

**VISARTS 9571A
Museum/Decay**

**Tuesdays 2:30-5:30, VAC 249
Fall 2022**



Image: The Origins of Oil and Gas. Focus on Energy Series, Canadian Petroleum Association, 1980s.

Professor: Dr. Kirsty Robertson
Office: online
Office Hours: by appointment
Email: kirsty.robertson@uwo.ca

Course Description and Objectives:

This class begins with a provocation: the museum, as an idea, tries to avoid the passage of time, through processes of conservation, through the creation of artificial climates, and through both embracing and sidestepping linearity in being simultaneously of its time/ahead of its time/behind the times. But time always catches up, often through slow processes of decay. Ranging from deep time through to the present moment, and pausing to consider plastics, fungi, jellyfish, ice, outer space, and colour (among other objects, topics, beings, and kin), this

experimental class examines museums, time, and collections from the perspective of a world that is constantly in motion.

This class emerges from and is an iteration of A Museum for Future Fossils www.museumforfuturefossils.com. Every iteration of A Museum for Future Fossils is a co-learning experience.

Here, the MFFF is imagined something like a vernacular natural history museum. What might a natural history museum look like if it resisted extractivist impulses? How does the natural history museum confront and understand deep time and decay? Each week is a room or gallery in the museum. The readings are provocations; starting points rather than the finish line.

*There are optional/not for credit workshops and events organized by the Centre for Sustainable Curating in collaboration with the Waste Stream/Waste Dream class and Dr. Friederike Landau of Radboud University (Nijmegen, Netherlands) that expand course content. Students attending at least three workshops will receive a certificate of completion and an artist multiple created as part of the CSC project Waste/Care/Carbon/Labour.

All optional events are in blue italics.

Required Texts:

All course readings are available on Owl. It is the student's responsibility to let the professor know in advance if they have any trouble downloading the readings.

Assignment Breakdown:

Final Assignment Proposal 10% due October 18
Final Assignment/Project/Essay 40% and December 6
Course journal 40% due November 8 (20%) and December 6 (20%)
Participation and engagement 10%

POLICIES

Statement on Academic Offences The statement:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Enrollment Restrictions:

Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in the Department of Visual Arts, as well as any student that has obtained special permission to enroll in this course from the course instructor as well as the Graduate Chair (or equivalent) from the student's home program.

Health/Wellness Services:

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Accessible Education Western (AEW):

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.