

PUBLIC HISTORY COURSES

Theoretical Courses

PHST 511. Studies in Material and Visual Culture--Dr. Bucciantini.

From the early history of collecting to modern cultural heritage informatics, we are constantly using physical and visual means of getting information. In addition, one of the main goals of many, if not all, public history institutions is the preservation and display of material and/or visual culture. This class takes on the multifaceted theory behind both material and visual culture, as well as their rich history in the public history sector. Students will engage in practical training projects to use their theoretical knowledge, and look at different case studies, analyzing the ways in which visual and material resources have been used in the field. This way, they have the tools and knowledge needed for a wealth of public history-related job opportunities. As a seminar-style class, this course will emphasize in-class discussion and the student's formal answers to previously distributed discussion questions on the course web site. Students will also be responsible for leading class discussion at least once during the semester. The course also requires the student to complete a variety of written assignments including a review of visual culture, a collections policy document, an object-based paper, and a formal research project based on the object selected for the shorter paper described above.

PHST 512. Museums and Society--TBD

This course begins with a look at the history of non-profit organizations in the United States, particularly the preservation, museum, archival, and educational groups associated with public history. The course will introduce students to various aspects of organizational management including budgeting and finance, personnel issues, staff and board makeup, and public relations. The course will also consider the contemporary relationships, such as multiculturalism and ethnicity, censorship, and political correctness, between public history institutions and the communities they serve. Throughout the semester, students will have the opportunity to meet and talk with working professionals in the Pittsburgh public history community about issues covered in this course. Students will complete a formal research paper on a topic related to contemporary issues in public history and will work, singly or in small groups, to present their research and lead class discussion of the issues their research has raised.

PHST 513. Cultural Resources Management--TBD

Through a variety of case studies, this course introduces students to the processes and procedures used to identify, manage, preserve, protect, and conserve cultural resources (evidence of the past human activities and accomplishments) to assure compliance with state and federal regulations. This course introduces students to management practices for prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, historic standing structures, bridges, cemeteries, and monuments, as well as other resources. It also covers the mitigation of impacts to cultural resources. Assessment of student achievement is based on participation in class discussions, written reviews and responses to the readings, a mid-term and final examination, and a major research paper investigating management case histories of each type of historic cultural resource."

PHST 514. Commemoration and Preservation--Drs. Bucciantini and Taylor

How and why do we commemorate, celebrate, memorialize, and preserve the "important stuff" of history? How have our methods of doing this changed over time? In this course we will discuss a variety of methods and theories for commemoration and preservation, their historical development and the future of the fields, how American national memory differs from that in other countries and why, and some of the recent big moments of commemoration and preservation in the last decade, and how that has changed the landscape, but literally and figuratively. This seminar-style course introduces students to a wide range of "classic" and contemporary readings on the topics of commemoration and preservation. Students are required to participate in weekly discussions of the assigned readings and to post answers to previously distributed discussion questions on the class web sites. Students will also be responsible for directing class discussion at least once during the semester. The course also requires students to complete several formal written assignments including a commemorative site report, an article review, and a moderate-length formal research paper on a topic of the student's own choosing.

PHST 515. Special Topics--various faculty.

This course will be offered from time to time to foster cooperative learning between students and faculty who are pursuing active research or work in the field of public history. It will focus on issues, practices, and topics not found in the Public History Program's regular curriculum.

PHST 516. Building Narratives in Public History—Dr. Taylor

Who decides what narratives we craft at public history sites? What shapes these narratives? How do narratives change over time? What is the relationship between narratives and neutrality? How does technology affect narrative and its construction? Building Narratives in Public History is a course exploring the theory and methodology of how narratives have been formulated at public history sites in the past as well as current narrative debates in the field. In addition to weekly readings and reflections, students will be required to create a substantial professional non-academic writing sample based on historiography and primary source material. These written products will be part of an individual or group project coordinated with a community stakeholder or benefiting the community at large. Non-academic writing includes but is not limited to an online or physical site tour, podcast, documentary, or other form of narrative writing for the public. **(This course may also be used to fill a Professional course requirement)**

Professional Courses

PHST 521. Introduction to Archives--Mr. White.

