

# Western Michigan University Department of History

HIST 4080, Museum Studies, Spring 2014

T 4:00-6:30pm, Dunbar Hall 03204, 3 undergraduate hours

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**Office Hours:** I am available before and after class and by appointment. If you have any questions about the class or need assistance please do not hesitate to ask.

**Course Description:** History, philosophy, organization and administration of general history, science, technology and art museums. Discussion of collecting theory, conservation and security, display and interpretation, and the role of museums in culture and education.

**Program Goals Addressed in the Course:** The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the basic elements of museum studies. Readings and discussions will present the history of museums, current practices, and key issues for the future development of the field. This course will also present an opportunity to develop skills essential in museum practice including: 1) knowledge of the code of professional ethics approved by the American Association of Museums; 2) the ability to work on a project both independently and as part of a team; 3) the ability to evaluate one's own contribution to the team effort as well as the contributions of other team members; 4) the ability to present the team's findings in both written and oral form.

**Course Outcomes:** HIST 4080 is unlike any other course you have likely taken up to this point in your studies. It is the beginning or a continuation of the life-long process of acquiring the knowledge and research and analytical skills needed for a career in museum practice or graduate study in the field. The class will work as a group composed of committees to create a single online exhibit on the topic of "Controversial Public Art" with Kalamazoo's Fountain of the Pioneers (aka the Ianelli Fountain) as the central example. The exhibit will be created on Omeka.net. All students are required to become familiar with the software.

**Course Required Texts:** (additional reading will be assigned in class)

Ambrose, Timothy and Crispin. *Museum Basics*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York: Routledge, 2012. ISBN 978-0415619349

Conn, Steven. *Do Museums Still Need Objects?* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010. ISBN 978-0812221558

Falk, John and Lynn Dierking. *The Museum Experience Revisited*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, Inc., 2013. ISBN 978-1611320459

Karp, Ivan et. al. eds. *Museum Frictions: Public Cultures/Global Transformations*. Durham, NC: Duke

University Press, 2006. ISBN 978-0822338949

**Course Assignments:** You will demonstrate your success in this class by your performance on weekly reports, two progress reports, your contributions to the group's final project, and participation.

Readings reports: Each week you will turn in a well-written summary of the reading that is between one and two pages in length. Concise writing and clarity of thought are crucial skills. Your weekly papers are not to exceed two pages. Graded on a +/- scale (0-2 points each: 25 points is considered full credit).

Exhibit review: (Due 2/4) You are required to submit one exhibit review. You must get the exhibit approved before beginning and visit for the purposes of the review. The review should critically assess the exhibit in question with special attention to the use of artifacts/images/technology, the clarity of communication, the educational potential, the support of the institution's mission and goals, and the inclusion of relevant scholarship. (length 700 words).

Progress report 1: (Due 2/25) Each student will submit a well-written report on the progress of his/her committees and his/her individual progress towards the completion of the final project. (length 3-5 pages)

Progress report 2: (Due 3/25) Each student will submit a well-written report on the progress of his/her committees and his/her individual progress towards the completion of the final project. The second report should reflect comments supplied on the first report as well as substantial progress. (length 5-7 pages)

Submission of contribution to final project: (Due 4/15) Committee and individual assignments will be created in the second week of class. Each student will be individually evaluated for his/her contributions to the successful completion of the final project. Full details will be provided in class.

Participation is awarded based on attendance, positive contributions to class, productivity in group settings, use of the elearning forum as assigned, in-class activities, and discussion leadership. Each student will be assigned at least one class period to lead discussion.

**Course Calendar:** All reading is due by the beginning of class. Additional reading will be assigned in class.

1/7:

1/14: Ambrose and Paine 1-21; Karp, et. al., 1-27; and Conn 1-85

1/21: Ambrose and Paine 23-80; Karp, et. al., 35-44; and Conn 86-137

1/28: Ambrose and Paine 81-115; Karp, et. al., 46-67; and Conn 138-196

2/4: Ambrose and Paine 117-138; Karp, et. al., 70-99 and 107-130; and Conn 197-232

Exhibit review due

2/11: Ambrose and Paine 138-170; Karp, et. al., 135-196; and Falk and Dierking 7-34

