

# MUSEUMS AND SOCIETY

<http://krieger.jhu.edu/museums/>

The program in Museums and Society is concerned with the institutions that shape knowledge and understanding through the collection, preservation, interpretation, and/or presentation of art, material culture, heritage, or natural and scientific specimens. It focuses on the role of museums (broadly defined), cultural stewards, and memory keepers, and their collections in societies past and present.

A minor in Museums and Society complements study in a range of fields, including but not limited to anthropology, archaeology, history, history of art, and history of science and technology. Many courses include visits to or focused work in local and regional institutions, including on-campus collections (Archaeological Museum, Homewood Museum, Evergreen Museum and Library, and the Sheridan Libraries).

Whether they are researching a historical artifact or debating the obligations of public institutions, students in the program are challenged to approach their discipline from a new angle. While some may choose to pursue a museum career, the program has the larger goal of encouraging critical, careful thinking about some of the most influential cultural institutions of our day.

## Programs

- Museums and Society, Minor (<https://e-catalogue.jhu.edu/arts-sciences/full-time-residential-programs/degree-programs/museums-society/museums-society-minor/>)

For current course information and registration go to <https://sis.jhu.edu/classes/>

## Courses

### **AS.389.140. Antiquity and Its Afterlives: Books, Art, and Culture from Ancient Greece and Rome to the Modern Era. 3 Credits.**

This course explores the surviving “objects” of the ancient Greco-Roman world, and the histories of their excavation, organization, and preservation in museum and library collections. From ancient objects and sculptures, ancient Greek papyri, scrolls, and late-antique and medieval books, to the revival of Greek and Roman traditions in the Renaissance and Enlightenment, we will learn how these objects help shape and transform our understanding of the ancient world over two millennia, up to the formation of the great antiquities museums of the modern era. This hands-on course will take advantage of ancient objects and texts in Baltimore, at the Walters Art Museum, the Baltimore Museum of Art, as well as the Archaeology Museum at JHU and the rare book and manuscript collections of the Sheridan Libraries at JHU.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences  
AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)  
Writing Intensive

### **AS.389.155. The History of “Fake News” from The Flood to The Apocalypse. 3 Credits.**

A sweeping historical engagement with fakes, lies, and forgeries from the ancient world to the digital age, explored through JHU’s Bibliotheca Fictiva collection of rare books and manuscripts—the largest research collection on this subject in the world. Topics include ancient papyri, biblical apocrypha, medieval manuscript forgeries, archaeological and textual forgeries of the Renaissance, false travelogues of the Age of Exploration, pecuniary forgery in the 19th century, art forgery, and the advent of “fake news” in the digital era.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences  
AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)  
EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)  
Writing Intensive

### **AS.389.165. Hands on History: Material Cultures of Knowledge from Antiquity to the Digital Age. 3 Credits.**

This hands-on course deals entirely with JHU’s collections of rare books and manuscripts as a springboard to build skills in the close visual and physical examination of rare books and manuscripts. You will investigate the technological and aesthetic transformation of textual artifacts from ancient papyri to Gutenberg imprints to digital surrogates, and contribute to the accumulation of historical clues about their meaning and significance as material cultural objects. You will learn what goes into curating and conserving book and manuscript collections today, and how to evaluate the quality and significance of collections. Materials/topics will include ancient Babylonian cuneiform and Egyptian papyri; medieval illuminated manuscripts; incunabula; Renaissance illustrated books of the Scientific Revolution and Spanish Golden Age; cheap print and unique ephemera; early books by and about women; forgeries; and “digital humanities” initiatives at JHU. Students will make regular visits to the Special Collections Reading Room in the BLC throughout the semester.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences  
AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)  
Writing Intensive

### **AS.389.201. Introduction to the Museum: Past and Present. 3 Credits.**

This course surveys museums, from their origins to their most contemporary forms, in the context of broader historical, intellectual, and cultural trends including the social movements of the 20th century. Anthropology, art, history, and science museums are considered.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences  
AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4)  
EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)  
Writing Intensive

### **AS.389.202. Introduction to the Museum: Issues and Ideas. 3 Credits.**

American museums today face ongoing practical, political and ethical challenges, including economic difficulties, technology and globalization, ongoing debates over the ownership and interpretation of culture and pressure to demonstrate their social value. This course considers how museums are answering these challenges and projects into the future. NOTE: Class usually meets 1:30- 4:00 PM, except for days with field trips (when class will meet 1:30- 5:00 PM instead).

