

MSM-220 *Collection Management and Care*
Visual Arts Program
Department of Visual & Performing Arts

Instructor information:

Course Credit: 03

Prerequisite: MSM-210

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to management and care of museum collections. Students learn the responsibilities of the collections manager or registrar in the documentation of objects, collection management policies, collections storage, environmental monitoring, preservation and conservation, museum security, insurance, loan procedures, customs and related issues. Lincoln University's African collection is incorporated to address object handling, condition reports, labeling, conducting inventories, and use of collections information management systems for cataloguing.

STUDENT LEARNER OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:

- 1 understand the role of the Registrar, Collections Manager and Conservator and the training required for the positions
- 2 correctly prepare a condition report on an object from the Lincoln African Collections or other art owned by Lincoln University
- 3 use the basic knowledge of record keeping, including EmbARK Collection Information Management System,
- 4 demonstrate knowledge of handling and labeling objects for public display
- 5 explain basics of object care in storage and while on display
- 6 prepare Collection Management policy guidelines, including security and risk management components
- 7 understand, on an introductory level, legal and ethical issues in dealing with museum collections
- 8 identify some of the collection care issues surrounding ethnographic collections and the preservation of cultural heritage
- 9 identify signs of conservation/preservation needs of some types of works

REQUIRED TEXT:

Rebecca A. Buck and Jean Allman Gilmore, ed., *The New Museum Registration Methods*, (Washington: American Association of Museums, 1998.)

Konstanze Bachmann, ed., *Conservation Concerns* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992)

Additional readings from Course Reserves, handouts and web-access articles are given.

On Reserve for regular use:

Jane S. Long and Richard W. Long, *Caring for Your Family Treasures* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2000).

LEARNER OPPORTUNITIES:

- 1 Textbook/assigned readings and class discussion
- 2 Complete two catalogue entries in EmbARK collection information management system.
- 3 Complete a condition report for an object in the Lincoln collection.
- 4 At least one field trip arranged with a museum collections manager or registrar for behind-the-scenes view of a storage facility and/or a conservation workshop.
- 5 Student peer presentations
- 6 Two exams
- 7 Presentation by Guest Speaker (museum professional)
- 8 At least one class field trip

ASSESSMENT TOOLS/GRADING STANDARDS:

GRADING WEIGHTS & PERCENTAGES

Midterm Exam	25%
Documentation of Objects and Condition Report	25%
Preservation Paper	25%
Final Exam	25%

GRADING SCALE

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F
Points	4.0	3.7	3.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	1.3	1.0	0.0
%	100-93	92.9-90	89.9-88	87.9-82	81.9-80	79.9-78	77.9-72	71.9-70	69.9-67	66.9-60.1	60 and under

AFRICAN COLLECTIONS PROJECT/ASSIGNMENTS:

These assignments/exercises are intended to give students first-hand collection management experience working with Lincoln University’s African Collections. Students will prepare a condition report for one object. Students will prepare documentation for two objects and enter their research into collection information management system.

PRESERVATION ASSIGNMENT:

Students will conduct research on an object’s care and preservation, write a short paper, and present their findings to the class.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

See “Class Attendance” under “General Academic Regulations” in the *Lincoln University (PA) Bulletin 2003-2006*, pp. 60-61. Located on Lincoln’s homepage as an Adobe© PDF file. <http://www.lincoln.edu>

LINCOLN UNIVERSITY INTEGRITY STATEMENT:

Will be attached or indicate location on website.

15 WEEK SCHEDULE COURSE SCHEDULE; some reading noted; additional given in class to note on schedule

Week 1:

What is a registrar/collection manager; primary responsibilities?

Documentation: Manual systems and registration for the very small collection

Creating documentation, types of files and managing them

Reading: Buck & Gilmore, pp. 1-14

Week 2:

Computerized Systems

Readings: Buck & Gilmore, pp. 17-40

Activities:

Overview of EmbARK, Lincoln University Collections Information Management System

Play with and become familiar with EmbARK and input two items of your own into the program.

What kinds of issues or questions did you have to address? You will be assigned two objects from Lincoln's African Collections for database entry. You will present your entries to the class at dates assigned below.

Week 3:

Getting the small museum started with numbering & labeling their collections.

Handling; Numbering; Labeling; Condition Reporting; Photography

Reading: Buck & Gilmore, pp. 43-101

Activities:

Prepare a condition report for an object in Lincoln University collections.

Week 4:

Preventive Care; Environmental Conditions (temperature; humidity; light)

Readings: Buck & Gilmore, pp. 103-107

Activities:

Field Trip to a Museum to review Collections Information Management System; environmental conditions and a storage facility.

Week 5:

Storage; Inventory; pack/ship; import/export; courier

Reading: Buck & Gilmore, pp. 109- 119, 131-155

Activities:

Student presentation of object documentation

Students view storage and learn about inventory of Lincoln African collection.

