

# **Virtual Museum Tour**

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## **Course**

Social Studies 102

## **Description**

“Virtual Museum Tours” uses the Internet to let students tour “museums” that present exhibits and materials relevant to course material and objectives. Some physical museums have put part of their collections on websites for virtual tours. In other cases, an instructor can use a variety of websites to construct a virtual museum that is, in fact, scattered around the globe. Students are given specific assignments that require museum research to satisfy and meet this need via the Internet.

## **Transferability**

This course can be used for a wide range of topics in sciences, the social sciences, and humanities.

## **Faculty Technology Skill**

Basic computer, web browser, and searching skills are necessary.

## **Student Technology Skill**

Basic computer, and web browser, and searching skills, and word processing skills are necessary.

## **Faculty Equipment**

Computer with Internet connection and word processing software are required.

## **Student Equipment**

Computer with Internet connection and word processing software are required.

## **Cost**

No specialized material is needed unless Internet access is nonstandard, in which case the instructor and each student workstation requires a modem (\$30), an Internet Service Provider Account (\$22/mo.), and a phone line (cost varies).

## **Improvement on Teaching and Learning**

Even in a large city, the range of museum offerings is limited, yet museums and their collections are important repositories of knowledge and cultural artifacts. Furthermore, many community college students work long hours in addition to attending school, making it difficult to visit museums during their hours of operation. Using the Internet significantly expands the average student’s access to such materials.

## **Nontechnology Comparison**

The same quality of learning could not be achieved through nontechnological means. Even if cost were not prohibitive, the time to travel to a large number of physical museums would be impractical.

**Pertinent Issues**

The instructor must be ready to guide and support students who need help. In some cases, the instructor should structure a virtual museum visit from one or more sources to make the material best fit the course and the needs of the students. In such cases, the instructor will need to confirm that the links are still active each time the assignment is given.

**How to Use in the Classroom**

Students would be required to research a particular topic that would be the subject of a museum exhibit, but rather than visiting a physical museum (or supplementing such a visit if a physical museum is convenient), the student will access web-based materials that duplicate the museum experience but are chosen (by the instructor) from the great range of material on the Internet.