

Stephen Bogener, Coordinator of Public History, Department of History, West Texas A&M University

- 1) From your perspective and experience, what are the basic purposes and goals for teaching public history at the undergraduate level? How might these differ from courses offered for the MA in Public History or from a traditional BA in History?

The undergraduate experience in Public History is aimed at allowing students from history and other disciplines to get a broad overview of what public history is in all of its manifestations. Therefore, we offer everything from an Introduction to Public History course and Introduction to Museums to more specific courses in local/regional history, oral history, collections management, internships and special topics courses in both Public History and Museum Studies. We offer these courses as an “emphasis,” whereby the student can specialize in fields as far ranging as museum studies to public outreach. The program constitutes 18 hours in addition to the 21-hour history major with the following emphasis:

1. One required three hour course, Introduction to Public History
2. Two three-hour traditional elective courses chosen from a list of options approved by the department in a field of the student’s choice.
3. Nine hours of internship in a field (s) of the student’s choice—upper division.
4. The production and submission of a portfolio that documents the student’s progress through the program. This portfolio must be approved by the department before the degree will be conferred.

At the graduate level, students are immersed in more individualized research and study. We offer three internships, one each in Public History, Museum, and Archival Studies, and three seminar topics courses in each of those areas. The idea at the graduate level is that students will work towards a specific goal, say, completion of a traveling exhibit or completion and submission of grant proposals to funding agencies over the course of a semester.

- 2) If your institution offers or is considering offering courses in undergraduate public history, discuss the reasons for this development.

West Texas A&M University is home to the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum (PPHM), a world class facility, the holdings of which comprise the largest history museum in the state of Texas and one of the largest in the American Southwest. Museum staff are nationally renowned in their respective fields and they bring a variety of experience to the Public History Program, offering individualized field-specific internships and traditional courses in the discipline.

Legwork done by the department chair to work with museum personnel to allow collaboration and partnerships came about at a fortuitous time for creating a new program. When I came aboard a year and a half ago, I continued to build relationships with the

museum and to expand our possibilities for internships and partnerships beyond the WTAMU campus.

- 3) How might public history training enhance the undergraduate experience – whether one is a history major or a major in another subject area?

My limited experience at WTAMU leads me to believe that public history courses can enhance the undergraduate experience in a number of ways. To take an example from the fall '09 semester, I taught an intro to public history course in which I had a variety of students from various backgrounds and disciplines. The readings and student experiences conducting oral histories, visiting and critiquing public history venues, taking a field trip to a national monument, and research in the archive led to some lively discussions ranging from the politics found in publicly-supported places to the difficulties in eliciting responses from oral history subjects. The course engaged students in communicating their thoughts and opinions to their fellow students, it caused them to think critically and to conduct research using primary and secondary source materials.

- 4) What form or structure should undergraduate public history take? Does it make sense to offer a major field, a minor field or simply a few courses? Should institutions offering this training seek to standardize it so employers know what to expect of graduates?

At WTAMU, students can specialize in fields as far ranging as museum studies to public outreach. The program constitutes 18 hours in addition to the 21-hour history major with the following emphasis:

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4. The production and submission of a portfolio that documents the student's progress through the program. This portfolio must be approved by the department before the degree will be conferred.

I like the idea of flexibility so that students can also take coursework within their interest areas outside of history (see no. 2 above). Currently, the minor is attached to the history major. I believe universities should endeavor to make their programs fit into the available course offerings across campus and to design a holistic approach to student learning.

- 5) What kind of public history courses do you believe are most useful for undergraduates? If possible, provide a case study example (s). I believe that the introduction to public history course is important for its broad arching coverage of a variety of public history issues and practices. Please see question (3) above.
- 6) What has been your experience providing undergraduate public history for undergraduates?

I have enjoyed the experience very much. Fortunately, the format of the course requires students to engage in class discussions and to communicate with their colleagues.

7) Are there any approaches to teaching that have been unsuccessful? What factors led to such failures.

As part of the various internships offered we require students to be assigned a mentor in the museum or venue where they are assigned. In fall, 2009, we had a student who did not get along well with others, and who caused us to institute a policy of applicant screening. We also now require a museum orientation in our courses, led by an experienced museum staffer. Therefore, students should have no questions about policy and proper behavior in a public history venue.

8) Is your institution pursuing a generalist approach or a more focused track (historic preservation, museum studies, archives, etc)?

WTAMU offers an undergraduate BA/BS minor in public history linked to the existing undergraduate history major. Students currently eligible for the public history minor are traditional history majors, although all students are welcome to take public history courses to satisfy a humanities or other requirement.

The public history minor consists of eighteen hours and is quite flexible in combination with the traditional history major. History majors who have completed their university core requirements and who complete the courses required for their BA/BS in history must also take 34-36 hours of electives to complete their undergraduate degrees. An 18-hour minor field in public history takes up just half of these elective hours.

Course Offerings:

Undergraduate:

HIST 3302 Introduction to Public History
HIST 3303 Introduction to Museums
HIST 3304 Local History
HIST 3305 Oral History
HIST 3308 Museum Collections Management
HIST 4097 Internship in Public History
HIST 4390 Topics in Public History
HIST 4391 Topics in Museum Studies

Graduate:

HIST 6097 Internship in Public History
HIST 6098 Museum Internship

HIST 6099 Internship in Archival Studies
HIST 6390 Topics in Public History
HIST 6391 Topics in Museum Studies
HIST 6392 Topics in Archiving

Kenneth Cohen

Let me begin by offering my thanks to Eleanor and Ivan for conceiving this working group, and allowing me to join at my first NCPH conference. I look forward to meeting you all, and enjoying a lively discussion about the practical and theoretical issues that confront us as undergraduate instructors in the field of Public History.

I synthesized the eight prompt questions into two basic topics, which provide the structure for my case statement. First, I'll say a little bit about my institutional background, which informs many of my opinions on the suggested issues. Then I'll express and explain those opinions.

