

**AHVS 60282**  
**Kostas Arvanitis**  
**Museums and Archaeology**  
**Course Option – Semester 2**

**Aims**

This course explores issues of collecting, interpreting and exhibiting archaeological material in museum environments. By examining the theory and practice of interpretation and display in archaeological museums the course will provide students with a knowledge and understanding of critical issues in contemporary curating. The main context of the course will be archaeological museums, but also links will be made to other museum environments, such as sites and open-air museums. On successful completion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate:

- A systematic and critical understanding of the theory and practice of museum archaeology
- Critical knowledge of the intellectual, ethical and practical issues in the curatorship, interpretation and display of archaeological collections in museums
- Comprehensive understanding of ethical and institutional issues around restitution, looting and illicit trade of archaeological material
- A critical appreciation of the diverse and complex ways that communities and visitors engage and relate to archaeological material
- An informed understanding of interpretive and exhibition methods, techniques and media in displaying archaeological collections to different audiences
- Further experience in researching and writing essays, team-based work and presentation skills

**Teaching and Learning Methods**

Weekly two-hour seminars with directed learning and presentations to be prepared from week to week, including presentations by guest lectures and site visits. Students will be directed to conduct fieldwork in preparation for the class each week. Also, social educational software will be used to achieve a 'blended learning experience' that combines both traditional offline paper-based learning methods with some online collaborative learning tools.

**Illustrative bibliography**

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- Appadurai, A. ed. 1986, *The social life of things. Commodities in cultural perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bender, B. 2001, 'Landscapes-on-the-move', *Journal of Social Archaeology*, 1 (1): 75-89.
- Choay, F. 2001, *The Invention of the Historic Monument*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Collins, A. M. 1995, 'The city is the museum!', *Museum International*, 187, 47, 3: 30-34.
- Falk, J. H and L. D. Dierking. 2000, *Learning from museums: Visitor Experiences and the Making of Meaning*, California: AltaMira Press.
- Gould, R. A. 1980, *Living Archaeology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
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- Hooper-Greenhill, E. 2000, *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture*, New York: Routledge.
- Merriman, N. ed. 2004, *Public Archaeology*, London; New York: Routledge.
- Mitchell, W. J .T. 1994, *Landscape and Power*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Shanks, M. 1992, *Experiencing the past: on the character of archaeology*, London: Routledge.
- Schlereth, T. J. 1992, *Cultural History and Material Culture. Everyday Life, Landscapes, Museums*, Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia.