

REVISED 12/19/16
History 204B Winter Quarter 2017
The Many Professions of History
Wednesdays, 4pm-6:50pm
Bunche 6265 (Department Reading Room)

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COURSE WEBSITE: <https://moodle2.sscnet.ucla.edu/course/view/17W-HIST204B-1>

COURSE DESCRIPTION: A professional development seminar with a practicum component, this course focuses primarily on exploring and demonstrating the ways in which the skills of historians are transferable to a variety of professions and exercised in diverse ways and roles. It requires students to engage in a collaborative project and be an active, reflective participant in producing an innovative experience of historical understanding. It asks students to engage with questions about the actual and possible roles and responsibilities of historians in 21st century society. It allows students to examine where have historians been, where are they now, where can they be, and where should they be as highly educated, actively engaged members of society.

As is typical, the seminar requires students to familiarize themselves with these subjects through critical readings and in-depth discussions. Atypically, the course requires students to engage in a collaborative applied research project designed to facilitate the acquisition and practice of a variety of skills useful in the numerous professions of historians. The project assignment intentionally aims to move students outside the carrel, classroom, and archive to diversify and expand their experiences with the practice of history. Student learning and reflection is facilitated through a combination of a customary seminar structure with practicum activities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: As preparation for careers in the range of professions practiced by History Ph.D.s, the course aims to:

- 1) facilitate student exploration and understanding of the many different professional applications of Ph.D. training and skills;
- 2) help students acquire and/or improve skills in written and oral communications, collaboration, digital literacy, and quantitative literacy through practice and assessment;
- 3) improve students' intellectual confidence and self-presentation through practice and assessment.

EVALUATION: Grading for the course is letter grade or satisfactory/unsatisfactory. Assignments in the course will receive the following weights. For collaborative work, grades will be determined by student's individual contribution, by peer assessment, and by the overall quality of the final project.

Collaborative applied research project design and proof-of-concept paper	50%
Collaborative project presentation with visual/digital illustrations	25%
Course and project written reflections (blog posts)	25%

Students will be asked to assess their individual contributions as well as those of their team members to an assigned collaborative applied research project and presentation. Those assessments will inform (not determine) the final project grade, which will be collectively assigned (i.e., everyone gets the same project grade). The assessments and final project grade will be based on the following criteria:

- Were team roles, objectives, and timelines clearly articulated, tracked and documented? Did team members understand their roles, objectives, and timelines?
- Did the team deliver well-written, well-documented, and well-designed original audience-appropriate content? Did individual team members fulfill their assignments as expected?
- Did the team meet the project goals within the specified timeline?
- Were the deliverables acceptable to the project manager or potential outside collaborator/client?

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

Active participation in all seminar meetings is required. There are some common required readings/viewings that will be part of class discussions.

Contributions to a Class Documentary/Mentoring Blog

Each student will be responsible for writing two 300-500 word blog posts for the course web site. These posts are aimed at professional peers and intended to (1) capture/document the experience of the course and project and (2) offer mentoring advice to students who take the course in the future. Students will sign up for two dates on which to submit their posts during the quarter.

Each student will be responsible for editing/reviewing two blog posts by other students in the course. The point of the editorial review comments is to help the blog writer improve as a communicator. Students will sign up for two dates on which to review other students' posts during the quarter.

Collaborative Applied Research Project

Students will work in teams of 3 to 5 people to produce a design and proof-of-concept paper with a model contribution to the 1919 Project, a student-driven research and applied history enterprise (see below for more details about the project). The design will help shape the larger project and the model contributions will serve as prototypical elements as well as examples for future student contributors to emulate. Each team will have a pre-defined set of goals that it will be expected to meet by the end of the quarter. Students will be organized into project teams and receive their specific contribution assignments at the first class meeting.

Each project assignment will require collaboration, planning, time management, and interaction with a variety of people. Each team will deliver oral updates on work plans and accomplishments (periodically beginning **week 3**); a formal class presentation of its research and model designs (**week 5**); a written design concept, research summary, model description, and contribution draft (**week 8**), and a final customized live presentation on its design and contribution to an invited audience along with a final written design document (**week 10**). The projects are intended to aid students in developing diverse communications skills, collaboration skills, intellectual confidence, and, in some cases, technology-related and quantitative skills. Projects are structured to provide hands-on experience with real-world tasks that are increasingly required of historians.

