

SCHOOL OF FINE ART AND MUSIC
Winter Semester 2021
ARTH2120 Introduction
to Museology



INSTRUCTOR: Jessica Jacobson-Konefall
TIME: MW 1:00-2:20pm
LOCATION: online
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OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday, 11:00 – 12:00am

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

Our course will explore the history of museums in Western modernity, with special focus on key issues in contemporary museum practice.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will introduce museum studies in terms of contemporary and historical issues in the field. We will emphasize looking at museums “from below,” learning about the role of museums in producing modernity/coloniality as a world system in local, national, and international contexts. We will also experiment with looking at contemporary museums’ engagement with anti-oppressive and decolonial praxis as an emergent standard by which an institution’s excellence is measured.

We will expand the terms of museological questions such as “what is a museum,” by considering venues that challenge status quo approaches. For example, Anishinaabe First Nation Shoal Lake 40 hosts what they call the “Museum of Canadian Human Rights Violations,” which involves a tour of their reserve community. Spanning the range of modern museums, we will also pay attention to emergent types, such as contemporary “ideas museums” (ie. the Canadian Museum for Human Rights). Together, we will analyze the stakes of museum practices of curation, collection and display, looking at how these have shaped the ways of seeing that attend the modern world system.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Identify and define the keywords and concepts in the field of museum studies.

Understand the role of museums in both historical and contemporary contexts, as well as across various urban, rural, national and international sites.

Categorize museums by type, understanding the salience of these categories (why does it matter what we call a museum in terms of “type”?)

Grasp the professional work of museums, considering the complexities of museum practice in terms of multiple determinations: funding, relationships of power, histories of marginalization and oppression.

Consider the ways that museums have functioned to uphold and challenge relations of oppression and domination in modern societies.
 Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate documentation and collections management in museums.
 Demonstrate and apply their knowledge of exhibition planning and design.



Black Panther. 2018. Film Still.

REQUIRED TEXT

Alexander, E. P. and Alexander, M. (2008). *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums*, 2nd. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

Additional weekly readings will be assigned and placed either in course reserve or on Courselink.

METHOD OF EVALUATION:

Participation	25%
Short writing assignments (750-1000 words x3) dates ongoing	25%
Final Paper (2000-2250 words).....	25%
Take home test (Due one week after final class).....	25%

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.