PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:
The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your MyAberdeen Organisation page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook. Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any School regulation or procedure.
You must familiarise yourself with this important information at the earliest opportunity.

COURSE CO-ORDINATOR/COURSE TEAM
Dr Andrew Mackillop: Dept. of History, RM 108, Crombie Annexe
Office hours: Wednesdays 9-11am
Telephone: 01224 27 2460
Email: a.mackillop@abdn.ac.uk

Discipline Administration:
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TIMETABLE
For time and place of classes, please see MyAberdeen

Students can also view their university timetable at http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php


**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

History has never been more popular with the general public. In reflecting upon the phenomenon of ‘public history’, this course explores how History operates beyond the university and the tenets of ‘academic history’. The key concept in this class is the idea and practices underpinning ‘Public History’. These are many and varied. Documentaries on historical personages or events are a staple of television, while entire series running over a number of weeks on historical topics (Britain, Ireland, American Civil War, Ancient Rome) are frequently broadcast, with their presenters (Starkey, Ferguson, Keane, Schama, Beard) becoming celebrities. The History Channel, as its name suggests, is entirely devoted to historical topics, especially those relating to ‘Henry and Hitler’: and note that there is no comparable dedicated Literature Channel or Sociology Channel. As historians what is our ‘take’ on these programmes (and their presenters)? How do we explain their popularity, and do we dismiss them as mere heritage, and not history at all? What role, if any, do historians have in the very public, and acrimonious, debate on the place of history, and the content of that history, in the school curriculum?

Who owns the past – and how might the answer differ for the idea of a ‘public past’? Look at the struggle to command the historical narrative in places like South Africa, Israel/Palestine, Ireland or the Ukraine. Again, as we move through the era of commemoration, 2014-18, there is a proliferation of programmes dealing with just about every aspect of the Great War, its battles, its impact. Allied to this are the commemorations in almost all European countries, as well as Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand and Russia, to remember the war dead. As historians, how can we explain the differences in commemoration? And not just the historiography of the Great War: how can we understand, say, the Tea Party movement in the United States without reference to the historiography of the American Revolution, how can we understand contemporary racial issues in the United States without reference to the historiography of slavery? And the same is true for British, French, German and Russian historiography: each country has its issues with its past – the Empire, the French Revolution, Hitler and Stalin.

Lastly, public history exists in any number of forms, often presenting itself in familiar, almost banal ways. Statues to be found throughout our towns and cities, and further afield: who is being honoured, commemorated (and who is not)? What is the function of these public memorials? What function do museums play and the purpose of their exhibitions? What role can rapidly developing digital technologies, from genealogy sites to phone apps play in ‘democratizing’ history, and what problems and issues arise from these new forms of accessing the past?

By addressing the concept of Public History this course aims to give a greater sense of history as an applied, practical subject with considerable public relevance and socio-economic significance beyond its academic forms. In this way students will be able to evaluate how public, heritage or civic institutions (libraries, archives, museums, art galleries, heritage boards, community groups) select, construct and present different – equally valid - forms of history.
INTENDED AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Aims:
This course aims to give a rounded appreciation of the practical and applied uses of historical knowledge and understanding as well as the generic cognitive skills inherent in the study of history in all its forms.

Learning outcomes:
At the end of the course students should have:
- enhanced their ability to evaluate, understand and critically review the various practices of history;
- developed a critical understanding of theoretical and practical links (as well as clear distinctions) between the practice of ‘academic’ and ‘public’ history;
- practiced skills which reflect critically on how history is presented to, received and interpreted by different audiences in different ways.
- implemented such skills by devising a public history project
- broadened their general understanding of the ethical issues and responsibilities central to the practice of all forms of history.

LECTURE/SEMINAR PROGRAMME

Week 1: 17 January 2017
Introduction: aims, objectives, assessments: ‘What is Public History’ – Dr Andrew Mackillop

Week 2: 24 January 2017
Lecture: History & Public Policy – Dr Andrew Mackillop
Seminar 1: Public History

Week 3: 31 January 2017
Lecture: The Historian and Current Affairs – Prof. William Naphy
Seminar 2: History & Public Policy

Week 4: 7 February 2017
Lecture: Presenting History through TV and film – Prof. Tom Weber
Seminar 3: History in TV & Films

Week 5: 14 February 2017
Lecture: History and Heritage – Dr Heidi Mehrkens
Seminar 4: Museums and Heritage

Week 6: 21 February 2017
Lecture: History and Digital Humanities: Law in the Aberdeen Council Registers – Dr Jackson Armstrong
Seminar 5: Democratizing History: The Internet & Community History

Week 7: 28 February 2017
Lecture: History, Memory and Commemoration – Prof. Andrew Blaikie
Seminar 6: History, Memory and Commemoration

Week 8: 7 March 2017
Reviewing Public History/Workplacements & Conclusions – Dr Andrew Mackillop
Seminar 7: Assessments and Conclusions
ASSESSMENT

History and Public Policy: (1,500 words: 20%): DUE THURSDAY, 23 FEBRUARY AT 3pm (WK 6)
Students will read two introductory articles on the role of History in the formulation of ‘public policy’ and then consider and reflect upon the following:

• Identify a relevant public policy and consider;
• To what extent can various forms of history shape the formation of public policy?
• What benefits do policy makers gain by choosing to formulate policy based on academic interpretations of history?
• What tensions might exist in the process of academic history informing public policy, and how might these be addressed?

