

Art History 490 Seminar: Exhibition Theory and Practice

Prerequisites: Art history 275 and 375 for majors in art history. Nine credits of art history for non-majors.

Course description: This course questions the ideas, values, and symbols that pervade and shape the practice of exhibiting culture. We will explore these issues through readings, class discussions, a midterm exam and final course project and presentation. The service-learning project enables you to integrate the course issues and concepts with a field experience in a local community organization.

Course goals:

1. to understand and analyze the relationships that the visual arts plays in community institutions
2. to apply the course concepts and issues to real world situations
3. to enhance your abilities and skills in creative thinking and problem solving
4. to generate a well-designed and executed project that contributes to the community
5. to gain insight into your abilities and interests within this field and career potentials

Course resources:

There are two texts for the class: Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine's *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display* (1991) and Lynne Cooke and Peter Wollen's *Visual Display*. You will need to bring these to class days we will discuss the assigned readings. You will also need to read several essays from Daniel J. Sherman and Irit Rogoff's *Museum Culture: Histories Discourses Spectacles* (1994) on reserve at the library (N430.M78 1994). I recommend that you read and take notes on these chapters well in advance of their assigned reading dates.

Course Expectations:

The focus is placed on critical analysis of your course readings through class discussions and questions. You are expected to prepare by completing the readings on their assigned date, attend and participate regularly in the class. Participation includes skills such as summarizing, explaining concepts and issues, and evaluating the author's point of view. These skills will be used in informal (non-graded) and formal writing and speaking opportunities. The course project and presentation is a culmination of the term's work. If you have a family emergency or illnesses please notify me (see above for contact information). The Student Life office 650-3844 can notify your professors if an emergency arises. More than two unexcused absences from class will result in a lowering of your grade by one third. For instance, a B plus grade would become a B. Your presence and active participation in class is an indication of your commitment.

Course Assignments and Grading

1. Three Essays: Personal Museum Experience 1/9; Agency Interview 1/16; Visual Stories: 2/11 30% of your grade
2. Midterm 1/24 30% of your grade
3. Final Project and Presentations 40% of your grade. Presentations—Final exam slot March 19 Wednesday 1- 3PM when all projects are due. If needed we will add the last class day as well.
4. Course participation asking questions, adding comments, critical analysis and questions is part of all graded components

Grades:

A—Excellent. Demonstrates substantial and consistent achievement in understanding the course issues. Marked development of critical thinking, research, and writing skills

B—Good. Demonstrable achievement in understanding the course issues, a range of skills in critical thinking, research, and writing, and a good ability to use terms and concepts.

C—Fair. An emerging understanding of course issues with some but inconsistent achievement in critical thinking, writing and research skills. Some work is reasonably done and other work is mediocre or poor.

D—Poor. Lacks solid understanding of course issues and needs substantive work on thinking, writing and research skills.

F—Failure. Insufficient demonstration of understanding of course issues to warrant a passing grade.

Course Schedule

The following material is listed under thematic units. Each unit covers approximately six-class session. It is useful to read the material as a unit, for instance the entire section on "Culture and Representation" from the Karp and Lavine book. The bracket dates give for each unit are approximations.

Part 1 Culture and Representation

Karp & Lavine Jan 9-21 Ch. 1 Alpers "The Museum as a Way of Seeing" Ch.2 Baxandall " Exhibiting Intention" Ch. 3 Greenblatt "Resonance and Wonder" Ch 4 "Poetics of Exhibition in Japanese Culture" and Ch.5. Goswamy "Another Past" 11-78.

Assignment: Bring your Personal Museum Essay to share on 1/9. We will also have community representatives present their projects the second hour.

Contact: You must contact your agency by 1/14/03. At the next class session 1/16 we will share your interview of the agency project supervisor (handout of questions provided and developed by class in advance)

Cooke & Wollen text 1/23-1/28 Susan Stewart " Death and life, in that order in the work of Charles Willson Peale" Note: the first article is lengthy and will take some time to interpret. Ralph Rogoff "Beyond Belief: The Museum as Metaphor" Note: you are required to view the Museum of Jurassic Technology website prior to reading the essay [http: www.mjt.org](http://www.mjt.org)

Part 2 Histories and Practices

Karp & Lavine 1/30-2/4 Ch. 10 Crew and Sims "Locating Authenticity" Ch. 11 Gurian "Noodling Around with Exhibition Opportunities" ch. 14 Clifford "Four NW Coast Museums Travel Reflections"

Note: the Midterm will be 2/6/03, bring stapled paper or a blue book.

Cooke & Wollen 2/11-2/13 Ann Reynolds "Visual Stories" Possible site visit

Contact: Josh will call you individually about your service-learning project & experience. 2/13 We will also ask you to do a midterm review of your experience as feedback for us

Sherman and Rogoff text course reserve readings - 2/18 -2/20 Ch. 3 Zolberg " An Elite Experience for Everyone" and Ch. 5 Azoulay "With Open Doors: Museums and Historical Narratives"

Part 3 Spectacles and Festival

Karp & Lavine 2/25-2/27

Ch. 17 Kurian "Cultural Conservation" and Ch. 20 Kirshenblatt-Gimblett "Objects of Ethnography"

Cooke and Wollen 3/4,3 /6 Warner "Waxworks and Wonderlands" and Bukatman " The Artificial Infinite: On Special Effects and the Sublime"

Sherman & Rogoff (tentative) 3/11, 3/13 Ch. 12 Higonnet " A New Center: the National Museum of Women in the Arts" and Wallis Ch. 13 "Selling Nations: International Exhibitions and Cultural Diplomacy" (We may run out of time to do this, it often happens)

Part 4

Presentations: Final exam slot 3/19 1-3 with agencies invited. If needed we can add the last day of class on the schedule.

Final exam slot: Submit your project. I will keep a copy of it; your agency may want a copy as well. Note that it contains additional materials listed on the class project sheet.

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