

## **HIS 626 – The Practice of Public History**

Spring 2020, Monday, 3:30-6:20 p.m.

MHRA room 2204 & Public History Lab

### **Professor: Torren Gatson**

office hours: Mondays 2:00-3:00 and by appointment: MHRA 2119

office email: [tgatson@uncg.edu](mailto:tgatson@uncg.edu)

### **Course Description:**

This course is not an instructional in how to claw your way to the top; rather it's an introduction to what it is like to work to within a public history institution and what it takes to thrive in one.

The true mark of a leader is the willingness to stick with a bold course of action — an unconventional business strategy, a unique product-development roadmap, a controversial marketing campaign — even as the rest of the world wonders why you're not marching in step with the status quo. In other words, real leaders are happy to zig while others zag. They understand that in an era of hyper-competition and non-stop disruption, the only way to stand out from the crowd is to stand for something special.”

-Bill Taylor from article, [“Do You Pass the Leadership Test?”](#)

Indeed, everyone at every level of every organization is simultaneously a leader and a follower. This course is about understanding each side of that relationship and how to do productive and fulfilling work from both ends.

The course starts from a few key premises:

- The day-to-day, nuts-and-bolts aspects of an institution's work take on life only when you understand the goals these practices were created to achieve. The policies, procedures, and programs that fill professional manuals and how-to books exist to achieve big-picture goals for institutions.
  
- Fundamentally, these goals involve relationships—between
  - an institution and its constituencies (“Reaching Audiences”),
  - an institution and other institutions (“Reaching Partners”),
  - an institution and its employees (“Reaching Colleagues”).

**The course is structured around the theory and practice involved in building these three kinds of relationships. Throughout, the course links practical skills—completion of a mission statement, creation of a marketing plan, and discussion of the broader purposes these tools are intended to accomplish.**

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Through a mix of classroom- and project-based work, you will gain:

- **a richer understanding of the role of history in public life;**
- **a working knowledge of the processes and procedures that sustain public history institutions;**
- **the ability to recognize the values underlying such processes and procedures;**

- **a richer understanding of how museums and sites establish sustainable niches in their communities; and**
- **an awareness of the dynamics involved in the interpersonal relationships that drive public work**

As well, you will hone a set of skills that you will need to thrive in the workplace:

- **evaluating and analyzing primary and secondary sources** thoughtfully, with attention to argument and point of view;
- **speaking** with passion, clarity, and respect;
- **planning** thoughtfully and efficiently, with attentiveness to multiple stakeholders;
- **writing** clearly and persuasively;
- **collaborating** with energy, sensitivity, and an awareness of how much you can learn from community members and your peers; and
- **experimenting** fearlessly to build your skills and to create rich public products.

### **Teaching Methods**

This seminar depends on active and engaged discussions that allow you and your classmates, individually and collectively, to wrestle with what it means to become a practicing public historian. The classroom will be a setting for engagement with multiple voices—not only the professor’s but those of the students, community partners, and historical and professional “informants” revealed through a range of sources. You are expected to complete reading assignments before every class meeting and to arrive ready to share informed personal opinions on the material. Class sessions will regularly involve informal full-group discussions, oral presentations, small-group conversations, and on-the-spot analyses of sources. As detailed below, class participation is a significant part of your grade. In addition, you will engage with the course content through formal and informal writing assignments that invite you to apply the approaches we are discussing to original work in your own voice.

Beyond regular readings, discussions, and writings, the best way to learn about public history work is to do some. You will continue to create the foundation and framework, collaboratively, a history project that will be practical, relevant, and engaging to real public institutions and audiences. This semester will focus on planning the **Historic Magnolia House exhibition**. You will collaborate with each other and with community and professional partners to create this exhibition that will be implemented next fall of 2020.

