**LIS 2970**  | **MUSEUM ARCHIVES, SUMMER 2004 TERM**  
**Time/Location** | Wednesday, 6:00 – 9:15 PM.   IS 501 (May 12 – July 28, 2004)  
**Instructor:** | Bernadette G. Callery  
**Office Telephone:** | 412-622-8870  
**Office Hours:** | By appointment or via email  
**Office Location:** | Carnegie Museum of Natural History or by appointment  
**Instructor's Email:** | calleryb@carnegiemuseums.org  
**Instructor's Homepage** | http://www.carnegiemuseums.org/cmnh/library/calleryweb/index.htm  
**Course URL:** | http://courseweb.pitt.edu.  (Search for 04315595)  

**Course Description**

Museums can be defined as objects organized within a specific intellectual environment. This course is an opportunity for students to analyze and evaluate the range of recordkeeping systems that have been used by museums to document their collections, and the physical and intellectual environment in which records are created, used and maintained. Records of lasting value to museums include both those records that document individual objects in the museum's collection and those that document the business of the museum in acquiring, preserving and interpreting those objects.

Beginning with an overview of the history of museums and the roles of museum staff in creating and using museum records, students will identify the various types of records created by a museum in the course of its business of building, maintaining and using collections of objects. Functional analysis will be used as an archival appraisal technique to examine the organizational structure of a museum, in order to determine what records are created by the museum in the course of its business, which of those records are essential to the museum and where those records are likely to be created and maintained in a given museum. Students will examine internal and external policies governing the activities of the organization, and determine their influence on records creation and retention. The second half of the course will apply this knowledge to a series of "hot topics" which bear directly on the capture, retention and interpretation of records. Examples of these "hot topics" are acquisition and ownership of cultural property, repatriation of cultural objects, provenance research, especially of Nazi-era looted art, detection of forgeries and collaborative online access to images and other collection information. The course will provide an opportunity to apply previously learned archival theories to a specific institutional setting. While all types of museums will be considered, the course will focus on the records of natural history museums, art museums and history museums.
Prerequisites

While direct experience of any type of museum will be helpful in this class, it is not required. If this is your first archives class, you may find it necessary to do additional reading in order to participate in class discussions and to benefit from the assigned readings. If you are in doubt about your background for this class, please contact the instructor to discuss this.

Please note that while this class will help you develop skills to identify, capture and maintain records dealing with museum exhibitions, object description and conservation and educational programs, this class will not teach you to design or mount museum exhibitions, catalog or conserve museum objects or produce public educational programs.

Course Goals and Learning Objectives

As an active and thoughtful participant in this class, you will be prepared to serve as an archivist within a museum and to create, analyze or maintain a museum archives and records management system. These skills will allow you to:

- Identify the historical changes of a museum’s purpose and structure and analyze the impact of those changes on museum recordkeeping systems
- Analyze the recordkeeping issues specific to museums as a particular class of archival system
  - Describe the specific types of records and recordkeeping systems used by museums
  - Apply functional analysis as an appraisal method to the museum’s collections and activities as a means of evaluating its records for retention
- Debate the application of archival theory and practice to the organization and access to museum records
  - Compare the recommendations and rationale for records management in the archival and collection management literature from the point of view of both an archivist and a collections curator
- Assess the impact of specific legislation and other external mandates which influence museum recordkeeping systems, identify their recordkeeping requirements and evaluate the effectiveness of a museum's present recordkeeping system in complying with those requirements
- Examine copyright and intellectual property policies and practices in the museum context, particularly in the electronic information environment
- Formulate maintainable museum archive policies that are consistent with professional best practice and that persuasively employ the specific language of museum recordkeeping systems
**Materials**

Books and periodical articles listed below as Required Reading are available on reserve in the School of Information Sciences Library on the 3rd floor of the School of Information Sciences building at 135 North Bellefield Avenue. Students are strongly encouraged to read the required and recommended periodical articles and book chapters in situ, in order to become familiar with the overall content and style of these journals and essay collections. Books on the Required Reading list can be purchased from the University of Pittsburgh Book Store or ordered directly from online booksellers such as Amazon (http://www.amazon.com) or from professional societies such as the American Association of Museums or the Society of American Archivists.

