

## PUBLIC HISTORY CAPSTONE II SPRING 2019

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UNCG HIS 721  
DR. TORREN GATSON  
OFFICE: MHRA, #2112

WED., 3:30-6:20 – MHRA 3207 OR PH LAB  
EMAIL: TLGATSON@UNCG.EDU  
OFFICE HOURS: BY APPOINTMENT

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### OVERVIEW OF COURSE

In both your classes and internships with the MA in 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 the United States, and improved your skills in writing, public presentation, and project planning. The Museum Studies concentration's 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 practice patience and endurance as you complete a long-term project that serves the community.

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 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 the class. Please note that the conversations among the students in the class are confidential. Throughout the semester, you will practice self-reflection about what you are learning and at the end of the class, you will present your projects to the History Department at the Graduate History Conference (April 26<sup>th</sup>) 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 interpreting the history in a way 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 when appropriate, 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 the class and troubleshooting issues that arise. I will also offer comments on the drafts you create throughout the semester. 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 intention 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. As a result, the class will include peer review on the content of the work and also opportunities for self-reflection about what you are learning and how it will relate to your public history career.

## **WEEKLY WRITE-ON-SITE SESSIONS**

This semester, we will not hold traditional classes as we did in HIS 720. Instead, each week, we will hold a write-on-site session – an informal work session that will include time for: peer review of each other’s work; troubleshooting as a group; meeting with me individually; and just plain sitting and working on your projects. This will also be a good time for us to schedule digital design workshops on topics such as Illustrator, Publisher, audio/video editing, graphic design, and so on. I will provide coffee/tea and we will rotate bringing snacks to sustain us. The intention of this write-on-site model is that it will build in scheduled time for your capstone project each week even in the midst of your busy lives. It will also make it easier for you and I to communicate throughout the semester. For the day you share your work, please bring hardcopies as peer review will be critical for the remained of your academic career.

## **EXPERIENCES, ASSIGNMENTS & EVALUATION**

Throughout this class, you will engage in the experiences and assignments 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.

## **UNCG History Conference and Capstone Presentation**

Each Spring, second year master students are required to present their capstone projects at the department of histories annual Graduate History Conference. You have the option to either present a poster presentation or an oral/written presentation. **This is a required mandate of the capstone course.**

**Self-Reflections – 10%**

Self-reflection presents excellent opportunity to document growth, progress, shortcomings and ultimately successes throughout this year long two-part course. You will write an essay that details your maturation as a budding public historian entering the professional world. While you will focus primarily on this semester and the creation of the final products, you may also discuss last semester. This will be uploaded to your professional website.

### **Final Project Portfolio – 60%**

**April 30<sup>th</sup>**

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, 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 back up 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. If your project was one that did not include a contributions section in Fall 2017, it is due this semester. 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 – 30%**

**April 26<sup>th</sup>**

At the end of the semester, you will publicly present your project to the department at its graduate student conference. This graded presentation will be included in your final grade.

## **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**

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](#), [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 MEETING SCHEDULE**

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January 16<sup>th</sup> – Introduction to the course & Individual Meetings with Dr. Gatson

January 30<sup>th</sup> – Work-on-Site Session at PH Lab

February 13<sup>th</sup> – Work-on-Site Session at PH Lab

February 27<sup>th</sup> – Preparing Poster Presentations for UNCG History Conference and NCPH

March 6<sup>th</sup> – Spring Break – Relax!

March 13<sup>th</sup> – Poster Presentations for UNCG History Conference and NCPH

March 27<sup>th</sup> – No Class because of NCPH annual conference

April 3<sup>rd</sup> – Work-on-Site Session at PH Lab

April 10<sup>th</sup> – Work-on-Site Session at PH Lab

April 17<sup>th</sup> – No Meeting (Week of Aycock & NCPH)

April 24<sup>rd</sup> – Presentations (will be open to the public)

April 26<sup>th</sup> 9AM – 1 PM – History Graduate Conference Capstone poster presentations\*\*

May 1<sup>st</sup> – Reflection Essay and launch of professional website and Final Portfolio Due  
Final Presentations of Capstone Projects!!!!