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences  
AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)  
EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

**AS.389.233. Exhibiting Cultures. 3 Credits.**

This course critically examines the role of exhibitions in shaping cultural narratives and public understanding of people and places across the globe. Students will explore the history, theory, and practice of exhibiting cultures in museums, galleries, and digital platforms. Topics include curatorial ethics, representation and identity, postcolonial critiques, audience engagement, and the impact of emerging technologies on exhibition design. Through case studies and hands-on projects, students will analyze how cultural heritage is displayed and interpreted, considering issues of appropriation, authenticity, and inclusivity. The course culminates in a final project where students conceptualize and design their own cultural exhibition proposal.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

**AS.389.250. Introduction to Conservation. 3 Credits.**

This course will introduce you to the theoretical and practical underpinnings of the conservation profession: who gets to be a conservator, where we work and how. What are its origins and how has it evolved? At the end of the course you will be able to: outline the different roles and responsibilities of conservators working in museums, libraries/archives and in private practice, situate the field of conservation within the larger cultural heritage sector and articulate the ways conservators contribute to institutional goals of preservation, access, research and learning, evaluate the risks and vulnerabilities faced by conservators in today's society, and apply theoretical knowledge to document and stabilize items from JHU Special Collections.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

**AS.389.260. Cultural Heritage in Crisis. 3 Credits.**

We explore the possible futures of cultural heritage and museums in times of accelerating climate change, pandemics, armed conflict and political and social turmoil by examining past and contemporary events.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

**AS.389.265. Hopkins History Through the Archives. 3 Credits.**

Archives are where history is documented, and archives have tremendous power over whose stories get told. This course will critically examine the relationship between archival practice and public history by using John Hopkins University as a case study. We will work closely with archivists in the Special Collections Department and archives across Baltimore to get a firsthand look at how local archives shape public history, collective memory, and institutional silences. Students will learn how public historians, archivists, community activists, and students themselves can work together to do reparative research that advances social justice in their own communities.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

**AS.389.280. Of and For Everyone: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access in the Museum. 3 Credits.**

How are museums responding to the pressures to be more equitable, inclusive, and accessible towards public audiences and their staff? Students go behind the scenes of the Smithsonian, Baltimore Museum of Industry and Baltimore Museum of Art to meet with working groups and staff charged with transforming their institutions. Includes site visits, hands-on experiences and research on best practices.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

Writing Intensive

**AS.389.305. Oral History: Recording Voices Today for the Archives of Tomorrow. 3 Credits.**

Oral Histories are a means by which history is both generated and preserved. Talking to and recording people in their own voices is immensely valuable, but also brings challenges. This course equips students with the ideas, theoretical framework and methods of making and interpreting oral histories and provides hands-on experience researching, designing and creating an archival record of our time to professional standards. Our project focuses on Baltimore's Confederate monuments. We will interview key stakeholders in debates that led to their removal and in ongoing conversations about what to do with them now.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

**AS.389.313. Data and the Digital in Museums. 3 Credits.**

Digital media play an increasingly significant role in museums from how museums share and narrate their collections online to the use of AI to catalog things and create metadata about them. This class explores critically how digital tools work to tell stories and invites students to unpack the resulting museum narratives. Students will learn by doing, creating a digital exhibit of five museum objects using Omeka and later transforming their exhibits by creating data of their own design to tell a new story about their objects. This new narrative will apply critical perspectives considered in the course such as, but not limited to, repatriation, critical cataloging, and geo-politics.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

**AS.389.314. Researching the Africana Archive: Black Cemetery Stories. 3 Credits.**

This course addresses the historic role of the African American cemetery as sacred and political space, with important links to other Black institutions. Operating in partnership with Mount Auburn Cemetery in Baltimore, owned and operated by the Sharp Street Memorial United Methodist Church, we will visit the cemetery and related locations in Baltimore throughout the semester. Our collective goal is to research and share stories that further the interests of these important and vulnerable sites.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

**AS.389.315. Ancient Color: The Technologies and Meanings of Color in Antiquity. 3 Credits.**

What role did the colorful surfaces of sculptures, vessels and textiles play in the ancient world? We examine historical texts and recent scholarly and scientific publications on the technologies and meanings of color in antiquity, and use imaging and analytical techniques to study polychromed objects from the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

