Instructor and course information:
Instructor: Dr. Trish Markert
Method of delivery: In person
Credit value: 0.5
Antirequisites: None.
Prerequisites: Anthropology 2229F/G and registration in third or fourth year in any Anthropology module, or permission of the instructor.

Course Description:
Material culture encompasses the relationships between people and their material world (e.g., objects, landscapes, written records, architecture). This course offers a hands-on approach to the archaeological theorization, identification, recordation, and analysis of material culture of the 19th and 20th centuries. We will begin by exploring conceptual frameworks for thinking through artifacts, built landscapes, and archives. What are materials and how do they shape our lives, and vice versa? How do people mobilize things to create meaning, make places, negotiate identities, remember and forget, or simply go about their daily lives – and how do archaeologists make sense of the material remains of these processes decades or centuries later? With this theoretical foundation, we will examine diagnostic and methodological approaches to historical material culture. Students will learn to identify, catalog, analyze, conserve, and curate historic materials including glass, ceramic, and metal, as well as practice methods like photogrammetry for recording objects and buildings. Partnering with local organizations like TMHC Inc and the Museum of Ontario Archaeology, students will work with real historic collections from Ontario to complete term projects, which include a public-facing exhibit design and a research essay/material culture analysis.

Materials, of course, do not exist in a vacuum; they are intimately connected to the processes, movements, and narratives that shape our lives. Therefore, we will focus on several thematic issues throughout the term: migration, colonialism, race/ethnicity, industry, heritage, and personhood. The collections we work with will sit at the intersection of one or more of these themes, and term projects will explore them in analytical depth.

A full course schedule including a week-by-week breakdown of topics and assigned readings will be available on the course’s OWL Brightspace site before the first day of class.
Course Materials:
No textbook. Required readings will be available through the Course Readings tool on the course site.

Evaluation:
Grades will be based on the following:

- Weekly Labs (hands-on analysis or exercises to be completed during the second half of each class period)
- Semester Project (selecting a research project by October and meeting project benchmarks throughout the term)
- Material culture guide and presentation (developing a brief analysis guide for a material culture type of your choice; short presentation after Reading Week)
- Final research paper (10-page analytical paper on your semester project)