

HIS 547: History Museum Curatorship: Collections Management

FALL 2013

Curry 331

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Introduction

This course will introduce students to the legal and ethical issues associated with the care and management of museum collections. Students will learn about collections professions in museums and explore what it means to be responsible for the physical and intellectual control of collections. Students will learn best practices and professional standards of the life cycle of a museum's collections from acquisition to deaccessioning. Readings and hands-on activities will provide students with knowledge of and skills in collections development, registration, documentation, storage, and preventive conservation. Students will gain an in-depth understanding of collections policies and collections plans through readings and written evaluations.

Course Expectations

As a graduate level course, students are expected to participate in and lead weekly discussions based upon the assigned readings. Students will complete hands-on projects in class to hone their skills as collections professionals. A major component of the course will be a 20 hour collections management project at Korner's Folly. The hands-on project will reinforce what the students will learn in the classroom. Students will be required to schedule work with Korner's Folly and complete all 20 hours prior to 4pm on Wednesday November 27, 2013. If you experience any difficulty completing the assigned 20 hours of work it is your responsibility to notify me as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements.

Grading

10% - Weekly quizzes of 5 to 10 short answer, multiple choice, and/or true or false questions.

10% - Completion of in class hands-on activities and submission of weekly discussion questions.

15% - Written assignment #1, Evaluation of collections policy.

15% - Written assignment #2, Evaluation of collections plan.

20% - Class participation: Attendance, participation during class, and leading class discussion of assigned readings.

30% - Successful completion of 20 hour collections management project.

No final examination.

Grading Scale

A: 93-100; A-: 90-92; B+: 87-89; B-: 80-82; C+: 77-79; C: 73-76

Academic Integrity Policy

All students are expected to uphold the standards detailed in the Academic Integrity Policy (<http://sa.uncg.edu/dean/academic-integrity/>). You will be asked to sign a copy of the Academic Integrity Pledge for each major assignment in this class (<http://sa.uncg.edu/dean/academic-integrity/pledg/>). Any instances of cheating, plagiarism, misuse of academic resources, falsification of information, and facilitating of academic dishonesty will be treated with the utmost seriousness by the History Department and the University.

Attendance Policy

Consistent attendance is central to success in this course and is a fundamental expectation for participation in the seminar. Active participation in course discussions is a critical component to your grade any unexcused absences will negatively impact your final grade.

Special Needs

If you require accommodations for special learning needs, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Disability Services in the Elliot University Center (336) 334-5770 and please notify me.

Required Reading

Malaro, Marie C. and Ildiko P. DeAngelis. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections, Third Edition*. Smithsonian Books, 2012.

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition*. The AAM Press, 2010.

Gardner, James B. and Elizabeth E. Merritt. *The AAM Guide to Collections Planning*. AAM, 2004.

In addition, other assigned readings and videos will be available on electronic reserve via Blackboard or provided to you in class.

Weekly Discussion Questions and Quizzes

Each week students will submit two discussion questions based upon the current readings and other assignments. The questions should show that the student has thought deeply about the week's readings and provide points to provoke group conversation. Each student's questions will be emailed to brynerke@wfu.edu no later than 9 am each Monday morning prior to class. Late submissions or those not submitted will negatively impact the student's final grade.

Every week students will complete a small quiz of 5-10 questions about the coursework to reinforce student learning. Missed quizzes can only be made-up in the event of an excused absence. Unexcused missed quizzes will negatively impact the student's final grade.

Written Assignment #1, Evaluation of a Collections Policy

Students will work individually to critically evaluate a real collections policy from a museum. Each student will be assigned a different institution to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the policy. Evaluation of the policy should reflect student knowledge of best practices and professional standards from readings and in-class discussions. The evaluation should be 3-5 pages long with appropriate citations (in Chicago style) to support the student's critique.

Written Assignment #2, Evaluation of a Collections Plan

Students will work individually to critically evaluate a real collections plan from a museum. Each student will be assigned a different institution to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the plan. Evaluation of the plan should reflect student knowledge of best practices and professional standards from readings and in-class discussions. The evaluation should be 3-5 pages long with appropriate citations (in Chicago style) to support the student's critique.

Course Schedule and Assignments

August 19: Introductions and Course Overview

Review syllabus and semester assignments. Discuss 20 hour hands-on project, leading weekly discussion, discussion questions, written assignments, and quizzes.

Watch in class: *From Here to There: Museum Standards for Object Handling, Working with Collections in Today's Museums.*

August 26: Museums, Collections and Staff

Quiz # 1

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition.* pp. 2-21: The Profession.

Malaro, Marie C. and Ildiko DeAngelis. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*, pp. 3-21: What is a Museum?; 22-26: Museums are Accountable to Whom? (Stop at b. Can Donors Sue?).

On Blackboard:

Burcaw, G. Ellis. *Introduction to Museum Work*, pp. 13-23: Museum Defined; 24-31: Beginnings of the Museum; 32-36: Museums Today; 37-44: Museums and Museum Fields; 45-55: Organization and Support.

September 2: No Class, Labor Day

September 9: The Basics

Quiz # 2

In class object numbering and handling exercise.

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition*, pp. 206-248: Numbering, Object Handling, Measuring, Condition Reporting, and Marking.

Readings on Blackboard:

Pouliot, Bruno and Lauren Fair. Excerpt from *The Procedure Manual for the Objects Conservation Laboratory of Winterthur Museum and Country Estate*, Object Handling Procedures.

NPS, Conserve O Gram, *How to Select Gloves: An Overview For Collections Staff*, September 2007, Number 1/12.

September 16: Historic Houses and Housekeeping

Quiz # 3

Class meets at Korner's Folly for tour and to meet the director, Dale Pennington.

