

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism
PRLS 362—Cultural and Environmental Interpretation
Spring 2012

DAY/TIME:	M-F 12:30– 4:30pm	LOCATION:	Barbados
PROFESSOR:	John Nauright	EMAIL ADDRESS:	jnaurigh@gmu.edu
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PREREQUISITES: PRLS 300 or PRLS 328 or TOUR 352 or permission of instructor

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Focuses on communication processes and practices used to explain and interpret special characteristics of cultural and environmental resource sites for visitors. Conceptual principles for planning interpretive programs and multi-media delivery techniques are discussed. Methods for programming interpretive services, addressing multi-audience accessibility, and administration and evaluation of interpretive services used at recreation and tourism sites are also examined.

- COURSE OBJECTIVES:** At the completion of this course, students should be able to:
1. Explain how interpretation is important to the management of tourism, event and recreation resource sites;
 2. Discuss principles of interpretation and communication;
 3. Analyze interpretive materials and presentations; and,
 4. Prepare several types of effective spoken and written interpretive messages.

Further, upon completion of this course, students will meet the following professional accreditation standard for the *Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Related Professions*:

7B.03	Understanding the principles and practices of stewardship and use of natural resources and the ability to interpret them to the general public, particularly as related to the public's role in stewardship.
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NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY:

Face to face in Barbados

COURSE OVERVIEW: In this course, we will examine, discuss, develop, and critique multiple examples of interpretive projects developed by you, your colleagues, and professionals. Because your contributions are important to this course, you will be expected to attend all class meetings scheduled, actively participate in class discussions on-line and in-person, complete in-class exercises as distributed, and fulfill all assignments according to the due dates noted.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: GMU is an Honor Code University; please see the University Catalog for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. What does academic integrity mean in this course? First, it means that when you are responsible for a task, you will be

the one to perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives and traditions. When in doubt, please ask for guidance and clarification.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Knudson, D.M., Cable, T.T., and Beck, L. (2003). Interpretation of Cultural and Natural Resources, 2nd edition. State College, PA: Venture Publishing, Inc.

Additional readings as indicated

EVALUATION:

Interpretive Talk: 15%

For this assignment, you will choose a topic, with a specific theme related to a cultural or natural site in Barbados. Then, following the steps for planning, preparing, and delivering a thematic interpretation, you will give a short interpretive talk (without using PowerPoint!).

Brochure Analysis 20%

For this assignment, you will collect an interpretive brochure from the tourism, park, and recreation field related to an attraction and analyze it for its effectiveness at communicating its intended message, as well as for its effectiveness in following interpretive brochure design and communication strategies. You will write a short (approximately 2-3 page) report detailing your assessment of the brochure using criteria identified in our course.

Barbados Cultural Heritage Trail 40%

You will develop an interpretive program to be titled the "Barbados Cultural Heritage Trail" for a specific age group utilizing the cultural and historical spaces from The Boardwalk through Bridgetown and out to the Mt Gay Factory and the Kensington Oval. You will design an interpretive guide that will be presented in a professional setting.

Exam 25%

TOTAL: 100%

Grading Scale

A+ = 97 – 100	A- = 90 – 92	B- = 80 – 82	D+ = 67 – 69
A = 93 – 96	B+ = 87 – 89	C+ = 77 – 79	D = 60 – 67
	B = 83 – 86	C = 73 – 76	F = 0 – 59

Tentative Schedule:

- I: Understanding Natural and Cultural Resources
- II: Managing Natural and Cultural Resources
- III. Interpretation of Natural and Cultural Resources
- IV. Preservation and Natural and Cultural Resources
- V. Natural and Cultural Resources in Barbados and the USA
- VI. Fieldwork in interpretive design
- VII. Developing a Plan for Natural and Cultural Heritage in Barbados

Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu>].

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

