Introduction to Museology (ARH 6938, section 6343)

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**Introduction to Museology** has two major components. Readings and seminar discussions engage the contemporary arguments surrounding museums and their function within society. These texts introduce students to the current theoretical debates within the museum world and consider how those debates affect actual museum practices. Guest speakers and visits to local museums provide an overview of the variety of vocational opportunities and challenges within the museum environment.

**Course Readings** are available online at UF library website.

1) Connect off campus: [http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ufproxy.html](http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ufproxy.html)
2) Choose arts and architecture library
3) Choose course reserves
4) Choose ARH 6938
5) Choose relevant article (check title and/or author)

**Recommended Reading:**
For a general introduction to museum practice and standards:

For anthologies of articles about the social and cultural role of the museum and about museum theory:

**Internet:** We will be using the internet more in the seminar than in past *Introduction to Museology* seminars. Still, I expect it will be minimal by your standards. You should, however, expect regular emails from me relating to topics of interest. I will tell you specifically if we will be discussing them in class. I also welcome relevant information from you, which I am happy to pass along to your colleagues in this seminar.

**Evaluation:**
**Weekly Commentary (10%):**
For the weekly commentary you should keep a record (journal, blog, or ??) about the speakers and/or the visits that we make in this class. What you write
may vary from one week to the next. For example, you might: summarize the important/interesting things about the presentation, mention information that was already known to you, suggest how their presentation related to the class reading, highlight information that added to your existing knowledge, and/or explain what you liked/disliked about the topic and why. In short, your reflections on each of the speakers. While the focus of your writing may vary from one week to the next, each week should be more than a synopsis of what each person said. I want to know less about what they said and more about what you thought. Be as specific as possible and, whenever possible, relate it to the course readings (1-2 pages each week).

Response Papers (30%):
For six of the reading assignments you will be asked to respond in writing to particular questions about the readings. Prompts for writing will be sent out via email the week before they are due. These short written responses are turned in the day that the reading assignment is due (1-2 pages maximum). We will be discussing the readings the day that the papers are due, so late papers cannot be accepted. Half of these assignments will be completed individually; the others you will complete in small groups. All the students in the group will receive the same grade for the submitted final product. At the end of the seminar, you will have the opportunity to critique the group work—strengths and weaknesses, problems and successes, expectations and surprises. Additional readings may be added when relevant topics are discussed in scholarly journals or other media.

Outside Reading (5%):
You will also be expected to begin to engage the literature associated with the field of museum studies. For the outside reading assignment, you will select an insightful and, preferably, challenging article, essay, or book chapter published in the last three years. Please locate and review where professionals and scholars publish relevant articles about museums and museum work. After this overview, choose a topic of particular interest to you. I will be grading on the appropriateness and difficulty of the article as well as your analysis. Your paper should provide a full citation at the top (e.g. author, title, original date of publication, volume, number, and page numbers [if a periodical]) and a brief description of your literature review. Your short paper should summarize the important arguments, explaining its relation to class, discussing any new information that the article contained, whether or not it presented a critique of existing practice, etc. (2-3 pages). You should also make a copy of your selected essay (or 15 relevant pages of the essay) and turn it in with your paper. (due Sept. 28).

Research Project (30%):
Students will be expected to complete a research paper about the area of museum work that most interests them. This exercise will require the submission of a bibliography (Oct. 12), an abstract (Oct. 19), rough draft [ungraded] (Nov. 2), a presentation (Dec. 7), and a final paper (8-11 pages) (Dec. 11). The idea behind this paper is to allow you to investigate a “cutting-edge” topic of personal interest. It is my hope that the project and paper will
serve as a potential proposal for a conference presentation and/or a thesis project.

The presentation of your research is an opportunity to get feedback from your colleagues before you turn in your final paper. The presentation should be professional but it need not be formal or complete. It can raise questions as well as present findings. And, last, it must be in a particular format. Your presentation will need to be organized into 20 images about which you may talk for only 20 seconds each. This is an experimental power point technique that is called pecha-kucha (Japanese for “chatter”). A brief description and an example can be found at http://blog.orselli.net/2008/04/want-better-museum-conferences-how.html. The blogger describes it this way: “exactly 20 slides displayed for 20 seconds each. That’s it. Say what you need to say in six minutes and 40 seconds of exquisitely matched words and images and then sit the hell down.” After your presentation, there will be a brief time for questions and comments from your peers. You can also use this time to ask them questions. The idea is to use this opportunity to strengthen your argument and your final paper. Please come early to class on the day of presentation and load your images into the classroom computer. In addition to the research paper, a hard copy of the power point presentation should be included in your portfolio (six images per page).

Museum Jobs (5%):

For the shadowing report/informational interview you have a choice. You may either make an appointment to spend a day with a museum professional of your choice, conduct an informational interview with someone who has the job that you think you would like to have, or volunteer for 10 hours to work with the person whose job you would like to have. I strongly recommend that you arrange this early in the semester.

If you are shadowing, your written report should discuss how the person thought, as well as what they did (i.e. what decisions did they make and why did they make them in the way that they did?).

