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## CESP 352: Museum Studies: Seminar and Practicum

### Course Syllabus

### Spring Semester 2019

**Instructor:** Antonella Valoroso, Ph.D.

**Credits:** 3

**Contact Hours:** 3 hours/week practicum; about 40 hours total  
1.5 hours/week seminar; about 20 hours total

**Prerequisites:** Application-based admission

**Class Hours:** Thursdays, 12:00 p.m.-1:30 p.m.

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Email:** valorosa@umbra.org

**Course Type:** Seminar and Practicum

**Umbra Practicum Coordinator:** TBD

**Host Institutions:** Casa Museo di Palazzo Sorbello, Museo Capitolare di Perugia, Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria

**Host Supervisors:** Sara Morelli – *Casa Museo di Palazzo Sorbello* (biblioteca@fondazioneranieri.org);

Chiara Basta – *Museo Capitolare di Perugia* (museo@diocesi.perugia.it); Veruska Picchiarelli - *Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria* (gallerianazionaleumbria@benicultura.it)

**Lab Fee:** 140 €

### Course Description

The goal of this course is to introduce students to community engagement based on mutual growth and reciprocity through dialogue and action. The academic seminar and practicum is designed for students to broaden their cultural perspectives; to develop a heightened sense of intercultural awareness and sensitivity; and to see different communities from a more comparative, global standpoint. The course has two main components: one reflective (*seminar*) and one experiential (*practicum*).

The *seminar* is based on readings, interactive class discussions, and group work focusing on the nature and function of museums as 'theaters of memory' that communicate a sense of place and identity. It will also examine the transformation of a traditional museum into a more dynamic center for contemporary arts. The *practicum* is a means of applying intercultural communication skills and theoretical knowledge to gain practical, field-specific experience. The local partners for the course are the *Casa Museo di Palazzo Sorbello*, a house museum with paintings, porcelains, printed works, manuscripts, and embroidered fabric collections; the *Museo Capitolare di Perugia*, an ecclesiastical museum established in 1923 whose collections illustrate the rich artistic activity revolving around the construction and decoration of the Cathedral of Perugia; and *Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria*, a museum that holds some of the greatest representations of Umbrian paintings, ranging from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Through activities at the museums, students will explore broader connections between their home and the local Italian community.

### Practicum Description and Student Responsibilities

Students will participate in the events and educational activities organized by the museums and work on current initiatives related to their own personal goals, skills, and interests. Students will meet weekly at the *Casa Museo Ranieri di Sorbello*, where they will work on authentic archive materials and will take part in the current activities of the Foundation and Museum. Among other things, students will create contents for the website of the American

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counterpart of the foundation, which manages the house museum. Students will select the most significant images, historical information, and stylized presentation to appeal to an American audience. Students will also regularly work at the *Museo Capitolare di Perugia*, where they will become familiar with the items belonging to the museum collections, help organize museum exhibits, create display descriptions in English, and design promotional and informational materials. Furthermore, students will develop an English language tour for international visitors. Lastly, students will explore the collections of the *Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria*.

### Course Objectives

By the end of the seminar and practicum, students will have acquired:

- a heightened sense of intercultural awareness;
- an appreciation for how the community partners, as part of the host culture, convey an identity and sense of place;
- critical thinking and communication skills as a result of integrating theory with practice and by synthesizing learning into a final project;
- a body of disciplinary knowledge and theory with which to interpret the cultural and artistic heritage in Italy, the region of Umbria, and Perugia; and
- familiarization with the operations and functions of different types of museums.

### Course Materials

#### Readings

Course reader available at local copy shop for a maximum of 30 €. See “Umbra Institute Course Materials - Textbooks and Readers” handout provided in the orientation folder for more information.

### Assessment

Participation and Reading Assignments	35%
Reflection Papers (2)	20%
Oral Presentation	20%
Final Project	15%
Practicum Evaluation by Community Partners	10%

### Grading

Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A	93% - 100%	Exceptional Excellent
A-	90% - 92%	
B+	87% - 89%	Superior
B	83% - 86%	
B-	80% - 82%	
C+	77% - 79%	Satisfactory
C	73% - 76%	
C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	Low Pass
D	63% - 66%	
D-	60% - 62%	
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

### Course Requirements

Grades are based on participation, reflection papers, oral presentations, a final project, and the community partners' evaluation of the students work.

#### *Participation and Reading Assignments (35%)*

In the seminar, students will examine academic readings related to the historical, cultural, and institutional

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context of the *Ranieri Foundation* and of the *Museo Capitolare di Perugia*. Students will be asked to reflect on themes discussed in class, presented in the readings, and as they relate to the practicum experience. This will solidify their understanding of the course material and offer an opportunity to explore connections between in-class and experiential learning. The course participation grade is based on oral contributions to the collective learning. Participation means active engagement, which includes being prepared for class by having carefully read that day's assignments, asking questions, responding to questions, and attentively listening to others. Furthermore, an essential part of the course requirements is the community partner's evaluation based on the students' participation and attendance.

#### *Reflection Papers (2) (20%)*

The reflection papers will ask students to build on and analyze the readings and themes discussed in class. In this way, the reflection papers will help students to achieve a higher level of critical reasoning by making connections between museum studies theory and their practicum experience. Students will write **two two-page reflection papers** throughout the semester.

#### *Oral Presentation (20%)*

During Special Academic Events Week, the class will present a 15-minute summary of the seminar and practicum experience to the Umbra community during the Community Engagement Presentations. Students will receive guidelines and presentation order after the mid-semester break.

#### *Final Project (15%)*

Students will work as a team to prepare one final project. The topic of the final project will be based on students' collaboration with the museums. Past projects have included organizing a workshop to improve the communication skills of tour guides at the house museum; working on archive papers to create a searchable database; and developing marketing strategies to make the Italian museums appealing for an international public.

