

Faculty Led Program: 24 July-13 August 2018
English 492 (Special Topics) - 3 credits
Dr. Heather Love & Dr. Carter Neal



Glaciers, Grizzlies, and Gondolas: The Nature and Culture of Canada's Rocky Mountain National Parks



Course Description

Through an immersive experience in the spectacular landscape of the Canadian Rocky Mountain, this course will introduce USD students to two closely related topics: (a) the natural and cultural history of Canada's Rocky Mountain National Parks, and (b) the principles and practice of effective "heritage interpretation" (i.e. communication strategies directed at visitors to educational, natural, or recreational sites).

Over the course of nearly three weeks at the peak of the summer season, students will travel through Banff, Jasper, Yoho, and Kootenay National Parks. The trip will begin with two half-day workshops (led by professional Mountain Park interpreters), which are designed to equip students with a basic understanding of the Mountain National Parks' ecosystems and cultural history, and also the principles that guide effective interpretation. Over the following weeks, the group will participate in activities that range from hiking into the back-country (to see 505-million-year-old fossils!), canoeing on glacial lakes (in some of Canada's most iconic settings!), and from white-water rafting (through class-5 rapids!) to riding on gondolas (above the area's top grizzly habitats), taking a glacier tour (on a giant "Snow Coach" bus) and, in the interest of rejuvenation, soaking in several luxurious natural hot springs.

As students use these diverse experiences to encounter the landscape and its "stories," they will reflect on the various instances of "interpretive" communications and texts (signs, displays, tours, performances) that mediate their interactions with the natural world and its human history. Applying the principles and theories they encounter in pre-course reading and early-trip workshops, students will develop and produce two main projects during (and immediately following) the trip: an "Interpretation Observation" multi-media report, in which they analyze and assess a selection of the interpretive materials they encounter on the trip that most interest them;

and an “Interpretation Demonstration” assignment, in which they create their own interpretive text (in the genre they choose) and present it to the group.

NOTE: Students are encouraged to apply for financial assistance through the Arts & Sciences International Opportunity Fund (<http://www.usd.edu/cage/global-learning/financial-aid>)

Required Textbooks

Students will be required to purchase the following two textbooks:

- Gadd, Ben. *Handbook of the Canadian Rockies*
- Interpretive Guides Association. *Handbook for Interpreters* (cost included in course fee)

Course Objectives

The main objectives of this course are as follows:

1. **Content:** Students will understand the natural and cultural history of the Canadian Rockies
2. **Principles:** Students will understand the basic principles of heritage interpretation
3. **Practice:** Students will analyze the interpretive programs/displays they encounter and develop interpretive materials of their own

Assignments and Assessment

During the trip, as students participate in various workshops, activities, and excursions, they will work on two main assignments, which are designed to assess how well they have achieved the main three course objectives.

#1: Interpretation-Observation Multi-Media Report

After photographing and/or making videos of interpretive programs/texts they encounter during the trip, students will curate a multi-media report that analyzes and assesses the interpretive materials they have encountered according to the principles of interpretation they learn. The project will be due within one week of return to SD.

#2: Interpretation-Demonstration Project

Students will select a topic of interest to them, and either create a short interpretive presentation (5-10 minutes in length) or design an interpretive text (e.g. panels for display at a specific location; booklet for distribution). Students will present their work to the class on the final day of the trip.

Each of these assignments is worth 40% of the student’s overall grade. The remaining 20% of course credit will be split between attendance and participation at pre-trip meetings (10%) and trip events (10%).



