

Office hours in the Center for Public History: Monday, 2-4; Tuesday, 3-5; Thursday 1-4, and other hours by appointment

Class meetings: Tuesdays, 12:30-3 p.m. in TLC 3205. On some days, we'll be meeting with HIST 4400 students in Pafford 204, from 12:30-1:30.

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce graduate students to the theory and practice of public history. While historians have been involved with the public for many years, the practice of public history has become increasingly professionalized since the 1970s, marked by the development of the National Council on Public History (NCPH) and an ever-increasing discussion about the ethics and practices of public history.

The National Council on Public History (NCPH) defines public history as “the many and diverse ways in which history is put to work in the world. In this sense, it is history that is applied to real-world issues. In fact, applied history was a term used synonymously and interchangeably with public history for a number of years. Although public history has gained ascendance in recent years as the preferred nomenclature especially in the academic world, applied history probably remains the more intuitive and self-defining term.” (NCPH website, accessed December 2015)

A previous definition from the NCPH website described public history as "where historians and their various publics collaborate in trying to make the past useful to the public... That is, public history is the conceptualization and practice of historical activities with one's public audience foremost in mind. It generally takes place in settings beyond the traditional classroom. Its practitioners often see themselves as mediators on the one hand between the academic practice of history and non-academics and on the other between the various interests in society that seek to create historical understanding. Public history practitioners include museum professionals, government and business historians, historical consultants, archivists, teachers, cultural resource managers, curators, film and media producers, policy advisors, oral historians, professors and students with public history interests, and many others.”

Working in the field of public history is challenging but extremely rewarding. Public historians are expected to be good historians, proficient in historical research and well-versed in historical scholarship, but also to possess the skills and knowledge of how to present history to a diverse public audience. A growing scholarship on the practice of public history has emerged over the past several decades, providing best practices recommendations on how best to accomplish our goals. This class will assess the scholarship on public history, explore the issues in public history practice, and examine career opportunities in the field while also offering hands-on, practical experience through preparing a grant proposal and completing a “real-world” public history project.

As part of this course, all students are encouraged to join our professional organization, the National Council for Public History, as a student member. Rates are inexpensive for students, and there are many benefits! For more information, please visit <http://ncph.org/about/join-us/>

To make the most of your graduate school training, please read the *Public History Navigator: How to Choose and Thrive in a Graduate Public History Program*, produced by the NCPH Graduate Student Committee. <http://ncph.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Public-History-Navigator-2015-Web.pdf>

This course meets the following Learning Outcomes for the UWG Graduate Program in History:

1: Conduct original historical research

- Conduct original historical research through:
 - the class project

2: Formulate and defend a historical argument in Standard English

- Formulate an argument and express that argument in Standard English through:
 - book review essays

3: To demonstrate knowledge of historiography and its changes over time

- Demonstrate knowledge of the historiography of public history through:
 - book review essays

4: Demonstrate knowledge of the theory and practice of public history

- Demonstrate knowledge of the theory and practice of public history through:
 - Final class project
 - Reflective project essay
 - Georgia Humanities grant proposal

This class will:

- Provide field experience in public history
 - develop skills in public history practice including
 - grant writing
 - project planning and development
 - develop professional skills necessary for public history practice
 - collaborative and teamwork skills
 - public presentations
 - critical thinking and writing
 - engaging community partners
 - challenge students to negotiate challenging issues in public history practice
- Provide opportunities for professional development in the history field
 - Identify the types of employment in the field of public history
 - Prepare a professional resume
 - Participate in discussions about work culture and expectations from seasoned, practicing professionals

Required Readings

Books:

- Adair, Bill, Benjamin Filene and Laura Koloski, *Letting Go? Sharing Authority in a User-Generated World*. Philadelphia: Pew Center for Arts and Heritage, 2011.
- *Burns, Andrea, *From Storefront to Monument: Tracing the Public History of the Black Museum Movement*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013
- Ferguson, Andrew, *Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2007.
- Forni, P. M., *Choosing Civility*. St Martin's Griffin, 2002.
- *Horton, James Oliver and Lois E., *Slavery and Public History: The Tough Stuff of American Memory*. New York: New Press, 2006.
- *Kelman, Ari, *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling over the Memory of Sand Creek*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013.
- *Miles, Tiya, *The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.
- *Rosenzweig, Roy and David Thelen, *Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1998.
- *Stanton, Cathy, *The Lowell Experiment: Public History in a Postindustrial City*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006.

