

**ANTH 240: Museum & Cultural Heritage Studies**  
**Colorado State University**  
**Department of Anthropology**  
**Course Syllabus**  
**Fall 2020**

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**CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

This course provides students with an introduction to basic theory and organization of museums and cultural heritage sites including their history, their role in society, as places of preservation and education, museum exhibitions and interpretation, and the relationship between museums and cultural heritage sites and the communities they serve. Emphasis will be placed on defining the role of anthropology in today's museum and multidisciplinary approaches to curation.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course offers a detailed overview of the field of contemporary museum and cultural heritage studies. Students will be introduced to the history of museums and to current museum principles, structure, organization, research, curation, collections management, interpretation, exhibit development and design, education within museums, ethics, and historic preservation. Each component within the museum will be examined in terms of its function and purpose and their relationship to the other components. Emphasis will be placed on defining the role of anthropology in today's museum and multidisciplinary approaches to curation. This course provides the opportunity for students to explore museum studies as a career.

The objective of this course is to provide the student with an understanding of museum and cultural heritage studies and the role of anthropology within the world of museums. To teach students the history of museums and their role in society; how to study and document material objects; plan and develop exhibitions; and to understand interpretation and education in museums. Students will also learn practice and theory related to museum ethics, collection policy, environment and conservation, curation, museum careers, and public perceptions of museums. This course will provide a foundation for students interested in understanding the museum field and perhaps entering museum careers.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the historical development of museums and cultural heritage sites around the world, emphasis on US.
2. Identify the differences among various categories of museums.
3. Distinguish the role played in museum operations by curators, conservators, exhibits designers, preparators, registrars, collections managers, and education staff in order to understand the training that is appropriate to enter these careers.

4. Examine the role of anthropology within the world of museums.
5. Explain various policies, which govern museums in the areas of a museum's mission, object acquisition, and ethics.
6. Recognize the environmental and physical factors, which endanger an artifact and the safeguards and technology utilized in artifact conservation.
7. Identify current trends in museum exhibit type, planning, and design.
8. Examine why museums and cultural heritage sites matter in a self-reflective essay

## **TEXTBOOK/COURSE READINGS**

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

*Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums* by Edward P. Alexander, American Association for State and Local History, 2007 (ISBN-13: 978-0759105096)

*Introduction to Museum Work* by G. Ellis Burcaw, Altamira Press, 1997 (ISBN-13: 978-0761989264)

### **OTHER REQUIRED READING (Available in PDF or online format)**

"Cultural Heritage" by Christoph Brumann, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle, Germany

"A Definition of Cultural Heritage: From the tangible to the intangible", *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, 2010.

National Park Service Museum Handbook, Part 1: Museum Collections (Handling, Packing and Shipping)

A Preventive Conservation Approach to the Storage of Collections, *The Storage of Natural History Collections* edited by Rose, Hawks, and Genoways, pp 1-20. Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections, 1995.

Principles of Storage. In *Conservation Concerns: A Guide for Collectors and Curators*, edited by Bachmann, pp. 5-9, 1992.

"Standards for Museum Exhibitions and Indicators of Excellence", American Alliance of Museums, 2012

"The Making of Exhibitions: Purpose, Structure, Roles and Process", Smithsonian Institution, 2002

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

Attendance and participation are required for gaining an understanding of the work. Attendance and quality of work will be noted by the instructor and will count toward your final grade.

**Assignment 1:** A typed 2-page double-spaced paper that describes your current impression of museums and their role in American society. Describe a museum or exhibition you have visited in the past that left a lasting impression.

**Assignment 2:** A typed 3-4-page double-spaced paper. Each student will be assigned a museum case study from one of the "museum types". Research the history of your museum, its mission, and strategic plans. Describe the

museums current offerings (exhibits, education, and outreach). Highlight one aspect of the museum that you find appealing.

**Midterm Exam:** Mid-term examination will consist of fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice and short answer questions related to the lectures presented in class, discussions, and class activities.

**Assignment 3:** A typed 2-3-page double-spaced paper that evaluates a recent (last 5 years) museum related news event. Explain what happened, why it is/was newsworthy, discuss both sides of the story (if applicable), and was it resolved and/or what was the outcome.

**Assignment 4:** A typed 2-page double-spaced paper that describes how your impression of museums and their role in American society have changed (or not) since the beginning of the course.

**Final Exam:** Final examination will consist of fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice and short answer questions related to the lectures presented in class, discussions, and class activities.

**Extra Credit:** There may be some extra credit for attending an outside lecture and/or other activity that relates to the class as specified by the instructor. The extra credit is open to all students in the class.

