

**Course Syllabus for:**  
**Animal Ecology 330**  
**“Interpretation of Natural Resources”**  
**Personal Interpretation**  
**Spring 2006**

*“Interpretation is the revelation of a larger truth that lies behind any statement of fact....(It) should capitalize on curiosity for the enrichment of the human mind and spirit.” --Freeman Tilden*

*"Interpretation is a communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the inherent meanings in the resource." --National Association for Interpretation (www.interpnet.com)*

## **Course Objectives**

Students will:

- 1) gain knowledge of the variety of learner styles and backgrounds to which a successful interpreter must adapt;
- 2) gain knowledge of the history and development of interpretation and interpretive strategies;
- 3) learn, experience, adapt, and practice a variety of beginning communication skills which they may apply to interpreting the natural environment with the public;
- 4) gain first-hand information on natural history topics and use information gained in other courses (i.e. mammalogy, limnology, herpetology, taxonomy, etc.) in a more integrated fashion;
- 5) gain preliminary knowledge about methods of evaluating interpretive programs and personnel, especially self- and peer-evaluation;
- 6) gain knowledge of existing curricula from which they may draw ideas and activities;
- 7) gain skills and knowledge about proper voice projection and enunciation.

This course contributes to the accomplishment of the following departmental student outcomes:

- #7 Communicate clearly and effectively with different types of audiences using appropriate oral, visual, electronic, and written techniques; and
- #4 Assess, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information fairly and objectively.

## **Format**

Lecture: Tuesday and Thursday 2:10-3 p.m.		Room 233 Science I
Lab: Thursday 3:10-5 p.m.	Section 1:	Room 233 Science II
	Section 2:	Room 135 Science II
	Section 3:	Room 128 Science II

Some labs will take place outside, though the weather will, in part, determine. Please come prepared to be outside for extended periods of time (i.e. in winter we'll wade through deep, sometimes wet, snow in fields and woods!) We'll let you know the class before. Some labs will take place at locations off-campus. Transportation by van will be provided and will leave the east parking lot of Science II promptly at 2:10 on those days.

## Course Instructor:

Dr. Jim Pease and the TAs are Ms. Sarah Franklin and Ms. Annabel Major. Jim's office is in room 103 Science II. Office hours Tuesday and Thursday 1-2 p.m. and other hours by appointment. I travel a lot for Extension so, whenever possible, arrange meetings with me after class or by phone (294-7429, email: [jlpease.iastate.edu](mailto:jlpease.iastate.edu)). Sarah's office hours are by arrangement. Email her at [misssara@iastate.edu](mailto:misssara@iastate.edu). Annabel's office hours are by arrangement and she can be reached by email at [annabel@iastate.edu](mailto:annabel@iastate.edu). Both office in room 07 Science II.

## Texts

Purchase:

Ham, S. 1992. Environmental Interpretation--A Practical Guide. Available at both University and Campus bookstores.

Regnier, Gross and Zimmerman, The Interpreter's Guidebook: Techniques for Programs and Presentations (NOTE: there are a limited number of these available at a discount from Carol in 339 Science II! First come, first served.)

Strongly Recommended:

J. L. Pease, Birds, Beasts, Bugs and Us: Activities for Environmental Education  
Available for \$5 at Publications Distribution Bldg.)

"Iowa Environmental Issues" (IAN 101-107), "Iowa's Biological Communities" (IAN 201-205), "Iowa's Plants"(IAN 301-307), "Iowa Wildlife and People" (IAN 401-408), "Iowa's Natural Resource Heritage" (IAN 501-504), "Iowa Wildlife" (IAN 601-606), and "Iowa Physical Environment Series" (IAN 701-703). (Available for \$2-3 per booklet at the Publications Distribution Bldg., north end of campus. See the Reading list for specific titles recommended.)

F. Tilden, Interpreting Our Heritage

## Grading

Grades should not have to be the "carrot" that leads people to learn. I hope that the subject matter and the methods of presentation in this course will stimulate you to want to learn, regardless of the grade. At the same time, I am not so naive as to think *all* of you will do so! Therefore, the following grading system will be employed.

Each exam (3 total) counts 40 points of the total possible points. You will make a total of 5 presentations during the semester (each worth 10 points). Your score will be made up 50% by your peers and 50% by your lab instructor. At least 3 self-evaluations of either in-class or out-of-class presentations are an expectation of this course. If they are of in-class sessions, they are worth up to 5 points. If they are of out-of-class presentations, they are worth up to 10 points. (Schools, scout groups, 4-H groups, CCBs – all are interested in having special presenters. You arrange it, video tape it, and self-critique.) Everyone is expected to critique the other members of their lab. These peer evaluations (3 total) are required and anonymous to your lab mates. A scoring matrix will be provided for each presentation. Interpretation is a form of active communication. That's why I've reserved a portion of the grade (20 points) for class participation. That includes class assignments, asking questions, getting involved. There will be opportunities throughout the semester to earn extra credit points.

Thus, points will be awarded as follows:

3 exams (40 pts @)	120
5 presentations (10 pts @)	50
3 peer evaluations (5 pts. @)	15
3 self evaluations (5 pts. @)	15
Participation (20 pts.)	20

Out of a possible 220 points, grades will be determined as follows:

A = 200 and above

B = 178-199.9

C = 156-177.9

D = 134-155.9

F = 133.9 or less

“Minus” and “plus” grades will be based on 3 points nearest to the break.