I am in my second year as a tenure-track faculty member in the History Department at St. Mary's College of Maryland, a public liberal arts college located in St. Mary's City, Maryland, about an hour east of Washington and an hour south of Annapolis. The college shares its state land grant with Historic St. Mary's City, a state-funded museum dedicated to the archaeology and preservation of the first capital of Maryland, founded in 1634. As a result, the college has a long – and, as you all might expect, a somewhat tortured – relationship with the museum. But beneath the daily politics of administrating adjacent institutions, the staffs of the two entities have created a successful student internship program. For a decade, college sophomores, juniors, and seniors have received work-study positions at the museum during term-time and paid seasonal positions during the summers. In the last five years, this program has sent several students to leading Public History/Museum Studies graduate programs, including Winterthur, Cooperstown, and George Washington. A growing applicant pool recently led the museum and college to work together to develop a more robust program. First, a joint Museum Studies Committee was formed, staffed by college faculty and museum personnel. The Committee created a mandatory course prior to applying for work at the museum (the course focuses broadly on the purpose of museums and how to interpret objects). Then, in the last two years, as enrollment in this course has grown, a full minor program of study has emerged, consisting of this core course and electives in several different departments, ranging from anthropology to history to economics. When the History Department's colonialist moved on in 2007, the position was re-written to include teaching and administrative responsibilities in this still-nascent "interdisciplinary" Museum Studies minor, besides duties in the History Department proper. This is my position. Currently, I am leading an effort to compose guidelines for evaluating existing elective courses and selecting/encouraging the development of new ones. Believing (from experience) that NCPH promotes more rigorous academic standards than AAM, I applied to join this working group, expecting to be exposed to other programs and ideas which might be helpful in formulating our guidelines.

Based on my current position, as well as my graduate education at Winterthur and the University of Delaware, I view undergraduate Public History as a vital component of an undergraduate's exposure to historical method. To me, Public History involves an approach and a skill set that complements and fits within a broader curriculum of more "traditional" or "content" courses. Housed within a history department, I believe public history accomplishes three goals. First, public history courses evince the applicability of historical information in contemporary times and settings. In my (admittedly brief) experience, this is the most engaging element of public history for undergraduates: the notion that the past can be relevant today and that there are all sorts of jobs which revolve around making those connections. To be sure, any good history course makes this point. However, undergraduate public history courses make this point in a way that is entirely unique and more approachable, and this element comprises the second goal of public history courses: providing an introduction to the methods for communicating with diverse publics or audiences. By excising the jargon and stilted writing style of most upper-level courses, specifically asking students to interpret for non-historians, and requiring them to communicate (or consider how to communicate) in ways beyond the traditional term paper, public history classes teach students not just to consider applying history to the present but to do it in ways that will reach and impact the general population. I believe this function is central to distinguishing public history's contribution within a broader history department. Finally, the third goal for undergraduate public history ought to be to prepare students for internships and graduate study. Cultural institutions and agencies are not going to do away with their demand for graduate education, so I don't think the primary purpose of undergraduate public history should be preparation for a job. Rather, undergraduate courses should whet the appetite, provide general background about institutions (their history and organization) and approaches (historical memory and material culture), and perhaps begin to develop a few core skills (exhibitory and public interpretation). Professional courses in curatorship, education, and management, all of which address the financial, legal, and technical details of work in the field, should be left for the graduate level at which most positions are filled.

A set of NCPH-recommended standards would be helpful in detailing this (or any other) distinction between graduate and undergraduate programs. Indeed, at St. Mary's, such standards would help guide the museum staff who teach many of our electives, but use their own graduate experience as the guidepost for appropriate material and expectations. In several of these courses, the technical information dispensed and graduate-level expectations have reduced student enrollment.

One of the first steps toward creating standards will involve defining "undergraduate Public History" and its relationship to grad programs, "traditional" history courses, and "Museum Studies." In my brief time as a member of NCPH, I have seen no consensus and much debate about such definitions, but marking out the boundaries of "undergraduate public history" vis-à-vis these three competing courses of study will be essential for our working group. If we do not establish such distinctions, we will have a hard time making sound comparisons to each other's programs, let alone reaching agreements on future courses of action.

**Carmel Finley, Instructor, Department of History, Oregon State University.
Brent Misso, Undergraduate Advisor and newly appointed Director of Public History,
Oregon State University**

Oregon State University is a land-grant university with about 22,000 students. There are 280 majors in the department, and there is a small graduate program in History of Science (two to six majors a year). The Department has long been interested in public history, and a former tenure track professor did a couple of graduate seminars, but never had the time to put together a program aimed at undergraduates.

Carmel is in her second year of teaching, and wanted a public history class that could be taught long-distance. Her objective is to get a group of students on the Oregon coast involved in a public project on the development of coastal fishing. Brent was interested in public history as a way to get students more involved in doing history earlier in their careers.

We first started talking about a class last year, as the College of Liberal Arts instituted a new minimum class size requirement, part of an ongoing series of budget cuts. We decided to offer our first public history class winter quarter. We made it lower division, to make it easier to meet the minimum enrollment. Brent made sure we got a lot of juniors and seniors who were interested in the possibilities of public history. We are also partnering with the staff of the archives at our library, where the head archivist has been interested in developing a class on archives and preservation.

We've developed a class that features a number of guest speakers to talk about various aspects of public history. We've pulled together a packet of readings, and we've sent our students to the archives. Since we are on terms, we prefaced the class by saying we did not expect students to complete a project, merely to begin exploring the materials that were available, and to think about how to tell a story, based on the information they had found. Some of our history classes do already emphasize the use of primary materials, but our focus has been on exploring, not on completing a term paper. We are trying to move the skills that are currently taught in the third-year Historian's Craft into first year, in hopes that students will be better prepared for our upper division classes. We are also exploring the use of the social network Ning, as a way for students to blog to the group about what they are doing, and what they are finding.

At the same time, Brent is moving forward to encourage students to find internship opportunities. One component of our class is to explore grant writing, at a preliminary level, and to get students to think about how they might find funds to enable their research. We have never taught students how to get jobs in history, and students are excited to find the wide range of potential opportunities that public history brings.

The department is uncertain how to incorporate public history. The first step would be to develop a minor field at the undergraduate level. We are moving to make public history an option for another new minor, taught in American Studies, about new media technologies.

One incentive to develop the minor is that OSU has a strong e-campus program, with development funds, for classes that can be taken online.

There is also discussion about making public history one of the tracks in the current History of Science graduate program. Other staff members think public history could be the basis for a long-desired masters program.