NB: a key objective of the History and Public Policy exercise entails students reflecting on additional points of discussion based upon their own research and reading.
Candidates must choose a particular policy subject around which can be explored these wider themes. Such policies for example could include (but are by no means restricted to) governmental or public agencies and their positions towards:

• The Holocaust
• Slavery
• History curricula in schools
• State sponsored commemoration – Remembrance Sunday etc..

Reviewing Public History: (3,000 words: 50%): DUE THURSDAY 23 MARCH AT 3pm (WK 10)
Students identify, analyze and critically review a particular act, institution, or piece of ‘public history’. This can be, for example, a TV series, a public debate among historians, an exhibition, a commemorative event, or even a blog. The review should explain why the subject was chosen, its significance, reflect on how this public history relates to ‘academic history’, and to think critically about how history is presented and consumed.

Work Placement Report: (2,000 words: 30%): DUE MONDAY 24 APRIL AT 3pm (REVISION WK)
The report will be based on a work placement scheme, undertaken during the Easter break or - by arrangement with the work placements co-ordinator (Dr Heidi Mehrkens) - at another appropriate time. The report should indicate the way in which your historical skills were utilised in the work environment, and - if appropriate - how the work-placement experience enhanced your historical skills and/or ideas about history.

OR

Practising Public history: (2,000 words: 30%) DUE MONDAY 24 APRIL AT 3pm (REVISION WK)
In this project students identify a topic, theme or aspect of History and, reflecting on the knowledge, issues and solutions considered in the Public History: a critical case study, construct their own version of a ‘Public History.’ NB: the subject used for the Reviewing Public History exercise cannot be reused in the Practising Public History element
To view the CGS Descriptors please go to MyAberdeen - Organisations - Divinity, History & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates. The link to the CGS Descriptors is on the left hand menu.

PLEASE NOTE: In order to pass a course on the first attempt, a student must attain a Common Grading Scale (CGS) mark of at least E3 on each element of course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of no greater than CGS E1 for the course as a whole.

Seminars & Bibliography:

1: Public History

Wilmer, E., ‘What is Public History?’, Available at http://www.publichistory.org/what_is/definition.html

2: History and Public Policy

History and Policy: http://www.historyandpolicy.org

3: TV & Films

Barta, Tony, Screening the past: film and the representation of history (Westport, Conn., 1998)
Cannadine, David, (ed.) History and the media (Basingstoke, 2004)


4. Museums and Heritage


Harrison, R., Understanding the Politics of Heritage (London, 2010)


Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, Terence. The invention of Tradition (Cambridge, 1983).


Smith, Laura Jane, Uses of Heritage (London, 2006).


5. Democratizing History: The Internet & Community History


Cohen, D. ‘History and the Second Decade of the Web,’ Rethinking History 8 (June 2004): 293-301.


http://www.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/articles/community_history.html “Place and the Intellectual Politics of the Past”

http://historyonics.blogspot.ca/2012/07/place-and-politics-of-past.html
6. History, Memory and Commemoration


7. Assessments and Conclusions

Relevant Journals

*Film and History: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Film and Television Studies; The Public Historian; Rethinking History, International Journal of Heritage Studies*

SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Please submit by the deadline ONE paper copy (cover sheet required) PLUS, ONE official electronic copy (no cover sheet required) as follows:

**Hard Copy:** One hard copy typed and double spaced, together with an Assessment cover sheet – this should have your ID number CLEARLY written on the cover sheet, with NO name and NO signature but EVERYTHING ELSE filled in – and should be delivered to the History Admin Office [Drop-off boxes located in CB008, 50-52 College Bounds].
**Electronic Copy:** One copy submitted through Turnitin via MyAberdeen. (For instructions please see [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/eLearning/turnitinuk/students/](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/eLearning/turnitinuk/students/)) Students are asked to retain the Turnitin receipt so they are able to provide proof of submission at a later date if required.

In advance of uploading, please save the assignment with your student ID number listed in the filename, i.e. 59999999 Viking Essay 1.

When asked to enter a title for the assignment, please enter a title identical to the name of your saved assignment, i.e. 59999999 Viking Essay 1.

Both copies to be submitted by 3.00pm on the due date

**Please note:** Failure to submit both an electronic copy to Turnitin and a hard copy to the school office, by the stated deadline, will result in a zero mark. N.B Turnitin doesn’t accept Mac documents in Pages. If using a Mac please go to File and export work as a Word document.