

**HIS 5935 Sec 02: Public History Theory and Methods**  
**Florida State University, Fall 2008**  
**Lecture: Tuesdays 2:00-4:45pm; Room: Bellamy 001**  
**Graduate Hour: TBA**

**Instructor:** Prof. Jennifer Koslow  
**Email:** jkoslow@fsu.edu  
(emails will be answered 8am-5pm Monday - Friday)  
**Class website:** <http://campus.fsu.edu/>

**Office:** Bellamy 409  
**Phone:** 644-4086  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday 10:00-12:00

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

*When you aren't in class, where do you seek out history?* Is it staring up at the ceiling of the old Florida State Capitol? At a rest stop along I-10? At the Smithsonian? At a movie theater? At a family gathering? This course introduces students to the field of public history. We will study how, why, where, and who produces history outside of universities. Central to these inquiries will be investigations into four major themes in the practice of public history: uncovering hidden histories, constructing interpretations, creating a sense of place, and negotiating contested memories. In addition to these discussions, we will examine several different types of public history specialties: oral history, archives management, historic preservation, and museum administration

Students who take this course will simultaneously participate in the Oral History Tutorial, which is a prerequisite for HIS 5077 Oral History that will be offered in the Spring.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

At the end of this course

1. The student will be able to identify the different specialties of public history;
2. The student will be able to state the history of the historic preservation movement in the United States, archives, history museums, and oral history;
3. The student will be able to identify the major themes and issues that shape the practice of Public History;
4. The student will be able to describe and analyze different types of public commemoration;
5. The student will be able to describe and analyze presentations of history that use new media
6. The student will be able to conduct an oral history;
7. The student will choose to develop their historiographical knowledge in preparation for oral and written comprehensive exams

**GRADUATE READINGS:**

**ALL READINGS NEED TO BE COMPLETED BY THE DATE LISTED ON THE SYLLABUS**

**COPIES OF THESE BOOKS WILL BE ON RESERVE AT THE LIBRARY; I HIGHLY RECOMMEND BUYING USED COPIES TO KEEP COSTS DOWN**

- Diane Barthel [Historic Preservation: Collective Memory and Historical Identity](#) Rutgers University Press (1996)
- John Bodnar, [Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century](#) Princeton University Press (1993)
- Antoinette Burton, [Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History](#) (2005)
- Doak S. Campbell, [A University in Transition](#) Tallahassee, Florida State University (1964)\*
- Steven Dubin [Displays of Power \(with a new afterword\): Controversy in the American Museum from the Enola Gay to Sensation!](#) NYU Press (2001)
- Michael Frisch, [A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History](#) State University of New York Press (1989)
- Sanford Levinson [Written in Stone: Public Monuments in Changing Societies](#) Duke University Press (1998)
- Edward Linenthal, [Preserving Memory: the Struggle to Create America's Holocaust Museum](#) Columbia University Press (2001)
- Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, [Presence of the Past](#) Columbia University Press (2000)

- Robin Sellers, Femina Perfecta: The Genesis of Florida State University FSU Foundation (1995)\*
- Studs Terkel, Touch and Go: A Memoir. New Press (2007)
- Dwight Young, Road Trips through History: A Collection of Essays from Preservation Magazine National Trust for Historic Preservation (2003)
- Valerie Raleigh Yow, Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences (2005)
- Articles on e-reserve:
  - Joshua Brown, "History and the Web, From the Illustrated Newspaper to Cyberspace: Visual Technologies and Interaction in the Nineteenth and Twenty-First Centuries," June 2004 <http://chnm.gmu.edu/resources/essays/d/29>
  - Daniel J. Cohen, "History and the Second Decade of the Web," June 2004: <http://chnm.gmu.edu/resources/essays/d/34> and "The Future of Preserving the Past," June 2005: <http://chnm.gmu.edu/resources/essays/d/39>
  - Katharine T. Corbett and Howard S. (Dick) Miller, "A Shared Inquiry into Shared Inquiry," *The Public Historian* 28.1 (2006): 15-38
  - Natalie Zemon Davis, "Movie or Monograph? A Historian/Filmmaker's Perspective," *Public Historian* 25 (2003): 45-48
  - National Council on Public History, "What is Public History?" <http://www.ncph.org/WhatisPublicHistory/tabid/282/Default.aspx>
  - Vivien Ellen Rose and Julie Corley, "A Trademark Approach to the Past: Ken Burns, the Historical Profession, and Assessing Popular Presentations of the Past," *Public Historian* 25 (2003): 49-59
  - Robert Brent Toplin, "Cinematic History: Where do We Go From Here?," *Public Historian* 25 (2003): 79-91

**Recommended:**

- James B. Gardner and Peter S. Lapaglia Public History: Essays from the Field (2004)
- Ian Tyrrell Historians in Public (2005)

