

VAH3383A
Introduction to Exhibition Design and Museum Management
Wednesdays 11:30-2:30 VAH247

Professor: Dr. Kirsty Robertson
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Office Hours: tbd
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Course Description and Objectives:

In this class, students will go “behind the scenes” at a traditional museum, learning about how the exhibitions seen by the public are made possible by a whole series of interlocking areas of expertise, among them collections management, conservation, fundraising, installation, social media/promotions, and graphic design. Students will also learn about the role of cultural policy in curating and running museums, and about how different kinds of exhibition spaces (museums, galleries, artist-run-centres, biennales, art fairs, commercial galleries etc.) determine curatorial content. Supplemented with case studies of successful and unsuccessful exhibitions, the class will provide an overview of the complex inner workings of contemporary museums. Through field trips, hands on work, guest lectures, readings, and in-class participation, students will build towards the final assignment, designing and planning a major exhibition, through a practice (initiated by Shelley Butler and Erica Lehrer) called “curatorial dreaming.” No studio background is required for this class, although creativity will be encouraged. The course promotes experiential learning and provides vital transferable skills for students aiming to work in the cultural sector.

Required Texts:

All course readings are available on Owl. It is the student’s responsibility to let the professor know in advance if they have any trouble downloading the readings.

Assignment Breakdown (dates tbd):

Reading responses (3): 15% (5% each)

Short Assignments based on course content: 20% (10% each)

Curatorial Dreaming Assignment:

Proposal: 10%

In-class peer review and re-submission of proposal: 10%

Final Assignment: 35%

Participation: 10%

Assignment Descriptions:

More detailed descriptions of all assignments are available on Owl. All assignments will be discussed in class.

Reading Responses

Over the course of the semester, students will respond to the readings assigned in three weeks of your choice (please note, only weeks marked with R can be used to fulfill this assignment). You must respond to *all* readings assigned that week, but you can choose which weeks. Responses must be uploaded to Dropbox/Owl prior to the class in which the readings have been assigned. Your responses can be provocative, critical, questioning, or praiseworthy but they must demonstrate a clear understanding of the authors' arguments. 500 words/response.

Short Assignments based on course content

A series of short assignments will be given based on field trips, guest lectures, lectures, skills-building, and in-class discussion. Short assignments will focus on collections management, conservation, fundraising, installation, social media/promotions, and graphic design. Students will choose **two** of the short assignments to complete.

Curatorial Dreaming assignment

A curatorial dream is “an imagined exhibit or public intervention (tour, film, audio piece, object, etc.) addressing a cultural issue or historical event in a manner relevant to the present day.” This assignment has three components:

1. Students will hand in a proposal that describes their curatorial dream.
2. Later in the semester, having received feedback on their proposal from the professor, students will prepare a short “sharing” presentation that will be presented to peer-groups. Following the peer-group presentations, students will re-submit their proposals and will receive further feedback.
3. The final, major assignment will be handed in at the end of class and will consist of an extensive and well-researched proposal for an exhibition. Students may use any approved format for their final proposal (digital/written/visual etc.).

Learning Outcomes, Museum Studies

- Students will develop a greater understanding of issues significant to the museum field.
- Students will develop knowledge of and discuss different curatorial strategies.
- Students will have the opportunity to develop their own opinions about controversial subjects in the museum field, through class discussions about the readings.
- Students will each learn about the process of designing and mounting a public exhibition.
- Students will perform independent research on a chosen subject.
- Through first-hand experience, students will develop a greater understanding of the variety of roles involved in curating an exhibition, including: budgeting, fundraising, community outreach, event planning, website design, graphic design, conservation, appraisal.

- Students will have the opportunity to hone their critical thinking and writing skills.
- Students will have the opportunity to experience current exhibitions.
- Because there is choice in the short assignments, students will be able to research and write on topics that suit their own areas of interest.
- Field trips and classroom visits introduce students to professionals in the culture and museums sector.
- These events are professional development opportunities, which will give students the opportunity to learn more about the arts and culture sector.
- These events give students a forum to ask professionals career-related questions, offering the potential for ongoing mentorship.
- Students will hone their academic writing skills and will develop their knowledge of critical themes and topics relevant to museum studies.
- Students will become more familiarized with best practices for citing reference materials and utilizing the Chicago Manual of Style.

