Course Title

Shaping an Educational Landscape: Museumsinsel

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Course Number
ARTH-UA 9850D01, SOC-UA 9940D01

Lecturer Contact Information
Dr Annette Loeseke
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Course Details
Wed, 10:00am to 12:45pm

Location
Location: Rooms will be posted in Albert before your first class. Please double check whether your class takes place at the Academic Center (BLAC – Schönhauser Allee 36, 10435 Berlin) or at St. Agnes (SNTA – Alexandrinenstraße 118-121, 10969 Berlin).

Prerequisites
None. Previous knowledge of art history, architecture, or German history is not required, but useful.

Units earned
4

Course Description
This course is a mixture of classroom discussions and field trips to different museums in Berlin. It focuses on the five major museums on Museum Island (Museumsinsel), which were built over a period of 100 years (1830-1930). We also talk about the newest addition to Museumsinsel, the Humboldt Forum scheduled to open its doors in the reconstructed city palace on Schlossplatz in 2019. Discussions focus on the nature and social function of museums, as well as their role as places where the image of the state and its civil society are constantly reshaped, and how this has evolved up until the era of global migration. Other topics include museum architecture, exhibition design, visitor studies, audience development, and the museum in the 21st century.
Course Objective
At the end of the term, participants should have gained the ability to view a museum in its social and historical contexts, while using Museum Island as a special point of reference. In conjunction with sessions on the Pergamon Museum, the Egyptian Museum (Neues Museum) and a session on “difficult heritage”, participants will be able to evaluate the display, web presence, and event program of a museum from both the institutional and visitor perspectives.

Assessment Components
Reading Responses and Oral Presentation: 25%.
READING RESPONSES: In order to document the reading of texts and foster class discussion students are required to hand in 14 reading responses overall (each between 300 and 400 words) to one assigned text of their choice respectively (unless stated otherwise) by 8pm the day before the respective class. Failure to do so may result in a deduction from the total marks of the participation grade. – ORAL PRESENTATION: The oral presentation of approx. 10 minutes can be developed as teamwork and should give a good overview of the history and museological concept of the respective museum as well as critical comments on the assigned texts for the respective session. The oral presentation counts as much as two Reading Responses.

Paper I (midterm paper): 25%. 5 pages, double-spaced. For the midterm paper, students are expected to select one of the museums visited so far and rethink the display strategies and narratives according to the discussion of challenging topics with Arjun Appadurai during the joint workshop on October 12, 2018. Paper due October 17, 2018. Please hand in the paper via email.

Paper II (Pergamon paper): 25%. 5 pages, double-spaced. For the paper on the Pergamon Museum, students work in small groups during the field trip to analyze the current display, identify problems, create a plan for improving the display, and hand in an individual paper (introduction, brief literature review, description and analysis of current displays, identification of problems, recommendations, conclusion, list of references). Paper due November 21, 2018. Please hand-in the paper via email.

Paper III (final paper): 25%. 5 pages, double-spaced. Students are free to choose a subject discussed during the semester. They might choose, for example, one of the visited museums, develop a specific research question, and write a paper that consists, for example, of a brief introduction and literature review, as well as chapters on the history and museological concept of the museum, current display strategies, recommendations for improvement of displays from a visitor studies perspective, a conclusion, and a list of references. Final paper due December 19, 2018. Please hand in the paper via email.

Failure to submit or fulfill any required component may result in failure of the class, regardless of grades achieved in other assignments.

Required Text(s)
Electronic Resources (via NYU Classes / NYU Library)

One copy of each book is kept in the Reading Room of NYU Berlin’s Academic Center, for you to read in the center but not to take out.
NYU Berlin Library Catalogue: or follow the link on NYU Berlin’s website (Academics/Facilities & Services).

Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)


Internet Research Guidelines
To be discussed in class.

Additional Required Equipment
None.

Sessions: Course starts Wed, 12 Sep 2018!
PLEASE NOTE: There will be no class on Wednesday, 5 Sep 2018. The course starts on Wednesday, 12 Sep 2018.

