Instructor: Sandra Toro Martell  
Fall, 2006  
Thursdays, 9:00am-11:40am  
HLT G90

Instructor: Assistant Professor Sandra Toro Martell  
Office: Enderis 745  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:30-2:30pm (sign-up sheet on door)  
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Credits: 3 graduate credit hours (G)

Description: Museums are places where people go to learn about objects, such as historical documents and artifacts, and ideas, including scientific concepts, by exploring exhibitions and participating in educational programs such as guided tours, workshops, classes, and lectures. The overall aim of this course is to examine selected contributions of theory and research to the understanding of how diverse groups of people, (identified according to age, gender, and ethno-racial background, among other characteristics,) learn in different types of museums, including science, art, and history museums, through reading, discussion, observation, and reflection.

Prerequisites: graduate standing

Rationale: This course is designed to further understanding about theory and research about learning in museums for students interested in teaching, research, and evaluation in informal learning environments.

Course Objectives

Participants will:

1. examine the history of the role of education in museums in the United States;

2. explore the development of socio-cultural and socio-cognitive theories of learning in museums and how these theories vary depending on kind of museum, i.e. history, science, or art, and/or type of visitor, i.e. child, adult, family group, girls, or urban school group;

3. investigate major pedagogical issues surrounding models of teaching and learning related to visitor behavior and identity, including sex differences and ethno-racial considerations;

4. assess research and engage in field-based study about how individuals and groups learn in museums during “informal” and “formal” learning experiences (self-guided or discovery vs. guided or structured);

5. and consider how learning experiences may be created, tailored and promoted to suit the needs of diverse audiences in accordance with relevant theories and research.
Course Outline

Tentative Schedule of Topics and Readings:

Day 1  Topic: *Introductions, overview, and context of the course; Museums in the United States: An Overview of What We Mean By “Learning”*

Reading:


Day 2  Topic: *The Museum Educator, the Museum, and the General Public*

Reading:


Day 3  Topic: *Constructivism and Museums*

Reading:


Day 4  **Topic:** The Contextual Model of Learning

**Reading:**


Day 5  **Topic:** Object-Based Learning in Museums

**Reading:**


Day 6  **Topic:** Science-Based Learning and Interpretation

Guest Speaker: Janie Beshare, UWM Conservation and Environmental Science

**Reading:**


Day 7  Topic: *Families as Learners in Museums*

Reading:


Day 8  Topic: *Adult Learners in Museums*

Reading:


Day 9  **Topic:** Learning About History in History Museums and at Historical Sites

**Reading:**


Day 10  **Topic:** Children and School Groups in Museums

**Reading:**


Griffin, J. (2004). Research on students and museums: Looking more closely at the students in school groups. *Science Education* 88 (Suppl. 1), S59-S70.


Day 11 Thanksgiving – No Class
Day 12  Topic: Learning Art in Art Museums

MUSEUM EDUCATION PROGRAM OBSERVATION REPORT DUE TODAY

Reading:


Day 13  Topic: “Diverse”/”Other” Groups in Museums


**Day 14**  **Topic:** Final paper presentations

**Day 15**  **FINAL PAPERS DUE** no later than 12 noon in my mailbox

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### Required Readings

**Required Texts:**


**Optional:**


**Readings:** All other readings are online on D2L. (See schedule below).

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### Course Requirements

Participants will **complete:**

**Discussion Presentation and Questions (10% of grade):** Lead a discussion based on issues and questions related to the readings for the week. This discussion should help the rest of the class assess:

1) your knowledge of the readings and
2) your understanding of relevant theories, research, and pedagogical issues related to visitor behavior and identity

A discussion sign-up sheet will be passed around during our first meeting. It is your responsibility to sign up for one discussion. It is recommended that, if more than one person signs up for the same week, you work together to shape your presentation and come up with questions for the group.

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Critical Analysis (20% of grade): A written critical analysis of the readings upon which your discussion is based. This analysis should be informed by the discussion of the readings led by you and your group (if more than one person presents); however, it should not be limited to that discussion. Your own analysis of the readings should be included. You are not expected to provide an exhaustive description of the readings. Rather, you should identify particular issues or questions that are salient to you. It is good to have some questions that cut across or synthesize the readings in addition to some questions focused on particular readings. Although individual papers are required, you may work within your group to identify particular aspects of the readings that each of you will cover. Note, however, that your analysis should touch on each of the readings assigned to your group. Suggested length guideline: 5 pages. The analysis is due the week following your discussion presentation.