Assignments, citations to readings and websites of organizations discussed in class are included both in the hardcopy syllabus and on its electronic version at [http://courseweb.pitt.edu](http://courseweb.pitt.edu). To use the Courseweb site,

- Type 04315595 in the search window and click on the Special Topics course that appears
- Enter your student username and password to gain access to the specific course material.

Please contact the instructor if you have any difficulty gaining access to any of this material, either in hard copy or in electronic form. Note that periodic updates and additions will be made to the information on the Courseweb site.

**Evaluation and Other Class Policies**

**Grading scale**

Your final grade will be composed of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation and discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Authentication paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy paper and cover memo</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final research paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

See below for more detail on the requirements for each writing assignment. Please do not hesitate to discuss these assignments with the instructor in class, via email or in person outside class.

Please note that a significant portion of your grade is based on your participation in class. Any student not participating in class discussion, either in class or on the class listserv will receive no higher than a "B+" for the course.

All students registering for the class will be automatically added to the class listserv. A handout summarizing the mechanics of posting to the listserv and responding to postings will be distributed during the first two weeks of class. A copy of these instructions will also be available on the Courseweb class site.
During the course of the class, there may be several informal, ungraded classroom assessment techniques. These will be done to help the instructor determine if the teaching methodologies used have been successful in conveying the content of the course.

**Readings and Class Discussion**

You are responsible for reading the weekly required texts. The course methodology will be part lecture on the theory of museum recordkeeping systems, illustrated with actual examples from museum practice and case studies, and part directed discussion, building on students' comments on the readings. Note that each week’s readings begin with a general question that will form the basis of our initial discussion of those readings in class.

Hint: As a method for dealing with the volume of readings, select an aspect of museum functionality that interests you, then read with that topic in mind. This may help focus your readings and class discussions.

**Assignments**

Because so much of your interaction with others in this profession will be through written communications, three of the course assignments are opportunities to practice your writing skills. Reminders of assignments and their due dates will appear on the Courseweb site and on the Course at a Glance page following. Assignments can be turned in through hard copy handed to the instructor or via the Courseweb Drop Box by 6 PM on the day the assignment is due.

NOTE: You will be expected to meet at least once during the course with the instructor in order to discuss your progress and work on the assignments.

**Authentication paper.** The first paper will be a 2-3 page paper in which you select a record or an artifact of any kind, describe it briefly and discuss what supporting documentation you would use to authenticate it. Possible records could include a letter, diary or photograph, a videotape or sound recording; possible objects include a painting, piece of pottery or a fossil. Be aware that provenance of the object may not be complete and that you may have to use indirect evidence or consult with an expert who is a specialist in that type of object. Be sure to comment on the criteria you would use to guarantee the validity of the documentation and guard against the possibilities for intentionally falsifying either the supporting documentation or the record or object itself. The purpose of this paper is to introduce you to the types of documentation used in authenticating a museum object and to provide the instructor with a sample of your writing. *This paper will be due in week 3.*

**Policy paper and cover memo.** The second paper will be a total of 8-15 pages and will discuss museum policies dealing with some aspect of recordkeeping systems. You are to create a policy document and write an accompanying document summarizing the practical and theoretical literature dealing with this policy. Additionally, you will write an accompanying memo explaining the policy, such as might be used to justify the policy to the
museum’s director or as a cover letter accompanying the policy to the museum’s staff.
Sample policies might include requests for permission to use the archives, requests for
permission to publish archival material from the collection, policies on staff collecting and
consulting, ownership of personal papers created within the context of the museum or
deaccessioning.

Assignment statement for the policy paper:
Your assignment is to select a single museum archives activity or service, then

- Write a policy statement and its accompanying procedure document that presents the
  museum's official position on this activity or service and the procedures used to achieve
  the policy’s desired outcome. (2-4 pages)
- Write the cover memo for the policy that would introduce and explain the new policy to
  museum staff. (no more than 2 pages)
- Write the benchmarking document, a literature survey that supports your policy decision
  as representative of prevailing best practice. (4-8 pages)

The purpose of this paper is to give you practical experience in designing and communicating
a recordkeeping policy. This paper will be due in week 7.

Final Research Paper. The third paper will be 20-25 pages and be a more extensive
investigation of one of the "hot topics" discussed in class or another controversial issue of
your choosing that illustrates the purpose and value of museum recordkeeping systems.
Topics could include the identification and restoration of looted art, the repatriation of
cultural objects, the museum accreditation process, management of personal papers (of
museum staff), deaccessioning, conservation and art fraud, or cooperative access to
electronic image collections.

