

Museum Studies Standard Course List

Fall

MSTD 6101 - Museum Management – *Max van Balgooy*

An overview of the major activities in governing and managing a museum. Course introduces the student to the non-profit sector and the context of the legal and professional expectations for governance. Course covers the elements of forming a museum, strategic planning, the role of the CEO/Director, building the organization structure and staffing. Finance, operations, and facilities management are also covered. The course also includes sessions on fundraising, grant writing, business planning, special events, programs, performance measurement and accreditation, marketing, public relations, and managing change. A strong emphasis on ethical challenges and decision making is included.

MSTD 6104 - Managing People/Managing Projects - *Max van Balgooy*

Dealing with people is an area consistently mentioned as a major challenge for museum managers. Students study organizational behavior theory, the methods of building a motivated and skilled staff, and focus on the team process. Project management systems are taught including developing scope, schedule and budget, team dynamics, resource leveling, and working within a matrix environment. The role of the project manager is emphasized along with tools for managing change and negotiating conflict. Case studies are presented by practitioners working in museums today.

MSTD 6201 – Introduction to Collections Management - *Laura Schiavo*

This class will serve as an introduction to creating, controlling, and protecting collections. We will look at the fundamentals of collections care (collections plans and policies, accessions, deaccessioning, loans, access, and the physical protection of museum objects) as well as legal and ethical issues related to collecting and collections management. Because guidelines to best practices run up against contingencies ‘on the ground,’ case studies will introduce students to challenges encountered in museum practice.

MSTD 6203 – Preventive Conservation Concepts - *Cathy Hawks, Shelley Sturman*

Examines the role of preventive conservation in museums by introducing materials commonly found in collections, the causes of their deterioration and the resources available to identify and mitigate collection risks. Students will learn how to handle objects, how to record object conditions in written and photographic formats, how to choose a conservator, how to test materials for use with museum collections, how to perform a qualitative assessment, and to understand the ethics that govern conservation. (Cross-listed with Departments of Anthropology and Fine Art).

MSTD 6204 - Preventive Conservation Techniques – *Mary Coughlin*

Builds upon topics introduced in the Preventive Conservation Concepts course with emphasis placed on practical exercises and ethical issues. Students will learn how to evaluate and monitor collections, how to prepare a grant for collections care, and how to develop and implement policies and procedures to facilitate collections care. MSTD 6203(or its cross-listed equivalent in Fine Arts/Anthropology) is required for this class.

MSTD 6205 – Archival Practice – *Robert Horton*

This course introduces museum professionals to the core ideas and practices of archivists and archival institutions. It establishes a foundation of knowledge about archival materials (their nature and uses); professional principles and practices in the management of archival materials (archival theory and functions); archival institutions (purposes, placement, operations); and the archives profession (values, organizations). It will illuminate differences and commonalities in professional values and methods of archives and museums. Students will become familiar with doing research in archives.

MSTD 6301 – Museum Exhibitions, Curatorial Practice and Planning - *Kym Rice*

The class focuses on the work of curators in the selection, display and interpretation of objects for collections and in exhibitions. Sessions emphasize ethics and collecting, exhibit conceptualization and development, working with the community, the production of meaning, and the politics of exhibiting.

Museum Studies Standard Course List

Fall – (continued)

MSTD 6302 - Museum Exhibition Design - *Barbara Brennan, Ashley Hornish*

Participants will focus on translating museum exhibition concepts into specific plans, models, and specification documents in this introductory class. Different computer design and graphic programs are introduced.

MSTD 6403 – Museums and Digital Technology – *Suse Anderson*

In many museums, digital technologies are now a naturalized and expected presence—core to the institutional approaches to problem solving. In the post-digital museum, technology and digital media are not considered as ends in themselves, but rather, as the means that helps the museum meet its mission and goals. Technology is not neutral, however. It has its own histories, both within and outside museums that impact its adoption within the museum. Museums began using digital technologies in the 1960s, and this has affected how museums work and how they define themselves. This course will explore the relationship between museums and digital technology, considering how and why it has been incorporated into practice.

MSTD 6501 - Museum Internship - *Laura Schiavo*

Supervised practical training in Washington area museums (or elsewhere). Internships are supervised by one or more members of the sponsoring museum staff and focus on a variety of areas including museum management, conservation, collections management, exhibition design and development. Prior approval required.