**AS.389.322. Tigers to Teapots: Collecting, Cataloging, and Hoarding in America. 3 Credits.**

This course examines material culture through the lens of personal collecting. Focusing on the United States, students will explore how collectors influenced the holdings of the nation's museums, including JHU's Evergreen and Homewood Museum, and contemplate how collecting, for public and private purposes, shapes status and taste in America. This course will also address how collections are organized, displayed, and conserved and will delve into psychological and environmental aspects of collecting and hoarding.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

**AS.389.325. Women of the Book: Female Miracle Workers, Mystics, and Material Culture, 1450-1800. 3 Credits.**

From psycho-spiritual autobiographers to mystical bi-locating nuns, convent crèche-keepers to choristers of sacred music, from rock-star-status mystics to the hidden careers of women printers, engravers, and miracle-makers, this course will explore the remarkable intellectual, cultural, and imaginative contributions of women who found refuge, agency, and power within alternative lives.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

Writing Intensive

**AS.389.326. Curating Gertrude Stein: Queer/Modernist/Celebrity. 3 Credits.**

Gertrude Stein was a writer who was disparaged, yet wildly popular; a celebrity as well as an object of scorn; openly yet invisibly queer. Reading selections of Stein's writing and that of her friends, lovers, and enemies, we will study her networks, art collection, and cultural status, and work extensively with rare books and archival materials, to explore these dilemmas. Student research will be incorporated into a major exhibition at the George Peabody Library in spring 2024.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

**AS.389.341. Museum Education for Today's Audiences. 3 Credits.**

Go behind the scenes of the Baltimore Museum of Art's Education Department and develop and implement programs for college students in conjunction with an exhibition about women and art in early modern Europe.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

**AS.389.344. Monuments and Memory in Washington DC. 3 Credits.**

Traditionally defined as placeholders of memory, monuments and memorials supposedly help us remember and reflect. But who, what and how do they remember? Who decides how and where they are built? This course poses these and other questions about the politics of public commemoration amid the rich monumental landscape of the nation's capital. Site visits allow students to experience monuments as living, built ideas and ideals, and to participate in the conversation among memorials. For example, how does the Vietnam Veterans Memorial—which remains the most original and poignant built expression of remembrance—dialogue with the nearby Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial? And how is Lincoln's legacy recorded differently in the contested Emancipation Memorial in Lincoln Park? Onsite engagement with DC monuments will be paired with discussing scholarly works on the theory and history of monuments and reflecting on talks by members of the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission, the National Park Service, and the American Battle Monuments Commission. This integrative learning approach invites students to grapple with the complex and ever-evolving process of making and maintaining public memory while placing recent controversies in a broader historical perspective.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4), Democracy (FA4.1)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

**AS.389.347. Landscaping Baltimore: Interpreting the City through its Parks, Campuses, and Neighborhoods. 3 Credits.**

This course will explore the landscape history of Baltimore City, including JHU's Homewood campus, Evergreen Museum, and surrounding areas. Special attention will be paid to the role of the Frederick Law Olmsted, and the Olmsted design firm, who played an important role in the development of several Baltimore parks and neighborhoods. This class will culminate in either small student exhibition or creation of a public-facing tour.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

**AS.389.348. Queer Oral History. 3 Credits.**

Students learn to conduct, analyze, and interpret their own oral histories as they contribute to a wide-ranging project documenting queer worldmaking in the Baltimore-Washington D.C. region. We engage with scholarship from performance studies, queer of color critique, LGBTQ history, and public humanities to consider the politics of storytelling and the promises of public-facing oral history projects. Students have the option of developing podcasts, multimedia projects, and public humanities proposals as their final assignment.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

**AS.389.350. Greening Museums in Times of Climate and Ecological Crisis. 3 Credits.**

Museums across the globe are rewriting their infrastructure, energy use, waste management, and exhibitions and conservation policies and practices to respond to our ecological crises. Students will conduct field research and analyze data; investigate “next” practices, case studies, and the challenges particular to museums; and write a white paper; all with an eye towards contributing to the BMA’s Turn Again to the Earth initiative - an eco-challenge, sustainability planning, and suite of art exhibitions dedicated to environmental themes.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

**AS.389.405. Visualizing Africa. 3 Credits.**

Examines the history of African art in the Euro-American world, focusing on the ways that Western institutions have used African artworks to construct narratives about Africa and its billion residents.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

