

VAH1045A Collecting Art and Culture – Fall 2015



Thursdays 2:30-4:20
Middlesex College, Room 110
Tutorials: Thursdays 4:30-5:30

Professor: Dr. Kirsty Robertson
Office: VAC 221
Office hours: Thursdays 12:30-1:30 or by appointment
Email: kirsty.robertson@uwo.ca

Teaching Assistants

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Office hour: Wednesdays 12-1pm

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Office hour: Wednesday 1-2pm

Course Description

Anti-requisite: The former VAH 1050F/G
Format: 2 lecture hours and 1 tutorial hour

This introductory course serves as a starting point to study the foundations of art history. It focuses on historical and contemporary practices of collecting art and cultural objects and introduces key principles of museum and curatorial studies. Taking a thematic approach, the course explores current debates in the field. Various kinds of museums and their histories are introduced (art museums, natural history museums, botanic gardens, zoos, etc.). Within these overviews, topics include discussions of how collecting practices have changed over time; museum architecture from the 17th century through to the twenty-first; the opening up of the museum to different audiences and different curatorial practices; as well as questions about who owns cultural property, and the repatriation of cultural objects. Bringing discussion of museums up to the current day, we will also look at the destruction of museums in times of conflict, theft, forgery, and trade in illegal antiquities. Students will also be introduced to the field of art history, and will learn important skills in how to write about, analyze, and understand art and culture. The learning outcomes for the course will be achieved through lectures, readings, discussions, films, a collecting assignment, a test, and an exam.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will learn about the role of museums historically and in contemporary society.
- Students will learn how to describe and analyze different kinds of museums and different kinds of collections.
- Students will learn how to discuss and analyze the contentious histories of museums.
- Students will learn appropriate language for the discussion of museums, culture, and art.
- Students will learn how to compare the principles of collecting, classification, and display from different historical periods and/or geographic areas.
- Students will be able to analyze how museum architecture conveys ideas.
- Students will learn how to participate in group discussions in tutorials.

RESOURCES

OWL Sakai

We will be using OWL Sakai to supplement the in-class portion of the course. I will post slides from class as PDF files for your review, and the syllabus and other resources will also be available. A tutorial discussion section in OWL will augment the in-class discussion. Go to <https://owl.uwo.ca/portal>. Use your Western user name and password to sign on. Please be sure to check your browser and make sure everything is working at the beginning of the course. See the ITS technical assistance info on the above mentioned web site, and contact ITS for additional technical assistance. The ITS Support number is (519) 661-3800.

Textbook and Articles

The required text is available for purchase from the University bookstore for \$66. It is also on reserve at Weldon Library.

Edward P. Alexander and Mary Alexander. *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums* **second edition**. New York: Alta Mira Press, 2007.

Supplementary short articles for the tutorials are available on OWL Sakai in the Resources folder.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignments

In class test (mid-term): 20% due October 8

Collecting assignment 25% due November 12

Tutorial attendance and participation 15%

Final exam 40% during the exam period Dec 11-22

Tutorials

Each week, this course consists of two hours of lecture and one hour of tutorial. Attendance at tutorials is mandatory. Attendance and participation in tutorials will be graded. Although Teaching Assistants (TAs) have some flexibility in the structure of their tutorials, certain issues in common will be addressed across the sections, including extended discussion of lecture materials and discussion of short articles addressing contemporary issues in museums. You will be provided with a separate syllabus for tutorials. TAs are responsible for issuing and grading all tests, exams, and written assignments. Your TA is your first point of contact for questions about the course.

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. Extensions, granted for valid reasons, must be negotiated BEFORE the assignments are due. Late assignments will be penalized by 10% each day, unless appropriate documentation (a doctor's note, for example) is provided. 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.*

Attendance:

Attendance at lectures is required. Tutorial attendance will be monitored and graded. Students are expected to attend all class sessions and be prepared for and participate in lectures and discussions. 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.

- 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, a student's final grade may be lowered by half a letter grade.

POLICIES

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.
- The TAs and I will do our best to respond to emails within 48 hours, exclusive of weekends. Neither I, nor the TAs, should be expected to respond to emails from Friday at 4pm to Monday at 9am.
- Due to privacy regulations, grades cannot be discussed over email.

Dropping the class

November 3, 2015 is the last day to drop a first-term 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. Under no circumstances are cell phones or any electronic devices to be used during tests or examinations.

Students must request permission if they wish to record lectures for study purposes. Lectures are the intellectual property of the professor.

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.

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://westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2015>. 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."

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

Building Access:

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:30 pm each night. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00 noon-5:00 pm. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:30 pm and 5:00 pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

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. D. Merritt (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 (Mr. Ben Hakala is the counselor 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

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.