

**HIS 4935-5 Sr. Sem: Exhibiting History  
Spring 2009  
421 Bellamy  
Wednesday 9:00-11:30**

**Instructor:** Prof. Jennifer Koslow

**Email:** jkoslow@fsu.edu

(emails will be answered 9am-4pm Monday - Friday)

**Class website:** <http://campus.fsu.edu/>

**Office:** Bellamy 409

**Phone:** 644-4086

**Office Hours:** Tuesday & Thursday 2:00-3:00pm and by appointment

**Course Description:**

How do you present history to a public audience? What makes an historical event or figure controversial? How do curators make decisions about what to display, what to include or exclude in their object descriptions, and how to mount the objects? This course provides undergraduate students with the opportunity to become public historians. Students will read about the issues public historians face when they develop exhibits of history. Building on this reading, students will engage in in-depth historical research of their own and, as a class, mount an exhibit of history.

Our exhibit will be based on the following collection located at Strozier: The Campus Defense Council, Florida State College for Women (FSCW). We will ask how FSCW's administrators, faculty, staff, and students prepared for World War II and participated on the homefront once the United States officially entered the war. Hence, much of our common reading focuses on exhibits related to war.

As a senior seminar this class is intense. The level of reading required and the degree of attention to issues of historiography have all been set to introduce students to some of the requirements, topics, and methods associated with the advanced study of history. I challenge you to leave your passivity at the door and become active historians for the semester.

**Course Objectives:**

1. The student will be able to explain orally her/his own research ideas in a convincing and coherent manner to other students and the professor
2. The student will be able to generate bibliographical and footnote citations of at least five different primary sources and five different types of secondary sources
3. The student will be able to produce his/her own research ideas in a convincing and coherent manner in the course research paper
4. The student will be able to use web-based library databases to search for research materials, especially journal, magazine, or newspaper articles
5. The student will be able to employ their knowledge of the conventions and methods of history to offer other students in class useful advice about their research projects
6. The student will be able to analyze works of history and be able to articulate the historiographical frameworks they contain
7. The student will be able to include a discussion about how his/her own research fits into the surrounding historiography

**Required Readings:**

- Lewis A. Erenberg and Susan Hirsch, The War in American Culture: Society and Consciousness During World War II (University of Chicago Press, 1996)
- Martin Harwit, An Exhibit Denied: Lobbying the History of Enola Gay (Springer, 1996)
- Richard Kurin Reflections of a Culture Broker: A View from the Smithsonian (Alta Mira Press, 1997)
- Edward T. Linenthal History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past (Holt Paperbacks, 1996)
- Robin Sellers, Femina Perfecta: The Genesis of Florida State University (FSU Foundation, 1995) (chapters 10-12)
- Beverly Serrell Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach (AltaMira Press, 1996)

- Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (University of Chicago Press, 1996)
- Additional books and articles related to your research project

### Course Requirements:

**All assignments must be turned in to receive a passing grade for this class**

**The following written assignments must be turned in to turnitin: (1) first label draft and (2) final research papers**

1. **Attendance and Class Participation:** You are required to attend all class meetings and you will be graded on class participation. This means that you will be graded not only on whether or not you come to class and speak in class, but also on the quality of your contributions.

*A note on attendance: I will take attendance at the start of each class. You are allowed one unexcused absence for the semester. Additional absences will be penalized by one full grade reduction off the final course grade (e.g., a B becomes a C). Excused absences are allowed at my discretion. If you expect to be absent because of a pressing personal matter or if, due to an emergency, you miss class, please discuss the matter in person with me either before/after class or during office hours. Also Note: IF YOU COME TO CLASS LATE OR LEAVE CLASS ANYTIME DURING THE CLASS SESSION (INCLUDING BREAK) YOU WILL BE COUNTED AS ABSENT.*

2. **Research Paper:** This paper should be based on original research in primary sources done for this class and focus on an aspect related to our exhibit. It should be between 15 -20 pages in length, excluding bibliography and endnotes. You will need to develop your topic in consultation with me but you should be aware that there are materials related to homefront experiences of World War II available not only at Strozier but at the Institute on World War II and the Human Experience and the State Archives. Each paper must include a section that addresses the historiography of the topic being written on. This will vary depending on the specific topic of the paper.

The paper will be evaluated on the accuracy and originality of the argument, the structural coherence and overall unity of the paper, and the quality of the mechanical execution of the paper. The paper must conform to the stylistic guidelines in Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.

3. **Meeting the Preliminary Paper & Exhibit Production Deadlines:** In order to ensure that steady progress is made on research papers throughout the semester, deadlines have been set for the selection of a topic, the completing of a bibliography, the creation of a paper outline and one-page abstract, as well as for handing in of the final paper. These deadlines, given below, must all be met to ensure the highest possible grade in the class.
  - a. Research Paper:
    - i. Selection of a topic: week 4, January 28
    - ii. Completing bibliography: week 6, February 11
    - iii. Creation of a paper outline and one-page abstract: week 8, February 25
    - iv. Final paper: April 29<sup>th</sup> 4pm in my Departmental Mailbox
  - b. Exhibit
    - i. Researching Campus Defense Council Records: weeks 2 &3
    - ii. Nominating Items for exhibit: week 4
    - iii. Label for exhibit: week 5
    - iv. Revising materials for the exhibit: weeks 6-9
    - v. Install: week 10
    - vi. Deinstall: week 15

