

ANTH 4720 Museums and Anthropology (2020-21)

Teacher: Dr. Sharon Wong Wai-yee

Office: NAH305, Humanities Bldg, New Asia College.

Phone: 3943 5549 (office) Email: sharonwwy@cuhk.edu.hk

Tutor: Ms. Melody Tan

Office: NAH406, Humanities Bldg, New Asia College

Phone: 3943 7726 (office) Email: melodytanyanzhen@hotmail.com

Lecture: Thursday 10:30am-12:15pm

Tutorial: Thursday 3:30-4:15pm

Course Outline

Museums are important institutions and serve the economic, social and political needs of contemporary societies. This course aims to study the issues on museology from anthropological perspectives. What is a museum? Why museums are established? Who need museums? Is museum important to the society during the COVID-19 pandemic? The course will examine the origin, classification, structure, function and practice of museums with examples come from art, history, and anthropology exhibits in worldwide, and students are encouraged to find their own examples. The course will introduce the collection, management, exhibition design, techniques in museums, discuss museums and digital technology, analyze how national identities and gender are constructed and enhanced through exhibitions, and discuss roles played by different stakeholders of museums from the (inter)national, regional and local communities.

Major contents of this course

1. What is a museum? Why do museums occur? Who need museums?
2. The cultural contexts and classification of modern museums
3. Basic practices of museums: acquisition, documentation, preservation, exhibition design, presentation, education and research
4. Museology from an anthropological perspective: collection and colonialism; exhibition and stereotyping, identity construction and gender interpretation; the social inclusion, public engagement and other roles of modern museums; museums and digital technology
5. Museum in the 21st century- debates on its cultural, economic, social and political roles

Learning outcomes

After taking this course, students are expected to:

- understand the basic functions of museums;
- understand the economic, social and political roles played by museums in contemporary societies;
- have a basic knowledge on museum practices from exhibition design to visitor study;
- develop the ability to integrate data from different disciplines and present data in a well organized manner;
- cultivate the ability of critical thinking, particularly through analyzing exhibition contents.

Learning activities

2-hour lectures and 1-hour tutorial per week for one semester, including a museum field trip in Hong Kong

Grade descriptors are as follows for the assessment of this course:

Grade Overall course

- A Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
- A- Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
- B Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
- C Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
- D Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes
- F Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Course Assessment

(1) Participation (10%)

(2) Group presentation (10%)

Students will be required to form a small group to present by conducting participant observations and interviews to the visitors and/or other stakeholders of the museum in the tutorial(s) or museum field trip

(3) Mid-term report, approximately 12-15 pages (40%)

Student will be required to write 12-15 pages individual paper on a study of the missions, and the ways it is illustrated through the collections, building and exhibition design, etc. of a selected museum (Due date 19th March, Friday, 5pm)

(4) Final paper, approximately 12-15 pages (40%)

Student will be required to write 12-15 pages individual paper on a study of selected topic(s) from lecture 9-15 of selected museum(s) (Due date 3rd May, Monday, 5pm)

Lecture topics and reading materials

NB: Required readings are essential for the lectures and tutorial. Students are expected to finish all the weekly readings before the lecture and tutorial.

Medium of instruction

Cantonese

Submissions & academic honesty

The Chinese University of Hong Kong places very high importance on academic honesty, and adopts a policy of zero tolerance on cheating in examinations and plagiarism. Any such offence will lead to disciplinary action including possibly termination of studies at the University. Students should know how to properly use source material and how to avoid plagiarism.

As required by the university, from Sept. 2008, students must submit a soft copy of their computer-generated text assignments to VeriGuide at a specified URL. The system will issue a receipt containing a declaration of honesty statement. Students should sign the receipt, print a hard copy of their assignment, and **submit the hard copy and the receipt to teachers for grading**. The university says that assignments without the receipt will NOT be graded.

Please check the website "Honesty in Academic Work" at:

<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/> for more information on plagiarism and on how to submit papers through VeriGuide

Lecture Topics

Week 1 (14th Jan.)

Introduction: What is a museum? Definition, objectives, classification and structures of modern museums

Required Readings:

ICOM 2007. *ICOM Statutes*. Vienna: 21st General Assembly of ICOM.

Preziosi and Farago eds. 2004. "What are Museums for?" In *Grasping the World: the Idea of the Museum*. Aldershot, Hants: Ashgate, pp.1-21.

Pearce, Susan. 1999. "Museums of Anthropology or Museums as Anthropology?", *Anthropologica* 41 (1): 25-33.

Week 2 (21st Jan.)

The occurrence of museums: Historical background and issues for the birth of museums

Required Readings:

Macdonald, Sharon. 2016. "New Constellations of Difference in Europe's 21st-Century Museumscape." *Museum Anthropology* 39(1): 4-19.

Denton, Kirk A. 2014. *Exhibiting the Past: Historical Memory and the Politics of Museums in Postsocialist China*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, Chapter 1.

Week 3 (28th Jan.)

Museums, power, capital and class: A comparative study of the founding and development of museums in China and Europe

Required Readings:

Lu, Tracey L-D. 2014. *Museums in China: Materialized Power and Objectified Identities*. Oxford: Routledge, Chapters 3-5.

Week 4 (4th Feb.)

