

SAHC 61061: Museum Objects and Exhibitions

Core Course – Semester I

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Aim

The course is designed to offer AGMS students a range of critical, theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of, and research in, the museum. Also, it combines a critical and theoretical study of the role of museum objects and exhibitions with an examination of good practice in these core areas of museum operation. In particular, it examines the strategies and practices by which museums interpret, organise and display objects produced within diverse historical, geographical and cultural contexts. Towards this goal, the course covers areas such as conservation, authenticity, exhibition planning and design and text writing.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Develop a critical understanding of theoretical and practical tools and approaches to the analysis of museum and gallery environment and practice
- Examine the purpose, role and effects of museum objects and exhibitions
- Develop a critical understanding of all the key stages in the life cycle of museum objects (from the moment they become part of the collection to their function in exhibition displays and the different ways that they are viewed and interpreted)
- Examine and define key issues in relation to interpretation, conservation, authenticity, exhibition planning and design and text writing

Teaching and Learning Methods

The course consists of six 4-hour sessions (including lectures, reading groups, seminars site visits and fieldwork tasks) and a group exhibition project that is developed over weeks 8-12.

Illustrative Bibliography:

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- Marstine, J. (ed). (2006) *New Museum Theory and Practice: An Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell.
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- Simmons, J. E. (2006) *Things Great and Small: Collections Management Policies*. Washington: American Association of Museums.
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