherokee removal. Please visit one public history site related to indigenous history, using the list below as a guide. Your reflections will make up a part of our discussion.

- McIntosh Preserve, Whitesburg, GA
- Cherokee Removal Camp, Cedartown, GA
- Vann Cherokee Cabin, Cave Spring, GA
- Chieftan’s Museum, Rome, GA
- New Echota historic site, Calhoun, GA
- Vann House, Chatsworth, GA
- Etowah Mounds, Cartersville, GA
Second site visit: Will be in conjunction with our conversation about exhibits. Please visit one museum and choose one exhibit within the museum on which to focus your analysis. Again, I’ll give you guidelines and you will post your reflections on CourseDen. The following is not an exhaustive list and if you have your own ideas for a site visit just make sure and run it by me first. Most of these will require an entrance fee.

- Southeastern Quilt and Textile Museum, Carrollton, GA ($)
- Newnan Coweta Historical Society, Newnan, GA ($)
- Senoia Area Historical Society, Senoia, Georgia (free)
- Rome Area Historical Society, Rome, GA ($)
- Atlanta History Center ($$)
- Center for Civil and Human Rights, Atlanta, GA ($$$)
- National College Football Hall of Fame, Atlanta, GA ($$$)
- Jimmy Carter Presidential Museum, Atlanta, GA ($)
- Breman Jewish Heritage Museum, Atlanta, GA ($)
- Money Museum, Federal Reserve, Atlanta, GA (free)
- Williams Museum of Papermaking, Georgia Tech, Atlanta, GA (free)

Historic site review rough and final draft (20% total, 12% and 8% percent respectively)

Rough draft due March 25; final draft due April 24
During the semester, on your own time, you will visit a historic site and complete a 6-7 page critical review of the site’s interpretation. I will give you detailed guidelines for the review. You will submit first a rough draft and then, once you’ve received my comments, a revised draft.

Final project (25%)
Draft of project due April 26; final project presentations May 8
This semester our class has been “hired” by the Cultural Arts Center in Carrollton to research, write, and design a small exhibit on the history of the Center. As the project has an important purpose, your strong investment in the project is required. You will complete the project in groups, with specific tasks, that include archival research; secondary source reading; oral histories; and consultation with our main contact, Mr. Israel Shasanmi. I have built in time during the semester for you to successfully create a dynamic, well-researched exhibit.

Grade turnaround:

Shorter assignments and assessments will normally be graded within a week after the deadline. Longer assignments may take two weeks to grade. I will keep you updated on my progress!

Make-up policy: Assignments are due on the dates indicated in the course schedule. Failure to turn in assignments on time will result in a “0” for each missed assignment.

***There is no extra credit assigned or accepted in this course.

Grading scale
90%-100% A
80-89 B
70-79 C
60-69 D
0-59 F
Grades are based on student performance and capability. Simply turning in every assignment does not guarantee that a student will receive a “good grade.” To receive a higher grade, a student must demonstrate proficiency in the material. For different students, gaining that proficiency requires different levels of work, because not all students walk into the class with the same aptitude for history. I will give you a rubric for each assignment so that you have clear expectations for how grades are determined. Also, you must turn in every assignment to pass this course.

**Course policies:**

**Course communication**
I will use your UWG email to communicate course news, so please check your email regularly. I will also post any changes to CourseDen content on the CourseDen news feed function. Because the university requires all communication between faculty and students to take place via UWG email, please communicate with me using your UWG--not personal--account. Please do not use CourseDen to email me.

**University policies and academic support**
Please carefully review the following Common Language for all university course syllabi at this link: [UWG’s Common Language for Course Syllabi](#)
It contains important material pertaining to university policies and responsibilities. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, university, and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

**Academic honesty**

***Any form of academic dishonesty (including but not limited to cheating and plagiarism) will result in a failing course grade as well as possible additional action. Full definitions of academic dishonesty and plagiarism are defined in student handbook, so please be familiar with them. Here is a link to the student handbook: [http://www.westga.edu/handbook/](http://www.westga.edu/handbook/)

The University defines plagiarism as: “Includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials such as term papers or other academic materials prepared by a person other than the submitting student.” All of your work should be your own with appropriate citations when you draw from the work of others (including textbooks, website, or another student’s work).

**Disability Act/accessibility for the course**
I am very happy to accommodate all students. Students with ADA-defined disabilities needing academic accommodation should; (1) register with and provide documentation to the UWG [Office of Accessibility Services](#); (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. You can contact to the Office of Accessibility Services at 678-839-6428

**Student Conduct**
Students are obligated to abide by the guidelines detailed in the university catalog. Respect and courtesy are required of all students while in the classroom. The following is also mandatory:
1. No arriving late or leaving early for class meetings (unless you have checked with me in advance). Arriving late or leaving early will count as against your participation grade. Arriving late is defined as arriving after I have begun the course plan for the day. Leaving early is defined as leaving once class has started and is in process. If you habitually arrive late or leave early, you will be asked to leave. Any disruptive behavior will result in your expulsion from the room. If disruptive behavior persists, you will receive a minimum of one grade-letter deduction from your overall grade (depending on the severity of your behavior), as well as possible action.

2. Cell phones, headphones, iPods, and all other electronic devices other than those you use to take notes must be turned off during lectures and individual/group activities. Continued use of these devices during inappropriate times will result in you being tossed from the class. Use of laptops is permissible, but if you are caught using laptops for non-class purposes, you will not be allowed to use a laptop for the remainder of the semester. Also, you may not record any portion of the class. If you have any documentation needs, please let me know.

