

**NRES 374 (3 cr.) & NRES 482 (12 cr.): Practicum in Environmental Interpretation and Human Dimensions of Natural Resources**  
**Syllabus – Spring 2020**  
**Schmeeckle Reserve**

**Course Schedule:**

**Mondays:** Class meets 2:00-5:00 p.m.; self-directed 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Schmeeckle Visitor Center

**One day: Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday:** Self-directed 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

**Friday Morning, Evening and Weekend Programs**

**Course Instructors:**

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**Grading Procedure:**

50% CWES teaching responsibilities and assignments (see CWES syllabus and manual)

50% Schmeeckle interpretive programs and projects, active participation in group discussions and group programs, attendance, and attitude

**Textbook:**

Buchholz, J., Lackey, B., Gross, M., & Zimmerman, R. (2015). *The Interpreter's Guidebook: Techniques for Programs and Presentations*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Stevens Point, WI: UW-SP Foundation.

**Course Description:**

Plan, present, and evaluate interpretive programs, and further your skills creating media for nature centers and park visitors. This capstone course allows you to demonstrate proficiency in skills and knowledge gained in previous EE and interpretation courses.

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. You will be able to apply interpretive skills in a professional manner for a public audience.
2. You will be able to develop your interpretive program research, development, delivery, and evaluation skills.
3. You will be able to develop your interpretive media skills by marketing programs and writing and designing media pieces for your programs.
4. You will be able to demonstrate your abilities as a professional working at a nature center through organization skills, punctuality, respect of others, teamwork, communication, and personal responsibility.

These course learning outcomes address a broader campus-wide learning outcome related to communication that helps students apply standards of oral communication to compose an articulate and organized presentation that is well-researched with information suitable to the topic, purpose, and audience.

You are expected to function professionally and to take full responsibility for your projects. For your programs, this means that:

- You have researched your topic so you feel comfortable with the material.
- You have PRACTICED your program several times.
- You have helped advertise your programs.
- You have made sure the visitor center will be unlocked when you need it.
- You have the logistics for your program all set up (audiovisual, seating, lighting, props, etc.) well before your program starts.
- You are self-motivated and take the initiative to ask for guidance when needed.

### **Environmental Interpretation Practicum Assignments:**

- 1. Personal Growth Objectives Paper** (25 pts) You will reflect on your goals for the semester and refer back to them at the end of the semester to assess your growth.
- 2. Program Brochure** (15 pts): You will each be responsible for developing a program description and an image for the program brochure that will be printed and distributed to nearly 900 people on the Schmeckle Reserve mailing list. The brochure will advertise each program with a date, time, place (if different than the visitor center), a concise interpretive description, the presenter's name(s), and if attendees should dress for the weather.
- 3. Individual Program:** Research, plan, develop, and present an interpretive program.
  - Programs need to be at least 45 minutes in length.
  - Programs will be presented to a public audience that targets family groups; plan for a diversity of ages and backgrounds.
  - The topic you choose will be related to seasonal local natural or cultural history, and it will be different than other programs you have presented in the past.
  - You will develop a creative, focused theme related to the topic after researching it.

### **Program Scoring** (315 pts.):

- **Theme Sheet** (25 pts): **All individual program theme sheets are due on Feb. 10.** A final draft, based on the feedback you receive, will be due 1 week prior to your rehearsal. Outline your plans for each program by developing a focused theme, organizing your sub-themes, and brainstorming creative techniques.
- **Dress Rehearsal** (50 pts): Presented at least 1 week prior to your program. Each program will be presented in its entirety (including props, costumes, demonstrations, activities, media for the program, etc.) to the class at least one week prior to the public presentation (during Monday class time). The class will provide feedback to help you make final adjustments. Preparation for the dress rehearsal is factored into your grade. **BE PREPARED!**
- **Interpretive Media** (25 pts): Your program should include a take-home piece of media for your audience members. Develop original content that relates to your program. Show your media during your dress rehearsal for feedback. Your media piece will be evaluated based on your interpretive design and writing. You should print up to 25 copies to distribute at the program.
- **Facebook Post** (10 pts): *For individual programs only.* Due 2 weeks prior to program. Develop a concise, creative Facebook posting that encourages Schmeckle visitors to attend your program. This should include an image that represents your program. Send your post and image to Shelby.

- **Public Program Evaluation** (180 pts): Your public program will be evaluated based on several criteria, including use of interpretive principles (45 pts), program organization (45 pts), interpretive techniques (45 pts), and effort (45 pts).
- **Critical Review of Program** (25 pts): Due 1 week after your program video is posted. Write a 2-3 page paper to critique your public presentation based on your experience and the video. Submit via Canvas.

**4. Preschool Program:** Develop and present a group program for preschool children (280 pts. per group member) Preschool Program tentative dates: March 27; April 3, 10, 17; May 8.

- Programs need to be at least 45 minutes in length.
- Programs will be presented to children ages 3-6, accompanied by a guardian.
- Your program topic will be assigned and you will work with 1-2 of your classmates to prepare and present the program.
- You will develop a creative, focused theme related to the topic and age-appropriate activities.

