



Western
UNIVERSITY · CANADA

The University of Western Ontario

HISTORY 9800A

Public History: Theory, History & Practice

Fall 2026

Professor Mike Dove mdove2@uwo.ca

Department of History, Lawson Hall 1207

Office Hours: TBA



PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS A DRAFT SYLLABUS. THE FINAL VERSION WILL BE SHARED WITH STUDENTS PRIOR TO THE START OF CLASSES IN SEPTEMBER.

Course Description:

HIST9800A is a combined seminar and project-based course, examining history as it is communicated to, and understood by, the public. The theory, history and practice of public history will be discussed, and students will learn the methods and skills used by public historians through guest speakers, site visits, workshops and both individual and group projects.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of this course, students should have:

- conducted graduate level research using primary and secondary sources;
- examined the theory and history of public history;
- an understanding of the main avenues for practicing public history;
- a range of skills commonly used by public historians;
- an ability to communicate history to the public through a variety of media;
- experience with public speaking through class discussions and presentations;
- conducted oral history interviews in both primary and supporting roles;

- familiarity with the major issues and legislation faced by public historians;
- an ability to examine critically public presentations of history;
- practiced non-traditional historical skills such as project management, teamwork, promotion, and working with community stakeholders;
- had opportunities for reflective, collaborative, service-based, and experiential learning;
- established contacts with practicing public historians.

Enrollment Restrictions:

This course is restricted to MA History students in the Public History field.

Course Materials:

All readings for weekly seminars and for the community project are available through the OWL Brightspace course website. Please note: Students should budget for incidental expenses related to their coursework, for example storage devices such as an external hard drive, USB sticks, and SD cards.

Methods of Evaluation:

Ignite Talk (individual mark)	September 29	10%
Participation (individual mark)	September - December	25%
Oral History Project (individual mark)	December 01	25%
Group Project (group mark)		40%
○ Contract	October 06	05%
○ Midterm Report & Presentation	November 03	15%
○ Final Report	December 15	20%

Policy for Late Assignments:

Late assignments will be deducted 5% for the first day, followed by 2% each day (including weekends and holidays) thereafter. Any accommodation for the group project will require supporting documentation from each group member.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

Health/Wellness Services:

Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director

(graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Campus mental health resources may be found at <https://www.uwo.ca/health/shs/index.html>

Accessibility Options:

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating people with disabilities in their respective graduate program. Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodation to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.

Request for Accommodations/Medical Issues:

Students are entitled to their privacy and consequently they do not need to disclose personal information to their course professors. If students feel the need to discuss personal information, they should see the graduate chair. Unlike undergraduate students, graduate students cannot be referred to Social Science Academic Counselling to have their medical or non-medical circumstances evaluated and to receive a recommendation for accommodation. Those facilities are for undergraduates only, and there is no process beyond the department to secure recommendations for accommodation. Our process is that faculty should deal with routine requests for extensions. However, a student's request for accommodation (on medical, non-medical, compassionate grounds) should go to the graduate chair, Prof. Cody Groat (cgroat@uwo.ca) who will consult and communicate with faculty. Additionally, faculty and students should communicate with the grad chair about any case in which work is not submitted before grades are due. If the graduate chair is also the course professor, then a request for accommodation can be taken to the department chair.

Statement on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Students in this course may use generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, for activities such as conducting basic research and refining their ideas, or drafting an outline to organize their thoughts—but not for generating prose. All writing submitted in this course must be their own. If in doubt, please ask me for clarification and advice.

Academic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Statement on Gender-Based and Sexual Violence:

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca

NOTE: See Policies and Statements on the Graduate Section of the History Department Website, <https://history.uwo.ca/graduate/program-information/graduate-policies-and-statements.html>

This includes additional information on academic support services for health and wellness and information on other academic policies, including copyright, plagiarism, and accessibility.