This syllabus is subject to changes, which will be announced.

SYLLABUS
Public Engagement in Museums
Spring 2015 – AH 544, 4 Credit Hours
Thursday, 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM, 303 Henry Hall

Dr. Therese Quinn, Instructor
Office Hours: Tuesday, 2:00 – 4:00 and by appointment, 206 Henry Hall, thereseq@uic.edu

Course Description: This participatory seminar examines the ways museums and related institutions create opportunities for audiences to engage with ideas, objects, and actions through programs and exhibitions. Through course readings, conversations with museum and gallery professionals, and museum and exhibition visits, students will learn institutions’ methods for reaching audiences and evaluating museum and exhibit visitor experiences, and explore the possibilities and limits for multiple publics to express agency within diverse settings.

Learning Outcomes
Graduates will be able to:
Discuss and recognize a variety of participatory practices;
Design and generate programming that engages diverse publics;
Evaluate museum and visitor’s experiences.

Course Assignments
1). Read all assigned materials before class. All readings will be made available as PDFs downloadable from a Dropbox folder shared by email after the first class session, or as URLs noted in your syllabus.
2). Co-lead class engagement with our weekly readings twice during the semester. This assignment offers the opportunity to practice engaging a specific public—your classmates—with
the key points from our readings and related ideas (current events, for example). Plan to use about one hour of our class time. Experiment!

3). Visit museums noted on syllabus, and participate in activities as described.

4). Write a declaration for an engaging museum or standards for an engaging exhibition. Due Feb. 5, 2015. You will keep revising and discussing your ideas for this throughout the class; they should be reflected in your final paper.

5). Develop a plan for evaluating engaging programming. This plan should include your goals and criteria (draw from your declaration or standards), questions you hope to answer, and include at least three ways of assessing the effectiveness of the programming, referencing class and other materials and using APA or MLA citations. Due April 9, 2015.

6). Final Project: Collaboratively develop a plan for programming (could be exhibit/s, intervention, activities, panel discussion, forum, or other forms) that aims to engage identified publics with specific content; implement and evaluate at least one aspect of this plan; and participate in the final presentation and review of this programming. Draft description (explaining who you hope to engage, why, where and how, with what ideas and experiences, to what ends), team roles and tasks, timeline and budget due Feb. 19; final plan due March 19; project should be completed by April 16, 2015. The project will be presented to a panel during the last class, April 30, 2015.

7). A 5 – 7 page paper that details your role in the final project; assesses the project plan using the criteria that guided its development, describing how well the programming met those guidelines and achieved its goals; and reflects on what you will take from this experience and course into your future cultural programming, and why. In other words: What did you do? How well did you meet your goals? What would you do next time, and why? Your paper should refer to course readings and other materials, and your declaration or standards, and use APA or MLA citations.

**Grading:** I’m presuming an “A” level of engagement for everyone. If something inhibits your ability to achieve this, come talk to me as soon as possible.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** As an academic community, UIC is committed to providing an environment in which research, learning, and scholarship can flourish and in which all endeavors are guided by academic and professional integrity. All members of the campus community—students, staff, faculty, and administrators—share the responsibility of insuring that these standards are upheld so that such an environment exists. Instances of academic misconduct by students will be handled pursuant to the Student Disciplinary Policy: [http://www.uic.edu/depts/dos/studentconduct.html](http://www.uic.edu/depts/dos/studentconduct.html)

**Grievance Procedures:** UIC is committed to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity involving students and employees. Freedom from discrimination is a foundation for all decision making at UIC. Students are encouraged to study the University's “Nondiscrimination Statement.” Students are also urged to read the document “Public Formal Grievance Procedures.” Information on these policies and procedures is available on the University webpages of the Office of Access and Equity: [www.uic.edu/depts/oae](http://www.uic.edu/depts/oae).

**Religious Holidays:** Students who wish to observe religious holidays shall notify the faculty member by the tenth day of the semester of the date when they will be absent unless the religious holiday is observed on or before the tenth day of the semester. In such cases, the student shall notify the faculty member at least five days in advance of the date when he/she will be absent. The faculty member shall make every reasonable effort to honor the request, not penalize the student for missing the class, and if an examination or project is due during the absence, give the student an exam or assignment equivalent to the one completed by those students in attendance. If the student feels aggrieved, he/she may request remedy through the campus grievance

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procedure.

**Respect:** It is important that our classroom be a respectful environment where all can participate comfortably. You play a role in creating this environment by arriving on time and prepared, learning and using your colleague’s names and preferred gender pronouns, and both speaking and listening during every class.

**Social Media Use in Seminar:** Bring paper and writing implements to each class, and take notes. Please keep your laptops, tablets and cellphones closed and put away during class. We will have regular breaks during which you can check email and make calls.