Museums and buildings: Discuss buildings, symbolic structures, the environments of museums, and the relationship between buildings, museums and preservations

Required Readings:

徐明福 2001 《英法博物館建築之旅》 35-49，96-117，148-164 頁。台南：台灣建築與文化資產出版社。

Week 5 (11th Feb.) Public Holiday: Chinese New Year Holiday

Week 6 (18th Feb.)

Basic practices of museums: acquisition, documentation and preservation

Required Readings:

Burcaw, G. E. 1997. *Introduction to Museum Work*. New York: AltaMira Press, Chapters 7-12.

Biedermann, Bernadette. 2017. "'Virtual Museums' as Digital Collection Complexes. A Museological Perspective Using the Example of Hans-Gross-Kriminalmuseum." *Museum Management and Curatorship* 32(3): 281-297.

Week 7 (25th Feb.)

Exhibition design: constructing the framework and engaging visitor involvement

Required Readings:

Lord, Barry and Gail Lord. 2014. *The Manual of Museum Exhibition*. Walnut Creek:

AltaMira Press, pp.233-250.

Week 8 (4th Mar.)

Presentation and Exhibition techniques

Required Readings:

Lord, Barry and Gail Lord. 2014. *The Manual of Museum Exhibitions*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, pp.293-338.

鄭建榮 2014 《博物館展示規劃經驗之要點》，《陶博館研究集刊 2013-2014》，新北：新北市立鶯歌陶瓷博物館，88-97 頁。

Week 9 (11th Mar.)

Education and research: Museum as (in)formal education institute; Should museums conduct research?

Required Readings:

Ambrose, Timothy. 2012. *Museum Basics*. London: Routledge. (General Reference book)

Simpson, Andrew John. 2017. “Beyond Visitor Statistics: Value Propositions and Metrics for University Museums and Collections.” *Museum Management and Curatorship* 32(1): 20-39.

Week 10 (18th Mar.)

Is museum important to the society during the pandemic?

Required Readings:

Billock, Jennifer. 2020. “How Will Covid-19 Change the Way Museums Are Built?” *Smithsonian Magazine*, 16 September, 2020.

Kist, Cassandra. 2020. “Museums, Challenging Heritage and Social Media During COVID-19” *Museum and Society* 18 (3): 345-348.

Crooke, Elizabeth. 2020. “Communities, Change and the COVID-19 Crisis” *Museum and Society* 18 (3): 305-310.

Week 11 (25th Mar.)

Museum, identity and civil society

Required Readings:

Sandell, Richard. 1998. “Museums as Agents of Social Inclusion.” *Museum Management and Curatorship* 17(4): 401-418.

Matherne, Neal and Quaintance, Hannah. 2019. “Meaningful Donations and Shared Governance: Growing the Philippine Heritage Collection through Co-Curation at the Field Museum.” *Museum Anthropology* 42(1): 14-27.

****Mid-term Report:** completed report with Veriguide receipts to be submitted to Dept. Office by 5pm Friday, 19th Mar.

Week 12 (1st Apr. no lecture) Reading Week

Week 13 (8th Apr.)

Museum and gender

Required Readings:

Pearce, Susan M. 1998. "Objects in the Contemporary Construction of Personal Culture: Perspectives Relating to Gender and Socio-economic Class." *Museum Management and Curatorship* 17 (3):223-241.

Heitman, Carrie C. 2017. "The Creation of Gender Bias in Museum Collections: Recontextualizing Archaeological and Archival Collections from Chaco Canyon, New Mexico." *Museum Anthropology* 40 (2): 128-142.

Week 14 (15th Apr.)

Ecomuseum and its roles

Required Reading:

Chang, Yui-tan. 2009. *Ecomuseums: The Rise of a Cultural Movement*. Nantou: Five Senses Arts Management Association, pp. 190-236.

Week 15 (22th Apr.)

Museums in the 21st century: marketing, globalization and cultural diversity

Required Readings:

Kotler, Neil et al. 2008 "Museums and Marketing." In Neil G. Kotler, Philip Kotler, Wendy I. Kotler eds. *Museum Marketing and Strategy: Designing Missions, Building Audiences, Generating Revenue and Resources*. 2nd edition. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, pp.1-40.

****Final Paper:** completed paper with Veriguide receipts to be submitted to Dept. Office by 5pm Monday, 3rd May.

Tutorial topics

Week 1: No tutorial. Students to prepare and read readings.

Week 2

Discussion: what can we learn from the historical context of museum occurrence?

Week 3

Discussion: is museum a place to trivialize or glorify culture?

Week 4

Discuss the function of museum buildings, the environments of museums, and the relationship between buildings, museums and preservations

Week 5-6: No tutorial. Students to prepare and read readings

Week 7

Discussion: exhibition design and engaging visitor involvement

Weeks 8-9

No tutorials. Four tutorials (5-6, 8-9) together will be replaced by a museum fieldtrip in Hong Kong. Students to form small groups and prepare for the group presentation by conducting participant observations and interviews to the visitors and/or other stakeholders of the museums.

Week 10

Group presentation and discussion: Is museum important to the society during the pandemic?

Week 11

Group presentation and discussion: museum, identity and civil society

Week 12

No tutorials: Students to prepare and read readings.

Week 13

Group presentation and discussion: issues about museum and gender

Week 14

Group presentation and discussion: ecomuseum and its roles

Week 15

Group presentation and discussion: challenges and problems for museums in the 21st century