Advanced Interpretive Media & Graphics
FOR 5374, Stephen F. Austin State University
Fall 2023

Online Seminar Times: Tuesday 10:30 AM CST

Instructor: Mr. Jeremy Scroggins
Adjunct Professor
Resource Communications
Arthur Temple College of Forestry
Personal Cell: 512-743-8238
Email: D2L email/message system or Jeremy.Scroggins@sfasu.edu

Office hours:
Digitally available all week.
Phone calls and/or virtual office visits by appointment or as available.
Feel free to text.

Course Description:

Effective interpretive media combines the principles and techniques of interpretation with those of the visual arts and communication graphics. Full-performance interpretive rangers work on their own, or with a media development team, to produce interpretive media such as wayside exhibits, park brochures, posters, interpretive exhibits, films or documentaries, or other audiovisual presentations.

Successful media development integrates image and text (or narrative) according to interpretive, writing, and design principles. It tends to make use of imaging, graphics, and media software to produce electronic media files. And it builds upon existing interpretive plans to enhance relevance and message congruence.

This course explores relevant aspects of interpretive media development including project definition and planning, selection of appropriate media, interpretive concept development, and the basic elements of design.

By providing a foundation in interpretive media development, this course sets the stage for further professional development and provides the skills and insights necessary for field interpreters to work directly with professional planners and consultants in developing interpretive media. The course also emphasizes the philosophy and techniques, the curriculum and training, and the certification review process of the NPS Interpretive Development Program (IDP) for one of its projects.
Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Define an effective interpretive media project and create a plan identifying the interpretive purpose, target audience, desired outcomes, expectations, needs, and constraints.

2. Identify media characteristics that are appropriate for the desired interpretive content and intent, and incorporate the interpretive structure of tangible-intangible links to convey resource meanings.

3. Determine appropriate media selection based on its strengths and weaknesses for specific interpretive projects.

4. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic elements of media design applicable to all visual interpretive products.

Course Texts:

ALL materials will be available digitally.

Course Technology:

Computer Software.

Course Requirements:

Class Participation. This is a graduate course in resource interpretation. As such, it requires students to assume responsibility for analyzing course content, identifying the implications for interpretive program development, and applying those insights to class discussions and assignments. Students are encouraged to participate in all aspects of the course. Student questions and comments are always welcome. Class participation includes, but is not limited to:

- Becoming familiar with and using D2L as the primary course delivery mechanism.
- Attending, or view recordings of ZOOM video seminar sessions.
- Selecting a proposed subject matter focus area.
- Participating in online seminar discussions.
Completing assigned readings, viewings, or listening, in preparation for discussion.
Reading discussion board submissions.
Posting Reflections.
Submitting assignments online.
Participation in the Peer Review Process promptly.
Working with one’s peers (in pairs or small groups) to complete assignments as required.
Providing peer review comments for drafts of classmates’ final projects.

Weekly Content and Reflections. Course readings, viewings, listenings, or other experiential tasks are required each week in preparation for seminar discussions and reflections. For your weekly reflections, you will write a short post in the D2L Discussion Forum (around 200 words) related to the topic. **You may create your own post or respond to another classmate.** This may be a direct reflection of the materials reviewed/experienced, your experience related to the topic, concerns you may have, tips tools, or software, or your desire/excitement related to the topic. These are not formal writings, rather, they are intended to promote idea-building and sharing.

Seminar Discussion and Participation. Each week students will participate in an online seminar discussion and/or project that will last approximately one hour using the ZOOM video conferencing software. Seminar discussions will focus on a topic(s) related to that week’s readings and/or assignments. Projects will be focused on topics related to the content and will be assigned during class time. You will be informed if there is any preparation work for participation projects. Projects primarily focus on using experiential learning techniques and may include individual in-class assignments, group discussion leadership, and/or group peer review. To a large degree, when students in this program talk about “going to class,” they will be referring to these weekly seminar discussions and projects.

Recordings of class meetings will be posted in D2L after class times for those who were unable to attend.

Seminar discussions will build upon the written reflections and any comments students post to the course discussion board. Preparation for seminar discussions includes (1) reviewing the required content, (2) posting discussion questions or comments, and (3) reviewing the postings of other students.

Seminar discussion topics will include as follows:

- **Week 1**  Introductions
- **Week 2**  Interpretive Media, Overview
- **Week 3**  Project Definition and Planning
- **Week 4**  Project Definition and Planning
Topics may be modified according to the needs of the students and the discretion of the instructor.

Assignments.

Students will complete a variety of assignments to (1) increase their familiarity with defining and planning media products, (2) enhance their understanding of the process of developing media products, and (3) strengthen their skill in creating and designing effective and appropriate interpretive media products.

