



Heritage Resources Management (HERM) 339

Conservation (Revision 5)

Status: Open ✓

Delivery mode: Individualized study online [↗](#) . Delivered via Brightspace.

Credits: 3

Areas of study: Arts or Humanities

Prerequisites: None

Course start date:

If you are a:

- Self-funded student: register by the 10th of the month, start on the 1st of the next.
- Funded student: please check the next **enrolment deadline and course start date** [↗](#) .

Precluded: None

Challenge: HERM 339 is not available for challenge.

Overview

HERM 339: Conservation introduces formative issues and approaches in conservation practice.

This course focuses on the principles and practice of preventive conservation as they relate to collections of movable objects. It deals with the characteristics of collection materials and how these characteristics can help identify potential conservation problems. Conservation issues specific to certain types of collections are addressed, including archival, archaeological, natural history, and outdoor collections. In keeping with the need to decolonize the heritage resource management field in Canada, particular attention is paid to the ethics of caring for Indigenous collections as well as collections of any culture not represented in an institution's collections staff.

The conservation of buildings is not covered except insofar as it must be taken into account in the conservation of collections in heritage buildings. The conservation of heritage sites and landscapes is not described. (Building, site, and landscape conservation are covered in HERM 342: General Principles of Planning Historic Places.)

HERM 339 emphasizes a universal approach that will accommodate the needs of different collections. It focuses on basic, practical solutions that can be implemented by small organizations as well as by larger ones. The course also introduces an extensive list of publications written for custodians of heritage collections.

This course will provide students with a body of knowledge that is relevant and useful to any person working within the broad area of heritage resources management, from archaeologists and historic interpreters to site managers and archivists. It will also serve as a solid foundation for anyone wishing to pursue specialized training in conservation. The goal of this course is to bring conservation awareness and knowledge to those who work—or intend to work—in heritage resources management.

Outline

HERM 339 is divided into eleven units:

- **Unit 1:** Introduction to Collections Conservation
- **Unit 2:** Materials: Introduction and Organic Materials
- **Unit 3:** Materials: Inorganic Materials, Modern Materials, and Composite Artifacts
- **Unit 4:** Preventive Conservation: Agents of Deterioration: Incorrect Relative Humidity and Temperature
- **Unit 5:** Preventive Conservation: Agents of Deterioration: Light, Ultraviolet and Infrared Radiation, and Pollutants
- **Unit 6:** Preventive Conservation: Pest Management, Fire Protection, Security, and Emergency Preparedness
- **Unit 7:** Preventive Conservation: Display, Storage, Handling, and Transportation
- **Unit 8:** Preventive Conservation: A Multi-Level Approach
- **Unit 9:** Conservation Treatments and Documentation
- **Unit 10:** Managing Conservation: Policy, Planning, and Training
- **Unit 11:** Decolonization

Learning outcomes

HERM 339: Conservation introduces foundational principles, basic information, and standard approaches to conservation practice. After completing the course, students will be able to:

1. Explain why and how we conserve movable heritage resources.
2. Apply basic knowledge of the material characteristics of heritage collections and of factors contributing to their deterioration.
3. Implement a variety of practical means to manage risks by preventing and minimizing deterioration.
4. Discuss the importance of conservation policies and plans.

5. Explain how conservation practice can assist with decolonization and sustainability efforts.

Evaluation

To **receive credit** [!\[\]\(2bdfe261b986065ee0ac76460d6528c9_img.jpg\)](#) in HERM 339, students must complete and submit the following five assignments. Students must achieve an overall grade of at least **D (50 percent)** [!\[\]\(eebbd3dc1abeccf4c1e5751ec03fc559_img.jpg\)](#) for the course. There is no final exam.

Activity	Weight
Assignment 1: Heritage Materials	15%
Assignment 2: Agents of Deterioration (Quiz)	15%
Assignment 3: Pests	20%
Assignment 4: Identifying Conservation Problems	10%
Assignment 5: Conservation Assessment	40%
Total	100%

Materials

This course either does not have a course package or the textbooks are open-source material and available to students at no cost. This course has a **Course Administration and Technology Fee** [!\[\]\(23d9fc146e83b5c3013cfa32c784f8d5_img.jpg\)](#), but students are not charged the Course Materials Fee.





Digital course materials

Links to the following course materials will be made available in the course:

Barclay, Robert. *Introduction to Conservation*. Athabasca, AB: Athabasca University and Robert Barclay, 2009.

All course materials for *HERM 339* will be accessed online.

Important links

- › [Academic advising](#) 
- › [Program planning](#) 
- › [Request assistance](#) 
- › [Support services at AU](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

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View **previous revision** 
