

HIST 4430: MUSEUM STUDIES  
CRN 10258, 3 credit hours  
Tuesday, 2:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.  
SO 2027  
Spring 2012

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Course description: This course offers a broad introduction to the museum world and the functions of museums in American society with an emphasis on history museums. Subjects covered will include museum management, collections management, education, interpretation, exhibit design, ethics, and scholarly criticism of museums.

The class will combine lectures by the instructor and guest lecturers, in-class discussion, case studies, readings, and field trips to achieve the goals specified below.

Course Goals: At the completion of this course you should demonstrate the following:

- an understanding of the history of history museums in the United States
- an understanding of the interpretive techniques employed by history museums
- an understanding of the current issues of debate in the museum field
- an understanding of the importance of ethical practices in museums
- the ability to develop an exhibit or program for a history museum

Required Readings:

Alexander, Edward P. and Mary Alexander. *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums*. Altamira Press, 2008.

Dubin, Steven. *Displays of Power: Controversy in the American Museum from the Enola Gay to Sensation*. New York University Press, 1999.

Additional readings as assigned

Student Services: The Office of Disabled Student Support Services (Student Center, Room 268A) offers services to aid disabled students with their academic work. Arrangements for special services should be made at the beginning of the semester so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Writing Center: The KSU Writing Center is a free service offered to all KSU students. Experienced, friendly writing assistants work with you throughout the writing process on concerns such as topic development, revision, research, documentation, grammar, and mechanics. Rather than edit your paper for you, writing assistants will help you learn strategies to become a better writer on your own. For more information or to make an appointment (appointments are strongly encouraged), visit <http://www.kennesaw.edu/english/WritingCenter> or stop by Room 242 in the English Building.

Academic Honesty: Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs.

No student shall receive, attempt to receive, knowingly give or attempt to give unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any work required to be submitted for credit (including examinations, laboratory reports, essays, themes, term papers, etc.). Unless specifically authorized, the presence and/or use of electronic devices during an examination, quiz, or other class assignment is considered cheating. Engaging in any behavior which a professor prohibits as academic misconduct in the syllabus or in class discussion is cheating. When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when the ideas, theories, data, figures, graphs, programs, electronic based information or illustrations of someone other than the student are incorporated into a paper or used in a project, they should be duly acknowledged. No student may submit the same, or substantially the same, paper or other assignment for credit in more than one class without the prior permission of the current professor(s).

Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an “informal” resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct’s minimum one-semester suspension requirement.

Exhibit Lesson Plans and Traveling Trunk: During the semester we will work with the staff of the KSU Museum of History and Holocaust Education (MHHE) to develop support materials for the “Women in War” exhibition. You will be divided into groups for this project. You will be required to evaluate your own contributions as well as the contributions of your team members to the group project. A discussion board will be set up for each group on Vista. You will be expected to use the discussion board to coordinate and disseminate your work throughout the semester. The discussion board allows me to see who is contributing what to the group project. If you do not show up on the discussion board, I will assume that you are not contributing to the group effort on the project.

Exhibit Reviews: We will take class field trips to the Booth Western Art Museum and the Atlanta History Center (AHC) during the semester. You will be required to write a short review (750-1000 words) following our visits to these museums. Your review should include a critical assessment of a particular exhibit and how the exhibit relates to the mission of the museum. You should draw on the assigned readings and class discussions in your analysis. Examples of reviews can be found on Vista and in issues of *The Public Historian* or *The Journal of American History*. As you walk through the exhibition, use the **Framework for Assessing Excellence Form** that is posted on Vista to help you organize your observations. **You will be expected to turn in the Assessment Form along with your paper.** See the attached Exhibit Review sheet for more details. Your review will be graded on **composition and content**.

Quizzes: You will be given five quizzes on assigned readings throughout the semester. The quizzes will include short answer questions related to the readings assigned for that particular class period. Each quiz will be worth 25 points. Your top four quiz grades will be combined to account for 20 percent of your final grade.

Attendance: You are expected to attend class and to participate in class discussions. If you are sick or need to miss class for any reason, you should alert the professor in advance by email. If an absence is deemed justifiable, the student will be given an opportunity to make up the work. Each unexcused absence will result in a five-point reduction in your final grade.

Participation: You are expected to participate as well as show up. This means that you ask questions, contribute to class discussions, and generally engage in what’s going on in the classroom. To facilitate your engagement, you should read the assignments, arrive on time, **turn off your cell phone**, pay attention, and take notes. You may be expected to give impromptu presentations.

