Shaping an Educational Landscape: 
*Museumsinsel*

**Course Title**

**Course Number**
ARTH-UA 9850001, SOC-UA 9940001

**SAMPLE SYLLABUS**

**Instructor Contact Information**
Dr. Annette Loeseke  
annette.loeseke@nyu.edu

**Course Details**
Wed, 10:00am to 12:45pm  
NYUB Academic Center, Room "Tempelhof", if not field trip (tbc)

**Prerequisites**
None

**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 will 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 will 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. Previous knowledge of art history, architecture, or German history is not required, but useful.

**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 two workshops on the Pergamon Museum and the Egyptian Museum (Neues
Museum), 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

Class Participation: 10%. Participation includes the preparation of assigned texts and active contribution to class. In order to document the reading of texts and foster class discussion students are required to hand in a reading response (between 300 and 400 words) to one assigned text of their choice (unless stated otherwise) by 3pm 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: 10%. Oral presentation of approx. 15 minutes together with a one-page handout summarizing the main aspects, followed by a brief Q&A session. The presentation 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.

Midterm exam: 20%. A written, in-class test of 60 minutes.

Workshop/Paper I Provenance: 20%. In a special session on Friday, 31 Mar 2017, we will focus on the provenance of objects. For the paper on provenance, students work in groups during the workshop 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 19 Apr 2017.

Workshop/Paper II Pergamon Museum: 20%. For the workshop and paper on the Pergamon Museum, students work in groups to analyze the current display and communication strategies, identify problems, create a plan for improving displays and communication strategies, and hand in an individual paper of 5 pages (double-spaced) as well as a ppt. Paper due 3 May 2017.

Final paper: 20%. 5 pages, double-spaced. Participants choose 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 17 May 2017.

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

Assessment Expectations

Grade A: The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and offers well-structured arguments in his/her work. The student writes comprehensive essays / answers to exam questions and his/her 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 instructor may use one of the following scales of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alternatively:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. Doctor's notes need to be submitted to the Academic 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. Furthermore, your professor is also entitled to deduct points for frequent late arrival to class or late arrival back from in-class breaks. Being more than 15 minutes late for class counts as an unexcused absence. 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.

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 http://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html

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 (http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-andwellness/students-with-disabilities.html) 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: http://nyu.libguides.com/citations).

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 please see: www.nyu.edu/global/academic-policies

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


Books can be bought at Dussmann in Friedrichstraße 90, where the books are pre-ordered for students. Additionally, 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: http://guides.nyu.edu/global/berlin or follow the link on NYU Berlin's website (Academics/Facilities & Services).

Supplemental Text(s) (not required to purchase)


Session 1 – 1 Feb 2017

Museum Studies – Museum Island
In the first session we will discuss terms and definitions. UNESCO’s International Council of Museums (ICOM) defines a museum as follows: “A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.” As an introduction to the topic and the course we will 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.

Session 2 – 8 Feb 2017

Visitor Studies – Audience Development – Museum Education
We will discuss recent trends in visitor studies, audience development, and museum education, as well as policies of social inclusion and participation.

Please read one of the texts by Tony Bennett or Thomas Gaethgens, and one of the other assigned texts for this session (2 reading responses for this session):


Session 3 – 15 Feb 2017

**Field trip: Altes Museum/Old Museum**

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

Please read:


Session 4 – 22 Feb 2017

**Field trip: Neues Museum/New Museum – Museum for Proto-History and Early History**
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 will
visit the Neues Museum and talk about its genesis and the cultural historical concept for the
presentation of the various exhibits. A visit to the Egyptian Collection of the New Museum is
scheduled for April 2017.

Please read:
Toews, John E. (2004): “Schinkel's Heritage in the 1840s: Fragments of a New Historicism,” in
Becoming Historical. Cultural Reformation and Public Memory in Early Nineteenth-Century
Ziesemer, John, Newton, Melanie (2009): The Neues Museum Berlin. Conserving, Restoring,

Session 5 – 1 Mar 2017

Field trip: Alte Nationalgalerie/Old National Gallery
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 will 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 will consider the opening of the National Gallery for international
contemporary art under the directorship of Hugo von Tschudi in late 19th century.

Please read:
Forster-Hahn, Françoise (1996): “Shrine of Art or Signature of a New Nation? The National
Gallery(ies) in Berlin, 1848-1968”, in The Formation of National Collections of Art and
Archaeology, ed. by Gwendolyn Wright, Hanover/London: University Press of New England,
pp. 78-99.
Grodzinski, Veronica (2011): "Wilhelm II., Hugo von Tschudi and Jewish Patronage of French
Modern Art," in Jewish Collectors and Their Contribution to Modern Culture, ed. by Annette
Paret, Peter (2001): "The Tschudi Affair," in German Encounters with Modernism, 1840-1945,
ed. by Peter Paret, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 92-118.
Collectors and Their Contribution to Modern Culture in the 19th and 20th Centuries," in Jewish
Collectors and Their Contribution to Modern Culture, ed. by Annette Weber, Heidelberg:
Winter Verlag, pp. 11-17.

