

# Digital Public History

## HIST 694, Spring 2016

### Sharon M. Leon

#### Course Overview

The work of public history calls for taking good history scholarship into the world to meet the needs and interests of a non-academic audience. While much of that work has traditionally happened in face to face encounters and at physical sites, increasingly public historians are encountering their audiences through digital means, such as social media, blogs, exhibit sites, collection and archives sites, mobile applications, and digital simulations. This course will introduce students to the theories and methods central to doing digital public history, and will equip them with the skills necessary to plan and execute their own projects. Topics to be discussed include digital strategy development, developing effective digital exhibits, describing and publishing digital collections, mobile computing and curating the landscape, sharing authority with the general public through participatory history projects, and effective methods for evaluating digital public history work.

#### Learning Outcomes and Assessment

- You will have an understanding of the relationship between in-person public history work and digital public history. (Activities, Comparative Review)
- You will have an understanding of the range of digital public history work that has comprised the field and is currently going on in the field. (Activities, Reflections)
- You will have an understanding of the centrality of evaluation and audience researching in conceiving and executing digital public history projects. (Activities, Reflections, Personas, Project)
- You will have a familiarity with the range of tools and approaches that public historians are using to create digital public history experiences. (Activities, Reflections, Project)
- You will have created a digital public history site or experience. (Project)

#### Contact Information

- Email: [sleon@gmu.edu](mailto:sleon@gmu.edu) Emails will be answered within 24 hours, unless prior notice is issued.
- Slack channel: <http://gmu-dph.slack.com> (invites to be issued at the beginning of the semester) [Preferred method of communication.]
- Skype: sharonmleon For individual meetings.
- Office hours: 7-8pm, Wednesdays

#### Course Structure

The course is organized around four topics and divided into 13 modules:

- The first topic explores doing history with the public.
- The second topic introduces the interpretive basics of building collections and narrative interpretation sites.

- The third topic explores various genres of digital public history work (includes 4 “Flex Weeks”).
- The fourth topic is devoted to prototype projects and evaluation.
- The final module is the submission of the final project and a self-reflexive essay on the process of developing the project.

The modules must be completed in order, with the exception of the “Flex weeks” (Modules 6-9), which may be completed in any order.

### **Course Requirements**

- You must have access to a computer and a reliable Internet connection. The modules for this course are web-based and require several hours weekly. The online portfolio and digital project also require Internet access.
- You are required to sign up for a domain hosting with Reclaim Hosting. The cost is \$25 for a year. There is no required textbook. All readings and assignments are online.
- Late work will not be accepted.
- No incompletes will be issued.
- Attendance is mandatory except for medical reasons or religious holidays. If you are absent, inform me of the circumstances as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to research and make up what you have missed.
- If you are forced to miss the due date for an assignment either as the result of an illness or a family emergency, fairness to all students in the class requires the proper documentation, without which your excuses will not be accepted.

### **University Policies**

#### **Academic Integrity**

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code: “not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, and/or lie in matters related to academic work.” If you are uncertain what that policy covers, see the information provided by the Office of Academic Integrity. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review.

If you are copying and pasting text that someone else wrote, you might be plagiarizing. Pasted or manually retyped text is not plagiarized only when all of the following three conditions are true: 1) the pasted text is surrounded by quotation marks or set off as a block quote, and 2) the pasted text is attributed in your text to its author and its source (e.g., “As Jane Smith writes on her blog . . .”), and 3) the pasted text is cited in a footnote, endnote, and/or a bibliography (e.g., “Smith, Jane. Smith Stuff. Blog. Available <http://smithstuff.wordpress.com>. Accessed August 1, 2012.”)

#### **Disability Accommodations**

Any student who requires special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should contact me to make necessary accommodations (before 8/31 please). Students should present appropriate verification from the Office of Disability Services (703-993-2474). All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

## Diversity Policy

George Mason University is an inclusive community of learners. Your instructor and all classmates should abide by the University's Diversity Policy found at Mason Diversity Statement. <<http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/>>

## Student Privacy

Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See MasonLive<<http://masonlive.gmu.edu/>> and Student Rights <<http://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/>> for more information.

## Student Services

- Writing Center (703-993-1200) <<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>>
- Ask A Librarian <<http://library.gmu.edu/ask>>
- Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380) <<http://caps.gmu.edu/>>

## Grading Scale

The following grading scale from the Graduate Catalog is in effect for this course.

