



## **HIS/IAR 633 – COMMUNITY HISTORY PRACTICUM**

### **Torren L. Gatson - FALL 2020**

---

LOCATION: BRYAN BUILDING #110  
OFFICE HOURS: BY APPOINTMENT  
EMAIL: [tlgatson@uncg.edu](mailto:tlgatson@uncg.edu)

TIME: MONDAY 2:00-4:50PM  
OFFICE: MHRA 2119  
PHONE: (302) 463-8533

---

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed to facilitate hands-on interactive learning, where you will work collaboratively with each other and with community partners as you conduct your public history project to remember the legacy of the Historic Magnolia house and unveil your exhibition highlighting the sites history and importance to the city of Greensboro. Over the course of the semester, you will lead an impactful unveiling ceremony for the local community and present your exhibition to public. You will learn by doing, taking the time to both practice new skills and reflect on the connections between this public history project and your graduate courses in a way that helps you absorb the principles you have learned at UNCG and encapsulates the ideology of community engagement.

### **Course Promises**

As an intentional facilitator of community engaged education, some of you have previous experience with community engaged projects and all of you will work on something similar in the future. This often generates the question(s) “So what is different about this practicum class” – “how does this project stand apart from your other jobs, internships, and class projects?”

What makes this project different is that it intentionally connects your project work to what you have studied in other classes such as your U.S. History, Practice of Public History, Museum and Historic Site Interpretation, Museum Education, Historic Preservation, and Museum Curatorship classes. We will focus on the process of designing, developing and implementing a public history project. In particular, this course will train you in the following ways:

- to consider the connections between public history theory and practice,
- to practice building relationships with community partners,
- to collaborate with and support your fellow team members and listen to their feedback with an open mind,
- to increase your cultural competency as you work with a diverse set of community members and stakeholders,
- to build your project planning skills (setting a calendar, budgeting, task management, communication),

- to put together the historic marker application, exhibition and programming in a way that engages the audience and encourages participatory approaches,
- to reach out to individuals and organizations through marketing and communication with the media,
- to create programming that connect to the humanities themes of the exhibit and are engaging to audience members, and,
- to evaluate your audiences through surveys and shadowing and to summarize what you find.

## **Teaching Methods and Service Learning**

*Why does service learning matter?* Studies show that service learning classes such as Community History Practicum succeed because they: 1) offer a chance for students to assess how theories play out in real-world settings, 2) improve job skills such as empathy, project planning, and working in a team, and 3) provides more student ownership of the learning process. Service learning is multi-directional and comes from students' own initiatives and reflections, facilitation by the professor, and interactions with peers and community partners. To make this process successful, each person involved in the service learning class has certain responsibilities to uphold.

**As graduate students,** You are the captain of your own learning. You will identify areas to strengthen and then will put effort into improving those areas. Think about the tasks you do in this course as “*on the job*” learning opportunities rather than merely task items on a checklist. Understanding that if and when things go wrong, the main purpose lies in learning while also serving the community. To that end, you will write reflection pieces throughout the class in order to consciously evaluate your progress. Finally, as students you will build a supportive environment with your classmates.

**The primary responsibility of the instructor** in this class lies in facilitating learning by designing and implementing the service experience (directing the project, crafting the schedule and syllabus, and evaluating student work). Direct feedback will be given on all your efforts in designing the exhibit, working with community partners, and collaborating with peers. Finally, the instructor will respond to any major issues that arise among students or with community partners to work toward a positive experience for everyone involved.

**The community partners** (in this case The Historic Magnolia House, Spartan Printing, Local schools for consultation on educational materials and UNCG history faculty) will offer constructive feedback and support over the course of the project, modeling the approaches of professionals and experts in their fields. The instructor will mediate between students and community partners if issues arise.

