Museum Studies

Chair, Department of Anthropology
• Katina Lillios

Coordinator, Museum Studies
• Heidi K. Lung (Anthropology)

Undergraduate certificate: museum studies
Faculty: https://museumstudies.sites.uiowa.edu/contacts
Website: https://museumstudies.sites.uiowa.edu/

Courses

Museum Studies Courses

MUSM:2850 Museums and Social Justice 3 s.h.
Exploration of museums as institutions that frame social justice, promote equity of access through social bridging, and at times, address and challenge social ills directly through exhibits and programs; case studies and dialogue.

MUSM:3001 Introduction to Museum Studies 3 s.h.
Overview of museum history, function, philosophy, collection, and curatorial practices; governance and funding issues; exhibition evaluation and audience studies; examples from Stanley Museum of Art, Museum of Natural History, Old Capitol Museum, and Medical Museum. GE: Social Sciences. Same as ANTH:3001, EDTO:3001.

MUSM:3003 Natural History Research Collections 3 s.h.
Techniques, methods, and issues specific to natural history research collections; practice in preparing and cleaning specimens; role of natural history specimens in modern scientific research. Recommendations: basic understanding of the diversity of plants and animals and natural history museum collections, MUSM:3001 or MUSM:3200, and BIOL:1411 or BIOL:1412; or other experience. Same as EES:3003.

MUSM:3004 Exhibition Planning 3 s.h.
Preliminary work for and process of developing museum exhibitions; history of exhibit design, evaluation, budgets, teams and team member roles, working with community and special interest groups, methods of production and display; students research a topic, choose artifacts and images, and create a narrative and exhibit script. Prerequisites: MUSM:3001.

MUSM:3100 Historic House Management and Preservation 3 s.h.
Management, preservation, interpretation, and basic operations of historic structures and the museums they serve.

MUSM:3105 Engaging Museum Audiences 3 s.h.
Effective audience engagement requires museums to meet visitors halfway; employing learning theories, knowledge of audience, and innovative examples from the field; students investigate a variety of approaches that are visitor-centered, interdisciplinary, and locally focused. Prerequisites: MUSM:3001.

MUSM:3120 Museum Origins 3 s.h.
History of museums; origin, character, and evolution into content specific institutions; anecdotes and personalities; how museums influenced society and their continuing relevance to a technological world.

MUSM:3125 Museums in a Digital World 3 s.h.
Digital technologies streamline internal museum processes while exponentially increasing the capacity of individuals to engage with museum collections; explores the digitized strategies and systems that democratize access and enhance museum visitor experiences.

MUSM:3131 Museum Evaluation and Visitor Studies 3 s.h.
Students explore evaluation theory, methodologies, and practical application through case studies and hands-on activities from all types of museum experiences (e.g., programs, exhibitions, wayfinding, interpretive technology) from both staff and visitor perspective. Prerequisites: MUSM:3001.

MUSM:3200 Collection Care and Management 3 s.h.
How a museum's management policy relates to its administrative, legal, and ethical obligations to its collections; acquisitions, deaccessions, collection use, data standards, storage environment, health, safety, documentation. Same as EES:3200.

MUSM:3215 The Museum of Today and Tomorrow: How Museums Enhance the K-12 Classroom 3 s.h.
What do museums have to offer teachers? How are they relevant to social studies, math, English, and science teachers? Students are put in charge of answering these questions and build their knowledge about art and innovative teaching strategies in the K-12 classroom and museum, practice designing lessons around a work of art, and apply their knowledge about art and curriculum into interactive online modules; students work directly with art on campus in the Lindquist Art Collection in the College of Education and the University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art. Same as EDTO:3215.

MUSM:3237 Politics of the Archaeological Past 3 s.h.
How control over management of material remains of the ancient past, and representations of that past, intersect with the identity of diverse groups, including archaeologists, Indigenous peoples, national governments, collectors, ethnic minorities and majorities, museum curators; struggles for control of the archaeological past at different scales (artifacts, skeletal remains, sites, imagery, narratives) and in different regions of the world. Same as ANTH:3237, HIST:3137.