Course Schedule

Prior to departure, all students are required to attend three mandatory pre-trip meetings . Two will be focused on preparation for course content (readings will be provided via D2L), and one will cover USD's "Global Learning Orientation"

Date	Location & Activity
24 July	Travel Day: Arrive at Calgary airport; drive to Banff, AB; set up at Banff campground
25 July	BANFF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning: IGA "Basic Knowledge" Interpretation Workshop <i>4 hrs</i> • Afternoon: Cave & Basin historic site; free time <i>1 hr</i> • Evening: Banff Mineral Springs (hot springs pool)
26 July	BANFF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning: Sulphur Mountain gondola ride and tour <i>3 hrs</i> • Afternoon: free time for museums, short hike, or canoe trip <i>2 hrs</i> • Evening: campground interpretive show <i>1 hr</i>
27 July	LAKE LOUISE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bow Valley Parkway (drive from Banff → LL; stops at interp exhibits) <i>4 hrs</i> • Afternoon: LL infocenter and town center; check in at hostel <i>1 hr</i> • Evening: Visit Chateau Lake Louise <i>1 hr</i>
28 July	LAKE LOUISE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-Day Visit to Moraine Lake • Guided hike with either Great Divide or Mahikan Trails interpreter <i>6 hrs</i> • Set up camp at LL Campground; attend evening interp show <i>1 hr</i>
29 July	LAKE LOUISE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morning: "Interpretation & Inspiration" workshop w Jacquie Gilson <i>3 hrs</i> • Lunch and Afternoon: LL gondola <i>2 hrs</i>
30 July	LAKE LOUISE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Explore Day" – options: geocache, hike, bike, etc. <i>3 hrs</i> • Eve interp show <i>1 hr</i>
31 July	ICEFIELDS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to the Columbia Ice Fields, w Bow Summit/Peyto Lake stops <i>5 hrs</i> • Snow Coach tour and exploration time at Icefields Center <i>2 hrs</i> • Overnight at Athabasca Falls Wilderness Hostel
1 Aug	JASPER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to Jasper, with stops at waterfalls en route <i>3 hrs</i> • Free time in town area • Eve. interp show at campground <i>1 hr</i>
2 Aug	JASPER <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full day of activities at the Palisades Center <i>6 hrs</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Possible ride on Jasper Gondola]
3 Aug	<p>JASPER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EITHER Miette Hot Springs OR Maligne Lake excursion <i>6 hrs</i>
4 Aug	<p>YOHO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive from Jasper to Field, BC <i>5 hrs</i> • Stops en route: Bow Lake; Spiral Tunnels • Overnight at Fireweek Hostel; guided historical walk around town <i>1 hr</i>
5 Aug	<p>YOHO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit the Yoho Infocenter, Takakkaw Falls, and Emerald Lake <i>5 hrs</i> • Campground geocache; eve interp show <i>2 hrs</i>
6 Aug	<p>YOHO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full day Burgess Shale hike [OR Emerald Lake walk/canoe] <i>8 hrs</i>
7 Aug	<p>YOHO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Explore day” – options: hiking, canoeing, swimming in pond/river <i>3 hrs</i> • Camp at KICKING HORSE SITE (for morning rafting trip)
8 Aug	<p>INVERMERE/RADIUM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White Water Rafting trip <i>4 hrs</i> • Drive to Invermere, check in at hostel, free evening in town
9 Aug	<p>INVERMERE/RADIUM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Thompson historic site visit <i>1 hr</i> • Columbia River canoe trip <i>4 hrs</i> • Radium Hot Springs (pool & augmented reality tour) <i>1 hr</i>
10 Aug	<p>BANFF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Kootenay NP infocenter (First Nations Heritage exhibit) <i>1 hr</i> • En route to Banff: stops at Paint Pots/Marble Canyon/Stansbury Glacier <i>5 hrs</i>
11 Aug	<p>BANFF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore day-focus on completing “data gathering” for course projects <i>4 hrs</i>
12 Aug	<p>BANFF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore day (option to return to Lake Louise or visit Canmore) <i>4 hrs</i> • Trip Finale Celebration Dinner: present “Interpretation Demonstrations”
13 Aug	<p>Travel Day: drive to Calgary Airport to catch returning flights</p>

