

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
PRLS/TOUR 362, Section 001—Cultural and Environmental Interpretation
3 credits, Spring 2017
Monday 10:30am-1:10pm, 253 Bull Run Hall, Science and Technology Campus
Recreation Management

Faculty

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PREREQUISITES/COREQUISITES

PRLS 300 or PRLS 328 or TOUR 352 or permission of instructor

UNIVERSITY CATALOG 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 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 so 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.

COURSE DELIVERY METHOD

This course will be delivered through lecture, field trips, and guest speakers.

LEARNER OUTCOMES OR 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.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

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*:

- 7.02: Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate the ability to design, implement, and evaluate services that facilitate targeted human experiences and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity.

REQUIRED TEXTS

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

COURSE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignments will be due at the beginning of class on the specific due date. All written papers are to be submitted in WORD. **Papers received after the beginning of class will be considered late and receive a 20% deduction in points per 24-hour period.** If you encounter extreme emergencies or are participating in a pre-approved university-sponsored function, exceptions may be made; however, these must be discussed with me to determine if they fall in this category. I strongly encourage you to make a back-up copy of any work submitted since computers have been known to crash at the most inopportune times.

Assignment Summaries

Agency Presentation (teams of 3)

You will become familiar with some of the various local, state, and federal agencies associated with cultural and environmental interpretation. You will explore in-depth the mission, purpose, structure and interpretive program offerings of the agency. You will create a power point presentation to share your findings with fellow classmates. Format and outline for the presentation will be provided by the instructor.

Site/Facility Analysis (individual or in teams of 2)

You will visit one interpretive site/facility outside of class during this semester. Select a site/facility that offers a cultural, historical, and environmental theme. Write a short (approximately 3-4 page) report detailing your assessment of the facility and their use of interpretive design techniques we discuss in class. An assessment form will be provided by the instructor as a guide.

Interpretive Program (teams of 2)

This is a culminating project for our course and will require you to develop an interpretive talk for a specific age group in an assigned category. You will work in teams to design and present your talk to your peers during the last several weeks of this course. Guidelines will be provided by the instructor.

EVALUATION

This course will be graded on a percent basis.

Requirements	Points per Project
FINAL EXAM- comprehensive	100
Assignments	
<i>Agency Presentation</i>	75
<i>Site/Facility Analysis</i>	100
<i>Interpretive Talk</i>	100
CLASS PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE (includes field trips, homework, quizzes)	<u>75</u>
TOTAL	450 possible points

Grading Scale

A+ = 98 – 100	B+ = 88 – 89	C+ = 78 – 79	D = 60 – 69
A = 94 – 97	B = 84 – 87	C = 74 – 77	F = 0 – 59
A- = 90 – 93	B- = 80 – 83	C- = 70 – 73	

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Class Schedule

WEEK	TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
1 (Jan.23)	Introductions, ice breakers, review course requirements	Section I- Chapters 1 and 2
2 (Jan. 30)	Historical Perspective of Interpretation Principles of Interpretation, why interpret?	Introduce Site/Facility Analysis Assignment
3 (Feb.6)	Historical Interpretation- Field Trip to Ben Lomond Park HOW TO PLAN FOR AN INTERPRETIVE TALK. CREATING -- Meanings & Relevance and Facilitating a Connection, Themes	Section II- Chapters (all)
4 (Feb.13)	Tangibles, intangible, universal concepts. NPS Training video GUEST SPEAKER	Site Analysis #1-DUE Ben Lomond Park
5 (Feb.20)	Work in teams on agency Presentation	
6 (Feb. 27)	Agency Presentations INTERPRETATION IN VIRGINIA	Section III- Chapters 12, 14
7 (March 6)	Developing Themes, Universal Concepts, tangibles and intangibles On Campus Activity-outdoors	
(March 13)	SPRING BREAK	

8 (March 20)	Environmental Interpretation- Guest Speaker or field trip Walker Nature Center Reston, VA	Interpretive Talk Outline – On Campus Activity Day
9 (March 27)	Historical Interpretation FIELD TRIP Manassas Battlefield National Park	http://www.nps.gov/mana/index.htm . Site Analysis #2 DUE (Walker Nature Center)
11 (April 3)	Cultural Interpretation Eleanor C. Lawrence Park Fairfax County Park Authority	
12 (April 10)	Planning Your Interpretive Talk Work on Interpretive Talk w/partner. DRAFT of talk to Professor Johnson by 1/14/17.	NOT IN CLASS THIS WEEK Site Analysis #3 DUE Eleanor C. Lawrence Park FINAL EXAM-on Black Board
13 (April 17)	Review Draft with Professor- in class GUEST SPEAKER	
14 (April 24)	INTERPRETATIVE TALK	Site Analysis # 4—your selected site
15 (May 1)	INTERPRETATIVE TALK	
May 8, 9	READING DAYS!!	NO CLASS
16 (May 15)	INTERPRETATIVE TALK	HAPPY SUMMER!

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: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

* Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).

* Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).

* Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).

* Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

* Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.

* The Writing Center 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/>).

* The 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 Student Support & Advocacy Center staff helps students develop and maintain healthy lifestyles through confidential one-on-one support as well as through interactive programs and resources. Some of the topics they address are healthy relationships, stress management, nutrition, sexual assault, drug and alcohol use, and sexual health (see <http://ssac.gmu.edu/>). Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone at 703-993-3686. Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://ssac.gmu.edu/make-a-referral/>.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.

