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www.lsa.umich.edu/exhibitmuseum

EXHIBIT MUSEUM of
NATURAL HISTORY

University of Michigan
1109 Geddes Avenue
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109-1079

Faculty Teaching Resources at the Exhibit Museum of Natural History

The University of Michigan Exhibit Museum of Natural History is a campus treasure, presenting extensive permanent exhibits on prehistoric life and evolution, Michigan wildlife, anthropology, geology, a new digital planetarium, and changing exhibits. We invite you to take advantage of the unique resources available here.

About 2,500 University of Michigan students visit the Exhibit Museum in class groups each year. Many more students visit on their own to complete class assignments or to work on special projects. Students may obtain a free or discounted membership to the Museum, and hundreds of students attend Museum lectures and events. Forty to fifty undergraduate and graduate students teach for the Exhibit Museum every year as paid docents. A Museum Methods class is offered at the Museum. University of Michigan students have performed plays in the Museum's rotunda, created art and science exhibits, produced planetarium shows, completed research projects under staff supervision, and much more. Here's how your students can become involved.

Class Visits

How do I bring my class to the Exhibit Museum? Is there a fee?

We welcome all University of Michigan faculty and instructors to meet with classes in the public galleries **at no cost**, and our staff is available to help develop and coordinate more specialized guided visits and projects. The Museum is open Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sundays, 12 noon to 5 p.m.

Please let us know in advance that your class will be visiting. This helps us coordinate attendance during busy periods, and keep track of U-M utilization of our resources. To plan your visit, call (734) 764-0478. Our office staff will advise you of other groups visiting at your planned time (200 second graders can make it difficult for your students to concentrate!), and help coordinate any special services you might need. We can provide Museum docents and staff to show hands-on objects at your request.

What kinds of classes visit the Exhibit Museum?

- Art and Drawing
- Biology
- Language (for vocabulary development)
- Scientific Illustration
- Anthropology
- Geology
- Astronomy
- History
- Museum Studies
- Education
- And many others...

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What do classes do at the Museum?

- Faculty or Instructor-led programs
- Museum staff-led programs
- Student presentations
- Practical exams
- Guided hands-on visits and workshops
- Planetarium shows

Independent Assignments and Projects

Whether you'd like students to complete a simple scavenger hunt, a collaborative research project, or an exhibit critique, the Museum staff is happy to help. We maintain an extensive file of student assignments. Contact Kira Berman at (734) 647-8574 or kiberman@umich.edu for copies of assignments and help with placing student research projects within the Museum. Past projects have included:

- Research projects in psychology, education, information flow, marketing, etc,
- Exhibit theory, history, and critiques
- Environmental education projects
- Exhibit design
- Program design and development
- Planetarium show design and production
- Scavenger hunts and self-guided visits
- Service projects
- Creative gallery assignments (sketching, poetry, etc.)

Jobs, Training, and Experience

Every year, forty to fifty students work for the Museum as paid museum educators, called docents. Museum docents lead hands-on natural history programs for elementary and middle school children, facilitate children's workshops, provide adult tours, assist at events, greet and coordinate school group visits, operate the planetarium, and provide weekend interpretation. They receive over 25 hours of paid initial training, take advantage of opportunities for further involvement in exhibits and programs, and receive placement assistance upon graduation. For information on docent hiring, contact Sarah Thompson at (734) 647-6421 or sarah@umich.edu.

Coursework and Independent Study

Whether the Museum staff is instructing classes like Museum Methods or supervising independent study projects, academic credit is available for projects that take place at the Exhibit Museum. Many UROP students have worked with Museum staff, and special project proposals are always welcome. In addition, the staff is happy to work with you to structure a student independent project that takes place at the Museum.

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