

Kress Foundation Museum Practice Grant Program Overview Assessment Tool

This assessment tool consists of a series of questions that each Museum Practice Program can use to determine how effectively its goals and outcomes are being met. The aim of the assessment is to identify what is working within the program and what needs to be changed. These questions can be considered once a year, or as needed and address areas such as: processes used to define individual student goals and outcomes for each semester/quarter; internal & external communications; program resources (budgets, staff and time); the alignment of the student capacity outcomes with the existing program structure/curriculum; and the changing nature of the museum field.

Curriculum/Student Project (to be completed using the Program Competency Outcomes)

1. General overview of course work and museum practice experiences as they align with the Program Competency Outcomes.
 - How does the full educational program help the student both gain knowledge about and gain capacity with the core competencies?
 - How does the course work and practicum (site-specific work) contribute to student capacity building?
2. Process for establishing museum projects for student museum practice experiences as they align with the Program Competency Outcomes.
 - Who determines the work to be done by the student and the process for determining how the work fits with the Student Competency Outcomes? (details of how students and supervisors engage appear in the Student/Interaction discussion)
3. General Review of the Program Competency Outcomes for potential changes and adjustments.
 - Does the Program Competency Outcomes Tool continue to be useful for the program? What, if any, adjustments are needed?

Student/Supervisor Interactions

1. Process for establishing student goals and outcomes for the duration of the site-specific museum experience.
 - What processes need to be established by both the site supervisor and student to determine the goals of the student experience, the approval of outcomes, and how adjustments will be made throughout the site-specific experience?
2. Process for onboarding and integrating the student into the museum culture.
 - What will be done to orient and integrate the student into the museum's culture?
 - Who will overview the onboarding experience?
3. Process for ongoing review of student work.
 - Who reviews the student's work, how often, and for what purposes?

- How often will there be formal reviews using the Student Competency Assessment Tool?

4. Process to review effectiveness of ongoing communication between student and site supervisor.

- Aside from the direct conversations between the student and the supervisor, who else will be involved with overseeing the student's experience as a check on the effectiveness of the student's ongoing learning and relationships?

5. Process for final evaluation/reflection when program experience has been completed to determine student and supervisor satisfaction.

A. Organizational Review of Student Effort

- Who is involved and what are the expectations of those participating, and what will be done with the assessment results?

B. Student Exit Interview/Survey

- How will the student be able to express their assessment of the situation openly, and also offer confidential insights about the program?
- How will you gauge the student's overall satisfaction of the program?

Integration of Museum Practice and Academic Course Work

1. Student Coursework and Museum Practice

- What is the process for coordinating the student's coursework and Museum Practice experience?
- Are the demands of coursework and museum practice sufficiently balanced? (timing, work demands, etc.)

2. Faculty and Museum Staff Communication & Collaboration

- How often and for what reasons will the faculty and museum staff communicate?
- How often and for what reasons will the faculty and museum staff collaborate?
- How will you assess the participant's satisfaction regarding collaboration and communication between the museum professionals and involved faculty?

3. Exchange of Ideas

- Is there an exchange of ideas between the two aspects of the program—the museum practice and academic side?

Program Resources

1. Status of budget

- What are current costs of the Museum Practice program?
- Is the budget configured to fit the needs of the program?

2. Status of funding needs and sources of funding

- Is funding adequate?
- Is funding sustainable?

- What are potential funding opportunities?

3. Staff supervisor time availability and constraints

- Do museum staff have adequate time to mentor and teach the student?
- Do the upcoming projects in the museum warrant student participation, or does the current calendar of museum projects suggest that staff will have limited capacity to support the Museum Practice program needs?

4. Additional staff time and resources required

- Are additional staff required to support the student competency outcomes?
- If so, how will they be involved and supported by the Museum Practice program?
- If so, how do the staff members perceive the Museum Practice program as part of the work of the museum?

5. Office space and material resources needed

- Are sufficient work space and resources available for the student to perform to expectations?