## Tests

This course, by the nature of its topic, does not lend itself very well to true/false or multiple guess tests. They simply don't test the type of knowledge gained in this course. This course asks you to integrate content with presentation. The majority of the exams will be essay with some short answer questions also. Interpretation is, after all, a type of communication; so, the tests should reflect your ability to communicate – at least in writing. The questions are intended to measure your application and integration of knowledge, rather than just your memorization. They will, however, expect you to draw on assigned readings and class handouts with specific facts, as well as that gleaned from lectures and labs. **That means that you will still have to commit some things to memory.** All of this requires some higher level critical thinking skills. You will be asked to *critique, compare, contrast, and interpret*. Those skills require you to draw on more than rote memorization. Please note that the first 2 exams will be given during the lab period. While the exams are intended to be about 1 hour in length, this gives you plenty of thinking time and makes it fair for all.

## Course Fees

In order to cover field trips and materials for labs, handouts, etc., the department has instituted a course fee policy. This will be charged directly to your U-bill. The fee for this course is \$25.

## One last bit of philosophy...

Over the 30+ years I've spent in the field of interpretation, I've become convinced that successful interpreters are successful not only because of what they know but also – perhaps primarily – because of their attitude. Their attitude exudes warmth, confidence, a love of life, and a willingness – almost an obsessive desire – to share their knowledge and love with fellow human beings. It seems to me that such an attitude cannot be examined and lectured about and tested; instead it must be “caught, not taught.” Further, you “catch it” from all those educators around you: parents, teachers, coaches, naturalists, fellow students, friends, casual acquaintances. In order to catch it though, you must be open to it. My fervent hope is that you will catch (or already have caught) that spirit.

<u>Dates-2006</u>	<u>Lecture-Tues.</u>	<u>Lecture--Thursday</u>	<u>Lab-Thurs.</u>	<u>Reading</u>
Jan 10, 12	Course introduction What is interpretation? How does it work?	Envronalysis – Dan Cohen	Discovering interp. Voice Exercises Interpreting you	This syllabus Ham: Preface & Chap 1
Jan 17, 19	Tilden’s 6 principles +1	Historical interpretation (Polk CCB nat?)	Historical Interp Lab	Tilden Chap I-VII, IX Ham: Chap 2
Jan 24, 26	History of interp. ( <i>You present</i> )	History of interp (cont.) ( <i>You present, continued</i> )	<b>OUTDOOR</b> lab	Readings you find Regnier 1-6 IAN 501 & 502
Jan 31, Feb 2	A Master Interpreter (Assignment)	National curricula-- Project WILD, etc.	State and national curric. ( <i>You present</i> )	Ham Chap. 7 Pease - All
Feb 7, 9	Presenting a talk	Interpretive Styles-- Developing your style (Assignment)	Preparing and presenting a talk – ( <i>You present</i> )	Ham Chap 3 &4 Regnier pp 7-32, 75-79
Feb 14, 16	Human growth and development	Human G &D--why does it matter?	<b>Exam 1*</b>	Regnier pp 81-90
Feb 21, 23	Self- and peer-evaluation: how and why?	Using live animals in Interp. (Mike Havlik?)	Live Animal Lab	IAN 402 & 403 Regnier pp 61-64, 91-95
Feb 28, Mar 2	Using the arts in interp	Using drama in interp (Jerry Keys)	Drama in Interp.	Ham Chap 6 Regnier pp 45-50
Mar 7, 9	Music in interpretation	Using music in interp (Lewis Major?)	Adapting songs for interp programs	Tilden Chap X-XV
Mar 11-20	Spring Break--Extra credit points will be given for visitation to and written critiques of interpretive facilities (county, state and national parks, monuments, nature centers, zoos, etc.) These must be contracted with the instructor <u>in writing</u> ahead of time, <u>no later than March 10th.</u>			

Mar 21, 23	Story-telling as an interpretive tool	Story-telling – <i>You present</i>	Story-telling – <i>You present</i>	Regnier pp 33-43, 51-60 Books/stories you find
Mar 28, 30	How to give an interpretive walk	Walks (cont.)	<b>Exam 2**</b>	Regnier pp 65-74 Ham Chap. 5
Apr 4, 6	Interpreting the night	Interpreting the dark--a possible <u>night lab</u> (7-10 p.m.) (Patti Peterson-Keys?)		
<b>credit</b>	<b>NOTE: April 5-9 is the regional NAI conference in Dubuque – a chance to get to meet lots of folks in the field of interp! Extra for attending and doing a short write-up afterwards. We'll have a van going.</b>			
Apr 11, 13	Spring things walk	Give us a walk! (Assignment)	Give a walk (cont.)	
Apr 18, 20	Professionalism in interpretation	<b>Field Day with kids****</b> ( <i>You present</i> )		
Apr 25, 27	Iowa – A Natural History Of Fragmentation	Plants and Critters of Central Iowa		IAN Publications – all but especially: IAN 201, 301, 302, 407, 601, 603, 604, 605
Week of May 2rd	Final Exam*** Thursday, May 4, 7:30-9:30 a.m. tentative			

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\*Exam 1 covers lectures, labs, and all readings through Feb. 14.

\*\*Exam 2 covers lectures, labs, and all readings through March 28.

\*\*\*Final Exam covers lectures, labs, and all readings through April 27.

\*\*\*\*April 20--This field day will require you to be gone most of the day. Please arrange this with other instructors early in the semester. I can provide a memo if it is necessary. Planning must be done outside of class.