

Collections Management MSL1150H Winter 2017

Wednesdays 9 am – 12 pm
SECTION 0101, Room BL 507

Course Instructors:

Annika Lauffer
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BL 619

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Course Description

This course introduces students to the practices, principles and values involved in building, using and dismantling collections in museums, galleries and similar institutions. Topics include processes of acquisition, accessioning, cataloguing and deaccessioning; collections policies; ethics; cultural property and legislation; digitization of collections and records; collections care; preventive conservation; storage; copyright and ownership; and physical and intellectual access to collections. The course approaches collections management as: an integrated and integral aspect of museum operations; an active site of museological research; and a series of practices and decisions performed by museum staff.

Course Objectives

Through participation in this class students will:

- be able to articulate the value of Collections Management
- understand how the objects in a collection may have been made—and how and why they change through time
- engage with the practice of caring for collections
- acquire a working knowledge of collections management resources
- engage with theoretical issues in an informed and critical manner
- acquire skills to conduct research effectively and efficiently.

Student Learning Outcomes

The course contributes to students' achievement of specific Museum Studies Program Student Learning Outcomes through an awareness and applied understanding of:

- the history of museums, and the centrality of representation within their social and political roles in societies
- various professional responsibilities within cultural institutions and agencies and the interrelationship of these responsibilities
- ethical issues facing cultural institutions, agencies, and professionals
museological best practices

- legal frameworks and ethical debates surrounding the acquisition and care of natural and cultural heritage

The course further contributes to Museum Studies students' capacities to:

- innovate in the face of new challenges
- advocate for the importance of cultural institutions in society
- organize processes involving people, financial and physical resources
- in order to actualize programmes, projects, buildings and revitalization plans
- work in and manage groups and interpersonal relations

Assignments

Becoming a Museum Object Module Assignment	Due February 3, 2017 - 11:59 pm	30%
Understanding and Keeping What You Have (to be submitted in two stages)	Phase 1: Due February 19 -11:59 pm Phase 2: Due April 7, 2017 – 11:59 pm	25%
Controlling Heritage – Case Study Responses	Due March 24, 2017- 11:59pm	15%
In-Class Test: Collections Care	April 5, 2017, in class	20%
Participation	Weekly	10%

Each of these assignments is discussed at the end of the syllabus and will be elaborated upon in class.

Course Structure

The class meets for three hours, from 9 am until noon. The course is divided into four modules, each lasting 3 weeks. To ensure consistency across the two sections of the course, Annika Lauffer will teach the Modules “Becoming a Museum Object” and “Controlling Heritage” to both sections, and Margaret Haupt will teach the Modules “Understanding and Keeping What You Have” and “Risk Mitigation” to both sections. Annika and Margaret will alternate classrooms – each section to attend class in their assigned room each week (0101 in BL507, 0102 in BL538).

Classes will contain lectured material, discussion and weekly hands-on activities.

Students will be required to bring one to two objects, which can be stored in the MLab if preferred, for use in the in-class activities. One object will be determined by in-class assignment. The second object can be of the student’s choosing.

These objects will be required in-class for the following modules:

Becoming a Museum Object
Understanding and Keeping What You Have
Risk Mitigation

Across all weeks, students are expected to do the weekly readings and preparatory activities, contribute to discussions, ask questions, participate in group work and in-class activities and hand assignments in on-time. All assignments are to be submitted via Blackboard as PDF documents.

WEEKS	MODULE
1, 2, 3	Becoming a Museum Object
4, 5, 6	Understanding and Keeping What You Have
7, 8, 9	Controlling Heritage
10, 11, 12	Risk Mitigation

A device that can access the internet (tablet, laptop, or smartphone) will likely be an asset to students.

Statement of Acknowledgement of Traditional Land

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

General Notes

Grading: Please consult the [iSchool's official interpretation](#) of letter grades and the [University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy](#). These will form the basis for grading in the course.

Writing support: [The SGS Office of English Language and Writing Support](#) provides writing support for graduate students. The services are designed to target the needs of both native and non-native speakers of English and include one-on-one consultations, non-credit courses, single-session workshops, and website resources. These programs are free. Please avail yourself of these services, if necessary.

