Spring 2014
Emory University
AAS 385WRT

Looking at the Familiar
History, Memory, Race and Visual Culture

TUESDAYS 9:00-11:30AM Woodruff Library 10th Floor

Instructor(s): Dr. Pellom McDaniels III
Faculty Curator of African American Collections
Assistant Professor, African American Studies
(404) 727-6276
pmcdani@emory.edu

Course Description and Goals

This course is designed to engage students in a hands-on learning environment that promotes an understanding of the research and writing process with the aim of producing an exhibition at the end of the semester based on one or more collections found in MARBL. During the first half of the semester, our focus will be on learning the various scholarly methods of analysis utilized by archivists, historians, and researchers. The second half of the semester will be dedicated to the production of an exhibition based on original research conducted by the class.

Course Learning Objectives

The purpose of this course is to provide students with a series of exercises and assignments to advance their knowledge of the research and writing process. Each activity will engage students to think about each of the learning objectives for undergraduates, as well as promote a mutually respectful environment for scholars capable of producing a final project for public consumption.

Research and analysis of primary evidence
Critical thinking
Writing/Rewriting
Use of technology
Public presentation

Assignments
- Weekly journals/blogs (300 word essays) 15 @ 1 pt. each =15 pts.
- Annotated bibliography of primary (10) and secondary (10) sources (drafts and final composition) 2@ 5 pts. each= 10 pts.
- Two (2) Book reviews (drafts and final composition) (750 to 1,000 words each) 2 @ 20 pts. each=40 pts.
- Final Dossier =35 pts.
Exhibition assignments

Each student will select materials from MARBL's collections that are informed by the interpretation of a photograph or photographs from the Langmuir Photography Collection. The development of the final project or exhibition provides an opportunity for the production of academic writing and research as well as critical thinking through visual practice.

Project assignments to include:

- Select photograph/s from Langmuir; develop narrative based on reading of photograph 5pts.
- Item selection (minimum of 5 items), preservation review, digitization requests 5pts.
- Concept storyboard, wireframe, layout, script, etc. 5pts.
- Final concept in the form of a traditional physical exhibition, online exhibition using a web based platform, film/video, performance, catalog, or interactive. 10pts.
- Curatorial statement and captions 10pts.
- Installation or production of final project 25pts.
  Advertising and marketing of public event – define audience, identify potential partners, provide a marketing philosophy, design and facilitate an interpretive component (blog, podcasts, QR code, etc.) 10pts.
- Presentation 30pts.

Attendance

Our class generally meets once per week. Therefore, consistent attendance by all is required and necessary. Also, missing class sessions will have a significant effect on your final grade. Two unexcused absences will reduce your final grade by half a letter. In addition to classroom sessions in MARBL, we will meet at various archives, museums and repositories throughout the Atlanta Metropolitan Area.

Required Texts and Materials


Expanding accordion files for materials
Two 4 inch three-ring binder
Box of 50 clear sheet protectors

Blackboard

A Blackboard site has been established for this course. We will be updating the site and posting messages weekly, so you should check the site as frequently as possible. Since this class meets one day a week (Tuesdays) you would be best advised to check the site daily for possible changes to the syllabus and/or assignments.
Grading
The grading system for this course relies on a point system. Each component of the course is worth a certain number of points. Your grade will be determined by dividing the number of points you earned by the total number of points possible. For the course there will be a total of 200 points possible. For example: If you receive 130 out of 200, or 65%, your final grade will be a D. If you receive a score of 189 out of 200, or 95%, your final grade will be an A.

A 100-95; A- 94-90; B+ 89-86; B 85-83; B- 82-80; C+ 79-76; C 75-73; C- 72-70; D+ 69-67; D 66-65; D- 64-60; F 59 and below.

Week 1: Jan 14
Introduction
General overview of course expectations, requirements, class policies, and working with primary materials
Lecture on History, Race, Memory, and Visual Culture.

Week 2: Jan 28
Accounting for the History Around Us

Week 3: Feb 4
Readings in Public History

Week 4: Feb 11
Reading Race in Public History and Public Memory

Week 5: Feb 18
Reading Photographs
In-Class Workshop, reading photographs

Week 6: Feb 25
Research In MARBL/Woodruff Library
Item selection
Preservation review
Identify additional primary sources from other collections
Digitization requests

Week 7: Mar 4  
Concept storyboard, wireframe, layout, script, etc.  
Identify available secondary sources  
Submit annotated bibliography of primary and secondary sources

Week 8: Mar 10  
Spring Break

Week 9: Mar 18  
Final concept presentation  
Traditional physical exhibition, online exhibition using a web based platform, film/video, performance, catalog, or interactive  
Submit book reviews

Week 10: Mar 25  
Public Outreach/Partnerships  
Advertising and marketing of public event – define audience, identify potential partners, provide a marketing philosophy, design and facilitate an interpretive component (curriculum, podcasts, QR code, etc.)

Week 11: Apr 1  
In-class peer review of work dossiers

Week 12: Apr 8  
Curatorial statement and captions

Week 13: Apr 15  
Free Work Day

Week 14: Apr 16  
Free Work Day

Week 15: Apr 21  
Installation or production of final project

Week 16: Apr 29  
Exhibit Opening (Student Presentations)

Submission of Final Edited Manuscript

(All written work, images, comments, storyboards, drafts, curatorial statement and captions, marketing philosophy, etc.)