

## **MODULE IV: Public History**

Monday 11:30-13h

ECTS 5

Instructor : Thomas Cauvin [thomas.cauvin@uni.lu](mailto:thomas.cauvin@uni.lu)

Location.....

### **Pre-requisite : The successful completion of this research seminar requires:**

- regular attendance at and participation in our sessions and field work
- completion of assignments
- creativity
- Discussion and some assignments in English. Depending the final projects, some works can be done in another language (optional)

### **Skills to be learned during the semester**

- initial acquaintance with different types of Public History definitions, debates, and practices.
- public history skills in dealing with the production, communication of history to non-academic and popular audiences.
- insights into a research project
- field work-experience (data collection, interviews, research in archives)
- experimentation with various media to produce your project (S3)
- historical knowledge about continuities and ruptures in political, cultural, and social perspective
- an introduction to the bibliography and literature in public history

### **Description**

Public history is a way of doing history that focuses on public interaction and public engagement. It is an international field of history with growing literature, new research centres and university programmes, and many different types of projects (museums, archives, audiovisual production, websites...etc). Divided into 3 semesters, this seminar introduces students to the theory and bibliography of the field, careers and history projects beyond education, and to the creation and production of a public history project.

The first semester (S1) focuses on the historiography and debates about public history; the second (S2) deals with sources and materials for the public history project as well as specific skills to share and communicate history to a popular audience. At the end of the third semester, each student will have to produce a public history project based on the archival research undertaken in the second semester.

- Semester 1 (Winter 2021 : September 2021 – January 2022)

The seminar aims at exploring and discussing the theory, concepts, practices, careers and opportunities in public history. We will discuss how history is produced, consumed, and used in public space (such as museums, monuments, Internet, documentary films...). Through the class, students will also be in regular contacts with students from other universities in Europe to discuss and exchange over public history examples. Discussions and proposals for the final public history project (produced during semester 3) will also be initiated.

- Semester 2 (Summer 2022 : February – July 2022)

During the second semester, students will collect, discuss, and analyze sources that will be used to produce their public history project. They will explore different media and processes for their project. Specific skills to communicate their research through project will be discussed and evaluated. Assignments will mostly consist in collecting and analyzing sources for the public history project.

- Semester 3 (Winter 2022 : September 2022 – January 2023)

The third semester will be entirely devoted to the production of the public history project.

## Course Policy

- Hybrid

The class is offered in hybrid mode. This means that – apart for 2 specific sessions that will be only offered online – students can choose to attend the class online or on site.

- Late work:

Unless you cannot complete an assignment for a valid reason (such as illness or family emergency), you will receive penalty (-10% of the grade for each day of late work). You are responsible for providing any necessary documentation and making arrangements for make-up work.

- Environment:

Sharing perspectives and experiences in a constructive environment is key for this class. To that end, disruptive, disrespectful, or discriminatory behavior will not be tolerated. Within both the course material and the varied experiences and perspectives offered by fellow classmates, it is possible you will encounter ideas with which you disagree. Respectful, considerate, and fact-based debates are encouraged in this course, but comments founded upon prejudiced reasoning will not be tolerated.

- Academic Integrity and plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious and, unfortunately, a growing problem at universities. It will not be tolerated in this course. Using other people’s words or ideas in whole or in part without proper citation or failure to use quotation marks when using direct quotes (or using portions of text with only superficial modifications) will result in a zero for your assignment. If you are unclear as to what constitutes plagiarism, please see me and I will be happy to clarify it for you.

## Evaluation

First semester (Introduction to Public History). See details below

10pts	Attendance and participation
15pts	Publication of 1 blog post on public history
15pts	Participation to the public history discussion
15pts	Project Presentation
15pts	Impact Log
30pts	Final Paper

2nd semester (Project Research) (tentative) (February 2022 – June 2022)

10pts	Attendance and participation
30pts	Project research collection
25pts	Research Paper
25pts	Project Pilot
10pts	Impact Log

3rd semester (Project Production) (September 2022 – January 2023)

10pts	Attendance and participation
-------	------------------------------

20pts	Project Presentation
40pts	Project
30pts	Final Paper and Impact Log

## Assignments (semester 1)

- 1 ) **Participation and Attendance (10pts)** – Points will be devoted to your general participation and commitment to class discussion. This grade will be provided at the end of the semester.
- 2 ) **Writing one blog post on public history (15pts)**
  - .Sign up for 1 of the proposed sessions and topics (see the calendar to choose one of the sessions with an \*). You will be able to sign up during the first 2 sessions. Up to (X) students can sign up for the same session.
  - .Write a blog post: Your post must be between **500 and 800** words. In your post, you must present the topic that you have chosen, the reading and resources you used. It is important that you explain the links between the topic and the field of public history at large. You need to present a few arguments about the topic (why is it important, what does it say about public history, what are the possible debates, challenges, and/or controversies). You should include some concrete examples too.
  - .You can adopt a personal tone – explaining what you agree/disagree on and why. You may also connect with other discussions that we have had in class.
  - .Your post should include at least **ONE PICTURE**, the **references of the readings** (at the bottom, with hyperlinks). Your post is due **2 DAYS before** the session so that everyone can read your answer. If not received on time, you will get a grade penalty.
- 3 ) **Public history discussion (15pts)**
  - .Choose (before October 4) and sign up for one of the 2 following discussion topics:
    - .Public history: challenges and opportunities (takes place on **1 November**)
    - .Shared authority: Who owns the past ? (to take place on **6 of December**)
  - .Prepare and submit (**1 week before the discussion**) your own individual (roughly 400 words) answer to the topic. Your answer can use previous class discussion, readings, online resources. You must provide clear arguments with some accurate details to support your view.
  - .Your grade will be based on your individual answer as well as your participation in the discussion.
- 4 ) **Impact Log (15pts) Due Monday January 17, 2022**
  - The impact log is an assignment that will run all over semesters 1, 2, and 3. The main objective is for you to keep a sort of diary of your project in which you keep track and later analyze the evolution of you project. It is called “impact log” because it focuses on the “impact” of participation and collaboration on your project.
  - You need to write things in it every week. It does not have to be too long, roughly one paragraph (4-5 lines) every week. What you wrote in it every week will help you writing a sort of conclusion at the end of the semester.
  - Your weekly paragraphs must be about how the definition and conception of the project change. How you found your initial idea of topic and why, how your group partners influence and “impact” the project, how the place where you want to