POLICIES

Late Policy

Students are expected to complete all assignments on time. Assignments are considered late after the start of class the day they are due. Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments must apply to the Academic Counseling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. *Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the professor or the department.*

Students will be docked 5%/day for late assignments.

Attendance:

Attendance is required and is an exceptionally important part of this class. Students are expected to attend all class sessions and be prepared for and participate in lectures and discussions, as well as in exhibition brain storms and group work. Students are also expected to help install and de-install the exhibition, which falls outside of class hours. Students who miss less than two classes are not required to seek accommodations for their absences from either the lecture or tutorials. For subsequent absences students will need to seek accommodations according to the Medical Accommodation policy below.

- Under Western's regulations, if a student misses 15% of their classes, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, they can be debarred from participation in the final exam (or in this case the final essay).
- If a student is consistently absent from a portion of class, they will be considered as exceeding the 15% cut off.
- After three unexcused absences/semester, a student's final grade may be lowered by half a letter grade.

Student Conduct:

All students will conduct themselves in a manner that will be consistent with the maturity and academic integrity expected of university students. Student conduct shall be consistent with the general laws of the community and with University regulations. Students shall show regard and respect for the rights, safety, and property of all members of the University community and are expected to act in a responsible manner within the University and the community at large.

Students will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Code of Student Conduct and treat all members of the Western community with respect. See:

<http://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2015>

Emails

- Assignments will not be accepted by email.
- Please clearly identify yourself and the course in any emails.
- I will do my best to respond to emails within 48 hours, exclusive of weekends.
- Due to privacy regulations, grades cannot be discussed over email.

Dropping the class

November 5 is the last day to drop a half course without academic penalty.

Electronic Devices

You may use a computer in class to take notes. All other activities (e.g. checking email or social media sites, etc.) are strongly discouraged, especially as this is distracting to others. Students should turn off all cell phones while in the classroom.

Prerequisites:

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:

All work for the course MUST be entirely your own. All sources that you use for your assignments must be accurately cited. This will be discussed in tutorials. If you have doubts about how and when to cite sources, consult the *Chicago Manual of Style* guide on OWL in the Resources section, or talk to me or your TA before the assignment due date. All course work must be completed specifically for this course. Plagiarism and cheating are very serious academic offences and they will be dealt with strictly. Submitting the same work for credit in more than one course is considered cheating.

Plagiarism includes:

1. Quoting verbatim or almost verbatim from any source, including all electronic sources,

without acknowledgement;

2. Adopting someone else's line of thought, argument, or supporting evidence without acknowledgement;

3. Submitting someone else's work, in any form, without acknowledgement;

4. Knowingly representing as one's own an idea of another.

5. Handing in the same work for more than one class.

6. Plagiarism includes presenting the visual or aural work of another creator as your own. Visual or Aural Plagiarism may involve both hand-based media such as drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture, as well as digital media such as photography, video and sound. It includes work subsequently manipulated or transferred between different media, as well as self-plagiarism -- work submitted for assignments previously produced and graded for another course. Similar to textual plagiarism, all student work involving the visual or aural work of others must be appropriately cited/identified whether in print or orally. Failure to do so will lead to similar academic penalties as those identified in Western's Academic Calendar.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. For information concerning Western's Plagiarism and Academic

Offences (Scholastic Offences) policies see:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism-detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Medical Policy:

For UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC): <https://studentservices.uwo.ca> (under the Medical Documentation heading).

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department.

Updated from previous years: The instructor will NOT accept any missed assignments, whether totaling more than 10% or less than 10%, unless the student has arranged accommodation through the Dean's Office.

Mental Health:

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Academic Accommodation: For Western's complete Policy on Academic Accommodation for

Students with Disabilities see <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg111.html>. The policy states, "In its efforts to accommodate disabilities appropriately, the approach adopted by the University is collaborative, involving the student requesting the accommodation, the instructor, department (or school or program where applicable), and/or Faculty which provides the accommodation, and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in the Student Development Centre which coordinates the request for and provision of accommodation."

Gender Neutral Bathrooms

There are two gender neutral bathrooms in the JLVAC. One is located in the Artlab and is open only during Artlab hours. A second single stall gender neutral bathroom can be found on the third floor of the JLVAC.

Preferred Pronouns

I will happily use your preferred pronoun. Please let me know during/after class or during office hours if I have made a mistake with your pronoun.

