SYLLABUS: Interpretive Planning and Project Management

Course Number…………………………………..CSP 635
Credits……………………………………………….3
Semester……………………………………………Spring 2016
Instructor………………………………………………Melissa McLoud, Instructor
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Welcome to this Interpretive and Program Planning Course!

The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.
                                                                —Freeman Tilden

It is a thoughtful decision-making process to determine the most effective way to communicate a message to an intended audience in support of the agency's mission.
                                        —Lisa Brochu, Interpretive Planner

Producing interpretation which balances the needs of the visitors who will use it, the conservation of the place which is its subject, the desires of those who produce it, and the interest of those who will live with it is no simple matter.
                                — A Sense of Place Interpretive Handbook

This course introduces interpretive planning — a goal driven process that matches an organization's resources and its messages and helps establish thematic priorities, interpretive techniques, visitor experiences, program scheduling, and costs. This course provides an orientation to the work of creating interpretive plans and cultural programs in collaboration with the communities they represent. You will also learn about community engagement and various strategies that various institutions have developed to include communities in interpretive planning and exhibit and program development.

Working with a partner museum or interpretive facility throughout this course, you will develop a Course Project that highlights ways to engage communities in interpretive planning and exhibit and program development. You will learn how interpretive planning and project management can empower people and communities, and thus contribute to organizational, community, and resource well-being and success.

Main Course Topics

1. Visitor experience
2. Best Practices--Great interpretive plans, exhibits, and programs
3. Working collaboratively
4. Interpretive planning process
5. Project management
6. Designing and producing interpretation
7. Evaluating interpretive plans

Learning Objectives

Through a mix of on-line classroom and project-based work, you will gain a richer understanding of the role of interpretive planning as it is used in cultural and educational organizations and the importance of interpretive planning originating from a process of dialogue and engagement with communities. Successfully completing this course you will build the skills that you will need to be an advocate for and implementer of interpretive planning in your organization and community. You will be able to:

- Summarize successful examples of community based interpretation
- Illustrate how to incorporate communities into interpretive, exhibit, and program planning
- Assess the visitor experience of a museum or interpretive site
- Define and apply strategies in exhibit and program design and development
- Successfully manage a project
- Evaluate exhibits, programs, and interpretive plans

The centerpiece of your work this semester will be a Course Project where you will partner with a museum, park, or interpretive facility. With their support, you will research and write a final paper that would assist them in their efforts to better include their local communities in their interpretive and program planning and implementation.

Departmental Learning Outcomes

This course is aligned with two departmental learning outcomes, listed below. Students will meet departmental learning outcomes through successful completion of assignments and activities in core and elective courses. A list of all departmental learning outcomes can be found at: http://www.goucher.edu/graduate-programs/ma-in-cultural-sustainability/curriculum

Outcome 4: Devise, implement and evaluate actions that support cultural sustainability such as educational programs, exhibitions, performances, workshops, projects, media productions, websites, festivals and other initiatives that align with community practices. (MACS4 Action)

Outcome 5: Identify and demonstrate a range of professional management skills that contribute to organizational sustainability such as financial skills, communications, and leadership through collaboration, teamwork, and consensus building. (MACS5 Management)

Course Format

- PowerPoint lectures with audio
- Asynchronous discussion sessions
- Live WebEx meetings
- Assignments
- Course Project
- Assigned readings
- Online links and reading resources

Required Readings

You can purchase some of these used from Amazon

Lisa Brochu, *Interpretive Planning: The 5-M Model for Successful Planning Projects*, 2nd edition, Fort
       Collins, CO: InterpPress, 2014
Curtis R. Cook, *Just Enough Project Management*, McGraw Hill, 2004
Freeman Tilden*, Interpreting Our Heritage*, Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina
       Press, 2008
Marcella Wells, Barbara Butler, and Judith Koke, *Interpretive Planning for Museums: Integrating Visitor
       Perspectives into Decision-Making*, Left Coast Press, 2013

Grading

Course Elements	Percent [or points]
Course Project Sections 4 sections @ 4 points	16%
Final Course Project 8 points	8%
Group Project 8 points	8%
Assignments 9 Assignments @ 4 points	36%
Voice Thread posts and comments 4 @ 4 points	16%
Discussion Board posts and responses 4 @ 4 points	16%
TOTAL	100%

Note: You will build your Final Course Project in sections each week throughout the semester. Then
during the final weeks, you will revise the Final Course Project and prepare it for posting it in your
ePortfolio.

Grade Scale

A	93 or more points
A-	90 - 92 points
B+	87 - 89 points
B	83 - 86 points
B-	80 - 82 points
C+	77 - 79 points
C	73 - 76 points
C-	70 - 72 points
F	59 points and below

Course Policies

Communication:
Faculty will be available at their Goucher email address and will respond to queries within 24-48 hours.
Course participants are responsible for maintaining continuous involvement with faculty, fellow
students and student groups. In particular, participation in all online discussions is required. Ongoing
communication allows you to gain deeper insights into the content, activities and assignments in the
course. Please give notice of any obstacle that prevents this. You are encouraged to ask questions
whenever information needs clarifying. For questions pertaining to your assignments: send an email
directly to the instructor (please do not post personal questions on the discussion board). For questions
about assignments that may be interesting and helpful to other class members: please use the

discussion board. For problems with technical aspects of the website: contact helpdesk@goucher.edu (you may copy the instructor).

Missed Work:
You are responsible for material covered in the course. It is your sole responsibility to obtain any materials missed.

Late Policy:
For proper graduate student learning to occur, pacing of content mastery is critical. Therefore, assignments are to be completed on time. If extreme circumstances prevent an assignment to be completed in a timely fashion, please notify me before the assignment is due so a new date can be negotiated. Only follow-ups completed by the due date can be redone. Late assignments without such notification will be docked.

Academic Integrity:
All final work products are to be the independent work of each student and stored in the electronic portfolio. Suspected violations of the Honor Code will be referred to the Academic Honor Board. For a full description of the code and what constitutes a violation of the code, refer to the Goucher Handbook or online at www.goucher.edu/x1292.xml.

Disability Support:
http://www.goucher.edu/academics/academic-support/disability-support-services