MSTD 6502 - Directed Research - *Staff*

Individual research on special topics in the museum field working with a MSTD professor or outside museum experts. Topics must be approved in advance by MSTD.

MSTD 6601 – Special Topics: Critical Visitor Experience – *Suse Anderson*

As museums become increasingly visitor-focused, it is critical to understand the multiple factors that affect the whole visitor experience. What is the impact of museum architecture on the museum visit? How does the museum’s shop, café, and other non-exhibit spaces inform the visitor experience? In this field-trip based course, students will utilize multiple frameworks through which to explore, observe and critique visitor-facing aspects of museum work. Note: This course will be based at institutions around the DC area. Students will need to travel to different locations depending on the week.

MSTD 6601 – Special Topics: Museum Governance – *Kathy Southern*

Good governance with an informed diverse board and an effective board-staff partnership are central to the success of every museum. As a basic component of the museum professional’s experience, everyone from the director, to the curator, to the educator, to the collections manager, to museum management, will have the responsibility of working with members of the board through special projects, their museum departments and trustee committees. To ensure the success of these experiences, strong working relationships between board and staff and an understanding of respective roles and responsibilities will be essential. This course will cover the role and responsibilities of the board and the elements of a successful staff-board partnership. Case studies from the museum community and guest speakers will exemplify these topics.

MSTD 6701-Museum History and Theory - *Laura Schiavo/Suse Anderson*

More often than not, museum practitioners and theorists speak at cross purposes. This course will take steps to bridge that gap. We will first explore the origins of the modern museum and the history of (mainly) American museums. Then, using U.S. and non-U.S. examples, we will engage with theorists whose ideas have been accessed to inform our understanding of museums as places of meaning making, power, empowerment, and cultural authority, and as “contact zones” (James Clifford, 1997). As the theory informs our understanding of how museums have functioned – both in the past and in more contemporary examples –we will be better prepared to engage critically with our own work as museum practitioners

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Spring

MSTD 6101 – Museum Management – *Max van Balgooy*

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MSTD 6102 – Nonprofit Fiscal Management – *Nik Apostolides*

Overall financial management of the museum including financial planning and analysis, internal controls, accounting, budgeting and financial reporting, presentation and leadership. Theory applied to practical situations.

MSTD 6201 – Introduction to Collections Management - *Laura Schiavo/Katie Speckart*

This class will serve as an introduction to creating, controlling, and protecting collections. We will look at the fundamentals of collections care (collections plans and policies, accessions, deaccessioning, loans, access, and the physical protection of museum objects) as well as legal and ethical issues related to collecting and collections management. Because guidelines to best practices run up against contingencies ‘on the ground,’ case studies will introduce students to challenges encountered in museum practice.

MSTD 6202 - Collections Management: Practical Applications- *Deborah Hull-Walski, Lisa Palmer*

This class focuses on the implementation of collections policies and procedures: establishing and managing collections, management procedures and systems, documentation of collections, records preservation, collections access and storage, handling, packing and shipping, and inventory control. This is the second-semester, applied class for 6201. MSTD 6201 Introduction to Collections Management is required for this class.

MSTD 6203 – Preventive Conservation Concepts - *Mary Coughlin*

Examines the role of preventive conservation in museums by introducing materials commonly found in collections, the causes of their deterioration and the resources available to identify and mitigate collection risks. Students will learn how to handle objects, how to record object conditions in written and photographic formats, how to choose a conservator, how to test materials for use with museum collections, how to perform a qualitative assessment, and to understand the ethics that govern conservation.

MSTD 6204 - Preventive Conservation Techniques - *Catharine Hawks, Shelley Sturman*

Builds upon topics introduced in the Preventive Conservation Concepts course with emphasis placed on practical exercises and ethical issues. Students will learn how to evaluate and monitor collections, how to prepare a grant for collections care, and how to develop and implement policies and procedures to facilitate collections care. MSTD 6203(or its cross-listed equivalent in Fine Arts/Anthropology) is required for this class.

MSTD 6302 - Museum Exhibition Design - *Barbara Brennan, Ashley Hornish*

Participants will focus on translating museum exhibition concepts into specific plans, models, and specification documents in this introductory class. Different computer design and graphic programs are introduced.