Absences on Religious Holy Days

For purposes of this policy "the University has approved a list of dates which are recognized religious holidays which require members of those religions to be absent from the University; this list is updated annually and is available at departmental, Deans' and Faculty advising Offices." For

Western's Policy on Religious Holidays see <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg111.html>.

Building Access:

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:00pm each night Monday to Friday. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00pm-5:00pm unless otherwise posted; access by side entrances only. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:00pm and 5:00pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

Permission re: Promotion

You grant permission for Western University to reproduce your name, information describing your artwork, representations of your work and any other information you have provided for the purpose of display, promotion and publicity either now or in the future.

By installing your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you grant Western University an irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free world-wide licence to photograph your

artwork and use such photograph(s) for the promotion of your artwork and/or Western University, including, without limitation, advertising, display, editorial, packaging, promotion, television, social media, the Department of Visual Arts website, flickr, Twitter, Instagram etc.). Students wishing to not have their work photographed should not exhibit it in the Visual Arts Centre, Artlab Gallery or Cohen Commons. As the area is open to the public, students, faculty, staff and other visitors will not be prohibited from photographing your artwork while on exhibit at the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre.

You otherwise retain all ownership in your artwork.

Artwork Installation Liability Release

You understand that the area where your artwork will be hanging or displayed is unsupervised and is in a part of the building that may be open to the public, day and evening, whether or not the building is open. Western University accepts no responsibility for damage to, or loss of, artwork at any time while on display or while being transported to or from the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre. By displaying your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you accept all risk of loss or damage to your artwork. Western University does not provide insurance for the artwork on exhibition. **If you wish to insure artwork, it is your responsibility to do so.**

Removal

Western University reserves the right to dispose of artwork not picked up by April 15th of each year.

Please remember:

One of the most important resources for course counselling, special permissions, course changes, grade appeals, etc., is the Undergraduate Chair of Visual Arts, Prof. C. Barteet (tel. 519-661-3440; vaugc@uwo.ca). Please note, however, that should you encounter any serious difficulties due to illness, family emergency, etc., you should consult the Academic Counselor for your Faculty (Ms. Amanda Green and Mr. Ben Hakala are the counselors for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities).

The Student Development Centre (WSS room 4111; tel: 519-661-3031; www.sdc.uwo.ca) offers a wide range of useful services to students including workshops on learning skills, career and employment services, and an effective writing program, amongst many more.

The D.B. Weldon Library offers orientation tours from the first week of classes until Thanksgiving, where you will get acquainted with the numerous research resources available. As well, the University libraries have an extremely useful website where you can search the library system, the databases, view your circulation record, renew materials, access your UWO e-mail account, and much more. Check it out at: www.lib.uwo.ca.

Financial Aid Services is your main source of information for OSAP, bursaries, loans, scholarships, and the work-study program which offer part-time positions on campus for Western students.

Tel: 519-661-2100; e-mail, finaid@uwo.ca; or check out their website at www.registrar.uwo.ca/FinancialServices/index.cfm

VISUAL ARTS Undergraduate Grading Guidelines - Art History

These guidelines are benchmarks that are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. For example, grades in first year courses are generally lower than in fourth year.

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)

The writing shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background research is exemplary. Regarding research, all major secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

80-89 (Excellent, A)

The writing shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Writing is probing through the use of comments and/or questions, and is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing immediately engages the reader. Mastery of complex materials and ideas is demonstrated. The writing is of appropriate length, and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are meaningful and not simplistic. Regarding research, a majority of the secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)

The writing shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Written claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The work is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. Written analysis is organized around focal points and the development of the argument is easily followed. The writer demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material. Regarding research, a representative selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

70-74 (Good, B)

The writing shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Written claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The work is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. Written analysis is organized around focal points. The text is generally well written and well argued.

Regarding research, a somewhat limited selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

60-69 (Competent, C)

The writing demonstrates adequate engagement with the topic. The writing is on topic and is a reasonable response to material covered in the course, but goes no further. Written facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the text. Regarding research, an insufficient number secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted but proper citation has been used.

50-59 (Marginal, D)

The writing shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The writing is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Written facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the text. Regarding research, few secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted; proper citation may or may not have been used.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)

The writing demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. Written material is disorganized and unintelligible. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Regarding research, secondary sources pertaining to the topic have not been consulted and proper citation has not been used.