

# **PTRM 310: Natural Resource Interpretation and Communication**

## **Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 09:00 to 09:50 AM in HS 207**

*The FCFC acknowledges that we are in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people. We honor the path they have always shown us in caring for this place for the generations to come.*

### **Instructor Information:**

*Instructor:* Dr. Elena A. Bigart

*Office Location:* Stone Hall 212

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*Office Phone:* 406.243.6210

*Office Hours:* Wednesdays 1-2 pm, or by appointment

### **Course Description:**

The overall objective of the course is to provide understanding of the guiding principles of interpretation, and demonstrate how to successfully utilize multiple interpretive techniques.

### **Course Overview:**

This course is intended to educate about the connection between people, communication, and natural resource management. One goal of natural resource management is communicating the importance of stewardship of public and private lands. This course is based on the idea that it is more effective to engage the public on natural resource decisions when the public is enlightened. The focus of this class will be on the foundation of how managers effectively communicate using appropriate methods for natural resource settings and topics.

### **Course Goals:**

- To introduce you to the field of interpretation.
- To give you an appreciation for interpretation as a management tool, public relations device, and as a way to enhance public understanding of natural resource management.
- To understand and practice the practical skills required for successful interpretation, by designing and presenting interpretive materials and programs.
- To be able to evaluate the effectiveness of various interpretive techniques.

### **Learning Objectives:**

By the conclusion of the course, you should be able to:

- Understand and explain the role of environmental interpretation in managing our natural resources
- Understand and explain the theoretical basis of an interpretive approach to communication
- Know several methods and techniques of interpretation, including waysides exhibits, interpretive messages, guided walks/tours, illustrated talks, and the use of other visual aids
- Make intelligent decisions regarding the application of various communication techniques to situations encountered in natural resource management
- Critically analyze interpretive programs and facilities

**Materials:**

The readings for this course will be available on Moodle as indicated in the schedule below.

We will draw upon the following two books:

- Ham, S., 2016. *Interpretation: Making a difference on purpose*. Fulcrum publishing.
- Knudson, D.M., Cable, T.T. and Beck, L., 2003. *Interpretation of cultural and natural resources*. Venture Publishing, Inc., State College, PA

**Requirements and Evaluations:**

- Reading materials and assignments are posted to the Moodle site every week. Please make a habit of checking and downloading each week.
- The assignments and exams for this course will be used to measure your understanding of the topics covered and your ability to communicate that understanding verbally and through writing.
- All assignments will be posted in advance, and must be submitted before due dates mentioned below (at the beginning of class) and late assignments will not be accepted unless the student has a written and verifiable excuse. Extraordinary circumstance should be discussed with the instructor in advance.
- Both exams must be taken as scheduled. Midterm exam will be open for 50 minutes at class time on October 4th. Final exam will be open for 2 hours from 8 to 10 am on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Please make arrangements with the instructor prior to the due date if special circumstances require an alternative time.

**Grading:**

<i>Total points</i>	<i>Description</i>
20	Class Participation
40	Interpretive Non-verbal assignment
40	Interpretive Talk
20	Final reflection
20	Out of class assignment
40	Midterm exam
40	Final exam
220 total points	

Total percentage of grade at the end of the course will be used to determine your grade.

**Grade Scale:**

The grading scale is consistent with that used on the University of Montana campus. The traditional letter grade scale is below. Please note, this class is offered for traditional letter grade only, it is not offered under the credit/no credit option.

Grade	Points	GPA	Grade	Points	GPA	Grade	Points	GPA
A	93 – 100 %	4.0	C	77 – 79%	2.3	D-	60 – 62%	0.7
A-	90 – 92 %	3.7	C	73 – 76%	2.0	F	< 60 %	0.00
B+	87 – 89 %	3.3	C-	70 – 72%	1.7			
B	83 – 86 %	3.0	D+	67 – 69%	1.3			
B-	80 – 82 %	2.7	D	63 – 66%	1.0			

## **Policies and Guidelines:**

### ***Attendance:***

Attendance is mandatory in this class! Exceptions will only be made if there is a documented excuse (i.e. doctor's note). The success of this course depends on lively in-class discussion. Therefore, students are expected to come to class everyday well-prepared and ready to discuss the assigned readings and topics from the lectures. Please arrive and leave on time, and allow for diverse opinions during discussions.

### ***Devices:***

Please do not use cell phones during class time; they are a serious distraction in college classes and cannot be tolerated. Please instruct relatives or friends to call campus security in case of an emergency. Security will look up the class in the system and then send someone to the class. If you want to use a laptop during class to take notes, please talk to the instructor.