## EXPERIENCES, PROJECTS & EVALUATION

You must hand in each assignment on time and I will deduct a third of a grade for each 24 hours past the deadline. Unless you have a specific accommodation from the [Office of Accessibility Resources and Services](#), I will only grant extensions in advance of the due date. That said, contact me if you sense that you will not meet the deadline. I will post the grades to Blackboard, and if you see a discrepancy, please contact me immediately.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are responsible for having a keen awareness of how the University defines plagiarism. According to the university: Intentionally or knowingly “representing the words of another, as one's own in any academic exercise.”<sup>1</sup> Please read the university's full statement. [Academic Integrity Policy](#) for further information. All sources (books, articles, documents, etc.) used in any paper or assignment must be properly cited or will be considered plagiarism. Any instance of plagiarism will receive a zero and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for appropriate action, including suspension or expulsion from the University.

## COVID-19

As UNCG returns to face-to-face course offerings in fall 2020, the campus community must recognize and address concerns about physical and emotional safety. As such, all students, faculty, and staff are required to uphold UNCG's culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. Such actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- [Wearing a face covering that covers both nose and mouth](#)
- Observing [social distance](#) in the classroom
- Engaging in proper hand washing hygiene when possible
- [Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19](#)
- Staying home if you are ill
- Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill.

If necessary, the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) has granted accommodations regarding wearing face coverings, students should contact their instructors to develop appropriate alternatives to class participation and/or activities as needed. Instructors or the student may also contact [OARS](#) (336.334.5440) who, in consultation with Student Health Services, will review requests for accommodations.

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the university, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling [336-334-5874](#),

visiting the website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/> or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting <https://shs.uncg.edu/srp> or reaching out to [recovery@uncg.edu](mailto:recovery@uncg.edu)

### **Guidelines for Virtual Meetings**

Virtual learning (i.e. Zoom, WebEx, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams etc.) may be necessary this semester for a host of reasons (among them COVID-19). That being said, below are a few short guidelines for how this class will operate during any distance learning:

- All participants on the call should be in a learning environment ready to engage (i.e. No one should be in the bed, or in a place not associated with classroom learning)
- All students must be visible at their computer ready to engage in class discussion or lecture
- visual disruptions should be brief so that I am able to see as well as hear your participation, you may need to briefly step away or tend to personal matters.
- Unless you are prompted to speak, please keep your microphone muted as to limit interference and disruption for your other colleagues.
- If you lose service or you are dropped from the call, it is your responsibility to immediately rejoin the class or immediately email the professor or record
- Be prompt to class, arriving before the official start of class (i.e. if class starts at 2:00pm please be in the call at least five minutes earlier)

## **ACCESSIBILITY & RESOURCES**

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro seeks to promote meaningful access to educational opportunities for all students. Should you have any needs or questions related to disability issues, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS), located in the Elliot University Center, #215. As a publicly engaged scholar I am committed to making this course as accessible as possible to all of the students in it.

For assistance with writing assignments, contact the UNCG Writing Center, where staff members hold appointments both in person and via instant-messaging. The Digital Media Commons and the Digital ACT Studio in Jackson Library provide help with multimedia projects and UNCG's Speaking Center offers a great resource for building public, small-group or individual speaking skills.

**Grade Scale:** A+ 97-100 / A 93-96 / A- 90-92 / B+ 87-89 / B 83-86 / B- 80-82 / C+ 77-79 / C 73-76 / F 72 and below

## **Course Requirements**

### **Class Participation – 20%**

Participation makes up a central part of this practicum course. This grade will assess your participation in the project planning sessions and the ways that you create a supportive and positive work environment. Attendance in class is mandatory and if you have any conflicts because of religious holidays, family emergencies or health issues, I must know immediately. You have no later than the day of class to request an excused absence and arrange for making up work as needed (unless expressly granted by me). Your participation grade also includes an evaluation and assessment of the amount of work that you put into the group project.

