

Introduction to Public History

HIS535.040 – Spring 2011

6:00-8:30 Thursday – Ferguson 474

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Office Hours: M & W 9:00-12:00,
1:00-3:00, and by appointment

Course Description

An exploration of the ways in which traditional academic history and public history complement and enrich one another. An introduction to the theory and practice of interpreting history for the public in such areas as historical societies, editing projects, business, libraries, historic preservation projects, museums and archives.

Program Learning Outcomes

The SFA History Department has identified the following Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for all SFA students earning an M.A. degree in History:

1. The student will be able to explain the key issues and developments in at least two historical periods (one per course).
2. The student will be able to identify the main historical works and interpretive debates associated with an event or period.
3. The student will be able to locate, identify, and critically analyze primary sources.
4. The student will be able to research and analyze effectively an issue or topic in writing.
5. The student will be able to present written work in an appropriate academic style, including the proper citation of sources using Chicago Manual of Style (15th or most recent edition).

This section of this course will focus on PLOs 3 and 5.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. The student will summarize and evaluate scholarly monographs and articles in order to demonstrate comprehension of the material and appropriate academic style.
2. The student will process an archival collection and prepare a self-evaluation of the work in order to compare “real world” situations with archival best practices.
3. The student will implement curatorial procedures and prepare a self-evaluation of the work in order to compare “real world” situations with collections management principles.
4. The student will compose two essays using the appropriate academic style to recommend potential historical research opportunities utilizing the respective archival and artifactual materials.
5. The student will transcribe and edit an oral history interview in order to demonstrate the technical and editorial skills necessary to prepare oral histories for use by the public.
6. The student will conduct a historic survey in order to demonstrate proficiency with photographic, GIS, and computer technology as well as develop a plan for future research and preservation.

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Required Texts

Gardner, James B. and Peter S. LaPaglia, eds. *Public History: Essays from the Field*. Rev. ed. Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 2004.

King, Thomas. *Cultural Resources Laws & Practice*. 3rd ed. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2008.

Kyvig, David E. and Myron A. Marty. *Nearby History: Exploring the Past Around You*. 3rd ed. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2010.

Levin, Amy K., ed. *Defining Memory: Local Museums & the Construction of History in America's Changing Communities*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2007.

Rosenzweig, Roy and David Thelen. *The Presence of the Past: Popular Uses of History in American Life*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Tilden, Freeman. *Interpreting Our Heritage*. 4th ed. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

Tyler, Norman, Ted J. Ligibel, and Ilene R. Tyler. *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice*. 2nd ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2009.

Recommended Texts

Longstreth, Richard. *Buildings of Main Street*. Updated edition. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira, 2000.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987.

Suggested Style Guides. Please note the proper History style is the Chicago Manual of Style. Each student is strongly encouraged to review written assignments with Ms. Darlington, the graduate program's writing coach, prior to submission.

Strunk, William Jr. and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York: Longman Pub. Group, 1999.

Truss, Lynne. *Eats Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*. New York: Gotham Books, 2004.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

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Grading Scale

In-Class Participation (20%)	A = 1000-900 points 100%-90%
Critiques (30%)	B = 899-800 points 89.99%-80%
Individual Projects (30%)	C = 799-700 points 79.99%-70%
Group Project (20%)	D = 699-600 points 69.99%-60%
	F = 599—0 points 59.99%-0%

The final grade in the course is determined by the total number of points earned on the assignments and participation (including attendance) according to their listed weights. Final grades will be posted by the deadline provided by the registrar (May 18) – do not ask for them prior to this date. You are also expected to have proficiency in computer usage, if you do not know how to use a particular program, please seek help before your assignments are due. Gross formatting errors may result in a penalization of up to ten percent (10%) of an assignment grade.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all classes and pre-scheduled outside meetings. One absence during the semester is allowed without penalty. After that, five points per absence will be deducted from the final participation grade.

Participation

Each student is expected to contribute to small group and class-wide discussions of assigned readings, projects, videos, handouts, and other materials. Contribution is defined as the demonstration of higher-order thinking skills: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. A student can do this when he/she has developed a dialog with the materials on one's own prior to class discussion. Students should check the course's WebCT page for updated notices, handouts, and deadlines.

Book/Article Critiques

Each student will write a series of three-page critiques during the course of the semester. These critiques will be evaluated using the posted rubric. The critique should not only explain the author's thesis, evidence, and contributions to the public history field, but also show an arrangement of material and statements that highlight the student's evaluation of the work's significance and specific strengths and/or weaknesses. This is to be a critical analysis, not merely a summary or recitation of a few examples from the work. However, when utilizing or referencing specific examples from the work they should be cited correctly.

