HIST 390: Museum Exhibits

Fall 2020, Section 1
Distance Learning Course

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Office Hours: T/TH 12pm-1pm and by appointment
Virtual Office Hours Held via the Chat and Zoom Features in Canvas

Course Summary

This course provides an introduction to the history and theory of museum exhibits. Over the course of the semester, students will experience first-hand the process of exhibition development by planning, writing, and designing a physical and virtual exhibit for the public. In addition, students will analyze both the theoretical and practical challenges historians face in producing exhibitions for a general audience.

Learning Outcomes

Students taking "Museum Exhibits" develop skills for analyzing and interpreting history to a general audience. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Evaluate how interpretations of the past are conveyed in museum settings
- Complete an experiential learning project by overseeing the development of a museum exhibition for the community from start to completion
- Reflect on the experiential project by recognizing both theoretical and practical challenges in creating museum exhibits
- Collaborate by working in a student cohort to curate an exhibition
- Locate and synthesize source materials, including written texts, audio/visual material, and/or objects in a final project suitable for a public audience

Required Materials

Beverly Serrell, *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach,* 2nd ed., available for rental at the bookstore.

Other assigned readings will be posted on Canvas.

Assignments

Reflection Responses:

Each week we will cover a topic related to the history, theory, and practice of museum exhibitions. For each topic, I provide a video overview along with a reading assignment from our textbook or outside materials posted on Canvas. Each week, students will submit a reflection response via Canvas based on a prompt related to the content and readings. The responses are due on Wednesdays by 11:30pm and

count for 20% of your total grade. The deadlines are firm, but students facing extenuating circumstances affecting their performance (such as serious health issues, UWSP athletics, the birth of a child, military service, etc.) are encouraged to contact me. Students who do not complete the responses by the deadline will receive a zero for that week and will not have an opportunity to make up the missing work.

<u>Zoom Participation and Online Discussion Boards:</u>
Every other week we will alternate between Zoom class meetings and online discussion boards. Every other Thursday we will meet virtually using Zoom from 4pm-4:45pm. During this session we will discuss the weekly topic as well as any class projects and deadlines. I will be tracking participation during the sessions. However, students who are unable to attend the Zoom meeting in real time can watch it afterwards and respond to a discussion prompt in order to gain participation credit. The follow up discussion responses for those who miss the Zoom meeting are on Fridays at 11:30pm via Canvas. In addition, you will be placed in a group of 4-5 students to engage in virtual discussions using the online forums on Canvas during weeks we are not holding Zoom meetings. Every other week you are expected to write a post based on a prompt I provide related to the material we are covering. In addition, each student is expected to craft at least two thoughtful, well-articulated responses to the posts of fellow classmates. I will grade posts and responses on a plus-check-minus system. A check-plus indicates exceptional work (A), a check represents basic competency (B), and a check-minus signals incomplete, inaccurate, or substandard work (C-see corresponding rubric for more detailed information). Students' primary posts are due every other Wednesday by 11:30pm and their responses to other posts are due every other Friday by 11:30pm. No late responses or posts will be accepted.

<u>Exhibit Review:</u>
Students will write a review of approximately 500 words of a physical or virtual exhibit of their choosing. The purpose of this assignment is to analyze exhibitions as a distinct form of visual communication and the efficacy of various interpretive techniques.

<u>History of 2020:</u>
This class will work together in writing, designing, and installing an temporary exhibit chronicling the history of 2020.The project built upon several incremental assignments, including producing an object and image list, writing sample object labels, developing exhibit sections, and creating a complete exhibit, assembling a design plan, producing publicity materials, and coordinating installation. Check the schedule for a full list of deadlines.

<u>Burial Site Final Project</u>:
Students will develop a proposal for a permanent exhibition commemorating a Native American burial site located on campus. The proposal will include a rationale

for the exhibit based on the readings and activities of the class. As part of this project, students will submit a rough draft, two peer reviews, and a final draft.

Assessment Breakdown

Participation: 15% (5% biweekly class Zoom discussions or responses; 10% biweekly discussion posts; 5% biweekly peer response posts)
Exhibit Review: 10%
Reflection Responses: 20% (divided evenly among responses)
History of 2020 Project: 30% (includes object/image list; peer reviews; exhibit draft script; exhibit final draft; design; installation; and outreach/publicity. Please note that portions of this project are individualized and each student will be assigned a particular focus)
Burial Site Final Project: 25% (5% rough draft; 5% peer reviews; 15% final submission)

*For students taking this course as a 500-level seminar, additional readings and projects may be assigned. Please see me for more details.

Grading Scale

A: 93-100
A-: 90-92
B+: 87-89
B: 83-86
B-: 80-82
C+: 77-79
C: 73-76
C-: 70-72
D+: 67-69
D: 60-66
F: 59 and below

Classroom Policies

Expected Instructor Response Times and Virtual Office Hours
- o I will attempt to respond to student emails within 24 hours. If you have not received a reply from me within 24 hours please resend your email.
- o I will attempt to reply to and assess student discussion posts within 48 hours of discussions closing.
- o I will attempt to grade written work within 72 hours, however longer written assignments may take me longer to read and assess (typically up to a week).

I hold regular office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12pm-1pm. To reach me online, you can message me via the "Chat" feature found in the taskbar of the course website during office hours. If you cannot meet during office hours, please schedule your appointment 24 hours in advance by emailing me

at sscripps@uwsp.edu. Please make the subject of the email <u>Online Office Hours</u>. You can also call me at my office phone number at (715) 436-4723. During this time, my priority is to talk to students about any questions or concerns they may have. I truly enjoy hearing with you to learn about how things are going. If you are struggling, let's chat. If you are unable to meet during office hours, email me and we will set up an alternative time. Please note that I also use this time to respond to student emails, as I typically do not check my inbox after 3:30pm, during the weekends, or during holiday breaks.

Student Expectations

In this course you will be expected to complete the following types of tasks. You will need a stable internet connection to complete this course. View [this website](#) to see minimum recommended computer and internet configurations for Canvas.
If you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to ask.
- communicate via email
- complete basic internet searches
- download and upload documents to Canvas as well as edit documents on a linked OneDrive document
- read documents online
- view online videos
- participate in online discussions

Understand When You May Drop This Course

It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider unenrolling from a course. Refer to the UWSP <u>Academic Calendar</u> for dates and deadlines for registration. After this period, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop from the course. Serious and compelling reasons includes: (1) documented and significant change in work hours, leaving student unable to attend class, or (2) documented and severe physical/mental illness/injury to the student or student's family.

All forms of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fraud, and unauthorized access to tests and assignments are strictly prohibited. Any words or ideas borrowed from another person or source, whether through a direct quotation or through paraphrasing, must be cited properly to avoid plagiarism. Please familiarize yourself with what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it. Violations of the university's code of conduct are subject to sanctions ranging from a failing grade for an assignment to disciplinary hearings or potential failure of the course. For more information on academic dishonesty, see:
https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx

Technical Assistance and Accessibility

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Canvas you can:

- o Seek assistance from the IT Service Desk (Formerly HELP Desk)
- o IT Service Desk Phone: 715-346-4357 (HELP)
- o IT Service Desk Email: techhelp@uwsp.edu
- o For additional resources, be sure to check the UWSP Student Resources tab under "Start Here" on our Canvas course website.

If you have a learning or physical challenge that requires accommodation, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center as early as possible. They will then notify me privately of the accommodations that will facilitate your success in the course. Their office is located on the 6th floor of Albertson (the library), Voice: 715-346-3365, TTY: 715-346-3362. You can also reach them via email at datctr@uwsp.edu.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP's policies, see:
https://www.uwsp.edu/datc/Pages/default.aspx

Netiquette Guidelines

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Your instructor and fellow students wish to foster a safe online learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course community. For more information on general classroom expectations, see:
https://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Student-Conduct.aspx

The following netiquette tips will enhance the learning experience for everyone in the course:
- o Do not dominate any discussion.
- o Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion.
- o Do not use offensive language. Present ideas appropriately.
- o Be cautious in using Internet language. For example, do not capitalize all letters since this suggests shouting.
- o Popular emoticons such as 😊 or / can be helpful to convey your tone but do not overdo or overuse them.
- o Avoid using vernacular and/or slang language. This could possibly lead to misinterpretation.
- o Never make fun of someone's ability to read or write.
- o Share tips with other students.
- o Keep an "open-mind" and be willing to express even your minority opinion. Minority opinions have to be respected.
- o Think and edit before you push the "Send" button.
- o Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.

- o   Using humor is acceptable, but make sure the tone is conducive to an inclusive learning environment.[1]

Please note that the syllabus is subject to change and assignments may be added or adapted.

Schedule

Week 1: September 2-4
Module: Course Introduction

Content: Introductory Video on Canvas
         Syllabus

> **Weekly Deadlines:**
> Introduce yourself on Discussion Board: Due Friday, September 4 (11:30pm)
> Submit Preliminary Reflection Response: Due Sunday, September 6 (11:30pm)
> Respond to two classmates on Discussion Board: Due Sunday, September 6 (11:30pm)
> Get Textbook *Exhibit Labels: An Interpretive Approach*: Due Sunday, September 6

Week 2: September 7-11
Module: Museum Definitions

Content: Museum Definitions Video Overview
         Dillenburg, "What, if Anything, Is a Museum?" (on Canvas);
         Baker, "Planning Exhibits: From Concept to Opening" (on Canvas)

> **Weekly Deadlines:**
> Reflection Response: Due Wednesday, September 9 (11:30pm)
> Class Zoom meeting: Thursday, September 10, (4pm-4:45pm)
> Makeup Reflection (only for students who missed the Zoom meeting): Due Friday, September 11 (11:30pm)

Week 3: September 14-18
Module: The Big Idea

Content: Serrell, pp. 19-46

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[1] Adapted from: Mintu-Wimsatt, A., Kernek, C., & Lozada, H. R. (2010). *Netiquette: Make it part of your syllabus*. Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 6(1). Retrieved from http://jolt.merlot.org/vol6no1/mintu-wimsatt_0310.htm

Weekly Deadlines:
Reflection Response: Due Wednesday, September 16 (11:30pm)
Module Discussion Post: Due Wednesday, September 16 (11:30pm)
Follow Up Discussion Posts: Due Friday, September 18 (11:30pm)
Submit a "big idea" for the History of 2020: Due Friday, September 18 (11:30pm)

Week 4: September 21-25
Module: History of 2020 Project Overview

Content: Project Video Overview
Readings: "A History-Textbook Entry for the Year 2020" (on Canvas)
Wisconsin Historical Society "Collecting History as it Happens":
https://wisconsinhistory.org/records/Article/CS16333

Weekly Deadlines:
Reflection Response: Due Wednesday, September 23 (11:30pm)
Class Zoom meeting: Thursday, September 24 (4pm-4:45pm)
Makeup Reflection (only for students who missed the Zoom meeting): Due Friday, September 25 (11:30pm)
Exhibit Review: Due Friday, September 25 (11:30pm)
Register for Project Team: Due Friday, September 25 (11:30pm)

Week 5: September 28- October 2
Module: Interpretive Labels

Content: Video Overview
Readings: Serrell, pp. 86-105 &117-143;
Lord and Lord, *Manual of Museum Exhibitions,* pp. 398-400 (on Canvas)

Weekly Deadlines:
Reflection Response: Due Wednesday, September 30 (11:30pm)
Module Discussion Post: Due Wednesday, September 30 (11:30pm)
Follow Up Discussion Posts: Due Friday, October 2 (11:30pm)
Preliminary Object/Image List for History of 2020: Due Friday, October 2 (11:30pm)

