

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
College of Education and Human Development
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

PRLS 362 – 001 – Cultural and Environmental Interpretation
3 Credits – Spring 2019
Wednesdays 7:20 – 10:00pm – Enterprise Hall 274

FACULTY

Instructor: Ivan Levin M.S.
Office: N/A
Office Hours: By Appointment
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Phone Number: 540-818-5818 (9am-10pm Call or Text)

PREREQUISITES: 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 using a face to face lectures and fieldtrips.

LEARNER OUTCOMES AND 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 sites, materials and presentations; and,
4. Prepare several types of effective spoken and written interpretive messages.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION STANDARDS: Further, upon completion of this course, students will meet the following professional accreditation standards for the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism, and Related Professions (COAPRT):

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, Cable (2018). *Interpretation of Cultural and Natural Heritage for a Better World*, Urbana, IL: Sagamore Venture Publishing. (**Professor's resource for lectures**)

COURSE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION: Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy). This course will be graded on a percentage system for a total of 100% distributed as follows:

Assignments and Examinations:

Requirements	Points per Project
FINAL EXAM- comprehensive	100
Assignments	
<i>Agency Presentation</i>	75
<i>3 Site/Facility Analyses</i>	150
<i>Interpretive Talk</i>	100
CLASS PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE (includes field trips, homework, quizzes)	75
TOTAL	500

*****NOTE – FULL ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS WITH GRADING RUBRICS ARE POSTED ON BLACKBOARD**

Assignment Summaries

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.

1. Agency Presentation (teams of 2)

You will become familiar with some of the various local, state, and federal agencies associated with cultural and environmental interpretation in Virginia. 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 in class.

Format and outline for the presentation will be provided by the instructor.

2. Class Field Trips/Site Analysis

a. As a class, we will visit three interpretive sites this semester. At each site we will have a lecture or program lead by their interpretive staff. Each site will help familiarize you with and increase your knowledge of Interpretation. We will visit sites such as ones noted in Section IV of our text.

Individual Project (or teams of 2)

b. You will visit one interpretive site/facility outside of class during this semester. Select a site/facility that offers cultural, natural, environmental theme. You will complete analysis of the site and share experience with the class.

3. 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. **Note: you must attend all three classes (April 16, April 23, and May 1) to receive full credit—no early departures.**

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. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:

WEEK	TOPIC FOR CLASS	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS/Homework for next class
Week 1 1/23	Introductions, ice breakers, review course requirements	Read: IX, XI, XIII Section I and II
Week 2 1/30	What is Interpretation? Why Interpret?	Read: Section III
Week 3 2/6	What Guides us? Introduce Site/Facility Analysis Assignment and Who offers Interpretation Project (Agency Presentation)	Read: Chapter 15
Week 4 2/13	TBD Field Trip Week Topic: HOW TO PLAN FOR AN INTERPRETIVE TALK. CREATING -- Meanings & Relevance and Facilitating a Connection, Immersion Interpretation	Read: Section IV
Week 5 2/20	Work in teams on Agency Presentation	Read: Chapters 11, 12, 13
Week 6 2/27	Agency Presentations-students Introduce Tangibles and Intangibles, How People Learn, Flow Learning, NPS Training Video	
Week 7 3/6	TBD SATURDAY Field Trip Week	Site Analysis Field Trip #1 DUE: (3/20/2010) NEXT WEEK: SPRING BREAK
Week 8 3/20	Guest Speaker	
Week 9 3/27	Work on your Individual Site Analysis – Self Field Trip	Read: Chapters 18 and 19
Week 10 4/3	TBD SATURDAY Field Trip Week	DUE: Site Analysis #2 Individual Site Analysis Read: Chapter 14
Week 11 4/10	Planning Your Interpretive Talk Talk Formula, Components of an Interpretive Talk, Thematic Interpretation, Effective Writing and Speaking Work on Interpretive Talk w/partner	- DUE: Site Analysis Field Trip #
Week 12 4/17	Review DRAFT with Professor	DUE: DRAFT OF INTERPRETIVE TALK
Week 13 4/24	INTERPRETATIVE TALK - student presentations	DUE: Final Interpretive Talk
Week 14 5/1	INTERPRETATIVE TALK-student presentations In Class review for Final Exam	Presentations
Exam Day 5/8	FINAL EXAM	7:30pm

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

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 <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- 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 <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices 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/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

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