HIST 4390.001
Spring 2017
Introduction to Museum Studies
TR 3:30-4:45
Location: Class will be taught at the Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History

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Office Hours at CCMSH: By appointment (Museum hours 8am-5pm M-F)

“Museums have a basic role as educational institutions. The saga of the earth through time is told by the objects preserved in the collections of museums. It is a fascinating story told with authentic specimens and artifacts. At the same time, it is important to remember that museums are not ends unto themselves. To accomplish their mission, they must provide pleasure and excitement as well as information and education.”
– Edson and Dean, The Handbook for Museums

Course Description
Museums of today are more than storerooms for things and glass cases full of artifacts; they are a vehicle for sharing stories, inspiring people, and understanding our past, present and future. Museums preserve and interpret our culture and our world through programming, exhibits, and research. Many people work together to shape this body of work, making this knowledge accessible to all now and in the future. This web of people isn’t just comprised of curators, exhibit designers, and others behind the scenes--visitors also help to shape the museum experience of today.

This course is an introduction to museums, including the variety of jobs available in the field. Museums thrive when people of all backgrounds and expertise give their strengths to the mission of the museum to further knowledge and understanding of our world. In this cross disciplinary course, students of science, history, the arts, and more will be introduced to the different departments of a museum, and gain experience watching and participating in their interactions in a real working museum.

Learning Outcomes Students who successfully complete this course will:
☐ Experience daily life of several museum professions through observing various departments, and comprehend the way these jobs work together to allow a museum to function.
☐ Understand the museum’s relationship with its community and how the many parts of the museum work together to present exhibitions and programs.
☐ Demonstrate proper recordkeeping and sound research methods to track, document, research, discuss and exhibit museum artifacts.

Readings & Required Texts Two textbooks are required. Additional readings will be available via Blackboard. All readings should be completed by the start of the class for which they are listed on the Course Outline. Falk, J. H., & Dierking, L.D. (2013). The museum experience revisited. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press Inc.

**General Policies**

Classroom Conduct Students are each expected to engage in a respectful dialogue each class period. Please be on time, and notify me of any planned late arrivals or early dismissals. If these are unapproved, they may affect the participation portion of your grade. Late arrivals on Mondays when the museum is closed to the public should call 361-826-4667 to reach the receptionist.

Academic Honesty

Cheating, including plagiarizing, is a serious offense. Penalties will be applied, and appropriate University officials will be notified, for every instance of academic dishonesty. These penalties may include a zero on the assignment, a decrease in grade, or more serious measures as deemed applicable. All cases will be handled per TAMU-CC policy.

Attendance: Attendance is required. Unexcused absences, after 2, will result in a decrease of your class participation by 1 point per absence. Excused absences in excess of 4 will also warrant a decrease in grade. Because all projects in this class are to be completed outside of class and no tests are given during class time, assignments (projects and journals) are still due in spite of an absence. Students who miss an assignment due date due to illness, family crisis, or extracurricular activity may submit the assignment upon their return to class if they notify me in advance of the absence and provide official documentation clearly explaining the absence. Because the Team Exhibit Project may require some work outside of class, being available to your team is imperative. Persistent problems regarding team participation may be brought to my attention at any time.

Late Work Assignments may be submitted via email. Late assignments will be worth 90% of the assignment’s original point value, and will decrease by 5% for each additional day it is late. Citation Method Museum Studies utilizes APA citations. A good go-to resource for learning APA is at: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Blackboard

Access Blackboard at https://bb9.tamucc.edu. This is where you’ll find important course documents, readings, grades, and messages relating to this course. Checking Blackboard regularly will ensure you have the most up to date information at all times.

**Graded Assignments**

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Objective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A = 90-100</td>
<td>Project 1 (10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>B = 80-89</td>
<td>Project 2 (10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>C = 70-79</td>
<td>Project 3 (10)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D = 60-69</td>
<td>Project 4 (15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>F = 59 or below</td>
<td>Team Exhibit Project (30)</td>
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Total 100

Project 1: Accession and Catalog an Object Students will be exposed to the daily life and workings of the Collections department. For Project 1, you will develop and complete the legal paperwork for a museum donation, for an object currently for sale that may be suitable for a museum collection. You’ll find that object on auction sites that specialize in fine objects (Sotheby’s and Christie’s being the most famous). Then, you’ll complete a sample catalog record to record all pertinent information about the donor and object. This process is integral to the function of museums as public trusts for objects and is one that should be mastered before handling museum collections or curating exhibits.