This course will provide an understanding of the nature and characteristics of archives and manuscript collections and the work of archivists in both theory and practice. Students will learn the history of archives as well as the role of the archivist in appraising, arranging, describing and preserving archival materials. It will cover issues such as copyright, disaster planning, management, reference and security. Recent issues and debates in the field will be addressed in the process. Time will be spent discussing these issues in relation to the various types of archives--business, university, historical society/museum, religious, and government. The technical aspects of archival processing, Machine Readable Cataloging (MARC), Encoded Archival Description (EAD), and digitization will be covered so that each student has a basic understanding of each process. Students will have hands on experience processing, preserving, and creating a finding aid for a small collection from the University Archives. In addition to having a midterm and final, students will receive grades on the finding aids that they create and on an in-depth research paper about an archival topic of their choosing.

PHST 522. Museum Exhibits and Management--Dr. Bucciantini.

Museums, archives, and other public history institutions often present information through visual presentations, most commonly public exhibitions. This class will present students with the theoretical issues behind public exhibitions and the practical techniques for bringing research, design, and planning together in a visually exciting and meaningful way. As a semester project, the class will prepare and install an exhibition in a campus location. The class will also travel to Pittsburgh-area public history institutions to view current exhibits and to talk with the staff members who created them. Students will also write a critical analysis of a formal history exhibition that they have visited.

PHST 523. Education and Public Programming--Ms. Gillen.

Public History institutions increasingly rely on formal educational programming to connect with their various stakeholder communities and to justify their existence to governmental and funding entities. Such programs need to be both engaging and age appropriate. This course will introduce students to research on the types of individuals who visit public history institutions and their motivations for doing so. It will also look at modern educational theory as it relates to public programming. Students will meet with educators in public organizations to learn how they incorporate this research and these theories into the public programming.

PHST 524. Historical Editing--Mr. Butko.

A summer course taught by the Director of Publications at the Senator John Heinz History Center, this class prepares students to edit their own and others' work in many formats found in today's museum profession. Taught on-site at

the History Center, the class introduces the history of the English language for a deeper understanding of what is considered "correct" usage. This transitions to what is generally accepted in the editing field using books such as the Chicago Manual of Style. Methods and technologies of producing publications are explored starting with the copy editing of manuscripts submitted by writers who can range from academics to amateur historians. The class also delves into (and does assignments in) other writing opportunities in the public history field such as proofreading design drafts, grant writing, press releases, exhibit labels, oral history, and document transcription. Students also visit the printer of the History Center's books and magazines to learn of the many technological advances, and meet former students to discuss opportunities for internships and employment. The class also includes a longer project focused on a social media campaign for an exhibit. Students are also graded on class participation and a final examination.

PHST 525. Introduction to Historic Preservation--TBD

This course provides an introduction to American historic preservation and focuses on its history and practices. The course surveys the growth and development of the preservation of sites, landscapes, and buildings, in particular, and investigates the legislation (national, state, and local) that established and continues to guide the field of preservation, providing students with knowledge of historic preservation issues, programs, and practices. Assessment of student achievement is based on written descriptions of a historic resource, analysis of historic mapping, field photography, a major research paper, and tests on assigned readings and lecture material.

PHST 526. Speaking to the Past: Oral History in Methodology and Practice—Dr. Taylor

This course begins with the fundamental question: What is oral history? Some argue it is spoken content. Others say it is the recording or transcript of the documentary record. Students will study successful oral history projects of the past. Oral history methodology will explore questions of memory and bias, legal and ethical issues, and how best to document and preserve people's stories. Assessment will include a short writing project related to researching our oral history project for the semester, participation in and leading weekly discussions, and graded components leading to the completion of the final oral history project. Students will contribute to a group oral history project on the Third Alternative in collaboration with the Oral History Initiative at Duquesne's Gumberg Library. As a class, we will navigate the best practices in conducting these oral histories, engage in research, and choose a format for dissemination beyond the ultimate goal of depositing the recordings and transcriptions in Duquesne library's archive. Students also will consider whether to present their research and experience outside of the classroom and are encouraged to use this experience as a possible topic to present at conferences or for publications.

PHST 527. Digital Humanities and the Historian—Dr. Taylor

What is digital humanities and what is its relationship to history? This course seeks to understand how digital humanities informs the scholarship and work of historians and public historians primarily through the lenses of digital history, public history, and new media. The class begins with the short history of digital humanities as it moved from digitization to scholarship. Students will explore projects for popular consumption and produced in the academy; they also will familiarize themselves with tools and web publication via mini-workshops. Students will engage in critical debates currently shaping the digital humanities and its future. Assessment will include weekly readings and discussions, building a digital presence, and graded components leading to the creation and curation of a collaborative digital humanities project based on best practices and original research.