Our new public history class comes freighted with many expectations and desires, at a time when we are facing increased budget constraints. At the same time, we see public history as fitting into the university's strategic plan for developing relationships with community groups. With just word of mouth, we are now working with a coastal museum and an interpretive center wants two of our students for paid internships this summer. Our students have come up with a rich range of projects that is opening doors to other departments (Anthropology sought help in cataloguing the papers of a well-known physical anthropologist) and units on campus (ROTC wants a history of the battalion, and we are now talking about a memorial for OSU graduates lost in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars). I want to get students researching the ocean science that emerged at Oregon State after it was named a Sea Grant college in 1966.

Sometime in fall quarter, the Department made the decision to shift Brent from advising into creating a public history program. We are working out a relationship with our local IRB, and getting students involved in establishing the protocols. We are in the very early stages of development, our students are enormously excited, and the faculty has been extremely supportive.

Eileen V. Wallis, Assistant Professor, History Department, Cal Poly Pomona

- 1) From your perspective and experience, what are the basic purposes and goals for teaching public history at the undergraduate level? How might these differ from courses offered for the MA in Public History or from a traditional BA in History?

Here in the Cal Poly Pomona History Department we view teaching public history at the undergraduate level as a way to introduce students to the wider world of history outside of academia. Many of our History majors do not plan to go on for a teaching credential or to a PhD program, but are actively seeking ways to apply their History training in a career. We do not offer an MA in Public History (in fact, due to budget cuts we are about to lose our regular MA program.) The main difference between such a course and a more traditional one is the emphasis on hands-on experience: here at Cal Poly we have made our sole undergraduate public history course a service learning course as well.

- 2) If your institution offers or is considering offering courses in undergraduate public history, discuss the reasons for this development.

Our department had long wanted to develop a course, or even a track, in public history at the undergraduate level. When I was hired in 2005 one of the expectations was that I

would assist with that development. I think many of the faculty without public history experience view HST 391, Introduction to Applied and Public History, as a career-training class. I do not—in fact I've been very clear with both the department and the students that a career in public history generally requires advanced training. However, the course does introduce students to the many subfields of public history; some of the practical issues involved; and gives them experience working for a community organization. Hopefully they leave the class knowing that MA programs in public history are out there, and that there are lots of research opportunities in the local community.

- 3) How might public history training enhance the undergraduate experience – whether one is a history major or a major in another subject area?

I've only taught the course once so far, but what I saw in HST 391 is that students got involved in the community in ways they never had before. Because each student was required to participate in a service learning project they had to delve into local history. Even for the non-History majors in the class it was a valuable exercise, as most knew little or nothing about the Pomona Valley even if they had grown up in the area. I would definitely consider that enhancing the undergraduate experience.

- 4) What form or structure should undergraduate public history take? Does it make sense to offer a major field, a minor field or simply a few courses? Should institutions offering this training seek to standardize it so employers know what to expect of graduates?

I think it is unrealistic for most departments to offer a major field in public history at the undergraduate level. I think a minor field, or track, as we call it, or even a collection of classes is more practical. I don't think standardization is feasible, either, at least not at the undergraduate level.

- 5) What kind of public history courses do you believe are most useful for undergraduates? If possible, provide a case study example (s).

First I think there should be an introductory course that gives an overview of the discipline. That is what I did when I designed HST 391. It covers a bit of everything: museums, archives, local history, historic preservation, etc. This proved useful because many students came into class having only the vaguest idea what public history was. In the future I would hope to offer more specialized classes, such as oral history or preservation, but in the meantime HST 391 is there to at least allow students to get their feet wet.

- 6) What has been your experience providing undergraduate public history for undergraduates?

I only have the one class under my belt, but I found the greatest challenge to be the wide range of the students' research skills. Some were quite willing and able to do research on their own; others, particularly non-History majors, struggled quite a bit. HST 391 was reading and writing intensive, and of course it required a team research project at the end. Students had to be self-motivated, and I don't think all undergraduates are. But overall I

was happy with the class, and our community partner, the Historical Society of the Pomona Valley, was thrilled with the student projects.

7) Are there any approaches to teaching that have been unsuccessful? What factors led to such failures

I have not yet encountered anything I would consider unsuccessful.

8) Is your institution pursuing a generalist approach or a more focused track (historic preservation, museum studies, archives, etc)?

Giving our current limited staffing (I am the only faculty member with public history training) we are definitely taking a generalist approach.

Julie Davis, Asst. Professor, Dept. of History, College of St. Benedict/St. John's University

I've organized my case study into three sections, drawing from the questions posed:

- I. A discussion of my particular experience developing and teaching a public history course for undergraduates, within my departmental and institutional context.
- II. General reflections on the purposes & benefits of undergraduate public history education.
- III. Consideration of the possible forms and structures that a public history curriculum might take.

Section I: My Experience Teaching PH to Undergraduates

I teach in the history department at a liberal arts college for undergraduates in central Minnesota. I was hired four years ago, in part to bring a public history component to our department curriculum. The department's goals were to provide our history majors with curriculum options that might help prepare them for jobs in public history, to promote awareness of a range of career possibilities, and to help recruit potential new majors to the department.

While my colleagues knew that they wanted to add a public history component, they did not have a specific plan for what that component should look like, how it should function, or how it might fit into the overall curriculum in the long term. I decided to start with one introductory course; rather than provide students with specialized training in a specific track, I took a more generalist approach. I've taught that course twice over the past two years. Now I am in the process of evaluating and rethinking that course; at the same time, we are considering how we want public history education to figure more broadly within our departmental curriculum.

My course was designed to give students an introduction to the many ways of defining public history and its many implications for the study and practice of history. I divided the course into three units: one practical, one philosophical/theoretical, and one experiential. Unit I, "Public History as Profession," consisted of career exploration and self-exploration through readings, visiting practitioners, field trips, and self-diagnostic tools. Unit II, "Public History as Meaning," explored "why history matters:" connections between past and present, reasons why history can be controversial and contentious, and interpretive challenges. Unit III, "Public History as Process," required the class to research a controversial local history and propose methods for its public interpretation, thus (theoretically at least) applying insights gained earlier in the course.

