This class, one of the foundation courses in the Museum Studies Bridging Disciplines certificate, is designed to introduce students to some of the main issues in museum studies and practices. The course will explore these issues through a focus on both art and natural history museums and their practices of collecting and display. Topics to be considered include issues of cultural heritage, the legalities of collecting, who “owns” specimens and works of art, the legacies of colonialism, methods of classification, and the relationship between collecting and global conflict.

This course carries the Ethics and Leadership Flag. Ethics and Leadership courses are designed to equip you with skills that are necessary for making ethical decisions in your adult and professional life. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments involving ethical issues and the process of applying ethical reasoning to real-life situations.

This course may also be used to fulfill the visual and performing arts component of the university core curriculum and addresses the following four core objectives established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: communication skills, critical thinking skills, teamwork, and social responsibility.

Grading:
Attendance: 10%
Participation: 20%
Brief research proposal for a BDP Connecting Experiences in a museum context: 20%
Two Reflection Essays on ethical issues in museum contexts: 50%
   Essay One: University Collections, Natural History, and Culture History
   Essay Two possible topics:
      1. Case Study: Elgin Marbles debate
      2. Museums, archaeologists, and conflicting agendas
      3. Museums, collections, and Colonialism
      4. Museums and issues of cultural patrimony
      5. Museums and global conflict
      6. Museums and issues of repatriation
      7. Case Study: Nazi art and issues of repatriation
      8. Case Study: The ethics of collaboration and co-authorship

Accommodations for religious holidays: You must notify us of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.
Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

SEQUENCE OF DISCUSSION TOPICS and READINGS (all posted on Canvas):

Aug. 25 Introduction to course

Aug. 30 Thinking about collecting and collections: Art and material culture

Sept. 1 Thinking about collecting and collections: Natural History
Read:

Sept. 6 Museum philosophies: Art, permanent collections, traveling exhibitions, and the question of originals vs. copies
MEET AT THE BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART (**it doesn’t open until 10 AM, so we will meet at its entrance where there are some benches and talk informally for 30 minutes) (http://blantonmuseum.org/images/bma/map.pdf)
Read:
1. Blanton Museum’s “History and Mission” statement on their web site: http://blantonmuseum.org/about/history_overview_mission/
5. Also peruse the items posted on Canvas from the Blanton including a University Programs brochure, Self Guided Tour instructions, and Blanton Museum Rules.

Sept. 8 Museum philosophies: Natural History
Read:


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Sept. 13  The Texas Memorial Museum past and present: the art and culture part

**MEET IN THE ART HISTORY DEPARTMENT CONFERENCE ROOM, DFA 2.506, TO VIEW PRECOLUMBIAN OBJECTS; Guest speaker Dr. Astrid Runggaldier of UT’s Mesoamerica Center**

Read:
1. Dept. of Art & Art History Proposal for Collection
2. Sample pages from TMM cultural artifacts inventory

Sept. 15  The Texas Memorial Museum past and present: the natural history part


Sept. 20  The Texas Memorial Museum past and present: guest lecture by John Maisano, Texas Memorial Museum’s Exhibit Designer

**MEET AT THE TEXAS MEMORIAL MUSEUM**
(http://tmm.utexas.edu/visit-tmm/directions.html)

Read about John Maisano at http://tmm.utexas.edu/stcat/

Sept. 22  The Texas Memorial Museum past and present: visit to the TMM

**MEET AT THE TEXAS MEMORIAL MUSEUM**
(http://tmm.utexas.edu/visit-tmm/directions.html)


Sept. 27  The Texas Memorial Museum past and present: Discussion of the future of the collections

**MEET AT THE VISUAL ARTS CENTER, ART BUILDING, 23RD AND TRINITY STREETS,**
[http://utvac.org/visit/plan-your-visit](http://utvac.org/visit/plan-your-visit)

**THEN WALK TO THE BENSON LATIN AMERICAN COLLECTION, SID RICHARDSON HALL,**
[https://www.lib.utexas.edu/benson/about](https://www.lib.utexas.edu/benson/about)

Read: (in same PDF) Susan Sleeper-Smith, “Contesting Knowledge: Museums and Indigenous Perspectives.” pp. 1-5, and Ray Silverman, “The Legacy of Ethnography,” pp. 9-14, in *Contesting Knowledge: Museums*
and Indigenous Perspectives, ed. Susan Sleeper-Smith, University of Nebraska Press, 2009.

Sept. 29 Issues of provenance, cultural heritage, and the legalities of collecting
Read:

Oct. 4 Discussion day: Discuss 1st Reflection Essay and Connecting Experience Research proposal
Read: Peruse the BDP Connecting Experience page for ideas:
https://www.utexas.edu/ugs/bdp/current/experiences

Oct. 6 Who owns antiquities? Art Part I

Oct. 11 Who owns antiquities? Art Part II
Read:

Oct. 13 Who owns specimens? Natural History Part I
Read:
Oct. 18  Who owns specimens? Natural History Part II
Read:
1. Society of Vertebrate Paleontology Ethics Statement

Oct. 20  Colonialism and the Museum: Natural History

Reflection Essay One Due.

Oct. 25  Colonialism and the Museum: Art Part I

Oct. 27  Colonialism and the Museum: Art Part II: the Elgin Marbles debate
Read and/or peruse the following essays/web sites:
5. Peruse this web site, which outlines the Greek position: http://odysseus.culture.gr/a/1/12/ea125.html
6. Peruse this web site, which outlines the British Museum’s position: http://www.britishmuseum.org/about_us/news_and_press/statements/parthe_non_sculptures.aspx

Nov. 1  The ethics of collaboration and co-authorship in museum contexts.
Nov. 3  Discussion day.  **BDP Connecting Experience Brief Research Proposal Due.**

Nov. 8  Issues of classification: Art

**MEET AT THE NEW GALLERY, WARFIELD CENTER, 201 E. 21st Street** to view exhibition “Wrestling History” and for guest lecture by Dr. Edward Chambers, Department of Art and Art History


Read:


Nov. 10  Issues of classification: Natural History


Nov. 15  Collections and Global Conflict: Nazi Art

Read:

Nov. 17  Collections and Global Conflict: Natural History  

Nov. 22  Collections and Global Conflict: Guest lecture by Dr. Janice Leoshko, Department of Art and Art History, UT, on the Bamiyan Buddhas of Afghanistan  
4. Peruse the Facebook page for UT’s Antiquities Action Group, led by Dr. Stephennie Mulder, of the Department of Art and Art History: [https://www.facebook.com/groups/391144767702560/448021448681558/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/391144767702560/448021448681558/)

Nov. 24  **Thanksgiving Holiday (no class)**

Nov. 29  Course evaluations and discussion. **Second Reflection Essay due.**

Dec. 1  Final thoughts