HIST 452:
Death and Human Remains in Public History
Tuesday and Thursday

Instructor: Dr. Katie Stringer Clary

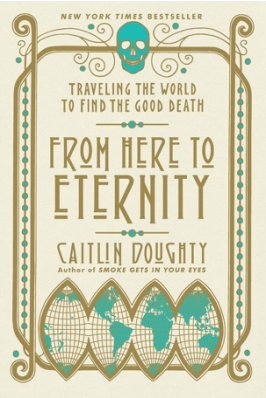
- **Email: mclary@coastal.edu**
- Phone: 843-349-2564
- **Office: Brittain 368**

Student Hours:
Tuesday & Thursday - 12:30-2:30 PM
Wednesday - 4:30-5:30 PM
- **And by appointment**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

HIST452 - Death and Human Remains in Public History (3 Credits) This course covers the various fields of Public History in the context of human experience with death and with human remains. Topics will include ethics of display and interpretation of human remains in museums and at other historical spaces, educational programs at sites of death or about death, dark tourism, best practices in public history, and other themes related to death, dying, and human remains. **F, S, Su.**

MATERIALS



Textbook:
Caitlin Doughty, *From Here to Eternity: Traveling the World to Find the Good Death.* New York City: W.W. Norton, 2017.

Other Resources:
Other articles as assigned for each topic, which will be available on our Moodle page, from the library, or distributed in class.

Moodle will be an integral part of this course for accessing materials and turning in assignments. If you are unsure about accessing Moodle, please let me know as soon as possible.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

I expect that all work turned in will be clearly written, well thought out, and that you will spend time thoughtfully completing all assignments, rather than rushing through them at the last minute. Each week, students will be responsible for reflective papers and discussion about readings and assignments. See the schedule below for more information.

Points:

- Participation in Class – 10 Points
- Participation on Moodle and FlipGrid – 10 Points
- Weekly Reflections and Reviews – 25 Points total
- Midterm UnEssay Proposal - 15 points
- Final UnEssay Project -25 Points
- Final Presentation – 10 Points
- Final Reflective Essay – 5 Points

Assignment Information:

Participation – You are expected to attend class and engage with the readings and discussion each week. By attending class and sitting silently, you will earn 0 points for in-class participation. If you regularly ask questions, bring up important issues or topics, and contribute to the conversation, you should easily earn the full points. Additionally, you are expected to participate online and with your classmates in virtual spaces as assigned weekly.

Attendance – It is your responsibility to keep up with your own absences and grades. If you attend all classes, you will earn all 10 points. 1 unexcused absence will result in 8 points, 2 unexcused absences will earn you 6 points, and 3 unexcused absences will earn you 0 points. If you miss part of a class, you will lose points, depending on the amount of time missed.

Weekly Reflections and Reviews – Each week you will submit a written reflection on the work we do in class and out of class. These papers should use proper grammar and spelling, and reflect thoughtfully on the work we have done. Full instructions are available on our Moodle page.

The UnEssay Project – Our main project in this class will be the UnEssay.

What is an UnEssay? An UnEssay is an opportunity for you to get creative with you own ideas and abilities to create a product; though I recognize that some of you may be more comfortable with a traditional essay. I hope that you will (and encourage you to) think outside of the traditional-essay-box box for your Final in this class. You could sew something, write something, sculpt or draw something; you could build a tabletop or computer-based game, expand a project from an earlier unit. You could do something I haven't even thought of!

The main goal of this **Final** is to bring together all we have done in this course and show what it has meant to you and what you have learned from this course.

For the **Midterm**, I want you to come up with a proposal for your final unessay project. Of course, at this stage, you will only have had about half of the total units, so don't feel like you are getting locked in or contracted to do a particular thing. This is more an opportunity for you to start thinking about the scope and possibilities of an unessay project related to this class. It is also a time for you to stop and reflect on where you've been and where you might be interested in going this semester.

Final Presentation – An in-class presentation of the project you created for your UnEssay.