In my experience over the past two years, history majors with a serious interest in public history (or at least a serious aversion to teaching) have responded enthusiastically to the career exploration unit and have appreciated both the exposure to a range of career options, and the opportunity to reflect on and write about what kinds of work might best suit their interests, aptitudes, and characteristics. These efforts also have yielded (or at least contributed to) tangible results, as four students from last year's course have applied to M.A. programs in public history (one, so far, successfully!). Students from other majors have benefitted from the self-exploration process but have found the career exploration less relevant. The exploration of "why history matters" has engaged most students, though again has proved more interesting to majors.

The most difficult to teach, and least successful, component of my introductory course has been the experiential unit. I find it difficult to give the students enough time to complete the project, in addition to covering the other material. Without sustained instruction in research methods, the students struggle to analyze and interpret their sources, but there hasn't been time for such instruction. Students also struggle to identify and apply relevant insights from the course, and I have been disappointed with their lack of imagination and creativity when proposing interpretive methods.

Section II: Purposes & Benefits of PH Education

Purposes

From my perspective, based on my experience, and considered within my institutional context, the purposes of undergraduate public history education for students would be three-fold. One is helping students to imagine and chart their futures and facilitating their search for meaningful work. A second purpose is providing them with knowledge and experiences that will help them be successful in the career path they choose. The third purpose is encouraging students to develop the intellectual characteristics and practice the skills of a good historian—which to me include something I'll call, for lack of a better term, "public-mindedness."

Benefits for Students

I believe that undergraduate history majors benefit greatly from an exploration and discussion of various kinds of public history careers, and from exposure to practicing public historians and the environments in which they work. Such exploration has allowed my students to broaden their awareness, widen their range of options, and better envision

themselves working with history outside of the classroom. By requiring students to analyze and compare these career options, in conjunction with self-exploration and personal reflection, my course also has helped them to focus in on those options that would likely be the best fit for them. For those students who want graduate training, this helps them research and select which M.A. programs to apply to, and I would guess that such familiarity with the field also makes them stronger candidates for acceptance.

I also believe in the value of introducing undergraduate students to some of the more philosophical and theoretical dimensions of thinking and working as a “public-minded historian,” whether one does history inside or outside of an academic setting. Considering why history matters, what makes it meaningful, why it’s contentious, and how people use it, makes students think critically about historical interpretation and production, consider context, and engage with the complexity of the past (and, hopefully, the present). These are essential qualities of the well-educated person and responsible citizen of the world, as well as the good historian.

I still think that an experiential component is useful for these students as well. It makes abstract issues of analysis and interpretation more real and relevant. It engages students actively and personally in the process of doing history, and allows them to test the relative strengths and weaknesses of their historical skills. The proposal project in my course has allowed my students to practice doing public history for the first time, and to encounter its many challenges, in the relative safety of a class assignment rather than in the “real world.” Yet for the reasons discussed in Section I above, I am concerned that my current approach is not working, and I am looking for other ways of providing experiential public history education—which might happen within an introductory course, or outside of it.

Benefits For Departments/Institutions

I think it’s also important to note the ways that developing a public history curriculum can benefit undergraduate departments and institutions. A public history component can help departments attract and retain majors. As increasing numbers of departments add such a component, it helps institutions retain a competitive edge relative to other comparable schools. Done well, public history education also helps fulfill institutional missions of community involvement and public engagement.

Section III: Curricular Forms & Departmental Structures

To me, the value provided by public history education benefits history majors far more than it does other undergraduate students. Teaching specifically to majors also allows me to target their interests and needs much more effectively than if I am trying to appeal to a broader range of students. Therefore I would prefer to limit enrollment in public history courses to majors; in addition, I would recommend making *some* element of public history education *required* for graduation with a history major.

Whether a department should offer a major in public history, a minor, a certificate, a concentration, a track, or some other option, depends in part on the staffing realities, student bodies, missions, and resources of individual departments and institutions. But it

also depends on what is most recognizable and desirable to graduate programs and employers. I would think that a concentration or certificate would prove most feasible and practical for most undergraduate departments, as well as most valuable and useful for graduates. However I look forward to hearing other perspectives and gathering more data on this issue, as well as on the question of standardization.

Amy Canfield

Historical method

- 1) From your perspective and experience, what are the basic purposes and goals for teaching public history at the undergraduate level? How might these differ from courses offered for the MA in Public History or from a traditional BA in History?

Currently, most of the history majors at Lewis-Clark State College are equally divided between those who want to go on and teach history, and those who do not know what they want to do with a history degree. The latter group largely consists of students who justify their major by saying they just enjoy history. Fair enough, but finding an applicable use for a college degree is needed. LCSC had not offered a Public History course in more than a decade until my class this fall. Many students, not knowing what to expect, signed up for the course to fulfill more History elective credits. One of my main goals in teaching this course was to reveal to the students the variety of different job possibilities for a historian, outside of teaching. While we concentrated much of the class on museum exhibits and archives, through guest speakers and field trips, students saw first-hand these different career options. Another goal was to demonstrate the applied use of history, and how aiming for a larger, public audience changes aspects of methodology, from research skills to writing styles. As a one-semester overview of Public History, clearly the class did not go as in-depth as a graduate seminar in the field, but it exposed the students to, what was to them, a new field. Three of my students expressed an interest in learning more about Public History and continuing on to graduate school to learn more about this field. A goal I had for this class was to give the students a strong foundation in the field to prepare them for further study at the graduate level.

- 2) If your institution offers or is considering offering courses in undergraduate public history, discuss the reasons for this development.

LCSC has a small history faculty—there are only three of us. My two colleagues and I have discussed making the Intro to Public History course a requirement for all history majors, even those who want to pursue teaching careers. As of now, the course is an elective. This discussion has also involved dividing the class into two sections, one focused on the subfields of the field and giving the students hands-on experience, and the other focused on some of the issues within the field (history of memory, objectivity, etc.). If this happens, the one-semester course would be turned into a one-year course. These issues, my colleagues and I believe, impact all history majors and even those who want to teach should be aware of different ideas regarding history, different ways of transmitting historical thought, and different research methodologies.

- 3) How might public history training enhance the undergraduate experience – whether one is a history major or a major in another subject area?

