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Museum Studies in Collection Management

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At the workshop on "Collection Resources for the 1990's" held in Washington, DC, October, 1988, one of the identified needs for institutions was for additional trained collection management staff (Hoagland and Mabee, *ASC Newsletter* 16(6):9. 1988). There are few academic programs that provide training in the management of biological, geological and anthropological collections. Because this is an identified need for the 1990's, the question arises: "Are we able to meet this need?" and, if we are not currently in a position to do so, "What must be done in the future to meet this need?"

To identify the current academic programs giving this training, a survey of Museum Studies Programs offering work in the management of scientific and anthropological collections was conducted. This survey concentrated on those programs offering degrees. Thirty-five questionnaires were sent and 18 positive responses were received. This survey may not be totally complete, but most of the programs have been identified.

Results of the survey are presented at the end of this article. Most of these Programs offer degrees at the Master's level, but three (Baylor University, California State University-San Bernardino, and University of Alaska-Fairbanks) are offered at the undergraduate level. One program (Texas A&M University) offers a Ph.D. in Museum Studies and work may concentrate on management of collections.

Program Composition

Based on this survey and my experience with two of these programs, I believe that there are some components needed for successful programs. These include the following: 1) The program must be associated with a museum. It is important that students have a

protracted exposure to a museum so that they can develop a museum conscience. 2) The program should include a mixture of courses. There should be a core of museum-related courses. These will acquaint the students with museum philosophy and operations. These are the courses that give museum studies programs their unique character. The program should include disciplinary courses such as mammalogy, ichthyology, and plant taxonomy, and theoretical courses such as systematics, evolutionary theory, and zoogeography. It is important that collection management staff know the collections under their care and have an appreciation for the uses of these collections.

3) The program must include an extensive internship. Much of the work that is conducted on collections in museums cannot be taught in a classroom but must be learned under the direction of trained professionals in real situations. 4) These are professional degree training programs and are not research degree programs. The considerable difference between these types of programs must be recognized by the museum community. If there is to be a collection management profession, then those of us in museum management must treat these people as professionals and work to develop a uniform professional track for them within our museums. I would suggest the following track as a starting point for discussion: Collection Assistant; Curatorial Assistant; Collection Manager.

Special Considerations

There have been suggestions that the free-standing museums become involved in training programs for collection managers because of the lack of academic programs in this field. Clearly, these institutions are able to give excellent practical experience; however, in my opinion, they must also be prepared to give the students the

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Museum Studies continued from page 77 museum-related training and the disciplinary/theoretical training for a rounded program. Without these training courses, the product of such a program will be only a technician and not a professional museum collection manager. For the future professional development of trainees, it will be necessary for these museums to become academically accredited so that they may grant degrees.

Many people entering the collection management profession have earned degrees in regular Master's programs, such as biology or geology. We have successfully recruited collection managers from such programs; however, these people often lack an appreciation for the museum and its functioning as an organization. Also, in many cases, people with these backgrounds lack the practical experience that can be gained through an internship.

From the point of view of the university, there are several special considerations. A scientific collection management track alone will not sustain a museum studies program. It simply cannot provide enough students to make the program economically feasible nor will it provide the range of courses necessary for a successful program. The only means by which these programs can be maintained is to extend them by discipline (history, art, etc.) and/or career (educators, exhibitors, administrators, etc.).

The question has arisen concerning the inclusion of a research component in the training of managers of scientific collections. The research would involve new management techniques or schemes, the gathering of basic data on specimens and collections, and the conservation of collections. A two-year master's program does not allow for sufficient time to engage in significant research projects. I would recommend a third year of training for those interested in research. This could easily be recognized by an endorsement on the degree, which universities regularly do in other types of programs. The length of such a training program would not differ significantly from training of conservators in which four years are required.

Recommended Working Relationship

Universities/Museums: These are the organizations that are best equipped to give the basic training to students. They must have a local natural science museum involved. Training at the Master's degree level would seem to be the most appropriate level for collection managers. This Master's degree should be recognized as a terminal degree by universities, museums, and the profession.

Free-standing Museums: The major natural history museums offer the best opportunity for practical experience. I would urge these museums to seek out programs with proven track records to form formal internships with them. These museums must be prepared to hire graduates of museum studies programs for positions in collection management. These museums must recognize these people as members of their professional staff and create a professional track for them to follow.