### **Assignments and Evaluation**

**You will be evaluated on**

**Class participation—5%:** attending class, doing the reading, writing thoughtful and on-time weekly responses to the reading (see below), responding promptly to ANY email from your professor, speaking up in discussions, and helping to foster a sense of shared exploration within the classroom

*Weekly responses: Each week, The STUDENT FACILITATOR ONLY, will submit a reaction to that week's readings (5 pages doubled spaced, times new roman) This Paper will be turned in at the beginning of class. Only exceptions made prior to class and with the express*

*agreement of the professor will be given any other exception.*

**Information Interview & Reflection Essay—5%: *due in class***

After reading in *Museum Careers* (Schlatter) conduct an interview with a museum professional, by phone or in person. Then each student will give a 5-8-minute in-class presentation about it to the class (presentation will be verbal only).

Required minimum questions for interview:

- 1) Describe your job title and role at your organization.
- 2) Please Discuss any other duties that you chose and/or are expected to do to enhance or complete your job that the public may not be aware of?
- 3) Can you speak to your toughest adversity faced in your current role?
- 4) What advice would you share for budding public historian entering your job?

**In Class Discussion leader Assessment—5%:**

*students will be given presentation dates, one per week*

Each student will be assigned to a week's collection of readings. You must write a 5 page review of the collected readings detailing the a in depth overview of the readings (which must be synthesized in one document) and discuss their strengths, weaknesses, and relevance when applicable to the Master group project (Historic Magnolia House). You will then lead discussion with classmates.

**Exhibit Narrative Paper —35%:**

Working in groups, develop plans for an exhibition component through historical written narrative that will inform your exhibit creation. Students will place their name in the heading of each page they contribute to the master document. Each week, during our remaining break out time until complete I will meet with each group and check in on all progress made toward completion of each students contributions toward the complete narrative. I will deliver more specific details in our first class meeting.

- first full draft *due March 2<sup>nd</sup> (via email and Hard copy)*
- revised full draft *due March 30<sup>th</sup> (hard copy)*

**Exhibition Script proposal—50%**

I will deliver more specific details in our first class meeting.

- first full draft *due April 13<sup>th</sup> (In Class)*
- revised full draft *due April 27<sup>th</sup> (by 5:00 p.m., via email)*

Each student's grade for the collaborative script will be determined by the quality of the product and, as well, by each individual's contributions to the project. Students will be asked to assess the contributions that team members (including they themselves) made to the project and to the collaborative process. Once we have a complete narrative, As mentioned with the

narrative, weekly, during our remaining break out time until complete I will meet with each group and check in on all progress made toward completion of each student's contributions toward the complete narrative.

**For both the narrative and the script, our community partner will have access and potentially join our class to read and examine our finished product as well as offer critique or concern.**

**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

Note\* Failure to turn in any assignment (without prior exception) carries the penalty of a loss of a final letter grade. (i.e. If you turned in all work successfully with the exception of one assignment, there is no possibility of a "A" in the course. The highest you would receive is an A- provided all other requirements were met.) Furthermore, each student is solely responsible for submitting his or her own work. I will not accept work turned in for any other student unless I have corresponded with that student prior to class.

**LATENESS POLICY:**

It is important to turn in assignments on time so as to be fair to other students and to ensure timely grading. I am receptive to *advance* notice if an emergency arises (they will be given the ability to turn in work) However, if an assignment is turned in late, It will NOT be accepted and thus receive a zero on that assignment.

**If things go awry...**

...it's your responsibility to tell me—right away. If your role or deliverable of project is dead-ending or your peer collaboration imploding, I need to hear about it so that I can help resolve the issues! If you fail to notify me, then you will receive a grade based of the projects assessment.

**Required Books**

Bergeron, Anne and Beth Tuttle. *Magnetic: The Art and Science of Engagement*, 2013.

Collins, Jim. *Good to Great and the Social Sectors: A Monograph to Accompany Good to Great; Why Business Thinking Is Not the Answer*, 2005.

Genoways, Hugh and Lynne M. Ireland (revised by Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko). *Museum Administration 2.0*, 2017.