have your project impacts it, how your choice of format does, how the people you interview influence the project....

-You may also want to explore how the “public history approach” may influence the topic and how you conceive it.

#### 5 ) Mid-semester project presentation (November 15)

.This public history seminar is divided into 3 semester (September-December 2021 ; February-June 2022; September-December 2022). The 3<sup>rd</sup> semester is devoted to the production of a public history project. In order to better prepare your project, you need to start working on it during the first semester. Ideas of projects will be provided in the first few sessions and you will be able to choose one. In the mid-semester project presentation, you will discuss:

##### A ) Written Part (10pts)

.Topic: In this presentation, you briefly explain what the historical topic of your project will be (brief presentation of the main idea, the subject, its context). Why did you choose that topic and how could it trigger interest from the publics? (100/200 words).

.Project: Propose preliminary ideas of what types of sources you envision, how and where to collect them? You need to propose preliminary ideas of how you want to deliver your project (what format, when, where and why?) (100/200 words)

.Public history: Based on reading and class discussion, you need to explain how and to what extent your project belongs to public history. (100 words)

.The presentation must be written and submitted by November 15

##### B ) Oral Presentation (5pts)

You have to explain your project in a 3-minute oral presentation in class. You will receive feedback (both on your written and oral presentations) that you will include in your final paper.

#### 6 ) Final Paper on your project (30pts) Due Monday January 17, 2022

-Your final paper is a milestone in your project production. Based on your project presentation during the semester and the feedback you received, you need to present your project and discuss how and to what extent it belongs to public history.

.Define the topic of your project (what it is about, chronology and context, main actors, where it took place.) What are the main historical questions, arguments, aspects you want to deal with in your topic. (400-600 words)

.Why is it a good topic? What is the popular/public interest for that topic? How will you make it interesting for people who may know nothing about it? (200 words)

.How is it a public history project? (400 words)

.Give your definition of public history and what are – according to you – the main aspects, assets, and challenges.

.How and to what extent does your project qualify as a public history project?

.What will the main challenges be and how to plan to mitigate them?

.Propose a preliminary pilot of your project: (300 words)

.Format

- .what format do you want to use?
- .Why ? Assets of using that type of format?
- .Challenges that you expect?
- .What audiences do you expect?
- .Where do you plan to have your project?
  - .If it is a physical place, give some details on who owns the place, feasibility, partnership, space...
  - .If it is an online space, give additional details on the server, software, tools needed.
- .Your plan to make it a project with partnership and public collaboration **(200-400 words)**
  - .Detail how you want to involve “some public” in the collect and gathering of resources.
  - .What partnership can you get to find information about your project?
  - .What partnership can you get to design or implement your project?
- .Calendar: Propose a preliminary calendar of your project. **(200 words)**
  - .Projects will be researched and information collected between February 2022 and June 2022.
  - .Projects will be developed and created between September 2022 and December 2022.

## Reading and Resources

- All reading will be available on Moodle either as scanned documents or online reading
- See the sessions on Moodle to access the reading

## CALENDAR

- Monday 20 of September: Introduction (1/2) Only Online Session**
- 27 of September: Public History Projects**
- 4 of October: Introduction (2/2)\***
  - Guest: Public History Research Assistants
- 11 of October: Communicating history through popular media\***
- 18 of October: Public History Styles\***
- 25 of October: Objects, Archives and Collections as Public History\***
  - Guest: Camilla Portesani
- 1 of November: (Only Online Session)**  
**(Public History Discussion 1) Public history: challenges and opportunities**

**.See assignment**

**-8<sup>th</sup> of November: Digital Public History\***

**-Guest:** George Lawson

**-15<sup>th</sup> of November: Mid semester project presentation (oral presentation) See assignment**

**-22 of November: Shared authority and collaboration with communities\***

**.Guest:** Joella van Donkersgoed

**-29 of November: Family History, Personal Stories, Memories\***

**-6<sup>th</sup> of December: Public History Discussion 2: Shared authority: Who owns the past?**

**.See assignment**

**-13<sup>th</sup> of December: Difficult Past, Controversial History\***

**.International discussion (UK, Ireland)**

**-20 of December: Conclusion and project updates**

**-Impact Log and Final Paper due Monday January 17, 2022**