A+	99-100	4.00
A	93-98	4.00
A-	90-92	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.67
C	70-79	2.00
F	69 and below	

## Assignments

### Ongoing Work

#### Readings and online activities [20%]

Each module has a series of activities for you to complete. These activities are hands-on -- they require you to engage with and analyze sources, software tools, databases, search engines, digital projects, and social media. The goal is to extend what you have learned from the assigned readings, and give you experience with, or first hand information about, the issues raised in the readings.

The activities are assessed as PASS/FAIL. If you complete the task, you will receive a PASS grade, and full marks for that portion of the final grade. This grading policy is in keeping with the design of these activities as learning experiences. The success of the tasks does not depend on whether your answers or the products of your experiments are 'correct' or not; what matters to the learning outcomes is that you experiment and offer, and revise, interpretations.

- No late work will be accepted.

### **Blog as reflection space (10) [30%]**

Your blog will serve as the home base for most of your written work during the semester. You will be able to read the work of your classmates and engage with their reflections on the issues raised by our readings and activities. Thus, the majority of our intellectual work for the semester will take place in public.

- Module 1 Reflection Due: January 22, 2016 [3%]
- Module 2 Reflection Due: January 27, 2016 [3%]
- Module 3 Reflection Due: February 10, 2016 [3%]
- Module 4 Reflection Due: February 24, 2016 [3%]
- Module 5 Reflection Due: March 3, 2016 [3%]
- Modules 6-9 Project updates due weekly: March 16, 23, 30, and April 6, 2016 [3% each]
- Module 13 Reflection Due: May 4, 2016 [3%]

### **Major assignments (3) [50%]**

- Physical site/Digital Presence Comparison Review (Due: February 3, 2016) [5%]
- Personas [10%]
  - Drafts Due: February 10, 2016
  - Final Due: February 24, 2016
- Major Digital Public History Project [35%]
  - Project Proposal Due: February 24, 2016 [5%]
  - Penultimate Draft/Prototype Due: April 13, 2016 [10%]
  - Peer Review Due: April 27, 2016
  - Pitch Video or Screencast Due: April 27, 2016 [5%]
  - Final Project Due: May 4, 2016 [15%]

### **Meetings (Video Conference)**

- Group Sessions (3)
  - Introductory Module (January 20, 2016)
  - Survey of the Field (January 27, 2016)
  - Narrative Interpretation (March 2, 2016)
- One-on-one with the instructor (2)
  - February 10 or 17, 2016
  - April 19 or 20, 2016

# SCHEDULE

## Topic: Introduction: History with the Public

Explore the origins of the field of public history and its major methodological commitments.

### Module 1: Roots of Public History

Wednesday, January 20, 2016 (Online meeting 8pm)

\*\* If you haven't taken Intro to Digital Humanities:

1. Sign up for a domain name and hosting space with Reclaim Hosting:  
<http://reclaimhosting.com/>
2. Install and customize WordPress:  
<http://docs.reclaimhosting.com/Getting-Started-with-Reclaim-Hosting/Installing-WordPress/> (with help at a pre-session if necessary)
  - a. Blog set-up refresher (Getting Started with WordPress:  
[https://codex.wordpress.org/Getting\\_Started\\_with\\_WordPress](https://codex.wordpress.org/Getting_Started_with_WordPress))

#### Readings:

- Ronald J. Grele, "Whose Public? Whose History? What is the Goal of Public History?" *The Public Historian*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Winter, 1981), 40-48.
- Denise D. Meringolo, *Museums, Monuments, and National Parks: Toward a New Genealogy of Public History* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 2012). (Prologue and Conclusion).
- Barbara Howe, "Reflections on an Idea: The First Decade of NCPH," *The Public Historian*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (Summer 1989), pp. 69-85.  
<http://ncph.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/NCPHsFirstDecade.pdf>
- History@Work Reflections on the Founding:  
<http://publichistorycommons.org/reflections-on-the-founding-of-ncph/>
- John Dichtl and Robert B. Townsend, "A Picture of Public History: Preliminary Results from the Survey of Public History Professionals," *Perspectives on History*, September 2009,  
<http://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/september-2009/a-picture-of-public-history>

