

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON • PE & REC • Outdoor Pursuits Program
PEO 351 - Backpacking Course Description

Course Description

This is a two-credit course designed for students with little or no backpacking experience. The course consists of classroom sessions and a three-day backpacking outing to the Oregon Coast. The classroom sessions are structured to prepare students for the outing. Classroom topics include clothing and equipment requirements, a map and compass review, backpacking risks and hazards, conditioning and injury prevention, leave no trace travel and camping ethics, fitness requirements, and trip planning and preparation. Students are required to complete a map and compass worksheet and complete a 2-mile run in less than 20 minutes during an in-class fitness test prior to participating in the outing component of the course.

The focus of the outing component is on learning the basics of backpacking, with an emphasis on the following skills and techniques: Packing a pack; improving hiking efficiency and preventing injuries; using a backpacking stove and cooking basic meals; erecting a tarp and/or tent shelter; camping and traveling using Leave No Trace (LNT) ethics specific to the coastal environment; reading a map and using a map and compass to navigate from point to point.

Prerequisites/Corequisites

Prerequisites: PEO 285 - Wilderness Survival (no exceptions)

Learning Outcomes

The Outdoor Pursuits Program emphasizes safe and responsible participation in outdoor activities. In addition to meeting the learning outcomes of prerequisite courses, upon completion of this course participants should be able to:

01. Select and properly utilize the clothing and equipment necessary to safely and comfortably participate in a multi-day, beginning backpacking outing.
02. Pack a backpack efficiently.
03. Prevent the most common forms of backpacking injuries and hike more efficiently.
04. Maintain comfort while hiking in a variety of weather conditions.
05. Safely use a backpacking stove and prepare backpacking meals.
06. Select a safe and sheltered campsite.
07. Set up a tent and/or tarp shelter securely and safely.
08. Explain the risks and hazards associated with backpacking at the Oregon Coast, and the techniques and behaviors critical to minimizing these risks and hazards.
09. Travel and camp using LNT ethics specific to the coastal environment.
10. Read a map and use basic map and compass techniques more efficiently, including measuring bearings, following a bearing in the field, and using resection and triangulation to estimate location.
11. Plan and implement a safe, comfortable, and environmentally responsible introductory backpacking outing.

Evaluative Criteria

This is a P/NP course. Students enrolled for credit will be graded in the following areas. All of the following evaluative criteria must be met for a passing grade:

- 30% Attendance and Participation
- a. *Classroom* - attending the required sessions identified on the course schedule, being on time and actively participating in classroom sessions, and contributing to the group effort.
 - b. *Outing* - complying with OPP Outing Policies; maintaining a positive and supportive attitude; making an effort to be organized, efficient, and on time for all outing events; contributing to the group effort; and arriving at the meeting point for

the outing with all of the required items of clothing and equipment.

- 40% *Competence* - must be demonstrated in the following areas:
- Map reading - orienting and identifying basic landform features on a topographic map.
 - Map and compass - measuring and plotting bearings, orienting a map with a compass, performing resection and triangulation to pinpoint location.
 - Camping and travel skills - packing a pack; maintaining comfort while hiking, during teaching events, and while camping; selecting a safe and suitable campsite, setting up and using a shelter; using a backpacking stove and preparing meals; and practicing Leave No Trace (LNT) camping and travel techniques.
 - Backcountry Risks and Hazards – demonstrating an understanding of the behaviors, skills and techniques essential for safety while backpacking at the Oregon Coast.
 - Fitness - running two miles in 20 minutes or less during an in-class pre-outing fitness test.
- 30% *Worksheet* – submitting a fully completed worksheet by the date specified by the instructor. A score of 80% or better is required for a passing grade.

To be considered for a passing grade, participants must:

- Attend and fully participate in ALL required classroom sessions specified on the course schedule.
- Participate fully in the three-day outing.
- Submit the map and compass worksheet by the deadline specified on the course schedule.
- Attain a score of 80% or higher on the combined evaluative criteria.

Outing Demands, Requirements, Expectations, and Policies

The outing route traverses a beautiful and diverse area in the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area, known for its spruce forests, extensive dunes, swamps, dense brush bands, lakes, streams and ocean beaches. Weather on the Oregon Coast can change rapidly. Sunny, summer-like weather can quickly change to heavy rain, and high winds are common on the coast. The temperatures are usually mild, however low temperatures occasionally reach the freezing point in this area during spring and fall.

Backpacking off trail with a large pack can be physically and mentally demanding. The terrain is relatively gentle, however large portions of the route are in sand, which can make travel considerably more difficult than on a normal trail. Prolonged rains and wind can be challenging even with proper gear.