Museum Education Program Observation (20% of grade): Observe a local museum education program, including guided or self-guided tours, workshops, lectures, events, etc., and write a report that includes detailed descriptions of:

1) the museum and its mission and goals
2) the physical environment in which the program takes place, including the immediate space/surroundings, exhibits, interactives, interpretive materials like signage, etc.
3) any mediators such as docents, teachers, lecturers, guides, etc.
4) the audience/participants
5) learning activities
6) your interpretations of the program, including your opinions about the effectiveness/success of the program in relation to any observable or stated goals and objectives and your observations of the mediator and audience/participants

It is your responsibility to observe a program prior to the observation report due date of 11/30.

Final Paper (45% of grade): A written project in which each student is to identify an area of interest focused around an issue related to museum education. (1) Provide a tightly focused review of the literature related to one or more theoretical perspectives/approaches to teaching and/or learning and research supporting them. (2) Design a program based on the research and findings for a particular audience within a specific context, i.e. older adults in science museums. Suggested length guideline: 15-20 pages. Percent of grade: 45%. Due date: 12/15 in my physical mailbox no later than 12 noon.

Expectations:

Students are expected to attend class. Attendance is 5% of your grade. Please notify the instructor if you are unable to attend class.

Students are expected to read the assigned readings and actively participate in discussions each week.

Students are expected to hand in written assignments on the date due. Late assignments will be penalized. (Students may not hand in papers prepared for another class). Please double-space all written work and use a 12-pt. font.
Grading Scale:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-94.9</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89.9</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86.9</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-82.9</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>77-79.9</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>73-76.9</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-72.9</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<td>67-69.9</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>63-66.9</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>60-62.9</td>
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<td>0-59.9</td>
<td>F</td>
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</tbody>
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Grading Procedures

The course grade for graduate credit will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Requirement</th>
<th>Credit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Presentation and Questions</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Museum Education Program Observation Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>45%</td>
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Teaching Methods

The methods of instruction will include both lectures and collaborative learning.

Policies and Procedures

**Assignments:** All assignments should be word processed unless otherwise stated in class. Each assignment is due on the designated due date whether or not you attend class. Late assignments will be penalized. No extra credit assignments will be granted.

**Attendance:** Please notify the instructor prior to class if you will be absent. Make arrangements with a class member to collect handouts and to share notes. Each assignment is due on the designated due date even if you are absent. You are responsible for in-class work and readings even when you are absent. Provide a written summary of in-class tasks and readings for sessions when you are absent within a two-week period or you will be given a score of zero for participation in that session. Each unexcused absence will negatively impact the Class Attendance component of your overall grade. Early departure and late arrival will negatively impact the Class Attendance component of your overall grade as well. Provide written confirmation of excused absences (e.g. medical emergency, illness, death). In hopes of lessening the severity of the deduction for unexcused absences, present your rationale in writing only, not verbally.

**Participation by Students with Disabilities:** If you need special accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. In general, students requesting special accommodations for exams, assignments or other course requirements (e.g., more time, alternative format) will be asked to provide written verification of this need by the UWM Student Accessibility Center.

**Accommodation for Religious Observances:** Students will be allowed to complete examinations or other requirements that are missed because of a religious observance. Please see the following for details: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S1.5.htm](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S1.5.htm)

**Academic Misconduct:** The university has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are
responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors.

A more detailed description of Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures may be found in Regents Policy Statements, UWS Chapter 14 and UWM Faculty Document #1686: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Acad_Aff/policy/academicmisconduct.html](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Acad_Aff/policy/academicmisconduct.html)

**Student Conduct:** [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html#Appeals](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html#Appeals)

**Complaint Procedures:** Students may direct complaints to the Department Chair. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the head of the department or academic unit in which the complaint occurred or to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy.

**Grade Appeal Procedures:** A student may appeal a grade on the grounds that it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow the established procedures adopted by the department, college, or school in which the course resides. The procedures used by the Department of Educational Psychology are available at the following site: [http://soe.uwm.edu/edpsych/studentappeals.doc](http://soe.uwm.edu/edpsych/studentappeals.doc)

A more detailed description of general grade Appeal Policy may be found in UWM Selected Academic and Administrative Policies, Policy #S-28 and UWM Faculty Document #1243.

**Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment is reprehensible and will not be tolerated by the University. It subverts the mission of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience, and well being of students, faculty, and staff. The University will not tolerate behavior between or among members of the University community which creates an unacceptable working environment.

**Grade of Incomplete:** A notation of "incomplete" may be given in lieu of a final grade to a student who has carried a subject successfully until the end of a semester but who, because of illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond the student's control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete some limited amount of term work. An incomplete is not given unless you prove to the instructor that you were prevented from completing course requirements for just cause as indicated above.

A more detailed description of the Incomplete Policy may be found in UWM Selected Academic and Administrative Policies, Policy #S-31 and UWM Faculty Documents #1558 and #1602. Also, a description of this policy may be found in UWM Schedule of Classes.