Lundin, Stephen C., Harry Paul, and John Christensen. *Fish! A Proven Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results*, 2014.

McLean, Kathy. *Planning for People in Museum Exhibitions*, 2005.

Schlatter, N. Elizabeth. *Museum Careers: A Practical Guide for Students and Novices*, 2008.

Simon, Nina. *The Art of Relevance*, 2016.

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

All students have a responsibility to uphold the standards of “Honesty, Trust, Fairness, Respect, and Responsibility” detailed in the Academic Integrity Policy. Instances of cheating, plagiarism, misuse of academic resources, falsification of information, and facilitating of academic dishonesty are treated with utmost seriousness by the history department and dealt with severely by the University administration. The full policy appears in the *Student Calendar/Handbook* and at <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>. Per university policy, you will be asked to sign a copy of the Academic Integrity Pledge for each major assignment in this class.

### **Special Needs**

If you require accommodations for special learning needs or other challenges, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services, located within the Elliot University Center (336/334-5440; <https://ods.uncg.edu>)! I will be very receptive to any steps to help make your learning experience more healthy and successful!

## **CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS**

### **Introduction**—read *before first class*

#### **January 13: Practicing Public History: What, Why, and How?**

Kelley, Robert. “Public History: Its Origins, Nature, and Prospects.” *Public Historian* 1 (Autumn 1978): 16-28.

Conard, Rebecca. “Facepaint History in the Season of Introspection.” *Public Historian* 25 (Autumn, 2003): 9-24.

Meringolo, Denise D. “A New Kind of Technician: In Search of the Culture of Public History.” In *Museums Monuments, and National Parks: Toward a New Genealogy of Public History* (2012): xiii-xxv.

Rizzo, Mary. “Finding the Roots of Civic Engagement.” *History@Work* (July 21, 2014): <http://ncph.org/history-at-work/finding-the-roots-of-civic-engagement/> (also on e-reserve): 2 pp..

“Letter of the Committee to Establish Principles on Renaming” [Yale University] (November 21, 2016): 24 pp. [*I will send .pdf*]

**No paper required in the first week only**

### **Reaching Audiences I**

#### **January 20: Making Public Institutions Matter and mission statements**

Weil, Stephen E. “From Being about Something to Being for Somebody: The Ongoing Transformation of the American Museum.” In Weil, *Making Museums Matter* (2002 [1999]): 28-52.

Read the History Relevance campaign's "value statement"—  
<http://www.historyrelevance.com/value-statement> —and explore its  
 website.

Simon, Nina. *The Art of Relevance*: 20-156, 179-183.

Rose, Julia. "Toward Commemorative Museum Pedagogy." In *Interpreting Difficult History at Museums and Historic Sites* (2016): 169-187 (not on e-reserve; already purchased for HIS627).

Anderson, Gail, ed. *Museum Mission Statements: Building a Distinct Identity* (2000 [1998]): 12-24.

Sevcenko, Liz. "Putting Mission First." In *The Importance of Mission in Guiding Museum Practice* (2003): 9-11.

Durel, John. "No Mission, No Money; No Money, No Mission." *Journal of Museum Education* 35 (summer 2010): 193-200.

## **Reaching Colleagues I**

### **January 27: Working Collaboratively and team dynamics**

Fisher, Roger and Alan Sharp. "Lateral Leadership." In *Getting It Done: How to Lead When You're Not in Charge* (1998): 14-34.

Duhigg, Charles. "What Google Learned from Its Quest to Build the Perfect Team." *The New York Times Magazine* (February 25, 2016): 22-26, 75-77.

Pagan, Peter. "How to Cultivate the Art of Serendipity." *The New York Times* (January 2, 2016): 6 pp.

Schrage, Michael. "Collaboration and Creativity." *Museum News* (March/April 2004): 3 pp.

McLean, Kathy. "Problem-Solving in Exhibitions." In *Planning for People in Museum Exhibitions*: 81-91.

