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NATURAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS
Museum & Heritage Studies 112
Spring 2020

Martin 309, Tuesdays 1:00-4:00 pm
Google Classroom Code: [REDACTED]

OVERVIEW of CLASSES, ASSIGNMENTS, and EXAMINATIONS

21 January: **History and Scientific Value of Natural History Collections**

28 January: **Geology and Geologic Processes** (Geology Collection)

4 February: **Evolution and History of the Earth** (Paleontology Collection)
**Worksheet 1 due*

11 February: **Bird & Mammal Collections**
**Cabinet of Curiosity specimen worksheet due*

18 February: **Quiz 1** on history of museums, geology & fossils plus Part I of *Feather Thief Invertebrate Collections; Citizen Science Zooniverse workday & worksheet (due in class)*

25 February: **Rewilding** (discussion with Dr. Schwartz and research students—*date / time TBA*)

3 March: **Botany and the Herbarium Collection**

7-15 March: **SPRING BREAK**

17 March: **Natural History Exhibits**
Quiz 2 on biological collections and Part II of *Feather Thief*
**Herbarium worksheet due*

20 March: **Cabinet of Curiosity installation** (with MUHS 262, Museum Education)
**extra credit to volunteers (2%)*

24 March: **Conserving Natural History Collections; Archival Materials**
Field Trip: Rare Book Room
**Archives worksheet (due in class)*

26-29 March: **Randolph College Science Fest**
**extra credit to SciFest volunteers (1% each hour)*

31 March: **Living Collections: Zoos, Botanic Gardens, Nature Preserves**

7 April: **Anthropology and the Natural History of Material Culture**
Conserv-o-Gram assignment due
Field Trip: Old City Cemetery & worksheet (due in class)

14 April: **Collecting in the Field**
Field Trip: iNaturalist activity & worksheet (due in class)

21 April: **Conclusions: Why Collections Matter**
Final Project (Display Box & Brochure) DUE
“Matter of Life and Death” & worksheet (in class)
Discussion of final readings

28 April: **Display Box & Brochure presentations**

Finals week: **Final Quiz** on conservation, ethics, importance of collections, & Part III of *Feather Thief*

Purpose: An introduction to natural history as a way of understanding the earth's biotic and abiotic diversity. Special attention will be paid to the scientific, cultural, and historical development of natural history collections and to the importance of these collections. Students will use the Randolph College collections and nature preserves as resources for interdisciplinary, hands-on natural history investigations.

Texts, Assignments, and Readings:

Finding Order in Nature: the Naturalist Tradition from Linnaeus to E.O. Wilson, Johns Hopkins
ISBN-10: 0801863902; **ISBN-13:** 978-0801863905

Cabinet of Curiosities, Workman Publishing Company
ISBN-10: 076116927X; **ISBN-13:** 978-0761169277

The Feather Thief, Viking
ISBN-10: 110198161X; **ISBN-13:** 978-1101981610
*Also available as audio book on Kindle & Audible.

Readings on Library & eReserve:

- *Museums in Motion*, Alexander & Alexander / Altamira (MM)
- *Stuffed Animals & Pickled Heads*, Stephen Asma / Oxford (SA)
- *Timefulness*, Marcia Bjornerud / Princeton
- *Field Notes on Science & Nature*, Michael Canfield / Harvard (FN)
- *House of Lost Worlds*, Richard Coniff / Yale (HLW)
- *The Future of Natural History Museums*, Eric Dorfman / Routledge (FNHM)
- *Dry Storeroom No. 1*, Richard Fortey / Vintage (DS1)
- *The Order of Things*, Michel Foucault
- *Curators*, Lance Grande / Chicago
- *Still Life: Adventures in Taxidermy*, Melissa Milgrom (SL)
- *Spectacle: the astonishing life of Ota Benga*, Pamela Newkirk / Amistad
- *The Natural History of Selborne*, Gilbert White (NHS)
- *Naming Nature*, Carol K. Yoon / Norton (NN)

*PLEASE NOTE: Some readings are on Google Classroom **only** (under "Required Readings"). Please check the syllabus and log on as necessary using your Randolph login.* Additionally, all updates to assignments, projects and

field trip details will be posted to Google Classroom (under “Assignments”), so students should join Google Classroom as soon as they are invited to do so.

Additional (optional) readings are also available on Google Classroom, sorted by subject.

Semester Projects:

You will complete a two-part final project (due 21 April) which consists of:

- 1) A trifold **brochure** describing a natural history museum of your imagining.
- 2) An 11x14” **display box** which contains a creative example of a diorama, case exhibit, or visual display such as might appear in your museum.