### ***Plagiarism:***

Students should always make sure that their work is original. This is important because the instructor must be able to gauge what the student has learned. Therefore, copying the work of another person, whether in an assignment or during an exam, without referencing this person, is considered plagiarism. Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Any time a student uses someone else's work and does not give that person credit, it is plagiarism. You must give due credit to other people's ideas by referencing or quoting the source.

### ***Cultural Leave Policy:***

Cultural or ceremonial leave allows excused absences for cultural, religious, and ceremonial purposes to meet the student's customs and traditions or to participate in related activities. To receive an authorized absence for a cultural, religious or ceremonial event the student or their advisor (proxy) must submit a formal written request to the instructor. This must include a brief description (with inclusive dates) of the cultural event or ceremony and the importance of the student's attendance or participation. Authorization for the absence is subject to approval by the instructor. Appeals may be made to the Chair, Dean or Provost. The excused absence or leave may not exceed five academic calendar days (not including weekends or holidays). Students remain responsible for completion or make-up of assignments as defined in the syllabus, at the discretion of the instructor.

### ***Disability Equity:***

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and the Office for Disability Equity (ODE). If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability, please contact the ODE at: (406) 243-2243, [ode@umontana.edu](mailto:ode@umontana.edu), or visit [www.umt.edu/disability](http://www.umt.edu/disability) for more information. Retroactive accommodation requests will not be honored, so please, do not delay. As your instructor, I will work with you and the ODE to implement an effective accommodation, and you are welcome to contact me privately if you wish.

### ***Food and Housing Insecurity:***

Any student who faces challenges securing food or housing, and believes that this could affect their performance in this course, is urged to contact any or all of the following campuses resources:

#### ***Food Pantry Program***

UM offers a food pantry that students can access for emergency food. The pantry is open on Tuesdays from 12 to 5 PM and Fridays from 10 AM to 5 PM. The pantry is located in UC 119 (in the former ASUM Childcare offices). Pantry staff operate several satellite food cupboards on campus (including one at Missoula College). For more information about this program, email [umpantry@mso.umt.edu](mailto:umpantry@mso.umt.edu), visit the [UM Food Pantry website](#) or contact the pantry on social media (@pantryUm on twitter, @UMPantry on Facebook, um\_pantry on Instagram).

#### ***ASUM Renter Center***

The Renter Center has compiled a [list of resources](https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog) (<https://medium.com/griz-renter-blog>) for UM students at risk of homelessness or food insecurity. Students can schedule an appointment with Renter Center staff to discuss their situation and receive information, support, and referrals.

**TRiO Student Support Services**

TRiO serves UM students who are low-income, first-generation college students or have documented disabilities. TRiO services include a textbook loan program, scholarships and financial aid help, academic advising, coaching, and tutoring. Students can [check their eligibility](http://www.umt.edu/triosss/apply.php) (www.umt.edu/triosss/apply.php) for TRiO services online. If you are comfortable, please come see members of the teaching team. We will do our best to help connect you with additional resources.

**Course Withdrawal Deadlines Statement:** For full policy see [Withdraw deadline policy link](#).

If you need to drop this course, we recommend you do so as soon as possible. The following deadlines apply this semester.

**Important Dates and Deadlines:**

Deadline	Description	Date
To 15th instructional day	Students can drop classes on CyberBear with refund and no “W” on transcript, last day to change to Audit.	09/18, 2023 at 5 pm
16th to 45th instructional day	A class drop requires a form with instructor and advisor signature, a \$10 fee from registrar’s office, student will receive a ‘W’ on transcript, no refund.	09/19 – 10/30/23 at 5 pm
Beginning 46th instructional day	<u><i>Students are only allowed to drop a class under very limited and unusual circumstances.</i></u> Not doing well in the class, deciding you are concerned about how the class grade might affect your GPA, deciding you did not want to take the class after all, switching majors, and similar reasons are NOT among those limited and unusual circumstances. If you want to drop the class for these sorts of reasons, make sure you do so by the end of the 45th instructional day of the semester. Requests to drop must be signed by the instructor, advisor, and Associate Dean (in that order) so if you pursue this request, <i>leave sufficient time to schedule meetings with each of these individuals</i> (generally this will take at least 3-5 working days). A \$10 fee applies if approved. Instructors must indicate whether the individual is Passing or Failing the class at the time of request.	10/ 31 – 12/8, 2023 at 5 pm