Ayan, Jordan. "Tapping into the Creative Process." In *Aha! 10 Ways to Free Your Creative Spirit and Find Your Great Ideas* (1996): 40-44.

Cress, Christine M., Peter J. Collier, Vicki L. Reitenauer and Associates. "Groups Are Fun, Groups Are Not Fun: Teamwork for the Common Good." In *Learning through Serving* (2013): 51-75.

Genoways and Ireland, 1-4.

*Optional:* Miller, Claire Cain. “Why What You Learned at Preschool Is Crucial at Work.” *The New York Times* (October 15, 2016): 5 pp.

## **Reaching Partners I**

### **February 3: Collaborating with Communities and civic engagement strategies**

Archibald, Robert. “Common Ground.” In *A Place to Remember: Using History to Build Community* (1999): 87-108.

Archibald, Robert R. “Introduction.” In *Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums* (2002): 1-6.

Hirzy, Ellen. “Mastering Civic Engagement: A Report from the American Association of Museums.” In *Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums* (2002): 9-20.

Simon, Nina. “Defining Participation at Your Institution.” In *The Participatory Museum*: 183-202. (not on e-reserve; already purchased for HIS627; also at <http://www.participatorymuseum.org/buy/>)

Simon, Nina. “Does Community Participation Scale to Destination Institutions?” *Museum 2.0* (March 30, 2016): 3 pp.

Merritt, Elizabeth. “On Morning Coffee & Museum Activism.” Center for the Future of Museums (March 26, 2015): 2 pp. <http://ht.ly/2WwXGE> (also on e-reserve)

“Michelle Obama, ‘Activism,’ and Museum Employment,” **Part I and Part II.** *The Inluseum* (May 12, 2015 and June 5, 2015): 16 pp. <https://inluseum.com/2015/05/12/michelle-obama-activism-and-museum-employment-part-i/> and <https://inluseum.com/2015/06/05/michelle-obama-activism-and-museum-employment-part-ii/> (also on e-reserve)

Moore, Porchia. “The Danger of the ‘D’ Word: Museums and Diversity.” *The Inluseum* (January 20, 2014): 7 pp. <https://inluseum.com/2014/01/20/the-danger-of-the-d-word-museums-and-diversity/> (also on e-reserve)

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 8 (excerpt): 201-218.

## **Reaching Audiences II**

### **February 10: Getting on the Radar Screen and marketing plans/branding**

Pine, B. Joseph II and James H. Gilmore. “Welcome to the Experience Economy.” *Harvard Business Review* (July 1998): 97-105.

Wilkening, Susan. “Suck It Up: Curated Brand Experiences.” *Museum News*

(November-December 2007): 7 pp.

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 10: 259-281.

## **Reaching Partners II**

### **February 17: Pursuing Outreach vs. “In-Reach” and diversity hiring plans**

McLean, Kathleen and Wendy Pollock. “Convivial Practice.” In *The Convivial Museum* (2010): 158-184.

Archibald, Robert R. “Everybody’s Business.” In *A Place to Remember: Using History to Build Community* (1999): 179-197.

Sullivan, Robert. “Evaluating the Ethics and Consciences of Museums.” In *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on the Paradigm Shift*, Gail Anderson, ed. (2004): 257-63.

Chew, Ron. “Community Roots.” In *Mastering Civic Engagement: A Challenge to Museums* (2002): 63-64.

Thorpe, Angela. “Rethinking Diversity: Introduction.” History@Work (November 13, 2014): <http://ncph.org/history-at-work/rethinking-diversity-introduction/> (not on e-reserve).

Thorpe, Angela. “Rethinking Diversity: Who Does History Belong To?” History@Work (January 8, 2015): <http://ncph.org/history-at-work/author/angela-thorpe/> (not on e-reserve).

Pelaez, Nina and Alyssa Greenberg. “Museums and Social Justice: Supporting Self-Assessment.” Center for the Future of Museums: <http://futureofmuseums.blogspot.com/2015/06/museums-and-social-justice-supporting.html> (also on e-reserve).

