

Administration of Museums and Historic Sites
History 6301, Fall 2015
University of West Georgia and Atlanta History Center

Dr. Ann McCleary, History Department, UWG

678-839-6141, amcclear@westga.edu

Office hours: Monday, 12:30-2, Center for Public History (CPH); Tuesday 11:30-12:30 at the AHC by appointment, Wednesday, 2-4 at CPH, Thursday, 1-4 at CPH, and other hours by appointment.

Class meetings: 12:30-3, Kenan Research Center Reading Room, Atlanta History Center

Course Objectives

The goal of this class is to introduce students to the wide range of administrative responsibilities that one might encounter at a museum or historic site. Directors and administrators wear a variety of hats in their daily interactions with staff, volunteers, board members, and the general public. While overseeing the daily operations of the museum or historic site, the director must also develop strategic plans as well as plan for projects and events ensure funding for programs and exhibits, educate the board about issues that the museum is facing, market the museum to the public, and find resolution to controversial ethical or legal issues.

But it is not only the museum director who holds administrative responsibilities. As Hugh Genoways and Lynne Ireland argue in their book *Museum Administration*, *all* museum staff members participate in administrative duties of some type. They may contribute to the exhibit planning process, market a program they develop, write a proposal for corporate funding for a particular project, or supervise other museum staff members, volunteers, and interns. Every professional staff member at a museum or historic site can benefit from learning good administrative practices.

This class will cover a variety of topics faced in administration: governance, working with a board, strategic planning, budget and fundraising, marketing, ethics and legal issues, daily operations, human resources management, insurance and risk management, and accreditation. As a graduate seminar, this course will emphasize class discussion and participation and the preparation of five administration “exercises” that one might encounter in a museum. These assignments will provide the basis of class discussion on the dates they are due. At the end of the semester, students will gather these assignments into a portfolio.

The collaboration with the Atlanta History Center offers several benefits to our students. First, students have the opportunity to become acquainted with and to learn from professional staff at the Atlanta History Center as well as other museum professionals around the region. Second, students will undertake assignments that are not hypothetical; these will be real-life projects at the AHC or another historic site. We guarantee that you will leave this class better prepared to work effectively as an administrator in the many tasks that you might have at a museum, archive, or any other type of historic site or organization.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will explore the range of organizational and governance structures used in museums and become familiar with the primary roles and responsibilities of the governing board and the director.
2. Students will learn basic principles and techniques of strategic planning, marketing, financial management, fundraising, and personnel management for museums.
3. Students will become familiar with key ethical and legal issues surrounding museums and public history organizations

4. Students will learn about the process of assessing museum performance and museum accreditation.
5. Students will become familiar with the range of career opportunities available in museum administration.
6. Students will gain experience in working in collaborative team projects.
7. Students will gain experience in presenting their work to reviewers and peers, both orally and in writing.

Required Readings

- Anne W. Ackerman and Joan H. Baldwin, *Leadership Matters*. Altamira Press/AASLH, 20013.
- Caitlin-Legutko, Cinnamon and Stacy Klinger, *Leadership, Mission, and Governance: Small Museum Toolkit Book 1*. Altamira Press, April 2013.
- Catlin-Legutko, Cinnamon and Stacy Klinger, *Organizational Management - Small Museum Toolkit, Book Three*. Altamira Press, April 2013.
- Cilella, Salvatore, *Fundraising for Small Museums: In Good Times and Bad*, Altamira Press, 2011.
- Genoways, Hugh H. and Lynn M. Ireland, *Museum Administration: An Introduction*. Walnut Creek, California: Altamira Press, 2003.
- Skramstad, Harold and Susan, *A Handbook for Museum Trustees*. American Association of Museums, 2003.

Recommended:

The Foundation Center's Guide to Proposal Writing, Available through the Foundation Center's website at www.fdncenter.org/atlanta/ One copy of this book is also available for student use in the Center for Public History at UWG, but it may not be checked out from the Center.

Course Requirements

This course is designed to offer students the opportunity to undertake several types of administrative projects in which a director or staff member at a museum or historic site might become involved. More details about all assignments will be provided in the class. Students will turn in these assignments throughout the class for a grade (see course schedule).

Students will include two copies of each finished assignment (except the board exercise) in the final class portfolio. We encourage students to revise their assignments, responding to our comments and the course readings, for the final portfolio. We know that this revision process will help students learn more, refine their skills, and enhance their knowledge of the process. We will re-evaluate the assignment grades based upon the revisions. ***If you revise an assignment, you must submit the original copy, with my comments, in order for me to reassess the assignment grade.*** The second copies will be distributed to the Atlanta History Center or the site for which the project was completed.