Submitting Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted electronically in the Brightspace D2L course Dropbox.

Assignments

1. Experience and Needs
2. Media Planning Worksheet
3. Effectiveness of Media Evaluation
4. Project Progress Update #1
5. Review Comments #1
6. Media KSA Exploration
7. Project Progress Update #2
8. Review Comments #2
9. Final Project Progress Update
Experience and Needs

The topic of Interpretive Media consists of an ever-evolving and enlarging scope of concepts, skills, and technologies. As such, this course will be flexible and strive to meet the needs of the students or utilize student individual experience/skills in specific areas to assist in course instruction.

Write a brief personal note (less than 500 words) expressing your experience and needs (concerns, hopes, topics you are interested in, etc.) as they relate to this course.

OPTIONAL: Post your response in the discussion board.

Planning Worksheet

All media projects begin with a plan. This media-planning questionnaire is based on the Preliminary Media Development Worksheet produced by the National Park Service’s Harpers Ferry Center. This planning worksheet is a starting point to assist students in defining, discussing, and making decisions for the selection of an appropriate media project.

Planning worksheet derived from:

Effectiveness of Media

Visit a local park, museum, visitor center, or other establishment either in person or virtually and evaluate the interpretive effectiveness of three different types of media (website, exhibit, brochure, self-guide, etc.). Complete the Interpretive Media Evaluation Form (Modified) to examine each piece of media.

In addition, post a response in the discussion board (200-300 words) on one of your choices of media to describe its positive and negative aspects, its advantages, or disadvantages over personal services, and explain if the selection of media was the most effective choice. If not, describe alternatives that could be more effective and why. If possible, include digital photos of the media or an electronic link.

Media Knowledge-Skills-Abilities (KSA) Exploration

Instructions are located in D2L Content.

Project & Peer Review

The final project consists of two parts.

First, students will prepare a media product of choice. The “completion” of the product will depend on the nature of the product as some products/projects will require a considerable amount of time that is beyond the length of this course. As such, the project is broken down into three Project Updates. Project updates are intended to assist students in developing and guiding their experiential learning in interpretive media production. Project updates will be posted in the appropriate section of the discussion forum.

Each Project Update must include the following sections:
1. Status of the project
2. Progress made
3. Obstacles faced
4. Content planned
5. Content created (photos, video, text samples, etc.)
6. Tools used
7. Collaborating partners
8. Any surprises?
9. What have you learned?

Second, students will prepare written and verbal feedback for a product developed by a classmate. To complete the peer review, students will submit their peer review comments to their classmates via the discussion forum. When preparing your feedback, consider the Interpretive Analysis Model (located in the course content section), at least two things you think work well, two things you think could be improved, and any thoughts on moving forward with the project.

The final project allows students to engage in a structured development process that involves (1) receiving feedback from peer reviewers, and (2) editing and revising their media product as appropriate.

Please remember, that no project or product is “perfect,” including products that have demonstrated certification standards. Every interpretive product can be improved. Peer review and revision are essential steps in the product development process. The final project helps students become more comfortable with peer review, more proficient at revising drafts, and more skilled at developing interpretive media in general.
The media product can be modified for submission to the National Park Service’s IDP certification review process if you so choose. The main gist is that graphics, text, and venue work together to convey the message you want to be conveyed in a way that meets that need. (NPS Submission requirements may be outdated as links appear either broken or material outdated)

**Grading:**

- **Class Participation – Includes Discussion** 150
- **Experience and Needs** 50
- **Planning Worksheet** 150
- **Effectiveness of Media** 150
- **Media Knowledge-Skills-Abilities (KSA) Exploration** 150
- **Project**
  - Project Updates (1st & 2nd @ 50pts, Final @ 100pts)
  - Peer Review of Classmate’s Final Project (2 @ 50 pts each)
  - 350
- **Total** 1000 points

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

- 1000 - 930 points = A
- 929 - 860 points = B
- 859 - 780 points = C
- 779 – 710 points = D
- 709 and under = F

**All assignments MUST be turned in to receive a passing grade for the course!!**

**General Student Policies:**
The following policies apply to all students enrolled in courses at Stephen F. Austin State University.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY (A-9.1):** Academic integrity is the responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp)

**WITHHELD GRADES (A-54):** Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F, and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats, and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to [http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/)

**ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR:** Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert.
Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed.

**Professional Ethics Statement**

Students in the graduate program are considered to be professionals, as well as students, and we expect that you will reflect professionalism in your work. As representatives of Stephen F. Austin and members of the graduate program of the Arthur Temple College of Forestry, you are held to the responsibility to conduct yourselves, your academic work, and your research professionally and ethically. This means that you abide by the rules of conduct stated in the student handbook, agree to a no-cheating and no-plagiarism policy, and follow the guidelines for ethical research set forth by the university.