The 1919 Project

The 1919 Project is a multi-faceted, course-based, long-term public history venture initiated by the History Department. Guided by faculty, undergraduate and graduate History students will work collaboratively to develop and sustain a set of activities, events, and resources to capture and convey the many histories of UCLA. Attentive to intellectual rigor and committed to making history useful to the UCLA community and the broader public, the 1919 Project has two goals: (1) to provide innovative experiential learning opportunities for students using the tools and methods of the discipline of history; and (2) to produce accessible, comprehensive, multilayered, engaging insights into the past that created today's UCLA.

Participants in the 1919 Project will contribute to public talks and seminars, artifact-rich exhibitions, and podcasts featuring student research, among other public activities and outcomes. Further, a website and digital archive will be created as an on-going repository for student-produced historical narratives and analyses, video and audio recordings of events, crowd-sourced contributions of UCLA-related memories and documents, and other resources. The 1919 Project will continue beyond the university's centennial year, deepening its utility for future generations of students, scholars, and supporters of the university.

Required Books

Nina Simon, *The Art of Relevance* (Santa Cruz, Museum 2.0, 2016)

Patricia A. Pelfrey, *A Brief History of the University of California*, Second Edition (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004)

CLASS TOPICS & READINGS

Week 1 – Introduction and Overview (January 11)

- Review of the course structure, objectives, assignments, and deliverables.
- Review of project options; organization of project teams; and explanation of assignment details.
- Sign up for blog entries and editing assignments.
- In-class activity: “Pitch Your [Personal] Project” and teamwork simulation.

Week 2 – Historians as Independent Scholars (January 18)

- Discussion of the history of University of California and resources for researching UCLA historical topics.
- In-class activity: Walk through all project deliverables.

Guest: **Becky Nicolaides**, Independent Scholar

Required Readings before class:

Patricia A. Pelfrey, *A Brief History of the University of California*

Shelley Bookspan, “Something Ventured, Many Things Gained: Reflections on Being a Historian-Entrepreneur,” *The Public Historian*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Winter 2006)

http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/tph.2006.28.1.67?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

Week 3 – Historians as Creators (January 25)

- Discussion of different audiences and different media for communicating history and historical insights.
- Team progress reports.
- In-class activity: Teams brainstorm how the 1919 Project could be done as a television program and develop 3-minute pitch to deliver to guest speaker.
- In-class viewing with guest speaker: WDYTYA episodes

Guest: **Melissa Betts**, Producer, “Who Do You Think You Are?” documentary television series

Required Readings/Viewings before class:

“What If Your High School History Teacher Had Been Totally Wasted? Behind the scenes of Comedy Central's hilarious new show, ‘Drunk History,’” *Mother Jones*, July 3, 2013

<http://m.motherjones.com/media/2013/07/comedy-central-drunk-history-will-ferrell-funny-die-jeremy-konner-derek-waters>

Drunk History webisodes - <http://www.cc.com/shows/drunk-history>

Week 4 – Historians as Museum Professionals (February 1)

- Discussion of historians engaged in the practice of history in museums and the role of scholarship in society and historians with the public.
- Team progress reports.
- In-class activity: Using the Simon book as a guide, groups (not project teams) propose a specific exhibition or educational activity based on a historical topic related to UCLA and oriented to an imagined visitor/participant drawn from a random list of possibilities (e.g., first grader, tween, undergrad, retiree, person with intellectual challenges, potential funder, etc.)

Guest: **Carolyn Brucken**, Curator, Western Women’s History, Autry National Center

Required Readings before class:

Nina Simon, *The Art of Relevance* (Santa Cruz, Museum 2.0, 2016)

Week 5 – Historians as Innovators (February 8)

- Discussion of new and emerging forms of historical research, analysis, teaching, curation, publishing, and public engagement.
- Project team presentations: Formal outline of project plan, roles, objectives, and process by each team (~15 minutes each).