#### **FINAL COURSE GRADE IS BASED UPON**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Participation and attendance            | 8%  |
| Assignment 1: Museum Impressions        | 5%  |
| Assignment 2: Museum Related News Event | 10% |
| Midterm Exam:                           | 14% |
| Assignment 3: Museum Types:             | 5%  |
| Student Presentation:                   | 5%  |
| Assignment 3: Museum Visit/Video        | 10% |
| Presentation Discussion:                | 5%  |
| Assignment 4: Museum Impressions        | 5%  |
| Reading Reflections (2 pts. Each)       | 18% |
| Final Exam                              | 15% |

#### Grading System:

|   |             | <u>Grade Points</u> | <u>Percentages</u> |    |     |
|---|-------------|---------------------|--------------------|----|-----|
| A | Outstanding | 4.0                 | 90                 | to | 100 |
| B | Good        | 3.0                 | 80                 | to | 89  |
| C | Acceptable  | 2.0                 | 70                 | to | 79  |
| D | Poor        | 1.0                 | 60                 | to | 69  |
| F | Failing     | 0.0                 | 0                  | to | 59  |

Grades of 'A' are earned by students who make a serious effort on their assignments and in the class in general, and who demonstrate by their work and exams that they have an excellent understanding of the materials covered in lectures and readings.

## **MAKEUP EXAMS AND LATE PAPERS**

Five points will be deducted from written assignments for each day they are late, no excuses. A written email request or in-person conversation must be initiated. Makeup exams will be administered only for excused absences. Written email requests for makeup assignments must be made within one week after the missed quiz or exam.

## **DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES INFORMATION**

Resources for Disabled Students (RDS) recognizes that disability reflects diverse characteristics and experiences and is an aspect of diversity integral to society. To that end, we collaborate with students, instructors, staff, and community members to create useable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable learning environments. RDS is also committed to supporting Colorado State University as a non-discriminating environment for qualified students with disabilities.

The mission is fulfilled through three specific goals: to provide accommodation, awareness, and advocacy. These goals are to ensure equal access for all qualified students with disabilities. All activities of RDS are related to fulfilling these goals in support of a campus environment that is not discriminatory based solely on the presence of a disability.

**Student Disability Center (SDC) Accommodations:** If you need accommodations in this class due to a disability or chronic health condition, I need an accommodation letter from the Student Disability Center (SDC) before implementation (*for exams the letter must be received **at least 2 weeks before the exam date***). Please meet with me during my office hours to give me the letter &/or to further discuss your needs. If you do not already have an accommodation letter, please contact the SDC immediately to initiate the process. The SDC is located in the TILT Building, Room 121. SDC Contact Info: 970-491-6385, [www.disabilitycenter.colostate.edu](http://www.disabilitycenter.colostate.edu).

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students are expected to be familiar with, and adhere to, University policy on Academic Dishonesty. Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest may receive a failing grade on the assignment and/or in the course. For more information, visit <http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/policies/students-responsibilities/>

## **CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR**

The Instructor will be available for questions and discussion after class. Email is also a great option, when sending an email, indicate "ANTH 240" and your name in the subject line, and provide your phone number in the email. If your email address does not have your name in it, please make sure to indicate your first and last name at the end of your email message, along with a phone number. I will return your email as soon as possible. Another good way to contact me is at my office phone: (970-491-5497); leave your name, a phone number where I can reach you, date you called, and a brief message. If it is something that I can discuss with you on the

phone or in a brief email, I will do so as soon as possible. Please note that I usually do not return phone calls and emails during evenings or weekends.

### **FEELING STRESSED?**

Visit the CSU Health Network, <http://health.colostate.edu/services/counseling-services/>.

### **INCLUSIVITY AND RESPECT**

"I am committed to the principle of universal learning. This means that our classroom, our virtual spaces, our practices, and our interactions should be as inclusive as possible. Mutual respect, civility, and the ability to listen and observe others carefully are crucial to universal learning."

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS**

All students should fill out a student-specific symptom checker each day before coming to class (<https://covidrecovery.colostate.edu/daily-symptom-checker/>).

In addition, please utilize the symptom checker to report symptoms, if you have a positive test, or exposed to a known COVID contact. If you know or believe you have been exposed or are symptomatic, it is important for the health of yourself and others that you report it through this checker. You will not be in trouble or penalized in any way for reporting. If you report symptoms or a positive test, you will receive immediate instructions on what to do and CSU's Public Health Office will be notified. Once notified, that office will contact you and most likely conduct contact tracing, initiate any necessary public health requirements and/or recommendations and notify you if you need to take any steps. For the latest information about the University's response, please visit the CSU COVID-19 site (<https://covidrecovery.colostate.edu/>).