#### Activities:

- Pre-survey
- Introductory post on your blog
- Reading Response Blog Post

## Module 2: Survey of the field (Week 2)

Wednesday, January 27, 2016

### Reading:

- Sam Wineburg, "Thinking Like a Historian,":  
[http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/quarterly/historical\\_thinking/article.html](http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/quarterly/historical_thinking/article.html)
- Review *Journal of American History* guidelines for reviewing websites:  
<http://jah.oah.org/submit/digital-history-reviews/>

### Activities:

- Revising Review Guidelines
- Comparative review of digital public history projects from three eras.
- Reading Response Blog Post

Wednesday, February 3, 2016

**Major assignment:** One paragraph project idea/elevator pitch for a digital public history project

**Major assignment:** Comparative Review of physical public history site and digital presence

## Module 3: Audience, Dialogue, and Co-Creation

Wednesday, February 10, 2016

### Reading:

- John Kuo Wei Tchen, "Creating a Dialogic Museum: The Chinatown History Museum Experiment," in *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, edited by Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer, and Steven D. Lavine (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992) 285-326.
- Katharine T. Corbett and Howard S. (Dick) Miller, "A Shared Inquiry into Shared Inquiry," *The Public Historian*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Winter 2006) 15-38.
- Michael Frisch, "From A Shared Authority to the Digital Kitchen, and Back," in *Letting Go?: Sharing Historical Authority in a User-Generated World*. Edited by Bill Adair, Benjamin Filene, and Laura Koloski (Philadelphia: The Pew Center for Arts and Heritage, 2011) 126-137.
- Erika Hall, "Interviewing Humans," A List Apart, September 10, 2013,  
<http://alistapart.com/article/interviewing-humans>
- Example: Darren Milligan, "Our Personas: Introducing Naomi, Javier, Samantha, and Nicole," *Smithsonian Learning Lab*, March 23, 2015,  
<http://learninglab.si.edu/news/2015/03/our-personas-introducing-naomi-javier-samantha-and-nicole/>.
- Shlomo Goltz, "A Closer Look At Personas: What They Are And How They Work (Part 1)," Smashing Magazine, August 6, 2014,  
<http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2014/08/06/a-closer-look-at-personas-part-1/>

- Shlomo Goltz, “A Closer Look At Personas: A Guide To Developing The Right Ones (Part 2),” Smashing Magazine, August 13, 2014, <http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2014/08/13/a-closer-look-at-personas-part-2/>
- “Three Technology Revolutions,” Pew Research Center, <http://www.pewinternet.org/three-technology-revolutions/>

#### Activities:

- Articulating Primary and Secondary Audiences
- Research Protocol
- End User Interviews
- User Research Findings
- Persona Construction
- Reading response blog
- Meet individually with the instructor (half of the group)

### Topic: Interpretive Basics

Explore the foundations of interpretive work in digital public history by investigating, creating, and describing digital collections. Then, put these collections to work by planning and building interpretive exhibits.

#### Module 4: Collections

Wednesday, February 17, 2016

#### Reading

- Trevor Owens, “What Do You Mean by Archive? Genres of Usage for Digital Preservers | The Signal: Digital Preservation,” Blog, The Signal: Digital Preservation, (February 27, 2014), <http://blogs.loc.gov/digitalpreservation/2014/02/what-do-you-mean-by-archive-genres-of-usage-for-digital-preservers/>.
- “Metadata,” JISC Digital Media, <http://www.jiscdigitalmedia.ac.uk/infokit/metadata/metadata-home>
- Sheila A Brennan and T. Mills Kelly, “Why Collecting History Online Is Web 1.5,” Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, March 2009, <http://chnm.gmu.edu/essays-on-history-new-media/essays/?essayid=47>.
- Martin Kalfatovic, et al. “Smithsonian Team Flickr: a library, archives, and museums collaboration in web 2.0 space,” Archival Science (October 2009), available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10502-009-9089-y>
- Tim Sherratt, “It’s All About the Stuff: Collections, Interfaces, Power, and People,” *Journal of Digital Humanities* 1, no. 1 (March 9, 2012), <http://journalofdigitalhumanities.org/1-1/its-all-about-the-stuff-by-tim-sherratt/>

- Michael Whitelaw, "Generous Interfaces for Digital Cultural Heritage Collections," *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (2015)  
<http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/9/1/000205/000205.html>

