Museum Management and Museology

Prof. Annalisa Agnese de Curtis; Prof. Paola Leoni

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The course aims to explore museum and museum service management (that are closely related to the physical reality of museums), and museography (intended as an integral part of economic management), in order to design a feasible cultural offer that can be appreciated by the public and the critics. The development of independent judgment and communication skills derives from the ability of cultural management to learn from the different approaches to museographic projects, and the main museological aspects on which contemporary art is based, either inside or outside museums.

Since the course aims to explore the nature of today’s museums, it also offers a useful parallelism with the Museology course held by Prof. Paolo Biscottini.

In fact, both courses will introduce similar topics, analysed from the point of view of museology and museum management, here with a focus on Museography.

*Specific objectives*

The course aims to analyse the concept of *museum as a place*, considered from the point of view of space and business at the same time: during the first part (30 hours), the course will analyse the relationship with the organisation and the management of the areas inside and outside the museum, as well as their physical manifestation, as elements influencing the economic strategy; the second part (10 hours), instead, is focused on the relationship with the market.

Part I (30 hours)

The focus is on the concept of museum, a privileged place where it is possible to experience man’s action in the world. Direction, management and organisation are all part of *museography*.

The students’ different backgrounds will be combined in a new approach aimed to encourage in all of them the design of a new concept ofmuseum and the elaboration of hypothesis for the management and the organisation of museums and their services.

Students will therefore develop their own project starting from their specific academic approach and will be able to make full use of their knowledge of all the different possibilities in terms of designing museums, permanent installations, exhibitions, and site specific installations.

Part II (10 hours)

The course examines in depth some key concepts of business economics applied to the management of museums and their services. The museum will be conceived as a “company”.

*Intended learning outcomes*

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

(Part I)

* use their newly acquired skills to put forward their own vision of contemporary museum based on the relationship between museography and its management, beyond the spectacle of contemporaneity (theme that is also investigated)
* evaluate and identify, from a value-related perspective, new ideas and innovations.
* understand the vision of the museum, as well as its pursuit of reality, through what is shown by museography and suggested by museology thanks to its strengthening and its expansion in the continuous novelties of the present
* make use, starting from their own background, of key practical concepts to create a project as *ideography*, and apply it to the reality of museums and their services
* elaborate their conclusions in a clear way, as well as their competencies and argumentations in front of specialist and non-specialist audiences

(Part II)

* assess the different streams of study concerning the role of museums
* understand the concept of museum as a company through the analysis of the different definitions of museum
* apply the key concepts and practical tools of the business world to the museum and its services

***COURSE CONTENT***

The course Museums Management and Museology will be held in parallel to the course Museology by Prof. Paolo Biscottini, in order to offer two complementary points of view on the main issues related to the *Museum and the spectacle of Contemporaneity*, as well as share meetings and initiatives.

*Part 1 (30 hours)*

In this part, the course explores the relationship between content and the “container” in museum management, by:

– interpreting examples to guide our vision of the contemporary museum; a study of enhancements within existing museums and on public space, both inside and outside the museum, accompanied by the reflections that emerged and promoted by ICOM;

– exploring different forms of museum planning, to provide guidance on the importance of museum updating, i.e. making a departure from the contemporary as an aesthetic category, that varies but does not change.

The initial interpretative phase - “what museums have become” - focuses on how the new model of museography has gradually taken shape and on its market orientation.

Planning culture is facing structural changes in the methods and objectives of museology, being the concept of what a museum actually is at the centre of an expanded definition. The course will focus on the relationship between the underlying concepts of what a museum is (principles that have remained largely unchanged over time) and new potential foundations (variable features related to recognisability and “belonging” to the present), which make the management of museums and its services understood in this way, a potential driving force for the museum as a business.

Next comes the planning phase - “what museums could become”. This phase addresses the dynamism of museums through the examination of a number of case studies in which museological forms have been updated, and where the museum as a chronological or hagiographic itinerary, or a system of specific collections, has been transcended in favour of models deriving not only from changes in the “cultural industry”, but also from the advent of new private institutions which offer a contrasting approach and end-goals based on the strategies of businesses/foundations, who self-represent their realities, in particular, through art. There are also several new museological approaches and, therefore, new museographical forms arising from the need to document historic events important on an ethical, civil or landscaping level; these give rise to new languages and opportunities for those case studies that shed light on the “institutionalisation” of the various ways in which “memento-memory-history- and their project” interrelate – the function assumed by museums.

We will also visit a museum complex currently in the phase of completion, to open up new potential perspectives.

*Part 2 (10 hours)*

The first part of the course focuses on the prerequisites for creating and managing a museum and its services. Starting with the various definitions of ‘museum’, the various branches of research related to museums, their legislative framework and the potential tasks to be carried out within museums, the course addresses the topic of creating and managing museums via the prerequisites for strategic development on the one hand, and, on the other, the practical business tools required for realising the vision and mission of museum management, internal and external analysis, stakeholder map, value chain, strategic marketing and fundraising.

***READING LIST***

*Part 1*

• textbooks of reference

M.C. Ruggieri Tricoli*-*M. D. Vacirca*,* *L'Idea di museo.* *Archetipi della comunicazione museale nel mondo antico*, Ed. Lybra, Milan, 1998.

P. Biscottini, de Curtis, *Museo è Contemporaneità*, Mimesis, Milan, 2021

• In addition, non-attending students (or the students who refuse to join the project, which is optional) will have to choose and study one of the following options

G. Agamben, *Che cos’è il contemporaneo?,* Nottetempo, Rome 2008.

P. Biscottini, *Note di museologia,* Educatt, Milan 2004.

A. de Curtis (edited by), *Il Museo in Tempo Reale,* Nottetempo, Milan, 2019.

A. de Curtis (edited by), *Il Museo come Laboratorio del Presente,* Mimesis, Milan, 2018.

A. de Curtis, *Il coraggio di riconoscere pp.* *9-20 ; Interruzione e continuità: emozioni vs rimozioni. Allestimento: prodotto o processo? pp. 185-198; Trasformazioni: analogie figurative e forme dell’uso pp. 199-220,* chapters from A. de Curtis, “*Figurazione alla ricerca della forma*”, Marinotti Edizioni, Milan 2015.

M. Augè, *Rovine e macerie.* *Il senso del tempo,* Bollati Boringhieri, Turin 2003.

*Part 2*

There is no textbook for the second part of the course; reading material and articles will be published on Blackboard. Students should print off the reading material prior to lectures, and bring it to class in order to complete the activities.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course will be delivered by means of frontal lectures, discussion of a number of case studies and participation in themes and meetings together with students on Prof. Paolo Biscottini’s Museology course.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

*Part 1*

attending students

- Oral presentations (only for the students who joined the project)

- Written papers or reports

non-attending students

- Oral exam based on the reading list

Learning outcomes will be assessed as the course progresses based on the participation of attending students, integrating their own reflections with the specific topics covered in lectures and other course activities. Up to a week before the exam, attending students will submit to the lecturer a summary report with references. This will be a write-up of the main topics covered, and include commentary on texts read as well as a report on the management of museum spaces and services through museography.The final individual exam will be a discussion based on lecture contents and reading list or the submitted project. Students should base their individual study path on the material on the reading list.

A compulsory reading list for non-attending students will be indicated.

*Part 2*

The compulsory reading list for students not attending the course is to be confirmed.

The first part of the course has only one form of assessment, namely a group assignment based on information provided during the course. The dates for submitting the work will be communicated in class. The mark will remain valid for the entire academic year.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at <http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG> or on the Faculty notice board.