An issue I continued to go back to over the course of the semester in the Intro to Public History class was that history matters. Many of our students viewed history as something separate from their lives; it was just a class that they had to take at some point in their college careers. I made my students have frequent discussions of how history has relevance in different aspects of their lives. The final project for the class was developing a small exhibit focused on the college's history in the 1950s, when the state legislature closed the school for (allegedly) financial reasons. The state did this in the face of protests for students, faculty, staff, and the community. My students made very clear connections to that decision and discussions that are currently taking place in Idaho. As the semester went on and the students continued their research into what had happened in the 1950s, many of them began to form clear arguments that resonated with current topics. Only one of the students in the class was not a history major and it was interesting to see his perspective on the class as a whole. He frequently commented that he learned how to research more fully (in sources he would never have considered before) and tie issues together more convincingly. In an interview with the school paper, this student commented that this was a class that would benefit all students because of the research skills he learned and because of the issue of relevancy.

- 4) What form or structure should undergraduate public history take? Does it make sense to offer a major field, a minor field or simply a few courses? Should institutions offering this training seek to standardize it so employers know what to expect of graduates?

The form really depends on the school and the students. With only three history faculty, offering more than one public history course is not a possibility. Most public history jobs require graduate experience, so having just an undergraduate public history field may not necessarily prepare students for work directly upon getting their BA. Because of this, I viewed the one intro public history course at our school as an avenue through which to introduce students to the variety of different jobs available outside of teaching and to pique their interest in the field. This is what makes sense for our school right now.

- 5) What kind of public history courses do you believe are most useful for undergraduates? If possible, provide a case study example (s).

I think that an overview of the different jobs and skills is the most useful. We had class projects aimed at covering some of these areas (an archival management assignment and a museum exhibit project, for example) but clearly students would not get hands-on experience in all of the different areas. If my department had the resources to teach more than just one intro to public history course, I could go much further in-depth, but that is not a practical option just now. I think giving students an overview and hitting on some of the ideas and methodology of the field to prepare them for future work or graduate school is the most effective and useful way to structure the class.

6) What has been your experience providing undergraduate public history for undergraduates?

I have only taught one undergraduate course at this point. My experience is that students who love history are ignorant that there are more career options out there for them, and many saw the class as a real eye-opening experience. Between the different guest lecturers in the class and the field trips, students saw the variety of jobs first-hand—and two of my students have been able to find internships as a result.

7) Are there any approaches to teaching that have been unsuccessful? What factors led to such failures?

My largest failure was in having the students write an analytical book review on a Public History book. The students said that the book did not help them understand the field any better than our course textbook did. Further, students noted that the hands-on projects taught them more about research, methodology, and issues relating to the field better than a book could.

8) Is your institution pursuing a generalist approach or a more focused track (historic preservation, museum studies, archives, etc)?

Currently, the one intro class that we offer is in the generalist avenue. Much of this relates to our school's resources and the size of our department.

**Alicia Barber, Director of Public History and the University of Nevada Oral History Program
University of Nevada, Reno**

1) From your perspective and experience, what are the basic purposes and goals for teaching public history at the undergraduate level? How might these differ from courses offered for the MA in Public History or from a traditional BA in History?

I see three primary goals for teaching public history to undergraduates: the first is to introduce these students to a wide spectrum of history-related career opportunities and activities and to give them a sense of what additional education and training would be necessary to pursue them. A second goal is to familiarize them with history-related institutions and activities in their local area, helping them to see themselves as members of a larger community. A third goal is to help promote more critical reflection as students observe the history that exists all around them, in their own community and beyond.

Such courses are similar to traditional history courses in that they all emphasize critical thinking and the importance of conducting historical research accurately and imaginatively. They differ from such courses in exploring a broader array of historical expressions, above and beyond the scholarly historical research essay, and in regularly taking our focus—and our actual classroom—beyond the walls of the academy.

Public history for undergraduates differs from graduate-oriented programs in that our undergraduates are less likely to have settled on a final career direction. They may simply be interested in museums, historic buildings, or historical documentaries, or may just need three credits. They therefore often span a wide range of interest and experience.

2) If your institution offers or is considering offering courses in undergraduate public history, discuss the reasons for this development.

Courses related to public history have been offered at UNR for many decades, through several departments and colleges. This ultimately has produced something of a scattered effect, since the various offerings have little institutionally to connect them, and could benefit greatly from increased collaboration, communication, and perhaps consolidation.

UNR has long offered an interdisciplinary Museum Studies (originally called Museology) minor through the College of Liberal Arts. The 18-credit minor requires an Introduction to Museum Studies course (cross-listed in various departments), a Museum Training course (offered through History, Anthropology, and Art), and 12 units of electives.

UNR also offers a Historic Preservation minor through the College of Liberal Arts. The minor requires 21 credits, including the Museum Studies intro course and a number of Historic Preservation classes that are offered rather sporadically and populated somewhat sparsely. A long-retired Anthropology professor interested in preservation founded it years ago, and it has been housed, strangely, in the Anthropology department ever since.

I created a new Introduction to Public History course in 2008 as part of a History department initiative to offer students additional preparation in history-related careers and opportunities outside the university. A Director of Public History position was created in 2009 in order to facilitate this, as well as to develop specialized course offerings as possible/desirable, consult with faculty interested in incorporating public history into their curricula, serve as a liaison between the department and the local community, and strengthen collaborations with other departments/programs and with community entities.

3) How might public history training enhance the undergraduate experience – whether one is a history major or a major in another subject area?

Connecting students to the outside community is always a valuable experience. Public history courses demonstrate to students the applicability of humanities work to actual careers, and expose them to people and institutions of which they might not have been aware. After working in local museums, many of our students have secured excellent letters of recommendation from their supervisors that have helped them get jobs or gain admission to graduate programs in history or in completely unrelated fields. They have also learned or enhanced skills ranging from website design and database management to interior design, exhibit fabrication, writing, editing, and research. And hopefully they have also strengthened their skills in critical analysis.

- 4) What form or structure should undergraduate public history take? Does it make sense to offer a major field, a minor field or simply a few courses? Should institutions offering this training seek to standardize it so employers know what to expect of graduates?

I'm not sure public history for undergraduates can be standardized to an extent that would generate consistency among all programs offering related courses. Schools are simply too varied in size and capabilities to allow for that. However, I do think that the move toward establishing Best Practices can help all public history educators to understand useful ways to construct and improve their course offerings and sequences.