Hazards encountered on our coastal hikes may include unexpected high "sneaker" waves, which can wash people off rocks and into the sea, and stream crossings, which can be hazardous as currents change rapidly near the mouths of coastal streams. Tsunamis, though uncommon, are another risk of traveling along the beaches.

Safe travel in these conditions requires proper clothing and equipment, careful navigation and route selection, and constant self-monitoring one's physical condition. It's imperative that you understand what is required of you in terms of preparation, fitness, physical comfort, attitude, and conduct. MOST IMPORTANT! Safety is our first concern and must be yours as well. Participate in the outing only if you feel mentally and physically prepared and are willing and able to assume full responsibility for your own safety. Never assume that the leadership team knows everything, always make good decisions, or can solve every problem for you. Your safety depends upon your alertness and good sense. We encourage you to maintain a questioning attitude! If you are unsure of something, ask!

A. Prior to participation in the outing component of the course you are required to:

- Attend the required classroom sessions.
- Submit the map and compass worksheet on time and in acceptable (passing) form.
- Meet the course fitness requirements by running 2 miles in less than 20 minutes during a pre-outing classroom session (or meet director approved alternative criteria).
- Read, understand, and sign the Statement of Risk, Assumption of Risk, and Release of Liability document, Health Information form, and Outing Policies document, allowing enough time to thoroughly read each document and bring any questions you may have to the course instructor. It is your responsibility to provide your instructor with information regarding injuries, surgeries, medications, or other special considerations that may affect your participation in this course.
- Arrive at the outing departure point on time and with all of the required clothing and equipment. Gear and clothing requirements will be detailed during class sessions. To avoid loss of credit, fees, and the experience of the outing, make sure that you understand the requirements and verify the acceptability of required items well in advance of the departure date. The OPP maintains a limited supply of certain items for student use at no charge. You must provide your own equipment unless we happen to have the items you need. Rentals are available locally. You must also provide your own food. Transportation is covered in the cost of the course.

B. As a participant in the outing component of this course, you are expected to:

1. Monitor your health and comfort, eat and drink regularly, and inform your instructor if you become uncomfortable or exceed your limits of personal safety. Your enjoyment of the course will be improved by maintaining a positive attitude and by being mentally prepared for a new set of challenges each day.
2. Know and practice minimum impact camping techniques specific to the season and environment.
3. Refrain from using illicit drugs and alcohol, carrying firearms, and bringing pets of any kind. Our outing participation policies regarding alcohol, illicit drugs and firearms are "zero tolerance". Do not anticipate lenience or exceptions. Failure to abide by these policies may result in a permanent grade of "F" or "NP" in the course and and/or a formal complaint registered with the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards.
4. Wear a seat belt AT ALL TIMES while riding in State vehicles.
5. Remember that you are participating in a tax-supported public program. Help us maintain a good image by being sensible in attire and behavior when near members of the public.
6. Comply with the Program's policy on use of cell phones, music players and other personal electronic devices. Policies regarding the use of personal electronics will be discussed during class sessions.

C. You will not be allowed to participate in the outing component of this course if you:

1. Miss any required classroom sessions.
2. Fail to submit the map and compass worksheet.
3. Fail the fitness test.
4. Arrive at the outing with inadequate equipment or if, in the instructor's opinion, your participation (for whatever reason) could compromise your or the group's safety.

D. You participate at your own risk. You are strongly encouraged to obtain health insurance prior to participation in the outing component of this course. You may be asked to secure a physician's statement clearing you to participate in this course.

Additional Information

1. IMPORTANT! The three-day outing requires that you miss ALL other class sessions scheduled on the Friday of the outing. It is your responsibility to contact your professors/instructors well in advance of the outing to determine if your absence will be permitted. NOTE: Your professors/instructors are under no obligation to release you from your responsibilities in order to participate in this outing. Attending Friday classes and driving on your own to the outing location later in the day is NOT PERMITTED.
2. Course readings, articles and notes are available on the OPP website: <http://opp.uoregon.edu/bpk/backpacking.html>
3. A color map of the outing location is required for classroom sessions. The map is available on the course web site, or the instructor.
4. Laptop and cell phone use (including text messaging) is prohibited during class sessions!

Policy On Issuing Incompletes

In compliance with University policies, an "I" can be given only when a relatively minor part of a course is not completed. Therefore, if you do not participate in the outing component, an "I" is not an option. If you cannot attend the outing, drop the course as soon as possible.

Refund Policies

If participation is disallowed due to failure to meet the requirements for participation specified above, or because you chose not to participate in the outing for any reason, fees will NOT be refunded. Refunds are subject to the refund schedule established by the Registrar's Office.

Course Instructor

Fall Term: Dan Crowe; 172 Esslinger Hall; 346-1932; dcrowe@uoregon.edu

Spring Term: Michael Strong; 186 Esslinger Hall; 346.1048; mstrong@oregon.uoregon.edu