If you are interviewing, you should ask for an hour’s appointment (let me know if that’s a problem for your interviewee), and you need to send me a copy of your questions at least two weeks before your appointment for the interview. Your questions (in the case of the interview), analysis, and reflection is the most important part of this exercise.

If you are volunteering, your written report should discuss how the person thought, as well as what they did (i.e. what decisions did they make and why did they make them in the way that they did?).

The best papers will discuss the day’s events or the informational interview in relation (positive or negative) to the course readings and the knowledge gained in the seminar. (2-3 pages max.)

Class Portfolio (due Dec. 5) (10%):

You will be asked to compile a class portfolio, the first part of which will be a curated presentation of your learning in this seminar. You are to select 5 artifacts—for example: response papers, work you did on your project, outside reading, weekly commentaries, shadowing exercise, discussion, or ??—-and use them, and the paper that explains them, to tell a coherent story about your
learning in this seminar. The accompanying paper should address what each artifact represents and how it advances your narrative. You might articulate, for example, what you learned as you worked on it, why you selected it to represent the achievement of a particular learning goal, or how you think it will contribute to your ongoing learning. Put simply: what have you learned? How have you learned it? Why does it matter? The goal of the assignment is to encourage you to be active and life-long learners, to think more deeply about your learning process, the broader context of your education, and to consider future directions of your learning.

Please organize your class portfolio in the following order:
1. Curated artifacts and paper
2. Abstract of your research paper
3. Research paper
4. Any drafts of abstract, bibliography, or paper (in chronological order)
5. *Pecha-kucha* presentation
6. Weekly commentaries or blog address
7. Shadowing exercise or interview
8. Commentary on group work
9. Reading response papers (include copies of group’s papers with my comments)
10. Outside reading papers

**Class Participation and Attendance (10%)**:

When you come to class read ahead and be engaged. Class attendance is required of all students. This is a graduate seminar and all participants are expected to attend, to express their opinion, and to listen to alternative views of the issues discussed in this class. I will begin each class with an open-ended question about the readings for the week. There will not be time to cover all the readings in detail, but it is important that you familiarize yourself with the literature of contemporary museum theory and practice. Please email me before class if there is a particular essay or topic within an essay that you would like us to cover in class. Any information shared via email will also considered “class participation.”

In addition to individual participation, I will also be interested in your interaction with your group, which will take place during three of the writing assignments and when you lead class discussions.

**Other necessary information:**

1) Course announcements (e.g. changes in assignment, syllabus, scheduling, etc.) will be made via email. Please be sure to check your email regularly to make sure there has not been a change of plans.

2) Students requesting accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation for you, which you must then provide to the professor. Please be sure to give me this documentation as soon as possible, but no later than three weeks before an assignment or exam.
Grade Point assignments: For the current University of Florida assignment of grade points see:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

Plagiarism: It is plagiarism if you present the ideas or words of someone else as you own. You are responsible for understanding the University’s definitions of plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Please read the Student Honor Code and ask me if you have any questions. Keep in mind that plagiarism is a serious violation of the student academic honor code and university policy recommends that, at a minimum, instructors should impose a course grade penalty and report any suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students.

August 24: Introduction to Museology

August 31: Curatorial Practice (Harn Museum of Art)
Kerry Oliver-Smith, Curator of Contemporary Art, Harn Museum

September 7: Holiday

September 14: Museum Accessibility
Jennifer Sabo, Executive Director, VSA Florida


September 21: Museum Education, Outreach (Harn Museum of Art)
Eric Segal, Director of Education, Harn Museum

September 28: Registration Methods 
Elise Le Compte, Collection Manager, Florida Museum of Natural History

Outside Reading Paper Due

October 5: Museum Development 
Kelly Harvey, Associate Director of Development, College of Engineering

October 12: Southeast Museum Association Conference, Jacksonville, FL
Bibliography Due

October 19: Conservation 
John Freund, Director of Library Preservation Department
Rustin Levenson, Rustin Levenson Art Conservation Associates, New York City and Miami

Abstract Due

October 26: On-Line Exhibits 
Lourdes Santamaria-Wheeler, Exhibits Coordinator, Smathers Library

**November 2: The Future of Museums**
Doug Jones, Director of the Florida Museum of Natural History and American Alliance of Museums (AAM) Board Vice-Chairman
Review: Center for the Future of Museums. [http://futureofmuseums.blogspot.com](http://futureofmuseums.blogspot.com)

**Rough Draft**

**November 9: New Museums—Cade Museum for Creativity and Innovation**
Leslie Ladendorf, Director of Development, Cade Museum

**November 16: Resumes, C.Vs., Cover Letters, and Jobs**

**November 23: Historical Societies and History Museums**
Peggy MacDonald, Executive Director, Matheson Museum

**November 30: Museums: Social Media, the Net, and Museums**
Sarah Fazenbaker, IT Expert, Florida Museum of Natural History


Recommended: [http://danamus.es/presentations/](http://danamus.es/presentations/)

**December 7: Class Presentations**

*Pecha-kucha* presentations.

**December 11**

Class Binders due (Learning Portfolio, Research Paper, Reports on Shadowing Exercise, etc.)