HIST 691: 001 Museum Studies
Spring 2022

Professor Spencer R. Crew
East Building Room 207B
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Class location: East Building Room 121

Time and Place: Tuesday 7:20 -10:00 PM

Office Hours: 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, navigating 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 museum professionals as well as the process of proposing, researching, and executing an exhibition planning grant.

Course Requirements: As a member of this class you are expected to attend class regularly, read assigned materials, actively participate in class discussions, lead one class discussion session, prepare assignments on time, write a two to three-page exhibition proposal, prepare a 10-page research paper based on the proposal, 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 (20%); proposal and research paper (35%); and exhibition grant proposal (45%). 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: Monday, January 31
Last Day to Drop: Monday, February 7
Selective Withdrawal Period: February 15 – March 1

Texts:

Edward P. Alexander, *Museum Masters: Their Museums and Their Influence*

Busby, Muller, and Woolford *The Idea of a Human Rights Museum*

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

Beverly Serrell, *Exhibit Labels An Interpretative Approach*

Nina Simon, *The Participatory Museum*

Lonnie Bunch III, *A Fool’s Errand: Creating the National Museum of African American History and Culture*


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.

25 Jan. **Introduction** – *Museum Masters: Their Museums and Their Influence*, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13

**AAM Code of Ethics** (blackboard)


1 Feb. **History and Memory**


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


15 Feb. **Museums and Controversy**

“Museums and Controversy : You Can’t Have One without the Other” by Bryanna Leigh-Anne Marie O’Mara, M.A. (blackboard); https://baylor-ir.tdl.org/bitstream/handle/2104/5078/Bryanna_OMara_masters.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y ;

“A Brief History of Exhibition Controversy”, Caitlin Stacy; Museum-Controversy Best-Practices-2019 (blackboard);


Shocking museum exhibitions: courting controversy or tackling important issues? https://blooloop.com/museum/in-depth/shocking-museum-exhibitions/


22 Feb.  Museums and Learning

The Museum Experience Revisited

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

1 March  Human Rights Museums

The Idea of a Human Rights Museum

Look at the webpage for the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, http://www.sitesofconscience.org

8 March  Writing Museum Labels

Exhibition Labels

15 March  Spring Break

22 March  African American Museums into the 21st Century

A Fool’s Errand: Creating the National Museum of African American History and Culture

What is the role of a Culturally specific Museum

29 March  The Participatory Museum

“VirtualTourist: Embracing Our Audience through Public History Web Experience,” Anne Lindsay

The Public Historian, Vol. 35, No. 1 (February 2013), pp. 67-86 Published by: University of California Press on behalf of the National Council on Public History
5 April  
**Lincoln’s Sanctuary**

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

“Rethinking the Modern House Museum”

“Lincoln’s Refuge”  
https://www.historynet.com/abraham-lincolns-refuge.htm

Visit Lincoln Cottage in Washington, D.C

12 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)

19 April  
**Mission, Market, and Money**


26 April  
Research and preparation of Grant NEH Proposal

3 May  
**Prepare completed draft of Grant Proposal for in class evaluation**
10 May       Final NEH Grant Proposal due