

Contemporary Museum Management

Gain an understanding of the organization, governance, and management of museums. Explore the role of the board of directors, museum president or director, and staff and volunteers. Delve into the principles and practices of planning asset acquisition, collections management, and exhibits. Contemporary issues and challenges, such as financing future acquisitions, shrinking public funding, and competition for leisure time, are discussed.

Required Reading:

Genoways and Ireland, **Museum Administration: An Introduction**

Kotler and Kotler **Museum Marketing and Strategy**

9/25 Week 1: Introduction to the Course

Discussion questions:

What is the role of the museum today?

What should be the primary goal of a museum?

Why are museums important institutions?

What limitations do/should museums face today?

Readings:

Museum Studies, Chapter 1 "The Museum Age" Germain Bazin (pp. 18-22)

Museum Marketing, Chapter 1: "The Diverse World of Museums"

10/2 Week 2: The Museum Board

Discussion questions:

What characteristics does an ideal museum board possess?

What are the responsibilities of a museum board member?

How does a museum board establish the mission of the institution?

Guest Speaker: Susan Larkin, former Chairman of the Board, Greenwich

Historical Society (to be confirmed)

Group Work:

Write a museum mission statement

Readings

Museum Administration, Chapter 1 "Introduction" and 2 "In the Beginning" (pp. 1-37)

Chapter 4 in Museum Marketing "Choosing a Mission and a Core Strategy" (pp.83-113)

10/9 Week 3: The Museum Director

Discussion questions:

What are the ideal credentials for a museum director?

What factors should a director consider in establishing the organization of the institution?

What are the primary hurdles that museum directors face today?

Guest Speaker: Paola, Director of the Neuberger Museum (to be confirmed)

Group Work:

Create a museum organization chart

Readings:

Museum Administration, Chapter 3: "The Working Museum" (pp. 39-55)
Museums: A Place to Work, "Interviews with Museum Professionals"
(pp. 125-137)

10/16 Week 4: Development/Fundraising

Discussion questions:

What are the main funding sources for museums today?
What can museums do take to address shrinking public funding sources?
What are some established/consistent strategies for museum fundraising?
What are some new/innovative ideas?

Group Work:

Create a Grant Abstract

Readings:

Chapter 6: "Development" in Museum Administration (pp. 121- 160)

10/23 Week 5: Finance/Accounting/Budgets

Discussion questions:

What are some of the financial constraints museum face?
What are some potential pitfalls to maintaining a balanced budget in a museum?

Readings:

Chapter 5, "Budgets and Accounting" Museum Administration (pp.

Mid-Term Projects Due:

Museum assessments: Visit a museum and assess the personnel you encounter. How is your experience shaped by those individuals? How do you experience the staff who are not physically present? How is your experience affected by their work? Who had the most direct impact on your visit? If you were to make a suggestion to one staff person, who would you address? What would you recommend?

10/30 Week 6: Curatorial/Collection Management /Conservation

Discussion questions:

What is the museum's responsibility vis-à-vis the collection?
What are 'best practices' in caring for a collection?
How does the museum determine what to collect/acquire?
How do/should museums de-accession works from the collection?
Guest Speaker: Neuberger Curator(to be confirmed)

Group Work:

Museum Acquisition Meeting: Make a selection of what to acquire
Resources: "21 ways to buy art" from Weil. Making Museums Matter

Readings:

Chapter 8: Collection Management Policies in Museum Administration (pp. 175- 195)

11/6 Week 7: Marketing/PR/Membership

Discussion questions:

What messages should museums be conveying to the public?
What strategies can museums employ to convey these messages?
How do/should museums cater to public tastes/opinions?

Group Work:

Create a Publicity Brochure

Readings:

Museum Administration, Chapter 11 "Marketing and Public Relations" (pp. 247-272)

Museum Marketing, Chapter 2 "The Role of Museum Marketing" (pp.21-39)

Additional Suggested Readings

Michael Belcher, Exhibitions in Museums, Chapters 2 and 3 "Museum Communication Policy" (pp. 15-22) "Museum Image, Marketing and Design" (pp. 23-33)

11/13 Week 8: Education and Public Programs

Discussion Questions:

What type of educational programs/experiences should museums provide?
What audiences should these programs/experiences address?
How can/should educational programs address special needs of audiences?
Guest Speaker: Neuberger Educator (to be confirmed)

Group Work:

Create a Program Schedule (consider budget, schedules, audiences)

Readings:

Museum Administration, Chapter 12 "Public Programs" (pp. 273-289)

11/20 Week 9: Volunteers

Discussion Questions:

What roles should be assigned to volunteers in a museum?
How do volunteers differ from museum staff? How are they alike?
What are the museum's responsibilities to its volunteers?
What are the volunteers' responsibility to the museum?
Guest Speaker: Neuberger volunteer docent (to be confirmed)

Group Work:

Write an introduction to a volunteer handbook

Readings:

Museum Administration, Chapter 7 "Personnel Management"

12/4 Week 10: Final Presentations

Final Project:

Faux Grant Proposal: Written from the perspective of one museum department, the proposal presents a case for a one-time grant of \$50,000 from the "Cotter Foundation". The proposal should explain why this funding is necessary, how the public will be served, how funds will be distributed (a rudimentary budget), and how success will be measured.