#### Activities:

- Play Metadata Games: <http://www.metadatagames.org/>
- Explore community engagement sites:
  - Hurricane Digital Memory Bank, <http://hurricanearchive.org>
  - Baltimore Uprising: <http://baltimoreuprising2015.org/>
  - Flickr Commons, <http://flickr.com/commons/>
  - National Archives, Citizen Archivist Dashboard, <http://www.archives.gov/citizen-archivist/>
- Begin building a collection in an Omeka site
- Meet individually with the instructor (half of the group)
- Reading response blog

**Wednesday, February 26, 2016**

**Major assignment:** Personas and Project Proposal

#### Module 5: Narrative Interpretation

**Wednesday, March 2, 2016**

#### Readings:

- Spichiger, L., J. Jacobson, Telling an Old Story in a New Way: Raid on Deerfield: The Many Stories of 1704 , in J. Trant and D. Bearman (eds.). *Museums and the Web 2005: Proceedings*, Toronto: Archives & Museum Informatics, published March 31, 2005.  
<http://www.museumsandtheweb.com/mw2005/papers/spichiger/spichiger.html>
- Richard Rabinowicz, "Eavesdropping at the Well: Interpretive Media in the *Slavery in New York* Exhibition," *Public Historian* 35:3 (August 2013), pp. 8-45
- Sanabria, Juan, Jason Reinier and Peter Samis. "Particle or Wave? Linear and Non-linear Storytelling in Museums." *MW2014: Museums and the Web 2014*. Published February 4, 2014. Consulted June 29, 2015.  
<http://mw2014.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/mw-2014-paper-particle-or-wave-linear-and-non-linear-storytelling-in-museums/>
- Wyman, B., Smith, S., Meyers, D. and Godfrey, M. (2011), "[Digital Storytelling in Museums: Observations and Best Practices.](#)" *Curator: The Museum Journal*, 54:4 (October 2011): 461–468.
- Steve Lubar, "The Curator Rules," *On Public Humanities*, February 7, 2015, <https://stevenlubar.wordpress.com/2015/02/07/creative-curation-curatorial-rules-and-when-to-break-them/> .
- Steve Lubar, "Exhibit and Exhibit Labels Workshop," *On Public Humanities*, March 31, 2015, <http://stevenlubar.net/curation/exhibit-and-exhibit-labels-workshop/>. (Review both sets of slides.)



- Shawn Medero, "[Paper Prototyping.](#)" *A List Apart* (January 23, 2007).
- Suzanne Fischer, "Developing your Synthetic Powers," *History@Work*, (March 13, 2015) <http://publichistorycommons.org/developing-your-synthetic-powers/>
- Erin Kissane, "A Checklist for Content Work," *A List Apart*, March 8, 2011, <http://alistapart.com/article/a-checklist-for-content-work>.
- Angela Colter, "Testing Content," *A List Apart*, December 14, 2010, <http://alistapart.com/article/testing-content> (Maybe this moves to the week on evaluation)

## Activities

- Explore Sites:
  - The Raid on Deerfield, <http://1704.deerfield.history.museum/>
  - Slavery in New York, <http://www.slaveryinnewyork.org/>
  - A More Perfect Union, <http://amhistory.si.edu/perfectunion/experience/>
  - Gulag: Many Days, Many Lives, <http://gulaghistory.org/>
- Storyboard an interpretive experience (Don't forget to consider the needs of the Personas you developed in Module 3 as you are designing these user workflows.)
- Create a content template for an interpretive element using Kissane's basic principles as a guide: "Content Template" in Erin Kissane, *The Elements of Content Strategy*, A Book Apart, 2011, 64-65.
- Begin building out the infrastructure for your DPH project
  - Active the Exhibit Builder Plugin in your Omeka site ([http://omeka.org/codex/Managing\\_Plugins\\_2.0](http://omeka.org/codex/Managing_Plugins_2.0))
  - Create an Exhibit and the subsequent pages that might be necessary for your work. ([http://omeka.org/codex/Plugins/ExhibitBuilder\\_3.0](http://omeka.org/codex/Plugins/ExhibitBuilder_3.0))
  - Use the materials from your content template to guide the content creation for at least one section of your exhibit.
- Reading response blog

## Topic: Genres

In practice, digital public history can take many, many forms. These modules introduce the genres of local and community history, oral history, place-based interpretation, and social media driven work.

