

## THE PRACTICE OF PUBLIC HISTORY SPRING 2022

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UNCG HIS/IAR 626  
ANNE E. PARSONS  
CLASSROOM: MHRA 3209

CLASS TIME: MON., 2:00-4:50 – IN PERSON  
EMAIL: AEPARSON@UNCG.EDU

IN PERSON OFFICE HOURS: MON., 1:00-2:00 PM EST IN MHRA 2137

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**Spring 2022 Course Delivery:** This course is scheduled to be taught in-person and all participants are required to wear face coverings in the class at all times. Students are strongly encouraged to wear three-layer surgical-style face coverings in class which are available at [designated on-campus locations](#). No food or drink (including water) is allowed in the class. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may require changes to our meeting plan; we will be monitoring the situation closely. If I need to change the format of the course temporarily due to outbreaks of illness, I will announce this via email and the course Canvas page.

**Students who test positive:** Students who test positive for COVID-19 are required to [self-report](#) and isolate per [University guidelines](#). Students can still participate in class virtually.

**Covid Syllabus Statement:** As we return for spring 2022, 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. These actions include, but are not limited to:

- [Following face-covering guidelines](#)
- 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 has tested positive
- Staying informed about the University's policies and announcements via the [COVID-19 website](#)

Instructors will have seating charts for their classes. These are important for facilitating contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students must sit in their assigned seats at every class meeting. Students may move their chairs in class to facilitate group work, as long as instructors keep seating chart records. Students should not eat or drink during class time.

A limited number of disposable masks will be available in classrooms for students who have forgotten theirs. Face coverings are also available for purchase in the UNCG Campus Bookstore. Students who do not follow masking requirements will be asked to put on a face covering or leave the classroom to retrieve one and only return when they follow the basic standards of safety and care for the UNCG

community. Once students have a face covering, they are permitted to re-enter a class already in progress. Repeated issues may result in conduct action. The course policies regarding attendance and academics remain in effect for partial or full absence from class due to lack of adherence with face covering and other requirements.

For instances where 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.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course comprises the second semester of the MA in History/Museum Studies track. The first class, HIS 627, focused on historic interpretation and the final class, HIS 633, will center on a practicum project. This seminar introduces students to the various ways people work and thrive within public history institutions. It revolves around the theories and practices involved in conducting oral histories, building relationships with community partners, connecting with audiences, and funding museums and historic sites.

The class is broken into three parts, with approximately 5 weeks per part.

- Learning to Listen: Oral Histories
- Connecting with Audiences
- Finding Funding

In the spirit of public history practice, students will learn by doing. The readings include texts and videos on best practices in museum and non-profit settings, which students will engage with and discuss. The class will also do assignments that bring the issues to life and will meet with professionals working in the field. Specifically, we will attend Museums Advocacy Day in Washington, D.C. virtually, we will visit the Greensboro Science Center, and we will meet with museum professionals from Old Salem, the National Center for Civil Rights and Human Rights, the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, the Greensboro Science Center, and the NC Humanities Council. Finally, the class will put theory into practice with three main projects: an oral history interview, a digital portfolio, and a mock grant application. Students will leave the class with enhanced skills in interviewing, communicating with general audiences, and fundraising.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The Practice of Public History seminar will enable students to understand and engage with the following enduring understandings, core concepts, and skills:

#### **Enduring Understandings**

**Students will be able to articulate, evaluate, and implement best practices in community engagement** through oral history work and collaborating with community partners and donors, including identifying local needs and interests, and fostering civic engagement. Students will evaluate the dynamics in these relationships and how they shape public history work.

**Students will be able to assess and implement strategies to connect with audiences** and increase participatory practices, create evaluation plans, and work to preserve the public trust. Students will assess the potential conflicts embedded in serving the public and multiple audiences.

### **Core Concepts**

**Students will learn how to cultivate a sustainable team and institution** through strategic planning, management skills and best practices in leadership and group work.

**Students will deepen their knowledge of cultural competency** and will be able to assess and implement best practices.

**Students will have a stronger knowledge of fundraising techniques** such as development planning, identifying grants, building membership, and budgeting money. You will be able to read and create a budget and assess various fundraising strategies.

### **Skills**

**Writing** concisely, clearly, and creatively for digital platforms and general audiences.

**Working collaboratively** with peers and community partners with sensitivity and a stance of listening and learning.

**Digital design** and communicating via the web creatively and in a way that communicates clearly and engages general audiences.

**Oral history interview skills** which include preparing for the interview, recording it, and processing it according to best practices in the field.

**Digital Skills:** Canva, VideoPad, and voice recognition transcription software (such as OTranscribe).

### **EXPERIENCES, PROJECTS & EVALUATION**

To build these skills, students will engage in the experiences and projects listed in the Assignments tab. All assignments are due before class-time (2:00 PM EST) on the days we hold class, unless otherwise indicated. You must hand in each assignment on time, and I will deduct a third of a grade for each 24 hours past the deadline (i.e., A to A-). 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 think you will not meet the deadline. I will post the grades to Canvas, and if you see a discrepancy, please contact me immediately.

### **Class Participation – 15%**

Participation makes up a central part of this course, as it is where students directly grapple with the texts, speakers, and learn from other points of view. Attendance and participation in face-to-face and online discussions is mandatory. 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. If it is excused, you may do the makeup work for that day so that you receive credit towards class participation. This grade is comprised of the student's attendance and their grade in class discussions.

### **Regular Homework Assignments – 25%**

This class merges reading and practice and so you will have regular homework assignments to complete by the beginning of class. These assignments will be posted in the Canvas modules and will provide instructions on what to do. You will be able to drop your lowest homework assignment grade. This means that you can choose to not complete a homework assignment and have no penalty.

### **Oral History Project – 20% Due: February 14**

Oral history skills are not only central to public history – they are an excellent chance to improve your presentation, interpretation, and digital skills. Over the course of the semester, you will identify someone whose life story teaches us something about the history of oppression, genocide, and/or resistance to injustice. You may interview a friend, family member, peer, or coworker. You will conduct an oral history with this person and will then prepare it as if you would deposit it in a library or archive. Finally, you will present your findings to the class with a short video presentation.

### **Digital Portfolio – 20% Due: March 28**

For this assignment, please create a digital portfolio in which you give potential employers a sense of yourself and at least 2-3 of your public history projects/experiences. In this digital age, being able to communicate visually (with color, typography, and brief, compelling text) is critical and this assignment will help you build these skills. As you look for internships and begin to turn your attention towards the job market, this draft digital portfolio will also help you better articulate your professional strengths.

### **Mock Grant Application – 20% Due: April 24 at noon**

Please create a mock grant application for a project of your choice. Imagine that you are applying for a NC Humanities Council Community Engagement grant, worth \$3,500. ([See the 2022 Request for Proposals here \(Links to an external site.\)](#)). For this mock application, please draft seven sections of the grant; you do not have to complete the entire Community Engagement grant application. You may work alone or in a pair for this project. You may create a project based on a different public history project you have worked on or a new project. We are also looking for at least one pair to submit a mock grant application for Temple Emanuel. This mock grant then has the potential of being edited and submitted to an actual grant agency.

### **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 students' 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, small-group or individual speaking skills.

## READINGS

The following books are available on Amazon.com or through Interlibrary Loan, or on reserve (e-reserve or hardcopy) at UNCG's Jackson Library. Any articles listed will be posted to Canvas.

### Required

Bergeron and Tuttle, *Magnetic: The Art and Science of Engagement* (AAM, 2013). Salvatore Cilella, *Fundraising for Small Museums* (AltaMira, 2011).

Genoways and Ireland, *Museum Administration 2.0* (RLPG, 2016).

Perks, *The Oral History Reader* (Routledge: 2015).

Sommer and Quinlan, *The Oral History Manual 3rd Edition* (AASLH: 2018).

Turino and Balgooy, *Reimagining Historic House Museums* (AASLH, 2019).

Optional: *Is Your Museum Grant-Ready?* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) (Rowman & Littlefield, 2018). This book is ideal for people who are most interested in future grant-writing.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

Below is a schedule of major readings and major assignment deadlines. We will meet in class in MHRA 3209 every week unless otherwise indicated in the schedule.

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### PART I: LEARNING TO LISTEN

We are beginning the course with oral histories because they are an excellent microcosm of the public history field. Not only will you build your skills in conducting interviews, but you will also evaluate the logistics of planning public history projects, strengthen your active listening abilities, and improve your skills in connecting to everyday people as partners and audiences. You will demonstrate your new knowledge through class discussions, assignments, and by conducting your own oral history.