This assessment tool was created with cohort input by Dr. Susan Spero, who served in a wide variety of roles with Museum Studies Program at the John F. Kennedy University. She has over 30 years of experience developing and analyzing museum experiences at museums throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, and frequently presents at museum conferences such as the American Alliance of Museums, the California Association of Museums and Western Museums Association. She has served on the board of the Museum Education Roundtable that publishes *The Journal of Museum Education*. Throughout her career she has cultivated students and emerging professionals, encouraging them to develop agency to make change.

Student Competency Outcome Assessment Tool

Overview:

The aim of this assessment tool is to identify the competencies students develop through their experiences in a Museum Practice Program. The working group developed these competencies and their related capacities to be used as guidelines. We recognize that each Museum Practice Program will have its own emphasis, and we expect that programs will adapt this tool to their specific needs.

For the purposes of this document competencies refer to broad areas of skills and knowledge that a student possesses to successfully perform professional museum work. Capacities provide more specificity to the competencies. Capacities detail a student's performance abilities with skills, knowledge and behaviors that can be purposefully honed during a museum practice experience.

Directions:

For this assessment tool, identify a specific student's work product and processes to review. For instance, you might select a student portfolio, a final research thesis, or choose another major indicator of student effort mutually agreed upon by the supervisor and student. Using the rating scales below, assess the Student Competency Outcome for each of the following competencies.

Students and supervisors should expect that at least some aspect of each competency will be experienced during the student's time in the program. However, students and supervisors should *not* expect the student to have covered all *capacities* within a given competency. Ideally students and the review supervisor will agree upon the capacities sought throughout the program. This tool will be most effective if it is used as a catalyst for conversations throughout a student's on-site museum professional development experience.

Assessment Scale Choices

You have a choice of two assessment scales when reviewing student work. The Classic Scale places a judgment similar to 'grading' the work after the student has completed a project. The growth Scale is useful for assessing progress towards a goal and is best used when students and supervisors discuss the student's efforts throughout the program.

Classic Scale

Please use the 5-point scale and mark the appropriate score for each student competency outcome.

1-unsatisfactory 2-below expectation 3-met expectations 4-above expectations 5-outstanding U-unable to assess

Growth Scale

Please use the 5-point scale and mark the appropriate score for each student competency outcome.

1- Emerging 2-Beginning 3-Developing 4-Applying 5-Extending U-unable to assess

A Note on Rubrics

This version of the project has not included specific rubrics to define a range of performance for the capacities described. Museum Practice Programs may decide to develop rubrics that will specifically delineate what a student performance looks like for their program. For example, using the Growth Scale a program might delineate what a beginning level effort looks like and what an advanced level looks like as well as those in between for any of the capacities listed. Then with the rubric, a student and supervisor will be able to share language to describe the level of student performance for that particular project. Rubrics need to be based on the products produced and these can vary from semester to semester. With this in mind, we leave it to individual programs to think through how their students will demonstrate each capacity at various levels.

Student Competency Outcomes and Related Capacities

1. Competency: *Research*

Students demonstrate the research skills needed in today's complex museum environments.

Related Capacities:

- *Defining the Research*: Student identifies *research purpose and questions*.
- *Situating the Research in the Past and the Present*: Student demonstrates an awareness of how the current research relates to past efforts and to current trends in the museum field.
- *Research Bias*: Student recognizes inherent bias of their own and others research.
- *Literature Review*: Student defines and analyzes appropriate references and resource.
- *Research Design*: Student designs appropriate research tools to collect appropriate evidence.
- *Research Synthesis*: Student develops research findings and presents conclusions, with recommendations.

2. Competency: *Community Engagement, Collaboration*

Students demonstrate attitudes and apply skills necessary for community engagement and collaboration by fostering physical and intellectual access to museum resources while attending to diversity, equity, access and inclusion (DEAI) principles.

Related Capacities:

- *Cultivating Community Connections*: Student demonstrates an understanding of the strategies the museum uses to identify and collaborate with museum audiences and communities including how to identify community characteristics, needs and interests.
- *DEAI*: Student can describe and apply DEAI principles to museum projects.
- *Recognizing Community Complexity*: Student recognizes that there are multiple and varying audiences and communities that each requires its own ongoing relationship cultivation with the museum.

3. Competency: *Organizational Management Literacy*

Student identifies and applies organizational management and entrepreneurial skills necessary for museum vitality and sustainability.