Grading:

Booth Museum Review	25%
Olympic Exhibit Review	25%
Quizzes	20%
Lesson Plans	20%
Attendance/Participation	10%

Grade Scale: 90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, 0-59=F

Tentative Schedule – (changes will be announced in class)

Week 1 Jan 10	Introduction – What is a museum? Introduction to the MHHE Telling history with objects	<a href="http://www.aam-us.org/">http://www.aam-us.org/</a> <a href="http://www.kennesaw.edu/historymuseum/">http://www.kennesaw.edu/historymuseum/</a> Guest speaker, Dr. Catherine Lewis, KSU MHHE <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/">http://www.bbc.co.uk/ahistoryoftheworld/</a>
Week 2 Jan 17	<b>Quiz #1</b> The history of museums and the role of museums in America Museum standards & best practices	Alexander, Chpts. 1, 11, and 13. Dubin, Introduction Vista – Newseum article from <i>Museum</i> magazine American Association of Museums website at <a href="http://www.aam-us.org/aboutmuseums/standards/stbp.cfm">http://www.aam-us.org/aboutmuseums/standards/stbp.cfm</a>
Week 3 Jan 24	Field trip – Museum of History and Holocaust Education <b>Stay after class for free pizza and a movie at the MHHE!</b>	Meet in room 151 at the KSU Center, 3333 Busbee Drive <a href="http://www.kennesaw.edu/historymuseum/">http://www.kennesaw.edu/historymuseum/</a> Guest speakers: Julia Brock, curator, and Richard Harker, education and outreach coordinator
Week 4 Jan 31	<b>Quiz #2</b> Historic House Museums	Vista—Donnelly, pp. 18-42, 43-80, 192-230.
<b>Fri Feb 3</b>	<b>Optional Field Trip – Chief Vann House</b>	Travel by bus from KSU – departure site and time to be determined. <a href="http://gastateparks.org/ChiefVannHouse">http://gastateparks.org/ChiefVannHouse</a>
Week 5 Feb 7	The Chief Vann House	Vista – Tiya Miles, “‘Showplace of the Cherokee Nation’: Race and the Making of a Southern House Museum,” <i>The Public Historian</i> , Vol. 33, Nov. 2011. Excerpts from <i>The House on Diamond Hill</i> . <b>Guest speaker – Tiya Miles</b>
Week 6 Feb 14	<b>Quiz #3</b> Art Museums	Alexander, Chpt. 2. Dubin, Chpts. 2 and 5.
Week 7 Feb 21	<b>Field Trip – Booth Western Art Museum</b>	Meet at 2:30 in the lobby, 501 Museum Drive, Cartersville, GA, <a href="http://www.boothmuseum.org/">http://www.boothmuseum.org/</a>
Week 8 Feb 28	<b>Booth Museum Review due</b> Exhibit Design Work in class on “Women in War” project	Meet at MHHE in room 151 Alexander, Chpt. 10 Vista – “Exhibit Labels” by Beverly Serrell.
<b>Thu. Mar 1</b>	<b>“Women in War” exhibit opening</b>	<b>12:30-2:00, MHHE, KSU Center, 3333 Busbee Drive Be there if you can!</b>
Week 9 Mar 6	No Class – Spring Break	
<b>Mar 12</b>	Last day to withdraw without academic penalty	
Week 10 Mar 13	Handling and packing of artifacts – “Engaging History: Continuities of Textile Traditions in the Andes,” Sturgis Gallery	Meet in basement of Sturgis Library at the Art Gallery Alexander, Chpt. 9. Vista – Collections Care Basics
Week 11 Mar 20	<b>Quiz #4</b> Collections Management Final review and dress rehearsal presentation of lesson plans	Alexander, Chpt. 8, Vista – Edson, “Collections Management” Nazi Era Appropriations at AAM website <a href="http://www.aam-us.org/aboutmuseums/standards/stbp.cfm#bp">http://www.aam-us.org/aboutmuseums/standards/stbp.cfm#bp</a>
Week 12 Mar 27	<b>Final Presentation of lesson plans to MHHE staff</b>	
Week 13 Apr 3	<b>Quiz #5</b> History Museums	Alexander, Chpt. 5. Dubin, Chpts. 3 and 6.
Week 14 Apr 10	<b>Field Trip – Atlanta History Center</b>	Meet at 2:45 in the lobby, 130 West Paces Ferry Rd, NW, Atlanta, GA <a href="http://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/">http://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/</a>
Week 15 Apr 17	<b>Olympic Exhibit Review due</b> Natural History and Anthropology Museums/Science and Technology Museums/Botanical Gardens and Zoos	Alexander, Chpts. 3, 4, and 6
Week 16 Apr 24	<b>Field trip – Tellus Museum</b>	Meet in the lobby, Tellus Drive, Cartersville, GA <a href="http://www.tellusmuseum.org/">http://www.tellusmuseum.org/</a>

