# GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY School of Recreation, Health and Tourism

PRLS 120 – Introduction to Backpacking (2) Fall 2010

DAY/TIME: Tues (3-6pm) 8/31/10 and 9/7/10 LOCATION: RAC 2203

Sat (12:30pm-4pm) 9/18 LOCATION: Bull Run Mountain

Conservancy

Trip: (8am) 10/8 - (5pm) 10/11 LOCATION: TBD

INSTRUCTORS: Sean Tierney

OFFICE LOCATION: Johnson Center Room 245 OFFICE HOURS: Tues and Wed

as needed

PHONE NUMBER: (540) 539-5509

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PREREQUISITES: None

FEE: TBD

#### 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 four-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 will be able to explain and demonstrate:

- 1. Contingencies necessary to plan and execute a multi-day backpacking trip
- 2. Use of a map and compass as a wilderness travel aid
- 3. Safe use of backpacking stoves and the planning and preparation of meals
- 4. Principles of "Leave No Trace" backpacking
- 5. How to stay safe and healthy while traveling in the wilderness
- 6. Expedition behavior and outdoor leadership

## **COURSE INFORMATION**

- 1. Students with injuries or pre-existing conditions that may affect performance must inform the instructor.
- 2. All communication will be through GMU e-mail.
- 3. Class Fees: TBD
- 4. Participation and Forms

- a. All students must complete a medical/physical concerns questionnaire and a Liability Release Statement. These forms will be handed out in the first class session and will be collected on 9/7.
- b. Due to the condensed format of this class, all students must participate and be fully engaged in all course sessions.

# 5. Equipment

a. All students will be expected to obtain all necessary equipment (see separate equipment list).

# REQUIREMENTS

- Assignment #1 Mock Trip Plan (Due on 9/7): Plan a sample three-day backpacking trip for you and three of your friends. Discuss the following topics: goals, location, dates/time of year, personal and group equipment, food, emergency considerations, weather, transportation, and permit regulations.
- Assignment #2 LNT presentations (present during our trip): Prepare one 5-minute presentation to share with the class. Discuss one of the 7 Leave-No-Trace principals. One person in the group will wrap up the presentations with a review of all 7 principles. Topics will be selected during our first class meeting. Detailed information is available on the LNT website (www.lnt.org).
- Final Paper (Due on 10/15): Submit a 2-page typed double-spaced paper, which discusses a learning experience that you had on this course. Topics for the paper do not have to be the same as your presentation. These will be e-mailed to the instructor.

### **EVALUATION**

- 1. Lab Exercises 20%
- 2. Demonstrated outdoor skills, leadership, and teamwork 40%
- 3. Assignment #1 10%
- 4. Assignment #2 LNT presentation 10%
- 5. Final paper -20%

# **GRADING SCALE:**

90-100 A

80 - 89 B

70 - 79 C

60 - 69 D

< 60 F

## COURSE OUTLINE

Session #1: Tuesday, August 31, 3pm – 6pm: (RAC 2203)

Agenda

Introduction

Goals and Expectations

Course Overview – Review Syllabus

Equipment (clothing-staying warm and dry, boots, backpack, sleeping, shelter, cooking) Homework (Due by 3/8)

Prepare your LNT Presentation (present on the trip)

Assignment #1 – Mock Trip Plan: Plan a sample three-day backpacking trip for you and three of your friends. Discuss the following topics: goals, location, dates/time of year, personal and group equipment, food, emergency considerations, weather, transportation, and permit regulations.

Session #2: Tuesday, September 7, 3pm – 6pm: (RAC 2203)

**Collect Forms** 

Gear Check (what you need)

Session #3: Saturday, September 18th, 12:30pm-4pm: (Meet at Bull Run Mountain Conservancy. Come prepared to be outdoors)

Agenda

Hydration and Nutrition in the wilderness

Menu Planning

Sanitation in the wilderness

Stove use

Tent pitching

Hike – bring daypack, rain gear, water, and lunch

Foot care

Water purification

Map and compass skills

Friday, October 8: Meet at GW Camp?

