

History Museum Curatorship: Collections Management HIS 547 / IAR 547

Spring 2002
McIver, Room 222 &
Greensboro Historical Museum
Thursdays 6:00-8:50 pm

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Description

This course will introduce students to the professional principles and practices in the care and management of history museum collections and historic sites, including collections development, museum registration methods, cataloging, collections care, conservation and preservation. The class will look at the nature of collections-related jobs in the museum field and explore what it means to be physically and intellectually responsible for museum objects. We will also look at what Registrars, Collection Managers and Curators do and the types of work experiences and education/training relevant to each position. Finally the class will examine the various components of a collecting plan and a collections management policy.

In addition to weekly reading assignments, students will be expected to actively participate in class and lead discussions on specific topics. There will be several practical “hands-on” exercises during the course and at least three quizzes and a final project, which will draw on material covered during the entire semester.

Grading

- 50% Class Participation (includes attendance and the quality of participation in student-directed discussions)
- 25% Quizzes and Practical Exercises
- 25% Final Project

Required Reading

- Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *The New Museum Registration Methods*, Washington, D.C.: American Association of Museums, 1998.
- Lubar, Steve and Kathleen M. Kendrick. *Legacies: Collecting America's History at the Smithsonian*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2001.
- Lubar, Steven and W. David Kingery, eds. *History from Things: Essays on Material Culture*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993.
- Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985.
- Messenger, Phyllis Mauch. *The Ethics of Collecting Cultural Property: Whose Culture/ Whose Property?* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Property, 1999.

National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property. *Caring for Your Collections*, New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1992.

Various journal articles

Course Outline

January 17, 2002: Introductions and Course Overview

January 24, 2002: Collectors, Collecting and Museums, Part 1

Collections and the History Museum

Lubar, Steve and Kathleen M. Kendrick. *Legacies: Collecting America's History at the Smithsonian*.

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. 3-41

Journal articles

January 31, 2002: Collectors, Collecting and Museums, Part 2

Collections Development, Contemporary Collecting, Collecting Plans and a Collections Management Policy

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, eds. *The New Museum Registration Methods*. Introduction, 221-223

Lubar, Steven and W. David Kingery, eds. *History from Things: Essays on Material Culture*. Intro, Chapters 1,2,3,4,10,11

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. 45-57

Journal articles

February 7, 2002: Collectors, Collecting and Museums, Part 3

Collecting Cultural Property & NAGPRA;

Collections Care: Object Handling and Condition Reporting

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, *The New Registration Methods*. 45-62, 95-101, 309-319

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. 83-118, 355-357, 457-502

Messenger, Phyllis Mauch. *The Ethics of Collecting Cultural Property: Whose Culture/Whose Property?* Intro, Chapters 1,2,6-13,15,16

Journal articles

February 14, 2002: Museum Registration Methods: Acquisitions, Accessions and Appraisals

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, *The New Registration Methods*, 156-166, 301-307

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. 58-82, 135-149, 203-215, 360-405

Journal Articles

Practical Exercise: Cataloging

February 21, 2002: Cataloging, Collections Documentation & Automation

Classification schemes; Management, Descriptive Data and Historical

Information: Records and Inventory

Collections Care: Object Marketing

Guest Lecturer: Mr. Bill Moore, Director of Greensboro Historical Museum

AASLH Technical Leaflet "Documentation Practices in Historical Collections"

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, *The New Registration Methods*. 1-44, 64-93, 117-119

Journal articles

Practical Exercise: Cataloging continued and Object Marketing

February 28, 2002: Collections Care: Storage

Guest Lecturer: Mrs. Susan Webster, Registrar/Curator of Costume & Textiles, Greensboro Historical Museum

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, *The New Registration Methods*. 103-116

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. 406-412, 443-448

Journal articles

March 7, 2002: Conservation, Preservation and Care of Collections

Guest Lecturer: Mr. Stephen Catlett, Archivist, Greensboro Historical Museum

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, *The New Registration Methods*. 120-125, 227-234

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. 412-415

National Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Property, *Caring for Your Collections*.

Journal articles

QUIZ #1

March 14, 2002: Spring Break

March 21, 2002: Incoming & Outgoing Loans and Exhibitions

Standard Facility Report, Packing and Shipping, Couriers

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, *The New Registration Methods*. 126-156, 177-206, 281-287, 355-358

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. 239-354

Journal articles

March 28, 2002: Deaccessions, Ethics and Museum Law

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, *The New Registration Methods*. 167-176, 277-280, 349-353

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. 127-135, 216-238, 358-359

Journal articles

QUIZ #2

April 4, 2002: Environmental Monitoring, Integrated Pest Management and Security

Temperature, Relative Humidity, Light Levels, Pollutants, Housekeeping

AAM Technical Information Service, "Describing the Museum Environment"

AASLH Technical Leaflet #171 "A Holistic Approach to Museum Pest Management"

Journal articles

AASLH Technical Leaflet # 147 “An Insurance Primer for the Local Historical Organization”

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, *The New Registration Methods*. 255-266

April 11, 2002: Risk Management, Disaster Planning and Emergency Plans

Access, Copyright, Insurance, Rights and Reproduction

AASLH Technical Leaflet #183 “Disaster Planning for Cultural Institutions,” *History News*, Volume 48, Number 1, January/February 1993.

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore, *The New Registration Methods*. 225-226, 237-254, 267-275, 288-300

Malaro, Marie C. *A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections*. 149-203, 416-432

Journal articles

April 18, 2002: Historic Preservation

Guest Lecturer: Mrs. Adrienne Monroy, Director Tannenbaum Historic Park

Journal articles

QUIZ #3

April 25, 2002: Class Project Presentations

May 2, 2002: Class Project Presentations

Last day of Class