Related Capacities:

- *Mission, Vision, Values*: Student can describe and analyze how the museum's mission, vision, and values influence and direct the work.
- *Non-profit Finances*: Student can describe the museum's financial structure, how the budget influences resources and project methods, and understand development and fundraising approaches.
- *Strategic Planning*: Student utilizes the strategic planning methods to guide the work achieved for the institution.
- *Roles and Responsibilities*: Student can describe the roles and responsibilities of their own museum position as well as generally describe the work of others within the institution, and understand the authority granted to each role.
- *Staff and Volunteer Management Principles*: Student can describe fundamental principles of effective people management for varying scenarios including staff and volunteer positions.
- *DEAI*: Student understands how DEAI principles influence work practices and relationships.
- *Assessment Strategies*: Student can describe how the museum determines success for any particular project including how evidence is collected to judge the effectiveness of the work

4. Competency: Agency and Leadership

Students demonstrate professional agency and leadership to work effectively and adaptively within museum environments.

Related Capacities:

- *Work design and level*: Student develops appropriate self-efficacy to produce the work for intended results, including aspects such as time management and project planning for performing both individually and within teams.
- *Work Environment*: Student recognizes and can navigate the museum's cultural environment and identifies strategies to appropriately question practices and work with colleagues to generate change.
- *Work Relationships*: Student establishes and develops effective work relationships with supervisors and other collegial supports, including establishing trust and developing skills for conflict management.
- *Initiative*: As appropriate, student takes initiative for achieving and improving the work, as well as seeking resources to support their own performance.
- *Effective Self-promotion*: Student recognizes how to represent their own ideas and abilities, seen in ways such as speaking up for ideas, and identifying their own career direction and interests.
- *Networking*: Student develops and builds professional networks within the institution, and is aware of how to connect more broadly with the museum field.

5. Competency: Specialized Museum Role Skills, Knowledge and Behaviors

Student demonstrates the ability to apply specific knowledge, skills and behaviors particular to performing specific museum roles such as collections manager, curator, educator, and others.

The lists that follow describe related capacities necessary to perform work within particular museum roles and tend to be both specific and wide-ranging. The capacities that follow are based upon the role competencies submitted by the Kress Museum Practice Program participants for the initial positions to be described during this pilot project. The participants in this pilot project recognize that the roles described here are prevalent in the field, and yet they also realize that these roles are not static. Since change is inevitable, future museum positions will have titles different from these and include duties not described here.

Role: Collections Manager for Art Museum

Physical Skills

- Object handling: experience handling objects of all kinds and with a variety of condition issues
- Theories and practical experience with object rehousing, packing, crating and the use of archival materials
- An understanding of the theory and practice of inventory
- Exhibition installation including condition reporting, mounting, and/or hanging objects with the safety and care of the object(s) in mind
- Ability to identify condition issues in objects and determine ways of mitigation
- Integrated pest management experience including monitoring for pests and understanding what the presence of certain pests indicates
- Environmental monitoring experience: understanding the various methods and current systems of recording and monitoring environments; knowledgeable on the latest benchmarks for temperature and humidity for various spaces and materials

Documentation, Contracts, and Legal Skills

- Experience in the theory and practice of object acquisition, accessioning and deaccessioning, and the legal underpinnings of these processes
- Experience in original object cataloging
- Experience maintaining physical and digital records systems
- An understanding of rights and reproduction and copyright law
- Loan experience: an understanding of contracts, insurance, and customs procedures
- Demonstrated knowledge of object accountability and location control

Diversity, Access, Equity, Inclusion

- Demonstrate antiracism in program offerings and Inter-cultural competencies and commitment to diversity, equity and access
- Engage with diverse communities
- Demonstrate antiracism in program creation
- Understand and advocate Americans with Disabilities Act
- Fostering the next generation of diverse museum professionals
- Providing a civil working environment

Risk Management, Security, Facilities

- Practical experience and theoretical understanding of emergency preparedness and disaster response