“Michelle Obama, ‘Activism,’ and Museum Employment: Part III.” The Inluseum (November 6, 2015): <https://inluseum.com/2015/11/06/michelle-obama-activism-museum-employment-part-iii/> (not on e-reserve).

Taylor, Chris. “Announcing the Department of Inclusion and Community Engagement at the Minnesota Historical Society: Part II.” The Inluseum: (April 22, 2015): <https://inluseum.com/2015/04/22/announcing-the-department-of-inclusion-and-community-engagement-at-the-minnesota-historical-society-part-ii/> (not on e-reserve).

*Optional:* Taylor, Chris. “Announcing” Part I (April 21, 2015): <https://inluseum.com/2015/04/21/announcing-the-department-of-inclusion-and-community-engagement-at-the-minnesota-historical-society-part-i/> (not on e-reserve).



**February 24: Work Session**

Staff, Grizzard. "13 Proven Elements to Make Your Direct Mail Sizzle": 2 pp.

**Information Interview & Reflection presentations***No paper due***March 2: No Class (Spring Break)****March 9: Collaborating with Donors I—Stating Your Case  
and budgets and grant-writing**

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 4: 61-93.

Roberts, Laura B. "Assessment and Planning Using Portfolio Analysis." *Journal of Museum Education* 35 (summer 2010): 181-186.

Durel, John. "Strategic and Inclusive Budgeting" (2004): 1-20.

Radock, Michael. "Words to the Wise." *NSFRE Journal* (winter 1990): 19-24.

Hoffman, Marilyn. "Writing Realistic Grant Budgets." *Museum News* (January/February 1980): 48-53

Durel, Anita. "Eliminating the Fear Factor in Fundraising." *Hand to Hand* 23 (summer 2009): 3 pp.

**March 16: Collaborating with Donors II—Listening  
and development plans—*****Guest speaker: TBA speaking on Development in the public realm***

Bergeron, Anne and Beth Tuttle. *Magnetic: The Art and Science of Engagement* (2013): 7-33, 193-198, 213-215, 58-87, and 138-159.

Falk, John H. and Beverly K. Sheppard. "Attending to the Bottom Line." In *Thriving in the Knowledge Age* (2006): 161-181.

Wolfe, Michael and Robert Ferguson. "New Money, New Demands: The Arrival of the Venture Philanthropist." *Museum News* (January/February 2001): 56-59.

Daniel, Pete. "History with Boundaries: How Donors Shape Museum Exhibits." *OAH Newsletter* 36 (August 2008): 6 pp. **and**  
"A Challenge to 'History with Boundaries.'" *OAH Newsletter* 36 (November 2008): 9 pp.

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 5: 95-139.

## **Reaching Colleagues II**

### **March 23: Building a Vision**

#### **and board management**

Gardner, Howard. "Preface to the Paperback Edition," "Preface," "The Leader's Stories," **and** In *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership* (1996 [1995]): ix-xv, 41-65.

[Kegan, Robert]. "Encouraging Leaders: New Models for Leadership in Museums: An Interview with Harvard Psychologist Robert Kegan." *Museum News* (November/December 2003): 34-39.

Vedantam, Shankar. "'Double Bind' Explains The Dearth Of Women In Top Leadership Positions." National Public Radio (October 26, 2016). Listen and/or read <http://www.npr.org/2016/10/26/499409051/double-bind-explains-the-dearth-of-women-in-top-leadership-positions> (not on e-reserve).

Kotter, John P. "What Leaders Really Do." *Harvard Business Review* (May-June 1990): 103-111.

Robinson, Maureen K. "Assigning Value: Do Boards Matter?"; "Defining the Role of the Board"; and "A Working Partnership: The Executive Director and the Board." In *Nonprofit Boards that Work: The End of One-Size-Fits-All Governance* (2001): 5-13, 27-38 [note: e-reserve includes additional pp.].

Anderson, Katie. "Marry Me! The Relationship between the Director and the Board," In *The Small Museum Toolkit, Book 1: Leadership, Mission, and Governance*, Cinnamon Catlin-Legutko and Stacy Klingler, eds. (2012): 117-143.

**Optional:** Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 6 (excerpt): 164-176.

### **April 6: Managing Change**

#### **and strategic planning**

Collins, Jim. *Good to Great and the Social Sectors: A Monograph to Accompany Good to Great; Why Business Thinking Is Not the Answer*, 2005.

Bridges, William. Introduction and Chapter 1. In *Managing Transitions: Making the Best of Change* (2003 [1991]): ix-xi; 1-10.

Franco, Barbara and Laura Roberts. "The Change Cycle": 2 pp.

Roberts, Laura. "Reinterpretation and Change: The Amos Smith House" and "Is It All History? The Burlington History Museum" (2004): 2-12.

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 3: 41-59.

**Optional:**

Durel, John and Anita Nowery Durel. "A Golden Age for Historic Properties." *History News* 62 (summer 2007): 7-15.

West, Patricia. "Of Babies and Bathwater: Birthplace 'Shrines' and the Future of the Historic House Museum." In *Born in the U.S.A.: Birth, Commemoration, and American Public Memory*, Seth C. Bruggeman, ed. (2012): 259-266.

Norris, Linda. "Are County Historical Societies Dinosaurs?" <http://uncatalogedmuseum.blogspot.com/2010/09/are-county-historical-societies.html> **and** "History Museums as Dinosaurs Take Two" <http://uncatalogedmuseum.blogspot.com/2010/09/history-museums-as-dinosaurs-take-2.html>. The Uncataloged Museum (September 19 and September 28, 2010).

**April 13: Work Session**

**and sustaining the team process**

Zenger-Miller, Inc. "The Four Phases of Team Development." In *Building A Foundation of Trust*: 16-17.

Cress, Christine M., Peter J. Collier, Vicki L. Reitenauer and Associates. "Failure with the Best of Intentions" [excerpts]. In *Learning through Serving* (2013): 144-147, 150.

Lenconi, Patrick. "An Overview of the Model." In *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable* (2002): 187-194.

"ABC's for Dealing with Stress" (Berkeley Health Services, undated): 1-7.

**Reaching Audiences III**

**April 20: "Futurecasting"**

**and seeing beyond one's walls**

Falk, John H. and Beverly K. Sheppard. "Preface," "A World in Transition," and "Creating a New Business Model," In *Thriving in the Knowledge Age* (2006): vii-xi and 3-25.

Merritt, Elizabeth. *Trendwatch 2016*: 52 pp.

Durel, John. "Building a Sustainable Nonprofit Organization."

**Reaching Colleagues III**

**April 27: Leading from Below**

**and human resources/personnel management and finding your niche**

Fisher, Roger and Alan Sharp. "Engagement" and "Choose to Help." In *Getting It Done: How to Lead When You're Not in Charge* (1998): 136-57; 200-4.

Lundin, Stephen C. Harry Paul, and John Christensen. *Fish! A Proven Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results*, 2014.

Dilenschneider, Colleen. "We Can't Keep Our Mouths Shut." In *A Life in Museums: Managing Your Museum Career*, Greg Stevens and Wendy Luke, eds. (2012): 101-104.

Ackerson, Anne and Joan Baldwin. "Is Negotiating Not a Museum Thing?" *Leadership Matters* (October 11, 2015): 3 pp.  
<https://leadershipmatters1213.wordpress.com/2015/10/11/is-negotiating-not-a-museum-thing/> (also on e-reserve)

Durel, John. "Qm2 Work Style Assessment" (2004): 4 pp.

Genoways and Ireland, Chapter 6 (excerpt): 141-149.

***Draft of final exhibition proposal due Saturday, April 27, 9:00 a.m. (email)***

**\*\*Note: Any details found within this syllabus excluding university policy are subject to change at any time at the full discretion of the professor of record \*\***