I would be interested in creating a Public History minor if there weren't already Museum Studies and Historic Preservation minors in existence at UNR. Adding another related minor to that list seems redundant, confusing, and potentially damaging to all. A minor could ideally include courses in History, Historic Preservation, Museums, and more.

- 5) What kind of public history courses do you believe are most useful for undergraduates? If possible, provide a case study example(s).

A course that provides both scholarly examination of public history and hands-on experience seems to be the best combination. Students might take only one public history-related course, so it's nice to give them a range of content and experience. Our Introduction to Museum Studies course has been very successful, with its combination of in-class lectures (providing a survey of various aspects of museums, from their history to ethical issues, interpretation, community collaborations, and architecture), 6-7 field trips to local museums (the class meets once a week for 3 hours, so this allows us to factor travel time into the actual class period), and a 20-hour mini-internship in an area museum. The students are graded for that internship by their museum supervisor. The combined experience from this class and its follow-up, Museum Training for Historians (a 100-hour internship in an area museum), has led several students to museum careers and related graduate programs. One recent graduate now works for a local children's museum, where she completed her internship as an undergraduate. Two others are currently applying to graduate school in Museum Studies and Public History.

- 6) What has been your experience providing undergraduate public history for undergraduates?

Every fall, I team-teach the Introduction to Museum Studies course with an Anthropology professor, and in the spring, I arrange internships for the History department's Museum Training course and teach the Introduction to Public History course. Enrollment in all of these courses has been steadily increasing over the past three years. In summer 2009, I began to direct the University of Nevada Oral History Program, and I hope within the next year or two to introduce a course in Oral History.

- 7) Are there any approaches to teaching that have been unsuccessful? What factors led to such failures?

Public history classes tend to involve more guest speakers than other types of classes, and when these speakers are not dynamic, focused, and interesting, it can be excruciating to stand by and watch. I've had varied results when assigning students to construct proposals for *hypothetical* projects, since some clearly procrastinate until the last minute and turn in lackluster papers. It also hasn't seemed possible to require students to conduct a substantial amount of historical research in the same semester that they need to manipulate that content into an actual public history product.

8) Is your institution pursuing a generalist approach or a more focused track (historic preservation, museum studies, archives, etc)?

Our approach is both general and focused. Existing campus offerings and resources in Museum Studies, Historic Preservation, and Oral History are rather focused, while the Introduction to Public History course is more generalist. Creating some kind of umbrella organization, or at least enhanced connections, between them all would make the entire Public History enterprise much more coherent and, ultimately, more successful.

Written by Janet Hauck, University Archivist and Adjunct History Instructor
Comments added by Arlin Migliazzo, History Department Chair

1) From your perspective and experience, what are the basic purposes and goals for teaching public history at the undergraduate level? How might these differ from courses offered for the MA in Public History or from a traditional BA in History?

Hauck: The History Department at Whitworth University has as one of its five departmental learning objectives: "Explore vocational opportunities in the field of history by connecting academic preparation to the world of work." By definition, then, one of the departmental goals is to carry out this task to the benefit of students. As described in #2 below, Whitworth has offered a minor in public history since 2004. Six courses are needed to complete the minor, three of which are content courses that are also required for the history major. This leaves three courses unique to the minor, which are: "Introduction to Public History," "Issues in Public History," and "Public History Internship." The Intro course covers a different public history vocation each week, including several guest speakers and field trips. The Issues course spends one-third of the course on archival administration, one-third on museum studies, and one-third on historic preservation. In this way, the Issues course was designed to introduce undergraduates to three main areas of public history, for which they might then take three separate courses during their enrollment in an MA program.

Migliazzo: All our history majors must do some kind of off-campus field study or advanced language preparation prior to graduation. The public history internship, however, is specifically designed to allow our Public History minors to fulfill that requirement in an off-campus experience tied as closely as possible to an area of greatest interest vocationally to the student.

- 2) If your institution offers or is considering offering courses in undergraduate public history, discuss the reasons for this development.

Hauck: In fall 2002, Whitworth University offered for the first time a 3-credit special topics course entitled "Introduction to Public History." This course was designed to provide primarily history majors with knowledge of vocational options in the field of history; in particular those students who did not plan to teach history. The course was incorporated into the curriculum in 2003, and in 2004, an 18-credit minor in public history was instituted. As of fall 2009, 20 students have declared and/or completed a public history minor.

Migliazzo: It is important to note that we have found that since instituting public history courses and the Public History minor we have had more students attending graduate school. Also many of our recent graduates have been able to secure good jobs in the broad field of public history (museums, historical societies, etc.) without an advanced degree.

- 3) How might public history training enhance the undergraduate experience – whether one is a history major or a major in another subject area?

Hauck: The majority of students enrolled in the public history minor at Whitworth University are history majors, with the rest being English majors. Public history training has been particularly useful for students of the humanities, who, due to the very nature of the humanities themselves, often have a less clear sense of direction in regard to their career paths. In fall 2010, a new course, "The Historian's Craft," will be introduced in the history department, with one of its objectives being the exposure of *potential* history majors to vocational options in history. Among other things, this course is expected to provide further impetus for students to pursue the public history minor.

Migliazzo: By its very nature and by the way we have structured the minor to include a required internship, training in public history at Whitworth means that students must directly interact with career possibilities, many of which they may never have considered before taking coursework in public history.

- 4) What form or structure should undergraduate public history take? Does it make sense to offer a major field, a minor field or simply a few courses? Should institutions offering this training seek to standardize it so employers know what to expect of graduates?

Hauck: Janet Hauck, University Archivist and director of the public history minor at Whitworth, has been involved in helping to draft the "Best Practices in Public History: Public History for Undergraduate Students" document located on the NCPH website at <http://www.ncph.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=qygRul%2fnzW4%3d&tabid=323&language=en-US>. The practices contained in this document have been implemented in Whitworth's public history minor since 2004. Therefore, Whitworth has done as much "standardizing of the field" as is currently possible. Because Whitworth is a medium-sized liberal arts university, this has been found to be the most efficient way to accomplish public history training, since no additional faculty have been hired; instead, the University Archivist and other pre-existing history faculty and courses have been utilized. It is felt

that some form of standardization of the field is a definite “plus” toward acceptance to graduate school and obtaining employment. For example, since 2002, Whitworth has sent 10 students to graduate school in public history fields, at institutions such as SUNY Cooperstown, University of South Carolina, University of Washington, Villanova University, University of Oregon, and CSU Sacramento. Also, Whitworth public history students have accepted jobs as museum curators, living history interpreters, and archivists.

