**ENVS\*3000 Nature Interpretation**

**Fall 2017**

School of Environmental Sciences, University of Guelph

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| **Instructor:** | **Dr. Amanda Hooykaas** |
| E-mail: | ahooykaa@uoguelph.ca (E-mail Subject: “ENVS\*3000”) |
| Office Hours:  Teaching Assistant:  Lectures:  Labs: | Mondays from 10:30-12:30, ALEX 204  Liane Miedema (miedemal@uoguelph.ca), office hours TBA  Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:30-10:20, CRSC 403  Tuesdays, 2:30-5:20, MCKN 304 (to begin – be prepared to go outside) |
| Course Website: | Located via CourseLink |

Calendar Description:

An exploration of communication and experiential learning theories and their application to natural history interpretation and environmental education program design.

Students will develop interpretive materials and identify a group to be the participants in an interpretive walk.

Prerequisite: BIOL\*2060

**"In every walk in nature, one receives far more than [s]he seeks." ~ John Muir**

**Course Structure:** This is a collaborative, learner-centred course that actively engages all students in discussions and activities. The course requires careful reviewing of all requirements and material placed on the website including this syllabus. Make sure that you are prepared to read and to actively engage in the lectures and labs and in the community around you before you enroll in the course. Each week will generally consist of three types of classes: 1) theory, 2) experience, and 3) skill development. Perhaps the most important aspect of this process is the sense-making – you will be expected to not only attend classes, but also engage meaningfully and substantively, recording your experiences in your blog.

**Required Textbook\*:** Beck, L. & Cable, T.T. (2011). The Gifts of Interpretation: Fifteen Guiding Principles for Interpreting Nature and Culture*.* Urbana, IL: Sagamore Publishing. ISBN/ISSN: 978-1-57167-636-8;

* To buy: Paperback available from Bookstore, E-book available directly from sagamorepub.com
* To borrow: 1 copy available from McLaughlin Library Reserve Desk (2-hour loan)

\*Additional readings/multimedia available via Ares Course Reserves System and CourseLink.

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Summarize interpretive theory in relation to the environment;
2. Recognize the value and diversity of approaches to environmental interpretation;
3. Acknowledge the role of environmental interpretation in conservation and sustainability;
4. Generate a strong skillset related to audience assessment, the delivery of program objectives, and effective planning, communication, and debrief; and
5. Effectively and confidently communicate one’s own interpretive experiences in the field through various forms of communication.

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| **Evaluation Component** | **Value** | **Responsibility** | **Due Date** | **Learning Outcomes Assessed** |
| Book Review  Presentation  Paper  Interpretive Walk  Plan  Trail Guide  Interpretive Blog/Engagement  Initial Submission  Peer Evaluation for Peers  Final Submission | 10%  10%  20%  20%  10%  5%  25% | Individual  Group  Individual | Sunday, November 19  Wednesday, November 22  Sunday, October 22  Sunday, November 12  Wednesday, October 4  Wednesday, October 11  Wednesday, November 29 | i, ii, iii, v  iii, iv, v  ii, iii, iv, v |

**Course Components:**

**Book Review (Individual):** This assignment offers you the opportunity to view the world through another’s eyes. You are required to read, review, and introduce your peers to a book you’ve chosen that interprets a part of the Canadian environment. This can be presented in any number of genres – from history, to art, to fiction, to non-fiction, to travel. You will be required to submit a book review (5 pages) and present on your book to the class (presentation timeslot randomly assigned)*.* Presentations will be formatted as Ignite Presentations. You have 5 minutes to talk about your chosen book; each presentation is accompanied by 20 slides, set to automatically advance every 15 seconds.

**Interpretive Walk (Group):** This assignment offers you the opportunity to interpret an environmental event, location, period, etc. relevant to Wellington County.

**Plan (20%):** Provide a clear plan on how you will develop and implement the interpretive walk. This includes but is not limited to the consideration of rationales, audiences, values, risks/rewards, objectives, budgets, timeframes, highlights, etc. This plan will be no more than 10 pages in length.

**Trail Guide (20%):**  Building on your Interpretive Walk plan (and feedback), design a trail guide suitable to your audience. This must be user-friendly, clear, and consider course material. Format and length is at your discretion. In addition to this, please submit a 3-page paper explaining how each of your considerations in your plan has been addressed within your guide.

**Interpretive Blog (Individual) (Check-In/Peer Evaluation: 15%; Final: 25%):** Your blog is expected to show strong reflection on your experiences, provoke conversation, and provide insight in the process(es) of interpreting the natural world. Your blog will be virtual and created as a Tumblr site (it must be registered as “YOURINITIALSENVS3000”).