## ***Museum Education Project***

Working in teams, the class will develop educational material for a traveling exhibition, “Women in War,” at the Kennesaw State University Museum of History and Holocaust Education (MHHE) <http://www.kennesaw.edu/historymuseum/>. The exhibit supports the mission of the MHHE, which is to **promote diversity, build character, and encourage respect through exhibits and public programs that are free and open to the public**. The lesson plans must support the Georgia Performance Standards (see <http://www.georgiastandards.org/>).

For the duration of the project, you will serve as consultants to the MHHE. That means that **you will behave as if you are professional consultants** hired to develop a support materials for this exhibit.

Each team will develop two lesson plans for a thematic section of the exhibit. With guidance from the MHHE staff, teams will identify subthemes that will serve as the subjects for the lesson plans.

Julia Brock, curator, and Richard Harker, education and outreach coordinator, have begun assembling materials in the MHHE resource library. These materials will be available to you during the museum’s regular hours (M-F, 10:00-5:00) and at other times by special request.

The Georgia Performance Standards can be found online at <https://www.georgiastandards.org/Standards/Pages/BrowseStandards/BrowseGPS.aspx>.

For examples of lesson plans that use historic sites or resources, see the following:

MHHE <http://www.kennesaw.edu/historymuseum/k12curriculum.shtml>

United States Holocaust Museum and Memorial <http://www.ushmm.org/education/foreducators/lesson/>

NPS Teaching with Historic Places <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/>

Atlanta History Center Educator Resources

<http://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/cms/Native+Lands%253A+Indians+and+Georgia/37.html>

The Smithsonian

[http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/resource\\_library/standards\\_of\\_learning.asp?state=GA&grade=8&subject=Social+Studies&Submit.x=27&Submit.y=8](http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/resource_library/standards_of_learning.asp?state=GA&grade=8&subject=Social+Studies&Submit.x=27&Submit.y=8)

National World War II Museum <http://www.ddaymuseum.org/education/for-teachers/lesson-plans/lesson-plans.html>

## **Museum and Exhibit Reviews**

You will be required to write two reviews during the semester—one on an exhibit of your choosing at the Booth Western Art Museum and one on the Olympic exhibit at the Atlanta History Center. The reviews should be 3-4 pages (750-1000 words) and should provide an analysis of the site or exhibit in terms of organization, design, themes, execution, and issues. The reading assignments throughout the semester are designed to help you develop your critical thinking and analysis skills as they relate to assessing the impact, effectiveness, and quality of public history displays. You should use the *Chicago Manual of Style* and include footnotes as appropriate.

Use the **Framework for Assessing Excellence Form** that is posted on Vista to help you organize your observations. **You will be expected to turn in the Assessment Form along with your paper.**

Your review should address the following questions:

- What is the mission of the institution that hosts the exhibit or tour?
- How does the exhibit or tour support that mission?
- How is the theme of the exhibition or tour conveyed through the objects, design, and, if appropriate, subsidiary text?
- What kind of bias or perspective does the exhibition or tour have?
- What were the curatorial objectives?
- Is the organization of the exhibition or tour logical?
- Was the exhibition or tour well researched and presented in an appealing fashion?
- What was emphasized or omitted and what impact does that have on the visitor?
- For an exhibit, how does the design shape the visitor's understanding or experience?
- What did the interpretive team do well? What areas could have been improved?
- Who is responsible for the content and design?

A few tips:

- Analyze; do not summarize. The summary of what you saw should be condensed to a short paragraph—just enough to allow the reader to understand what the exhibition or site was all about.
- Read sample reviews in the *Journal of American History* or the *Public Historian*.
- Do not mention every artifact or tidbit of information that was conveyed to you. Be selective. Talk about highlights and lowlights.
- Provide concrete evidence to support your argument and assertions.
- Do not feel that you have to organize your paper to mimic the layout of the exhibition or tour.

### **Mission Statements:**

**Booth Western Art Museum** – to educate, entertain and inspire a diverse audience by creating a place where people feel welcome, find meaning and value, and delight in exploring the uniqueness of Western American art and culture.

**Atlanta History Center** – The Atlanta History Center through its collections, facilities, programs, exhibitions, and publications preserves and interprets historical subjects pertaining to Atlanta and its environs and presents subjects of interest to Atlanta's diverse audiences.