

HIST 4430: MUSEUM STUDIES
CRN 81150, 3 credit hours
Tuesday, 12:30 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.
SO 2027
Fall 2009

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer W. Dickey
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Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday – 3:30 p.m.-5:00 p.m. or by appointment
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Course description: A broad introduction to the museum world and the functions of museums in American society with an emphasis on history museums. Subjects covered will include museum management, collections management, education, interpretation, exhibit design, ethics, and scholarly criticism of museums.

The class will combine lectures by the instructor and guest lecturers, in-class discussion, case studies, readings, and field trips to achieve the goals specified below.

Course Goals: At the completion of this course you should demonstrate the following:

- understanding of the history of history museums in the United States
- understanding of the interpretive techniques employed by history museums
- understanding of the current issues of debate in the museum field
- understanding of the importance of ethical practices in museums
- ability to develop an exhibit or program for a history museum

Required Readings:

Donnelly, Jessica Foy, ed. *Interpreting Historic House Museums*. Altamira Press, 2002.

Lewis, Catherine. *The Changing Face of Public History: The Chicago Historical Society and the Transformation of an American Museum*. Northern Illinois University Press, 2005.

Additional readings as assigned

Attendance: Students are expected to attend class and to participate in class discussions. If a student is sick or needs to miss class for any reason, he or she should alert the professor in advance by email or by phone. If an absence is deemed justifiable, the student will be given an opportunity to make up the work. More than one unexcused absence will result in a five-point reduction in your final grade.

Participation:

You are expected to participate as well as show up. This means that you ask questions, contribute to class discussions, and generally engage in what's going on in the classroom. To facilitate your engagement, you should read the assignments, arrive on time, **turn off your cell phone**, pay attention, and take notes.

Student Services: The Office of Disabled Student Support Services (Student Center, Room 268A) offers services to aid disabled students with their academic work. Arrangements for special services should be made at the beginning of the semester so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Writing Center: The KSU Writing Center is a free service offered to all KSU students. Experienced, friendly writing assistants work with you throughout the writing process on concerns such as topic development, revision, research, documentation, grammar, and mechanics. Rather than edit your paper for you, writing assistants will help you learn strategies to become a better writer on your own. For more information or to make an appointment (appointments are strongly encouraged), visit <http://www.kennesaw.edu/english/WritingCenter> or stop by Room 242 in the English Building.

Academic Honesty: Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an "informal" resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct's minimum one-semester suspension requirement.

Museum Exhibit Project: During the semester we will work with the staff of the Museum of History and Holocaust Education (MHHE) at Kennesaw State to develop an exhibit about the Tuskegee Airmen. See page 4 of the syllabus for more information.

Historic Site Review: We will take a class field trip to the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site (TUAI) during the semester. You will be required to write a short paper (750-1000 words) on the interpretive program at the TUAI. You should draw on the assigned readings and class discussions in your analysis of the site. Examples of reviews can be found in issues of *The Public Historian* or in *The Journal of American History*. Assignments will be graded on **content and composition**.

Exhibit Review: We will be taking a field trip to the Atlanta History Center during the semester. You will write a short review (750-1000 words) of one of exhibits at the Atlanta History Center (AHC). The paper should include the mission of the AHC and a critical review of the exhibit as it relates to that mission. You should draw on the assigned readings and class discussions in your analysis of the exhibit. Examples of reviews can be found in issues of *The Public Historian* or in *The Journal of American History*. Assignments will be graded on **content and composition**.

Journal: You will be required to keep an online journal (WebCT) throughout the semester as a record of your work on the exhibit project and your reflections on the reading assignments. Journals should include **at least one entry for each week** beginning with the second week of class. Journals should include a brief assessment of the weekly reading assignments and a summary of any work you did on the group project.

