

- Please complete one for *each course you regularly* teach. The focus is on what *actually* occurs in your course. Please submit with the worksheet a copy of the most recent syllabus from the course.
- Aim to keep your work at no more than two (2) pages. Setting limits and using a uniform format will aid in future analysis and comparisons.
- Keep in mind that curricular mapping is a process and can support on-going course reflection and refinement. It is expected that at least some portions will remain fairly consistent over time, while others may change/be refined/updated frequently. (So don't stress too much—fill it in as best you can.)
- These will be used to inform our on-going program curricular development work, started last year by Julie's work with the 250 series instructors. Specifically, this detailed course information will lead to a mapping of program learning outcomes according to what is actually taught in our courses – a crucial step in assessment.

### Course Title: Planning Interpretive Exhibits

**Instructor:** Alice Parman

**Course Context:** Briefly indicate how the course fits within the AAD program. Is it a requirement, elective? When offered/Frequency?; other instructors?; primary audiences?

*PIE has always been an elective. Usually I've offered it as a 3 or 4 credit workshop-type course over 3 Friday/Saturday sessions. In Spring 2015 I was asked to teach a 5-week, 2-credit version, meeting once a week for 3 hours. This is the syllabus I am analyzing on this worksheet.*

**Essential Questions** provide focus for the course, can push students to higher levels of thinking, and help to make connections across curricular areas. Consider, what types of questions might guide your teaching and engage students in uncovering the important ideas at the heart of each subject?

Number of essential questions usually range between 3 and 6. These can take time to develop.

- *What principles and considerations guide interpretive planning in a museum context?*
- *What are best practices in the development of effective, engaging exhibits?*
- *How can visitors improve our exhibits, through evaluation and prototyping studies and opportunities to contribute meaningfully to exhibit content?*

**Learning Outcomes (grounded in core content, concepts, and skills):** the "what" that is to be taught. (See Curricular Mapping Overview and AAD 430/530 YACM example for more details.)

- *Interpretive planning is grounded in the museum's mission, the take-home messages deemed essential by content experts, and awareness of the interests, knowledge, skills, and curiosity of diverse potential audiences.*
- *Visitor studies, including testing of prototypes, are essential to planning engaging, educationally effective exhibits.*

**Learning Outcomes (from your syllabus)**

- *Through reading and discussion, understand and evaluate exhibit planning methods used by leaders in the field*
- *Broaden awareness of current practice, through review and discussion of contemporary interpretive exhibitions*
- *Use local and regional museums as case studies and learning labs*
- *Experiment with exhibit planning using a proven framework*

- *Link readings to on-site learning and practice by keeping a reflective journal*
- *Synthesize readings, team-based activities, and journal entries to fulfill individual assignments*
- *Assist a campus museum by developing useful products*

### **Core content/themes/topics**

- *Developing an exhibit concept: take-home messages, storyline, key objects and images*
- *Whitehead's theory of learning: romance, precision, generalization*
- *Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences*
- *John Falk's research on museum visitor identity*
- *Design for accessibility and visitor engagement*
- *Project management*
- *Prototyping and evaluation*
- *Careers in exhibit planning and design*

### **Key concepts and skills**

- *Understanding Freeman Tilden's definition of interpretation and what it means in practice*
- *Working with a team to develop and document an imaginary exhibit*
- *Writing exhibit text*
- *Critiquing an existing exhibit in a local or regional museum*
- *Working with a team to develop a prototype for an interactive to be used in an actual exhibit at UO MNCH*

**Key Activities and Assessments** (may also provide information about instructional strategies). The focus here is on *key* assessments (assignments). How will students show you what they know? These should relate back to the learning outcomes. Expect that the details of some/many of these will change/be refined over time.

*Instructional strategy: I tell the students this is akin to a "learn to swim" class. I provide information, as do the assigned readings. But the key learnings occur "in the pool," as students work in groups and individually to develop interpretive exhibits.*

### *Key assessments:*

- *A journal of reflections on class lecture and discussion, in-class group activities, and readings. Submitted weekly.*
- *Individually created narrative walkthrough and bubble diagram based on team-developed exhibit plans*
- *Written critique of an existing exhibit at a local or regional museum*
- *Narrative description and sketch of an interactive component for the UO MNCH Paisley Caves exhibit.*

**Primary Resources** (readings, support materials) Expect that some/many of these will be regularly up-dated.

- Kathleen McLean, *Planning for People in Museum Exhibitions*. Although it was published in 1993, this remains a classic, and students like it and learn from it. However, in future I will instead use a new book that came out just a bit late for the 2015 course: Polly McKenna-Cress and Janet A. Kamien, *Creating Exhibitions: Collaboration in the Planning, Development, and Design of Innovative Experiences*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013.
- D. Lynn McRainey and John Russick, eds., *Connecting Kids to History with Museum Exhibitions*. Left Coast Press, 2010. This book could have been titled "Connecting Anyone to

Any Topic with Museum Exhibitions." It offers a wealth of good ideas and approaches to interpretive planning.

- I taught the course at the Museum of Natural & Cultural History, making use of their exhibits. We also used the JSMA as a resource, for an exercise in the Throne Room.