- Demonstrated knowledge of facilities systems and issues (fire suppression, HVAC, structural security features)
- Understanding of object and building security and monitoring practices
- Competency with facilities maintenance and material handling equipment
- Loan experience: an understanding of object packing and shipping methods, and loan coordination
- Experience with shipping and freight systems, vendors and applicable regulations and best practices

Technology

- Mastery of museum database systems and an understanding of their underlying functionality
- Mastery of standard office software, specialized data and museum software
- Theories and practical experience in current photography and digitization practices, including scanning, photography, digital preservation and editing equipment and software

Academic Knowledge

- Specific areas to be determined by program and related to coursework

Role: Curator for Art Museum

Core

- Ability to apply effective community-centered approaches to curatorial work resulting in productive interactions with diverse publics that support their communities and build connections to art and the museum. These include: understanding of museum's role in society and with communities, such as demographic changes and culture-specific norms; inviting and supporting diverse communities to contribute their voices and perspectives to the development and implementation of museum programs and decision-making (ensuring relevance of exhibitions, collections, public events, etc., to diverse communities); identifying audiences for particular programs and collaborating with them; and facilitating personal responses to art.
- Demonstrated ability to collaborate with colleagues, students, volunteers, and community members through strengthening of interpersonal skills and relationship building.
- Demonstrated commitment to museum ethics and general familiarity with U.S. and international laws and policies related to object acquisitions, deaccessioning, loans, exhibitions, documentation, and dissemination of images and information
- Demonstrated understanding of and commitment to social justice and experience putting it into practice
- Significant scholarship/research expertise and experience (provenance-related, art history/visual culture/cultural studies fields, museum studies, etc.)
- Evidence of intellectual curiosity, interdisciplinarity, , and interest in broadening areas of specialization
- Excellent oral and written communication skills, including public speaking, museum presentations, interpretative materials, and both scholarly and public writing.
- Demonstrated knowledge of the care and interpretation of objects in the collection and on loan
- Digital/technological literacy

Additional

- Familiarity with museum management practices in areas of strategic planning and staff/student supervision
- Evidence of agency
- Fundraising and Financing (including donor cultivation, grant writing, budgeting)
- Knowledge of the Art market, particularly in area of specialization
- Basic understanding museum evaluation practices
- Training in trauma informed practices
- More in-depth knowledge of legal Issues (e.g. NAGPRA, UNESCO- and Holocaust-related provenance, Fish and Wildlife laws, etc.)
- Participation in museum organizations (membership, committee work, conference attendance and/or presentations, etc.)

Academic Knowledge

- Specific areas to be determined by program and related to coursework

Role: Education Position for Art Museum

Museum Teaching Skills

- Content specialist in area of museum's collections
- Familiar with teaching with works of art and facilitating dialogue
- Knowledge of educational pedagogy and current practice in the field, learning theory and philosophy
- General knowledge of state educational standards, and of workshops and education programs for K-12 educators
- Practical experience with (art) materials and (art) making projects
- Experience developing and managing youth and children's programs and art camps
- Familiar with outreach programs for elder care facilities, schools, and community centers of all kinds

Programs and Interpretation

- Skilled in program collaboration practices with both campus and community partnerships
- Develop and manage interpretive programs for varied audiences
- Develop interpretive materials and interactives for specific audiences
- Ability to train and manage volunteer docent corps
- Ability to develop and/or manage development of multilingual content
- Knowledge of universal design for access

Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion

- Demonstrate antiracism in program offerings and Inter-cultural competencies and commitment to diversity, equity and access and inclusion
- Engage with diverse communities on a consistent basis
- Demonstrate antiracism in program creation
- Understand and advocate the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Foster the next generation of diverse museum professionals
- Provide a civil working environment

Academic Knowledge

- Knowledge of art, art history, art materials & techniques
- Familiarity with scholarship on art history, museum studies and museums in general
- Knowledgeable about diverse artistic practices and cultures beyond the western canon

Technology Skills

- Familiarity with museum database systems
- Strong PowerPoint and Excel skills; G-Suite skills
- Familiarity with basic video production
- Some image and/or design program (e.g. Photoshop or InDesign) skills
- Ability to learn and use GUI-based programs such as those used for developing mobile tours and other digital assets
- Ability to learn and adapt to new technologies

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