**AS.389.407. What Goes Around Comes Around: Objects, Architecture, and Memory in America. 3 Credits.**

Many of the buildings and objects that fill our daily lives deliberately invoke earlier styles. In the United States, one form that has been revisited over and over again is the “colonial” style, with “colonial” serving as a catch-all phrase for the material culture associated with the settlement of North America by Europeans and the societies that these settlers built in the 17th and 18th centuries. This course interrogates the history and motivations for the United States’ many colonial revivals and the role these played in shaping American museums and their collections. Students will contribute research, writing, and object selection toward the 2025 Homewood Museum exhibition “If Walls Could Talk” which will explore the many lives of Homewood House, a National Historic Landmark, on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of JHU and the 250th anniversary of U.S. Independence.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

**AS.389.410. Public Humanities & Social Justice. 3 Credits.**

Investigates collaborative humanities methods that foster democratic participation among publics more broadly conceived than the academy, including participatory action research, collaborative oral history, indigenous research methods, interactive theater, participatory archival practices, and cooperative models for connecting art, artists, and audiences. Course focuses on queer, trans, and Black histories in Baltimore, includes excursions to local cultural institutions, and is co-taught by prominent public humanists, artists, and activists from Baltimore and beyond.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Democracy (FA4.1), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

**AS.389.420. Curatorial Seminar: European Art. 3 Credits.**

Working in collaboration with staff from the Baltimore Museum of Art, students assess the opportunities and challenges of the European collections; research select objects; contribute to the department’s collections development plan; and conceptualize new, more global and more inclusive approaches to the displays.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

**AS.389.430. D.C. Career Trek: Museums, Galleries, Archives. 1 Credit.**

This experiential course introduces undergraduate and graduate students to careers in galleries, libraries, archives and museums. Students will discover the relevance of humanities skills and training to the “GLAM” sector and practice translating these into resumes and cover letters for a sector projected to grow 12% over the next decade. Students will apply design thinking to their professional plans and ideate and prototype career paths. Course includes a 5-day trek to D.C. to network with D.C. professionals; participate in workshops; and tour front and back of house operations at select D.C. institutions.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

**AS.389.502. Independent Study- Museum and Society. 1 - 3 Credits.**

Independent research under a faculty mentor.

**Prerequisite(s):** You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration, Online Forms.

**AS.389.521. Capstone in Museums and Society. 1 - 3 Credits.**

The Capstone allows students to develop and carry out their own, hands-on research project in a museum, collection, archive, or other living resource. Final projects must involve some form of public presentation (exhibition, lecture, poster, web-based, etc.) and a work of self-reflection (journal, brief paper, blog, or other). Projects must be approved and overseen by a supervising faculty member and approved by the Program’s Director, in keeping with the University’s Independent Work Policy. Instructor permission required.

**Prerequisite(s):** You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration, Online Forms.

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

**AS.389.522. Capstone in Museum and Society. 1 - 3 Credits.**

The Capstone allows students to develop and carry out their own, hands-on research project in a museum, collection, archive, or other living resource. Final projects must involve some form of public presentation (exhibition, poster, web-based, etc.) and a work of self-reflection (journal, brief paper, blog, or other). Projects must be approved and overseen by a supervising faculty member and approved by the Program’s Director, in keeping with the University’s Independent Work Policy.

**Prerequisite(s):** You must request Independent Academic Work using the Independent Academic Work form found in Student Self-Service: Registration, Online Forms.;AS.389.201;AS.389.202

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)



**AS.389.801. Graduate Independent Research. 3 Credits.**  
Museums and Society independent research for graduate students.

## Cross Listed Courses

### Anthropology

**AS.070.361. The Future of Here: An Art and Anthropology Studio. 3 Credits.**

This class is an occasion for speculative anthropology, a chance to reimagine this place (an American city on the Jones Falls river) in a future beyond the bustle of our fossil-fueled present. What culture might people of that distant time produce, and how might they make creative use of the many things we leave behind? In this class, we will work together as anthropologists and artists of another time, crafting an inventive and collaborative story about a culture to come, and the material artifacts of a very different collective life. The class will be co-taught by anthropologist Anand Pandian and visual artist Jordan Tierney. We will nurture our imaginations through experiential practices of observing nature, collecting materials, and assembling artifacts. What we build will serve as the core of a spring 2025 local museum exhibition we will plan together.

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

**AS.070.661. The Future of Here: An Art and Anthropology Studio. 3 Credits.**

This class is an occasion for speculative anthropology, a chance to reimagine this place (an American city on the Jones Falls river) in a future beyond the bustle of our fossil-fueled present. What culture might people of that distant time produce, and how might they make creative use of the many things we leave behind? In this class, we will work together as anthropologists and artists of another time, crafting an inventive and collaborative story about a culture to come, and the material artifacts of a very different collective life. The class will be co-taught by anthropologist Anand Pandian and visual artist Jordan Tierney. We will nurture our imaginations through experiential practices of observing nature, collecting materials, and assembling artifacts. What we build will serve as the core of a spring 2025 local museum exhibition we will plan together.