You are to create a strong, persuasive blog and thus your work should be reflective of your experience in the course and should be created while being mindful of the lens of the course. Your blog will be evaluated with the following rubric (adapted from Skawinski & Thibodeau, 2002):

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| **Level** | **Description** |
| **Distinguished** | Evidence selected shows a high degree of understanding, knowledge, synthesis, and creative thinking; rationale provides a developed and convincing explanation for inclusion; blog overall is well-written, well-designed, and transformative, presents a coherent and compelling case of achievement. |
| **Proficient** | Evidence selected shows an acceptable degree of understanding, knowledge, synthesis, and/or creative thinking; rationale provides a clear and acceptable explanation for inclusion; blog overall is well-written and well-organized, presents a coherent case of achievement. |
| **Emerging** | Evidence selected shows a moderate degree of understanding, knowledge, and/or performance; rationale may be incomplete or inconsistent, provides an underdeveloped explanation for inclusion; blog overall shows effort at organization but is not yet a fully developed case of achievement; quality of writing is inconsistent. |
| **Unacceptable** | Evidence selected shows minimal degree of understanding, knowledge, and/or performance; rationale provides little and/or irrelevant explanation for inclusion; blog overall is not yet organized to present a case; quality of writing interferes with ideas. May be too little to assess. |

You will be asked to make several directed entries, and you will also make many independent entries as you reflect upon this course and its content. Directed entries will be responses to specific and varied prompts. These prompts will be released at the beginning of each week and you should post blogs at the end of the week (Sundays at 11:59pm). **You are required to post at least one original post (prompt response) on your blog per week (which should be approximately 500 words in length);** this will result in 11 posts. Additional substantive posts may receive additional credit. There are a number of ways to approach the open-ended posts: consider the reading in relation to its historical or theoretical context; write about an aspect of the day’s lecture that you don’t understand, or something that jars you; formulate an insightful question or two about a resource you have discovered on your own and then attempt to answer your own questions; or respond to another student’s post, building upon it, disagreeing with it, or re-thinking it (within your own blog and in addition to your comment on their blog). In any case, strive for thoughtfulness and nuance. The quality and depth of posts should increase as the term (and your understanding) develops. Beyond this, **you must also monitor your peers’ blogs and must post a 250-word response to at least one post per week** (vary the people you respond to). This may then become a longer conversation – and that is fine!

The important part of the blog is to analyze and reflect—substantively and frequently. The principal constraint is that the entries must somehow relate to the course’s content. Other than this constraint, what you write about is up to you. You should express your true feelings or opinions. Agreement or disagreement with the instructor’s opinions will **NOT** influence grades. Don't assume that you don't know enough to write something decent. Start by reflecting on what you are learning. Your entries will likely improve with time. Commit yourself to filling in your blog with articles, prose, maps, drawings, photos, etc. relevant to this course.

**Territorial Acknowledgement**

We would like to acknowledge the Attawandaron people on whose traditional territory the University of Guelph resides and offer our respect to our Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Métis neighbours as we strive to strengthen our relationships with them.

We recognize the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant to this land. The Dish with One Spoon Covenant is a peace agreement made between Indigenous nations before the Europeans arrived. It characterizes our collective responsibility to each other and Mother Earth - we should take only what we need, leave enough for others, and keep the dish clean.

Today, this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples and acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we learn and work.

**Instructor Policies:**

**Late Assignments:** All assignments are due at 11:59pm on the date indicated in the attached schedule, unless otherwise indicated. **Failure to submit any assignment on time will result in a 10% deduction per day, for up to five days.** For example, if an assignment is due at 11:59pm, submitting by 11:59pm the next day will be a 10% penalty; if submitted at 12:00am that night, a 20% penalty will be deducted). If you know in advance that you will not be able to meet a particular deadline **for any reason**, please contact the instructor before the deadline to make alternative arrangements. Your e-mail request for an extension must have your completed work to date for the assignment attached. No extension will be granted if you have not completed what the course instructor considers to be a reasonable amount of work on the assignment.

**Communication:** CourseLink will be used in this course to facilitate course communication outside of class, includingannouncements, course material, e-readings, assignments, written submissions, and any updates.Outside of class, the Teaching Team will use ‘Gryph Mail’ to communicate directly withindividual students and the Discussion Board and Announcements to communicate directlywith the entire class. Please monitor CourseLink frequently. If you have any questions, concerns, ordifficulties with this course at any time, please do not hesitate to talk with the instructor during officehours, either just before or after class, or via e-mail. E-mail communication to the Teaching Team should at all times be professional in tone (i.e. Dear Professor Hooykaas…). E-mail will normally be answered within 48 hours, during working hours, Monday to Friday. Avoid using e-mail as a substitute for consulting with the instructor on issues requiring detailed responses. As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <@mail.uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

**Writing:** Students are expected to write at a University Level. Many students have difficulty writing, the instructor strongly suggests that you edit each other’s work and carefully edit your own work. This is one way to improve your writing. If you would like more structured assistance visit The Learning Commons (for a list of services refer to <http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/get-assistance/writing>).

**Course Notes: Downloading Notes:** Limited lecture notes will be posted online. Any notes posted will be available on CourseLink (in the “Content” section of the webpage), normally by 4pm the day before any given lecture. It is recommended that you print off these notes ahead of class and bring these so you can add the remaining content (discussion notes, off-the-cuff examples given in class, etc.). Students missing lectures must get their lecture notes from a friend or another student in class. Lecture notes will not be distributed in printed form and do not replace hand written note taking.