2/18: Ambrose and Paine 171-210; Karp, et. al., 207-217; and Falk and Dierking 35-99

2/25: Ambrose and Paine 211-252; Karp, et. al., 219-241; and Falk and Dierking 101-145  
Progress report 1 due

3/4: Spring Break, No Class

3/11: Ambrose and Paine 252-288; Karp, et. al., 257-279; and Falk and Dierking 146-194

3/18: Ambrose and Paine 289-336; Karp, et. al., 286-314; and Falk and Dierking 197-245

3/25: Ambrose and Paine 337-397; Karp, et. al., 322-342; and Falk and Dierking 249-292  
Progress report 2 due

4/1: Ambrose and Paine 397-416; Karp, et. al., 347-388; and Falk and Dierking 295-317

4/8: Ambrose and Paine 416-443 and Karp, et. al., 394-463

4/15: Ambrose and Paine 443-449 and Karp, et. al., 469-532  
Project contribution due

4/22: Finals Week

**Course Grading Policies:** All grades will be posted in the Elearning system's grade book.

Assignment	Percentage of final grade
Readings reports (13)	10% aggregate
Exhibit review	15%
Progress report 1	15%
Progress report 2	20%
Contribution to project	30%
Participation	10% This is a combined score reflective of participation in class, on elearning forums, and at field trips.

**Course Grade Scale:**

Grade	Honor points	Significance
A	4.0	outstanding, exceptional, extraordinary
BA	3.5	
B	3.0	very good, high pass

CB	2.5	
C	2.0	satisfactory, acceptable, adequate
DC	1.5	
D	1.0	poor
E	0.0	failing
X	0.0	failure (unofficial withdrawal)
W		official withdrawal
I		incomplete
CR		credit
NC		no credit
AU		audit (noncredit enrollment)

**Academic Ethics and Integrity:** You are responsible for making yourself aware of and understanding the policies and procedures in the University's Catalog's that pertain to Academic Integrity.

These policies include cheating, fabrication, falsification and forgery, multiple submission, plagiarism, complicity and computer misuse. If there is reason to believe you have been involved in academic dishonesty, you will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. You will be given the opportunity to review the charge(s).

If you believe you are not responsible, you will have the opportunity for a hearing. You should consult with the course instructor if you are uncertain about an issue of academic honesty prior to the submission of an assignment or test.

**Non--- Discrimination Policy:** Western Michigan University prohibits discrimination or harassment which violates the law, or which constitutes inappropriate or unprofessional limitation of employment, University facility access, or participation in University activities, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, protected disability, veteran status, height, weight, or marital status.

**WMU Human Rights Statement;** It is a fundamental policy of Western Michigan University not to discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, color, race, age, religion, national origin, height, weight, marital status, or handicap in its educational programs, admissions, employment, promotions, salaries and social activities. Through its example and teaching, Western strives to foster in its students, faculty, and staff respect for basic human rights. In its external relationships, the University is supportive of those activities that seek constructive change in the development of human rights in this country and abroad.

**Specific Needs:** Any student with a documented disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact the professor and/or Disability Services for Students, (269) 387-- 2116, at the beginning of the semester. Disability information provided to the instructor will remain confidential. DSS recommends that

students with disabilities bring their accommodation letters to the instructor during office hours or by special appointment. During the appointment, the particulars of arrangements for accommodations can be discussed and agreed upon in private.

**Classroom Decorum & Etiquette:** Every member of this learning community has the right to freely express his/her opinion as long as this is done in such a way as to not impede the rights of other members of the learning community. Along this line, it is expected that all participants in this class will treat all others with respect and dignity. Behavior that is disrespectful, intimidating, threatening, or disruptive of the learning environment will not be tolerated. If any participant in the class has a concern regarding another participant's behavior he/she is encouraged to speak with the instructor.

**WMU E-Mail Account is the Official Channel of Communication:** Students are expected to use their WMU e-mail accounts regularly, as this is the official channel of communication between the University and student. Students receive notifications of class cancellations, campus emergencies and closures, and other important information through this channel. Problems sending or receiving e-mail through the WMU address may be addressed at the Help Desk (387-HELP), online at <http://www.wmich.edu/oit/helpdesk/>, or in person at the front desk in any on-campus computer lab.