Academic integrity: The iSchool has a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism as defined in section B.I. 1. (d) of the University's [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#). You should acquaint yourself with the Code and Appendix "A" Section 2.

Please review the material you covered in Cite it Right and, if necessary, consult the site [How Not to Plagiarize](#).

Accommodation of students with disabilities: Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the [Accessibility Services Office](#) as soon as possible. The Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. The sooner you let them and me know your needs, the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Extensions: Extensions are at the discretion of the instructor. Requests for extensions must be submitted to the instructor by email before the due date. Requests for extensions must be supported by appropriate documentation. Late submission of assignments: If no extension has been granted, the late submission of an assignment carries a penalty of 2% per day. **Students should note that any assignment handed in more than two weeks late cannot therefore receive a passing grade.

WEEKS 1-3: A. LAUFFER MODULE: BECOMING A MUSEUM OBJECT

Museum objects are made out of processes of collection, attribution and description. These processes ultimately build (and constrain) the information we have or “know” about these objects. This module thus considers how objects “become” museum objects through the processes of object acquisition and documentation.

Week 1, January 11: Introduction to Collections Management; Building a Museum Collection

- Introduction to Collections Management
- How does a collection come to be?
- Why manage a collection? Who manages collections?
- Practical and theoretical aspects of collections management
- Planning for Scope: Collections policies

Readings

Buck, Rebecca A. 2010. Beyond the Four-Legged Chicken: A History of Museum Registration. In *Museum* July-August: 48-53. [Available on Blackboard]

Miriam Levin, “Museums and the Democratic Order,” *Wilson Quarterly* (Winter 2002): 52-65. http://archive.wilsonquarterly.com/sites/default/files/articles/WQ_VOL26_W_2002_Article_04_1.pdf

In Class Activity: Review with your group and discuss provided collections management policies to see how your policy addresses the specific needs of your institutions.

Week 2, January 18: Acquisitions, Accessioning and Cataloging: History, Philosophy, and Practice

- Acquiring and Accessioning Objects
 - Methods and steps of acquisition
 - Ethics and legal considerations
 - Due diligence, authentication, provenance, title
- Deaccessioning
 - Methods
 - Ethics and considerations
- Cataloging:
 - What is cataloging?
 - Historic legacies of colonialism and empiricism in knowledge
 - The catalog record
 - Why classify objects? Should we?

Readings

Carnell, Clarisse and Rebecca Buck. 1998. Processes: Acquisitions and Accessioning. In NMRM 4th Ed. R Buck and J Gilmore, pp 157-165. Washington: American Association of Museums. [Available on Blackboard]

Vecco, Marilena, and Michele Piazzai. 2015. "Deaccessioning of Museum Collections: What Do We Know and Where Do We Stand in Europe?" *Journal of Cultural Heritage* 16 (2): 221–27.

Roberts, Andrew. 2004. Inventories and Documentation. In *Running a Museum: A Practical Handbook*, P Boylan (ed), pp. 31-50. Paris: ICOM. [ebook].

Turner, Hannah. 2015. "Decolonizing Ethnographic Documentation: A Critical History of the Early Museum Catalogs at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History." *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 53 (5-6): 658–676. [Available on Blackboard]

In Class Activity: Students will need to bring 2 objects to class. You will accession two objects - one your own, and one object from another student.

Week 3, January 25: Object Management: The Content Management System

- Learning Vocabularies and Thesauri
- Content Management Systems
- Naming and the Descriptive Apparatus
- Inventory Control, Barcoding
- Digital Asset Management
- Copyright

Readings

Reibel, Daniel B. 2008. Registration Methods for the Small Museum. Toronto: Alta Mira. Chapters 1 & 6, “Why Have a Museum Registration System” and “The Catalogue”. (Robarts AM139.R44 1997X)

Dunn, Heather. 2015. “Adopting a Classification System for Collections of Cultural Objects: A Comparison of Nomenclature 4.0 and the Parks Canada Classification System.” CHIN, Government of Canada, Department of Canadian Heritage. July 20. Online at: <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1443538498065>

McGovern, Megan. 2013. Digital Asset Management: Where to Start. Curator: The Museum Journal 56(2): 237-254.

In Class activity: Students need to bring two objects to class with them. Each student will catalogue one of their own objects, and one belonging to a classmate. The objects can be old or new, singular or mass-produced.