MSTD 6304 – Exhibition Development - *Kym Rice*

Class emphasizes exhibition content and includes sessions on evaluation, team work, audience engagement, learning styles, budgeting, exhibition layering, language and best practices. Students follow an idea from conceptualization through organization to scripting---with extensive peer review. Class includes guest speakers

Museum Studies Standard Course List

Spring – (continued)

MSTD 6305 – Visitor Perspectives – Museum Evaluation in Exhibitions-- *Sasha Palmquist, Elizabeth Danter*

Of the many components involved in exhibition development, incorporating the visitors' voice is often misunderstood, neglected, or under-used. This course will review current learning theory and visitor research related to exhibition development. Emphasis will be placed on how an understanding of the visitor experience informs the various stages of exhibition development, from concept generation, design, interpretation, and installation. Students will then put theory into practice by conducting visitor research on a local exhibition and organizing a public review of that exhibition by area museum professionals.

MSTD 6306 – Race, Gender, Sexuality and Museums – *Laura Schiavo* (This class is not offered every spring.)

Will explore the role that museums have played in the construction and reification of the categories of race (including whiteness) and gender, and the representation of the lives of women, African Americans, Native Americans, and other cultural minorities. The class will focus on museums in the United States but will include some non-US examples. We will also look at how these represented –and often unrepresented –groups have created opportunities to tell their own stories and exhibit their own cultural productions in museums such as the National Museum of the American Indian and the National Museum of Women in the Arts. Class readings and discussion will cover issues such as identity politics, feminism, essentialism, and the performance of identity in the museum setting.

MSTD 6403 – Digitization and Digital Asset Management – *Suse Anderson*

This course is designed for museum professionals who expect to manage digital assets, projects, or programs involving digitization and access. It examines current methods in the creation and dissemination of digital surrogates, associated metadata, and digital descriptive records of museum collections. By exploring the workflows and guidelines necessary to implement a successful digitization project, this course examines the aspects of maintaining and managing digital assets. Aspects of technical creation and guidelines will be addressed; digital asset management, metadata creation and use, as well as long-term preservation and access of those assets will be discussed. Sessions will cover format types and digitization challenges, selection and prioritization, successful project tracking, and Digital Asset Management Plans (DAMP), as well as ways to successfully implement, manage, and make accessible digital collections over time.

MSTD 6501 - Museum Internship - *Laura Schiavo*

Supervised practical training in Washington area museums (or elsewhere). Internships are supervised by one or more members of the sponsoring museum staff and focus on a variety of areas including museum management, conservation, collections management, exhibition design and development. Prior approval required.

MSTD 6502 - Directed Research - *Staff*

Individual research on special topics in the museum field working with a MSTD professor or outside museum experts. Topics must be approved in advance by MSTD.

MSTD 6601 Special Topics: Archives in Thought and Practice: From Canon to Critical Theory– *Gina Rappaport*

Archives, like all cultural heritage institutions, are contact zones, the workings of which are shaped by multiple factors. Building on MSTD 6601: Archival Practices, this course explores how the core functions, practices, and guiding principles of archives impact and are influenced by prevailing social, historical, and political currents. The role of institutional history and ideology and relations with source communities is given particular attention in shaping contemporary archival functions and practice. The course addresses the challenges of managing and preserving non-traditional collections such as photographs, film and video, sound recordings, and electronic records.

MSTD 6601: Archival Practice is required for this class.

MSTD 6601 – Special Topics: Historic House Museum – *Max van Balgooy*

How has historic house/site interpretation changed in the last two decades? The class explores how these museums use historical documents, objects, and ideas to craft new interpretations with respect to social, political, and cultural life in the past. Class usually partners with a local museum/site for group project.

Museum Studies Standard Course List

Spring – (continued)

MSTD 6601 – Special Topics: Museums and Cultural Property - *Thomas Kline, Rena Opert*

This seminar explores the ethical and legal principles involved with ownership and restitution of stolen art and other cultural property wrongfully removed from their owners or countries of origin. Reported claims brought against museums are used to examine current museum policies and procedures on acquisition, exhibition, repatriation, retention and restitution of museum collection objects.

