

PUBLIC HISTORY CAPSTONE I FALL 2022

UNCG HIS 720

THURSDAYS, 2:00-4:50

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CLASSROOM: PUBLIC HISTORY LAB, 536 HIGHLAND AVE, UNCG CAMPUS

OFFICE HOURS (VIRTUAL AND IN PERSON): THURS, 11:30-1:30

SIGN UP IN ADVANCE TO GUARANTEE A SPOT: [GO.UNCG.EDU/TALKWITHDRPARSONS](https://go.uncg.edu/talkwithdrparsons)

IN PERSON LOCATION: MHRA 2137 / VIRTUAL LOCATION: [GO.UNCG.EDU/ZOOM](https://go.uncg.edu/zoom)

[CLICK HERE FOR THE COURSE DESCRIPTION](#)

OVERVIEW OF COURSE

In your classes and internships with the History/Museum Studies program, you have studied major principles and best practices of public history, strengthened your historical research skills, expanded your knowledge of the historiography of United States history and improved your skills in writing, public presentation, and project planning. The capstone classes HIS 720 and 721 offer you the opportunity to draw upon the knowledge you gained during your coursework, learn new areas of study, and put theory into practice with a project that serves a community need. You will synthesize your understanding of the public history and museum studies disciplines, while learning new professional skills.

In the first semester of the capstone, HIS 720, you will lay the foundation for the community project and will begin working on it. In Weeks 1-5, you will learn about your potential site, research the professional skills you will need, and finally, create a work plan with your community partner. This work will build your project management skills and will also lay the groundwork for a successful project. During Weeks 6-8, you will begin working on the project: conducting primary research and reviewing the secondary literature. Weeks 9-12 follow in which you will draft an annotated bibliography, create preliminary designs, and implement best practices in public history. Finally, in Weeks 13-15 you will get feedback from your community partners and the class and will finalize your Fall 2022 deliverables. Next semester, in HIS 721, you will design, implement, and/or fabricate the project and will document the research that you have done along the way.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

During HIS 720, you will strengthen your history and museum studies skills in the following ways:

- **by communicating with your community partner** to identify the needs of the institution and the audience,

- **by improving your project management skills** as you work independently on a long-term project,
- **by modeling best practices in public history**, particularly in research and preliminary design work,
- **by identifying and evaluating bodies of academic and public history work** that tell the history of your subject,
- **by conducting research in relevant primary sources** that inform your narrative and that you can use in your project, and,
- **by creating clear and concise deliverables** that document how you wove together the interests of your community partner and audience, the primary and secondary source research you conducted, and the preliminary plan of the project.

CORE ELEMENTS OF CAPSTONE PROJECTS

- An original contribution (this topic has not been covered before in this manner)
- Rigorous research – either historical research or museum studies research (i.e., evaluations, audience interviews)
- Involves interpreting research to a broader audience
- Done in collaboration with a community partner (a museum, local institution, library, archive, school)
- Builds at least two concrete public history skills (i.e., exhibit design, evaluation, programming)
- UNCG will provide a minimum of \$150, towards the cost of travel, research, or the project.

TEACHING METHODS

In the capstone course, you as students have as much, if not more, influence over what you learn and the skills that you build as the professor and community partner do. As the instructor of the course, I facilitate the process by establishing basic deadlines and goals, facilitating class discussions, and leading feedback sessions. I also offer comments on the drafts created throughout the semester, with a focus on connecting what you have learned in your coursework to this practical experience. Most work occurs outside of the classroom setting where you control how you conduct your research, writing, collaboration with community partners, and project planning. This schedule assumes that you will also be communicating with your community partner

approximately no less than once every two weeks. It is your responsibility to communicate regularly with your community partner and to meet with them at the agreed-upon times.

The purpose of the capstone is two-fold: a product that serves the community and the space for you to hone your skills as a public historian. This is your chance to step outside of your comfort zone and try new things. The goal is not perfection; the goal is learning. As a result, class sessions will include not just time for peer review, but also time for reflection on your experiences.

ASSIGNMENTS, ASSESSMENTS, & GRADING POLICY

To build these skills, you will engage in the experiences and projects listed below. 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 Canvas, and if you see a discrepancy, please contact me immediately. N.B. There are no “Required Readings,” per se. You will determine your own readings based on your research needs and I may assign a few readings for homework as needed.

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

Class Participation – 5%

I base the participation grade on your engagement with in-person and online group discussions and on the quality of the reflections that you do in class. Attendance is mandatory and if you have any conflicts because of religious holidays, family emergencies, or health issues, please contact me as soon as possible and no later than the day of class to request an excused absence and arrange for making up that work.

Homework Assignments – 20%

Assigned Throughout Semester

Throughout the semester, I will give assignments such as reflection pieces, primary source evaluation, and peer evaluations. I will post these on Canvas, so please check regularly.

Initial Capstone Work Plan, Contract & Experiential Learning Agreement – 15% Due: September 15th

By September 15th you will need to have finalized your community partner, the type of project, and a plan for the capstone. You will create a project work plan that will include an overview of the project, potential community partners, purpose, the deliverables for Fall and Spring semesters, and other logistical questions to get you started. Your capstone project is like a trip, and this work plan is your map. You may deviate from this work plan in the Fall semester, but it should lay out the basic direction of the project and

the resources you have. Your project will inevitably change, and you will submit a revised work plan at the end of the semester that reflects what you did in the Fall and your plan for the Spring. You will also fill out and sign a contract and experiential learning agreement with your community partner supervisor.