Resources:

Visit Collections Link <http://www.collectionslink.org.uk/>

Browse by Subject, or Browse by Practice, to find Collections Management related resources.

MODULE ASSIGNMENT DUE!

“Becoming a Museum Object” Module Assignment Due February 3 @ 11:59pm – details listed below.

WEEKS 4-6: M. HAUPT
MODULE: UNDERSTANDING and KEEPING WHAT YOU HAVE

This module introduces students to the materials commonly found in museum collections. Students will learn to assess and document the condition of objects. They will begin to explore the causes for change in collection objects and how to manage those changes while collections are handled, shipped, stored, exhibited, and shared in other ways.

Week 4, February 1: Introductions; Focus on the physical objects

- Museums as collection repositories
- Stewardship as a shared responsibility
- Cost of collecting
- What is in a collection?
- Collections management as care of the physical object; standards of care
- Handling and moving museum collections: methods; equipment; inventory control; health & safety

Resources

Bachman, Konstanze (ed.). *Conservation Concerns, A Guide for Collectors and Curators*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992.

BC Museums Association, Care and Handling of Your Collections. Online at:
<http://museumsassn.bc.ca/professional-development/care-handling-collections/>

CAMEO (Conservation and Art Materials Encyclopedia On-line):
<http://cameo.mfa.org/>

Matassa, Freda. *Museum Collections Management: A Handbook*. London: Facet Publishing, 2011.

Week 5, February 8: What is the object and what condition is it in?

- Agents of Deterioration
- Preventive Conservation
- Examining artifacts
- Condition reporting: Why; When; How—and Who
- Photodocumentation
- Conservators as a collections management resource

Readings

Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), Agents of Deterioration. Online at:
<http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1444330943476>

Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Condition Reporting. Online at:
<https://www.tepapa.govt.nz/sites/default/files/26-condition-reporting.pdf>

Besser, Howard. Introduction to Imaging, Revised Edition, Getty Research Institute, 2003. Read online or download from:
<http://d2aohiyo3d3idm.cloudfront.net/publications/virtuallibrary/0892367334.pdf>

In Class Activity: Condition Reporting

Week 6, February 15: Behind-the-Scenes

- Learning “Behind the Scenes” with Professional Colleagues: Off-Site visit

Readings

Collections Trust, Labelling and Marking of Museum Objects. Online at:
<http://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/labelling-and-marking-museum-objects-booklet/>

In Class Activity: Marking/labelling objects

MODULE ASSIGNMENT DUE!

Phase 1 Understanding the materials of cultural property: Research into fabrication technologies, characteristic changes/damage; and condition report of assigned object: phase 1 due February 19 @ 11:59pm

February 22 READING BREAK NO CLASS

Weeks 7-9: A. LAUFFER MODULE: CONTROLLING HERITAGE

This module looks at the various instruments that control how museums are able to move, access, and acknowledge heritage legally, financially physically, and ethically. Attention will be given to the underlying values and priorities of these tools and the ways they advance and hinder museum activities past, present and future.

Week 7, March 1: Legalities, Ethics, and Special Collections

- Relevant legislation and international agreements: Endangered Species Act, CITES, UNESCO, etc.
- Human remains, sacred and secret materials
- Intangible Cultural Heritage

Readings

Mueller, Jennifer and Kathryn Zedde. 2012. The Cultural Property Export and Import Act and Canada's International Legal Obligations. *Canadian Criminal Law Review* 17(1): 31-40. [e-article]

Bruchac, Margaret M. 2010. Lost and Found: NAGPRA, Scattered Relics, and Restorative Methodologies. In *Museum Anthropology* 33(2): 137-156.

Savova, Nadezhda Dimitrova. 2009. Heritage Kinaesthetics: Local Constructivism and UNESCO's Intangible-Tangible Politics at a Favela Museum. *Anthropological Quarterly* 82(2): 547-585.

Resources

CITES <http://www.cites.org>

UNESCO.1970. *Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property 1970*. Available on-line: http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13039&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage:
<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/home>

A Matter of Justice: Recommendations of the Canadian Symposium on Holocaust-era Cultural Property. Ottawa, Ontario, November 14-16, 2001. Available on the Canadian Museums Association website:
<http://www.museums.ca/uploaded/web/docs/holocaustsymposium.pdf>

In Class Activity: Establish what provincial, national and international controls effect the acquisition, movement and exhibition of your designated collection. You will be assigned a 'collection' in class.

