**Museum Displays and Outreach**

**BSC 480/580, 3 credits**

**Spring 2014**

**Dr. Suzanne Strait, straitho@marshall.edu**

**Readings:** All posted on MUOnline

**Class:** Wednesday 5:00-7:30

**Course Description:** This class resolves around learning all the basic techniques for curating a natural history collection and making outreach exhibits. That will include specimen preparation (making study skins, skeleton mounts, and alcohol preps), paleontologically preparation (mold and casting), acquiring specimens, exhibit and outreach design, field notes and georeferencing, and database management and design. The class will focus on mammals, because that is mostly what we have access to but if there is interest in other animals we can add that as well. We will also spend a week considering plant curation and herbaria. There will not be traditional Powerpoint lectures – this is a hand-ons class. We will learn by reading, discussion, and doing so everyone has to be ready to be an active participant in the class.

the own choosing which will be aeditessionk contributed to a poster presentation at a regional scientitc meeting and he was inclAs a group we will learn osteology and all basic techniques on our group project – mounting a cross between a coyote and deer (a Doyote) and writing up a formal description of this new species. Everyone will also do a project of their own choosing which will be the major focus of the class. The project must either be designing an outreach exhibit for display in the hall or museum or a teaching kit that can be loaned out to K-12 teachers. This needs to be more than just a specimen preparation – it needs to include labeling, teaching instructions, or other type education material that permit it used by non-specialist educators.

**Prerequisties:** BSC 121 with grade of C or better plus an additional 8 hours of BSC courses.

**Attendance Policy:** You are expected to come to every class – end of story. You will want to come to class because class will be fun.

Week: Date:

I January 15: Class Logistics

 Making Study Skins

II January 22

Making Study Skins

Discuss class project ideas

III January 24:

 Alcohol preparation and use

IV January 29:

 Alcohol preparation and use

V February 5:

Beyond taxidermy – skeletal preparation

VI February 12

Beyond taxidermy – skeletal preparation

VII February 19

Georeferencing

VIII February 26: Fossil preparation

 Molding and casting

IX March 5

Herbarium, Plant curation techniques

X March 12

Field notes

XI March 19

No class Spring Break

XII March 26

 Projects

XIII April 2

 Projects

IX April 9

Projects

X April 16

 Smithsonian trip 13-15

XI April 23

Project presentations

XII April 30

Project presentations

**Grading:**

50% class participation, exercises, and group project

50% individual projects (Completed by no later than May 7th)

**Individual projects to choose from:**

Finish the Bison (if you don’t want to get dirty, woodworking or wood burning experience helpful; signage and 5 smaller exhibits, teeth, fur, toes, poop, sound, pathologies; thanks & naming plaques; more “landscaping”). 1 student

1. Fur balls and full on touch fur exhibit (sewing experience helpful). 1 or more students
2. Cobra. Model, skin, skeletonize, and signage. 1-2 students
3. Bone comparison board. Looking at how one bone changes in different animals. Exhibit that teaches the concept of bone homologies in animals. Two board minimum per student. 1 or more students
4. Latch board. On the outside panels pictures of the animal on the inside you could have teeth, fur etc. All touchable. Several that focuses on one aspect of animals. Two board minimum per student. 1 or more students. Some wood working.
5. Alligators. Skin, mount, and produce signage. Produce protocol for skinning and mounting alligators/crocodiles. 1 or more students (up to 4) each student does their own
6. Baculum/baubella of West Virginia exhibit with signage (someone who has or wants to develop good dissection skills). Also will include making nice skins of small mammals for outreach. 1 or more students
7. Tortoise cleaned and the shell molded. Tortoise versus turtle exhibit. 1 or more students

**University Policies**

By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy be going to [www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs](http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs) and clicking on “Marshall University Policies.” Or, you can access the policies directly by going to <http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802>

Academic Dishonesty/ Excused Absence Policy for Undergraduates/ Computing Services Acceptable Use/ Inclement Weather/ Dead Week/ Students with Disabilities/ Academic Forgiveness/ Academic Probation and Suspension/ Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students/ Affirmative Action/ Sexual Harassment