History@Work

Students are also expected to read the National Council on Public History blog "History@Work" on a weekly basis. We will discuss articles on the blog in class each week. Each student will be assigned a week to discuss issues that appeared on the blog with the class. You can access the blog through <http://publichistorycommons.org/>

Course Requirements

Georgia Humanities grant proposal (25 points):

Each student will write a grant proposal for Georgia Humanities. Students will design a project, identify a potential sponsoring organization, and write a grant proposal, complete with humanities scholars and budget. Each grant must meet the guidelines required by Georgia Humanities grant program. Arden Williams, Senior Program Officer at Georgia Humanities, will come to class to talk about the grant program on January 19. For more information on GH and its grant program, visit www.georgiahumanities.org

While this exercise is designed as a "mock" grant proposal, if you envision a project that you would like to undertake or if you are involved with an agency or organization that would like you to develop a grant proposal, you are more than welcome to write a "real" proposal that you could submit to GH for funding.

All students will present their proposals to a class review panel, and they will receive feedback from that panel. Students will submit their proposals on that date for a grade, but all students have the option to revise for a final grade if they so choose to do so. Any revised proposals must be submitted on April 20.

Class project (30 points):

All graduate students will participate in a real-life public history project. We will be completing three projects in class this semester, and each student will be assigned to a team. This assignment will test not only your ability to work and think as public historians and your ability to research and write about history but also provide an opportunity to work collaboratively and share authority with a partnering

organization. All teams will meet with their project sponsors at the beginning of the class and present the final project to those sponsors at the end of the semester.

Each team will develop a schedule to complete this project. All students must meet the schedule and team expectations for the project to be successful. The team will divide up the tasks and responsibilities and all members are expected to pull their weight to complete the project. Communication is key to success. Students are required to meet or communicate with team members outside of class. In addition, all teams/members are required to submit a weekly update about the team's progress on Course Den, no later than each Monday at 12 noon.

At the end of the semester, each student will write a minimum 1000-word essay that

1. describes what work you personally completed for the team,
2. reflects on what you learned about public history through the project, and
3. evaluates *your* performance as a team member.

Students will be evaluated individually for the class project. Project grades will be assessed based on:

- my observations of your work throughout the semester (based on Course Den and other discussions in class)
- *your* project essay
- the quality of the work that *you* performed for the project
- your final presentation of the project

Book responses (20 points)

Students will write reviews on four of the books, each worth 5 points. The reviews should be 1000 words, double-spaced, 12-point font, standard margins, including page numbers, and staple bound. The reviews should include:

- the authors' thesis,
- a discussion about how well s/he or they supported the thesis
- *your* assessment of the authors' contributions to the field of public history.

Students may choose four from the six books indicated on the book list with an asterick. The review must be submitted on the day that we discuss the book. Please note that copies of the paper are expected in class. If you should have computer issues or if you miss class, please submit the assignment via the appropriate drop box on Course Den.

Resume (5 points)

Students will write a resume geared towards employment in the field of public history. Each student will create a resume that is tailored to a particular aspect of public history that you choose (museum educator, curator, historical society director, archivist, historic preservationist, etc). On the designated class day, students will bring five copies of their completed, copy-edited resumes for a collaborative workshop to strengthen those resumes. A hard copy of the revised resume is due on April 20.

Class participation and attendance (20 points):

Students are expected to come to class having done the reading and be prepared to discuss the topics on the class schedule.

Points in this category will be awarded based on the following three criteria:

1. ***Class attendance.*** Because this class only meets once a week and much of what I hope we learn will come through class discussions and guest speakers, excessive absences will lower your final course grade.