Here some of the types of questions to be considered. What is the author's thesis and supporting evidence -- their construction and acceptability? What was the monograph and/or article's position within the historiography (at least according to the authors if not from your own perspective)? Who is/are the audience(s) who may find these works to be of value (do not always go for the obvious)? Did each author make a supportable argument for the thesis? How might each work contribute to the field of public history as a whole?

If you are unfamiliar with this process, peruse reviews published in *The Public Historian*, the *American Historical Review*, the *Journal of American History* or any other peer reviewed journal. Be sure to follow the posted guidelines for written submissions. A hard copy of the paper is due at the beginning of class.

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Individual Projects

Transcription Project

Each undergraduate student will transcribe a section of an interview conducted for Cooper Lake State Park in September 2010. Each student will edit another student's transcription. Each student will then make the suggested editorial changes to his/her original transcription. A detailed instruction packet will be provided.

Archival Project

Each student will work five hours a week for two weeks in the East Texas Research Center, Steen Library, SFASU. Students will write a three-page essay summarizing their accomplishments, how this experience developed their understanding of archival principles, and an evaluation of the collection and its processing based on best practices. The report should include a summary and critique of his/her hands-on experience and an analysis of the materials' potential interpretation and contribution to the discussion of history and its relationship with the public. The ETRC is open 8-5 Monday-Friday and 10-5 Saturday. A detailed instruction packet will be provided.

Museum Project

Each student team will work five hours a week for two weeks at Millard's Crossing Historic Village. Students will write a three-page essay summarizing their accomplishments, how this experience developed their understanding of curatorial principles, and an evaluation of the primary sources, and current condition based on best practices. The report should include a summary and critique of his/her hands-on experience and an analysis of the materials' potential interpretation and contribution to the discussion of history and its relationship with the public. Millard's Crossing is open 9-4 Monday-Saturday and 1-4 Sunday. A detailed instruction packet will be provided.

Group Project

Each group will perform a historic assets survey in the Washington Square and Zion Hill Historic Overlay Districts. Each group will be responsible for completing a survey form, taking digital photographs, and recording GIS data for each structure. Each group's ten-page final report will summarize and evaluate the individual historic assets and the neighborhood as a whole within the appropriate historic contexts as well as suggest future preservation and interpretation opportunities. Each member of the group will submit an individual two-page reflection of the process and skills acquired. A detailed instruction sheet will be provided.

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Notifications

Academic Integrity (A-9.1)

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

Withheld Grades (Semester Grades Policy, A-54)

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Students with Disabilities

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to <http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/>.

Non-discrimination

Each student will be free of discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, sexual orientation, veteran status, or physical appearance.

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Course Calendar

Week 1 (January 20) – Introduction

Week 2 (January 27) – What is Public History? Readings: *The Presence of the Past*, “Professional Historians and the Challenge of Redefinition” and “Becoming a Public Historian” in *Public History*, Robert Kelley, “Public History: Its Origins, Nature, and Prospects” and Marianne Babal, “Sticky History: Connecting Historians with the Public” in *The Public Historian*, Constance Schulz, Page Putnam Miller, Aaron Mars, and Kevin Allen, “Careers for Students of History,” <http://www.historians.org/pubs/careers/index.htm>, The Working Group on Evaluating Public History Scholarship (AHA, NCPH, OAH), “Tenure, Promotion, and the Publicly Engaged Academic Historian,” (and supporting white paper), http://www.oah.org/news/20100628_publichistorytenure.html. *Presence of the Past* critique due.

Week 3 (February 3) – Archives 1

Week 4 (February 10) – Archives 2 – Transcription due for editing

Week 5 (February 17) – Museums 1 – Transcription due for revisions

Week 6 (February 24) – Museums 2 – Final transcript due

Week 7 (March 3) – Interpretation & Education

Week 8 (March 10) – Primary Sources & Digitization – Archival or Museum project due

----- (March 17) – Spring Break

Week 9 (March 24) – Historic Preservation 1

Week 10 (March 31) - Historic Preservation 2 – Archival or Museum project due

Week 11 (April 7) – National Council on Public History Annual Conference, Pensacola, FL

Week 12 (April 14) – Grants & Training

----- (April 21) – Easter Break

Week 13 (April 28) – Cultural Resources Management

Week 14 (May 5) – Cultural Resources Management

Week 15 (May 12) – Finals Week, Group Project due.