

## PUBLIC HISTORY CAPSTONE II SPRING 2015

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UNCG HIS 721  
DR. ANNE E. PARSONS  
OFFICE: MHRA, #2112

MONDAYS, 6:30-9:20 – MHRA 1209  
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OFFICE HOURS: THURSDAYS, 1:00-3:00

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### OVERVIEW OF COURSE

In both your classes and internships with the 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 Museum Studies capstone classes HIS 720 and 721 offer you the opportunity to bring together all of what you have learned and apply it toward a public history project of your own creation. The independent nature of this project will offer you the opportunity to compassionately practice self-confidence in the face of doubt and uncertainty and patience and endurance as you complete a long-term project.

In this second semester of the capstone, HIS 721, you will complete your public project by working with your community partner, developing materials based on primary and/or secondary resources, and finding innovative ways to engage your audience. You will also incorporate the suggestions of your community partner as well as the instructor and the other students of this class. At the end of the semester, you will present your projects to the History Department at the end of semester conference and will submit portfolios documenting your work to the instructor.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

During HIS 721, you will strengthen your historical skills in the following ways:

- **communicating and working with your community partner** as you plan out the components of your project,
- **modeling best practices in public history as you develop detailed materials for your project**, such as conveying a main idea and purpose and crafting an interpretive plan that engages your audience,
- **identifying, analyzing, and using relevant primary and secondary sources** upon which you base your narrative, and **properly citing your work** by footnoting your final materials, and,
- **by presenting your work** in public programs, at the department conference, and in a professionally put together portfolio.

## **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 does. As the instructor of the course, I facilitate the research and writing process by insuring that you have set deadlines and goals and by facilitating class discussions and peer reviews. I will also offer comments on the drafts created throughout the semester and am available to offer any other edits you request. Beyond that, the majority of the work will occur outside of the classroom setting where you will control how you conduct your research, writing, collaboration with community partners, and project planning. The primary purpose of this capstone project lies not just in an end product that serves the community. The other purpose of this class is that you hone your skills as a public historian by taking steps outside of your comfort zone and trying new things to learn from them. As a result, class sessions will include not just time for peer review on the content of the work but also time for reflection on your experiences as you do long-term research-driven public history projects.

## **EXPERIENCES, ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION**

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 Blackboard, and if you see a discrepancy, please contact me immediately.

**Grade 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.

### **In-Class Participation, Self-Reflection and Peer Review – 25%**

Participation makes up a central part of this course, as the classroom is an important place for discussing the research process and the successes and challenges that arise with it. I will base the participation grade on the quality of your engagement in discussions and small-group work and on short self-reflections that you will complete in class. Finally, evaluations of your work play an important role as well. Each student will present his/her project to their community partners, to the class and to the instructor at least one time throughout the semester and will give feedback to the other students. The participation grade includes the quality of the feedback that you provide and how well you listen to the feedback given.

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.

### **Final Project Portfolio – 60%**

Because these capstone projects are tied to community organizations that have different needs and requirements, the final project is an individualized portfolio documenting what you have done. Please include the final materials of what you have created (includes: exhibit layout plans and text, final video cuts, lesson plans from travelling trunks, detailed design plans, links to mobile apps, public programming outlines, historic interpretation guides, gallery guides, etc.).

For all sections where you provide historical narratives (exhibit text, video scripts, etc.), please provide footnoted citations for your work to document what sources you have used to you're your claims. Finally, the instructor will distribute an evaluation form to your community partner prior to the end of the semester, which will assess how well you worked with that institution.

N.B. If your project was one that did not include a contributions section in Fall 2014, it is due this semester. Please include a 3-5 page short essay that documents how your project added to academic, public and/or community projects on your subject. See me if you have questions.

The grade for this project will assess the areas listed below and how well you incorporated peer, instructor, and community partner comments into the final draft. I will grade the capstone project based on the following criteria:

- communicating and working with your community partner as you plan out the components of your project (determined by the evaluation form),
- modeling best practices in public history as you develop detailed materials for your project, such as conveying a main idea and purpose and crafting an interpretive plan that engages your audience, and,
- identifying, analyzing, and using relevant primary and secondary sources upon which you base your narrative, and properly citing your work by footnoting your final materials.

**Final Project Presentation – 15%**  
**April 17<sup>th</sup>**

At the end of the semester, you will publicly present your project to the History Department at its graduate student conference.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro greatly values integrity in the work of its students. You must appropriately cite any information that you use from your sources and you must submit work that you yourself have written or created. Copying the work of others and passing it off as your own (known as plagiarizing) is taken very seriously and will be handled by the university administration. You can read more about the policy at: [academicintegrity.uncg.edu](http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu).

## **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 an instructor, I am committed to making this course accessible to all of the students in it, and will work with OARS to accommodate your requests. N.B. You do not need to disclose details about your disability to me in order to receive accommodations.

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 speaking skills.

## **CLASS MEETINGS**

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**January 12<sup>th</sup> – Introductions & Review of Schedules**

**Due: January 19<sup>th</sup> Final Schedule of Semester, Including Dates for at Least One Rough Draft Review by the Instructor, One Draft Review by the Community Partner, and One Peer Review.**

**February 2<sup>nd</sup> – 2 Peer Reviews**

**February 23<sup>rd</sup> – 2 Peer Reviews**

**March 16<sup>th</sup> – 2 Peer Reviews**

**April 6<sup>th</sup> – 2 Peer Reviews**

**April 17<sup>th</sup> – Public Presentations at Graduate Student Conference**

**April 28<sup>th</sup> – No Class, Final Portfolios Due in Hardcopy by 5:00 PM**

N.B. Please see me if any of these dates or deadlines conflict with your community partner's expectations.

This syllabus is subject to change.