Session 6 – 8 Mar 2017

Classroom meeting: Midterm Exam at the AC/Kulturbrauerei!
Subsequent to the midterm we are going to summarize what we have seen and do a
workshop on visitor orientation.
15 Mar 2017 – Spring Break – No Class

Session 7 – 22 Mar 2017

Classroom meeting: Session on Exhibition Design at the AC/Kulturbrauerei!
We will meet in class for a seminar and workshop on exhibition design.
No reading response due.

Session 8 – 29 Mar 2017

Field Trip: Egyptian Museum (Neues Museum)
The session at the Egyptian Museum is called "Egyptianizing: Exhibition Strategies in Berlin's Egyptian Museum from the 19th to 21st Centuries". We will 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. During and after this session, students will work in groups to develop concepts for improving the presentation of the complex multi-layered narratives to visitors.

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 articels pp. 421-437, OR diverse articles pp. 452-468.

Session 9 – Friday, 31 Mar 2017, 13:30am-16:30pm

PROVENANCE WORKSHOP

We will meet at the coat check in the Neues Museum at 10:00am.

Field trip: Altes Museum and Neues Museum – Provenance Workshop/Assignment
In this workshop we connect with the course on art history/archaeology to focus on information about the provenance of certain objects, their finding conditions or purchase on the art market. We will analyze how and if the museums make this a subject of discussion and how this could be communicated to the public. This session is mandatory. Students who enroll in the class commit to participating on this date. To offset the Friday session, there is no class on Wednesday, 12 Apr 2017.

Assignment: 20%. Essay (5 pages, double-spaced). For the paper on provenance, students work in groups during the workshop, however hand in an individual paper (introduction,
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 will define the characteristic features of the “style room” and investigate Bode’s intentions by taking into account the contemporary crisis of museums.

Please read:


12 Apr 2017 – NO CLASS (to offset the Friday-session: Workshop on Provenance)

Session 11 – 19 Apr 2017

Field trip: Pergamon Museum  (Workshop /Assignment)  
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 will 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.
Assignment: 20%. For the paper on the Pergamon Museum, students work in groups to analyze the current display and communication strategies, identify problems, create a plan for improving displays and communication strategies, and hand in an individual paper of 5 pages (double-spaced) as well as a ppt. Paper due 3 May 2017.

Please read:


Session 12 – 26 Apr 2017

Field trip: Museum for 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 will 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 13 – 3 May 2017

Field trip: German Historical Museum
Right next to Museum Island, the German Historical Museum stages "2000 Years of German History". We will examine the narrative and display strategies of the permanent exhibition.

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

Please read:

Session 14 – 10 May 2017

Field trip: German Historical Museum: Temporary Exhibition “German Colonialism”

We will visit the temporary exhibition on Germany's colonial past “German Colonialism: Fragments Past and Present” at the German Historical Museum, located just off Museum Island, Unter den Linden 2.

We will meet at the main entrance of the museum, Unter den Linden 2.

Please read:


Session 15 – 17 May 2017

Field trip: Humboldt Box

We will visit the Humboldt Box located on Schlossplatz 5, across from the Altes Museum and Pleasure Garden and in front of the reconstructed City Palace. The Humboldt Box has served as a PR tool for the so-called Humboldt-Forum in the reconstructed City Palace that is scheduled to open in 2019 and house the Ethnological Museum and Asian Art Museum of the National Museums in Berlin which are currently located in Berlin-Dahlem in the South-West of Berlin. We will discuss postcolonial presentation strategies and address the challenges and opportunities of reconstructing the former royal/imperial City Palace in Berlin's historic city center, and discuss re-emerging narratives of the 'universal museum'. We will also explore the wider political, economic, social and urban planning impacts that the reconstruction of a destroyed former royal palace and its planned re-opening as a museum of 'world culture' has had on the city and its inhabitants.

We will meet at the main entrance of the Box across from the Altes Museum
Final paper due! No Reading Responses due. However, please read one of the following texts:


Classroom Etiquette
In the classroom and during field trips, smartphones should be switched off. 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 exhibition development. She has been an instructor in museum studies at NYU Berlin, an associated lecturer in visitor studies at the Master-of-Museology Program of the Reinwardt Academy, Amsterdam University of the Arts, an associated lecturer in visitor studies at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow, and a visiting lecturer at Free 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. Annette has carried out numerous visitor studies for the National Museums in Berlin (Asian Art Museum, Neues Museum, Museum of Islamic Art, Humboldt Lab Dahlem), The British Museum, Whitechapel Gallery, Shanghai Museum, and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. Her research interests include intercultural museum studies and curating, reception processes and practices, theories of the artwork/exhibit, and digital museum studies (non-linear formats/exhibition models). 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.