### Four weeks of Flex Modules:

- **Wednesday, March 16, 2016**
- **Wednesday, March 23, 2016**
- **Wednesday, March 30, 2016**
- **Wednesday, April 6, 2016**

## Module 6: Local Sites and Community History [Flex order]

### Readings:

- Tammy S. Gordon, "Community Exhibition: History, Identity, and Dialogue," *Private History in Public: Exhibition and the Settings of Everyday Life* (Lanham: AltaMira Press, 2010). 33-57 plus notes.
- Lauren Gutterman, "OutHistory.org: An Experiment in LGBTQ Community History-Making," *The Public Historian* (32:4) (2010).

### Activities

- Digital Communities
- Explore Sites
  - The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia, <http://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/>
  - Connecticut History, <http://connecticuthistory.org/>
  - Baltimore '68: Riots and Rebirth, <http://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/index.html>
  - <http://www.outhistory.org>
  - The Postville Project, <http://www.postvilleproject.org/>
  - Virtual Watervliet, <http://virtual.shakerheritage.org/>
- Reading/website response blog post
- Project progress update blog post

## Module 7: Oral History [Flex order]

### Readings:

- Boyd, Doug. "[OHMS: Enhancing Access to Oral History for Free.](#)" *Oral History Review* 40, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 95–106. doi:10.1093/ohr/oht031.
- Groce, Nancy, and Bertram Lyons. "[Designing a National Online Oral History Collecting Initiative: The Occupational Folklore Project at the American Folklife Center.](#)" *Oral History Review* 40, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 54–66. doi:10.1093/ohr/oht018.

### Activities:

- Explore Sites:
  - Oral History in the Digital Age, <http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu/>
  - Nevada Test Site Oral History Project, <http://digital.library.unlv.edu/ntsohp/>
  - Bracero History Archive, <http://bracerohistory.org>
  - American Folklife Center, <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/>
- Annotating Oral History OHMS
- Reading/website response blog post
- Project progress update blog post

## Module 8: Landscape, Mobile [Flex Order]

### Readings:

- Deborah Boyer and Josh Marcus, "[Implementing Mobile Augmented Reality Applications for Cultural Institutions.](#)" *Museums and the Web* 2011.
- T. Hart & J. Brownbill, Storyteller – World War One: Love and Sorrow – A hybrid exhibition mobile experience. In *Museums and the Web Asia 2014*, N. Proctor & R. Cherry (eds). Silver Spring, MD: Museums and the Web. Published September 19, 2014. Consulted June 29, 2015.  
<http://mwa2014.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/storyteller-world-war-one-love-and-sorrow-a-hybrid-exhibition-mobile-experience/>
- Baer, Brad, Emily Fry, and Daniel Davis. "Beyond the Screen: Creating interactives that are location, time, preference, and skill responsive." *MW2014: Museums and the Web 2014*. Published February 1, 2014. Consulted June 29, 2015.  
<http://mw2014.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/beyond-the-screen-creating-interactives-that-are-location-time-preference-and-skill-responsive/>
- Tebeau, Mark. "[Listening to the City: Oral History and Place in the Digital Era.](#)" *Oral History Review* 40, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 25–35. doi:10.1093/ohr/oht037.
- *Building Histories of the National Mall: a Guide to Creating a Digital Public History Project* (Fairfax VA: RRCHNM, October 2015): <http://mallhistory.org/Guide/>

### Activities:

- Exploring Sites:
  - CurateScape, <http://curatescape.org/> (tool)
  - Spokane Historical, <http://spokanehistorical.org/>
  - Histories of the National Mall, <http://mallhistory.org>
  - Driving through Time: The Digital Blue Ridge Parkway, [http://docsouth.unc.edu/blueridgeparkway/about/about\\_parkway/parkway/](http://docsouth.unc.edu/blueridgeparkway/about/about_parkway/parkway/)
  - Museum of London, Street Museum, <http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/Resources/app/you-are-here-app/home.html>
  - Walking Cinema: Murder on Beacon Hill, <http://www.parkmanmurder.com/>
- Exploring your landscape with mobile digital public history
- Reading/website response blog post
- Project progress update blog post

## Module 9: Social Media [Flex Order]

### Readings:

- Dana Allen-Greil, Susan Edwards, Jack Ludden, and Eric Johnson, "[Social Media and Organizational Change.](#)" *Museums and the Web* 2011.
- Bomboy, Scott, and Rebecca Sherman. "Success Strategies for Engaging Audiences with Museum Website Blogs." *MW2014: Museums and the Web 2014*. Published February 24, 2014. Consulted June 29, 2015.