Week 8, March 8: Legalities, Ethics, and Special Collections Continued

- International Treaties, National and Provincial Legislation
- Cultural Property
- CPEIA, CPERB

Readings

Merryman, John H. 2006. Introduction. In *Imperialism, Art and Restitution*, J Merryman (ed), pp. 1-14. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press. [PDF on Blackboard]

Glass, Aaron. 2004. Return to Sender: On the Politics of Cultural Property and the Proper Address of Art. In *Journal of Material Culture* 9(2): 115-139. doi:10.1177/1359183504044368

Getz, Daniel. 2011. The History of Canadian Immunity from Seizure Legislation. In *International Journal of Cultural Property* 18: 201-224. [earticle] doi:10.1017/S0940739111000178

Government of Canada. Cultural Property Export and Import Act, 1974-75-76, c. 50 s. 1. Available on-line:

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C51/FullText.html>

*See especially section 4.

In Class Activity: Establish whether the Canadian Cultural Property Export and Import Act affects your assigned collection. Determine whether restrictions apply and whether Cultural Property designation is possible for your collection.

Week 9, March 15: Transporting Objects Between Institutions & Countries

- Preparing for loaning, moving and receiving objects
- Loans policies and procedures
- Transportation by land, air and sea: domestic and international movement
- Insurance, Liability
- Restrictions

Readings

Agnew, Ella. 1991. *Legaleasy: a step-by-step legal guide to collecting for Canadian art galleries and museums*. Toronto: OAAG & CMA. Chapter 7 Loans and the Exhibiting Institution. [Inforum: 344.0971093 A273L – Course Reserves]

Buck, Rebecca A and Jean Allman Gilmore. 2010. *The New Museum Registration Methods*, 5th ed. Washington DC: American Association of Museums. pp 315-337 on Packing, Moving, Crating etc. [Inforum: 069.52 N532N – Course Reserves]

Geyer, Ginger Henry. 1988. Moving Imagery: Collections Management During a Museum Move. In *Registrars on Record: Essays on Museum Collections*

Management, M Case (ed), pp. 91-110. Washington DC: American Association of Museums. [PDF on Blackboard]

In Class Activity: Exploring case studies – as a group we will discuss real examples of difficult/problematic shipments and how to plan appropriately to mitigate risk to the collections/exhibitions.

MODULE ASSIGNMENT DUE!

“Controlling Heritage” Module Assignment Due March 24 @ 11:59 pm – details listed below.

WEEKS 10-12: M. HAUPT MODULE: COLLECTIONS CARE AND RISK MITIGATION

This module continues the exploration of factors that cause change in collection artifacts and how those factors may be eliminated or reduced through responsible collections care. Protocols for formal risk assessment and mitigation will be discussed. We will consider best professional practices and how those need to be activated with attention to the specific context.

Week 10, March 22: Housing the Collection

- An appropriate climate: temperature and relative humidity. Monitoring and management.
- Chemically induced change (aging): contamination and pollutants
- Insects & Animals: integrated pest management (IPM)
- Collections Storage: storage containers; equipment; arrangement. Capacity challenges. Housekeeping. International Re-Org Project. Access-Control.
- Risk management

Readings

Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), Agent of Deterioration: Incorrect Temperature. Online at: <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1444925166531>

Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), Agent of Deterioration: Incorrect Relative Humidity. Online at: <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1444925238726>

Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), Agent of Deterioration: Pollutants. Online at: <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1444924955238>

Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), Agent of Deterioration: Pests. Online at: <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1444922929038>

Museum Pests, Museum Pest ID for PMPs. Online at: <http://museumpests.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Museum-Pest-ID-for-PMPs-2014.pdf>

Resources

Hatchfield, Pamela. *Pollutants in the Museum Environment: Practical Strategies for Problem Solving in Design, Exhibition and Storage*. London: Archetype Publications Ltd., 2002.