3. I will use both your UWG email accounts and CourseDen to communicate with you. Please check both regularly.

Important note on changes: I reserve the right to modify this syllabus at any time during the course of the term, particularly regarding the course schedule. If such a modification is substantial, I will reissue a revised syllabus.

Important note on content: This course takes at face value the political nature of the commemoration of the past. History is “usable” in that historic narratives are often put to work for political ends. We are in a moment that is saturated with contests over history. And, we will be discussing this theme regularly. This attention means we also will be covering difficult histories—Indian removal and slavery, for example, and the continued struggle for the recognition of histories forgotten or erased, willfully or otherwise. I expect the classroom to remain a civil place during these discussions, and it is paramount for us to attend to these themes with informed opinions. If you anticipate that this content may be emotionally difficult for you, please do not hesitate to let me know immediately.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics/Assigned Readings/Homework</th>
<th>Major Assignments and Deadlines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>Defining Public History</td>
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<td>Introduction to the course and each other</td>
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<td>1/11</td>
<td>Read before today’s class:</td>
<td>Presence of the Past survey</td>
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<td>• Lyon, Nix, and Shrum, <em>Introduction to Public History</em> (hereafter referred to <em>IPH</em>), chapter 1</td>
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<td>Take the Presence of the Past survey by Wed. night:</td>
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<td>1/16</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>A Public Orientation</td>
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<td>1/18</td>
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<td>NO CLASS: Dr. Brock at Georgia Association of Museums and Galleries</td>
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<td>1/23</td>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Roots of Public History Practice</td>
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<td>1/25</td>
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<td>Meeting our community partner: the Carrollton Cultural Arts Center</td>
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<td>1/30</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Monuments to Absence</td>
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<td>2/6</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>The History of Historical Societies, Filioptism, and Monument Mania</td>
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<td>2/8</td>
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<td>Project workday: Beginning Research</td>
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<td>2/13</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>Dark Tourism and the Troubled Past</td>
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| 2/15   | Guest discussant: Dr. Richard Harker from Historic Oakland Foundation: http://www.oaklandcemetary.com/ | Read before today’s class:  
• Tiya Miles, *Tales from the Haunted South*,  
Short paper for *Tales from the Haunted South* |
| 2/20   | Traces and Whispers: Archives and the Politics of Collecting          | Guest presenter: Prof. Shanee’ Murrain, University Archivist, UWG Special Collections  
Read before today’s class:  
• Cherstin, Lyon, and Nix, *IPH*, chap. 4 |
|        | Week 7                                                                |                                                      |
| 2/22   | CLASS MIDTERM                                                         |                                                      |
| 2/27   | Popular History and Historical Consciousness                          | Read before today’s class:  
• M.J. Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive*, Intro-Chap. 3  
Short Paper for *History Comes Alive* |
| 3/1    | Read before today’s class:                                           |  
• Rymsza-Pawlowska, *History Comes Alive*, Chaps. 4-Conclusion |
| 3/6    | History on Display                                                   | Read before today’s class:  
• Cherstin, Lyon, and Nix, *IPH*, Chap. 5  
Make second site visit before today |
| 3/8    | Read before today’s class:                                           |  
CourseDen reading post |
| 3/13   | The Frozen Past?                                                      | Read before today’s class:  
• Selections from Norman Tyler, *Historic Preservation* (CD)  
CourseDen reading post |
| 3/15   | Read before today’s class:                                           |  
Draft site review Due by Sunday, 3/25, at 5 p.m. |
| 3/20-22| SPRING BREAK                                                          |                                                      |
| 3/27   | Week 12: The Aesthetics of History                                  | Read before today’s class:  
• John Q, “Discursive Memorials: Queer Histories in Atlanta’s Public Spaces,” *Southern Spaces*, February 26, 2010,  
Watch before today’s class:  
• Creative Time presents Kara Walker, “A Subtlety,”  
CourseDen reading post |
| 3/29   | Project workday                                                      |                                                      |
| 4/3 | **Week 13: Digital Public History**  
Read before class:  
| 4/5 | Read before class:  
• Lara Kelland, “Digital Community Engagement Across the Divides,” *History@Work*, 20 April 2016,  
Explore before class:  
• Antioch A.M.E. Digital Archive: antiochamehistory.org/archive  
• Densho: https://densho.org/  
• Remembering Lincoln: http://rememberinglincoln.fords.org/  
• CSI: Dixie: https://csidixie.org/  
• ATLMaps: https://atlmaps.org/  
• Smithsonian Digital Volunteers: https://transcription.si.edu/ | CourseDen reading post  
| 4/10 | **Week 14: Public History and U**  
Read before today’s class:  
Watch before today’s class:  
• Entire panel, “Slavery and Universities Nationally,” Universities and Slavery Conference, 2017:  
| 4/12 | Explore thoroughly before today’s class:  
• Harvard and Slavery: http://www.harvardandslavery.com/  
• Clemson: The Complete Story:  
  https://www.clemson.edu/about/history/taskforce/  
• University of Mississippi Slavery Research Group:  
  http://slaveryresearchgroup.olemiss.edu/  
• Slavery at South Carolina College:  
  http://library.sc.edu/digital/slaverysec/  
• African Americans at Washington and Lee:  
| 4/17-4/19 | **Week 15: Work Week**  
NO CLASS, Dr. Brock at the National Council on Public History conference | Project work reports due by Friday 20 at 5 p.m.  
<p>| 4/24 | Workday | Final site review due at 5 p.m. |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4/26</td>
<td>Draft presentations on final project</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/8</td>
<td>Final Presentations to Carrollton Cultural Arts Center</td>
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