Ideas for developing content for this project will be posted to Google Classroom under the headings “Museum Exhibitions” and “Brochures.” Detailed requirements for both will be given in early February. Each portion of the project is worth 15% of your grade, for a total of 30%.

Additionally, you will contribute information on one specimen (or small group of related specimens) for an installation in Main Hall: **“The Curiosity Cabinet.”** This is a collaborative project with MUHS 262, Museum Education. To do this, you will select specimens relevant to the exhibition theme (TBA) and answer questions about the specimen(s) on a worksheet (see 28 January, “specimen worksheet”); due 11 February. 5% of final grade; extra credit may be earned if you assist with the installation of the Curiosity Cabinet on 20 March.

Natural History Coffee Hour, Collections Workday, and Workshops:

We have several opportunities this semester for you to enhance your knowledge outside class. These are entirely optional, but will give you a chance to review your knowledge in preparation for quizzes and get ideas for in-class projects and discussions.

- 1) **Natural History Coffee Hour:** Once a week we will meet for a coffee hour in the Skeller, in which we will discuss a natural history / collections topic of interest from the news. This will be open to anyone on campus, so feel free to bring friends! Date and time will be selected by the class (Google poll) and announced in class and on the Portal during the second week.
- 2) **Collections Workday:** Our interns work on a variety of projects in the collections—from taxidermy to cataloging and digitization to scientific illustration—on Friday afternoons, 2-4pm, in Martin 309. Come see what they are doing, or get involved yourself!
- 3) **Workshops:** Workshops on museum-related skills may be offered throughout the semester; these will be announced as available, so watch the Portal announcements and listen in class for details. Potential topics include: reading historic handwriting; digitizing specimens and artifacts; identifying mineral content in historic paints; repairing damaged taxidermy; and more.

Class Policy: Attendance at all laboratories is expected and roll will be taken. More than one unexcused absence, or late arrival, will result in a reduction in your final grade point total of 3 percentage points/absence, or 1 % point per late arrival. (An excused absence is one that is supported by a note from the Dean's Office, the Health Center, or a physician; late arrivals will be judged on the validity of the excuse.) All quizzes must be taken at the scheduled time. Credit reductions for late assignments will be assessed at a rate of 10% of the total credit/day. Please note that making up false excuses for missing classes, tests/quizzes, are *honors offenses*. Field trip dates are subject to change.

Use of cell phones during class is prohibited **except** during the iNaturalist field activity (14 April).

Accommodations & Privacy Statements

Randolph College is committed to providing learning experiences that are accessible for all students, and will make reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities. If you have a learning difference or a disability – mental health, medical, or physical impairment – please contact Diane Roy, Coordinator of Access Services, in the Academic Services Center, 4th floor, Lipscomb Library; at (434) 947-8132; or at droy@randolphcollege.edu.

As your instructors, one of our responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. We also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to our roles as faculty. It is our goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. We will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, we are required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on Randolph's campus with the College's Title IX Coordinator, Sharon Saunders. We do this to make sure that you are able to get all the information and support you may need.

Quiz Dates: 18 February; 17 March; Finals Week

In-Class Worksheets: 18 February; 24 March; 7 April; 14 April; 21 April

Take-Home Worksheets Due: 4 February; 11 February; 17 March; 7 April

Brochure & Display Box Due: 21 April

Grading:

Quiz 1:	5%
Quiz 2:	5%
Quiz 3 (final):	5%
Brochure:	15%
Display Box:	15%
Worksheets:	45% (5% x9: Owen, Specimen, Zooniverse, Herbarium, Archives, Cemetery, Conserve-O-Gram, iNaturalist, Life & Death)
Attendance & Participation:	10% (1 excused absence)

Spring Semester (college-wide):

January 20 Monday Classes begin

24 Friday End of the Add period

31 Friday Last day for incomplete work to be submitted

February 7 Friday Grades due for all Fall Incompletes

14 Friday End of Drop, Pass/Fail, and Audit period

March 6 Friday Mid-term; Spring Break begins, 6:00 p.m.

16 Monday Classes resume, 8:00 a.m. Mid-term grades due at 10:00 a.m.

April 2 Thursday Fall 2020 advising begins

3 Friday End of withdrawal period

13 Monday Fall 2021 online registration begins; Last day for juniors to declare independently designed majors and apply for May 2021 graduation

May 1 Friday Last day of classes

4 Monday Exams begin (through Friday at 5:00 p.m.)

8 Friday Exams end, 5:00 p.m.