<http://mw2014.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/success-strategies-for-engaging-audiences-with-museum-website-blogs/>

- N. Dudareva, "Museums in social media." In *Museums and the Web 2013*, N. Proctor & R. Cherry (eds). Silver Spring, MD: Museums and the Web. Published June 1, 2014. Consulted June 29, 2015.  
<http://mwf2014.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/museums-in-social-media/>
- Anne Lindsay, "#VirtualTourist: Embracing Our Audience through Public History Web Experience," *The Public Historian* 35, no. 1 (February 1, 2013): 67–86, doi:10.1525/tp.2013.35.1.67.
- Noam Cohen, "History Comes to Life With Tweets From Past," *The New York Times*, November 17, 2013,  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/18/business/media/history-comes-to-life-with-tweets-from-the-past.html>.
- Diana Reese, "Quantrill Rides Again to Lawrence: This Time on Twitter #QR1863 - The Washington Post," *The Washington Post*, August 21, 2013,  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/she-the-people/wp/2013/08/21/quantill-rides-again-to-lawrence-this-time-on-twitter-qr1863/>.

#### Activities:

- Explore Sites (blogs)
  - History@Work (NCPH): <http://publichistorycommons.org/>
  - O Say Can You See?: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/blog>
  - Indiana Historical Society: <http://www.indianahistory.org/blog>
  - Rediscovering Black History (NARA): <http://blogs.archives.gov/blackhistoryblog/>
- Explore Sites (time-based):
  - Ford's Theatre event marking the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's Assassination: <https://storify.com/FordsTheatre/fords150> and <http://www.fordstheatre.org/home/performances-events/civil-war-150>
  - #QR1863 -- Quatrill's Raid, Live Twitter Reenactment: <https://twitter.com/hashtag/QR1863> Roll back to August 27, 2013.
  - Heinz History Center: <https://twitter.com/historycenter>
  - Lincoln's Cottage: <https://twitter.com/LincolnsCottage>
  - Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History: <https://twitter.com/santacruzmah>
  - Ask a Curator day on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/hashtag/AskACurator>
  - Museums Respond to Ferguson: <https://twitter.com/hashtag/museumsrespondtoferguson>
- Social Media Planning
- Project progress update blog post

## Topic: Prototypes and Evaluation

Build a prototype of your digital public history project and create an evaluation plan to accompany your work.

### Module 10: Drafts

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

#### Activities:

- Submission of materials (by April 13, 2016)

### Module 11: Evaluation

Wednesday, April 20, 2016

#### Readings:

- Hallie Preskill, "[Museum Evaluation without Borders: Four Imperatives for Making Museum Evaluation More Relevant, Credible, and Useful.](#)" *Curator: The Museum Journal* 54:1 (Jan. 2011): 93-100.
- Craig MacDonald, "Assessing the User Experience (UX) of Online Museum Collections: Perspectives from Design and Museum Professionals," *MW2015: Museums and the Web 2015*, February 1, 2015, <http://mw2015.museumsandtheweb.com/paper/assessing-the-user-experience-ux-of-online-museum-collections-perspectives-from-design-and-museum-professionals/>.
- Aaron Mentele, "Following Through with Post-Launch Strategy," *A List Apart*, July 23, 2013, <http://alistapart.com/article/following-through-with-post-launch-strategy>
- "The Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation, Second Edition," (January 5, 2010): [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/program\\_managers\\_guide\\_to\\_eval2010.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/program_managers_guide_to_eval2010.pdf)
- "Shaping Outcomes" Modules: <http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/course/index.htm>

#### Activities:

- Explore IMLS Evaluation Resources: <https://www.imls.gov/research-evaluation/evaluation-resources>
- Draft an evaluation plan for your project
- Meet individually with the Instructor

### Module 12: Penultimate Project Presentations

Wednesday, April 27, 2016

#### Activity:

- Review the prototype materials from your assigned buddy

- Project Presentation

## Topic: Final Projects Due

Complete your final project and share it with the world.

