

MUSE 704 Principles and Practices of Museum Collection Management

(cross listings: GEO 785, HIST 725)

Spring 2015

Mondays 2:30 – 5:00 PM

Watkins Museum of History

1047 Massachusetts Street

Instructors

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Office Hours at Watkins: Brittany: Thursdays, 2-4 PM

Steve: Mondays, 10 AM-noon

Required Texts

- Bucks and Gilmore. 2010. *Museum Registration Methods 5th Ed.*
- See Reading List for additional readings

Course Description

This course is intended to introduce students to the role collections play in a museum and to issues collection workers face. Topics will be addressed in readings, discussions, lectures and real life experience. A component of this course is hands-on collection care tasks that will be completed during scheduled class time.

Course Requirements and Policies

- Attendance at weekly classes is required; please inform us *ahead of class time* by email, phone, or in person if you will not be able to attend class. Attendance will be one component of your final grade.
- Assigned readings are listed on the calendar below. Do the readings *before* coming to class; they will be the basis of our class discussion.
- Assignments must be submitted on time in order to receive full credit.
- Good communication skills are important to museum professionals. Written work will be graded for grammar and spelling as well as for content.

Need help with your writing?

The KU Writing Center is an excellent place to go for help in perfecting your writing skills. Its services are FREE for KU students. Make the most of it. <http://www.writing.ku.edu/>

Plagiarism

Plagiarism (using another's words, research or ideas without proper credit) is not tolerated at KU or in this course. As graduate students you must be meticulous about giving credit to all sources you consult including material you find in books, articles, websites, and lectures. If you are uncertain whether you are citing sources appropriately, please ask me. For more information about the University's policy on plagiarism see the University Senate Rules and Regulations, Article 2, Section 6

(<https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect6>).

Disruptive Behavior

Please do not answer your phone, check e-mail, or communicate by text message in the classroom or project workspace.

Students who engage in disruptive behavior, including persistent refusal to observe boundaries defined by the instructor regarding inappropriate talking, discussions, and questions in the classroom or laboratory may be subject to discipline for non-academic misconduct for disruption of teaching or academic misconduct, as defined in the Code of Students Rights and Responsibilities, Article 22, Section C (https://documents.ku.edu/policies/Student_Success/VPSS/Code_Student_Rights_Responsibilities.htm), and the University Senate Rules and Regulations, Article 2, Section 6 (<https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm>).

Disability Accommodation

The KU office of Disability Resources coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted DR, please do so as soon as possible. Their office is located in 22 Strong Hall; their phone number is 785-864-2620. Information about their services can be found at <http://disability.ku.edu>. Please also contact me privately in regard to your needs in this course.

Grading Scale

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
60-69%	D
below 60%	F

Class Participation (5 points/class; 70 points total, 23%)

Participation includes arriving to class on time, asking questions in class, answering questions from the instructor or your fellow students, contributing to in-class discussions, participating in hands-on activities, voicing your own viewpoints and opinions in a constructive manner, and remaining awake.

Written Assignments and Collection Presentation (10 points each, 50 points total, 17%)

Four written assignments will be based on a collection developed by each student. At mid-term, students will present their collections to the class.

Readings/Responses (10 points each, 60 points total, 20%)

Six reading assignments will include a written response to the readings and class discussion due the following class period.

Collections Issues Case Studies (20 points each, 60 points total, 20%)

Students will research three case studies relating to issues in collections management and write up their findings. In class, the case studies will be discussed and alternative ways to address the issues identified will be explored.

Term Paper/Project (60 points, 20%)

Select a collection management topic and get the instructor's approval early in the semester. Suggested topics include: care or preservation needs of a particular type of object; policies or guidelines for a specific type of collection; collection law and legal issues; safety considerations in collections. As an alternative to a term paper, students may present their research in the form of a project such as a written policy, collections storage plan, inventory procedure, or collections plan. Term paper with complete bibliographic citation or project will be due during finals week. Term papers should be approximately 10 pages in length (excluding bibliography), double-spaced, one inch margins, in 12 point Times New Roman font or equivalent.

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Written Assignments</i>
Week 1 Jan 26	Review Syllabus Discussion: prior experience with collections •	Reading 1 assigned	Written Assignment 1 distributed
Week 2 Feb 2	Collecting Institutions • Role of collections in museums • Public Trust • Collections Documents	Reading Response 1 due	
Week 3 Feb 9	Shaping Collections • Sources of collections materials • Accessioning • De-accessioning	Reading 2 assigned	Written Assignment 1 due
Week 4 Feb 16	Documenting Collections • Cataloguing/numbering • Records systems • Information Management Hands-on activity	Reading Response 2 due	
Week 5 Feb 23	Collections Care • Handling • Housing • Storage/inventory systems Hands-on activity or guest speaker	Reading 3 assigned	Written Assignment 2 distributed
Week 6 Mar 2	Collections Utilization: • Accessibility (physical/electronic) • Loans • Insurance	Reading Response 3 due	
Week 7 Mar 9	Presentation of student collections Discussion of research paper topics Questions/review, weeks 1-6		Written Assignment 2 due
Mar 16	SPRING BREAK		

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Reading Assignments</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
Week 8 Mar 23	Collections Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy • Procedure/practice • Outside Forces Review case study approach	Reading 4 assigned	Written Assignment 3 distributed
Week 9 Mar 30	Case Study 1 Policy	Reading Response 4 due	Case Study Report 1 due
Week 10 Apr 6	Field Trip or Guest Speaker		Written Assignment 3 due
Week 11 Apr 13	Case Study 2 Procedure	Reading 5 assigned	Case Study Report 2 due Written Assignment 4 distributed
Week 12 Apr 20	Field Trip or Guest Speaker	Reading Response 5 due	
Week 13 Apr 27	Case Study 3 Outside Forces	Reading 6 assigned	Case Study Report 3 due
Week 14 May 4	Review, questions, or hands-on activity		Written Assignment 4 due
Finals Week May 11		Reading Response 6 due	Term Paper due