### Classics

**AS.040.137. Archaeology at the Crossroads: The Ancient Eastern Mediterranean through Objects in the JHU Archaeological Museum. 3 Credits.**

This seminar investigates the Eastern Mediterranean as a space of intense cultural interaction in the Late Bronze Age, exploring how people, ideas, and things not only came into contact but deeply influenced one another through maritime trade, art, politics, etc. In addition to class discussion, we will work hands-on with artifacts from the JHU Archaeological Museum, focusing on material from Cyprus.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

### English

**AS.060.617. Black Print Culture. 3 Credits.**

Students interested in black print culture will engage in intensive archival research, both collaborative and individual, using the Sheridan Library's Rare Book and Manuscript collections. Texts include poems, printed lectures, pamphlets, novels, periodicals, ephemera, correspondence, etc., alongside relevant critical and theoretical reading.

Distribution Area: Humanities

Writing Intensive

### First Year Seminars

**AS.001.164. FYS: Curating Women. 3 Credits.**

From the women who created the Museum of Modern Art in New York City to the "Because of Her" working group across the Smithsonian's museums, this First-Year Seminar investigates the hidden women of many distinct social positions, racial and ethnic identities whose labor shaped the museums we know today and considers how museums tell the stories of women, including transgender women, in the arts, sciences, and history.

Distribution Area: Humanities

**AS.001.169. FYS: Inventing a City - Exploring Baltimore Through Maps and Mapping. 3 Credits.**

Using maps from the 17th century to the present, students in this First-Year Seminar will explore the historical and contemporary landscape of their new hometown – Baltimore. These primary sources will show how Baltimore was invented and developed in popular imagination to become the most vital port on the US Eastern Seaboard, but also a symbol American post-industrial decline. Students will have the chance to map how they see Baltimore, by learning and applying Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and converting geospatial data into visual stories. With the goal of fostering a deeper understanding of this complex city, and a student's place in it, the class will include explorations outside of the classroom. The course will culminate with the creation of a small exhibit whose content and venue will be decided upon mutually by students during the course of the semester.

Distribution Area: Humanities

**AS.001.215. FYS: Mosques, Museums, and the Mind's Eye: Discovering Islamic Art in Person. 3 Credits.**

Despite its association with distant regions and time periods, Islamic art has a flourishing presence in today's America, represented by rich museum collections, modern buildings designed in historical styles, and vibrant scholarly networks. This seminar explores how we, from the vantage point of twenty-first-century Baltimore, might experience works of Islamic art in ways that are informed by their own cultural contexts while also acknowledging the challenges involved in bridging this gap. We will spend much of the course engaging with objects and architecture in person, with visits planned to the recently reinstalled Islamic galleries at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, the Islamic Center of Washington, DC, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. You will be invited to handle artifacts in person and to try your hand at calligraphy, one of the most distinctive and esteemed Islamic artforms. In the classroom setting, we will read and discuss translations of primary sources written by historical practitioners and consumers of Islamic art, along with examples of modern scholarship that seek to understand the Islamic tradition from a variety of perspectives. As well as learning about such perspectives, you will be encouraged to develop and share—in presentations and written assignments—your own ideas about Islamic art, building on the close, firsthand encounters that run throughout the seminar.

Distribution Area: Humanities

**AS.001.250. FYS: Queer Archives. 3 Credits.**

This First-Year Seminar offers an in-depth exploration of Baltimore's queer and trans archives, expansively defined, engaging with interdisciplinary scholarship on "the archive" within queer and trans studies. Beginning with a brief survey of U.S. LGBTQ history, students delve into archival research methods and hands-on explorations in JHU Special Collections. We then engage with queer theory, performance studies, and public humanities scholarship to ask what we can know of the recoverable past and what silences the archive might contain, approaching the queer archive as a complex record of activity that includes ephemera of events, shows, and collective affect; innuendo and gossip; residues of queer nightlife; performance and gesture. We ground these theoretical explorations by visiting Baltimore-based institutional and non-institutional archives, where we engage with 1970s LGBT newspapers and 1960s medical documents, oral histories recorded by local trans artists, street youth photography, and the embodied archives of vogue performance. Throughout the course, we underscore the transformative potential of engaging with the queer and trans past to forge solidarities in the present and map more just and gorgeous futures.

