CMST 4142 - **Performing the Archive**, Section 1, 3 Credit Hours
Class meets Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:30 pm – 2:50 pm – 137 Coates Hall
Fall 2013 – Final Examination is Thursday, December 12th, 5:30-7:30 pm
Instructor John LeBret, Ph.D.
Office Hours 11am – 12pm Tuesdays, 3pm – 4pm Thursdays or by appointment
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**Course Texts:**

**Contact Information** - I can most easily be reached through email at the address above. I am generally in my office, 216 Coates Hall, from 10:00am until 12:00pm and am easily available with prior appointment. To schedule an appointment please send me an email at least 24 hours in advance. For your convenience, I will be available for drop-ins from 11:00am – 12:00pm on Tuesdays and 3:00pm – 4:00pm on Thursdays. My office telephone number is 225-578-6812 and my mailbox is located in the Communication Studies office in Coates Hall, room 136. Please feel free to talk to me about any issue relating to this course.

**Course Goals** - Welcome! The Archive, as it exists in both concept and practice, serves as the keystone to nearly all portals of knowledge in Western civilization. Institutions of all sorts depend on archives, and the documents contained therein, to make claims of legitimacy and authoritative power. The Archive itself is one such institution and, left unexamined, can subtly shape our intellectual and creative practice. To put it another way, The Archive is neither a neutral or benign entity as it actively shapes the very possibilities of how we think, make claims to know, and in the generation of original works of art/scholarship. In this course we will explore the concept of archives, as well as the attendant human impulses that give rise to their powerful place in contemporary society, in order to develop a critical and creative (i.e. performative) research practice. We will also work to expand and imagine the possibilities for archives and archival research by exploring our own collaborative role in shaping new archival forms and publicizing them to others in novel and creative ways.

**Class Decorum & Citizenship** - Creative work often includes elements of exposure and risk and is best fostered in a safe, supportive environment. Students should make every effort to be considerate of others. When offering critique, honesty should always be tempered with compassion. Disagreement does not warrant uncivil behavior and even in our differences let our humanity prevail. Also, just as students should respect each other, so too should they respect our shared space by cleaning up after themselves and assisting in restoring the room at the end of class. Outside distractions are not welcome, please turn off electronics and put them away before class begins.
Creative Research, Readings, Journals, and Collaborations - Students in this course, along with myself, comprise a creative intellectual community. While much of your work can and will be at an individual level, based on your own interests and goals, everything will also contribute to a collective effort. You are welcome to present your creative research in the mode you are most interested in developing over the semester. That said, as collaborators, we should strive to be open to the influence of others – especially in terms of technique – and I encourage each of you to attempt to work in a mode outside your immediate familiarity. Students will be also responsible for attending to all assigned readings while certain students will help guide our conversations by providing outlines and/or notes on their assigned sections. Students should also keep a research journal comprised of notes, insights, and personal reflection on the process of their own research. Journals are evaluated on volume, not content, and I will check in on them at midterm and at the end of semester. Lastly, you will work in collaboration with others. That said collaborative relationships are different than what we more commonly associate with “group assignments.” Collaborations take many different forms and develop over time. Your role is to commit fully to that experience, regardless of the way in which it emerges over time.

Late Work, Attendance, and Participation - The assignments in this class are designed to work toward a cumulative goal of presenting an original piece of creative scholarship. In many cases, one student’s assignment is the inspiration for another’s next piece. Incomplete or late work disrupts multiple schedules and effectively delays the whole class. Late assignments will be penalized at the rate of 10% per day (24 hours). Also, the readings in this class range from pleasantly challenging to thrillingly difficult in their complexity. It will take our collective efforts to unpack and make useful sense of them. I have deliberately kept the reading load light, so every student should stay up to date with the assignments to facilitate our course momentum. In general, when a student misses class, he or she will fall behind not only by missing the introduced material but also missing the associated activities and discussion. Students also play an important role as collaborator to each other’s work and absence from the class deprives others. Participation counts as 20% of the final evaluation. Students may be absent from class, for any reason, up to three times. Absences in excess of three will result in a reduction of the participation grade by 33% for each additional absence. Excessive tardiness to class counts as a 1/2 absence. In addition to being present in class and on time, students should be actively listening to the others and be prepared to offer their thoughtful comments during discussion.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a Coordinator in the Office for Disability Affairs so that such accommodations may be arranged. After you receive your accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations during the first two weeks.
**Plagiarism** - Plagiarism is a violation of the fundamental principles of intellectual property. Punishment can range from failing the assignment to failing the class, depending on the seriousness of the act. In cases of gross misconduct, I reserve the right to petition for expulsion. That said, the very idea of plagiarism is also an extension of archival authority and power. Deliberate transgressions made in good faith and articulated as such are not only permitted but encouraged, so long as the goal is creation rather than capitalization.

**Grading** - This class is graded using a standard A - F grading scale:

- 100%-90% = A
- 89.9% - 80% = B
- 79.9% - 70% = C
- 69.9% - 60% = D
- 59.9% - 0% = F

As will be given for work that indicates achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements. Bs will be given for work that indicates achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements. Cs will be given for work that meets the course requirements in every way.Ds will be given for work that is worthy of credit even thought it fails to meet the requirements of the course. Fs will be given for work that fails to meet the basic parameters of the course.

- Participation - 20%
- Collage assignments - 1.0% (5% each)
- Readings - 15% (5% each)
- “The Archive” re-imagined - 15%
- Final Project - 40%
Course Calendar –

8/27 - Welcome, syllabus, introductions
8/29 - Archives, Libraries, Museums, and Memories
9/3 - College, montage, and intuitive research
9/5 - College presentations - Part 1
9/10 - "The Archive" PDF Readings, pt. 1
9/12 - "The Archive" PDF Readings, pt. 2
9/17 - College presentations - Part 2
9/19 - Theorizing The Archive
9/24 - Re-imagining "The Archive"
9/26 - Presenting Creative Scholarship - Close Cover Before Striking @ 7:30 pm
10/1 - "The Archive" - remediated, revised, reconsidered
10/3 - The Archive - Introduction & Traces
10/8 - The Archive - Inscriptions
10/10 - The Archive - Contestations pt. 1
10/15 - The Archive - Contestations pt. 2
10/17 - The Archive - Retracings
10/22 - Archive & Project proposals - Locating the Subject
10/24 - Expanding the archive
10/29 - Subverting the document
10/31 - Politics and Aesthetics
11/5 - Project reports
11/7 - Fall Break
11/12 - Archive Fever - Exerge & Preamble
11/14 - Archive Fever - Forward
11/19 - Archive Fever - Thesis & Postscript
11/21 - Work Day, No Class
11/26 - Work Day, No Class
11/28 - Thanksgiving
12/3 - Summations
12/5 - Final Performances/presentations
12/13 - Final Performances/presentations