A 1-2 page summary of the research paper will be due to the instructor in week 8 and
you will come prepared to briefly discuss your topic in week 9. The final form of the
paper will be due in week 11.

Doctoral Students. Doctoral students have the option of either doing all three of the class
papers or a major research paper of publishable quality that develops one of the themes
discussed in this class as it relates to their thesis research. Students choosing this option
should discuss their plans with the instructor by the second week of class.

Style Manual

Students should adhere to the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style in the preparation
of their papers. Papers should use at least 1.5 line spacing.
**Course At A Glance**

The first day of this class is May 12, 2004; the last day of this class is July 28, 2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Assignments (in addition to the assigned readings)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 12 May</td>
<td>Introduction to the course and to museum history</td>
<td>Identify phases of historical change in museum practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 19 May</td>
<td>Functional analysis, museum records and recordkeepers</td>
<td>Describe the types of records and the role of recordkeepers</td>
<td>Authentication paper assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 26 May</td>
<td>Collection management literature and museum archives</td>
<td>Analyze the language and purpose of collection management literature and museum archives</td>
<td>Authentication paper due Policy paper assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 2 June</td>
<td>Policies and practices</td>
<td>Review the types of policies typically in place for the administration of museum archives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5 9 June</td>
<td>Accountability and repatriation: External legislation and professional ethics</td>
<td>Analyze the impact of external legislation and professional ethics on museum accountability</td>
<td>Research paper assigned. Policy paper discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 16 June</td>
<td>Hot Topics: Museums as educational institutions</td>
<td>Survey the changes in public expectation of museums as educational institutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7 23 June</td>
<td>Hot Topic: Multi-media records in museums and intellectual property</td>
<td>Analyze the impact of technology on museum recordkeeping systems and archives</td>
<td>Policy paper due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8 30 June</td>
<td>Hot Topics: Provenance research</td>
<td>Identify the resources and methodologies for provenance research</td>
<td>Research paper outline due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9 7 July</td>
<td>Hot Topics: Ownership and cooperative (online) access to cultural property</td>
<td>Survey the changes in attitudes towards ownership and cooperative access to cultural property in the electronic age</td>
<td>Brief discussions of research paper topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10 14 July</td>
<td>Hot Topics: Preservation in museums, Maintaining the illusion of permanence</td>
<td>Identify the tensions between preservation, access and use; consider what is real</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 11 21 July</td>
<td>Hot Topics: History wars</td>
<td>Survey the changes in the exhibition and interpretation of cultural and non-cultural objects</td>
<td>Research paper due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 12 28 July</td>
<td>Reprise of the role of museum archivists</td>
<td>Articulate the role of records in museums and the professional responsibilities of archivists</td>
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Academic and Other Student Issues

Academic Integrity

Students will be expected to comply with the University’s Policy on Academic Integrity at http://www2.sis.pitt.edu/~wadmin/academics/information/sisacint.html

Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. If there is clear evidence of your presenting another's work as your own, including not citing published material or electronic resources, your final grade will be lowered a full letter grade.

Incompletes

No incomplete grades will be given for this course, unless there were emergency circumstances affecting a student's ability to meet course requirements.

Special Accommodations

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 or 412-383-7355 (TTY) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for the course. For further information see http://www.drs.pitt.edu.

Required and Recommended Readings

The items listed below and chosen for each week’s readings represent a portion of the available literature on this topic. Students should also browse the selected organizational websites for general information about these organizations and their services, as well as the increasing number of online publications mounted at these sites.

The following are strongly recommended for purchase:


Additional Useful Reference Works


Online Resources, including Professional Societies

American Association of Museums (AAM), especially their website’s Hot Topics section which deals with aspects of museum law and cultural property. Major professional society and significant publisher of books in this field. Museum News is the Society’s bi-monthly journal. http://www.aam-us.org/

American Association for State and Local History (AASLH). Valuable publications, including Technical Leaflets and useful links to regional and national organizations. http://www.aaslh.org/


Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN). Free access to resources dealing with collection management, intellectual property and creating and managing digital content in museums. Includes training tools, online publications, directories and databases. http://www.chin.gc.ca/

Museum Learning Collaborative (MLC). Concerned with the study of learning in informal contexts, such as museums. Includes bibliographies and course syllabi. While the project officially ended in December 2003, see http://museumlearning.com as a record of the project.