Migliazzo: On the other hand, we have had to “create” a Public History program without additional funding from the administration. Therefore we have capitalized on the abilities of our current faculty members and archival staff.

5) What kind of public history courses do you believe are most useful for undergraduates? If possible, provide a case study example (s).

Hauck: CASE #1: Jason, Whitworth class of '09, now works as a living history interpreter at a museum in Oregon. His email message of 11/30/09 said: “I find I’ve been using the information you taught us everyday. I really liked how you made us think about the ethics and issues in public history – we have discussions about how to present history to the public in an accurate but appropriate manner all the time in my department. Interpreting issues like American Indian / white settle interactions, women’s suffrage, or the temperance movement while in character presents all kinds of dilemmas. As far as I can tell, there is no easy answer. Tell your students that your class[es] really helped prepare me for a public history career.”

CASE #2: Lucas, Whitworth class of '09, is now enrolled in a MA in Book Publishing program. His email message of 11/27/09 said: “Public history is a popular topic for the press here, so I have been able to apply a good part of my Whitworth education already. I am definitely glad I studies public history under you and got to experience the archives in the way I did. It has helped me immensely with gathering material for editorial and marketing work. Also, I’ve been using the texts from your classes in my current work group to help me determine the quality of public history manuscripts submitted by potential authors. Minorng in public history was the perfect stepping stone into this program.”

CASE #3: Amber, Whitworth class of '09, is now employed as a museum curator in Oregon. She sent a newsy email on 11/26/09 that said: “The biggest project I have done is 34 boxes filled with documents... given in 1989, and as far as I can tell, left in the boxes in which they were donated. Twenty years later, I decided I needed the space, so I cataloged everything and stored it properly. A huge “thank you” for teaching me how to archive and store documents! Each box has its own wonderful index and the accession folder has a complete one as well.”

Migliazzo: In summary, for our students, the hands-on learning in the Intro and Issues courses, coupled with the very practical public history internship requirement, have proved to be pathways to success in their post-Whitworth career directions.

6) What has been your experience providing undergraduate public history for undergraduates?

Hauck: At Whitworth University, it has been extremely effective to have a practicing public historian teaching public history. In this case, the University Archivist teaches two public

history courses, and also supervises the public history internships. The remaining three courses in the minor are content courses taught by regular history faculty. The archivist's contacts in the public history community are invaluable for obtaining guest speakers, taking field trips, working on projects, and obtaining internship placements. It has also been gratifying to receive feedback from students with regard to the practical nature of what they have learned.

Migliazzo: Contacts that other history faculty have in the greater Spokane community and a current initiative to build a more comprehensive list of internship providers in the greater Northwest including possibilities for those students interested in Latin American, Asian, and European history have also been helpful in the cultivation of internships.

7) Are there any approaches to teaching that have been unsuccessful? What factors led to such failures?

Hauck: At Whitworth University, there are two examples of unsuccessful approaches that come to mind: 1) internships that were not pre-arranged by the public history faculty – the university internship office is now used only in an administrative capacity; and 2) attempting to cover historical method in public history courses – this is soon to be covered in a pre-requisite history course entitled “The Historian’s Craft.”

Migliazzo: Another area of concern, though not technically falling into the category of “unsuccessful”—at least not yet—is the problem of spreading out responsibility for supervising the growing number of internships beyond just two or three departmental faculty members.

8) Is your institution pursuing a generalist approach or a more focused track (historic preservation, museum studies, archives, etc)?

Hauck: Whitworth University pursues a generalist approach in its Introduction to Public History and Issues in Public History courses, but for the Public History Internship, each student is specifically matched to an internship site according to that student's interest. As a result of these specific, pre-arranged internships, most students who pursue graduate school after obtaining a public history minor tend to enter a more focused track. Upon completion of their internships, students either know that they want to pursue graduate school in that particular field, or they know that they want to pursue a different field.

Migliazzo: This works out well for us because we just do not have the budget or personnel to become too specialized.

Teaching, Mentoring, and Program Development
Ann McCleary, University of West Georgia

- 1) From your perspective and experience, what are the basic purposes and goals for teaching public history at the undergraduate level? How might these differ from courses offered for the MA in Public History or from a traditional BA in History?

First, I believe that undergraduate courses in public history should introduce students to public history as a possible career option. I hope that students will learn about the range of career options in the field and how they might obtain training in those careers, if they so choose. I am a firm believer that an M.A. is the core degree for entering public history work, so I would encourage those students interested in public history to choose an M.A. program that would best suit their background and interests. It is at the graduate level where I believe they should pursue more specialized training in public history and develop a graduate-level expertise in historical research, analysis, and writing.

But I also think that public history courses can do more than prepare students for a career. They can offer creative ideas to students who want to become teachers to develop more innovative social studies curriculum in their classrooms. They show history students how to make history “matter” to others. They can inspire any history student, regardless of his or her eventual career, to help preserve and promote history in his or her own community, region, or State.

As an example, one of our B.A. and M.A. history graduates went on to law school, became a lawyer, and is now a judge in a neighboring county. But while he was at our school, he worked with the Georgia Political Heritage Project, and he became very interested in political history. Now, as a judge, he still advocates for history. He is serving on the board of a community museum that is getting off the ground. He collects artifacts related to Georgia political history and has already willed this collection to the University’s Political History Collection. He actively supports a variety of history-related causes in his region and inspires others to do so as well.

- 2) If your institution offers or is considering offering courses in undergraduate public history, discuss the reasons for this development.

We offer several cross-listed classes (4000/5000 level courses) for both undergraduate and graduate students, including Introduction to Public History, Oral History, Introduction to Archives, American Architecture, and Public History Internships. We have also experimented with other cross-listed courses; this summer, my colleague is teaching a State and Local History class. The Anthropology department teaches a Cultural Resource Management class, which we cross-list with History.

We developed these courses as a way to introduce undergraduate students to the public history field. When I came to start a program twelve years ago, the idea then was that the “real” program would be at the graduate level. But we have plenty of undergraduate students who do not want to teach and would like to learn about other career opportunities. So from the beginning, we decided to cross-list some of our public history courses to make them available to both undergraduate and graduate students. We only

have two public history faculty members, and given the range of courses that we teach at the graduate level, this arrangement is one of the few ways in which we could conceivably teach undergraduate students while also meeting the needs of our graduate program. Clearly, cross-listed classes are not ideal, but they are a reality for many programs.

We have a graduate student in our program that came from an institution that has an outstanding graduate public history program. He commented that he wished that the school had offered more classes for undergraduates besides the Internship course, which he took. He believed that if he had had the opportunity to take more classes, it might have helped him consider more carefully which field in public history would have been of most interest to him. We hope that the classes that we offer will help at least some of our undergraduates in directing them to the appropriate graduate program.

3) How might public history training enhance the undergraduate experience – whether one is a history major or a major in another subject area?

As I've noted earlier, I think that public history courses, particularly the Introduction to Public History course, can encourage students to think more broadly about history and its practice. I personally think it would be useful for any history major or even majors in related fields such as anthropology or archaeology. I think we should encourage all our undergraduates to become advocates of history in their communities, participating in committees or organizations or volunteering to help preserve and promote history.

We also have opportunities for undergraduate students to work in a variety of public history settings on our campus, thus offering them real-life experience in the field. These work experiences (such as undergraduate research assistantships or federal work-study positions) help enrich the graduate curriculum by providing for more hands-on, collaborate research with faculty and graduate students.

4) What form or structure should undergraduate public history take? Does it make sense to offer a major field, a minor field or simply a few courses? Should institutions offering this training seek to standardize it so employers know what to expect of graduates?

Because I believe that public history at the undergraduate level should be more introductory, I am supportive of either a few classes or a "minor" field in public history. I worry about making public history a major field for undergraduates because I think it takes away from the solid training in history which they also need to succeed. I would prefer to see stronger training in history at the undergraduate level and public history introduced as a way to encourage them both to think about what historians do as well as what they might do with a history degree.

We do not have a major or minor field in public history. Several years ago, inspired by a session at an NCPH conference, I suggested that we create a minor field in public history for our history majors. Currently, we have a history major, which requires a minor, and a history major with secondary education certification, where the education courses

essentially create the minor field. My suggestion was to have a third history degree where public history would essentially be the minor field, including the introductory course, an internship, at least one public history class through our department, and two electives which might come from other related departments. I continue to believe that public history is, by nature, interdisciplinary and related training in fields such as anthropology, archaeology, or art history would be useful. This idea was not embraced by the department at that time. Perhaps it was due to the fact that the department was facing other more pressing issues, but I also think there was a bit of concern that public history would “overwhelm” the undergraduate program in the same way that public history has become the most popular field in the graduate program. That said, I think it is an idea we might introduce again.

5) What kind of public history courses do you believe are most useful for undergraduates? If possible, provide a case study example (s).

I believe courses that introduce students both (1) to the ideas and practices of the field and (2) to specific careers within the field are appropriate.

I have really enjoyed teaching the Introduction to Public History class to undergraduates because it encourages them to think about what historians do and why they do it. In many ways, it supplements the Methodology and Senior Seminar classes required for our major. It is also particularly relevant for those of our majors who want to pursue teaching and need to consider how to make history relevant to their students in the classroom.

Several years ago, we taught an Introduction to Museums class that was successful for undergraduates. Through the class, we brought in a variety of museum practitioners and explored the careers that one might experience in the field. We had a small project that offered some hands-on experience. Unfortunately, I have not had the time to teach the course for several years, due to other teaching responsibilities at the graduate level.

Another class which I continue to teach is one on American Architecture. What I like about this class is that it truly blends historical research, analysis, and writing with public history. The readings trace how architecture can be used as a means of studying American history from the colonial period to the present. Each student completes a research paper documenting a historic building that provides experience in working with primary documents in a local community, a skill they would need in public history. The project, as well as the class field trips, provides an opportunity for students to gain skills in deciphering historic buildings, skills that they might eventually use in a public history career in cultural resource management, museums, or community history. So it has both an academic and public history component.

6) What has been your experience providing undergraduate public history for undergraduates?

In my classes, most undergraduates are still simply trying to figure out what public history is. Few have any real-world experience, although they might have volunteered in their

community or participated in History Day as a college student. Some students end up in the class by default; they might need a night class, and it is the one that best fits their schedule. Many are taking it to satisfy a requirement for a history elective, but they are not really that interested in the content of the course. I see my role in these classes as generating enthusiasm and excitement for the field, helping them to understand what we do, why we do it, and why we like it so much.

Another challenge in teaching public history to undergraduates is the students' lack of knowledge about history. At the graduate level, we can usually expect that the student has the equivalency of an undergraduate major (or close to) upon which they can build their training. At the undergraduate level, they come into our classes with varied knowledge, depending upon where they are in their curriculum. Because our classes are offered on a two-year rotation, they may end up in our classes as juniors, sometimes even as sophomores.

I would echo a comment in another case study that it is difficult to provide the hands-on experience in undergraduate history courses. I believe they need it, but it takes much more time for the faculty member than in graduate public history courses. This was a topic last year at the NCPH working group on undergraduate education. We need to think of projects appropriate for undergraduate students and we need to help our chairs and deans appreciate the amount of time such work requires for the public history faculty.

7) Are there any approaches to teaching that have been unsuccessful? What factors led to such failures.

Teaching cross-listed classes with graduates and undergraduates can be very frustrating. For some classes, such as my American Architecture class, the field might be relatively new to all the students, so the challenge is not as great. But this past semester, in my Introduction to Public History class, I had an experienced group of graduate students with a very "green" group of undergraduates, and it was difficult to find ways to work with them together. I experimented with a variety of formats, sometimes separating the groups, sometimes having the graduate students mentor the undergrads in group work or projects, etc. As a result of that class, I have decided that we will have to separate these two classes in the future, as both "sections" have a different purpose. That said, we already teach a wide range of courses, so fitting two separate classes into our teaching schedules can be difficult.

8) Is your institution pursuing a generalist approach or a more focused track (historic preservation, museum studies, archives, etc)?

We are definitely pursuing a more generalist approach. More specialized studies are at the graduate level at our school.