**AS.001.261. FYS: Museum Matters. 3 Credits.**

Museums are crucibles, places where public memory, identity, and cultural values are debated, hammered out and refined. This First-Year Seminar examines this premise through guided discussion, close looking at exhibitions past and present, written reflection, and visits that go behind the scenes of many of Baltimore's history, art, industry, and science museums. Just what is a museum and how does it compare to other sorts of cultural institutions? What responsibilities do museums have to their communities? to their collections? How do they balance the two? How are they adapting to broader social, economic, and cultural changes? And what is their future? Learn how to decode museums. Discover the varied roles they play in the life of a city like Baltimore.

**AS.001.274. FYS: Queer Performativity. 3 Credits.**

This First-Year Seminar examines the intersections of queer theory, performance studies, and LGBTQ history with a focus on "queer worldmaking" the ways in which performances—both theatrical and everyday rituals—can establish oppositional publics and politics. We take an interdisciplinary approach to historical research, considering embodied memory, gesture, and ritual as methods for learning, preserving, and transmitting cultural knowledge. Case studies include the ballroom and voguing scene in Baltimore and beyond, migratory street youth subcultures, drag performance, and queer nightlife.

**History****AS.100.406. Public History and Engaged Research. 3 Credits.**

How do we interpret history for and with broad public audiences? This class introduces students to public history and community-engaged research, emphasizing collaborative knowledge production between academic and non-academic publics. Case studies include virtual reality experiments, walking tours, exhibitions, public art and performance, activist oral history, and community mapping. Students receive training in oral history and podcasting, benefit from guest speakers, and explore methods such as participatory action research, indigenous research methodologies, and shared authority.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

**History of Art****AS.010.307. Diplomats, Dealers, and Diggers: The Birth of Archaeology and the Rise of Collecting from the 19th c. to Today. 3 Credits.**

This course investigates the confluence of archaeology as a discipline, collecting of cultural heritage, and their ongoing roles in the socio-politics of the Western world and Middle East. It focuses primarily on the Middle East, first tracing a narrative history of archaeology in the region during the 19th and early 20th centuries, with its explorers, diplomats, missionaries and gentlemen-scholars. It then examines the relationship of archaeology to the creation of the encyclopedic museum and collecting practices more generally, considering how these activities profoundly shaped the modern world, including the antiquities market and looting. A central theme is the production of knowledge through these activities and how this contributes to aspects of power and (self-)representation.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

**AS.010.355. Exhibiting Picasso: Modern Painting Now. 3 Credits.**

This course offers a critical introduction to modernist painting and its eurocentric art history by focusing on the work and reception of Pablo Picasso. At the center of the course is Picasso's celebrated yet controversial painting *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)* of 1907. Our point of departure is the recent rehang of the New York MoMA's historical Cubism gallery. For decades, Picasso's *Les Femmes d'Alger* was positioned there as the prescient "masterwork," surrounded by other cubist paintings. In 2019, however, the painting was thought-provokingly juxtaposed with Faith Ringgold's work *American People Series #20: Die of 1967*, a figurative painting responding to civil rights struggles in the United States. What occasioned this curatorial intervention? Why does Picasso's painting remain such a point of contention in exhibiting modern and contemporary art today? And what other curatorial and art historical strategies might be used to continue to decenter the canon? We will deepen our discussions with close-looking and collaborative visual analysis of paintings in the Phillips Collection and the National Gallery in Washington D.C. as well as local collections. We will also consult online collections and, in our course readings, consider formalist, social, feminist, and decolonial approaches to modern art. No prior familiarity with Picasso or modern art is necessary. Students from all fields are welcome.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

**AS.010.369. The American Art Museum: Origins, Mission, and Civic Purpose. 3 Credits.**

This course will explore the American art museum as a distinctive cultural and political idea. Tracing its origins to the ancient world, the American art museum was descended more immediately from institutions created during the European Enlightenment, but differing with regard to overall mission and civic purpose. This course will explore the various roles played by museums in American society, focusing on programmatic content, organizational design, funding and operating practices, and the particular issues that have arisen in recent years in the areas of cultural property restitution, collection development, special exhibitions, governance and funding, and the larger question of civic purpose.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