### Module 13: Final Materials

Wednesday, May 4, 2016

#### Activities:

- Submit the Final URL
- Blog post on the process

## MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

### Physical/Digital Presence Comparative Review

In this activity, you will analyze the representation of history in two, related environments: a physical exhibit or site, and on the web. The goal is to get a feel for the ways that interpretation and engagement vary in the two spaces.

- 1) Do some research to select a public history site to visit that also has an online presence. This might be a history museum, a state or county historical society, an historic house museum, or historic site near you. Please stick to public history sites; art and natural history museums are great, but they're not really the focus here.
- 2) Make a visit to the physical site. If it is a large institution, you may want to focus on a particular exhibition. Approach the site as a researcher, taking notes along the way:
  - a) What is the argument about history embodied in the site? How well does the physical design communicate that argument? What is the interpretive point of view?
  - b) Who is the primary audience for this work? What types of visitors are actually in the space?
  - c) What are the primary items used to communicate the interpretation? What supports are used to frame and contextualize the materials?
  - d) How is the site laid out? Is it easy to navigate? Does it encourage a single flow of traffic?
  - e) Are there any interactive elements in the physical space? What are they and how effective are they?
  - f) Are their curators/interpreters/docents in the space? How are they interacting with the public?
  - g) How would you change the physical exhibit to make it more effective?

- 3) Visit the digital presence for the public history site or exhibition that you analyzed. Do a similar review of the website:
  - a) What is the argument about history that is embodied in the digital representation? How well does the design communicate that argument? What is the interpretive point of view of the site?
  - b) Who is the primary audience for this work? How well does it succeed in delivering materials that are appropriate for that audience? What assumptions does it make about the audience?
  - c) How is the site laid out? Is it easy to navigate? Does it encourage a single flow of traffic?
  - d) What kinds of content does the site offer? How does this differ from the content that resides in the physical space?
  - e) Does the site have participatory or interactive elements? What are they? What does the user take away from these experiences?
  - f) Are there opportunities to interact with the site's creators? If so, how? Is this interaction central to the success of the site?
  - g) How would you change the digital experience to make it more effective?
- 4) Write a comparative review of the two sites. The review essay should be no longer than 1,500 words. Include a clear header that identifies both the physical and the digital sites and their producers. Post the review essay to your blog.

## **Personas**

Within the course site you will draft and revise two user personas to use with your work on your Major Digital Public History Project. Each persona should include fully articulated descriptions of a composite character's:

1. name,
2. demographic data,
3. descriptive title,
4. photograph,
5. quote,
6. a day-in-the-life narrative,
7. end goals (explicit and tacit).

## **Major Digital Public History Project**

For your major project for this course, you will design and develop a prototype digital public history project. These projects will require that you balance rigorous history scholarship and digital development skills, while designing for specific public user groups. Possible project types include:

- an website that offers content and interpretation on an historic person, place, or event
- a participatory website that offers members of the public the opportunity to contribute, describe, or remix historical materials
- a multi-platform campaign that is tied to an anniversary or memorialization
- a tool or platform that supports users in doing their own historical work
- a platform that brings members of a community together to engage with one another about the role of history in contemporary issues

The project work will proceed through several development stages, including a proposal, a draft stage, peer review and feedback, a video/screencast presentation, and the completion of the final project:

A **proposal** (600 words) should include a description of the history questions and content to be included; a description of the digital technologies to be mobilized in the work and the key features of the prototype; a description of the target audiences and how the project will reach them.

A **draft prototype** should be as close to complete as possible, including all primary source content, metadata, additional interpretive content, and all functional technical elements.

**Peer review** feedback should be provided based on the following criteria:

- Historical content and interpretation
- Audience engagement and usability
- Appropriateness of technology

A **video/screencast presentation** of no more than 3 minutes should introduce a member of the general public to your project. The presentation should address the project's major historical questions and content, the intended audience, and its digital features.

The final prototype of your project should demonstrate all of the major features of your proposed work with enough depth of content and functionality that a user can get a sense of the ways that a larger implementation would address key historical questions and content, and use digital technologies to share that material with a public audience.

Important Dates:

- Project Proposal Due: February 24, 2016
- Penultimate Draft/Prototype Due: April 13, 2016
- Peer Review Due: April 27, 2016
- Presentation: April 27, 2016
- Final Project Due: May 4, 2016