Museum governance role playing assignment (10 points)

Students will be assigned a role-playing scenario in the book *A Handbook for Museum Trustees*. For this scenario, a team of students will present the issue to the class. In addition, each student will prepare a written statement about how s/he would respond to one of the scenarios for which s/he is leading the discussion. Depending on the number of students in the class, each group may have one or possibly two scenarios to present. Students will be graded both on the presentation and the paper.

Strategic Plan (15 points)

In this era of challenging financial resources, strategic planning has become even more essential to museums to set priorities and timetables for their work. In this exercise, students will work as a team to develop a strategic plan for a project at the Atlanta History Center. Guidelines and a template for the strategic plan will be presented in class.

Foundation proposal (15 points)

Each student will research and write a foundation proposal for an upcoming project at the AHC. This semester, we will be seeking funding for a traveling exhibit coming to the AHC called NUEVOlution! More information on the exhibit is available at the following website:
<http://www.museumofthenewsouth.org/exhibits/nuevolution-latinos-and-the-new-south>

To prepare for this task, all students will attend the ninety-minute workshop at the Foundation Center, in Atlanta, on October 13, during class time, from 12:30-3. This workshop is designed specifically for our class to teach you how to research and write foundation proposals. After the presentation, you will have the opportunity to research a foundation for the class project. Please bring a laptop computer, if possible. Information and directions on the Foundation Center are available at <http://foundationcenter.org/atlanta/>

The Foundation Center has prepared a book *The Foundation Center's Guide to Proposal Writing* that you should use as you complete this assignment. An older-edition copy of this book is available in the Center for Public History for use there. We ask that you use the foundation proposal formula provided in the book in preparing your proposal, unless the specific foundation guidelines specify otherwise. In this case, you should follow their guidelines.

Writing a foundation proposal is a process, so we have established several deadlines by which this process will proceed:

October 20—submit the name of the foundation you have selected

November 17—submit draft of foundation proposal for class critique

December 11—submit final proposal in your portfolio

Marketing Plan (15 points)

Each student will develop a marketing plan and a press release for an upcoming event at the Atlanta History Center. This year, we will develop a marketing plan for the opening of the Atlanta Stories exhibit.

We will follow the AHC marketing plan templates, which the AHC staff will provide.

Human Resources Plan (15 points)

For this assignment, each student will develop a staffing plan for a proposed museum, the Goldworth Farm Park in Villa Rica. This site include a historic home, related agricultural outbuildings, historic gardens, and a Civilian Conservation Corp camp site as well as two archaeological home sites, all located on approximately 20 acres.

Students will develop three scenarios for staffing this new museum at different budget levels: a \$50,000, \$100,000, and \$150,000 annual budget. You will choose how you will staff the museum. What positions will you hire? What salaries will you pay? What knowledge, skills, and experience will you expect for each position?

The plan for each scenario must include the titles of each position as well as a brief job description, qualifications, and salary for each position. Your plan must also include whether these staff members are full-time with benefits or part-time, and if the latter, how many hours they will work and for what hourly wage. You may also include interns, graduate research assistants, and contractual services, if you choose to go that route, as well as unpaid volunteers, being realistic about what volunteers can accomplish. More details on the farm park and this assignment will be provided.

Operations Plan (5 points)

One of the most important tasks of any museum administrator is to develop an operations plan for an event. Using a scenario that we provide, you will work as a team, in class, to develop an operations plan for the week leading up to and including the big event. We will provide a description of the event and the staff with which you can work. You will need to develop a plan for the six days leading up to the event and an hour-by-hour plan for the day of the event.

This exercise will begin as an in-class team discussion, but then each student will take home the plan the team developed, refine it as s/he sees fit, and include the final version in his or her portfolio.

Portfolio essay (10 points)

The portfolio essay should be a 2,000 to 3,000 word essay on what you have learned from the class. Please provide *insights, ideas, and concepts* that you will take from the class, not simply a discussion of what you did or a synopsis of what we discussed in class. Please do NOT write a week-by-week synopsis of the class. The essay should be a personal reflection about the key issues you consider for museum administration.

All students *must* incorporate discussion of and references to the readings and use footnotes as appropriate. You are welcome to be creative in this essay, if you like, as long as it provides the required content.

Class participation and attendance (15 points)

This course will be taught as a graduate seminar in which discussion and participation are essential. Some classes will include guest speakers and presentations. We hope that you will make the most of the class experience and engage the guest speakers by asking questions and raising issues of interest to you. On other days, students will present their ideas and projects for critique and discussion. Making effective presentations to others is also an important skill to develop, and you will have time to work on this skill during the class.

Students are expected to share their thoughts about the readings in advance of class on Course Den. I will create a discussion topic for each week's readings. Students will post their thoughts and ideas about the readings on Monday at 7 p.m. Student responses will be used to guide discussions, as time allows. Course Den entries are part of the class participation grade.