**AS.010.444. Classics/History of Art Research Lab. 3 Credits.**

This research-driven course focuses on joining together and mapping the largest known corpus of mosaic fragments (1st-6th centuries CE) from the heterogenous ancient city of Antioch at the mouth of the Orontes river (modern Antakya, Turkey). These mosaic fragments have been dispersed to institutions and museums across the globe, and their reunifications tell a series of stories about ancient Mediterranean diversity, early 20th century archaeology, and contemporary collection histories. Building from work completed in Phase I (Spring 2020) and Phase II (Fall 2021) and in conversation with a global network of Antioch researchers, students in this course will continue to research and digitally reunite mosaic fragments, including those in the collection of the Baltimore Museum of Art, delve deeper into the archival record associated with the early 20th century excavations, of which Baltimore was among the sponsors, and explore contemporary object biographies of the corpus, part of which remains in the region devastated by the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria in Spring 2023. Our research will center questions of craft, trade, materials and labor in ancient Antioch, modern archaeological practice, and contemporary museums. No prerequisites required and students from all majors welcome.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3), Engagement with Society (FA4)

**AS.010.497. Reply-All: Letter-Writing in Art and History. 3 Credits.**

From embellished silver pens and abolitionist secretary desks to contemporary artists manipulating historical postcards and making fax collages, this course will explore the materiality, technologies, and aesthetics of written communications from the 18th century to the present. This research-centered course will engage directly with objects in the Baltimore Museum of Art collection, in preparation for an upcoming exhibition. Topics include the development of specific decorative arts and designs in conjunction with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century postal and bureaucratic history, letter-writing as a mode of resistance, strategic illegibility and asemic writing as a form of critical artistic practice, and the importance of mail art as conceptual and institutional critique.

Includes hands-on work in the museum and class visits with BMA curator Dr. Leslie Cozzi.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Ethics and Foundations (FA5), Projects and Methods (FA6)

**AS.010.697. Reply-All: Letter-Writing in Art and History. 3 Credits.**

From embellished silver pens and abolitionist secretary desks to contemporary artists manipulating historical postcards and making fax collages, this course will explore the materiality, technologies, and aesthetics of written communications from the 18th century to the present. This research-centered course will engage directly with objects in the Baltimore Museum of Art collection, in preparation for an upcoming exhibition. Topics include the development of specific decorative arts and designs in conjunction with eighteenth- and nineteenth-century postal and bureaucratic history, letter-writing as a mode of resistance, strategic illegibility and asemic writing as a form of critical artistic practice, and the importance of mail art as conceptual and institutional critique.

Includes hands-on work in the museum and class visits with BMA curator Dr. Leslie Cozzi.

Distribution Area: Humanities

**Interdepartmental****AS.360.410. Humanities Research Lab: The Dutch Americas. 3 Credits.**

The Dutch East India Company, or VOC, is historically and art historically well documented and firmly understood. But the Dutch also had significant holdings to the west via the Dutch West India Company, or WIC. They operated and held outposts in the present-day United States (New York/New Amsterdam), Caribbean (Surinam, Curaçao, Bonaire), Latin America (Brazil), and West Africa. Despite the abundance of materials associated with the WIC from this wide geography, these have been scarcely assessed by art historians, and a defined and comprehensive corpus has never been assembled. This class will act as a research lab in which to do so. In research teams, students will map artworks and objects created from that broad, transnational cultural ambit—categories that might include maps, landscape paintings, still life paintings featuring American flora and fauna, botanical illustrations, plantation architecture, luxury objects made from precious raw materials gathered in the Americas, the urban environment of slavery—and develop individual research questions around them. The class will run with a partner lab in the form of a course led by Professor Stephanie Porras at Tulane University. The course will feature speakers; and there is potential for funded travel to conduct research. We will start at the ground level; no previous knowledge about the field is required. Students from all disciplines are welcome.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

Writing Intensive

## Islamic Studies

### AS.194.256. Museums, Communities, and the Sacred. 3 Credits.

This community-engaged course is co-created by a scholar and curator with expertise in religion, art, and material culture, and taught in partnership with the Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA), and centers how museums engage with the sacred. Recognizing that museums have traditionally been under-equipped to respond to the social concerns that animate their local communities, the BMA is rethinking how a twenty-first century civic museum engages the city in which it is located. Understanding the museum as a public space in which contemporary civic and social issues can be engaged, we will explore such questions as: how can a museum represent devotional objects while honoring a diversity of religious and spiritual perspectives and avoiding homogenous narratives about belief? How can a museum create relationships with religious communities to understand and interpret the objects in its collection, and navigate differences in faith-based communities with ethical care? How can a museum engage local communities in the process of writing labels for objects and in other acts of interpretation in a way that is not extractive and is genuinely value-aligned? In short, how can a museum truly become public? As a community-engaged course, students will build practically on their learning about museums, religion and public pedagogy to create and facilitate community listening circles at the BMA. The course will include visits to the BMA and other sites, guest visits on focused topics from museum professionals in other institutions, and training in listening and facilitation.