MSTD 6601- Special Topics: Museums and Community Engagement – *Max van Balgooy*

Museums of all types are increasingly turning to their local communities as a primary audience for programming and support. We will study why this shift in thinking is occurring in museums and when it is an appropriate strategy. Then we will use a variety of techniques to identify and describe a local community and develop a range of methods for engagement to fulfill a museum's mission and goals. By the end of the course, each student will be able to craft a community engagement plan that is suitable for presentation to a board or executive director.

MSTD 6601-Special Topics: Museums and Social Media – *Suse Anderson*

The introduction of Web2.0 or the 'social web' in the mid-2000s led to an influx of new participants in the consumption and creation of digital information. Typified by platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and blogs, the social web focused on user participation as critical in the creation of value. By lowering the technical barriers to entry, the social web made it easier for people outside formal institutions such as the press to create and publish their own work, changing the ways that people communicate and interact with one another, and with organizations and institutions. Museums continue to experiment with how best to engage in this environment to serve their missions and their audiences. In this course, students will utilize multiple online platforms to discern the affordances and complexities of social media for museums. Together, we will consider strategies, tactics, and benchmarks for measuring social media, as well as risk, privacy and publicness, and online identities (professional, personal, and institutional). Students should be prepared to be active participants in an online, multi-platform peer discourse throughout the semester.

MSTD 6601 – Special Topics: Museum Fundraising – *Kathy Southern*

Fundraising is an increasingly important skill of today's museum professional. From the director to the curator, to the educator, to the development specialist, everyone may be called in from time to time to participate in the development effort. This course will cover the basics in fundraising today including sources of funds, best practices and approaches, annual funds and capital campaigns, and the internal management of the fundraising effort. Student work will include donor research, grant writing and a museum project.

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Summer

MSTD 6501 – Museum Internship – *Laura Schiavo*

Supervised practical training in Washington area museums (or elsewhere). Internships are supervised by one or more members of the sponsoring museum staff and focus on a variety of areas including museum management, conservation, collections management, exhibition design and development.

MSTD 6502 – Directed Research - *Staff*

Individual research on special topics in the museum field working with a MSTD professor or outside museum experts. Topics must be approved in advance by MSTD.

MSTD 6601 Special Topics: Archival Practice – *Robert Horton*

This course provides an introduction to the basic theories, methodologies, and current issues relating to archives management. The course addresses the challenges of managing and preserving non-traditional collections such as photographs, film and video, sound recordings, and electronic records. Key aspects of archival practices covered are: what are archives and why are they important; what are the basic archival principles; what are the components of an archival program; how are archival records appraised, arranged and described, and made available for use; and what are some of the current legal and preservation issues facing archivists.

MSTD 6601 - Special Topics: Issues Related to Collections Policy– *Laura Schiavo*

This class will look in depth at five issues related to collections in which there is currently some debate or question as to “best practice”: deaccessioning; repatriation and restitution; provenance research; storage for culturally sensitive collections; and collections access. Each week will be devoted to one topic, with one class spent discussing readings on the issue, and one class in conversation with a professional in the field. Students will be required to write 4 short papers (one per week) reviewing the assigned readings, and one longer paper on the issue of her choice based on a case study.

MSTD 6601- Special Topics: Museums and Community Engagement – *Max van Balgooy*

This is a practicum class that allows a Museum Studies Professor to work with a small group of students and a community partner on a museum-related project.

MSTD 6601 - Special Topics: Museum Marketing – *James Fetters*

What is “museum marketing?” The answers to that question can be as varied as the types of museums responding. Over the last twenty years, in particular, the variety and number of activities that can be considered part of marketing have grown dramatically. Lines between media relations, public affairs, events, sales, branding, development and retail blur, while the media and technologies available for reaching targeted audiences expand. This course will explore the diversity of opportunities and responsibilities represented today under the museum marketing umbrella.

The course will cover the development of a marketing plan including situational analysis and market research; segmentation and targeting; positioning and intent; identification of business, marketing and social objectives; strategies and key performance metrics. Course participants will research and develop a museum marketing plan, gaining a deeper understanding of the research and planning that goes into a museum marketing campaign. The course will also examine issues related to the role of marketing within a museum and how marketing efforts can be effective without being at odds with the mission of a museum. The overall goal of the course will be to provide participants with an understanding of available marketing tools and a disciplined approach to assessing what tools/techniques are needed and appropriate for an individual museum to optimize its awareness and audience building efforts.