Natural Resources 4611
“Environmental Interpretation and Visitor Services”
Spring 2015
Course Syllabus

Course Meeting Times
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:45 – 2:05 or 3:55 – 5:15 p.m.
Kottman Hall 382

Course Instructor
Susan M. Rasche
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Office: 384 Kottman Hall
Office hours: T/R 2:30 – 3:30 p.m., and by appointment

Course Description
In this course, students will learn the principles of interpretation, the theory behind those principles, and the practical application of those principles in personal interpretive programs. Students will also learn the importance of using interpretation as a management tool which connects the audience with the resource, thus furthering the goals and objectives of an organization.

Course Goals
• To understand the principles of interpretation
• To understand the components of meaningful interpretation
• To hone the presentational skills required to conduct such interpretation

Course Objectives
• Students will be able to develop and deliver thematic interpretive presentations which form a bond between organization, audience, and resource using interpretive techniques
• Students will be able to demonstrate the management goals met by their interpretive programs
• Students will exhibit public speaking skills, both planned and improvisational
• Students will evaluate interpretive programs in an ongoing fashion with an eye toward constant improvement
• Students will view themselves as members of a body of professionals, and hold themselves to those professional standards.

Course Text
Attendance
Attendance and punctuality are required and expected. If you need to miss a class, please inform the instructor in advance or have a written excuse for your absence from the Student Health Center. If you miss a class, you are responsible for copying the notes from a fellow classmate and then seeing the instructor if you have any questions. If you have an unexcused absence for a presentation or exam, your grade will be entered as a zero.

Class Format
Classes will be a combination of lectures, activities, and student presentations. Discussion and questions are welcome; you sit amongst a synergistic group of your peers. Remember; always have a passion for what you are learning!

Disability Accommodations
The Office for Disability Services will be relied upon to notify the instructor of the need for accommodation of a registered disability. If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a non-registered or temporary disability, please inform me so that we can discuss the class format, anticipate your needs, and explore potential accommodations.

Assignments, Exams, and Values
- all presentations to be given to class as a whole
- total of 1,000 points

Due Thurs., Jan. 15: 2 minute Biography presentation: (50 pts.)
Prepare a two minute interpretive presentation about your most important resource – yourself! Relate to us, reveal your passion for interpretation to us, provoke us to learn more about you in the future.

Due Thurs., Feb. 5: Outline for Interpretive Talk: (75 pts.)
Create the theme, goals and objectives, and outline for the Interpretive Talk.
Re-do of Talk Outline due Feb. 12, if desired

Tues., Feb. 10: Object Interpretation: (50 pts.)
Each student will be given an object and asked to perform a two minute improvisational interpretive presentation about that object.

Thurs., Feb. 19: Quiz: (75 pts)
All things relating to Interpretive Talks

Tues. and Thurs., Feb. 24, 25, Mar. 3, 5: Interpretive Talk presentation (175 pts.)
Prepare a 10 min. interpretive talk in which you use visual aids. These aids can be objects, models, illustrations, etc.; anything not technology based. You may ask your fellow students to act as a specific kind of audience if you desire.
Due Tues., Mar. 10:  
**Outline for Interpretive Walk:** (75 pts.)  
Create the theme, goals and objectives, and outline for the Interpretive Walk.

Thurs., Mar. 6:  **Midterm Exam:** (125 pts.)  
An exam of short answer and essay type questions will be given, covering class discussions, Chapters 1-11, and any supplemental readings given to date.

Tues. and Thurs., Mar. 31, Apr. 2, 7, and 9:  
**Interpretive Walk presentation** (175 pts.)  
Prepare a 10 min. interpretive walk starting and ending outside Kottman Hall. Walks will be held snow or shine so be prepared for the weather. You may ask your fellow students to imagine things not actually seen around Kottman Hall if desired, but you must support these images creatively.

Thurs., Apr. 16:  **Final Quiz** (125 pts.)  
A comprehensive quiz which will cover class discussions, Chapters 1-11 in the text, and any supplemental readings given.

Tues. and Thurs., Apr. 21 and 23:  **Professional Goals** presentation (75 pts.)  
Prepare a 5 min. interpretive presentation about your professional goals. This presentation should not be just about where you want to work, but include how you want to work. Please show us where you envision yourself as a professional in the field of interpretation.

Notes:
- Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned date. Late assignments will be devalued by 5% of their grade per day, including weekends.
- Writing skills ALWAYS count! Points will be taken off for poor composition and poor spelling. A spelling dictionary will be available during exams; please use it.
- Please make sure you cite and give credit for ALL material you use in your work, including that which is gathered from the internet.
- Faculty rule 3335-5-54 will be followed in the case of academic misconduct. Basically, don’t cheat, don’t plagiarize, and don’t be foolish enough to think I will let these kinds of actions slide.
**Course Schedule**

**Tues., Jan. 13:**
- Introduction – instructor, course, textbook
- What is Interpretation? (Ch 1)
- Assignment: 2 min. Bios (Due Jan. 15)

**Thurs., Jan. 15:**
- **Due: 2 min. Bio presentations**

**Tues., Jan. 20:**
- Why is Interpretation Important? (Ch 2)
- Communication – principles, techniques (Ch 3)

**Thurs., Jan 22: (Career Fair)**
- Communication – principles, techniques (Ch 3) con’t.
- Plan for Success – know your audience, resource, organization (Ch 4)
- Extras and Essentials (Ch 11)

**Tues., Jan. 27:**
- Programming – thematic presentation (Ch 5)

**Thurs., Jan 29:**
- The Interpretive Talk (Ch 6)
- The Campfire Program (Ch 8)
- Assignment: Outline, goals, and objectives for Interpretive Talk (Due Feb. 5)

**Tues., Feb. 3:**
- Guest Interpretive Talk

**Thurs., Feb. 5:**
- Theater Workshop
- **Due: Outline for Interpretive Talk**

**Tues., Feb. 10:**
- **Object Interpretation – 2 min., improvisational**

**Thurs., Feb. 12:**
- Interpreting to Children (Ch 9)
- **Due: Re-do of Talk Outline, if desired**

**Tues., Feb. 17:**
- The Interpretive Walk (Ch 7)
- Assignment: Outline, goals, and objectives for Interpretive Walk (Due Mar. 10)

**Thurs., Feb. 19:**
- **Quiz:** All things relating to Interpretive Talks
- Roving Interpretation (Ch 10)
Tues. and Thurs., Feb. 24, 25, Mar. 3, 5  
**Due: Interpretive Talk presentations**

**Tues., Mar. 10:**  
Review Chapters 1 – 11 for midterm  
Workshop Interpretive Walk outlines in class  
**Due: Outline for Interpretive Walk**

**Thurs., Mar. 12**  
**Midterm Exam** (Ch. 1 - 11)

NO CLASS: Mar. 17, 19  Spring Break

**Tues. Mar. 24:**  
Guest Interpretive Walk  - Field trip to Highbanks Metropark

**Thurs., Mar. 26:**  
Review Talks vs. Walks, including themes and sub-themes

**Due: Interpretive Walk** presentations

**Tues., Ap. 14**  
Professional Development (Ch 14)  
**Assignment:** 5 min. Professional Goals (Due Ap. 21 and 23)

**Thurs., Ap. 16**  
**Final Quiz** (comprehensive)

**Tues. and Thurs., Ap. 21 and 23**  
**Due:** 5 min. Professional Goals presentation

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Have a great summer, and remember: it is the teacher who learns!