Distribution Area: Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

EN Foundational Abilities: Creative Expression (FA3)

## Modern Languages and Literatures

### AS.211.329. Museums and Identity. 3 Credits.

The museum boom of the last half-century has centered largely around museums dedicated to the culture and history of identity groups, including national, ethnic, religious, and minority groups. In this course we will examine such museums and consider their long history through a comparison of the theory and practice of Jewish museums with other identity museums. We will study the various museological traditions that engage identity, including the collection of art and antiquities, ethnographic exhibitions, history museums, heritage museums, art museums, and other museums of culture. Some of the questions we will ask include: what are museums for and who are they for? how do museums shape identity? and how do the various types of museums relate to one another? Our primary work will be to examine a variety of contemporary examples around the world with visits to local museums including the Jewish Museum of Maryland, the National Museum of African American History and Culture and the National Museum of the American Indian.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Citizens and Society (FA4), Democracy (FA4.1)

### AS.214.307. Collecting and its Discontents. 3 Credits.

This seminar will be concerned with resonances between collectors, artists, poets, and other hallowed figures of modernity, and their less celebrated doubles: hoarders, bibliomaniacs, ragpickers, and gleaners. We will examine the material practices and psychic mechanisms that define these identities and authorize distinctions between them, as well as the historical contexts from which they emerge. More broadly, we will grapple with the relationships between objects and narrative. We will ask how the human-object practices of collecting, hoarding, gleaning, scavenge, misuse, and fetishism change when performed in the immaterial realm of language, and what these practices look like as rhetorical and narrative strategies.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3)

## Near Eastern Studies

### AS.130.153. A (Virtual) Visit to the Louvre Museum: Introduction to the Material Culture of Ancient Egypt. 3 Credits.

This course will present the Egyptological collections of the musée du Louvre in Paris, room by room, as in a real visit. From the Predynastic period, in the 4th millennium BC, to Roman time, the iconic “masterpieces” of this world-renowned art museum, as well as its little-known artifacts, will allow us to explore the history and material culture of ancient Egypt. We will also learn to observe, describe and analyze archaeological objects, in a global manner and without establishing a hierarchy between them, while questioning their place in the museum and its particular language. The objective will be to go beyond the objects themselves and answer, in fine, the following questions: What do these objects tell us about the men and women who produced them, exchanged them, used them, and lived among them in antiquity? What do they also reveal about those who discovered them in Egypt, several millennia later, about those who collected them and sometimes traded them, and what does this say about the relations between Egypt and the Western countries over time? The course will be complemented by one visit to the Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum and one visit to the Walters Art Museum.

Distribution Area: Humanities

### AS.130.247. Digging for Legitimacy Archaeology, Museums, and Ideology. 3 Credits.

Archaeology was born out of Western Colonial endeavors into Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Americas. Large scale excavations conducted by the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, and the United States resulted in the removal and transfer of valuable (culturally and monetarily) material culture from local stewards and stakeholders to the West. To this day the discipline of archaeology is still saddled by its colonial past and the Hollywood interpretation of archaeologists as saviors of ancient treasures. Today, most interaction between people and ancient objects is facilitated via the museum. In this course we will explore 19th- 21st century archaeological and museum practices and the role they play in modern narratives of identity and representation in the America and the Middle East. Students will engage with the historical, legal, economic, and ethical implications of archaeology and analyze how political, religious, cultural, and academic institutions have leveraged archaeology and cultural artifacts to reify and legitimize their pursuits and ideologies.

Distribution Area: Humanities



**Study of Women, Gender, & Sexuality****AS.363.346. Queer Performativity. 3 Credits.**

Introduces students to the intersections of queer theory, performance studies, and LGBTQ history with a focus on “queer worldmaking” the ways in which performances—both theatrical and everyday rituals—have the ability to establish alternative views of the world. Case studies include the ballroom scene in Baltimore and beyond, migratory street youth subcultures, and queer nightlife. This course also offers a unique lens on the archive and historical research by approaching embodied memory, gestures, and ritual as systems for learning, storing, and transmitting cultural knowledge.

Distribution Area: Humanities

AS Foundational Abilities: Culture and Aesthetics (FA3), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

For current faculty and contact information go to <http://krieger.jhu.edu/museums/directory/>