

George Mason University School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism
PRLS 120 – INTRODUCTION TO BACKPACKING (2 credits)
Spring 2013

Instructor: Margaret John
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Office House: By appointment, prior to or after class
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COURSE DATES/TIMES/LOCATIONS:

In-Class – **Friday, March 22**, 9 – 11am Aquatic & Fitness Center 112

Field Trip – **Saturday, April 6**, 9 – 5pm Prince William Forest Park, Turkey Run Ed Ctr

In-Class – **Friday, April 5**, 9 – 11am Aquatic & Fitness Center 112

Field Trip – **Saturday 9am til Sun. 5pm, April 13 & 14**, Shenandoah National Park, Rte. 211 Entrance

In-Class – **Friday, April 19**, 9 – 11am Aquatic & Fitness Center 112

LAB FEES: \$130 – Backpacking gear rentals & Trip Food; Collected at first field trip

May reimburse some of lab fee dependent on students' own backpacking gear

COURSE TEXTS: Required readings will be provided in class and/or online

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This practical and experiential course is designed for students with little or no knowledge of backpacking. The course will involve discussions, demonstrations, and activities to teach students the basics of backpacking. Topics covered will include: equipment selection and use, map and compass skills, backcountry cooking, staying healthy in the outdoors, safety and emergency procedures, backcountry ethics ("Leave No Trace"), and natural history. Application of these skills will be realized over the duration of a culminating two-day backpacking trip. Not only will students have the opportunity to practice these skills, but they will also develop their leadership abilities by working in a collaborative team environment.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Develop necessary skills to plan and execute a multi-day backpacking trip.
2. Use a map and compass as a wilderness travel aid.
3. Plan and prepare meals using backpacking stoves.
4. Present principles of "Leave No Trace" backpacking.
5. Maintain safe and healthy techniques while traveling in the wilderness.
6. Display expedition behavior and outdoor leadership.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Students will be expected to dress appropriately (ability to stay warm and dry) for each class trip.
2. Students must bring lunch/snacks/water for each class.
3. Students will be expected to participate in all group discussions.
4. Students with injuries or pre-existing conditions that may affect performance **MUST** inform the instructor.
5. Students will be expected to obtain all necessary equipment on attached list.

GRADING:

Attendance at Class Meetings & Trips – 25% (5% each)

For every class/field trip you attend in its entirety, you earn 5% towards your grade.

Assignments – 55%

Mock Shopping List & Shakedown (20%)

Using a budget of \$3,000, you must ‘purchase’ all of the necessary gear that you would need for a four-day backpacking trip for yourself on your Mock Trip. A certain number of these items will be required at the Shakedown. See the attached Assignments Sheet for additional information.

Leave-No-Trace Presentation (10%)

Prepare one 10-minute presentation to share with the class. Individually or with a partner (grades will be given individually), discuss one of the 7 Leave-No-Trace principals. Give recommendations about how our class can abide by this principal during our hikes. Topics will be selected during our first class meeting. Detailed Leave-No-Trace information is available at (www.lnt.org). A certificate of completion of online LNT course will also be required. See the attached Assignments Sheet for additional information.

Mock Trip Plan & Presentation (25%)

Plan a sample four-day backpacking trip for you and a friend. You must write-up this plan in no more than 4 pages, covering the following topics: goals, location, dates/time of year, personal and group equipment required, food plan, emergency considerations, weather, transportation, and permit regulations. Individuals have 10 minutes to present this plan during class (using props if desired) with an additional 5 minutes to answer questions by classmates. See the attached Assignments Sheet for additional information.

Demonstrated Outdoor Skills, Leadership, and Teamwork – 20%

Score is based on improvement and competency of backpacking skills throughout the course; including, group participation and leadership throughout the 2-day backpacking trip.

EVALUATION SCALE 90 – 100: A 80 – 89: B 70 – 79: C 60 – 69: D < 60: F

COURSE OUTLINE: *(Class runs rain or shine)*

CLASS / FRIDAY March 22, 9-11am

Schedules/Syllabus

Equipment Demo

Introduce Leave No Trace Principles

Location: Aquatic & Fitness Center 112

CLASS / FRIDAY April 5th 14, 9-11am

Assign Leave No Trace Principles for

Presentation during Backpacking Trip

Review Homework & Gear Shakedown

Trip Logistics and Itinerary

Review Backpacking Skills to be introduced during Prince William Forest Park outing

Location: Aquatic & Fitness Center 112

FIELD TRIP / SATURDAY & SUNDAY

April 13, 9am – April 14, 5pm

Backpacking – Demonstrate & Learn

Backpacking Skills

Location: Shenandoah National Park

CLASS / FRIDAY April 19, 9-11am

Mock Trip Plan Presentations

Mason Course Evaluation

Student Course Recommendations

Location: Aquatic & Fitness Center 112

FIELD TRIP / SATURDAY April 6, 9-5pm

Orienteering – land navigation, compass use

Backpacking Hard Skills – stoves, water purification, camp set-up, etc.

Location: Prince William Forest Park

Gear list

*Some equipment will be available for rental. Students should, however, try to acquire as much as possible. Those marked with asterisks *may* be available through rentals. We will discuss gear as necessary during class meetings.

- 50-60+L pack*
- sleeping bag and stuff sack
- sleeping pad (yoga mats suffice)*
- tent*
- Personal stove and cookware*
- Rain jacket or poncho
- Fleece top
- Non-cotton base layers
- Non-cotton top and bottom for hiking
- Insulating jacket
- Appropriate hiking shoes and socks
- Personal first aid kit
- Non-cotton hat and gloves

Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See [http:// oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/](http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/)]
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See <http://rht.gmu.edu>].

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.



George Mason University

PHOTO, AUDIO, VIDEO, AND COMMENT RELEASE

Event: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Faculty Staff Student Visitor

GENERAL RELEASE

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I am not a minor and have the right to contract in my own name. I have read the foregoing and fully understand its contents. This release shall be binding on me and my heirs, legal representatives, and assigns.

Signed _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

