

## AH1648B Collecting Art and Culture

Lecture: Thursday 2:30-4:30 PM – MC Room 110  
Tutorials held online (see: Learning and Forum modules on OWL)



L: Ole Worm, *The Museum Wormianum*, 1655  
R: Rosamund Purcell, "One Room," 2011



Professor: Dr. Kirsty Robertson  
Office: VAC 221  
Office hours: Thursdays 1-2; Tuesdays 1-2  
Email: [kirsty.robertson@uwo.ca](mailto:kirsty.robertson@uwo.ca)

### Course Description

Prerequisite: none

Anti-requisite: The former VAH1045 A/B

Format: Blended course with 2 lecture hours and 1 online hour

This introductory course serves as a starting point to study the foundations of art history. It focuses on historical and contemporary practices of collecting art and cultural objects and introduces key principles of museum and curatorial studies. Taking a thematic approach, the course explores current debates in the field. Various kinds of museums and their histories are introduced including art museums, natural history museums, botanic gardens, zoos, etc. Within these overviews, topics include discussions of how collecting practices have changed over time; museum architecture from the 17<sup>th</sup> century through to the twenty-first; the opening up of the museum to new audiences and different curatorial practices; as well as questions about who owns cultural property and the repatriation of cultural objects. Bringing discussion of museums up to the current day, we will also look at the destruction of museums in times of conflict, theft, forgery, and trade in illegal antiquities. Students will also be introduced to the field of art history, and will learn important skills in how to write about, analyze, and understand art and culture. The learning outcomes for the course will be achieved through lectures, readings, discussions, films, a field trip, a collecting assignment, a test, and an exam.

## **Class Learning Outcomes**

- Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the history and organization of museums.
- Students will learn how to describe and analyze different kinds of museums and different kinds of collections.
- Students will learn how to discuss and analyze the contentious histories of museums, and will be able to debate ethical issues pertinent to the field of museum studies.
- Students will learn appropriate language for the discussion of museums, culture, and art.
- Students will learn how to compare the principles of collecting, classification, and display from different historical periods and/or geographic areas.
- Students will be able to use critical thinking skills in evaluating museum exhibits and public programs.
- Students will be able to analyze how museum architecture conveys ideas.
- Students will learn how to participate in online discussions.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Assignments**

In class test (mid-term): 20% [February 13, 2020]

Short field trip assignment: 5% [April 2, 2020]

Collecting assignment: 20% [March 5, 2020]

Tutorial participation and class attendance: 15 + 5% [ongoing]

Final exam: 35% [tbd/exam period]

\* In accordance with Western's Evaluation of Academic Performance, one week prior to the deadline for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty, you will receive assessment of your work for at least 15% of your final grade. The last day to drop a first-term half course is March 7.

### **Collecting Assignment and Field Trip Assignment**

Descriptions of the Collecting assignment and Field Trip assignment can be found in the Assignments folder, under Resources, on Owl. You are responsible for following the directions of the assignments and submitting them on time.

### **Mid-term Test and Final Exam**

The mid-term test and final exam may consist of multiple choice, short-answer questions, slide identifications, and essay questions. Examination material will be drawn from lectures, tutorial lessons, and from course readings. The final exam is cumulative (includes the whole semester). Under Western's regulations, if students miss 15% of their classes, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, they can be debarred from final exams.

### **Attendance**

Please find your name and sign the attendance sheet at the front of the classroom (starting January 16, 2020).