Association of Systematics Collections: If professionally trained collection management staff is a national priority for museums as suggested at the ASC-sponsored workshop in October 1988, then ASC must become an advocate for museum studies programs at a national level. ASC also may want to become involved in setting standards for the collection management portions of programs such as the AAM has done for overall programs. The ASC is in an excellent position to coordinate the internship relationship between museum studies programs and natural history museums. Finally, ASC can be an advocate for funding traineeships from NSF, IMS, etc. for students pursuing degrees in management of natural history collections. This will be the best possible manner in which to recruit highly-motivated students into the professions.

Conclusions

Currently, there are probably not enough programs training students in the management of natural history collections if projected needs are correct. If this need is to be met, there must be a coordinated effort involving current and future museum studies programs, natural history museums, and ASC.

Survey Results

Arizona State Museum (Graduate Program in Museum Studies). Ann Hedlund, Department of Anthropology, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287-2402. Training for collection management positions in anthropology (2).^{*} 36 hrs. for Master of Arts degree in Anthropology. *Museum Studies courses:* Museum Principles, Museum Collection Management, Museum Interpretation, Museum Administration, Exhibition Planning and Design, Principles of Conservation, Computers in Museums. *Internship:* 6 credit hours, corresponding to approximately 20 hours per week for a semester at an approved museum. *Faculty:* 2. *Comments:* Associated with the University's Museum of Anthropology and Museum of Geology and other central Arizona museums such as Desert Botanical Gardens, Pueblo Grande Museum, and Heard Museum of Anthropology.

Baylor University (Museum Studies Program). Calvin B. Smith, Strecker Museum, Baylor University, Waco, TX 76798. Training for collection management positions in anthropology, biology, geology, and paleontology. Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Museum Studies. *Museum Studies courses:* Introduction to Museums, Museum Administration, Museum Marketing and Development, Educational Programming for Museums, Collection Management, Exhibit Design and Preparation, Principles of Conservation, Using the Museum as a Teaching Resource. *Internships:* One or two hours per week lecture and a minimum of six to 12 hrs. per week laboratory, serving in a museum. *Comments:* Programs supported by Strecker Museum.

California State University--San Bernadino (Museum Studies Program). Russell Barber, Department of Anthropology, California State University, San Bernadino, CA 92407. Training for collection management positions in anthropology (10). 186 credit hours for a BA in Anthropology (Track B: Museum Studies-52 credits required in

^{*} The numbers in parentheses are the number of students graduated in each area of collection management in the past 5 years.

Museum Studies continued from page 79 major). *Museum Studies courses*: Introduction to Museum Studies. *Internship*, Gallery Management. *Internship*: Two 150-hour. *Internships* (various thrusts). *Faculty*: 1. *Administrative unit*: School of Social and Behavioral Sciences. *Comments*: Associated with San Bernadino County Museum.

George Washington University (Museum Studies Program). Marie C. Malaro, Director, Museum Studies Program, Academic Ctr. T-215, George Washington University, Washington, D.C. 20052. Training for collection management positions in anthropology (20), biology (6), and geology (0). 42 hrs. Master of Arts in Museum Studies. *Museum Studies courses*: History and Philosophy of Museums, Museums Administration, Fiscal Management of Nonprofit Organizations, Collections Management: Legal and Ethical Issues, Collections Management: Practical Applications, Curatorial Research and Exhibition Development, Museum Exhibiting, Museum Research and Education, Anthropological Museum Techniques, Exhibition and Display Design, Introduction to Conservation, Preventive Conservation Techniques, Advance Conservation Techniques, Proposal Writing, Museum Audiences, Museum Evaluation. *Internship*: 520 service hours of internships are required. Many times students elect to accomplish this in two separate assignments. *Administrative unit*: Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. *Comments*: Formal internship relationships with approximately 50 organizations in the Washington area including Smithsonian Institution, National Park Service, and Textile Museum.

Indiana University. Geoffrey W. Conrad, Director, Wm. H. Mathers Museum, Indiana University, 601 E. 8th Street, Bloomington, IN 47405. Training for collection management positions in anthropology (15). 12 hour minimum as part of a degree in anthropology or folklore. *Museum Studies courses*: Introduction to Museum Studies, Museum Practicum, Museum Methods, Museum Management. *Internship*: Requires 6 credits (2 semesters) of practicum work. *Faculty*: 3. *Administrative unit*: Wm. H. Mathers Museum and Department of Anthropology. *Comments*: Associated

museums include Wm. H. Mathers Museum, Indiana University Art Museum, Monroe County Historical Society Museum, and Children's Museum of Indianapolis.

