



GOUCHER COLLEGE

Welch Center for Graduate and Professional Studies

Syllabus - Exhibits, Real and Virtual

Course Number..... CSP 640
Credits..... 3
Semester..... Spring 2018
Instructor:..... Robert Forloney
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Welcome to the Course!

Course Description

As communities strive to sustain themselves and communicate their unique perspectives to the wider public, they often turn to exhibitions in museums and cultural institutions as well as the Internet to document and display their traditions, celebrate their accomplishments, enumerate their contributions, and articulate their concerns.

This course focuses on the work of museums in the selection, display and interpretation of cultural objects and concepts in exhibitions. Students will be introduced to the problems, possibilities and choices that inform the cultural practices of museums as they interact with both communities and larger audiences. It is organized around both real and virtual exhibits studied in-depth during and after the residency. Whether working in three-dimensional space or with a virtual platform, this class will introduce students to the diverse strategies and approaches used in exhibition planning, development and implementation with an emphasis on cultural representation in museums.

Main Course Topics

Students will develop and practice the skills needed to think critically about exhibitions and the interface between objects and visual materials, concepts and content, and visitor experience. It includes a number of class exercises/activities, done in groups and individually, designed to improve your abilities as an exhibition developer and a final project that requires you to analyze one real or virtual exhibit in depth.

This courses addresses the following MACS Program Outcomes

Outcome 2: Exhibit professional and ethical responsibility in managing partnerships that foster community self-determination and empower community efforts in cultural documentation, preservation, revitalization and social equity. (MACS2 Ethics)

Outcome 4: Devise, implement and evaluate actions that support cultural sustainability such as educational programs, exhibitions, performances, workshops, projects, media productions, websites, festivals and other initiatives that align with community practices. (MACS4 Action)

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to do the following:

2. Examine and discuss current, as well as historical, trends in the various ways that museums have been involved with the production of knowledge.
3. Identify the cultural practices that define exhibitions.
4. Summarize the issues of representation of culture in museums.
5. Identify the motivations and needs for various museum audiences as well as the correlating interpretative strategies for these groups.
6. Assess conceptual frameworks and exhibit narratives.
7. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the theoretical and practical concerns of exhibit development, design and production.
8. Evaluate how well exhibits accomplish museum mission and identify ways to improve visitor engagement and learning.

Course Format

Structure

This course combines a 7-day intensive residency and three weeks of online follow up.

Residency

The seven-day intensive residency is held at the campus of Goucher College from January 12 – 19, 2018. Days will alternate between guest presentations, case studies and discussion on campus, and an off-site trip to explore examples of best exhibition practices.

Three-week online follow-up

After our time together at Goucher, we will continue to meet for three weeks through the Canvas online education system. We will use video, live chat, and discussion boards to continue the conversations begun in Baltimore.

Assignment Instructions: (More details can be found on the course website in the relevant module)

1. Participate fully in the seven-day residency. You are required to participate in class discussion as much as possible. In order to achieve a satisfactory level of participation, you should make relevant comments each classroom session and always stay engaged with the class discussion.
2. The readings assigned for each class period must be completed before class. You will be expected to respond in class to questions provided as a guide to each reading. It is advised that you bring the text or texts we are discussing to class in order to refer to specific passages. Remember that academic reading is not a passive activity. Strive to gain the highest degree of understanding about the work that you can.
3. Each student will give a ten-minute presentation on this first day. Students should use the first 5 minutes describing their community of interest, including how you got interested in this topic, what you already know, what questions about representation you are hoping to explore, and how you hope this course may help you reach your goals. The final section of this presentation should reference three concepts from the reading that you have completed in anticipation of this course and tie it specifically to your interests.
4. Twice during the residency, present an 8-minute summary and facilitate a 12-minute critical discussion on an assigned reading on the topic of your choice. Your 20 minute presentation should

include a brief summary of the main topic including the author's key points, questions that the reading raises for you regarding cultural interpretation, and how the reading connects to your growing understanding of exhibition methodologies. You will be asked to facilitate a class discussion on one of the key issues raised by the text.

5. Participate in the online Canvas activities both during the residency and on-line portion of the course; including submitting the required postings and assignments, reading your classmates entries, and completing peer reviews where required. The online Canvas activities should be thought of as an extension of the classroom. Your responses should provide constructive critiques that will help your peers improve and advance their work. Please be aware that all of your responses are contributing to your grade. The faculty will read the responses.

6. Prior to the end of the residency, post a written piece or Voice Thread identifying a particular target audience you wish to engage along with a detailed description of this group's motivations. Explain how you might utilize one of the interpretive methodologies discussed in class to present information about your culture of interest to this group and explain why this technique would be successful for representing your concepts to this audience.

7. During week 1 of the on-line portion, write a detailed review of a virtual exhibition or display. This profile should analyze all significant elements such as clarity of key points/main messages, potential learning outcomes, ease of information accessibility, use of interactivity, as well as a discussion about overall aesthetics. Do not forget to discuss who the target audience appears to be and what the opportunities, as well as the weaknesses, to successfully communicate with this group are given the selected format. How does the graphic design choices and over all structure help or hinder visitors in reaching the desired learning outcomes?