2. *Class participation*, including contributing to class discussions and raising issues or questions for discussion
3. *Participation in presentations by guest speakers*, including asking questions to or responding to questions asked by our guest speakers
4. *Leading a class discussion about a book (5 points)*
5. *Leading a weekly discussion about the History@Work blog* <http://publichistorycommons.org/>
6. *Weekly discussions on Course Den*

Course Den

Please note that students are required to utilize Course Den on a regular basis for this class.

1. Course announcements will be posted on Course Den. It is your responsibility to be aware of these announcements.
2. All teams are expected to submit weekly updates on the class project. All students should post an update about their project work for the previous week by Monday at noon.

Other announcements

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to turn in their own work. Adopting someone's words or ideas as your own is a serious violation of academic honesty. If a student turns in any work that is plagiarized from another source (whether a book, article, on-line source, or another student in the class), that student will receive an automatic "F" as the final class grade. The History Department has adopted the American Historical Association's statement on plagiarism. Please visit our website at <http://www.westga.edu/~history/statementonplagiarism.pdf> so that you are familiar with the definition of plagiarism.

Cell Phone Policy: If special circumstances require you to monitor your phone, take a call, or text during class, please let me know at the beginning of class and step outside of the room to use your phone. Otherwise, cell phone should be turned off and not visible during class.

Class Schedule

Readings listed for each class meeting are due on the class day referenced. Additional readings may be assigned. Written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date listed. *This schedule is subject to change.*

- January 12: **Class introduction**
Read: “What is Public History,” accessible at <http://ncph.org/what-is-public-history/about-the-field/>
- January 19: **Public Humanities and Grantwriting**
Guest speaker: Arden Williams, Georgia Humanities Council
Read:
- *Choosing Civility*
 - NCPH Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
<http://www.ncph.org/2006Board/Code%20of%20Ethics%20and%20Professional%20Conduct-Final%20Committee%20Draft.pdf>
 - Georgia Humanities website section on “Grantmaking,” which is available at www.georgiahumanities.org
- January 26: **Class projects; Using History**
Read:
- Ferguson, *Land of Lincoln*
 - Carl Becker, “Everyman His Own Historian,” *American Historical Review* 39 (1934): 219-231[available on JSTOR]
- February 2: **Race and Public History**
Read: James and Lois Horton, *Slavery and Public History*
- February 9: **Difficult Issues in Public History and Sharing Authority**
Read: *Letting Go! Sharing Historical Authority in a User-Generated World*
- February 16: **National Park Service: History and Mission**
Read: *The Lowell Experiment*
- February 23: **Reaching the Public; Heritage Tourism**
Read: *Presence of the Past*
- March 1: **Cultural Resource Management Panel
Museum Site Interpretation**
Read: *The House at Diamond Hill*
- March 8: **The History of Museums**
Read: *From Storefront to Monument: Tracing the Public History of the Black Museum Movement.*

March 15—No class, spring break

- March 22: **Humanities Council Grant Panel Review**
Due:
- Complete copy of your *Humanities Council grant proposal*
 - One-page executive summary of your proposal for the review panel (18 copies)
- March 29 **Resumes, Professionalism and Workplace Culture**
Read:
- Section 2, “Thriving as Public History Graduate Students,” in *The Public History Navigator: How to Choose and Thrive in a Graduate Public History Program*, available at <http://ncph.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Public-History-Navigator-2015-Web.pdf>
- April 5: **Resume workshop**
Read:
- “Public History Employers: What Do They Want?” at <http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2003/0309/0309aha6.cfm?>
 - Tips for Getting A Job in Public History at <http://vimeo.com/113961817>
 - Review other job-seeking resources available at <http://ncph.org/publications-resources/students/>
- Due: Your resume**
- April 12: **Commemoration**
Read: *Misplaced Massacre: Struggling over the Memory of Sand Creek*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013.
- April 19: **Project Workday**
Due:
- **Revised resume (required)**
 - **Revised GH grant (optional)**
- April 26: **Class project presentation**
Due:
1. Class project
 2. Each student’s evaluation of his or her participation in the class project
- August 28: **Optional: Participate in the campus tours by History 4400 class**