Regular attendance at classes is required. We have some excellent speakers, and what you learn from them cannot be replicated elsewhere. Excessive absences will lower your final course grade.

Tentative Class Schedule

Please note: Class schedule and readings are subject to change.

August 25: **Introduction to Museum Administration**
 Mission Statements
 Guest: Sheffield Hale, President and Chief Executive Officer

Read:

- *Leadership, Mission, and Governance, Chapter 3 (pp.60-76).*

September 1: **Governance**
 Guest speaker: Dr. Sal Cilella, retired Atlanta History Center President
 Museum Accreditation and Assessment

Read:

- *Ackerson and Baldwin, Leadership Matters*

- *Leadership, Mission, and Governance*, Chapters 1 (pp. 2-40) and Chapter 5 (pp. 97-116)
- American Association of Museums website on accreditation, accessible at <http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/accred/index.cfm>

September 8: **Strategic Planning**

Guest: Paul Carriere, Executive Vice President for Operations and Legal
Organizational Structure of Museums

Read:

- Genoways and Ireland, *Museum Administration*, Chapter 4;
- *Leadership, Mission and Governance*, Chapter 4 (pp. 77-96)

September 15: **Museum Director's Roundtable**

Roundtable participations: Dr. Sal Cilella, retired Atlanta History Center President; Trey Gaines, Director of the Bartow History Museum; and Heather Shores, Director of the Chieftains Museum

Team discussion time to prepare for the role-playing assignment

Read:

- Genoways and Ireland, *Museum Administration*, chapters 1-3 and 14-15
- *Leadership, Mission, and Governance*, Chapter 6 (pp. 117-143);

September 22: **In the Trenches: Working with Your Board**

Guest discussant: Gordon Jones, Senior Military Curator

Read: Skramstads, A Handbook for Museum Trustees

Due: Role-Playing Assignment, presentation and paper

September 29: **Fundraising for Museums**

Guest speaker: Cheri Snyder, Vice President for Development, AHC

Team discussions for the planning presentation

Read:

- Cilella, *Fundraising for Small Museums*
- Genoways and Ireland, *Museum Administration*, Chapter 6

October 6: **Students Planning Presentations**

Due: Team presentations on strategic planning exercise

October 13: "Introduction to Finding Grants," at the **Foundation Center in Atlanta**.
 Foundation Center-Atlanta, 133 Peachtree Street NE, Lobby Suite 350, Atlanta, GA 30303-1804, Tel. 404-880-0094. This course is being developed specifically for our class, and will be held during our regular class time.

October 20: **Marketing 101**

Guest speaker: Hillary Hardwick, Vice President Marketing Communications

Budgeting 101

Guest speakers: Jeff Rutledge, Vice President Finance

Read:

- Genoways and Ireland, *Museum Administration*, Chapters 5 and 11
- Review the financials located in the AHC annual report at the State of the Atlanta History Center report, starting around page 55. <http://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/about-us/history/governance-finance>

Due: one-page summary of the foundation you chose and why you think it would fund this project

October 27:

Operations and the Visitor Experience

Guest speakers: Michael Rose (Executive Vice President), Hillary Hardwick (Vice President Marketing and Communications), and Kate Whitman (Vice President Public Programs)

Introduction to Development

Aaron Berger, Director, Bremen Museum

November 3:

Museum Operations and Facilities Management, Partnerships

Guest speakers: Sean Thorndike, Vice President Operations, and Katy Clarke, Director of Guest Experience

Operations plan (in-class exercise)

Read:

- *Organizational Management*, chapter 1 (pp 1-30) and Chapter 5 (109-122)
- Genoways and Ireland, *Museum Administration*, Chapter 9

November 10:

Student presentations and critiques of marketing ideas

Preliminary discussions of foundation proposal ideas

Due: Marketing plan

November 17:

Human Resources

Guest: Paul Carriere, Executive Vice President Operations and Legal

Foundation proposals: student presentations and critiques

Read:

- *Organizational Management*, Chapters 2-4 (31-108)
- Genoways and Ireland, *Museum Administration*, Chapter 7

Due: Foundation proposal draft

November 24:

No class, Thanksgiving Break

December 1:

Human Resources: student presentations and critiques

Read:

- Genoways and Ireland, *Museum Administration*, Chapter 13

Due: Staffing plan

December 8: **Ethics and Legal Issues in Museums**

Read:

- Genoways and Ireland, *Museum Administration*, chapters 8 and 10
- AAM Code of Ethics for Museums, available at <http://www.aam-us.org/museumresources/ethics/coe.cfm> ;

Due: Portfolio with all assignments and portfolio essay