

MUSEUM STUDIES

Difficult Heritage

ARH 6930 — Spring 2026
Wednesday, 11:45am-2:45pm
FAC 116A

Professor:

Dr. Jacque Micieli-Voutsinas

(Please feel free to call me Dr. MV)

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Fine Arts Building C (Room 119A)

Office hours:

Wednesdays 3:00pm-5:00pm, or by appointment.

Office hours will be held both in person and
remotely via Zoom

This course is an elective part of the core curriculum in Museum Studies. It aims to introduce and familiarize students with current and emerging theories and debates in the area of difficult heritage.

Course description:

This course investigates the meaning of “difficult heritage.” Difficult heritage is an interdisciplinary field of inquiry related to a number of intellectual developments in genocide, tourism, trauma, memory, heritage, and death studies. Also sometimes called “dark tourism,” “thanatourism,” or “death tourism,” difficult heritage is an umbrella term for intellectual investigation into places of traumatic memory, their visitation and consumption, and how their historical narratives and social relevance are actively shaped and negotiated by divergent communities.

Course objectives:

- (1) To help graduate students gain a general understanding of the growing interdisciplinary body of literature known as “Difficult Heritage.”
- (2) Critically explore the themes and debates of Difficult Heritage as it connects with history.

- (3) Develop and improve students' ability to critically think, evaluate, and write about difficult histories and the experiences of visitors traveling to these places.
- (4) Engage students in interdisciplinary dialogue as it pertains to the intersections of tourism studies, memory studies, trauma studies, death studies, genocide studies, and museum studies.
- (5) Engage students in dialogue with museum professionals working in difficult history.

Course texts:

There is one assigned textbook for the course:

- 1) *Interpreting Difficult History at Museums and Historic Sites*. Rose, J., Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.

Recommended Course Texts:

Additional journal articles, book chapters, and/or newspaper articles will be assigned throughout the semester. All additional readings will be available electronically through Canvas on our course site under "Weekly Readings." To access the course site, go to: elearning.ufl.edu

Course evaluation: ARH 6930 is designed to introduce you to conceptual frameworks that guide contemporary studies in Difficult Heritage, and to help you understand the complexities at play in places of memory. Course evaluation will reflect this focus and will include a mixture of written assignments, participation in in-class discussions, and site visits to local GLAM sites (in-person or online), when permitted. A plus/minus grading system will be used. I will make every effort to grade and return all written assignments within two weeks.

Attendance & Class participation	20%
Discussion Leading	15%
1 st Paper	20%
2nd Paper	20%
Final Research Paper (Selected Case Study)	25%

Grading Scale:

A	93.4 – 100	B+	86.7 – 89.9	C+	76.7 – 79.9	D+	66.7 – 69.9
A-	90 – 93.3	B	83.4 – 86.6	C	73.4 – 76.6	D	63.4 – 66.6
		B-	80.0 – 83.3	C-	70.0 – 73.3	D-	60.0 – 63.3

- an 'A' denotes work that is exceptional, as represented by thorough and detailed engagement with ideas from course readings and lectures; careful integration of materials or concepts across themes or topics; logical reasoning; sincere reflection; and precise writing.
- a 'B' denotes work that is above average in relationship to your peers' work and in relationship to the expectations of the assignment.
- a 'C' denotes work that fulfills course requirements in every way, but only adequately.
- a 'D' denotes work that does not adequately fulfill course requirements, but still deserves

credit.

- an 'F' denotes work that does not deserve passing credit.
- a **ZERO** will be assigned to work not turned in. Late assignments will be penalized, if accepted at all, and plagiarism will result in an "F" for the entire course, and you will be reported to the Academic Integrity office for violating university and course policy.

Information on current UF grading policies for assigning grade points. This may be achieved by including [a link to the University grades and grading policies](#).

For all UF-related syllabi policies, please visit: <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>

Attendance, in-class participation, discussion leading, discussion questions (35%): Your participation grade will be based on the following criteria:

1. This course is a seminar, or discussion-based and attendance is **MANDATORY**. You will be expected to participate fully in classroom discussions. In a seminar course students do assigned reading and then, under your own guidance and direction—as well as the guidance of the Professor—we will grapple aloud with the ideas we've read, collectively. Our seminar will be a mixture of discussion, mini-lectures, large and small group activities, with an emphasis on understanding course readings. Lectures will not be posted, and discussions and activities completed in class will not be recreated, so attending class is the only place to learn key material on which you will be evaluated. If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate, including any assignments or announcements that were made. All course handouts and materials will be made available on the course's eLearning page.

Only 1 absence will be excused over the course of the term unless you can provide documentation for a health emergency. However, more than two absences may result in failing the course in addition to lowering your overall course grade. Excessive tardiness will also impact final class averages. Attendance is worth 10 percent of your course grade.

2. **Participation in class.** Participation includes contributing to in-class discussions by *SPEAKING* and being intellectually present for each meeting of ARH 6938. When you are not speaking or asking a question, you should be actively *LISTENING*, which may even include note taking. Meaningful contributions to class discussion should reflect ***your engagement with the assigned course readings and in-class peer conversation***. Not participating in classroom discussions will result in a lower course grade. Participation is worth 10 percent of the course grade.
3. **Performance on in-class Discussion Leading.** You will be asked to facilitate in-class discussion for one assigned class session (see Discussion Leading handout for more information). Your responsibilities will be to: 1. meet with me at least once prior to class and come to that meeting having already reviewed the materials in order to discuss your (nearly formed) ideas for facilitation, which will include; 2. bringing **one** case study of a

museum or heritage site, memorial, art installation, artwork, gallery show, or architectural example that helps illuminate a critical examination of ideas presented in the assigned class readings—this is a great opportunity to incorporate current events, or local site visits, relating to museums in class); 3. As a facilitator, you are also expected to generate **four** reading-informed, discussion questions that support discussion of the course readings. Discussion questions should not be yes or no questions but rather generate nuanced classroom discussion of course ideas and reading themes. Remember, this assignment is NOT a lecture, it is a discussion facilitation; 4. Lastly, you are also responsible for emailing me your final list of discussion questions and facilitation outline by **11pm**, two days prior to class (Monday evening). Student preparedness and performance on this assignment is worth 15 percent of the course grade.

4. General in-class preparedness. Students are expected to bring the assigned readings to class and to complete all assigned readings prior to attending class. TV, cell phones, music, and other electronic distractions, are not permitted to be out during class time.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in the course are consistent with university policies. [See UF Academic Regulations and Policies for more information regarding the University Attendance Policies.](#)

UF Religious Observances Policy: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#religiousholidaytext> For University of Florida Students, the following guidelines apply: Students, upon prior notification of their instructors, shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith. Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence. Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances. A student who is to be excused from class for a religious observance is not required to provide a second party certification of the reason for the absence.

First Paper: (15%):

Second Paper: (20%):

Final Research Paper (Case Study Literature Review) (25%): The final research paper will be an opportunity for students to develop and design their own preliminary literature review connected to a case study of their choosing.

Course papers should synthesize and respond to weekly themes, teasing out connections and common links between the readings as they pertain to the assigned course unit. Papers should have a clearly identifiable argument and demonstrate thoughtful and comprehensive engagement with the readings across the assigned unit. To begin, try considering a key passage from the readings and write a well-organized essay in which you explain its relevance to the overall theme of the week. Use examples from the readings to support your claim. Response papers are *not* reading summaries.

Written assignments will be due before the start of class on assigned dates. Please email me your assignment prior to the start of class time, and please note that ABSOLUTELY NO LATE

ASSIGNMENTS will be accepted. Each assignment should be double-spaced with 12-point font, 1" margins. Please follow APA, MLA, or Chicago for any citations, when needed.

In general, about written assignments: Because improving your writing skills is an important goal of a research course, your grades for these assignments will also emphasize this objective. I encourage you to utilize the services of the <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>, if needed. For your own protection, please make certain that you continuously save your written work as you write and back up those documents on a flash drive or external hard drive. You should also save all graded work until you receive your final grade in the course. In the event that work goes missing or a grade gets miscalculated, this will provide the *only acceptable* evidence that you turned in a particular assignment or received a particular grade.

Policy on late submissions: Unless you have provided substantial, documented evidence for need of an extension, and have discussed the situation with me well in advance of the impending deadline, late assignments will receive a 5% reduction in your grade for **each day** that exceeds the stated assignment deadline. Extensions will be given only under certain circumstances, and I do not except late work after one week past the original deadline. Malfunctioning computers, printers and so on are not reasonable grounds for an extension. Save your work regularly and in multiple locations and be prepared to print your work in a computer lab if necessary. Please note that I will be the sole judge of what constitutes an extraordinary circumstance, that in most cases my granting of an extension will require that you submit a note from a doctor or other appropriate official, and that extensions must be negotiated in advance. Please also note that sending me an email does not constitute negotiating an extension. Unless we have spoken and agreed on a new date, the original date stands.

How to reach the Instructor: E-mail is the best way to reach me, jmicielivoutsina@ufl.edu

In communicating with me, please note the following tips:

1. I will make every effort to respond to your email within 24-48 hours, 9:00 am—4:00 pm, Monday—Friday. Outside of those times, I am unavailable. Please think ahead when working on assignments.

Letters of Recommendation: If you would like a letter of recommendation you should work throughout the semester to distinguish yourself so that there is evidence of your excellence. In addition, help me help you.

- Ask for the letter a minimum of ONE MONTH in advance of the deadline
- Include information on the job, internship, academic opportunity, etc. that you are applying for
- Include your CV and achievements that you would like highlighted in the letter (2-3 sentences)
- Clearly state the deadline and where/how the letter should be submitted
- Gentle reminders leading up to the deadline are greatly appreciated

Student Accommodations: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center. [See the “Get Started With the DRC” webpage on the Disability Resource Center site](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Course evaluations: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

1. The email they receive from GatorEvals
2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals
3. The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluera.com>

Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty includes plagiarizing, cheating, turning in counterfeit papers, stealing academic materials, knowingly falsifying academic documents, accessing confidential academic records without authorization, disclosing confidential academic information without authorization, and turning in the same work to more than one class without the expressed permission of the instructors involved. An online plagiarism checker service may be used to screen papers. Please note that recording class discussions will not be permitted under any circumstances. Students are, however, allowed to record video or audio of class ***lectures only***, but please note that the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.¹ In ARH 6900, all of the above are prohibited. Any student deemed to have engaged

¹ A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and deliver by an instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentation such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless, of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

in academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action from the University and will also receive a “no credit” (i.e., a zero) for the assignment.

Academic Honesty: UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’” The Conduct Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please ask me. [See the UF Conduct Code website for more information.](#)

Software Use: All faculty, staff, and students at the University are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against University policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate. We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to uphold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see: <http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html>

Additional Academic Resources:

E-learning technical support: Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk](#) at [352-392-4357](tel:352-392-4357) or via e-mail at helpdesk@ufl.edu.

[Career Connections Center](#): Reitz Union Suite 1300, [352-392-1601](tel:352-392-1601). Career assistance and counseling services.

[Library Support](#): Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Call [866-281-6309](tel:866-281-6309) or email ask@ufl.libanswers.com for more information.

[Academic Resources](#): 1317 Turlington Hall, Call [352-392-2010](tel:352-392-2010), or to make a private appointment: [352-392-6420](tel:352-392-6420). Email contact: teaching-center@ufl.edu. General study skills and tutoring.

[Writing Studio](#): Daytime (9:30am-3:30pm): 2215 Turlington Hall, [352-846-1138](tel:352-846-1138) | Evening (5:00pm-7:00pm): 1545 W University Avenue (Library West, Rm. 339). Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Academic Complaints: Office of the Ombuds; [Visit the Complaint Portal webpage for more information.](#)

Enrollment Management Complaints (Registrar, Financial Aid, Admissions): [View the Student Complaint Procedure webpage for more information.](#)

UF Student Success Initiative: Visit <https://studentsuccess.ufl.edu/> for resources that support your success as a UF student.