\*(copy to be distributed prior to start of class)

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

**(Aug 26) Week 1: Introductions**

Reading: Sellers & Campbell

**(Sept 2) Week 2: What is Public History?**

Reading: National Council on Public History; Corbett and Miller; Rosenzweig and Thelen

**(Sept 9) Week 3: History Museums: Foundations**

Reading: Linenthal pages 1-166

**(Sept 16) Week 4: History Museums: Transformations**

Reading: Linenthal pages 167-272

**(Sept 23) Week 5: Curatorial Crises of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century**

Reading: Dubin

**(Sept 30) Week 6: Historic Preservation: Beginnings**

Reading: Young

**(Oct 7) Week 7: Cultural Resources Management in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Reading: Barthel

**(Oct 14) Week 8: Midterm**

**(Oct 21) Week 9: Preserving History: Archives**

**Reading:** Burton

**(Oct 28) Week 10: Public Displays of History: Monuments**

**Reading:** Levinson

**(Nov 4) Week 11: Public Displays of History: Pageantry**

**Reading:** Bodnar

**(Nov 11) Week 12: No Class: Veteran's Day**

**(Nov 18) Week 13: Creating Sources: Oral History**

**Reading:** Terkel; Frisch

**(Nov 25) Week 14: History & Hollywood**

**Reading:** Corley; Davis; Toplin

**(Dec 2) Week 15: Public History & New Media**

**Reading:** Cohen (2 articles); Brown

**(Dec 9) Week 16: Final Exam Final Exam: Tuesday December 9, 5:30-7:30pm**

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

**1. Oral History Project**

This assignment will be supervised and graded by Dr. Robin Sellers. Please see separate syllabi for instructions, reading assignments, and schedule.

**2. Analysis Blog**

Each student will create their own blog for this course using Blogger.com and use the space to discuss their analysis of the readings and public history experiences throughout the semester. (I will explain the logistics in class. In sum, we will all connect to one class blog.) Every week you will be responsible for reading your colleague's blogs and **commenting on at least two**. This assignment will be evaluated for the quality of your analysis (do you move beyond description/summary to analytical engagement with the material?). They will also be evaluated for the clarity of your expression. Just because this is an informal format does not excuse spelling errors and incoherent grammar. I highly recommend writing your entries in a word processing program so that you can edit them before placing them online. These are due no later than **10am Tuesday morning**.

What are Prof. Koslow's expectations about content and length? I expect between 250 to 500 word entires. The point of this exercise is to help you crystallize your critique of the book. Your blog entry must make at least one decisive argument about the book. In completing this exercise, you should consider the following questions: What historical question is the author addressing? What is the author's argument(s) about the historical question they are trying to answer? What types of sources did the author use to support her argument? Is his/her argument persuasive? Is the author entering into a historical debate with others and if so, who? Did the book change the way the history of this topic was written (look up book reviews using American History and Life to answer) What would you say are the strengths of the book? The weaknesses?

**3. Participation/Graduate Hour**

Attending the lecture and the graduate hour is required. Students are expected to come to the graduate hour having read the assigned material and be prepared to discuss its contents and implications for contributing to our knowledge of Public History. Your participation grade will be based on whether your comments and questions foster discussion. Your participation grade will also be based on whether your questions and comments indicate that you've read the material, thought about it, and come to some questions or conclusions. Many of these graduate hours will consist of field trips to local historic sites, with

the purpose of acquainting you with the various career paths you might take in public history. You will receive a separate schedule for the graduate hour.

**4. Final Exam.** At the end of this course you will take a comprehensive exam of the course materials that will ask you to integrate the readings and lectures. I will give you a few questions to prepare from ahead of time.

**5. Public History Project: Heritage Protocol**

As a class we will be working with Eddie Woodward, FSU Heritage Protocol Archivist. “The mission of the FSU Heritage Protocol is to locate, identify, record, assist in the preservation of, and promote knowledge about the heritage of Florida State University and its predecessor institutions.” You will each help in processing a collection by learning how to digitize materials and create and enter the accompanying metadata into HP’s archival database. In addition, your oral history project will also relate to this assignment. As a preview please review the materials at the Heritage Protocol’s website <http://heritage.fsu.edu/>. Your grade for this assignment will be based on your successful completion of the project assigned to you. All digitizing and entering of metadata must be finished by Friday, December 5.

**Grade Breakdown**

Requirement	% toward final grade
Oral History Project	25%
Analysis Blog	30%
Final Exam	20%
Participation	10%
Heritage Protocol Project	15%
Total	100%

**Grading Scale:** A=superior; A-=excellent/very good; B+=very good/average; B=average/minimum; B-=below average; C+=serious deficiency

**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>.)

**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/>