## COURSE SCHEDULE – Subject to Change (Please check Moodle regularly!)

Date	Section/Topic	Readings for this class	Assignment
Week 1: Aug 28, Mon	Introduction to interpretation		Read Class syllabus and explore Moodle page
Week 1: Aug 30, Wed	History and goals of interpretation		
Week 1: Sept 1, Fri	<i>No class – work on your out-of-class assignment</i>		
Week 2: Sept 4, Mon	<i>No class - Labor Day</i>		
Week 2: Sept 6, Wed	Interpretive organizations	Knudson (2003), Ch. 2	
Week 2: Sept 8, Fri	Understanding your audience		
Week 3: Sept 11, Mon	<i>No class – finish your out-of-class assignment</i>		Out of class assignment is due 9/11 at 10 am
Week 3: Sept 13, Wed	Principles of Interpretation	Ham (2016), Ch. 1	
Week 3: Sept 15, Fri	TORE approach to interpretation	Ham (2016), Ch. 2	
Week 4: Sept 18, Mon	TORE practice	Readings on Moodle	
Week 4: Sept 20, Wed	Theories behind interpretation	Readings on Moodle	
Week 4: Sept 22, Fri	Theories behind interpretation		
Week 5: Sept 25, Mon	How people learn	Knudsen (2003), Ch. 7	
Week 5: Sept 27, Wed	How people learn	Readings on Moodle	
Week 5: Sept 29, Fri	Exam review	Exam Study Guide	Review all class materials
<b>Week 6: Oct 2, Mon</b>	<b>Midterm exam</b>		
Week 6: Oct 4, Wed	<i>No class</i>		
Week 6: Oct 6, Fri	<i>No class</i>		
Week 7, Oct 9, Mon	Making a difference through interpretation. Assignments review	Ham (2016), Ch. 5	
Week 7, Oct 11, Wed	Theme development	Ham (2016), Ch. 6	
Week 7, Oct 13, Fri	<i>No class - visit your sites!</i>		
Week 8, Oct 16, Mon	<i>Field Trip to Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge: 8 am -12 pm</i>		
Week 8, Oct 18, Wed	Writing for interpretation	Knudsen (2003), Ch. 9	

Date	Section/Topic	Readings for this class	Assignment
Week 8, Oct 20, Fri	<i>Field Trip to Travelers' Rest State Park: 8 am -12 pm</i>		
Week 9, Oct 23, Mon	Museums, visitor centers, and exhibits	Knudsen (2003), Ch. 10 Knudsen (2003), Ch. 11	
Week 9, Oct 25, Wed	Design basics	Caputo (2008), Ch. 4	
Week 9, Oct 27, Fri	Designing self-guiding trail Signs, trails and wayside exhibits	Gross (1994), Ch 3&4 Knudsen (2003), Ch. 12	
Week 10, Oct 30, Mon	Public speaking skills	Readings on Moodle	
Week 10, Nov 1, Wed	Presentation of non-verbal assignments		Non-verbal assignment is due 11/1 at 9 am
Week 10, Nov 3, Fri	Presentation of non-verbal assignments		
Week 11, Nov 6, Mon	Performance interpretation		
Week 11, Nov 8, Wed	Planning interpretive talk	Knudsen (2003), Ch. 13	
Week 11, Nov 10, Fri	<i>No class - Veterans' Day</i>		
Week 12, Nov 13, Mon	Interpreting history and culture Interpretive talk critique	Knudsen (2003), Ch. 14	
Week 12, Nov 15, Wed	<i>No class – work on your interpretive talks!</i>		
Week 12, Nov 17, Fri	Verbal presentations		Verbal assignment is due 11/17 at 9 am
Week 13, Nov 20, Mon	Verbal presentations		
Week 13, Nov 22, Wed	<i>No class – Thanksgiving</i>		
Week 13, Nov 24, Fri	<i>No class – Thanksgiving</i>		
Week 14, Nov 27, Mon	Verbal presentations		
Week 14, Nov 29, Wed	Verbal presentations		
Week 14, Dec 1, Fri	Verbal presentations		
Week 15, Dec 4, Mon	Technology and communication	Media Guide	
Week 15, Dec 6, Wed	Evaluating interpretation	Knudsen (2003), Ch. 19	Final reflection is due 12/6 at 9 am
Week 15, Dec 8, Fri	Final review	Exam study guide	Review all class materials
<b>Dec 11, Monday 8-10 am</b>	<b>Final exam</b>		