Smithsonian Center for Education and Museum Studies (SCEMS). Includes Museum Studies Bibliographies. http://museumstudies.si.edu/


Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPHNC). Includes research on ethnographic collections as well as biological and geological collections. Indexes for and the full text of some issues of the Society’s journal, Collection Forum, are also available online. http://www.spnhc.org/


Course schedule

**Week 1 – Introduction to the course and to museum history**

How have museums institutionalized the basic human impulse to collect? How has the relationship of museums to their public changed over time and what impact have these changes had on museum recordkeeping systems?

Required readings


Recommended reading

**Week 2 – Functional analysis, museum records and recordkeepers**

Do different types of collections generate different types of records? Which museum staff create and use what records – and how? How can functional analysis be used to predict the likelihood of records and their creators?

**Required readings**


**Recommended readings**


**Week 3 – Museum Archives and collection management literature**

What are the main themes affecting recordkeeping in the professional collection management literature? What the tensions in museum archives between collection records and administrative records?

**Note: Authentication paper due.**


Recommended Readings


**Week 4 – Policies and Practices**

In addition to the usual concerns of archives use, what circumstances peculiar to museums are covered in museum archives policies?

**Required Readings**


Recommended Readings


**Week 5 – Accountability and repatriation: external legislation and professional ethics**

What is the impact of external mandates, such as legislation, on museum recordkeeping systems? How are museums affected by professional ethics?

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


United States Information Agency (USIA) website on International Cultural Property Protection. For background on the problem of international pillage of artifacts and the U.S. response; information about relevant laws, bilateral agreements and U.S. import restrictions; recent news stories and magazine articles, see [http://exchanges.state.gov/education/culprop/](http://exchanges.state.gov/education/culprop/)

**Week 6 – Hot Topic: The Responsibilities of Museums as Educational Institutions**

How have the museum's responsibilities for public education changed over time and how can these changes be documented? What is the nature of learning within museums?

Guest Lecturer: Catherine Eberbach, University of Pittsburgh, Education, Cognitive Studies.

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


**Week 7 – Hot Topics: Multimedia records in museums and intellectual property**

What are the impacts of external mandates such as the changing copyright laws and the introductions of new technologies to the archivist’s responsibility to identify, capture and provide access to archival records within the museum setting?

**Note: Policy Paper Due**

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


**Week 8 - Hot Topics: Authentication and Ownership: Provenance Research**

What records are necessary and adequate to prove ownership of objects? How are museum archives used to authenticate objects or prove ownership? What cooperative resources have been developed to assist with repatriation?

Guest lecturer: Deane Root, Director, Center for American Music, University of Pittsburgh

**Required Reading**


[Nazi-Era Provenance Internet Portal.](http://www.nepip.org/)


**Recommended Readings**


**Week 9 - Hot Topics: Ownership and cooperative online access to cultural property**

**Note:** Research paper outline due.

Who owns cultural property? Who wields the power to control identity? How is the concept of ownership culturally biased and how has it changed over time? Who controls access to the records of cultural property, including electronic images and machine-readable collection information and online exhibitions?

**Required Readings**


Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. "Objects of Ethnography."


Recommended Readings

Art Museum Image Consortium (AMICO), a not-for-profit association of institutions with collections of art, that is creating a digital library of their holdings for licensing to educational users.  http://www.amico.org


**Week 10 - Hot Topics: Preservation and Restoration**

Are the responsibilities of preservation and access mutually exclusive? What are the ethics of “invisible” restoration – and who keeps the records of conservation treatment? Is it real?


Required Readings


**Recommended Readings**


**Week 11 - Hot Topics - History Wars**

What are the social influences, resulting in the "History Wars," which influence how a museum selects and presents exhibitions and other public programs? How are these changes in position documented?

**Note: Research Paper Due**

**Required Readings**


**Recommended Readings**


**Week 12 - Professionalism and The Reprise Of The Role Of Museum Archivists**

How do you define a profession? What is the changing nature of the museum profession and how have those changes affected expectations of recordkeeping systems?

**Required readings**


**Recommended Readings**

