

NRES 374 (3 cr.): Practicum in Environmental Interpretation

Syllabus – Fall 2021

Schmeeckle Reserve

Schedule

Mondays: 2:00-5:00 p.m at Schmeeckle
additional evening and weekend programs

Instructors

Megan Espe

Interpretation Instructor

TNR 176

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Schmeeckle Director

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Stephanie Somerville

Graduate Assistant

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Drop-in Hours

Megan is available for Zoom drop-in hours from 11-11:50 a.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. See Canvas for the link to join. An RSVP is recommended to ensure I'm available. I'm also happy to meet outside these times, including in-person outdoor meetings. Please e-mail mespe@uwsp.edu

Stephanie is available by appointment. Please contact her at ssomervi@uwsp.edu to arrange a meeting.

Course Description

In this course you will plan, present, and evaluate interpretive programs, and further your skills creating media for nature centers and park visitors. This practicum course allows you to demonstrate proficiency in skills and knowledge gained in previous environmental education and interpretation courses.

Recommended Resources

- Buchholz, J., Lackey, B., Gross, M., & Zimmerman, R. (2015). *The Interpreter's Guidebook: Techniques for Programs and Presentations*, 4th ed. Stevens Point, WI: UW-SP Foundation.
- NRES 369 Interpretive Media Lab tutorials binder.

Grading Procedure

Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A	93-100%	C+	77-79%
A-	90-92%	C	73-76%
B+	87-89%	C-	70-72%
B	83-86%	D+	67-69%
B-	80-82%	D	60-66%
		F	< 60

Late Policy

If you have extenuating circumstances that are preventing you from completing assignments on time, please [contact Megan](#). Unexcused late work will result in a 10 percent deduction.

Environmental Interpretation Practicum Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome (LO) #1: Knowledge of Self
Demonstrate a strong awareness of self, including personality, knowledge, strengths, and weaknesses, and work to develop these skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be creative and open to trying something new• Adapt to various situations with flexibility, problem-solving, and creativity• Demonstrate a commitment to professional and personal growth• Prioritize tasks through organizational skills and personal responsibility• Admit when you don't know something and be willing to find the answer• Exhibit commitment through enthusiasm and passion for Schmeeckle's mission and values• Demonstrate professionalism in appearance, attendance, demeanor, and representation of Schmeeckle Reserve• Accept constructive feedback and guidance
LO #2: Knowledge of Site and Visitor
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop interpretive programs and media that relate to Schmeeckle Reserve's mission and are relevant to central Wisconsin natural and cultural history.• Increase your personal connection to Schmeeckle Reserve and integrate that passion into your interpretive efforts to relate to your audience.• Develop interpretive programs and media that target audiences typical to Schmeeckle Reserve, including a variety of ages, backgrounds, and abilities.
LO #3: Program Development
Conduct research, develop a theme and sub-themes, incorporate a variety of creative techniques, and present professional-level interpretive programs for a variety of audiences.
LO #4: Interpretive Media
Create, write, and design non-personal professional interpretive media for program marketing and interpretation.
LO #5: Evaluation
Evaluate your peers' interpretive programs and media and critique your own work for effectiveness and quality.

Student Learning Outcomes adapted from the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) Interpretation Standards Project, 2018.

Environmental Interpretation Practicum Assignments:

See our Canvas course for all due dates.

LO #1: Knowledge of Self

1. **NAI and NAAEE Standards Self-Assessment:** *Completed in NRES 483 and referred to in the Schmeeckle practicum.*
2. **Coaching Sessions** (25 pts): Schedule and attend a one-on-one meeting with Megan. Attend prepared to share updates on program progress and bring questions and concerns for guidance.

LO #3: Interpretive Program Development

1. **Individual Interpretive Program:** Research, plan, develop, and present a public interpretive program on a topic of your choosing that's relevant to Schmeeckle Reserve and its visitors.
 - Develop an outdoor program (guided walk, campfire program, etc.) with a built-in rain date, at least 45 minutes long, presented to an audience of all ages.

Assignments for Public Interpretive Program:

- **Tangibles/Intangibles and Theme Statement** (10 pts): Develop a focused, creative interpretive theme for your program.
 - **Three Pillars of Interpretation** (10 pts): How does your individual program meet Schmeeckle's goals and adapt to potential audiences? (also relates to LO #2: Knowledge of Site & Visitor)
 - **Program Research** (10 pts): Conduct research for your interpretive program and document your sources.
 - **Subthemes** (10 pts): Develop your program's main points, based on your theme.
 - **Creative Techniques** (10 pts): Develop creative techniques for your program.
 - **POW and Conclusion** (10 pts): Develop a thematic POW and Conclusion.
 - **Final Theme Sheet** (50 pts): A final draft, based on the feedback you receive on the components above, will be due one week before your rehearsal.
 - **Dress Rehearsal** (75 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 during Monday class time. The class will provide feedback to help you make final adjustments. Be prepared!
 - **Program Evaluation** (180 pts): Your final public program will be evaluated on the use of interpretive principles, program organization, interpretive techniques, and effort.
2. **Nature Notes Program Video***: Create a short (~5 minute) interpretive program video that will be posted on the Schmeeckle YouTube and Facebook page. Assignments include:
 - **Draft Theme Sheet** (10 pts)
 - **Final Theme Sheet** (25 pts)
 - **Draft Video** *optional*
 - **Final Video** (100 pts)