#### *Practicum Evaluation by Community Partners (10%)*

Host supervisors will be asked to provide structured feedback as well as a grade that reflects the following parameters: taking responsibility; respecting schedules and appointments; proactivity and creativity; and accomplishment of assigned individual tasks.

#### Additional Course Information

The seminar meets once a week and is an important time to discuss course themes, share experiences, and address practicum activities. The community partners also expect students to be punctual and to keep weekly appointments. Students must notify the course instructor and host supervisors beforehand if they need to miss a practicum appointment.

#### Written Work Guidelines

It is important that students leave sufficient time for devising an outline, the writing process (first draft and revisions), and - equally important - proofreading their work. Reading their own work aloud while someone listens, or asking someone to read their work, are effective means of "quality control". Simply performing a spell-check is not enough to ensure that students' work is well-organized, well-written, and that the argument is stated clearly and supported effectively. **All written work must be double spaced with 2.54cm (1 inch) margins on all sides and be set in 12 pt. Times New Roman font.**

#### Attendance Policy

Class attendance is **mandatory**. The seminar meets once a week and is an important time to discuss course themes, share experiences, and address practicum activities. The community partner also expects students to be punctual and to keep weekly appointments. Students must notify the course instructor and community partner beforehand if they need to miss a practicum appointment. Students will be responsible for maintaining an Hours Log (*Registro delle ore*), which needs to be signed by the host supervisor after each appointment.

Students are allowed two "free" absences (seminar and practicum included), which do not need to be justified. **It is the students' responsibility to keep them in case of real necessity (sickness or any other unforeseen inconvenience that may prevent students from being in class).** Each additional absence, unless for a very serious reason, will lower the students' grade by one grade level (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

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If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. It is also the policy of the Institute that any student who has eight or more absences automatically fails the class.

Except in the case of medical emergencies, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. **Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason.** Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important for student performance in class. Missing a mandatory field trip, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to the professor and Umbra Academic Director in a timely manner, will lower students' final grade by one grade level (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

#### Academic Integrity

All forms of **cheating** (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and **plagiarism** (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

#### Classroom Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate **respect** for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that **cell phones** must be turned off before the beginning of each class. **Computers and other electronic devices** cannot be used during class lectures and discussions.

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## Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

### WEEK 1

Thurs.,  
Jan. 17     *Introduction to the seminar and the practicum. Goals and expectations. What is a house museum?*

### WEEK 2

Thurs.,  
Jan. 24     *Seminar + first appointment and guided tour of the Casa Museo Ranieri di Sorbello.*

#### **Reading #1**

Leahy, Helen Rees, "Making a House Museum" in *The House Museum of the Palazzo Sorbello in Perugia*, Perugia 2010, pp. 7-9

### WEEK 3

Thurs.,  
Jan. 31     *Seminar + first appointment and guided tour at the Museo Capitolare di Perugia.*

#### **Reading #2**

Risnicoff de Gorgas, Monica, "Reality as illusion, the historic houses that become museums" in *Museum International, Historic House Museums*, LIII, 2, 2001, pp. 10-15

### WEEK 4

Thurs.,  
Feb. 7     *Reflection on the visits. History and function of museums.*

#### **Reading #3**

Alexander, Edward and Alexander, Mary, *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Function of Museums*, American Association for State and Local History, revised ed. 2007, pp. 5-15

#### **Work due**

#### **Reflection Paper #1**

### February 9-10 – PISA SIENA FIELD TRIP

### WEEK 5

Thurs.,  
Feb. 14     *Survey of Italian history (1).*

#### **Reading #4**

Ranieri, Ruggero, "The History and Legacy of an Old Aristocratic Family in Modern Era", in *The House Museum of the Palazzo Sorbello in Perugia*, Perugia 2010, pp. 12-23

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#### WEEK 6

Thurs.,  
Feb. 21

*Survey of Italian history (2).*

#### **Reading #5**

Ranieri, Ruggero, "The History and Legacy of an Old Aristocratic Family in Modern Era", in *The House Museum of the Palazzo Sorbello in Perugia*, Perugia 2010, pp. 23-43

#### WEEK 7

Thurs.,  
Feb. 28

*Place, heritage, and memory.*

#### **Reading #6**

Pazzini, Claudia, "The House of Bourbon di Sorbello: the Formation of a Dynastic Art Collection in Umbria from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century" in *The House Museum of the Palazzo Sorbello in Perugia*, Perugia 2010, pp. 54-65

#### SEMESTER BREAK (March 4-10)

#### WEEK 8

Thurs.,  
Mar. 14

*From temple to forum.*

#### **Reading #7**

McLean, Kathleen, "Museum Exhibitions and the Dynamics of Dialogue" in *Daedalus*, 1999, 128, 3, pp. 83-105

#### WEEK 9

Thurs.,  
Mar. 21

*Museum communication and learning.*

#### **Reading #8**

Hein, George E., "Museum Education", in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, Ed. S. Macdonald, Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, pp. 340-350

#### WEEK 10

Thurs.,  
Mar. 28

*Work on final project.*

Community Engagement overview with Umbra Staff.

#### WEEK 11

Thurs.,  
Apr. 4

*Work on final project.*

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**WEEK 12**

Thurs.,  
Apr. 11     *Work on final presentation.*

**WEEK 13**

Thurs.,  
Apr. 18     *Final draft of project due.*

**Work due**  
**Reflection Paper #2**

**WEEK OF FINAL EXAMS AND SPECIAL ACADEMIC EVENTS**

Apr.  
23-26     The Final Exam and Special Academic Events Calendar will be provided later in the semester.  
**Guided tours to Umbra community**