Introduction to Museum Studies, Art 505
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6:00-7:15 at the Cole Art Center
Instructor, John Handley, PhD

Course Description
This upper division course provides an in-depth and hands-on introduction to the theory and practice of museum management. Topics will include the history of museums, museum mission statements, collections management, exhibition design and public programming. Based in practical exercises, students will research, write and present on a variety of subjects central to the successful administration of museums in general.

Outcomes
At the end of this course, students will have gained a broad knowledge about the history of, and current issues involving professional standards in museums, and will be able to articulate the major themes in the following areas: museum theory and practice; the role of museums in society; governance; financial management; collections care; and education, to name a few.

Students will also work throughout the semester preparing a professional reference binder, which will contain an annotated bibliography, sample mission statements, sample job descriptions, and sample educational programs and guidelines.

Requited Texts
Course Reader


The following books have been placed on reserve at the Steen Library:


Assignment: Creating Annotated Bibliography
Throughout the semester, students will create their own annotated bibliography. By the end of the semester, students should each possess a bibliography of 20 sources, including books and articles on a variety of topics, including Museum Management,
Fundraising, Collections Management and Museum Education. Each entry must have a complete bibliographical citation and a brief paragraph about the content of the book/article.

**Class One, August 27**

**Introduction to the Course.**

Review of the syllabus and course requirements.

Group Discussion: What are museums? Why do they exist? What role do they play?

**Class Two, August 29**

**Background: How did we get here and where are we headed?**

**Reading Assignments for Class Two:**

Essay by John Cotton Dana in Gail Anderson’s book


In class discussion.

**Class Three, September 3**

**Foundations: The Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives**

**Reading Assignments for Class Three:**


Assignment: Search the web and bring to class information on ten different types of museums in the United State. Be prepared to present your findings including where each is located, their mission statement, the scope of their collections, the size of their staff, the size of their facility, and if possible, their funding sources. Be creative in your search.

In Class Assignment: Working as a class, we will explore the methods of writing mission statements.
Homework Assignment Due Next Class

Prepare two mission statements, one for an art museum and one for a museum type of your own choice. Your mission statement should contain the mandate, goals and objectives. Be prepared to present your work in class.

Class Four, September 5

Faculty Show opens at the Cole
Class will meet from 6 to 7 p.m. and then we will join the reception.

Presentation of Mission Statements and Discussion.

Homework Assignments Due Next Class

Search the web for job positions in museums across the nation. Start with The American Alliance of Museums web site, but look for other sources, too. Answer these questions:

What are the minimum qualifications for a museum director?  
What are the minimum qualifications for a museum collections manager or registrar?  
What are the minimum qualifications for a museum curator?

Based on your research, write a job description for a museum director of a mid-sized art museum.

Spend time on the Foundation Center Web Site (www.foundationcenter.org). Identify three key potential funders and prepare a report on what types of programs they fund and what type of information they require in a grant application.

Class Five, September 10

Presentations of Job Descriptions & Funding Source Info

Fiscal Responsibility: Board Structure and Financial Viability

Reading Assignment for Class

Class Six, September 12 (to be arranged for field trip)

Collections Management: Policies and Procedures

The dos and don'ts of collection management, conversation, preservation and interpretation. How are collections tracked and managed? Includes a review of insurance and handling procedures.

Field Trip to Tyler Museum for a behind-the-scenes tour.

Assignment? Interpretative texts; gallery lesson plans. Students develop a lesson plan to be used at the Cole Art Center or the Old Stone Fort Museum.

Guest speaker: Carolyn Spears, Director, Stone Fort Museum.

Education Verses Entertainment: Where and How do we Draw the Line?
What is the role of Museum Educators and What Do Museum Educators Do?

Reading Assignments:


Class Seven, September 17

Curatorial Authority: The Museum as Muse

Reading assignments:


Class Eight, September 19
**Class Nine, September 24**

**Class Ten, September 26**

**Class Eleven, October 1**

**Current Issues Facing Museums Today**

From politics to fundraising, what are the critical issues facing museums today. Final Assignment: Based on this semester's study, you are now prepared to implement your own concept museum.

- Mission Statement
- Board Structure
- Funding / Fundraising Strategies
- Job Descriptions
  - Director
  - Curator
  - Registrar
  - Preparator
  - Receptionist/Admin Support
  - Janitorial

**Bibliography**


**Lord, Barry and Gail Dexter Lord (editors). The Manual of Museum Exhibitions. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2002.**


**Lord, Gail Dexter and Kate Market. The Manual of Museum Planning. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 2007.**