Review website for Korner's Folly: <http://www.kornersfolly.org/> . One of your two discussion questions this week should be for the director of Korner's Folly.

Watch – links on Blackboard to YouTube:

Housekeeping for Historic Sites 9 part series: Introduction and Credits, Preparing to Clean, Cleaning Architectural Elements, Caring for Textiles, Caring for Metals, Caring for Glass and Ceramics, Caring for Composite and Faux Decorative Objects, Caring for Furniture, Caring for Books, and Caring for Framed Objects.

September 23: Museum Registration and Collections Documentation

Quiz #4

In class cataloging, condition reporting and photography exercise.

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition*, pp. 38-61: Initial Custody and Documentation; 150-192: Records Management: Types of Files, Manual Systems, Computerized Systems, Digital Asset Management; 277-285: Photography.

Malaro, Marie and Ildiko DeAngelis. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*, pp. 57-64: The Acquisition of Objects: Accessioning, (Stop at c. What is Title?).

Readings on Blackboard:

Blackaby, James R. and Patricia Greeno. *The Revised Nomenclature for Museum Cataloging*, pp. 1-5: Looking at Nomenclature; and 6-12: Using Nomenclature.

Demeroukas, Marie, ed. *Basic Condition Reporting: A Handbook*, pp. 1-8: General Condition Reporting; 27-34: Basketry; 35-43: 53-63: Ceramics and Glass; 65- 72: Metals; 89 -98: Paintings and Frames.

September 30: Collections Policies

Quiz # 5

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition*, pp. 24-33: Collections Management Policies and Ad-Hoc Policies for Collections Managers.

Malaro, Marie and Ildiko DeAngelis. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*, pp. 45-56: Collection Management Policies.

Readings on Blackboard:

American Alliance of Museums (AAM). *Developing a Collections Management Policy*.

Assign collections policies for Written Assignment # 1, Evaluation of a Collections Policy. Assignment due Monday, October 7 – submit electronically by 9 am to brynerke@wfu.edu .

October 7: The Museum Environment and Preventive Conservation

Quiz # 6 available on Blackboard.

Class will not meet, however you still must complete the assigned work of discussion questions and turn in your written assignment.

Readings on Blackboard:

NPS, Conserve O Gram, Hazardous Materials in Your Collection, August 1998, Number 2/10.

NPS Museum Handbook, Chapter 4: Museum Collections Environment and Chapter 5: Biological Infestations.

Ward, Phillip. *The Nature of Conservation: A Race Against Time*, pp. 9-27.

October 14: No class, Fall Break.

October 21: Collections Plans and Planning

Quiz # 7

Gardner, James B. and Elizabeth E. Merritt, *The AAM Guide to Collections Planning*, read the entire book.

Assign collections plans for Written Assignment # 2, Evaluation of a Collections Plan. Assignment due Monday, October 28 – submit electronically by 9 am to brynerke@wfu.edu .

October 28: Provenance, Title and Museum Ethics

Quiz # 8

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition*, pp. 62-77: Provenance Research in Museum Collections; 109-119: Found in Collection; 393-407: Ethics for Registrars and Collections Managers and Collections Ethics.

Malaro, Marie and Ildiko DeAngelis. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*, pp. 64 (Begin at c. What is Title?) – 122 (Stop at h. Claims for Cultural Objects Displaced during the Nazi Era).

Readings on Blackboard:

American Alliance of Museums, *A Code of Ethics for Curators* and *A Code of Ethics for Registrars*.

November 4: Nazi Era Provenance

Quiz # 9

Watch in class: *The Rape of Europa*, 2006.

Malaro, Marie and Ildiko DeAngelis. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*, pp. 122 (Begin at h. Claims for Cultural Objects Displaced during the Nazi Era) -128 (stop at i. Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act).

Readings on Blackboard:

American Alliance of Museums, *AAM Guidelines Concerning the Unlawful Appropriation of Objects During the Nazi Era*, 2001.

November 11 – Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) and Caring for the Sacred

Quiz # 10

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition*, pp. 408-426: Care of Sacred and Culturally Sensitive Items.

Malaro, Marie and Ildiko DeAngelis. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*, pp. 128 (Begin at h. Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) -135.

Readings on Blackboard:

Fine-Dare, Kathleen S. *Grave Injustice: The American Indian Repatriation Movement and NAGPRA*, pp.117-171.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, full text of law.

November 18 – Copyright, Rights and Reproductions and Loans

Quiz # 11

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition*, pp. 85-99: Old Loans and Unclaimed Property; 120-146: Loans; 427-437: Copyright and Photographic Services and Fees.

Malaro, Marie and Ildiko DeAngelis. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*, pp. 273-300: Loans.

November 25: Storage, Inventory, Disaster Planning and Theft

Quiz # 12

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition*, pp. 293-299: Storage; 300-306: Inventory.

Readings on Blackboard:

Layne, Stevan P., AASLH Technical Leaflet #253, “An Ounce of Prevention – Worth More than a Pound.”

Emergency Management Plan for the Museum of Anthropology, 2006.

Please note: Wednesday, November 27 is the last day to complete your 20 hours!!!!

December 2: Deaccessioning and Disposal of Objects

Quiz # 13

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *Museum Registration Methods, 5th Edition*, pp. 100-108: Deaccessioning.

Malaro, Marie and Ildiko DeAngelis. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*, pp. 248-272: The Disposal of Objects.

Readings on Blackboard:

Weil, Stephen E., ed. *A Deaccession Reader*, pp. 51-61: Selling Items from Museum Collections; 64-70: Deaccessioning in American Museums I; 93-97: "Guilt-Free" Deaccessioning.

Please note the class schedule may change to unforeseen circumstances.