Project 2: Visual Description For Tour - 500-750 words One of the prime objectives for every museum is making their collections accessible to all--this means even people with disabilities. To adjust for the challenges of people with low or no sight, visual descriptions are employed by educators to allow people to “see” the piece, especially when touching may not be an option. Write a script using visual description for one exhibit case/exhibit area at CCMSH (2-4 objects), such as would be featured in a tour. Aim your tour at either children, young adults or senior citizens who require visual description due to low or no sight (specify which in your document).

Project 3: Propose An Object For Exhibition - 500-750 words One of the most important building blocks of the
curatorial process is the ability to create links between artifacts that help you to tell a story. Think of an artifact that could help tell a strong story and propose an addition to an existing CCMSH exhibit. Present its provenance, supporting historical framework, and argue for its inclusion into the exhibit. This artifact does not have to be one you’ve encountered, but should be a logical object for the history you are presenting. Then, write a 100 word exhibit label to briefly describe the piece as it would be on display.

Class Participation (Discussion and Journals - 200-300 words) Be prepared to participate in discussion each class period, including completing all assigned readings. Participation grades are not given for showing up, but are earned by engaging in and contributing to the discussion. You may find it helpful to bring your readings with notations from your preparation to help you participate fully in discussions. Copies of notes and Power Points used in class will not be posted, so note taking will also strengthen your ability to participate. Journals serve as an opportunity to reflect on readings, prepare for upcoming discussions, and practice the concepts learned in class in preparation for your projects. They are due at 10pm the night before the class where they will be discussed (if listed for Monday class, they should be posted by 10pm Sunday). Observations & Team Exhibit Project Opportunities will be offered for students to shadow museum staff of CCMSH, allowing opportunity to apply what is being learned during classroom portions. Throughout the semester, students will be given the opportunity to shadow work in Collections, as well the Exhibits and Education departments. The option to observe Exhibits or Education is based on the schedule and availability of opportunities in these departments.
The Team Exhibit portion of the course is a chance to directly apply work in the many departments of the museum to form a proposal for an exhibit. This requires group work and communication to accomplish the many tasks it takes to curate and display an exhibit. These projects will be presented at the end of the semester as the Final Exam.

Project 4: Preserving & Presenting History This semester’s focus is experiential learning. To do is to learn, and for this project, you are the Collections Manager! You will be assigned an object and will complete the steps it takes to document the object (like in Project 1), label and house the artifact, prepare an object-level exhibit label, and argue for its display and/or inclusion in an educational program. By completing these steps of preserving and presenting historical artifacts, you will experience the many aspects of working with collections in a museum setting through the ‘life’ of a single artifact.

ACADEMIC ADVISING
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466 or log onto http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac.

DISABILITY SERVICES
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

GRADE APPEALS
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student_grade_appeal_procedure.pdf). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.
Course Outline  subject to change

WEEK 1  Wednesday, January 18  Introduction to Museum Studies  Syllabus  History and Development of Museums

WEEK 2  Monday, January 23  Intro to CCMSH  Museum Tour: Behind the Scenes  Jobs and Staff Structure  Read  Chapter 1, Museums In Motion, “What Is a Museum?”  “What, if anything, is a museum”
Dillenburg
Due: Journal  What do you want to learn in this course? What aspect of museums most aligns to your interests and goals?

   Wednesday, January 25  Collections Management  Legal and Ethical Standards
   Basics of Preservation

Read  Chapter 8, Museums In Motion, “To Collect”

WEEK 3  Monday, January 30  Collections Management  Archival Supplies, Numbering Systems
Everyday Preservation, “Preserving Your Legacy” program  Read  Chapter 8, Museums In Motion, “To Conserve”
Due: Journal  What is going on in the world around us that people of the future will want preserved? What should we save to remember it by?

   Wednesday, February 1  Collections Management
   Day in the Life – Collections Manager  Read  “Museum, a Temple or the Forum?” Cameron

WEEK 4  Monday, February 6  Leading the Field  Museum Ethics  Standards and Best Practices
Read  Chapter 10, Museum Administration, “Ethics and Professional Conduct”

   Wednesday, February 8  Leading the Field
   NAGPRA, Cultural Heritage  Legalities & Ethics

Due: Project 1  Accession and Catalog an Object
Due: Journal  Find a news article covering the story of a museum dealing with NAGPRA or another ethical controversy. How did the museum falter in
dealing with the issue? What did they do right?