**You have a choice between this assignment and the Interpretive Media project.*
 3. **Group Character Program:** As a group, develop thematic characters, write a script, and create costumes for a character program based on a theme. Assignments include:
 - Draft Script (25 pts)
 - Final Script (50 pts)
 - Dress Rehearsal (50 pts)
 - Final Presentation (100 pts)

LO #4: Interpretive Media

1. **Program Brochure** (15 pts): Develop a program description and source a copyright-free image for the program brochure that will be distributed to the Schmeckle Reserve mailing list. The brochure will advertise each program with a date, time, meeting location, a concise interpretive description, and the presenter's name.
2. **Facebook Posts** (10 pts/each): Develop a concise, creative Facebook post that encourages Schmeckle visitors to attend your program or watch your video.
3. **Interpretive Media***: You will develop either an interpretive sign or print media piece for Schmeckle Reserve. Assignments include:
 - a. Planning phase: Media topic, format, theme development, statement of purpose, measurable objectives (20 pts)
 - b. Draft media design (30 pts)
 - c. Final media design (100 pts)

**You have a choice between the Media assignment and the Nature Notes video.*

LO #5: Evaluation

1. **Program Evaluation Reflection** (10 pts): Reflect on the qualities of constructive feedback.
2. **Rehearsal Attendance** (50 pts): Attend and participate in the critique of all other class members' program rehearsals. 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.
3. **Program Attendance** (20 pts): Attend 2 of your classmates' public programs and stay after to provide an evaluation and discuss as a group.
4. **Critical Review of Individual 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.
5. **Critical Review of Nature Notes video** (15 pts): Due 1 week after your program video is posted. Write a 1-2 page paper to critique your video. **if doing Nature Notes.*
6. **Peer Media Evaluation** (20 pts): Provide peer feedback on draft media designs. **if doing Media Project.*

Professionalism and Student Conduct

Students in the College of Natural Resources are pursuing courses of study that prepare them for careers as natural resources professionals. Thus, CNR students and faculty/staff are expected to exhibit conduct and attitudes appropriate to professionals. During the Schmeckle practicum, we view you as ambassadors of the natural area and have high expectations for your professionalism in how you represent Schmeckle and the university to the public. For your public interpretive programs in particular, if you do not demonstrate acceptable progress on your program development, Schmeckle staff reserve the right to cancel your program with no opportunity to make up those points.

Equal Access for Students with Disabilities

If accommodations are needed, please inform the Disability and Assistive Technology Center (DATC), datctr@uwsp.edu or 715-346-3365.

Schedule: NRES 374 Environmental Interpretation Practicum – Fall 2021 *Subject to Change*

Date, Time Location	Topics
Fri. Sept. 3 10a-12p	Welcome & Introductions Syllabus & recommended materials, Canvas details Course learning outcomes Covid-19 considerations: Illness, due dates, etc. Individual program format and topic ideas Interpretive themes
Fri. Sept. 10 10a-12p	Schmeeckle orientation Topics & theme workshopping Program scheduling
Mon. Sept. 13 2-5p	Brochure description workshopping Program planning logistics Guided walk format review
Mon. Sept. 20 2-5p	Finalize brochure Program evaluation
Mon. Sept. 27 2-5p	Dress rehearsals
Mon. Oct. 4 2-5p	Dress rehearsals
Mon. Oct. 11 2-5p	Dress rehearsals
Mon. Oct. 18 2-5p	Dress rehearsals
Mon. Oct. 25 2-5p	Candlelight Hike character program dress rehearsal
Fri. Oct. 29	Candlelight Hike Festival!
Mon. Nov. 1 2-5p	Dress rehearsals Nature Notes Video assignment intro
Mon. Nov. 8 2-5p	Nature Notes Video theme sheet workshopping
Mon. Nov. 15 2-5p	Nature Notes video recording
Mon. Nov. 22 2-5p	Nature Notes video recording
Mon. Nov. 29 2-5p	Interpretive Media assignment intro
Mon. Dec. 6 2-5p	Interpretive Media Peer review
Sat. Dec. 11	Graduation!