Evaluation from Community Partner – 10%

Due via Canvas: December 1

The community partner supervisor will fill out an evaluation form that will assess your communication style, attention to detail, research skills, implementation of project, and professionalism. If issues arise with the community partner supervisor, Dr. Parsons will work with the student to find an alternative assessment method.

Annotated Bibliography – 15%

Rough Draft Due via Canvas and Hardcopy: November 10

Final Due via Canvas: December 1

Please submit an annotated bibliography of primary and secondary research that will form the basis of your interpretation for your project.

Project Portfolio – 30%

Rough Draft Due via Canvas and Hardcopy: November 10

Final Draft Due via Canvas: December 1

Because these capstone projects are tied to community organizations that have different needs and requirements, the final project is an individualized portfolio decided upon by each student and the professor no later than September 15th and detailed in the work plan. The grade for this project will assess the four areas listed below and how well you incorporated peer review, self-evaluation, and instructor comments into the final draft. I will grade the portfolio based on the following rubric:

- the project has a clear purpose and meets a community need,
- modeling best practices in public history, particularly in preliminary design work (identifying an audience, articulating a big idea, and crafting an interpretation and design plan that engages your audience),
- identifying and evaluating bodies of academic and public history work that tell the history of your subject (does your project fill a gap, build upon a well-documented or burgeoning field, make an intervention, take up a hotly debated topic, etc.),
- articulating how your project builds upon and contributes to bodies of academic and public history work already done on your topic,
- identifying and analyzing relevant primary sources that inform your narrative and that you can use in your project, and,
- quality of the presentation of the work.

How will you document these things? Specific ideas include: research memos, preliminary design plans, grant narratives, interpretive plan, a walk-through of an exhibit or public program, draft docent training guides, and/or a collections review. These are all common professional documents found in the field.

Example: Your community partner would like a draft video script by December. Your portfolio due to me might include: 1) a footnoted draft video script, and 2) a 3-page memo on how your project addresses the need of a community, models best practices in public history, and fits with other historical works.

Revised Capstone Work Plan – 5%

Due: December 1st

Edit your work plan from the beginning of the semester to reflect the work you did in the Fall semester and the work you will do in Spring 2023. Most likely, your deliverables and schedule will change, and this is an excellent chance to check in with your community partner about what the plan is for the second half of the capstone. If nothing changes, that is ok; you may keep the work plan significantly the same.

COMMUNICATION RESPONSE

The faculty member will respond to emails within 48 hours on Monday to Thursday. Emails received Friday through Sunday will be responded to the following Monday. For time-sensitive issues, please text or call at 217.255.2399.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

UNCG is located on the traditional lands of the Catawba, Keyauwee, and Saura Nations. UNCG and the City of Greensboro are home to a vibrant Native community connected by the Native American Student Association (NASA) at UNCG and the Guilford Native American Association. The state of North Carolina is home to many Native Nations, including the Coharie, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, the Haliwa-Saponi, the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, the Meherrin, the Sappony, the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, the Tuscarora Nation of North Carolina, and the Waccamaw Siouan. Let us venture to honor them with our work together.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

By submitting an assignment, each student is acknowledging their understanding and commitment to the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work for the course. Refer to the following URL: <https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/>.

ACCOMMODATIONS & RESOURCES

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. If you encounter any barriers to full participation in this course due to the impact of a disability/condition impacting a major life activity, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS). OARS will engage students in an interactive process to determine the need for any reasonable accommodations. Connect quickly via this brief [Welcome Form](#). Upon receipt, OARS will contact you to schedule a convenient, virtual consultation. You may also request a

consultation by calling 336-334-5440, emailing oars@uncg.edu, or walking into the OARS suite in 215, EUC. Additional OARS info may be found at <https://oars.uncg.edu/>.

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 provides help with multimedia projects and UNCG's Speaking Center offers a great resource for building public speaking skills.

Covid Statement from University

As we return for Fall 2022, all students, faculty, and staff and all visitors to campus are required to uphold UNCG's culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. While face-coverings are optional in most areas on campus, individuals are encouraged to wear masks. All individuals and visitors to campus are asked to follow the following actions:

- Engaging in proper hand-washing hygiene.
- Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19.
- Staying home when 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.
- Completing a self-report when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, testing positive for COVID-19, or being identified as a close contact of someone who tested positive.
- Staying informed about the University's policies and announcements via the COVID-19 website.

Students who are ill, quarantining, or isolating should not attend in-person class meetings, but should instead contact their instructor(s) so alternative arrangements for learning and the submission of assignments can be made where possible. As we continue to manage COVID-19 on our campus, we are following the lead of the local health department and we will adjust our plans to balance student success, instructional requirements, and the hallmarks of the collegiate experience with the safety and wellbeing of our campus community.

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTIONS

August 18th – Introductions - Class Meeting

August 25th – No Meeting

WEEKS 3-5: PLANNING

September 1st – Class Meeting - Draft Initial Work Plans Due

September 8th – No Meeting

September 15th – No Meeting - Work Plans, Contract, & Experiential Learning Agreements Due

WEEKS 6-8: INITIAL RESEARCH & DESIGN

September 22nd – Class Meeting

September 29th – No Class Meeting

October 6th – No Class Meeting

WEEKS 9-12: BEGIN DRAFTING

October 13th – Class Meeting

October 20th – No Class Meeting - HIS 690 Internship Presentations via Zoom

October 27th – Class Meeting

November 3rd – No Class Meeting – Rough Draft of Portfolio Due

WEEKS 13-15: FEEDBACK AND FINALIZE

November 10th – Class Meeting

November 17th – No Class Meeting – Revised Portfolio Due and Submitted to Partners for Feedback

December 1st – Class Meeting – Final Portfolio Due

This syllabus is subject to change.