

**PRT 452 – Environmental Interpretation**  
**Fall 2008, 4 credits**  
**Lecture: W 1:10-4:00pm**  
**Lab: W 4:10-5:25pm**  
**Room: South Annex B**

**Instructor:**

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Office Hours: By Appointment Only

**Required Texts:**

- \* *Environmental Interpretation: A Practical Guide (Sam Ham)* – This book should be available at the University of Maine bookstore.
- \* *Project Learning Tree Activity Guide* - The guide will be distributed free of cost to participants during the Project Learning Tree workshop in light of a \$25 workshop fee (pay on Wednesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>).

**Optional Texts:**

- \* *Certified Interpretive Guide Library* – An addition to the required Sam Ham book above, his library set includes the following books:
  - *Interpretation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* by Larry Beck and Ted Cable
  - *Interpreting for Park Visitors* by William Lewis
  - *Interpreting Our Heritage* by Freeman Tilden
  - *Interpretation of Cultural and Natural Resources* by Doug Knudson, Ted Cable, and Larry Beck
  - *Sharing Nature with Children* by Joseph Cornell

The set can be purchased from the National Association for Interpretation at:  
[http://interpnet.com/store/acatalog/Publications\\_Page\\_1.html](http://interpnet.com/store/acatalog/Publications_Page_1.html).

To save you money, two sets of these books will be put in South Annex B.

- \* *Last Child in the Woods* by Richard Louv – A recommended read for all parks, recreation & tourism students.
- \* *The Experience Economy* by B. Joseph Pine and James Gilmore – A recommended read for parks, recreation & tourism students specifically interested in visitor services.

## Course Description:

Environmental Interpretation (PRT452) is a course about the principles and techniques of cultural and natural resources interpretation, with special reference to forests and other parkland settings. This course examines cultural and natural resources interpretation from the standpoint of principles and practices that lead to effective interpretation in a variety of forms which may include verbal, signage, posters, brochures, and video presentations. Interpretive planning, interpretation of complex subjects and controversy, ethics, special populations and research are discussed. A large portion of the class is devoted to student practice and demonstration of their understanding and application of interpretive principles using applied examples.

## Prerequisites:

PRT 352. Junior or senior standing or permission of instructor.

## Objectives:

This is a course about developing your environmental interpretation knowledge and skills. By the end of the course you will:

- Know the principles of environmental interpretation,
- Be able to do front-line environmental interpretation and education,
- Have the opportunity to gain certifications in environmental interpretation and education,
- Develop an appreciation of the role of interpretation and environmental education in problem solving to achieve resource management goals.

## Grading:

The basis for your final grade is:

- Baxter State Park Project 35%
- Patten Lumberman's Museum Project 35%
- Documentation Notebook 10%
- Class Activities and Participation 10%
- Final Exam 10%

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

**Projects (70%)**

You will have the opportunity to prepare two different interpretive projects for important clients this semester: the Scientific Forestry Management Area (SFMA) of Baxter State Park and the Patten Lumberman's Museum (PLM). You will be working with these two clients, in effect, as interpretive consultants. We will take an overnight field trip to visit these two places on Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>. This is a mandatory trip. On this trip, you will be able to discuss their interpretive needs and learn more about the two sites. Then you will prepare 1-page proposals for your projects that will be reviewed by the professor and the clients. A handout with comprehensive details of the projects will be provided during the class session prior to the field trip.

**Documentation Notebook (10%)**

You will keep, throughout the semester, a documentation notebook in the provided spiral bound notebook. This notebook should be used for taking notes, completing some assignments, detailing actions taken in the completion of the SFMA and PLM projects, answering journal questions, etc. The documentation notebooks will be collected at the end of the semester and evaluated for thoroughness.

**Class Activities and Participation (10%)**

This will be an interactive class with high levels of participation required to be effective. As well, there will be in-class worksheets and quizzes.

**Final Exam (10%)**

We will use the National Association for Interpretation's Certified Interpretive Guide test as the final exam. This will be an open book, open-note group exam. Students must pass with greater than an 80% to be certified.

**Class Policies/Expectations/Other Notes:**

Late work will not be accepted, or make-up opportunities provided, unless arrangements are made in advance with the instructor. Approved absences must be discussed with the instructor prior to class time (either in person, via e-mail, or via voice mail). Each unapproved absence will result in a 5-point reduction of the final computed grade.

If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, please contact Ann Smith, Director of Disabilities Services, 121 East Annex, 581-2319, as early as possible in the term.

Students are expected to follow the policies outlined in the University of Maine Student Handbook and the Student Conduct Code. This includes not committing acts of academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of misrepresenting academic work. No alcohol is allowed on field trips. The penalty for violating this will be failing grade in the course.

## **Overview of Class Schedule\* for PRT452:**

### **Unit 1: Foundations**

*Week 1 (Sept. 3):* Syllabus, Introduction to Environmental Interpretation  
*Week 2 (Sept. 10):* History of Interpretation

### **Unit 2: Fundamentals**

*Week 3 (Sept. 17):* Principles of Interpretation  
*Week 4 (Sept. 24):* Communication & Learning Theory  
*Week 5 (Oct. 1):* Goals & Objectives, Audience and Setting Analysis

**FIELD TRIP TO BAXTER STATE PARK AND PATTEN LUMBERMAN'S MUSEUM –  
Saturday, October 4<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, October 5<sup>th</sup>!!!**

### **Unit 3: Advanced Interpretation**

*Week 6 (Oct. 8):* Personal Interpretation  
*Week 7 (Oct. 15):* Personal & Non-Personal Interpretation  
*Week 8 (Oct. 22):* Non-Personal Interpretation

### **Unit 4: Environmental Education**

*Week 9 (Oct. 29):* Project Learning Tree Training  
*Week 10 (Nov. 5):* Project Learning Tree Student Presentations  
*Week 11 (Nov. 12):* Environmental Education  
*Week 12 (Nov. 19):* Environmental Education  
*Week 13 (Nov. 26):* NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING WEEK

### **Unit 5: Science Education**

*Week 14 (Dec. 3):* Science Education for Interpreters and Environmental Educators

### **Unit 6: Wrap-Up**

*Week 15 (Dec. 10):* Student Presentations  
*Finals Week (Dec. 17):* Final Exam (9:30-11:30am)

\* Subject to change; please see individual unit schedules for the latest schedule.