

CERTIFICATE
IN MUSEUM
STUDIES
Program



Course Information

The Alberta Museums Association's (AMA) Certificate in Museum Studies (CMS) Program provides entry-level museum professionals with an understanding of current theories and standards in museum practice. The Program is designed for museum professionals with no formal training and for those looking for further development in an unfamiliar area of museum practice.

The CMS Program encourages the use of standards for museum practice and is aligned with the AMA's *Standard Practices Handbook for Museums, 3rd Ed.*

Curriculum

Course curriculum for CMS is developed with instructors under the direction of the AMA. Course Content is based on the *Standard Practices Handbook for Museums, 3rd Ed.* and supplemented with case studies regarding current best practices. Required reading for each course is selected from the *Standard Practices Handbook for Museums, 3rd Ed.*, and supplemented by a list of recommended readings and / or resources provided by the instructor.

Course Format

Courses in the CMS Program build a foundation in museum practices and standards and offer an opportunity to network with peers. The courses are delivered throughout the province in a two-day format, hosted by museums and other heritage organizations. Aside from the curriculum presented within each topic area, courses offer participants an invaluable networking opportunity and the chance to learn from the host museum.

Program Requirements

The CMS Program is open to any individual. There are no pre-requisites for the program, and membership with the AMA is not required.

Participants who would like to complete the full certificate must apply to the Program and complete an introductory webinar. The Program application fee includes a copy of the *Standard Practices Handbook for Museums, 3rd Ed.*, which is the required textbook for the Program.

There are eight courses offered on a rotating basis at host museums around Alberta. To obtain a Certificate in Museum Studies participants must successfully complete assignments for all eight courses. Participants have up to eight years to complete the program, but it is possible to complete the Program in as little as two years.

Participants can also attend courses without obtaining credit, in which case assignments are not required.

Assignments

Assignments are developed by instructors in alignment with the curriculum. Participants are given three weeks to complete an assignment. It is possible to rewrite or challenge an assignment for a small fee. Challenges are intended for participants who can prove they have received extensive education in the subject area or for participants who have already completed the course without obtaining credit. For more information on rewrites or challenges, please contact the AMA Program Lead at learning@museums.ab.ca.

Transfer of Credit

A certificate of equivalency can be granted to CMS participants who have completed a course considered equivalent or greater in content. Equivalent courses may include certain certificate courses offered by other Provincial Museums Associations and courses offered by post-secondary institutions. There is no charge to obtain a certificate of equivalency. For information on obtaining a transfer of credit, please contact the AMA Program Lead at learning@museums.ab.ca.

Registration

Participants are registered on a first-come, first-served basis. Registrations are not complete until payment has been received in full. Registrants may cancel up to seven working days prior to a course and receive a registration fee refund less a 25% administration fee. No refunds will be issued after that deadline. Participants can register online at www.museums.ab.ca or by submitting a CMS Registration Form to the AMA office.

Course Cancellation

The AMA reserves the right to cancel courses due to low registration and in instances of severe weather. In the case of a cancelled course, participants could either receive a full refund or transfer payment to another course.

CMS COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

INTRODUCTORY WEBINAR

What is a museum? Who does a museum serve? This introductory webinar covers the basic understanding of museums and sets the stage for the rest of the CMS Program, including course logistics, participant expectations, and Program details.

Participants must complete the webinar before attending their first CMS Course.

MUSEUM MANAGEMENT

Participants will examine a range of activities needed to manage any museum, including planning, financial management, human resources, facilities management, public relations, marketing, risk management, and information management.

MUSEUM GOVERNANCE

As legally constituted organizations, museums must define their governing authorities and public trust responsibilities. This course introduces the basic legal and ethical requirements for operating a museum. Topics covered include an explanation and identification of governing documents as well as governing authority, accountability, and fiduciary responsibilities. Content is augmented by significant attendee participation and case studies.

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

Collections are at the heart of a museum. Participants will learn about the policies, practices, and skills needed to manage museum collections. This course moves from broad concerns relating to public trust, cultural diversity, and planning through to issues in the areas of acquisitions, records management, and loans.

RESEARCH

Research is undertaken in all areas of museum practice as it is fundamental to the museum's purpose and programs. Participants will explore the kinds of research conducted in museums and will learn practical guidelines for planning and conducting research projects. Topics covered will include discipline-based research, collections-based research, research relating to museum functions and activities, and research methodologies such as field research and oral history interviews.

PREVENTIVE CONSERVATION

The measures taken to care for and preserve museum collections are of vital importance. This course provides an introduction to preventive conservation (the actions taken to delay the deterioration of objects or to protect them from potential damage). Topics covered will include care and handling of museum collections, storage, managing the museum's environment, and pest control.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Public programming is the service a museum provides to the public to help interpret their collections from the visitor's point of view. Participants will learn how to enhance the range of opportunities museums offer to their communities. Topics covered will include audience research, customer service, planning, and evaluation.

EXHIBITS

This course provides an overview of the role and importance of exhibits in museums and introduces the concepts involved in planning, fabricating, and evaluating exhibits. Topics include the basic elements of exhibit planning and design, exhibit policy, development, production, and evaluation.

MUSEUMS AND SOCIETY

This capstone course re-examines the fundamental purpose and role of museum in society with a focus on the big picture. How do museums go beyond doing everything right to doing the right thing? This course will tie together the content from the rest of the program to explore the museum's role in community engagement, social responsibility, sustainability, and museums as agents of social change.

Participants must receive credit in all seven other courses before receiving credit in Museums and Society.



For more information on the
CERTIFICATE IN MUSEUM STUDIES PROGRAM
please contact the Program Lead
at **780.424.2626 x. 225** or learning@museums.ab.ca