Grading:

Exhibition Brief	20%
Historic Site Review	20%
Journal	10%
Exhibit Review	20%
Exhibit Project	30%

Grade Scale: 90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, 0-59=F

Tentative Schedule – (changes will be announced in class)

Aug 18	Introduction – What is a museum? What is an Exhibition Brief? Who were the Tuskegee Airmen?	http://www.aam-us.org/
Aug 25	Introduction to the Museum of History and Holocaust Education Discussion of exhibition project	Meet at MHHE, KSU Center, East entrance http://www.kennesaw.edu/historymuseum/ Guest speaker, Dr. Catherine Lewis, KSU MHHE WebCT – “Exhibit Labels” by Beverly Serrell. Exhibition Brief sample & template
Sep 1	Exhibit design Exhibition Brief due	WebCT – Charles, “Exhibition as (Art) Form,” pp. 97-104. Burnham, “So the Seams Don’t Show,” pp. 105-115.
Sep 8	The history of history museums and the role of museums in America Museum standards & best practices Finalize concept & budget for exhibit	WebCT – “Making Newseum” WebCT – Michael Wallace, “Visiting the Past: History Museums in the United States,” pp. 4-32. http://www.aam-us.org/aboutmuseums/standards/stbp.cfm
Sep 15	Museums and the Culture Wars Preliminary text and images	WebCT – “Politics at the Exhibition,” Timothy Luke.
Saturday Sep 19	Field trip to Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site	Depart at 8:00 a.m. from KSU Center
Sep 22	Field Trip – Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History	2829 Cherokee Street, Kennesaw, GA 30144 http://southernmuseum.com/visitor_info.htm Guest speaker—Jennifer Legates, Director of Curriculum & Educational Initiatives.
Sep 29	Historic House Museums Historic Site Review due Prepare notebook for designer	Donnelly, pp. 18-42, 269-308.
Oct 6	Interpreting Historic House Museums The evolution of museum interpretation Review preliminary design	Donnelly – pp. 43-110, 192-230. WebCT – Carson, “Colonial Williamsburg and the Practice of Interpretive Planning in American History Museums.”
Oct 13	Collections Management First round of edits	WebCT – Museum Ethics, Collections Stewardship, Archaeological Material, Nazi Era Appropriations, Loaning Collections. WebCT –Ettema, “History Museums and the Culture of Materialism,” pp. 62-85.
Oct 20	Urban Historical Societies Prepare press materials & plan for opening	Lewis, Catherine. <i>The Changing Face of Public History</i> Guest Speaker – Dr. Catherine Lewis
Oct 27	Field Trip – Atlanta History Center Meet with curator Don Rooney	130 West Paces Ferry Road NW, Atlanta, GA 30305 http://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/ .
Nov 3	Exhibit Review due Second round of edits & final proof	
Nov 10	Field Trip – Root House Museum	Meet at 1:00 at The Root House, 145 Denmead St. NE, Marietta, GA 30060 (corner of North Marietta Loop and Polk Street) http://www.cobblandmarks.com/root-house.php
Nov 16	Exhibit Installation	
Nov 17	Exhibit Opening	
Nov 24	Museums and controversy Museum management and ethics	WebCT – “Nuclear Reactions,” Timothy Luke. “The Enola Gay Controversy” Michael Hogan. Crane, “Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum,” pp. 44-63
Dec 1	Holocaust & Genocide Museums	“Memorializing Mass Murder,” Timothy Luke
Dec 8		

Museum Exhibition Project

The class will develop a traveling exhibition for the Kennesaw State University Museum of History and Holocaust Education (MHHE) <http://www.kennesaw.edu/historymuseum/>. The exhibit will support the mission of the MHHE, which is to **promote diversity, build character, and encourage respect through exhibits and public programs that are free and open to the public**. The exhibit must support the Georgia Performance Standards (see <http://www.georgiastandards.org/>).

For the duration of the project, you will serve as consultants to the MHHE. That means that you will behave as if you are professional consultants hired to curate this exhibit. You will work closely with the staff of the MHHE. The exhibit will open in the main gallery of the Social Sciences Building at 12:30p.m. on November 17, 2009. In addition to curating the exhibit, you will also be responsible for organizing the opening reception.

Dr. Catherine Lewis, Director of the MHHE, has begun assembling materials in the MHHE resource library. These materials will be available to you during the museum's regular hours (M-F, 10:00-5:00) and at other times if necessary by special request. Additionally, we will take a field trip to the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site on **Saturday, September 19, 2009**. We will visit the sites where the Tuskegee Airmen were trained during WWI at Moton Field and Tuskegee University. **Departure** will be from the **KSU Center at 8:00a.m.** with a return by 6:00p.m. on the same day.

See the following websites for more information on the Tuskegee Airmen:

Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site: <http://www.nps.gov/tuai/>

Tuskegee Airmen Virtual Exhibit: <http://www.nps.gov/history/museum/exhibits/tuskegee/airoverview.htm>

Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site: <http://www.nps.gov/tuin/>

Tuskegee University Airmen Information: <http://www.tuskegee.edu/Global/story.asp?S=1127695>

Tuskegee Airmen, Inc.: <http://www.tuskegeeairmen.org/>

National Museum of the Air Force: <http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/factsheets/factsheet.asp?id=1356>

The following rubric will be used to assess your papers.

A = Excellent. An excellent essay will:

- Have a strong thesis (main point) that is clearly supported by an organized essay
- Provide excellent examples to support your thesis
- Show thorough comprehension of the ideas presented in class and in the reading
- Demonstrate innovative ideas and approaches
- Have strong analyses of material arguments found in lectures, reading, and research
- Contextualize ideas and arguments to the overall historical period
- Have proper citations
- Be written clearly, with few errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation or usage

B = Good. A good essay will:

- Have a valid thesis that is supported by a mostly well-organized essay
- Provide appropriate examples to support your thesis
- Demonstrate comprehension of the ideas presented in class and in the reading
- Analyze the material and arguments found in lectures, reading, and research
- Connect ideas and arguments to the overall historical period
- Have proper citations with few mistakes as per syllabus
- Be written clearly, with minor errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or usage

C = Satisfactory/Average. An average essay will:

- Have a thesis, perhaps flawed, or one that is incompletely supported by the essay
- Provide examples to support your thesis
- Demonstrate basic comprehension of the ideas presented in class and in the reading
- Reveal some incompleteness in the research
- Incompletely analyze the material and arguments found in lectures, reading, and research
- Incompletely connect ideas and arguments to the overall historical period
- Have improper citations
- Be written clearly, with some errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or usage

D = Below Average/Barely Passing. A below average essay will have one or more of the following major problems:

- A weak thesis, or one that is incompletely supported
- Incomplete or weak organization
- Weak examples that do not support the thesis
- Show minimal comprehension of the ideas presented in the class
- Show incomplete research
- Partially analyze material and arguments found in lectures, reading, and research
- Missing or incorrect citations
- Show lack of coherence, or many errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, or usage

F = Failing. A failing essay will receive an “F” if it meets any of the criteria below:

- Does not meet the minimum requirements for a D
- Shows evidence of plagiarism
- Does not fulfill the requirements of the assignment
- Contains an unacceptable amount of compositional errors
- Written in stream-of-consciousness or incoherent argumentation

Historic Site and Exhibit Reviews

You will be required to write two reviews during the semester—one on the Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site and one on an exhibit at the Atlanta History Center. The reviews should be 3-4 pages (750-1000 words) and should provide an analysis of the site or exhibit in terms of organization, design, themes, execution, and issues. The reading assignments throughout the semester are designed to help you develop your critical thinking and analysis skills as they relate to assessing the impact, effectiveness, and quality of public history displays. You should use *Chicago Manual of Style* and include footnotes as appropriate.

Your review should address the following questions:

- What is the mission of the institution that hosts the exhibit or tour?
- How does the exhibit or tour support that mission?
- How is the theme of the exhibition or tour conveyed through the objects, design, and, if appropriate, subsidiary text?
- What kind of bias or perspective does the exhibition or tour have?
- What were the curatorial objectives?
- Is the organization of the exhibition or tour logical?
- Was the exhibition or tour well researched and presented in an appealing fashion?
- What was emphasized or omitted and what impact does that have on the visitor?
- For an exhibit, how does the design shape the visitor's understanding or experience?
- What did the interpretive team do well? What areas could have been improved?
- Who is responsible for the content and design?

A few tips:

- Analyze, do not summarize. The summary of what you saw should be condensed to a short paragraph—just enough to allow the reader to understand what the exhibition or site was all about.
- Read sample reviews in the *Journal of American History* or the *Public Historian*.
- Do not mention every artifact or tidbit of information that was conveyed to you. Be selective. Talk about highlights and lowlights.
- Provide concrete evidence to support your argument and assertions.
- Do not feel that you have to organize your paper to mimic the layout of the exhibition or tour.

**PLEASE PRINT AND SIGN THIS PAGE AND SUBMIT TO THE PROFESSOR
WITHIN THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF CLASS.**

I have read **every page** of the attached syllabus for HIST 4430 and agree to the terms set forth therein.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

KSU ID#: _____