MUSM:3500 Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness 3 s.h.
Operational and financial aspects of nonprofit management; mission and governance of organization; strategic planning for effective management, including finance, budget, income generation, fund-raising. Same as ENTR:3595, MGMT:3500, NURS:3595, RELS:3700, SSW:3500.

MUSM:4080 Museum Internship arr.
Work experience in functions, departments, and programs of the sponsoring museum related to museum’s overall mission and museum field in general.

MUSM:4081 The American Art Museum: Theory and Practice 3 s.h.
Introduction to different aspects of art museums; emphasis on roles of art historians, especially curatorial practice; current and historical theories and practices of art exhibitions; varying debates of the politics of display; art museum professions; the many facets of art exhibition preparation; the University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art collections. Same as ARTH:4081.
MUSM:4082 Distance Learning Museum Internship  arr.
Work experience in functions, departments, and programs of
the sponsoring museum related to museum's overall mission
and museum field in general.

MUSM:4084 Museum Professionalism  1-3 s.h.
Opportunity to apply core concepts learned in other courses
through an in-depth service learning experience within a
museum; students complete a minimum of 40 hours per credit
hour of primarily independent work for a museum or like
organization under the supervision of a staff member and
faculty advisor; development of a digital portfolio reflecting on
project activities. Prerequisites: MUSM:3001.

MUSM:4130 Museum Literacy and Historical
Memory  3 s.h.
Concepts and methods for understanding the role of museums
in shaping knowledge and collective memory of history;
institutionally based exhibits and collections, historical
markers and public monuments, public holidays and events,
media and artistic works that interpret the past; how events,
people, and civic ambitions are memorialized and how
memories of them are shaped; appearance of museums and
related practices in the non-Western world after 1850. Same
as HIST:4130.

MUSM:4150 Introduction to Grant Writing  3 s.h.
Comprehensive training in grant proposal writing; basics
of project development and management; core principles
for writing small and large proposals to public and private
funding sources; finer points of grant writing to increase
competitiveness of future proposals and applications; for
students with limited grant writing experience. Same as
EALL:4130.

MUSM:4200 Museum Object Preservation  3 s.h.
Detailed study of specific types of museum objects, their
materials, and care; topics include care, storage, and
preservation of paper, books, photographs, works of art,
electronic media, textiles, furniture, archaeological artifacts,
and natural history specimens; students complete a curatorial
project and gain hands-on practice in basic object cleaning
and making enclosures and supports; for students planning
museum careers or taking care of collections as part of their
professional responsibilities. Same as EES:4200.

MUSM:4210 Museum Without Walls: Museum, Art
Education, and Community Engagement in the Digital
Age  3 s.h.
Collaborative work to recreate one exhibition from the
University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art that took place
before the flood of 2008; creation of content that contributes
to a virtual museum experience; introduction to digital
tools commonly used in design of exhibitions; recreation of
historical exhibitions based on documentary photographs in
museum and University archives and research on the premise
of the exhibition and objects on view; how digital artifacts
might be used in different contexts; use of museum and
digital environments as labs for lifelong and distance learning.
Same as EDTL:4210.

MUSM:4310 Slavery Museums, Memorials, and Statues
in the United States, Europe, and the Global
South  3-4 s.h.
Comparative study of museums, memorials, statues,
performances, and artistic works that encapsulate the
entangled history and memory of transoceanic slave trades
and slavery in the United States, the Caribbean, the Indian
Ocean, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Europe (France and the
United Kingdom); critical tools to analyze public debates over
politically charged monuments; exploration of transnational
and political predicaments of the contemporary world;
approaches include trauma theories, memory studies,
history, postcolonial ecocriticism, cultural anthropology,
heritage studies and museology, and Francophone cultural
critique. Taught in English. Requirements: for 4 s.h. option
—prior enrollment in FREN:3060 and FREN:3300. Same as
FREN:4210, WLLC:4210.