Final Reflective Essay – Your final exam will be a reflective essay in which you reflect upon the course, readings, discussions, assignments, and final project. This will be due at our final exam time.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance

The full attendance policy is on Moodle, and corresponds with ACAD-SENA 129.
Because this is a core course, the instructor must report absences and tardies to the university. Come to class prepared and on time; be present mentally and physically. You are responsible for any information you miss when you are absent. Absences over 25% of the course will result in failure of the course.

Respect

It should go without saying that all students are expected to act in a professional and respectful manner, especially if we have guests. Because this course involves debates, we will set a class respect policy the first week. Be mindful that all students represent CCU, this class, & your professor whether on campus or off, during or outside of class time.

Electronics

Please stay off of your devices during class; they not only disrupt your learning, but that of your classmates, and your professor. Failure to comply may result in an absence for the day or loss of points.
Electronic recording You may not record class either with an audio or visual recorder of any kind without permission and documented accommodation.

Emails

Email is the best way to reach me. Allow 24 hours for a response during business hours. Outside of those hours, do not expect an immediate response. I respond to all emails in a timely manner, unless they are written to ask questions clearly outlined in the syllabus, schedule, or on moodle. Email etiquette information link - click here.

Late work & Make Ups

Late work is not accepted, and all work must be turned in on Moodle through TurnItIn. Let me know if you need help learning to access these programs. No Make-up tests or assignments are allowed without documentation of an excused absence

CCU Student Code of Conduct: https://www.coastal.edu/academic integrity/code/

Academic Misconduct

It is expected that work you complete for this course is your own. Always include appropriate citations. Academic misconduct includes the following behaviors: Plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, or facilitating any such act. Any student suspected of violating the academic misconduct policy will be required to meet with me to discuss the situation. Your name will also be forwarded to Student Academic Integrity Officer for disciplinary action. If you are found responsible for committing an act of academic misconduct, you will receive a grade of "F" for the course.

Accessibility & Accommodations

If you have a disability that may require assistance or accommodation, or if you have questions related to any accommodation for testing, note takers, readers, etc., speak with me as soon as possible. Students may contact the Office of Accessibility and Disabled Services with questions. CCU is committed to equitable access and inclusion of individuals with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Individuals seeking reasonable accommodations should contact
Accessibility & Disability Services
843-349-2503 or
www.coastal.edu/disabilityservices/

If you are having ANY issues, please let me know ASAP so I can help.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1: Public History and The Good Death: An Introduction to the field of Public History and Death Studies

Week 2: Public History and The Good Death: An Introduction to the field of Public History and Death Studies Continued

Week 3: An introduction to Death, Dying, and Mourning Culture in the US and Western Europe

Week 4: Museums and Historic Places; Acquisition, Conservation, and Display of the Dead and items of Death (war trophies, weapons, and other material culture)

Week 5: A history of Humans Remains on Display in Museums and Heritage Sites (from freakshows to NAGPRA and beyond)

Week 6: Death and Museums: Displaying (or not?) the Dead and Death Education at Museums and Heritage sites

Week 7: Haunted Places and People: The Impact of the Living on the Spaces of the Dead (historic preservation, destruction of historic places, pros and cons of legends and myths)

Week 8: Dark Tourism: Serial Killers, Mass Murder, and Disaster History and the Public
Midterm Proposal Due

Week 9: Spaces of Dark Tourism and Public Engagement: Plantations, Asylums, Hospitals, and Sites of Mass Death as Tourist Destinations. (balancing historical interpretation and sensitivity to the dead)

Week 10: Public Consumption of Death and Human Remains in Popular Culture: Mummies, Zombies, and what they say about the living

Week 11: Death and Religious Spaces: Churches, Cemeteries, and Relics

Week 12: Radical Death Studies: Decolonizing Death

Week 13: Politics and the Dead

Week 14: Ask Me Anything: A Panel of Guest Speakers in related fields

Week 15: Final Presentations of UnEssay Projects