Session 1 – 12 Sep 2018

Museum Studies – Museum Island: Introduction – In-class session
As an introduction to the topic and the course we talk about our understanding of and experiences with museums and our expectations for this course. An overview of Berlin’s Museum Island and its development over time will lay the groundwork for the following field trips. We discuss how the ‘politics of display’ (Sharon Macdonald) frame museum narratives and how to rethink museums politically. We explore what has been the role of museums and academia during colonial and imperialist times, and ask how museums have addressed (historical and current) issues of provenance, acquisition and appropriation. How have museums, over time, framed their own image? How have museums framed their narratives in terms of diversity, equity and inclusion? How have museums responded to recent activist movements such as #MeToo or #RhodesMustFall? We also discuss recent trends in visitor studies, audience development, and museum education, as well as policies of social inclusion and participation. How might empirical research on visitor experience inform curators, education and outreach managers, marketing and PR managers, among others, to better cater to the shifting need of diverse visitors?
Session 2 – 19 Sep 2018

Altes Museum
We focus on the origins of Museumsinsel and pay attention to Karl Friedrich Schinkel’s neoclassical building for the royal Prussian art and antiquities collection, the Altes Museum, which opened its doors as the first museum of the entire ensemble in 1830.

We meet in front of the colonnade/staircase of the Altes Museum.

PLEASE READ one of the assigned texts for the session on Altes Museum (by Giebelhausen, Toews or Wezel) AND one of the text by Bennett, Gaethgens or Hein (2 reading responses for this session):


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Session 3 – 26 Sep 2018

Neues Museum: Prehistory and Early History Museum
The Neues Museum, the second building of Museum Island, was designed by Schinkel’s disciple Friedrich August Stüler. Its erection was premised on an astonishing combination of neoclassical architectural elements and innovative principles of industrial construction. Severely damaged during World War II, it re-opened to the public in October 2009. We visit the Neues Museum and talk about its genesis and the cultural historical concept for the presentation of the various exhibits.

We meet in front of the Neues Museum.

Please read:


3 Oct 2018 – Public Holiday – No Class

**Session 4 – Friday, 5 Oct 2018 – Make-up session for Wed, 3 Oct 2018**

**Alte Nationalgalerie**

The construction of the National Gallery coincided with the Franco-Prussian War of 1870/71 and the founding of the German Empire in 1871. We trace the idea of a public national art museum all the way back to liberal notions of unifying the German territories, which were popular among intellectuals, artists and bourgeois in mid-nineteenth century. As well, we will observe to what extent the "unification from above" in 1871 changed the profile of the collection. In addition, we consider the opening of the National Gallery for international contemporary art under the directorship of Hugo von Tschudi in late 19th century.

Please read:


**Session 5 – 10 Oct 2018**

**Neues Museum: Egyptian Museum**

Egyptian Museum from the 19th to 21st Centuries”. We explore the multi-layered displays and narratives of 'Egypt' from the 19th to the 21st centuries as presented at the Egyptian Museum. The following key issues will be addressed: the museum's restoration by architect David Chipperfield, the multi-layered presentation of various (historical) notions of 'Egypt' in the Egyptian Museum and the meta-presentation of these historical exhibition concepts. Assignment: 20%. For the paper about “Egyptianizing” effects at the Egyptian Museum, students work in small groups during the field trip and hand in an individual paper of 5 pages (double-spaced) (introduction, description and analysis of current displays, identification of problems, recommendations, conclusion, list of references). Paper due 29 Nov 2017.
Please read:

In the Light of Amarna. 100 Years of the Nefertiti Discovery (2013), ed. by Friederike Seyfried, exh.cat., Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, diverse articles pp. 421-437, OR diverse articles pp. 452-468.

Session 6 – Friday, 12 Oct 2018, 1-4pm – In-class session (room tba)

JOINT WORKSHOP with Stephanie Pearson’s class:
Whose global? Whose heritage? A discussion with Arjun Appadurai, NYU / HU

This workshop is a joint project between two NYUB courses, "Shaping an Educational Landscape: Museum Island" and "Ancient Art in Berlin: Discovering the Collections of Museum Island". A joint session is planned to address challenging questions such as, What (or when) is a museum, collection, display? What kind of context(s) does a museum provide? How do museums address issues of provenance, acquisition and appropriation? How can we describe an object's ‘journey’? What is the difference between the terms ‘object’ and ‘exhibit’? Arjun Appadurai, professor at NYU and visiting professor at Humboldt University, will lead a discussion with students about how questions such as these relate to controversial debates about the universal museum, the production of a global cultural heritage, and notions of shared heritage. We explore how museum narratives about memory and identity-building might include or reject issues of diversity and equity, and ask who has been producing what kind of narratives, who has been silenced. Whose heritage indeed have museums produced and keep (re-)producing through their narratives? What can be done?

Paper I (midterm paper): 25%. 5 pages, double-spaced. For the midterm paper, students are expected to select one of the museums visited so far and rethink the display strategies and narratives according to the discussion of challenging topics with Arjun Appadurai during the joint workshop on October 12, 2018. Paper due October 17, 2018. Please hand-in the paper via email.
This session is mandatory.

