History 615  Professional Development  
2:00 – 3:20 Friday, McKenzie 375

Description: This one-credit course centers on the professional structures that shape historians’ work, both inside and outside the academy. The course will meet six times.

Learning objectives: You will gain a better understanding of the historical discipline and its relationship to professional life. Additionally, you will gain practice presenting historical information in a multi-media format, something relevant to many historical careers.

Grading: This course is Pass/No Pass only. To pass the course, students must attend all sessions (exceptions made for excused absences), complete the assigned readings, and give a presentation.

Presentations: You will pick your presentation assignment out of a sack on the first day of class. Your goal is to develop a 25-minute presentation aimed at a general audience that both presents your topic and places it in a historical context. You should plan to focus your assignment on something specific within your own field of study. If at all possible, incorporate images or items associated with your topic into the presentation. Use computer projection as needed. Assume that your audience knows nothing about the historical context. Be prepared to answer questions. At the end of the class period, we will critique that day’s presentations.

Possible presentation assignments include:
1. a historical film
2. a place
3. a material artifact
4. a piece of music
5. a person’s journey
6. a food

Assigned texts:


Joan Bolker, Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day (Owl Books, 1998).
Meeting schedule:

Friday, January 9
Reading: *Being a Historian*, 1-95.

Friday, January 23
Reading: *Being a Historian*, 96-259

Friday, February 13
Class presentations: numbers 1 - 2

Friday, February 20
Class presentations: numbers 3 – 4

Friday, February 28
Class presentations: numbers 5 - 6

Friday, March 13
Reading: *Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day*, pages TBA