**Students with Disabilities and Reasonable Accommodations:** The University of Illinois at Chicago is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at UIC. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome, but must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). You may contact DRC at 312-413-2183 (v) or 312-413-0123 (TTY) and consult the following:

Introduction to syllabus, course assignments, and each other. Discuss excerpts (see PDF) and a reading (we will view in class together) from Citizen by Claudia Rankine; and Claudia Rankine by Lauren Berlant (http://bombmagazine.org/article/10096/claudia-rankine).

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week. As you read consider how museums and exhibits connect to these concepts: public sphere, publics and counterpublics. Be ready to share your connections next week.

Week 2). January 22, 2015 – Publics and Counterpublics
Guest Speaker: Anthony Stepert, MUSE Program Coordinator

Look at examples from the Laundromat Project in class; discuss in relationship to reading.

Readings:
Fraser, Nancy, Rethinking the Public Sphere, 1990.

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week.
2). Visit a museum of your choice; spend at least 20 minutes each in two different exhibits; observe other visitors in these exhibits; and note their and your own engagement and disengagement. Tip! Take a clipboard with you; it will make you look “official.” Ask one visitor you notice in one exhibit a question about their engagement (use your clipboard, tell them you are a graduate student, and write the question down before you ask it). Write up your thoughts and observations to share next week.

Week 3). January 29, 2015 – Participation in Museums

Readings:
Herrmann, Dennis & Koch, Jonas, Reasons for Participation in Museums, 2013.

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week.
2). After doing the readings for next week write either a Declaration for Engaging 21st Century Museums, or; a Framework for Assessing an Engaging Exhibit, including standards or criteria. Your point of view and ethical stance as a museum/cultural worker should be clear in your writing; feel free to include examples and passion. Bring to class to share in discussion with our guest speaker and classmates.

Week 4). February 5, 2015 – Criteria for Engaging Museums and Exhibitions
Skype discussion with Kemi Ilesanmi, Director of the Laundromat Project.
Last hour of class – Final Project planning.

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Due: Declaration or Standards.

Readings:
Quinn, Therese, Exhibits Through the “Other Eye,” 2006.
MINOM (Movement for a New Museology) Declaration, Rio, 2013.

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week.
2). Work on final project plan.

Week 5). February 12, 2015 – Outcomes of Engagement
Visit Latino Cultural Center; meet with Rosa Cabrera, Director.
Plan Final Project – Last hour of class.

Readings:

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week.
2). Work on final project plan. First draft description, team roles and tasks, budget and timeline due next week.

Week 6). February 19, 2015 – Models of Engagement in Museums
Guest Speaker: Jennifer Scott, Director of Jane Addams Hull-House Museum
Due: First draft of final project plan. Discuss ideas and plans for last half-hour of class.

Readings:
Dankl, Kathrina & Mimica, Tena, Collecting the Present, 2013.

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week.
2). After doing the readings for next week visit a museum of your choice. Examine at least two exhibits closely; how does the concept of microaggressions (applied more broadly, perhaps, to other categories like gender, sexuality, religion, and ability) inform your close look at the exhibit elements, including labels, design, activities, objects and visitor interactions? What links can you make to the Proceedings? Talk to a visitor at this museum about their experience (first, define a question to ask this person). Write a page of observations and reflections to share in class next week.
3). Work on final project plan.

Week 7). February 26, 2015 – Barriers to Engagement
Guest Speaker: Carrie Sandahl, Disability Studies, UIC.

Readings:
101st Congress Proceedings (Excerpts), 1990.

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Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week.
2). Work on final project plan.

Week 8). March 5, 2015 – Stances and Goals
Discuss Final Project plans during the last part of class. If there are competing ideas, vote!

Readings:
Beautiful Trouble Toolbox, 2013.

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week (only one of the two will be required; I’ll assign groups).


Readings:

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week.
2). Final draft of Final Project plan is due next week.

Week 10). March 19, 2015 – Evaluation Approaches
Due: Final Project Plan.

Readings:

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week. There are three examples of evaluations in the Dropbox folder. Read through and use them when writing your evaluation plan.

March 26, 2015 – NO CLASS, SPRING BREAK


Readings:
Evaluation Models

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week.
2). Your evaluation plan is due next week.

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Week 12). April 9, 2015 – Museum Work as Political, Public Scholarship
Readings:

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week.

Week 13). April 16, 2015 – Art and Democracy
Due: Project Completion.

Readings:

Homework:
1). Readings listed for next week.

Week 14). April 23, 2015 – Examples in Practice

Readings:
Our Stories, Ourselves, PittArts, 2006.

Week 15). April 30, 2015 – Class Presentations to Review Panel
Due: Final Paper