**Laptop use in-class:** Students are expected to access course material only while in-class. Anybody found accessing the Internet for other purposes (e.g. checking email, visiting non-course sites, playing on-line games, etc.), or using laptops off-line for non-course purposes (e.g. games, movies, music), will be asked to leave the class. Laptop use can influence your grades and the grades of your distracted peers. Repeated complaints about laptop use will require students to receive permission from the course instructor to use in class. \*Note: There will be some classes where we will rely heavily on laptops as part of the learning process.

**Other communication devices:** All phones and similar devices will be off while in-class.

### ****Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures:**** Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.

**University of Guelph Policy Statements:**

**E-mail Communication:** As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <mail.uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

**When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement:** When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the undergraduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [*Academic Consideration*](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml).

**Drop Date:** Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the fortieth class day. The regulations and procedures for [*Dropping Courses*](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml) are available in the Undergraduate Calendar.

**Copies of out-of-class assignments:** Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

**Accessibility:** The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs.  To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student. When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS).  Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway. Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability. Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance, and not later than the 40th Class Day. More information: [*www.uoguelph.ca/sas*](http://www.uoguelph.ca/sas)

**Academic Misconduct:** The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.  University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct.  Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. The [Academic Misconduct Policy](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml) is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

**Recording of Materials:** Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

**Resources:** The [*Academic Calendars*](http://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars/) are the source of information about the University of Guelph’s procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

**Delivery Schedule (to be modified as necessary)**

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| **Week** | **Date** | **Topic** | **Deadline** |
| 1 | Mon. Sept. 11 | **Defining our Objectives** |  |
|  | Tues. Sept. 12 | Lab: Interpretation Fundamentals |  |
|  | Wed. Sept. 13 | Skill: How to Record Your Experiences (Blog Primer) |  |
| 2 | Mon. Sept. 18 | **Learning Styles/Communication** | Book title must be emailed to instructor |
|  | Tues. Sept. 19 | Lab: Interpretation Through Science |  |
|  | Wed. Sept. 20 | Skill: How to Engage |  |
| 3 | Mon. Sept. 25 | **Values and Interpretation** |  |
|  | Tues. Sept. 26 | Lab: Interpretation through Impact (LNT) |  |
|  | Wed. Sept. 27 | Skill: Defining your Objectives |  |
| 4 | Mon. Oct. 2 | **Risk Versus Reward** |  |
|  | Tues. Oct. 3 | Lab: Interpretation Through Music |  |
|  | Wed. Oct. 4 | Skill: How to Assess your Audience | Initial Blog Submission due |
|  | Mon. Oct. 9 | FALL STUDY BREAK |  |
| 5 | Wed. Oct. 11 | Blog Peer Evaluations | Peer Evaluations due |
| 6 | Mon. Oct. 16 | **Interpretive Planning** |  |
|  | Tues. Oct. 17 | Lab: Planning your Walk (working/consulting lab) |  |
|  | Wed. Oct. 18 | Skill: How to Plan for “all” scenarios | Plan due on Sun. Oct. 22 |
| 7 | Mon. Oct. 23 | **Interpretive Writing** |  |
|  | Tues. Oct. 24 | Lab: Interpretation Through Art |  |
|  | Wed. Oct. 25 | Skill: How to Write what you Experience |  |
| 8 | Mon. Oct. 30 | **Interpretive Presenting** **I** |  |
|  | Tues. Oct 31 | Lab: Interpretation Through History |  |
|  | Wed. Nov. 1 | Skill: How to Present what you Interpret |  |
| 9 | Mon. Nov. 6 | **Interpretive Presenting II** |  |
|  | Tues. Nov. 7 | Lab: Interpretation Through Play |  |
|  | Wed. Nov. 8 | Skill: How to Ignite (Presentation Primer) | Guidebook due on Sun. Nov. 12 |
| 10 | Mon. Nov. 13 | **Small Group Discussion** |  |
|  | Tues. Nov. 14 | Lab: TBD |  |
|  | Wed. Nov. 15 | Skill: How to Debrief |  |
| 11 | Mon. Nov. 20 | Book Review Ignite Presentations | Ignite Presentation due on Sun. Nov. 19 |
|  | Tues. Nov. 21 | Book Review Ignite Presentations |  |
|  | Wed. Nov. 22 | Book Review Ignite Presentations | Book Review due |
| 12 | Mon. Nov. 27 | **Interpretation's Role in Environmental Sustainability** |  |
|  | Tues. Nov. 28 | Skills: Sense-Making of Environmental Interpretation |  |
|  | Wed. Nov. 29 | Skill: How to Communicate your Skills to a Wider Audience | Final Blog Submission due |
|  | Thurs. Nov. 30 | Lab rescheduled from Tues. Oct. 10 |  |
|  | Fri. Dec. 1 | Classes rescheduled from Mon. Oct. 9 |  |