RE-ORG: UNESCO/ICCROM initiative designed to help improve museum storage and documentation systems: <http://www.re-org.info/en>

In Class Activity: Risk Assessment and Improving Collections Care

Week 11, March 29: The Display Environment

- Understanding and managing the impact of light on the condition of collection materials. Rationing the exposure.
- Collections care in the exhibition environment. Risk assessment and advocating for collections care during the planning process; collaboration with colleagues in other departments, such as Curatorial, Security.
- Installation and dismantling procedures.
- Collections care in the context of shipping
 - Packing and crating
 - Selection of conveyance
 - Courier assignments

Readings

Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI), Agent of Deterioration: Light, Ultraviolet and Infrared. Online at: <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1444925073140>

Resources

Richard, Mervin, Mecklenburg, Marion F., Merrill, Ross. *Art in Transit: Handbook for Packing and Transporting Paintings*. Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1991. Online at: https://repository.si.edu/bitstream/handle/10088/8127/mci_Art_in_Transit_Handbook_for_Packing_and_Transporting_Paintings.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

In Class Activity: Risk Assessment/Visitor Impacts

Week 12, April 5: Class Test, 1 hour; Emergency Preparedness, Planning and Response

- Agents of Deterioration: various causes of *physical* change: physical forces; dissociation; theft
- Emergency Preparedness and Response
 - Fire; Water
 - Planning; Preparedness; Response
 - Salvage Priorities

Readings

UNESCO and ICCROM, Endangered Heritage: Emergency Evacuation of Heritage Collections, 2016. Online at: http://www.iccrom.org/wp-content/uploads/Endangered-Heritage_INTERACTIVE.pdf

In Class Activity: Emergency Response: Table Top Exercise

MODULE ASSIGNMENT DUE!

Phase 2 Understanding the materials of cultural property: Research into fabrication technologies, characteristic changes/damage; and condition report of assigned object: phase 2 due April 7th, 2017 @ 11:59pm

ASSIGNMENTS

Becoming a Museum Object (30%): Building upon class discussions and/or activities focusing on collections management policies, acquisitions, accessioning and cataloguing, prepare an acquisition proposal for your object, or an object of your choosing, for a real institution. Then, assume your object is accepted for acquisition, and prepare an accession record and a catalogue record. Templates will be provided in class. You will need to approach this assignment from the perspectives of various members of a collections management team.

Understanding and Keeping What You Have—25%

Each student will be required to source a representative object of an assigned material type. The student will research how objects made from their assigned material/s are typically fabricated; how they characteristically age; how deterioration and damages typically manifest; and how changes in the condition of the object can be mitigated through thoughtful professional care.

The student will also prepare a condition report for the object, with appropriate photo-documentation. This work will be submitted to the instructor in two phases: a partial record will be submitted after the first Collections Care module for feedback only; the completed assignment will be submitted after completion of the second Collections Care module.

All completed assignments will be made available to the entire class so that each student will have a full set of material guidelines for future reference.

Controlling Heritage Scenarios (15%): Respond to 3 of the following scenarios in 1-2 pages maximum.

- 1) A whalebone sculpture by a prominent Canadian Inuit artist is being sent from your collection to a museum in France. The sculpture is almost 2 meters in length, weighs over 600 lbs, and is valued at \$500 000 Canadian dollars. Discuss what steps should be taken to ensure the safe movement of the sculpture from your institution to the borrowing institution – both from a physical standpoint, and a legal perspective.
- 2) Your museum is lending a 150-year-old Canadian artwork valued at \$10 million Canadian dollars to a preeminent American institution. At the border crossing, members of the Canadian Border Services Agency demand that the crate must be opened and inspected, and you (Registrar) are not on site. What are your next steps and why?
- 3) A crate arrives at your museum from overseas containing the loan of a very sensitive watercolour painting for your exhibition. When your preparator opens the crate, you discover that it is the wrong artwork. Not only does the artwork not match what is listed on the loan agreement, but

the shipping documents and customs paperwork are for the 'missing' painting. How do you handle this?

- 4) A donor in Switzerland offers your museum 15 folios from 17-century Iraq. The folios have been in the donor's family since 1995. The collection is in remarkable condition, and would be meaningful addition to the collection. Safe packing and transportation is already taken care of. Discuss what considerations and paperwork would be required for the museum to import this lot legally.