8. During week 2 of the on-line portion, you will be asked to develop a statement of purpose for a potential cultural exhibition on your community, identify one intellectual question for visitors and write succinct but engaging didactic labels and a short piece of wall text for this show. Utilizing the best practices set forth in the assigned readings, write two short labels for a cultural object or image that would assist visitors with understanding your main message. (This should be 65 – 75 word max) In addition write a strong piece of introductory text for the section that would include these items- display an understanding of clear messaging and introduce the overarching intellectual question to be addressed.

9. During week 3, create a final 8 – 10 page paper that illustrates your understanding of the course's material through a highly detailed and thoroughly investigative exhibition critique. This piece should be comprehensive in its analysis- dissecting and discussing all aspects of exhibition design, cultural representation, methodologies for teaching with material culture and technology, exhibit development and production as well as messaging and meaning-making. In addition to critiquing the conceptual framework and political aspects of your chosen cultural exhibit, you will need to also assess pragmatic aspects such as ADA compliancy, general flow, make note of publicized funders, use of interactives, how visitors appear to engage with the exhibition, etc. This piece will also incorporate a presentation to the rest of the class via Zoom.

Required Readings

Textbook:

McLean, Kathleen. 2001. *Planning for People in Museum Exhibitions*. Washington, DC: Association of Science and Technology Centers.

This textbook can be purchased through the Association of Science-Technology Centers [website](#). Please note: You will need to create an account (simply a user name and password) but do NOT need to be a member to purchase the text through their bookstore. No cost associated with creating an account.

Required Readings:

Articles and Chapters are posted in Canvas website for viewing and downloading. Please see each Unit for specific readings.

Grading

Course Elements	Percent of Final Grade
Participation (residency, WebEx, online).	15%
Classroom presentations (Introduction and two readings @ 5% each)	15%
Discussion Board Posts (residency and online)	15%
Audience and Interpretive Methodology	10%
Virtual Exhibition review	15%
Didactic Label & Wall Text	10%
Final Exhibition Critique	20%
TOTAL	100%

Grade Scale

A	93 or more points
A-	90 - 92 points
B+	87 - 89 points
B	83 - 86 points
B-	80 - 82 points
C+	77 - 79 points
C	73 - 76 points
C-	70 - 72 points
D	60 - 69 points
F	59 points and below

Course Policies

Academic Integrity:

All final work products are to be the independent work of each student original to this course and stored in the electronic portfolio. Suspected violations of the Honor Code will be referred to the Academic Honor Board. For a description of the code and what constitutes a violation of the code, refer to Goucher College's [Academic Honor Code](#).

Accessibility Services:

Please inform me of any accommodations you need to participate fully in the course. Goucher College makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students requesting accommodations must make their request and provide appropriate documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS). Because classes change every semester, eligible students must

obtain a new accommodation letter from the Disabilities Specialist every semester and review this letter with their professors so the accommodations can be implemented. The Director of OAS is available by appointment to answer questions and discuss any implementation issues you may have. For more information, please visit Goucher College's [Academic Accommodations](#) site.

Communication:

- Faculty will be available at their Goucher email address and will respond to queries within 24-48 hours.
- Course participants are responsible for maintaining continuous involvement with faculty, fellow students and student groups. In particular, participation in all online discussions is required. Ongoing communication allows you to gain deeper insights into the content, activities and assignments in the course. Please give notice of any obstacle that prevents this.
- You are encouraged to ask questions whenever information needs clarifying.
- For questions pertaining to your assignments: send an email directly to the instructor (please do not post personal questions on the discussion board).
- For questions about assignments that may be interesting and helpful to other class members: please use the Ask the Professor Discussion Forum.
- For problems with technical aspects of the course website: chat with [Canvas Support](#).

E2Campus Emergency Notification System:

In an ongoing effort to better disseminate information during emergencies and campus closings, Goucher has implemented the e2Campus Notification System. The notification system will only send information regarding emergencies and campus closings as text messages* to your mobile phone. To receive these messages, you must be registered in the system. Click the following link for information about how to create your [E2Campus account](#).

Inclement Weather:

Online courses will not be cancelled for inclement weather when the college campus is closed. Students and faculty are expected to access their courses just as they would if the campus were open. Each faculty member and student is expected to have a contingency plan for attending online courses in case their primary computer is unavailable or out of service. Additionally, the online component of a residency or hybrid course is not affected when the college campus is closed for inclement weather, although if the residency or hybrid course has a face-to-face meeting scheduled on the closed campus, the meeting will be rescheduled for another day. The course instructor will notify students of the makeup day and time. Only in extreme situations, such as wide spread power outages, may exceptions to this policy be made by the Office of the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs. In such severe cases, an official statement concerning online activities will be issued via normal emergency channels.

Late Policy:

For proper graduate student learning to occur, pacing of content mastery is critical. Therefore, assignments are to be completed on time. If extreme circumstances prevent an assignment from being completed in a timely fashion, please notify me **before the assignment is due** so a new date can be negotiated. Only follow-ups completed by the due date can be accepted. Late assignments without such notification will be docked according to the chart above.

Missed Work:

You are responsible for material covered in the course. It is your sole responsibility to obtain any materials missed. You are expected to attend all Zoom meetings and will lose participation points if you miss one, unless you notify the instructor at least 24 hours **in advance**. Advanced notice will allow us to record the meeting for future review.

Nondiscrimination Policy:

Goucher College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status or genetic information in its programs and activities. The college has adopted a [Nondiscrimination Policy](#). Further details and contact information for the college's Title IX coordinator can be found on [Goucher's Nondiscrimination Notice and Policy page](#).