John F. Kennedy University, Center for Museum Studies. John F. Kennedy University, 1716 Seventeenth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. Training for students in management of collections of ethnography, anthropology and scientific artifacts. 54 units required for a Master of Arts degree in Museum Studies. *Museum Studies courses*: History and Philosophy of Museums, Seminar in Research, Documentation of Collections, Conservations: Care and Preservation of Collections, Curatorship, Exhibition Design, Museum Education, Museum Management. *Internship*: A two-semester course of study that places students in a museum or museum-related institution. Students are required to develop a 6 to 12 unit thesis, which reflects their expertise in a special subject area. *Faculty*: 10. *Administrative unit*: School of Liberal and Professional Arts. *Comments*: Associated with many museums in the Bay area including California Academy of Science and The Exploratorium.

Oregon State University (Interdisciplinary Programs in Museum Studies). Lucy Skjelstad, Coordinator, Museum Studies Program, Horner Museum Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR 97331. Training for collection management position in anthropology (3) biology (1), geology (0), and paleontology (0). 45 hours Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies. *Museum Studies courses*: Principles of Museum Work, Environmental Interpretation, Interpretation Projects, Public Administration. *Internship*: 6 credit hours minimum required. *Faculty*: 8. *Administrative unit*: College of Liberal Arts. *Comments*: A new program associated with the Horner Museum and Mark Hatfield Marine Science Center.

San Francisco State University (Museum Studies Program). Linda Ellis, Director, Museum Studies Program, c/o Anthropology Department, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA 94132. Training for collection management positions in anthropology (new program). 30 semester units for a Master of Arts in Museum Studies. *Museum Studies*

course: Seminar in Museum Studies, Museums as Educational Institutions, Museums and the Law, Museum Exhibit Practicum, Museum Conservation and Restoration, Authentication and Dating of Antiquities, Exhibition Design, Museum Collections Management, Writing for Museums, Galleries and Other Cultural Institutions. *Internship*: One semester of a minimum of 9 hours per weeks. *Faculty*: Director and 3 faculty. *Administrative unit*: Anthropology Department and Classics Department. *Comments*: Associated with many of the museums in the San Francisco area.

Texas A&M University. David J. Schmidly, Head, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences, Texas A & M University, College Station, TX. Training for collection management positions in biology (1). 36 hours for a Master of Agriculture and 94 hours for a Ph.D. *Museum Studies courses*: Museums: Their Functions, Collection Management, Museum Programming. *Internship*: Must leave campus for a 3 to 6 month internship at a major research-oriented collection for Master's level students. *Faculty*: 4. *Administrative unit*: Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences. *Comments*: Associated with the Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collections.

Texas Tech University (Museum Science Program). Gary Edson, Museum Science Program, The Museum, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX 79409. Training for collection management positions in anthropology, biology, geology, and paleontology. 45 hours Master of Arts in Museum Science. *Museum Studies courses*: Museum Program Planning, Museum Administration, Museum Collection Management I and II, History and Philosophy of Museums, Exhibit Design and Preparation, Field Methods, Historical Analysis and Material Cultures, Conservation Practices, Computers in the Museum, Museum and the Law, Special Topics. *Internship*: Students are required to do 6 hours of thesis or internship. *Faculty*: 10. *Administrative unit*: College of Arts and Sciences. *Comments*: Associated with The Museum of Texas Tech University.

University of Alaska-Fairbanks (Museum Studies). Craig Gerlach and

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F. James Dixon, University of Alaska Museum, 907 Yukon Drive, Fairbanks, AK 99775-1200. Training for collection management position in anthropology, biology, geology, and paleontology. Minor in Museum Studies offered at the undergraduate level. *Museum Studies courses:* Fundamentals of Museum Studies (2 sequential courses), Museum Collection Management, Museum Photography, Museum Practicum, Field Collecting. *Internship:* None required. *Faculty:* 8 to 10. *Administrative unit:* College of Natural Sciences. *Comments:* Associated museums include University of Alaska Museum and Alaska State Museum (Juneau). This is a relatively new program.

University of Arizona. Nancy J. Parezo, Arizona State Museum, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ 85721. Training for collection management positions in anthropology (30+) and biology (3). 33 units are required for Masters of Arts in Anthropology with a Museum Studies Special Track emphasis (18 units in Museum Studies courses and internship). *Museum Studies courses:* Organization of Museums, Museums Collections Management, Museum Exhibition, Introduction to Museum Conservation. *Internship:* 6 units required during final semester of program. *Faculty:* 6. *Administrative unit:* Department of Anthropology and Arizona State Museum. *Comments:* Associated with the Arizona State Museum.