**WEEK 5  Monday, February 13  Museum Education**  Object Based Learning  Visual Thinking Strategies  Understanding By Design, etc.  Informal vs. Formal Education  Read  “Museum Education,” George Hein  Chapter 11, *Museums In Motion*, “To Interpret”

**Wednesday, February 15  Museum Education**  Understanding Educational Theory  Visual Descriptions and Accessibility  Read  “Take A Seat” Tokar  Introduction: The Contextual Model of Learning, *The Museum Experience Revisited*  Due: Journal  Describe a lesson you learned in a formal education setting that could have benefitted from OBL, VTS, etc. to make the lesson more effective.

**WEEK 6  Monday, February 20  Exhibitions**  The Exhibits Team  The Exhibits Process  Read  “The Making of Exhibitions: Purpose, Structure, Roles and Process” The Smithsonian  Browse the Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibit Design

**Wednesday, February 22  Exhibitions**  The Exhibits Process  Mock Exhibit Exercise  Read  Chapter 10, *Museums In Motion*, “To Exhibit”  “New Technologies as Part of a Comprehensive Interpretive Plan” Samis  Due: Journal  What is the most impactful use of technology you have seen in museums?  Have you ever seen technology used badly, when another method would have been more effective?

**WEEK 7  Monday, February 27  Exhibitions**  Exhibit Planning  Knowing Your Visitors  Read  Chapter 2, *The Museum Experience Revisited*, “The Personal Context”  Due: Project 2  Write a script using visual description for one exhibit case/exhibit area at CCMSH (2-4 objects), such as would be featured in a tour.
Wednesday, March 1  Exhibitions  Writing for Exhibits  Interpretive Planning  Read  Chapter 3, *The Museum Experience Revisited*, “Sociocultural Context”  Excerpts, *Museum Labels*, Beverly Serrell  Due: Journal  What type of museum visitor are you, according to Falk & Dierking? How does your type influence how you visit museums?

WEEK 8  Monday, March 6  Team Project  Exhibit Team Project Introductions/Prompts

Wednesday, March 8  Team Project  Exhibit Team Project, Artifacts  Due: Journal  The exhibits team is full of people with varied specialties. Is there a role in the team you feel yourself drawn to? What skills do you have that could be an important part of an exhibits team?

WEEK 9  Spring Break  Vacation!


Wednesday, March 22  The Business of Museums  Museum Development  Fundraising & Grants  Due: Project 3  Propose An Item for Exhibition  Due: Journal  Find a mission statement that clashes with Genoways & Ireland’s guidelines for a good mission statement from Chapter 2. Revise the mission statement, keeping their guidelines in mind.

WEEK 11  Monday, March 27  Museum Audience  Reaching the Community  Community Partnerships  Read  Chapter 4, *The Museum Experience Revisited*, “The Personal Context”  “What Teachers Want From Field Trips” Flannery

Wednesday, March 29  Team Project  Exhibit Team Project: Design, Look, and Feel

**WEEK 12 Monday, April 3 Museum Audience**  
Due: Journal  
What can museums do to make museums accessible and approachable for inexperienced visitors, as discussed by Falk & Dierking? Have you ever experienced the feelings discussed in this section of the Chapter 6 reading?  
**Wednesday, April 5 Team Project**  
Exhibit Team Project: Partnerships, Programs, and Events

**WEEK 13 Monday, April 10 Team Project**  
Exhibit Team Project: Designing for Visitors, Schematic  
Read Chapter 11, *The Museum Experience Revisited*, “Supporting the Museum Experience”  
**Wednesday, April 12 Team Project**  
Exhibit Team Project: Education Plan  
Due: Project 4

**Preserving & Presenting History**

**WEEK 14 Monday, April 17 The Future of Museums**  
Read Chapter 12, *The Museum Experience Revisited*, “The Twenty-First-Century Museum”  
**Wednesday, April 19 Team Project**  
Exhibit Team Project: Narrative Walkthrough

**WEEK 15 Monday, April 24 Team Project**  
Exhibit Team Project: Marketing, Advertising Plan  
**Wednesday, April 26 Course Review**  
Course Review

**WEEK 16 Monday, May 1 Team Project**  
Team Exhibit Peer Reviews

**FINAL EXAM and Team Exhibit Presentations, Monday, May 8 1:45pm - 4:15pm**  
In Class Journal Final journal entry will be completed in class during the Final.