HIST 691: Museum Studies
Spring 2016

Professor Spencer R. Crew
East Building Room 207B
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Time and Place: Tuesday 7:20 -10:00 PM, East Building 122
Office Hours: Tuesday 6:15-7:15 PM and by appointment

Course Objectives: This course is designed to introduce graduate students to the theory and practice of museums with an emphasis on history institutions. We will examine the origins of museums and the leaders who helped shape the field. History and memory, surviving controversy, the changing role of museums, museum learning, creating exhibitions, the future of museums, as well as museums and innovation are among the issues which will be covered. In the process the class will acquire an understanding of the numerous challenges facing museums professionals as well as the process of proposing, researching, and executing an exhibition.

Course Requirements: As a member of this class you are expected to attend class regularly, read assigned materials, actively participate in class discussions, prepare assignments on time, write a two to three page exhibition proposal, prepare a 10 page research paper based on the proposal, prepare a poster presentation of your exhibition idea, and write a NEH planning grant proposal to seek funding to create your exhibition.

Evaluation: Class attendance, preparation as a discussion facilitator, and contribution to class discussions (15%); proposal and research paper (35%); poster presentation (10%), exhibition grant proposal (40%). LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED UNLESS DISCUSSED AND APPROVED IN ADVANCE.

All plagiarism cases will be automatically submitted to GMU’s honor committee. According to GMU’s honor code, plagiarism includes the following:
1. Presenting as one’s own words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement.  
2. Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

**Drop/Add deadlines:**
- Last Day to Add: Tuesday, January 26
- Last Day to Drop: Friday, February 19
- Selective Withdrawal Period: Monday, February 22 – Friday, March 25

**Texts:**

Leslie Bedford, *The Art of Museum Exhibitions*

Andrea Burns, *From Storefront to Monument: Tracing the Public History of the Black Museum Movement*

Herman Din and Phyllis Hecht, *The Digital Museum: A Think Guide*

John Falk and Lynn Dierking, *The Museum Experience Revisited*

Mathew Pinsker, *Lincoln’s Sanctuary Abraham Lincoln and the Soldiers’ Home*

Beverly Serrell, *Exhibit Labels An Interpretative Approach*

Marjorie Schwarzer, *Riches, Rivals & Radicals 100 Years of Museums in America*


**Optional reading:**

Mim Carlson and Tori O'Neal-McElrath, *Winning Grants Step by Step*
The articles for reading can be found on jstor or on the course’s blackboard page.

19 Jan. **Introduction – The History of Museums in America**

*Riches, Rivals & Radicals 100 Years of Museums in America*

**AAM Code of Ethics** (blackboard)

26 Jan. **History and Memory**


2 Feb. **Roles and responsibilities of museums**

66. (blackboard); look at the webpage for the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, http://www.sitesofconscience.org

9 Feb.  Exhibitions and Controversy

“Museums and Controversy: You Can’t Have One without the Other” by Bryanna Leigh-Anne Marie O’Mara, M.A. (blackboard);

16 Feb.  Museums and Learning

The Museum Experience Revisited

Selection of project topics (2-3 page proposal due)

23 Feb.  Writing museum labels

Exhibition Labels

1 March  Museum Education and Exhibitions

The Art of Museum Exhibitions
Visit to the International Spy Museum and meet with education curator Lucy Stirn

The International Spy Museum is located in downtown Washington, DC within the Pennsylvania Quarter neighborhood and stretches the entire city block between 9th and 8th Streets at 800 F Street, NW—one block from the Gallery Place/Chinatown Metrorail Station and the Verizon Center. The International Spy Museum is easily accessible by Washington, DC's Metrorail system. The closest Metro station is the Gallery Place/Chinatown stop, served by the RED, YELLOW, and GREEN lines. Also nearby is the Metro Center station, served by the SILVER, ORANGE, BLUE, and RED lines.

8 March  

Spring break

15 March  

African American Museums into the 21st Century

From Storefront to Monument: Tracing the Public History of the Black Museum Movement


22 March  

Digital Museum

The Digital Museum: A Think Guide

“Virtual museums for all: employing game technology for edutainment,” George Lepouras, Costas Vassilakis (blackboard)
29 March  
*Lincoln’s Sanctuary*

“Rethinking the Rembrandt Rule,” James Vaughn (blackboard)

**Visit Lincoln Cottage** in Washington, D.C and meet with the Director of the site.

5 April

Turn in research paper and individual discussions with the professor concerning exhibition grant proposals.

(You may want to look through *Winning Grants Step by Step*)

12 April

**Mission, Market, and Money**


19 April  
**Project Poster Presentations**

26 April  
**Bring completed draft of Grant Proposal for in class evaluation**

3 May  
**Final NEH Grant Proposal due**