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and will be treated as such. Cheating can be defined as the unethical use of another’s information to complete an assignment or test. Plagiarism can be defined as using someone else’s words or ideas without giving proper credit for their use. Be sure to cite your sources if in doubt. Behavior related to cheating or plagiarism may cause immediate failure of the course, and/or, at the very most, cause academic expulsion from the program.

**Ph.D. STUDENTS:**
If necessary, Ph.D. students should schedule a meeting with the instructor to discuss special course content deemed required to support their research.
# Course Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Class Date</th>
<th>Topics/Agenda</th>
<th>Content Review</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 29</td>
<td><strong>Introductions</strong></td>
<td>Olson</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Experience and Needs</em></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Sept 5</td>
<td><strong>Interpretive Media, Overview</strong> – Start thinking of a media project you may want to do.</td>
<td>Olson</td>
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<td><em>Media Planning Worksheet</em></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Sept 12</td>
<td><strong>Project Definition &amp; Planning</strong> – Pre-Production: Determining the interpretive purpose, target audience, and desired outcomes, and making a plan.</td>
<td>Olson</td>
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<td><em>Media Planning Worksheet</em></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Sept 19</td>
<td><strong>Project Definition &amp; Planning</strong> – Issues to consider (legal, access, etc.)</td>
<td>Olson</td>
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<td><em>MORE - Video</em></td>
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<td><em>TimeScapes - Video</em></td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Sept 26</td>
<td><strong>Meaningful Media</strong> – What sticks and what is just noise?</td>
<td>Olson</td>
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<td><em>Effectiveness of Media</em></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Oct 3</td>
<td><strong>Meaningful Media</strong> – NO CLASS MEETING!!!</td>
<td>Olson</td>
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<td><em>CHOOSING THE RIGHT MEDIUM</em></td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Oct 10</td>
<td><strong>Appropriate Media</strong> – Discuss Effectiveness of Media Choosing a medium and what to consider.</td>
<td>Olson</td>
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<td><em>Work on Project</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td>Review Content</td>
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<td>Oct 17</td>
<td>Project Check-in Discussion</td>
<td>Project Progress Update #1 Due Review Content Located in “Week 9-12: Media Design” – “Photography and Videography”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 7</td>
<td>Audio Media Design – Podcasts and Audio guides</td>
<td>Review Content Located in “Week 9-12: Media Design” – “Podcasts and Audio guides”</td>
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<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>Project Check-in Discussion</td>
<td>Enjoy the Break!</td>
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<td>Nov 21</td>
<td>NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING</td>
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<td>Nov 28</td>
<td>Digital Media Design – Blogs, Social Media, various multimedia</td>
<td>Work on Project</td>
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<td>Dec 5</td>
<td>Round Table Discussion –</td>
<td>Work on Project</td>
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<td>Dec 12</td>
<td>Class Optional – Open discussion</td>
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<td>Media KSA Exploration Due</td>
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<td>Final Project Progress Update Due</td>
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**Seminars Discussions Held On Tuesday at 10:30 AM CST**

For University Assessment Purposes Only:

**Program Learning Outcomes**

1. The student will demonstrate proficiency in research design, relative to their field of study.
2. The student will demonstrate proficiency in the process of reviewing scientific literature pertinent to their field of study.
3. The student will demonstrate proficiency in basic statistical analysis; relative to their field of study.
4. The student will demonstrate preparation to pursue a professional career and/or Ph.D. degree in subject
5. The student will demonstrate competency in oral and written communication skills.
6. The student will demonstrate competency in comprehensive interpretive planning and design of
   interpretive products.

Please list each course in the program and indicate how it supports the Program Learning Outcomes
for the identified program.

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<td>A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>M</td>
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N/A – Not Applicable  B - Basic  I - Intermediate  A - Advanced  M - Mastery

**Definition of Rating Categories:**

1. **N/A** – Not Applicable – course does not support the Program Learning Outcome.
2. **B** – Basic – course supports Program Learning Outcome by providing students with fundamental information, definitions, concepts, and lab activities relative to the expected outcomes.
3. **I** – Intermediate – course supports Program Learning Outcome by providing students with topic-specific information, concepts, applications, and lab activities that increase the students’ skills in making tactical implementation decisions relative to the expected outcomes.
4. **A** – Advanced – course supports Program Learning Outcome by providing students with transitional, high-level topic-specific information, activities, and opportunities that enable the students to apply their critical thinking and tactical skills to resolve increasingly challenging strategic situations.
5. **M** – Mastery – course supports Program Learning Outcome by providing students with opportunities to independently apply tactical and strategic planning skills to accomplish real-world, non-academic management objectives. Completes students’ preparedness for entry-level professional activity accomplishment.