Guest (via Skype): **Rachel Deblinger**, Director, Digital Scholarship Commons, UCSC Library

Required Reading/Viewings before class:

Todd Presner, “Welcome to the 20-Year Dissertation,” *The Chronicle of Higher Learning*, November 25, 2013. <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Welcome-to-the-20-Year/143223>

Molly Osberg, The Assassin’s Creed curriculum: can video games teach us history?

<http://www.theverge.com/2014/9/18/6132933/the-assassins-creed-curriculum-can-video-games-teach-us-history>

Website: Mapping the Republic of Letters <http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/>

Website: MicroPasts <http://micropasts.org/>

Website: 15 Minute History <http://15minutehistory.org/>

Week 6 – Historians as Advisors, Opinion Shapers and Policy-makers (February 15)

NOTE: *This class will meet only from 4-5:15pm as students are expected to attend the “Why History Matters” program on February 16 featuring the current and past mayors of Los Angeles.*

- Discussion of historians in the arenas of government service, public policy and politics.
- In-class activity: Class brainstorm on topics and questions to raise with the mayors the next evening.

Required Readings before class:

Rick Perlstein, "What Gay Studies Taught the Court," *The Washington Post*, July 13, 2003.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/opinions/2003/07/13/what-gay-studies-taught-the-court/d8e3988c-dfa7-498c-a281-15d2b043a3a0/?utm_term=.e322c7c82da4

Neeta Krishna, "A Think Tank History: A View from India," On Think Tanks, August 6, 2014.

<https://onthinktanks.org/articles/a-think-tank-history-a-view-from-india/>

David Armitage, "Why politicians need historians," *The Guardian*, October 7, 2014.

<http://www.theguardian.com/education/2014/oct/07/why-politicians-need-historians>

Office of Mayor of Los Angeles and brief history

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mayor_of_Los_Angeles

Week 7 – Historians as Leaders (February 22)

- Discussion of historians engaged in leading organizations, altering institutions, and challenging conventions.
- Team progress reports.
- In-class activity: Class brainstorm about naming/renaming Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center - how historical case could be made to retain or rename; how consensus could be built for either position, how either position could be communicated to campus community and broader public.

Guest: **Rosalind Remer**, Vice Provost & Lenfest Executive Director, Center for Cultural Partnerships, Drexel University

Required Reading before class:

Michael H. Schill. OU's Dunn and Deady Halls - Next Steps (*Note: Read the letter and all of the related documents referenced and linked to it.*)

<https://president.uoregon.edu/content/deady-and-dunn-halls-next-steps>

Kenneth R. Weiss, "UCLA to Name Medical Center for Ronald Reagan," *Los Angeles Times*, April 20, 2000, <http://articles.latimes.com/2000/apr/20/news/mn-21584>

Week 8 - Historians as Communicators (March 1)

DUE FROM EACH TEAM: Written draft project concept, research summary, and model project contribution.

- In-class activity: Short team presentations of draft concept and model contribution.
- In-class activity: Workshop on presentation design and visual communications.

Guest: **Patrick Frederickson**, designer

Required Readings before class:

John Theibault, Stephen Robertson, Laura Zucconi et al, "Part 5. See What I Mean? Visual, Spatial, and Game-Based History," in *Writing History in the Digital Age*, Kristen Nawrotzki; Jack Dougherty, eds. (Digital Culture Books, 2013).

<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/d/dh/12230987.0001.001/1:8/--writing-history-in-the-digital-age?g=dculture;rgn=div1;view=fulltext;xc=1>

Week 9 – Cutting Edge History: Practicing History in the Future (March 8)

- Discussion of how will historians practice history in 5-10-20 years in the future? What needs to change in how historians are trained? What is your future in history? How will you achieve it?
- In-class activity: Rehearsal and critique of formal presentations of project design concept and model project contribution.

Guest: none

Required Readings before class:

William Cronon, "Storytelling," *The American Historical Review* (2013) 118 (1): 1-19.

<http://ahr.oxfordjournals.org/content/118/1/1.full.pdf+html>

Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession*, pp. 510-521 – **excerpt on class web site under Week 9**

Week 10 – Final Project Presentations to invited guests (March 15)

DUE FROM EACH TEAM: Written final project concept, research summary, and model project contribution.