Please read:


Session 7 – 17 Oct 2018

Bode Museum
Wilhelm von Bode’s name ranks among the most prominent in the museum history of Berlin for multiple reasons, e.g. his connoisseurship, which served the vast expansion of the royal collections, his strategic handling of patrons, and his introduction of the concept of the “style room”. The “style room” was a leading principle for the display of artifacts in the Kaiser-Friedrich Museum, which was opened under Bode’s guidance in 1904, and which after World War II was renamed Bodemuseum in his honor. We define the characteristic features of the “style room” and investigate Bode’s intentions by taking into account the contemporary crisis of museums.

Please read:


PLEASE NOTE: Paper I (midterm paper) due today!

24 Oct 2018 – Fall Break – No Class!

31 Oct 2018 – No class!
(Make-up day for the Friday session with Arjun Appadurai on 12 Oct 2018)

Session 8 – 7 Nov 2018

Pergamon Museum
In 1930, the Pergamon Museum was the last museum on Museum Island to open its doors to the public. Having been planned as an imperial institution to display large-scale architectural elements unearthed during various excavations by German archaeologists, it remained unfinished by the end of World War I and proved to be a burden to the young Republic’s self-image in the aftermath of a lost war. We look closely at the way monumental architecture has been exhibited up until today, and explore the effects of the arrangement on the visitor. Since there have been claims for restitution, we will take into account the controversial debates on the concept of the “universal” museum and its colonial and imperialistic past. Please note that one of the major pieces of the museum, the Pergamon Altar, is currently not on display.
Please read:


Paper II (Pergamon paper): 25%. 5 pages, double-spaced. For the paper on the Pergamon Museum, students work in small groups during the field trip to analyze the current display, identify problems, create a plan for improving the display, and hand in an individual paper (introduction, brief literature review, description and analysis of current displays, identification of problems, recommendations, conclusion, list of references). Paper due November 21, 2018. Please hand-in the paper via email.

**Session 9 – 14 Nov 2018 – In-class session**

**Exhibition Design for Contested Cultural Heritage and ‘Difficult’ Heritage Issues**

In this in-class session we explore how topics of contested cultural heritage and difficult, challenging issues might be reconsidered by new ways of curating and designing exhibitions. We examine notions of ‘epistemic violence’ (Gayatri Spivak), the ‘poetics and politics of ethnography’ (James Clifford), the ‘politics of display’ (Sharon Macdonald) or ‘disobedient museums’ (Kylie Message), and work in small groups to test a range of exhibition models and explore diverse visitor types. How might exhibition design and various curatorial approaches cater to the needs and expectations of diverse audiences?

Please read:


**Session 10 – 19 Nov 2018: Mon 6-8pm, Grimm Zentrum, Humboldt University**

**Panel Discussion “Decolonize Mitte! Museum Island, Humboldt Forum, and Schloss”**

A panel discussion with NYU Berlin professors Ares Kalandides, Annette Loeseke and Stephanie Pearson and two invited guests about contested cultural heritage and controversial narratives with regard to the museums on Museum Island, the reconstructed former royal palace and the planned Humboldt Forum in the palace, that will present the ethnological and Asian art collections of the National Museums in Berlin and is due to open in 2019.

This session is mandatory.
We meet in the Auditorium at the Grimm Zentrum, Humboldt University in Berlin, Geschwister-Scholl-Str. 1-3, 10117 Berlin, 5:45-8pm.

Please read:


Session 11 – 21 Nov 2018

Museum of Islamic Art in the Pergamon Museum
Current trends and debates in critical museum studies will change the educational landscape of Museum Island in the future. We discuss these trends together with issues in cross and intercultural museum studies with a particular focus on the Museum for Islamic Art.

Please read:


Session 12 – 28 Nov 2018

Bode Museum: Exhibition ‘Beyond Compare’
Temporary Exhibition of Objects from the Ethnological Collection in the Bode Museum
The former Ethnological Museum and the Asian Art Museum of the National Museums in Berlin, located in Berlin-Dahlem from 1971 til January 2017, are due to move into the new Humboldt Forum in Berlin’s reconstructed former royal palace building in Berlin-Mitte. Since the collections will not be on display until the end of 2019, selected objects from the ethnological collection are currently on display in the Bode Museum on Museum Island. We explore the comparative approach of the exhibition ‘Beyond Compare’ and discuss whether – or to what extent – the exhibition challenges or rather reinforces stereotypes about ‘African’ or ‘European’ art.
Please read:


Session 13 – 5 Dec 2018

Natural History Museum: A Cultural Studies Perspective on Narratives of ‘Nature’