Week 6:

Acquisitions & Accessioning; Deaccessions; Loans

Reading: Buck & Gilmore, pp. 157-188

Activities:

Guest Speaker at Lincoln
Student presentation of object documentation

Week 7:

Exhibitions, in-house
Organizing Loans & Traveling exhibits
Hosting Traveling exhibits
Collection Management Policies
Rights and Reproductions

Reading: Buck & Gilmore, pp. 189-206, 221-226

Activities:

Student presentation of object documentation.
View samples of Collection Management Policies

Week 8:

Midterm Exam
Risk Management; Insurance; Disaster Mitigation Planning;
Security and Fire Protection; Integrated Pest Management

Reading: Buck & Gilmore, pp. 237-266

Week 9:

Ethical and Legal Issues
Professional Ethics; Old Loans; Copyright
Tax issues related to Gifts of Collections

Reading: Buck & Gilmore, pp. 277-302

Week 10:

Appraisals
International Movement of Cultural Property
NAGPRA

Reading: Buck & Gilmore, pp. 303-338

Isabel Tovar, .A Day in the Life: Collection Manager and NAGPRA Coordinator.,
(<http://www.aam-us.org/pubs/webexclusive/tovar.cfm>)

Week 11:

The role, scope and training of the conservator
Conservation: Storage of Works on Paper
Warning Signs: When Works on Paper Require Conservation
Storage and Care of Photographs
Warning Signs: When Photographs Need Conservation

Reading: Bachman, pp. 29-38

"Careers in Conservation" on line at http://www.preservation.gc.ca/careers/index_e.asp

Week 12:

Painting Storage: A basic Guideline
Conservation of painting: when to call a paintings conservator

Reading: Bachman, pp. 57- 67.

Halima Taha, *Collecting African American Art*, chapter on preservation (see Reserves).

Demonstration: Identifying conservation issues in Lincoln's collection.

Week 13:

Preserving Ethnographic Objects

Conservation of Cultural Heritage . Getty Conservation Institute

Reading: Bachman, pp. 115-122.

Nancy Odegaard, "Collections Conservation: Some Current Issues and Trends" (see Reserves)

Demonstration: cleaning an object form Lincoln's collections

Week 14:

Activities:

Student Presentations of "Treasures" Paper

Base research for preservation of an object you treasure (photograph, scrapbook, doll, etc.) on *Caring for Your Family Treasures*, Jane S. Long and Richard W. Long (on reserve) and then conduct additional web research.

Websites for "treasure" research:

American Institute for Conservation: <http://aic.stanford.edu/>

Canadian Conservation Institute: <http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca>

(see also "Preserving my Heritage" <http://www.preservation.gc.ca>)

Week 15:

Discussion on professional certificate and other programs related to careers in preservation and collection management.

Review issues for FINAL EXAM.

FINAL EXAM: UNIVERSITY-WIDE SCHEDULE; KEEP POSTED.

SAMPLE RESERVES (Supplementary Bibliography):

Books

Applebaum, Barbara. *Guide to Environmental Protection of Collections* (Madison, CT: Sound View, 1991).

Buck, Rebecca A. and Jean Allman Gilmore. *Collection Conundrums* (Washington: American Association of Museums, 2007).

Case, Mary, ed. *Registrars on Record: Essays on Museum Collections Management*, (Washington: American Association of Museums, 1988).

Cuttle, Christopher. *Light for Light's Sake: Lighting for Artwork and Museum Displays* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2007).

Demeroukas, Marie. ed. *Basic Condition Reporting: A Handbook, 3rd ed.* (Jackson, MS: Southeastern Registrar's Association, 1998).

Taha, Halima. *Collecting African American Art* (Crown Publishers: NY, 1998, chapter on preservation) [photocopy]

Landrey, Gregory, et al. *The Winterthur Guide to Caring for Your Collections* (Winterthur, DE: Winterthur Museum, 2000).

Lord, Allyn, Carolyn Reno, and Marie Demeroukas. *Steal this Handbook! A Template for Creating a Museum's Emergency Preparedness Plan* (Jackson, MS: Southeastern Registrar's Association, 1994).

Malaro, Marie. *"Collections Management Policies": A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1998).

Mervin, Richard, Marian F. Mecklenburg and Ross M. Merrill. *Art in Transit, Handbook for Packing and Transporting Paintings, 2nd ed.* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1997).

Odegaard, Nancy. *Collections Conservation: Some Current Issues and Trends*. Cultural Resource

Management 23.5 (2000), pp. 38-41 [photocopy].

Shelley, Marjorie. *The Care and Handling of Art Objects* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987).

Weil, Stephen E., ed. *A Deaccession Reader*, (Washington: American Association of Museums, 1997).

Websites:

American Institute for Conservation: <http://aic.stanford.edu/>

Canadian Conservation Institute: <http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca>

(see also "Preserving my Heritage" <http://www.preservation.gc.ca>)

Museum security Network: <http://www.museum-security.org/>

Conservation training: read on-line: <http://aic.stanford.edu/become/contrain.html>