4. **The Historian's Chair:** In developing your research paper, each student will take the "historian's chair" and make a 15-20 minute presentation about how he/she is interpreting one or two primary source(s), and how it relates to her/his secondary sources, and then discuss their analysis with the class. Students in the class will each fill out a worksheet to provide their colleagues with useful advice about their research projects. **You are required to Xerox your peer review and give it to Prof. Koslow within 24 hours of the presentation.** (put in Prof. Koslow's departmental mailbox and get it time stamped)

Grade Breakdown:

Attendance and Class Participation: 20%

Research Paper: 45%

Historian's Chair (Presentation and Peer Critique): 15%

Meeting the Preliminary Paper and Exhibit Production Deadlines: 20%

**Course Schedule:**

**Week 1 (Jan7):**

**Topics:** Introduction to the Course; Using electronic databases; Our Exhibit

**Reading:** Sellers, chapters 10-12 (available to download from our course library section)\* (to be read **before** class)

**Week 2 (Jan 14):**

**Topics:** the State Archives; America and World War II; What is Historiography?; Exhibit Making

**Reading:** Erenberg and Hirsch, The War in American Culture

**Exhibit Assignment:** Research Your Files Weeks 2 & Weeks 3

**Week 3 (Jan 21):**

**Topics:** Sharing Inquiry and Authority

**Reading:** Kurin, Reflections of a Culture Broker

**Week 4 (Jan 28):**

**Topics:** Controversial Exhibits; The object List

**Reading:** Linenthal, History Wars;

**Exhibit Assignment:** Bring image of 3-5 objects to nominate for the exhibit

**Paper Assignment:** Due in-class: One-paragraph description of your intended research topic

**Week 5 (Feb 4):**

**Topics:** What makes a good exhibit?

**Reading:** Serrell, Exhibit Labels; Oral History from Reichelt Oral History Program Collection

**Exhibit Assignment:**

- report on one oral history listened to re: FSCW and identify and quotes feel are relevant for the exhibit
- Bring label for peer review

**Week 6 (Feb 11):**

**Topics:** Curatorial Power or Lack thereof

**Reading:** Harwit, An Exhibit Denied

**Exhibit Assignment: Have ready for peer review**

- Exhibit Script Draft (Intro and Panels)
- Exhibit Layout Draft
- Exhibit Graphic Design Draft
- Exhibit Promotion proposal
- Exhibit Public Programs proposal

**Paper Assignment:** Due in-class: Annotated bibliography due with no fewer than 5 primary sources and 12 secondary sources. Annotations should be one to two sentences for each source. In completing this

assignment students must use the web-based library databases to search for research materials, especially journal, magazine, or newspaper articles. Students should document this aspect by submitting a series of screen shots of at least 3 different web-based databases. (Screen shots are created by holding down the following two keys "Ctrl" and "Prnt Scrn" and then pasting the image on to a new page.)

**Week 7 (Feb 18):**

**Topic:** Interpreting History

**Exhibit Assignment: Have ready for peer review**

- Exhibit Script Draft (Intro and Panels)
- Exhibit Layout Draft
- Exhibit Graphic Design Draft
- Exhibit Promotion proposal
- Exhibit Public Programs proposal

**Week 8 (Feb 25):**

**Topic:** Interpreting History

**Exhibit Assignment: Have ready for peer review**

- Exhibit Script Draft (Intro and Panels)
- Exhibit Layout Draft
- Exhibit Graphic Design Draft
- Exhibit Promotion proposal
- Exhibit Public Programs proposal

**Paper Assignment:** An outline of your paper and a one-page abstract of your paper, including thesis statement in bold

**Week 9 (Mar 4):**

**Topic:** Exhibit Production

**Exhibit Assignment: Have ready for peer review**

- Exhibit Layout plan final report
- Exhibit Graphic Design – create labels and panels for final class review
- Exhibit Promotion final report
- Exhibit Public Programs final report

**Week 10 (Mar 11): No Class – Spring Break**

**March 18-April 17, 2009: our exhibit**

**Week 11 (Mar 18): Exhibit Installation (March 16-18); Exhibit Opening**

Individual Meetings to discuss the progress of your project

Meeting time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 12 (Mar 25): Historian's Chair**

**Week 13 (Apr 1): Historian's Chair**

**Week 14 (Apr 8): Historian's Chair**

**Week 15 (Apr 15): Historian's Chair  
- deinstall exhibit**

**Week 16 (Apr 22): Reflections**

**Final Papers Due: April 29<sup>th</sup> 4pm in my Departmental Mailbox**

**Academic Honor Policy:**

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to ". . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://www.fsu.edu/~dof/honorpolicy.htm>.)

Failure to adhere to the Honor Policy may result in an F for an assignment or for the entire class.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

(1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the

Student Disability Resource Center

97 Woodward Avenue, South

Florida State University

Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167

(850) 644-9566 (voice)

(850) 644-8504 (TDD)

[sdrc@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:sdrc@admin.fsu.edu)

<http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/>

**If you endure a hardship during the semester that prevents you from completing the required assignments of this class you need to contact the Dean of Students**

[deanofstudents@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@admin.fsu.edu)

4th Floor of the University Center

Bldg A, Suite 4300

Mail Code: 2440

Ph.# (850) 644-2428

FAX (850) 644-0687

AIM: FSUDeanStudents (M-F, 8a-5p)

The University Counseling Center is also available to you at no charge and is confidential

201 SLB

Askew Student Life Building

942 Learning Way

Phone: (850) 644-2003

<http://counseling.fsu.edu/>

**Exhibit Postions:**

Curator (1)

Assistant Curator (1)

Graphic Designer (1)

Copy Editors (2)

Promotions (2)

Public Programs (1)

Register (1)

Exhibit Manager (1)

Exhibits Assistants (2)