**Program Scoring** (305 pts.):

- **Program Outline** (25 pts): **Draft preschool program outlines are due Feb. 10.** A final draft, based on the feedback you receive, will be due 1 week prior to your rehearsal.
- **Dress Rehearsal** (50 pts): Presented at least 1 week prior to your program. Each program will be presented in its entirety (including props, costumes, demonstrations, activities, etc.) to the class at least one week prior to the public presentation (during Monday class time). The class will provide feedback to help you make final adjustments. Preparation for the dress rehearsal is factored into your grade. **BE PREPARED!**
- **Interactive Interpretive Prop/Activity** (25 pts): Your group should develop an original interactive interpretive prop related to your topic that will be used as part of your program. Examples include flannel boards, an outdoor play station using natural materials, a hands-on discovery station(s) for preschoolers to rotate through, puppets for a puppet show, a creative 3-dimensional prop, a thematic hands-on snack, or your own creative ideas. Show your interpretive element during your dress rehearsal for feedback.
- **Program Evaluation** (180 pts): Your preschool program will be graded based on several evaluation criteria, including use of interpretive principles (45 pts), program organization (45 pts), interpretive techniques (45 pts), and effort (45 pts).
- **Critical Review of Program** (25 pts): Due 1 week after your program video is posted. Write a 2-3 page paper to critique your public presentation based on your experience and the video. Submit via Canvas.

**5. Rehearsal Attendance:** Attend and participate in the critique of all other class members' program rehearsals (75 pts.)

The greatest learning usually occurs in the interactions at rehearsals where we can make suggestions to each other and brainstorm ideas with the pressure of an upcoming public program. It is your responsibility to attend all of these rehearsals, and notify the instructors as soon as possible if a conflict arises.

**6. Program Attendance:** Attend 7 of your classmates' public programs (70 pts.)

At the end of each public program, we will meet as a group and discuss the successes and improvements made by the presenter. You will fill out an evaluation form for the presenter. Submit the completed evaluation form to a practicum instructor.

- 7. Special Event:** Participate in the planning, development, and production of a group character interpretive program and interactive Passport Stations at the annual Schmeckle Reserve Candlelight Hike Festival. (200 pts.)

Each fall and spring, Schmeckle Reserve hosts a Candlelight Hike Festival that attracts 2,500-5,000 people from the community. It is the Reserve's biggest event of the year. The festivals have specific natural and cultural history themes. Your group will develop a creative and engaging character program (100 pts) based on the theme. You will also be responsible for planning the interactive Passport Stations (100 pts) that provide more in-depth information about the theme. More information will be provided in class.

- 8. Nature Notes** (25 pts): These short, informal interpretive talks will be presented to your peers on weeks when we don't have program rehearsals. They will be graded based on depth of research, interpretive techniques, and effort.

**Total: 1,030 pts.**

**Schedule: NR 374/482 Environmental Interpretation – Spring 2020**

Date	Class Topics	Readings/Assignments
<b>Jan. 21 (special Tuesday class)</b> 2:30-5 p.m.	Introductions; syllabus & textbooks; individual program topic ideas	<i>Guidebook</i> , Ch. 2: Meaning Centered Interpretation, pp. 28-47; Ch. 3: Planning Successful Programs, pp. 56-70 <b>Personal Growth Objectives due</b> 5 p.m. Jan. 24
<b>Jan. 27</b>	Topics & theme discussion; preschool program topics; program scheduling; program props/iPad; history & tour of Schmeeckle	<i>Guidebook</i> , Chs. 5-7: Creative Techniques, Talks & Walks; Ch. 9: Interpreting for Children, pp. 188-192; 199-200
<b>Feb. 3</b>	Program planning; brochure prep; introduce special event; media for programs	
<b>Feb. 10</b>	Finalize program brochure; poster distribution locations	<b>Individual program draft theme sheets &amp; draft preschool program outlines due</b>
<b>Feb. 17</b>	Special event planning; presentation room logistics; rehearsal guidelines; Facebook assignment	
<b>Feb. 24</b>	<b>Dress rehearsals begin</b> ; special event planning; evaluation; critical review assignment	<i>Guidebook</i> , Ch. 10: Gathering Feedback
<b>March 2</b>	<b>Public programs begin this week</b> ; dress rehearsals; special event planning	
<b>March 9</b>	Dress rehearsals; special event prep	
<b>March 16-20</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>	
<b>March 23</b>	Dress rehearsals; special event prep	
<b>March 30</b>	Dress rehearsals; special event prep	
<b>April 6</b>	Dress rehearsals; special event prep	
<b>April 13</b>	Dress rehearsals; special event prep	
<b>April 20</b>	Dress rehearsals; special event prep	
<b>April 27</b>	Candlelight Hike dress rehearsal, Passport Station demos	
<b>May 1, Friday</b>	<b>Candlelight Hike Festival!</b>	
<b>May 4</b>	Final rehearsals	