

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**  
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism  
PRLS/TOUR 362—Cultural and Environmental Interpretation  
Spring 2013

<b>DAY/TIME:</b>	T, TH 3:00– 4:15 p.m.	<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>258 Bull Run Hall</b>
<b>PROFESSOR:</b>	Susan L. Johnson	<b>EMAIL ADDRESS:</b>	<b>sjohnsoi@gmu.edu</b>
<b>OFFICE LOCATION:</b>	Freedom Center Administration	<b>PHONE NUMBER:</b>	<b>703-993-3761</b>
<b>OFFICE HOURS:</b>	By appointment only	<b>FAX NUMBER:</b>	<b>703-993-8478</b>

**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.

**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.

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.
-------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**NATURE OF COURSE: Face-face**

**REQUIRED READINGS**

Beck, Larry and Cable, Ted T. (2011). *The Gifts of Interpretation*. Urbana, Il: Sagamore Publishing LLC

Additional readings to be assigned.

**EVALUATION:** Assignments will be due at the beginning of class on the specific due date. All written papers are to be submitted in WORD (.doc or .docx). **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

### **Facility Analysis (pairs)**

For this assignment, you will work in pairs and travel to an interpretive facility assigned to you by the instructor. The facility will focus on natural history, cultural history, and/or historical interpretation. You may attend an interpretive talk, view exhibits, walk a self-guided trail, etc. You will complete a facility analysis based of the fifteen principles—Due: April 2

### **Brochure Analysis (in class)**

For this assignment, you will collect 2 copies of an interpretive brochure from the facility you visit. Bring them to class for an in class analysis. More details to follow—Due: April 2

### **Pitch in on the Piedmont (Saturday)**

This is a volunteer experience for our class. We will gather at The EDGE on Saturday, April 20, 9:00am-12:00. To reinforce the concepts noted in Chapter 12 of our text, we will work together as a team alongside other volunteers from Mason and the surrounding community to enhance the facility. This event takes place rain or shine—Due: Saturday, April 20, 9am-12:00.

### **Interpretive Program (pairs)**

For this assignment, you will choose a topic, with a specific theme. Then, following the steps for planning, preparing, and delivering a thematic interpretative program, you will give a short interpretive talk (without using PowerPoint, however, you may use visual aids). You will present the interpretive talk to your peers in class—Due: April 25

### **Journal Activity**

To enhance the readings assigned, the Instructor will provide several questions per chapter for you to reflect on and respond to in a journal—Due: February 14, March 7, April 11

<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>
Mid-term Exam (based on text & class lectures)	100
Assignments:	
<i>Facility Analysis (pairs)</i>	100
<i>Brochure Analysis</i>	
<i>Pitch in on the Piedmont</i>	75
<i>Interpretive Program (pairs)</i>	100
<i>Journal Activity</i>	75
CLASS PARTICIPATION & ATTENDANCE (includes field trips)	<u>50</u>
<b>TOTAL possible points=</b>	<b>500</b>

### **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	

## *Tentative Schedule based on responses from Guest Speakers*

### COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK	TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
1 (Jan.22 & 24)	Introductions, ice breakers, review course requirements  History of Interpretation? The Gift of Spark	Prologue, Preface, Introduction and Chapter 1
2 (Jan 29 & 31)	The Gift of Revelation  The Gift of Story Tangibles, Intangibles and Universal Concepts	Chapter 2 & 3& 4
3 (Feb 5 & 7)	The Gift of Wholeness Know your audience. Creating Themes, Topics, 3-5 talking points The Gift of Illumination	Chapter 5 & 6
4 (Feb.12 & 14)	Walk in the Woods, explore interpretive techniques <b>Exhibits and Self-guided trails</b> (Keith Tomlinson)	Chapter 7 & 8 Journal #1 , February 14
5 (Feb. 19 & 21)	<b>Field Trip –Eleanor C Lawrence Park</b> <b>The Gift of Provocation</b>  <b>Site Interpretive Planning</b> Speaker-John Shafer	Chapter 9 & 10
6 (Feb 26 & 28 )	Field Trip- <b>Manassas Battlefield National Park, Feb 28</b>	Chap. 10 & 11
7 (March 5 & 7)	The Gift of Targeted Programs Interpretive Talk by a Professional Naturalist  Practice Skills – in class	Journal #2, March 7
8 (March 12 & 14)	Spring Break-No class	
9 (March 19 & 21)	The Gift of Professionalism (guest speaker) <b>Mid-term</b>	
10 (March 26 & 28)	<b>Work on brochure and facility assignment (no class scheduled)</b>	Chapter 14 thru the end
11 (April 2& 4)	Brochure analysis (in class activity) Creating a sketch for a brochure or exhibit	Facility analysis due, April 2
12 (April 9 &11)	The Gift of Passion, The Gift of relationship Interpretation Flow. Interpretation Program Prep and Planning	Journal #3, April 11
13 (April 16 & 18)	Work in teams	April 20-Class Volunteer Day
14 (April 23 & 25)	<b>SATURDAY--April 20-Pitch in on the Piedmont</b> <b>No Class on April 23</b> <b>Presentations Begin-April 25</b>	
15 (April 30 & May 2)	STUDENT INTERPRETIVE TALK PRESENTATIONS	ALL CLASS MEMBERS MUST BE PRESENT
16 (May 7 & 9)	STUDENT INTERPRETIVE TALK PRESENTATIONS	ALL CLASS MEMBERS MUST BE PRESENT

*Note: Faculty reserves the right to revise the course schedule.*

## ***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 of 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.



