

Museum Preparator

University of California, Los Angeles
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Class Specifications - I.20
Principal Museum Preparator - 9632
Senior Museum Preparator - 9633
Museum Preparator - 9634

SERIES CONCEPT

Museum Preparators perform or supervise the performance of duties involving the handling of museum specimens or art objects for a variety of purposes including exhibitions, research and teaching; assist the Curators in the maintenance of collections; may assist field parties in the collection of specimens; and perform other related duties as required.

The examples cited in the Class Concepts are illustrative and do not preclude allocation to the series of positions in museums not described within the disciplines given as examples.

CLASS CONCEPTS

Principal Museum Preparator

Under general supervision, incumbents supervise the activities of Preparators, or perform the most technical, skilled preparatory work with museum collections, as indicated below.

Principal Museum Preparators assist in conservation and restoration projects, in consultation with the appropriate Museum Scientist or administrator; maintain collections according to museum classification or storage systems; coordinate the installation of art exhibitions; may perform limited research on museum materials or exhibit projects; and may serve as docents to visitors and present talks to school groups by introducing students and scholars to a collection, and providing assistance as needed.

In a museum of paleontology, incumbents perform the most difficult duties of preparation on fragile or unique specimens contained within rock matrices; restore and mount specimens for exhibitions by constructing skeletal mounts of fossil animals using drill presses, pipe threaders, welding and soldering apparatus, and a variety of carpenter's tools; clean, catalogue, label and arrange the most fragile specimens; and advise museum staff Members on methods and techniques for preparing or restoring specimens, and initiate new methods and techniques.

In a museum of anthropology, incumbents perform the most difficult and complex duties of preparation for anthropological specimens; identify, organize, and catalogue a variety of archaeological and ethnological specimens; supervise the proper handling of fragile artifacts; carry out sophisticated preservation and conservation projects; and supervise preparators in duties involving the maintenance of collections, and the packing and unpacking of shipments.

In a University art museum, incumbents direct and coordinate the complex installation schedule of art exhibitions in several galleries which change on irregular, but frequent occasions; supervise the preparation staff; advise the curatorial staff on installation methods, and initiate new methods. Incumbents are also assigned responsibility for the safe handling of all works of art in the museum.

Principal Museum Preparator positions are distinguished from Senior Museum Preparator positions in that incumbents either supervise other preparators, or perform the most difficult assignments as described above. The ability to work independently, or with a minimum of supervision, is a characteristic of this class.

Senior Museum Preparator

Under supervision, incumbents serve at the operational level in performing preparatory work.

Senior Museum Preparators perform preservation and restoration, including the cleaning of specimens for exhibition; sort, arrange, and integrate specimens or art objects into classification or storage systems; condition and install works of art; and assemble and re-file specimens or art objects, including checking material returned from loan for possible damage.

In a museum of paleontology, incumbents serve as preparators in cleaning rock matrix from fossil specimens using chemical and mechanical methods, including a variety of hand- and power-driven tools such as electric and pneumatic drills, dental tools, air abrasive tools, mallets, chisels and similar tools. Incumbents also harden and preserve fossil specimens using plaster, plastics and other hardeners; and model and restore skeletal parts of fossil animals using modeling clay, plaster, plastic, latex and plastiflex molding techniques.

In a museum of anthropology, incumbents serve as preparators in cataloguing archaeological and ethnological specimens; carry out limited research on the collections; may serve as working leaders for other preparators in the organization and maintenance of collections; retrieve and return specimens to collections as required; supervise preparators in the construction of exhibit cases; and oversee the painting of display units and the cleaning of exhibit case glass.

In a University art museum, incumbents receive, condition, mat, unmat, mount, clean, frame and stretch, install, pack, ship, and record the location of works of art in all media; use a wide variety of tools, hardware and equipment; and act as security guards during installation projects.

Senior Museum Preparator positions are distinguished from Museum Preparator positions in that incumbents perform at the operational level and are required to possess a higher level of experience applicable to museum operations in their selected discipline, particularly in the areas of collections research and organization.

Museum Preparator

Under close supervision, incumbents perform at the entry level those functions described in the Series Concept. Typically, incumbents perform manual work involving the transfer of specimens or art objects within a museum, to and from classrooms, and for special exhibit layout; assist in the layout of specimens or art objects for exhibition programs and research projects; pack, unpack and prepare shipments; assist in inventory and other collections work, including the typing of tray and shelf labels; assist in the arrangement of specimens or art objects within collections study-storage areas; assist in the construction

February, 1976

Museum Preparator

of exhibit cases, display units, and the painting of panels, backgrounds, etc.; and assist in the maintenance of inventory records.

In a museum of paleontology, incumbents perform rough or semi-skilled work in separating fossil material from the matrix; assist in the cleaning, hardening and preservation of specimens; arrange specimens within assigned storage areas; and make minor repairs on museum showcases, work benches, tools and other equipment.

In a museum of anthropology, incumbents perform assigned tasks including the inventory, cataloguing, and maintenance of collections; construct crates for shipping artifacts; provide the manual labor for shifting collections or perform other manual operations; handle artifacts for a variety of purposes including exhibition installation; assist in the construction of exhibit cases; and paint display units, clean glass, and operate a variety of wood working power tools and equipment.

In a University herbarium, incumbents mount all kinds of botanical specimens, ranging from the most fragile and delicate to bulky and/or spiny, with techniques appropriate to each; assist with records of mounted specimens; repair damaged specimens; place specimens in special mounts for classroom demonstrations; instruct visitors in mounting techniques; and may serve as working leaders for other mounters, assigning tasks and advising on problems.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Principal Museum Preparator

Graduation from high school or a General Education Diploma and two years of preparatory experience in a museum field; or graduation from college with a major in a selected discipline, and one year of related experience; or an equivalent combination of education and experience; and knowledges and abilities essential to the successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.

Senior Museum Preparator

Graduation from high school or a General Education Diploma and one year of preparatory experience in a museum field; or graduation from college with a major in a selected discipline; or an equivalent combination of education and experience; and knowledges and abilities essential to the successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.

Museum Preparator

Graduation from high school or a General Education Diploma; and knowledges and abilities essential to the successful performance of the duties assigned to the position.