### **Reflection Essay – 30% – ( Due November 23)**

You will document all of your experiences gained over the course of the semester and produce a 7 page reflection essay detailing how this project and involvement with the community and historical elements have impacted your understanding of the field. Your essay must be a reflection of three components: 1) a description of what you did this semester and your group; 2) an analysis of how your work connected to what you've learned in your MA in History/Museum Studies degree; and 3) a discussion of how this applies to your future career. This essay offers you the chance to step back and discuss what you have taken away from any successes or breakthroughs, collaborations with peers or community partners, and responses to challenging situations.

### **Final Project Portfolio – 30% – Due November 23 (will discuss in detail on first day)**

You will submit a final project portfolio at the end of the semester that will summarize the work that you did and the final deliverables that you created. Using that information and my own observations of the project work, I will give you a final project grade. Please note that the quality of a project does not lie in only the final project, but in the creativity, thoughtfulness and rigor that you put into each step along the way. The portfolio should include:

- The group plan your team created at the beginning of the semester
- Deliverables (flyers/photographs of the events; final drafts of the exhibit with photographs etc...)
- A 2 page double-spaced impact statement in which you describe the impact of your part of the project on the community.

### **Evaluation – 20% – Due November 23**

Finally, you will conduct thorough multi-level evaluations (of the event, community partners, and lastly your teammates) Evaluating the event exhibit/grand means an assessment of the effectiveness of the programming, the audience experience of the exhibit, the experience of attendees, or the community partners' feedback on the project. Evaluating Peers assessments will be done individually within each group. I will provide further guidance during class.

## **Selected Reading**

Over the course of this semester, I may assign readings, AT MY DISCRETION (which will be provided to you) to help you as you prepare the exhibit for installation and unveiling. The readings this semester will cover aspects marketing and outreach, programming, and evaluating audiences, and education and outreach. The readings include the following, which one or two may have been covered in other classes:

*The Museum Educator's Manual: Educators Share Successful Techniques (American Association for State and Local History) Second Edition, 2017.*

Beverly Serrell, *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach second edition, 2015*

Sheldon Wolf, *A Practical Guide to Fundraising for Small Museums: Maximizing the Marketing-Development Connection. 2018*

Jaclyn Spainhour, *Museums and Millennials: Engaging the Coveted Patron Generation, 2019.*  
Archibald, Robert. "Common Ground." In *A Place to Remember: Using History to Build Community* (1999): 87-108.

Kathy McLean, *Planning for People in Museum Exhibitions.*

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

**Note\*** Any date labeled **Class Meeting**, may be a meeting in class but also may be prescribed for onsite work if necessary by persons **who have acknowledged and agreed to visiting the Magnolia House during the COIVD era if deemed necessary**. Also, as of now the grand opening is not scheduled on the calendar, but will be once the semester begins. Below is the main schedule for the entire class. Each small group will also develop a plan for their work in the semester, which they will use as well.

**August 24<sup>th</sup>** – **First** class meeting, thorough review of syllabus and group placement

**August 31<sup>st</sup>** – Groups produce semester deliverable workplan (up to opening event whether physical or virtual)

**September 7<sup>th</sup> Labor Day NO CLASS**

**September 14<sup>th</sup>**- Class Meeting

**September 21<sup>st</sup>**- Class Meeting

**September 28<sup>th</sup>**- Instillation and Fabrication Review with Class (provide insight on design ideas)

**October 5<sup>th</sup>**- Class Meeting

**October 12<sup>th</sup>**- Class Meeting

**October 19<sup>th</sup>**- Program on Historic Magnolia (TBD by the events committee)

**October 26<sup>th</sup>**- Education Committee review of Lesson (Plan for feedback from colleagues)

**November 2<sup>nd</sup>**- Class Meeting

**November 9<sup>th</sup>**- Program on Historic Magnolia (TBD by the events committee)

**November 16<sup>th</sup>**- Class Meeting

**November 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Evaluations, project portfolio's and reflection essay due

**\*\*Please note, this syllabus is subject to change in any manner at any time at the full discretion of the professor of record. \*\***

**If UNCG has any planned or unforeseen change in semester schedule due to COVID-19, I will monitor and Adjust this course schedule accordingly if necessary.**