University of Denver (Museum Studies Concentration). Sarah Melson, Museum Studies Program, Department of Anthropology, University of Denver, Denver, CO 80208. Training for collection management positions in anthropology. 60 credit hours Master's degree in Anthropology with Museum Studies Concentration. *Museum Studies courses:* Introduction to Museum Principles and Methods, Managing Collections, The Context of Material Culture, Technology and Adaptation, Ways of Presenting Culture, Exhibit Development, Museum Administration, Material and their Maintenance. *Internship:* 8 hours required. *Administrative unit:* Department of Anthropology. *Comments:* A newly revitalized program. Associated museums include Denver Art Museum and Denver Museum of Natural History.

University of Iowa (Museum Training Program). George D. Schrimper, Museum of Natural History, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52240. Training for collection management positions in biology (5) and paleontology (4). 38 hour Master's program with degree in Anthropology or Science Education. *Museum Studies courses:* Museum Technique, Museum Accessory Work, Introduction to Museology, Principles of Exhibit Design, Introduction to Conservation of Museum Objects. *Internship:* One semester or summer equivalent required for M.A. or M.S. Students placed in external facilities for at least 20 hours per weeks. *Faculty:* 3 budgeted to Museum Training. *Administrative unit:* College of Liberal Arts. *Comments:* Associated with Museum of Natural History.

University of Kansas (Masters of Historical Administration and Museum Studies Program). Alfred E. Johnson, Museum of Anthropology, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045. Training for collection management positions in anthropology (5) and biology (2). 42 hours required for a Masters of Historical Administration and Museum Studies (18 hours of museum courses). *Museum Studies courses:* Introduction to Historical Administration and Museum Studies, Museum Management, Introduction to Museum Exhibits, Introduction to Museum Public Education, Principles and Practices of Museum Collection Management, Conservation Principles and Practices. *Internship:* A supervised apprenticeship in an approved museum is required full-time for one semester or half-time for two semesters totaling 6 semester hours of credit. *Faculty:* 15. *Comments:* Museums associated with the Program include Museum of Anthropology, Museum of Natural History, and Museum of Art.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Interdisciplinary Museum Studies Program). Hugh H. Genoways, University State Museum, 307 Morrill Hall, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE 68588-0338. Training for collection management positions in anthropology, biology, geology, and paleontology. 36 hours Master of Arts/Master of Science degree in Museum Studies. *Museum Studies courses:* History and Philosophy of Museums, Museum Administration and Management, Museum Education,

Museum Exhibition, Collecting Methods, Management of Cultural Collections, Management of Scientific Collections, Special Topics. *Internship:* 6 hours of credit required for graduation, with a total of at least 320 contact hours. *Faculty:* 19. *Administrative unit:* Graduate College. *Comments:* Associated with the University of Nebraska State Museum, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, and State Museum of History. This is a new program that will begin classes in the Spring Semester of 1990.

University of Oklahoma. Barbara Wilson, College of Liberal Studies, University of Oklahoma, 1700 Asp Avenue, Norman, OK 73019. A two-year program leading to a Master of Liberal Studies with museum emphasis. The program integrates brief on-campus stays with year-long work and study at home institution. *Program progression:* 1) Introductory Seminar (2 weeks)-introduced to 6 major areas of museum study. 2) Directed Study-at home institution doing papers and critiques; special project. 3) Colloquium (3 weeks)-work with MLS program; develop topic and prospectus for thesis. 4) Advanced study during second year of program, research and writing of thesis. 5) Advanced Seminar (2 weeks) presentation of thesis to committee. *Administrative unit:* College of Liberal Studies. *Comments:* Museums and collections associated with the program include Museum of Art, Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, History of Science Collections, and Western History Collections.

University of Washington (Museology Program), Miriam Kahn, Director of Museology Program, Department of Anthropology, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195. Training for collection management positions in anthropology (8). 36 hours Master's program in Anthropology/Museology. *Museum Studies courses:* Introduction to Museology, Seminar in Museum Issues (Theoretical), Seminar in Museum Issues (Practical), Seminar in Specimen Documentation, Collections Management, Conservation. *Internship:* 10 weeks full time. *Faculty:* 2. *Administrative unit:* Department of Anthropology. *Comments:* Associated museum is the Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum.