

*Academy of Visual Arts*  
*Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Visual Arts Programme*

## **VART 3335 Museum Studies**

**No. of units: 3**

**Pre-requisite: VART 2305 Introduction to Western Art AND VART 2306 Introduction to Chinese Art OR VART2335 Material Culture & Collections OR VART 2336 Exhibition and Art Markets**

**Duration: 39 hours**

**Cluster: Visual & Material Culture**

### **I.1. Course Description & Rationale (200–300 words):**

Museums have served many functions, as educational institutions, repositories of artifacts, temples of genuine artworks, and as social agents promoting civic values. How do museums balance their diverse roles and responsibilities against a backdrop of changing social agendas, commercial competition, globalization, and the desires of the public?

This course examines the history and changing mission of museums. Fundamental aspects of museum culture including organizational conventions, collection management policies, documentation systems, interpretation and communication mechanisms, and education and outreach programmes will be introduced.. Through case studies, hands-on workshops, and site visits, this course offers students practical knowledge of art administration with an emphasis on operation routines, management skills, and project planning, to bring art to a wider audience. This course also examines how museums can convey standards about the value and meaning of works of art, shape public understanding of art, and become involved in the production of art and culture. Students will learn about operating mechanisms of museums and reflect on the complex relationship between museums and contemporary practices in the art world and in society.

Looking into various museum practices, such as the acquisition, preservation and displaying of works of art, this course explores how meanings of art are shaped and thus enables students to reflect on their artistic practices. This helps bridging with many practical courses offered by the AVA.

## I.2. Course Content:

No.		Hours	%
1.	Introduction: Museum definitions, purposes, and codes of ethics	3	7.7
2.	Museum history: From cabinet of curiosities to community powerhouse	3	7.7
3.	Collection management: Collecting, documentation and conservation	12	30.8
4.	Interpretation and exhibitions: educational mission, popular appeal, and the blockbuster	9	23.1
5.	Museum education, community development, and representation of values and identity	9	23.1
6.	Towards the post-museums: Vision and strategy	3	7.7
		39	100

## I.3. Intended Course Learning Outcomes (CILOs):

*(Please take note of the PILOs for the overall BA programme in the Programme Document.)*

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No.	Intended Course Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
1.	Identify cultural theories and philosophy related to museum practices;
2.	Discuss the roles of museums in constructing knowledge, making meaning, and producing contemporary art;
3.	Engage with current debates and museological issues from historical and contemporary perspectives;
4.	Evaluate current museum practices in response to public needs, and relate these practices to other institutions, agencies, or stakeholders in the art and cultural sectors;
5.	Critically reflect on the rationale for museum operations within the context of contemporary cultural production; and
6.	Adhere to standards of professional practice and ethos.

*\* More may be added.*

#### I.4. Alignment of CILOs with PILOs:

Learning Outcomes	<i>Please indicate alignment by checking '✓' the appropriate box</i>					
	CILO1	CILO2	CILO3	CILO4	CILO5	CILO6
PILO1.1	✓	✓				
PILO1.2						
PILO2.1		✓	✓			
PILO2.2						
PILO2.3			✓	✓	✓	
PILO3.1						✓
PILO3.2				✓	✓	✓

\* There may not be 6 CILOs, in which case, just leave columns empty.

#### I.5. Alignment of Teaching and Learning Activities with CILOs:

No.	Teaching and Learning Activities	CILO	Hours
1.	Lectures will discuss rationale, philosophies and cultural theories embodied by various professional museum practices within the context of contemporary art scene. Students will be given written tasks to do object documentation, classification exercise, interpretive text, and education materials in considering rationale and working ethos of museum profession.	1, 2, 4, 6	12
2.	Case studies will be discussed in class to examine best professional practices in relation to collection management, interpretation and research, and audience development. Students will be given hands-on instructions to perform professional practices including acquisition, disposal, conservation strategy, interpretation, and education workshop.	1-3, 6	3
3.	Regular group work will be arranged to encourage students to develop the theories and definitions with a practical and informed approach.  Group presentation requires students to research specific case studies and to analyse in terms of the themes and topics of the course.	2, 3, 6	9
4.	Class activities will be arranged to encourage students to express their opinions about various exhibitions. The tutor will guide students through the processes and consequently encourage them to evaluate with appropriate means and confidence.	1, 5, 6	9

5.	Study trips to art museums and alternative art spaces will be arranged to examine how professional principles and strategies are applied in real-life situation. Students will submit fieldwork report examining to what extent a specific aspect of museum service has fulfilled its mission.	2, 4, 5, 6	6
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*\*More may be added.*

#### **I.6. Assessment:**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Assessment Methods/Activities</b>	<b>Weighting</b>	<b>Alignment with CILOs</b>
1.	Written report: Students will be asked to write an object-documentation or an outreach program and an exhibition review	40%	1, 2, 3
2.	Group Presentation: Students are required to research into one specific aspect of museum practices including collecting, organizing guided tour, designing education and launching marketing events, and evaluate to what extent the museum practices respond to socio-cultural needs.	30%	1, 4, 5
3.	Professional Attitude: Professional Attitude does not necessarily define its own learning outcomes, but takes a look at 'how' the other, non-attitudinal outcomes are achieved. Assessment will always be based on direct personal contact with the student. Assessment methods include personal conversations – formal and informal –, class observation, individual and group-tutorials, and such like. Assessment evidence is continuously produced through attendance and participation class-records, public presentations, peer-reviews, evaluation of sketchbooks or visual diaries, personal notes of students and teachers, etc.  For more information, please refer to the BA (Hons) in Visual Arts' Programme Document.	30%	6

*\*More may be added.*

#### **I.7. References (up to 10 books):**

Carbonell, B. M. (ed) *Museum Studies: an Anthology of Contexts*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.

Greenberg, R., Ferguson, B. W., and Nairne, S. (eds) *Thinking about Exhibitions*, London: Routledge, 1996.

Knell, Simon Jeremy, Suzanne MacLeod, and Sheila Watson, eds. *Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and Are Changed*. London: Routledge, 2007.

Marstine, Janet, ed. *New Museum Theory and Practice: An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

Macdonald, S., and Fyfe, G. (eds). *Theorising Museums: Representing Identity and Diversity in a Changing World*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1996.

Macdonald, S. (ed). *A Companion to Museum Studies*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

Preziosi, D., and Farago, C. (eds). *Grasping the World: the Idea of the Museum*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004.

Sherman, Daniel J., and Rogoff, I. (eds). *Museum Culture: Histories, Discourses, Spectacles*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994.

Tythacott, Louise. *The Lives of Chinese Objects: Buddhism, Imperialism, and Display*. London: Berghahn Books, 2011

Watson, Sheila, ed. *Museums and their Communities*. London: Routledge, 2007.

**I.8. Academic Integrity:**

Students will endeavour to only claim work that they have actually produced themselves. Claiming the work of others is considered plagiarism, and will be dealt with under the academic policies of the university.

**I.9. Health and Safety:**

Every effort will be made to comply with the intent of Hong Kong's law or acts and the University's policies to maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

**I.10. Final Note:**

The instructor reserves the right to modify the class and the syllabus or the schedule to adjust to the dynamics of the particular group or to take advantage of opportunities that may arise.