The collections of the National Museums in Berlin, that today are mainly on display in the museums on Museum Island, originate in the royal collection of the cabinet of curiosities (Kunst-/Wunderkammer), that was housed in the royal palace. The royal collection comprised European antiquities, paintings and prehistorical objects, ethnographic objects from European countries and countries outside Europe, and objects that later formed the natural historical collection, among others. While in 1810, the natural history collection moved from the Wunderkammer in the royal palace into the newly founded Berlin University (later renamed Humboldt University) to become the university’s museum, the ethnological collection was considered a cultural history collection to be presented in the Neues Museum. In this session, we look at the Natural History Museum from a cultural studies perspective and explore how natural historical objects have been categorised and presented from the 19th to the 21st century. We examine whether the natural historical exhibits have been framed as contrasting to, or complementing cultural historical objects on display, for example at the Neues, the Ethnological or the Pergamon Museum. We further discuss in what way the displays and narratives produced by the Natural History Museum can be interpreted from a cultural and curatorial studies point of view, as a carefully constructed narrative about ‘nature’, i.e. as a cultural product. We finally explore, whether or how the Natural History Museum addresses the history of its collection and its origin in the cabinet of curiosities in the royal palace, where the objects were presented next to cultural historical pieces and artefacts. In the second part of the session, we look more closely at how the museum frames currently ‘hot’ topics such as diversity, biodiversity, evolution and climate change.

We meet in front of the main entrance, Invalidenstr. 43 (Subway U6: Naturkundemuseum)

Please read:


Session 14 – 12 Dec 2018

German Historical Museum
Right next to Museum Island, the German Historical Museum stages “2000 Years of German History”. We examine the narrative and display strategies of the permanent exhibition with a focus on the 19th and 20th centuries. How does the museum frame narratives of Prussia, the German Empire, German colonialism, the Weimar Republic, and antisemitism in the 19th and 20th centuries, i.e. topics that relate to cultural politics and the museums on Museum Island we explored during the term? How are influential scholars and politicians like Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt or Otto von Bismarck portrayed? How are cultural politics and the political instrumentalization of museums addressed? Relating to our discussions about outreach programs at the Museum of Islamic Art to connect with Berlin’s diverse local communities, how does the German Historical Museum address migration in East and West Germany post 1945?

We meet in front of the main entrance, Unter den Linden 2.

Please read:


Session 15 – 19 Dec 2018

Last session at the Humboldt Box
Final paper due! Please hand it in via email. The paper counts as submitted if you receive a confirmation in order to avoid situations in which a paper was accidentally not sent.

We complete the term exploring the reconstructed city palace and the Humboldt Box, located on Schlossplatz 5, opposite the Altes Museum and Lustgarten. This session addresses the challenges and opportunities of reconstructing the former royal-then-imperial city palace in Berlin's historic center, and discusses controversial notions of the 'universal' museum. We also explore the wider political, economic, social and urban planning impacts that the reconstruction of a demolished former royal palace and its planned re-opening as a 'center of world culture' has had on the city and its inhabitants.

We meet in front of the Humboldt Box near the city palace on Schlossplatz, across from the Altes Museum.

Reading Response: None.
Classroom Etiquette
In the classroom and during field trips, smartphones should be switched off (No emails and text messages during class, please!). In the classroom, laptops should only be used for taking notes. It will be most practical to take notes during our museum sessions with pencil (pens are not allowed), paper, and clipboard; there will be no space for laptop use.

Your Lecturer
Dr. Annette Loeseke is an art historian and works as a scholar and museum consultant in the fields of museum studies, visitor studies and curatorial studies. She has been a lecturer in museum studies at NYU Berlin, external lecturer in visitor studies at the Reinwardt Academy, Amsterdam University of the Arts and Moscow Higher School of Economics, and a visiting lecturer at Free University Berlin, Technical University Berlin, Humboldt University in Berlin, and Heidelberg University. From June through August 2015, she was a scholar-in-residence at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, where she worked on a study about challenging Western exhibition models. Annette has carried out numerous visitor studies for the National Museums in Berlin (Asian Art Museum, Neues Museum, Museum for Islamic Art), the Humboldt Lab Dahlem, the British Museum, Whitechapel Gallery in London, Shanghai Museum, and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Her research interests include intercultural museum studies and curating, reception processes and practices, theories of the object / artwork / exhibit, and digital museum studies (serial non-linear exhibition formats). Annette holds a PhD in art history from the University of Bonn. She studied art history, philosophy, romance literature and linguistics, and cultural management at universities in Freiburg, Munich, Paris, and London.
Academic Policies

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and offers well-structured arguments in their work. The student writes comprehensive essays / answers to exam questions and their work shows strong evidence of critical thought and extensive reading.

