**Libraries/ITAM/Writing Center Course Grants for 2014-15: Digital Video**

**Heather Lerner for Care & Use of Collections (MUSE 240)**

Students entering careers in museums, even collections managers, will increasingly have the need to share information in a digital format, including videos, to reach a broader audience. Indeed, some of the major museums are publishing short, fun, informative videos (e.g. the weekly [Brain Scoop](https://www.youtube.com/user/thebrainscoop) at the Field Museum of Natural History). I have taught courses in Museum Collections for two years at Earlham and will teach another this fall (Care & Use of Museum Collections). I have required student presentations, posters, research reports and other written assignments for this course, but never a video.

Obviously, I have been too traditionalist with the format of assignments and should use this grant opportunity to improve my class in terms of the skills it helps students achieve for museum (and other) careers.

There are a number of assignments that I can see being appropriate for a video. We would set aside one 50-minute class period in the second week of the semester to learn how to create videos (via a guest presentation by ITAM/libraries) so that students would be prepared early on and could turn in a video for one of the first assignments (Collections Description described below). Some of the videos could be shared on the Joseph Moore Museum blog, website, and/or social media sites. If this works out well, I’d try to include similar assignments in my spring Evolution course, a core requirement for the biology department (it will be my first time teaching the Evolution course here, so I don’t have the syllabus prepared enough to propose assignments now).

**Assignments in MUSE 240 appropriate for video format**:

These assignments would be completed by pairs of students who select a taxonomic collection in the museum for their semester-long assignments and project. Every 1-2 weeks they have an assignment that helps them delve deeper into the collection.

1. **Collection Description Video**: Create a 3-5 minute video (replaces a minimum 4 page report, including graphs) that describes your focal museum collection. Be sure to answer the following questions: How are specimens preserved, collected and organized for this type of collection? What are the major strengths of the collection, including its size, major collectors, most active time period, and most common localities of specimens. You should use graphs where appropriate. Choose at least one interesting or unique specimen and describe it. Also be sure to reference at least one publication that has used specimens from this collection.

**Assigned week 1, ITS/library workshop in class week 2, video due week 3**

1. **Agents of Deterioration** **Video**: Create a 2-4 minute video (new assignment) in which you identify one specimen in your focal collection that has deteriorated due to each of the common agents of deterioration (i.e. one specimen degraded from physical, one from biological, and one from chemical factors). Explain the evidence that signifies that deterioration has occurred and propose at least one way to reverse or slow the deterioration. If it is not possible to save the specimen, explain why and propose how you would protect other specimens in the collection from this type of degradation.

**Assigned week 5, due week 8 (after 3 weeks of learning in-depth about agents of deterioration in class)**