### **Jan. 10 Introductions to Class & Oral Histories**

**Jan. 17 Learning to Listen I – Preparing for Oral Histories**  
*No Class in Observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*

Due: (Homework is on Canvas)

- Read excerpts of *The Oral History Manual*
- Watch videos on active and radical listening

**Jan. 24 Learning to Listen II – Preparing for Oral Histories**

Readings: (Homework is on Canvas)

- Read excerpts of *The Oral History Manual*
- Watch the Baylor webinar on Remote Oral Histories

**Jan. 31 Processing Oral Histories**

*No Class – Work on Oral History Project*

Readings: (Homework is on Canvas)

- Read excerpts from *The Oral History Reader*
- Read excerpts from *The Oral History Manual*

**Feb 7 Interpreting Oral Histories**

Readings: (Homework is on Canvas)

- Read excerpts from *The Oral History Reader*
- Read excerpts from *The Oral History Manual*

**Feb 14 New Voices in Museums**

**Guest Speaker Dr. Modupe Labode, Curator, Smithsonian National Museum of American History**

Due: Submit Oral History package

Readings: (Homework is on Canvas)

- Read excerpts from *Radical Roots*, ed. by Denise Meringolo

**PART II: MAKING MUSEUMS MATTER**

In Part II of the class, you will learn about how to make your institution matter in this world of competing interests. You will learn about the process of crafting missions and strategic plans, connecting with audiences, inclusivity and accessibility, and how museums can thrive in rocky times. In the twenty-first century, digital communication is key and in this section you will learn to communicate not just through concise text, but visually as well. You will learn these concepts through readings and discussion, participation in Museums Advocacy Day, by creating a digital portfolio, and by speaking with museum professionals about how they make their institution sustainable.

**Feb. 21 Making Museums Matter I**

Readings: (Homework posted on Canvas)

- Anderson, Gail, ed. *Museum Mission Statements: Building a Distinct Identity* (2000 [1998]): 12-24.
- *Museum Administration*, Ch. 3
- Museums Advocacy Day Webinar

**Feb. 28 Making Museums Matter II – Museums Advocacy Day Virtual Live Program 3/28 (2-6:30) + Congressional Meeting on 3/1 (Times TBA)**

Readings: (Homework posted on Canvas)

- Watch Webinar from Museums Advocacy Day

**Mar. 7 Spring Break ~ No Class Session and No Homework**

**Mar. 14 Inclusive Museums**

Readings: (Homework posted on Canvas)

- Excerpts from *The Inclusive Historian's Handbook*
- Excerpts from *Reimagining Historic House Museums*

**Mar. 21 Accessible Museums – Field Trip to [Elsewhere Museum](#)**

Readings: (Homework posted on Canvas)

- Excerpts from *The Inclusive Historian's Handbook*
- Resources on Museum Accessibility

**Mar. 28 From Good to Great – Field Trip to Greensboro Science Center**

Readings: (Homework posted on Canvas)

- *Magnetic: The Art and Science of Engagement*
- Excerpts from *Reimagining Historic House Museums*

**PART III: FINDING FUNDING**

For better or worse, money makes the museum world go round. Part III of this class trains you in the main forms of fundraising, applying for grants, and issues of finance. In this part of the class, you will draft your own mock grant application. A team of three museum professionals will review the final product and will choose one application as the winner.

**Apr. 4 Finance and Grants I**

Readings: (Homework posted on Canvas)

- Chapters from *Museum Administration 2.0*
- Chapters from *Fundraising for Small Museums*

**Apr. 11 Grants II**

Readings: (Homework posted on Canvas)

- Chapters of *Is Your Museum Grant-Ready?*

**Apr. 18 The World of Fundraising**

Readings: (Homework posted on Canvas)

- Chapters of *Fundraising for Small Museum*
- Selection from *Reimagining Historic House Museums*

**Apr. 25 Writing Winning Grants - Guest Speakers: Lance Wheeler, National Center for Civil and Human Rights; Melissa Knapp, Old Salem; and Caitlin Patton, North Carolina Humanities Council**

Due: Mock Grant Application on 4/24 at noon