Research Sources for more information on Difficult Heritage:

- [International Coalition of Sites of Conscience](#)
- [Institute of Dark Tourism Research \(IDTR\)](#)
- [Global directory of holocaust museums](#)
- [Dark tourism \(Guardian article\)](#)
- [Dark tourism resources \(The Digital Panopticon\)](#)
- [Prisoners, punishment, and torture: Developing new approaches to interpretation at the Tower of London](#)
- [Current research issues in dark tourism](#)
- [MELA* Project: European museums in an age of migration](#)

Health and Wellness:

UF Whole Gator Resources: Visit <https://one.uf.edu/whole-gator/discover> for resources that are designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF.

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or (352) 392-1575 or visit the U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern, and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need or visit the Student Health Care Center website.

UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website.

Basic Security Needs: Any student who is facing challenges securing food or housing is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly for additional assistance in the event that these external stressors are also affecting your performance in the course.

Mindfulness/Wellness: Over the course of the semester, you will be exposed to difficult topics. I therefore asked to seek out and participate in seven different forms of wellness and self-care. You will be highly encouraged to take up and develop a wellness practice in the following forms:

- yoga movement (online or in person)
- meditation/breath work

- talk therapy
- massage therapy
- sauna/infrared sauna
- acupuncture
- chiropractic
- walking/hiking in nature (e.g. forest bathing, alone or with a friend)
- any other form of movement-based expression (dance, Tai-Chi, etc.)
- singing (with others or alone, online or in person)
- ASMR
- spiritual practice (student determined)
- reiki
- astrology
- physic/intuitive reading
- connection with others (laughter, talking, spending time with your chosen people)

For your convenience, I have provided a list of local or online resources for your consideration; you may repeat two of your selected activities for full credit (see attached Appendix).

Course Outline (*subject to revision*)

Date	Lecture	Discussion
Week 1 Wed. 1/14	<p>Introduction to Course:</p> <p>~ Introductions ~ Review Course Syllabus</p>	(1)
Week 2 Wed. 1/21	What is “Difficult Heritage”	(2)
Week 3 Wed. 1/28	Difficult Emotions	(3)

Week 4	Affective Heritage	(4)
Wed. 2/4		
Week 5	Memorial Museums	(5)
Wed. 2/11		
Week 6	“Dark Tourism”	(6)
Wed. 2/18		
Week 7	Case Study:	(7)
Wed. 2/25		

Week 8 Wed. 3/4	Case Study:	(8)
Week 9 Wed. 3/11	Case Study:	(9)
Week 10 Wed. 3/18	Spring Break	(10)
Week 11 Wed. 3/25	Case Study:	(11)
Week 12 Wed. 4/1	Reclaiming Memory:	(12)

Week 13 Wed. 4/8	Museums & Genocide	(13)
Week 14 Wed. 4/15	Immersive Futures	(14)
Week 15 Wed. 4/2	Museums and Reconciliation	(15)
Week 16 Wed. 4/22	Frontiers	(16)
4/29	Final Research Papers Due ~ Research Papers Due to Professor via email by 9:30am	

Local Healthcare Resources Appendix

Talk Therapy

- **Counseling and Wellness Center:** Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.

<https://counseling.ufl.edu/services/individual/>

- Better Help

https://www.betterhelp.com/get-started/?skip_redirect_question=1

Somatic Therapy

- Yoga with Adrienne

<https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadrienne>

<https://yogawithadrienne.com/free-yoga-videos/>

- Underbelly Yoga with Jessamyn Stanley

<https://theunderbelly.com/classes/>

- Wildflower Yoga

<https://www.wildflowersyoga.com>

- Massage Therapy at UF

<https://recsports.ufl.edu/fitness/massage-therapy/>

Mindfulness

- Yoga Girl Daily Podcast (Wednesday Meditations)

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/yoga-girl-daily/id1475244555>

- Organically Jamie (Kirtan Kriya Meditation, third video down)

<https://organicallyjamie.com/thoughts-meditations-rituals/kirtan-kriya>

- Headspace (on Netflix)

<https://www.netflix.com/title/81280926>

- Erin Stutland (the Movement)

<https://erinstutland.com/the-movement/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ESTutland/videos/heres-a-short-mantra-powered-calming-movement-sequence-for-you-because-i-think-w/194729651815515/>

- The Class (14-day free trial)

<https://www.theclass.com>

- UF Rec Center classes

<https://recsports.ufl.edu/classes/>