Week 6: October 5-9
Module: Historical Research

Content: Video Overview
Readings: TBD (on Canvas)

Week 7: October 12-16
Module: Exhibit Design

Content: Video Overview
Readings: Serrell, pp. 166-177 & 266-286;
Williams, *The Non-Designer's Design Book* (on Canvas)

Week 8: October 19-23
Module: Museum Outreach

Content: Video Overview
Readings: Serrell, pp. 49-85
Tongorra Matelic, "New Roles for Small Museums;" (on Canvas)
excerpts from Anderson, ed. *Reinventing the Museum* (on Canvas)

Week 9: October 26-30
Module: Exhibit Fabrication

Content: Video Overview
Readings: Serrell, pp. 287-301;
Parman et al, excerpts from *Exhibit Makeovers* (on Canvas)

Weekly Deadlines:
Reflection Response: Due Wednesday, October 28 (11:30pm)
Module Discussion Post: Due Wednesday, October 28 (11:30pm)
Follow Up Discussion Posts: Due Friday, October 30 (11:30pm)
Draft of Outreach Plan: Due Friday, October 30 (11:30pm)

Week 10: November 2-6
Module: Museum Objects

Content: Video Overview
Readings: Conn, *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* pp. 20-29 (on Canvas)

Weekly Deadlines:
Reflection Response: Due Wednesday, November 4 (11:30pm)
Class Zoom meeting: Thursday, November 6 (4pm-4:45pm)
Makeup Reflection (only for students who missed the Zoom meeting): Due Friday, November 6 (11:30pm)
Final Draft of Exhibit Script, Design, and Object List: Due Friday, November 6 (11:30pm)

Week 11: November 9-13
Module: Burial Site Overview

Content: Video Overview
Readings: Reser, "Normal School Camp and Cemetery Acknowledgment" (on Canvas)
Other Readings TBD

Weekly Deadlines:
Reflection Response: Due Wednesday, November 11 (11:30pm)
Module Discussion Post: Due Wednesday, November 11 (11:30pm)
Follow Up Discussion Posts: Due Friday, November 13 (11:30pm)
Final Draft of Outreach Plan: Due Friday, November 13(11:30pm)

Week 12: November 16-20
Module: Exhibit Evaluation

Content: Video Overview
Readings: Serrell, pp. 219-231;
Diamond, *Practical Evaluation Guide,* pp. 96-113

Weekly Deadlines:
Reflection Response: Due Wednesday, November 18(11:30pm)
Class Zoom meeting: Thursday, November 19 (4pm-4:45pm)
Makeup Reflection (only for students who missed the Zoom meeting): Due Friday, November 20 (11:30pm)
Exhibit Installation and Official Debut: Due Friday, November 20 (11:30pm)

Week 13: November 23-27
 Fall Break! Happy Thanksgiving!

Week 14: November 30- December 4
Module: Museum Ethics

Content: Video Overview
 Readings: McGreal, "Coming Home" (on Canvas)

Weekly Deadlines:
Reflection Response: Due Wednesday, December 2 (11:30pm)
Class Zoom meeting: Thursday, December 3 (4pm-4:45pm)
Makeup Reflection (only for students who missed the Zoom meeting): Due Friday, December 5 (11:30pm)
Burial Site Rough Draft: Due Friday, December 5 (11:30pm)

Week 15: December 7-11
Module: Museums and "Edutainment"

Content: Video Overview
 Readings: Readings: Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History,* pp. 159-174 (on Canvas)
 Other Materials TBD (on Canvas)

Weekly Deadlines:
Reflection Response: Due Wednesday, December 9 (11:30pm)
Module Discussion Post: Due Wednesday, December 9(11:30pm)
Follow Up Discussion Posts: Due Friday, December 11 11:30pm)
Burial Site Peer Reviews: Due Friday, December 11 (11:30pm)

Week 16: December 14-18
Burial Site Final Project: Due Friday, December 18 (11:30pm)