Grade B: The candidate shows a good understanding of the problem and has demonstrated the ability to formulate and execute a coherent research strategy.

Grade C: The work is acceptable and shows a basic grasp of the research problem. However, the work fails to organize findings coherently and is in need of improvement.

Grade D: The work passes because some relevant points are made. However, there may be a problem of poor definition, lack of critical awareness, poor research.

Grade F: The work shows that the research problem is not understood; there is little or no critical awareness and the research is clearly negligible.

Grade Conversion
Your lecturer may use one of the following scales of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

A = 94-100 or 4.0
A- = 90-93 or 3.7
B+ = 87-89 or 3.3
B = 84-86 or 3.0
B- = 80-83 or 2.7
C+ = 77-79 or 2.3
C = 74-76 or 2.0
C- = 70-73 or 1.7
D+ = 67-69 or 1.3
D = 65-66 or 1.0
F = below 65 or 0

Attendance Policy
Participation in all classes is essential for your academic success, especially in courses that meet only once per week. Your attendance in both content and language courses is required and will be checked at each class meeting. As soon as it becomes clear that you cannot attend a class, you must inform your professor by e-mail immediately (i.e. before the start of your class). Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, religious observance or emergencies. Your professor or NYU Berlin's administration may ask you to present a doctor's note or an exceptional permission from NYU Berlin's Director or Wellness Counselor as proof. Emergencies or other exceptional circumstances must be presented to the Director. Doctor's notes need to be submitted to the Academics Office, who will inform your professors. Doctor's notes need to be from a local doctor and carry a signature and a stamp. If you want the reasons for your absence to be treated confidentially, please approach NYU Berlin's Director or Wellness Counselor.
Unexcused absences affect students' grades: In content courses each unexcused absence (equaling one week's worth of classes) leads to a deduction of 2% of the overall grade and may negatively affect your class participation grade. In German Language classes two or three (consecutive or non-consecutive) unexcused absences (equaling one week's worth of classes) lead to a 2% deduction of the overall grade. Three unexcused absences in one content course and five unexcused absences in your German language course may lead to a Fail in that course. Being more than 15 minutes late counts as an unexcused absence. Furthermore, your professor is entitled to deduct points for frequent late arrival or late arrival back from in-class breaks. Please note that for classes involving a field trip, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student's responsibility to arrive in time at the announced meeting point.

Exams, tests and quizzes, deadlines, and oral presentations that are missed due to illness always require a doctor's note as documentation. It is the student's responsibility to produce this doctor's note and submit it to the Academics Office; until this doctor's note is produced the missed assessment is graded with an F and no make-up assessment is scheduled. In content classes, an F in one assignment may lead to failure of the entire class.

Regardless of whether an absence is excused or not, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with the work that was missed.

**Attendance Rules on Religious Holidays**

Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Students who anticipate being absent due to religious observance should notify their lecturer AND NYU Berlin's Academics Office in writing via e-mail one week in advance. If examinations or assignment deadlines are scheduled on the day the student will be absent, the Academics Office will schedule a make-up examination or extend the deadline for assignments. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

**Late Submission of Work**

1. Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor.

2. Late work should be submitted in person to the lecturer or to the Academics Office, who will write on the essay or other work the date and time of submission, in the presence of the student. Another member of the administrative staff may also personally accept the work and will write the date and time of submission on the work, as above.

3. Work submitted late receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100 point scale for each day it is late (excluding weekends and public or religious holidays), unless an extension has been approved (with a doctor's note or by approval of NYU Berlin's administration), in which case the 2 points per day deductions start counting from the day the extended deadline has passed.

4. Without an approved extension, written work submitted more than 5 days (excluding weekends and public or religious holidays) following the submission date receives an F.

5. End of semester essays must be submitted on time.
(6) Students who are late for a written exam have no automatic right to take extra time or to write the exam on another day.

(7) Please remember that university computers do not keep your essays - you must save them elsewhere. Having lost parts of your essay on the university computer is no excuse for a late submission.

**Provisions for Students with Disabilities**
Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see their website for further information.

**Plagiarism Policy**
The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism. Proper referencing of your sources avoids plagiarism (see as one possible help the NYU library guide to referencing styles.

NYU Berlin takes plagiarism very seriously; penalties follow and may exceed those set out by your home school. Your lecturer may ask you to sign a declaration of authorship form.

It is also an offense to submit work for assignments from two different courses that is substantially the same (be it oral presentations or written work). If there is an overlap of the subject of your assignment with one that you produced for another course (either in the current or any previous semester), you MUST inform your professor.

For a summary of NYU Global's academic policies.