

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

PRLS 120– 201 —Introduction to Backpacking (2 credits)
Fall 2015

DAY/TIME:	F 9-11 am., Sa 9-5, Sa-Su 9-5	LOCATION:	AFC Room 112
INSTUCTOR:	Yahya Abdul-Qaadir	EMAIL ADDRESS:	yabdulqa@gmu.edu
OFFICE LOCATION:	AFC 112	PHONE NUMBER:	414-429-4678
OFFICE HOURS:	By appointment, prior to or after class		

PREREQUISITES/COREQUISITES

None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This practical and experiential course is designed for students with little or no knowledge of backpacking. The course involves discussions, demonstrations, and activities to teach students the basics of backpacking. Topics covered include equipment selection, 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 a weekend 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.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY

Three classroom session, on Saturday field experience and one overnight backpacking trip

EVALUATION

Attendance at Class Meetings & Trips- 25 points (5 points each)

For every class/field trip you attend in its entirety, demonstrating teamwork, leadership, respect for others and environment, and cooperation, you earn 5 points towards your grade.

Assignments- 75 points

Leave-No-Trace (LNT) Presentation (20 points)

- This assignment will be done individually or in groups depending on the size of the class. Each group or individual will be given one of the 7 Leave No Trace principals and is responsible for giving a 10-minute presentation (grades will be given individually). Presentations should be creative employing whatever method chosen to cover the details of the principal that is assigned. Each group will be given a handout with a LNT principal but any resource can be used for the presentations.

Mock Trip Plan & Presentation (20 points)

Plan a four-day backpacking trip for you and 3 friends. Everyone is required to submit no more than a 3 page plan and conduct a class presentation. The plan and presentation should cover the following topics: goals, location,

dates/time of year, personal and group equipment, menu plan, emergency action plan, weather, transportation, permit regulations and points of interest on the trail. Individuals have 10 minutes to present their plan during class with an additional 5 minutes to answer questions by classmates.

Camp Cooking Assignment (20 points)

This assignment will be done in groups of two and contains two parts; a written meal plan and a demonstration portions during our trip. The meal plan must contain details on ingredients, portion sizes and the preparation required. The meal must contain at least three ingredients and feed four persons.

Reaction Paper (15 points)

Students will be assigned a reaction paper this will be a response to the backpacking trip and how the class dealt with LNT, teamwork and other aspects that were covered in class. The paper must include reactions on the camp meals, our route, our campsite and the overall feeling about trip.

Grading Scale

A = 94 – 100	B+ = 88 – 89	C+ = 78 – 79	D = 60 – 69
A- = 90 – 93	B = 84 – 87	C = 74 – 77	F = 0 – 59
	B- = 80 – 83	C- = 70 – 73	

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE			TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENT DUE
Friday	Aug	29	Schedules/Syllabus review Discussion on gear selections, water purification, and backpacking stove operations. Introduce Leave No Trace Principles intro	
Saturday	Sept	6	Day Hike Map and compass use (Location: TBA)	
Friday	Sept	12	Review mock gear list & LNT presentations Trip Logistics and Itinerary Review Backpacking Skills introduced during Day Hike.	Leave No Trace presentation and Mock Gear List presentation. List should also be emailed to instructor.
Sat-Sun	Sept	20-21	Backpacking Trip– Demonstrate & Learn Backpacking Skills Location: Shenandoah National Park	Demonstrate LNT, backpacking skills and good expedition behavior in the field.
Friday	Sept	26	Review of Backpacking Trip Mock Trip Plan Presentations Mason Course Evaluation Student Course Recommendations	Mock Trip Plan presentations and second reaction paper due via email before the start of class

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary.

Student Expectations

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <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/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- 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.

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/>].

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR: Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

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.