Agenda

Personal equipment check

Food packing

Group equipment issue

Pack packing

Lunch in van

Arrive at Shenandoah National Park

Hike to camp

Campsite selection

Revisit: water purification, tent pitching, and stove use

Dinner

Bear bagging

Expedition behavior

**SLEEP** 

Saturday, October 9:

Agenda

Wake-up 7am

**Breakfast** 

Break Camp and depart

Hike to camp

Set-up camp

Afternoon hike

Free time

Dinner 5pm

LNT presentations (half of group)

**SLEEP** 

# Sunday, October 10:

Agenda

Wake up 7am

Breakfast

Hike and orienteering course

Free time

Dinner 5pm

LNT presentations (half of group)

# Monday, October 11:

Agenda

Wake up 7am

Breakfast

Break Camp

Hike out

**Depart** 

Group Meal on the way home

Clean equipment

De-issue equipment

Wrap-up

This course is designed to improve the health, and well-being and quality of life. It is part of an increasing number of activities available through the Department of Health Fitness and Recreation Resources. For further information about other courses or degree programs, please contact Leona Smith at 993-2096



- All students are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#Anchor12]
- University policy states that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the professor
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See www.gmu.edu/student/drc]
- For additional School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism information, please visit the website at http://rht.gmu.edu

# **EQUIPMENT**

The following is a list of clothing and equipment that all students should have. Some items from the list are optional but for safety reasons, much of this equipment is required. We will discuss the equipment specifics and economical ways to acquire equipment in the first class. You will be surprised how much of this equipment you already own. You might also be able to borrow some items from friends. Many of the items can be rented from local outdoor stores such as, Hudson Trail Outfitters in Fairfax Circle (703) 591-2950, and REI in Bailey's Crossroads and Fairfax Corner (703) 379-9400, (571) 522-6568. The following is group gear that the program provides: tents, camp stoves, fuel and fuel bottles, cooking gear, trowels, references books, maps and compasses, equipment repair kits, and first aid kits.

#### Head

- Wool or fleece hat (must cover ears)
- Brimmed hat (for sun protection) (optional)

# Upper Body

- Midweight synthetic long underwear top polypropylene, or other wicking fabric (NO COTTON)
- Expedition weight synthetic long undershirt fleece or wool (NO COTTON)
- Heavy weight fleece jacket/wool sweater (Polartec 300)
- Wind jacket nylon (can be same as rain jacket if waterproof/breathable-must fit over insulating layers)

#### Hands

Gloves or Mittens

### Lower Body

- Underwear (optional)
- Midweight synthetic long underwear bottom polypropylene, or other wicking fabric (NO COTTON)
- Fleece or wool pants (ex. Polartec 200 NO COTTON)
- Wind pants nylon (can be same as rain pants if waterproof/breathable-must fit over insulating layers)

#### Feet

- Midweight hiking boots boots should extend above the ankle and be leather/fabric or all leather. It is best if the boots can be waterproof, either by treating the leather with waterproofing compound before the trip or if the boots have a Gore-tex liner. Boots should fit comfortably with two pairs of socks, a light liner and a heavy wool/synthetic sock.
- 2 pair of wool or synthetic poly-blend socks and 2 pair liner socks
- Running shoes or sneakers camp shoes are optional but nice to have
- Gaiters (optional)

#### Rain Gear

• Waterproof jacket and pants or rain poncho

# Travel Gear

- External frame/Internal frame backpack with padded hip belt
- Sleeping bag synthetic fill, rated to 20 degrees F
- Closed cell foam sleeping pad or inflatable mattress. Sleeping pads provide insulation from the ground and padding for more comfortable/safe sleeping.

### Miscellaneous

- 1 liter water bottle
- Spoon/fork
- Bowl with lid (tupperware)
- Bandannas (optional)
- Sunscreen (optional)
- Sunglasses (optional)
- Lip balm
- Headlamp/flashlight
- 2 disposable lighters
- Prescription contacts lenses and solutions in a small bottle (if needed)
- Extra pair of glasses (if needed)
- Watch (optional)
- Duct tape
- Pocketknife (optional)
- Toiletries toothbrush, toothpaste, tampons, prescription medications (if needed)
- Notepad and pencil material for LNT/Nature Nugget Presentations
- Camera and film (optional)