

OUTDOOR EDUCATION WORKSHOP
SYLLABUS - FALL 2006
EVST 395 - 3 Credits

INSTRUCTOR

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MEETINGS

Thursdays 2:15pm - 5:00pm Lolo National Forest and public land around Missoula

*“Now I see the making of the best persons.
It is to grow in the open air...”*

Walt Whitman

COURSE OVERVIEW This course is designed to provide students with a solid foundation in the field of outdoor education. Outdoor education is generally defined as an experiential process of learning that educates in, about, and for the outdoors, utilizing the outdoors as an educational tool. It focuses on relationships involving both people and the natural world, and includes elements of environmental education, adventure education, group learning, natural sciences, and outdoor recreation. This course is recommended for students in fields such as Recreation Management, Environmental Studies, Education, Biology, Forestry, Health & Human Performance, Social Work, or others who are interested in gaining expertise teaching or leading in the outdoors.

COURSE GOAL & OBJECTIVES The goal of this course is to offer students in-depth experiences and understanding in the field of outdoor education. The objectives of this course are to:

1. Expose students to a variety of methods, strategies, activities, resources and content areas pertaining to education and the outdoors;
2. Enable students to design lessons and/or programs which utilize the outdoors as an educational tool.
3. Prepare students to safely and successfully lead a group of students in the outdoors.

COURSE DESCRIPTION This course will meet once a week for 3 hours at various sites around Missoula on the Lolo National Forest. Class discussion and activities will focus on the topic area scheduled for that week, and reading materials will be provided. All activities for the course will take place outside, without exception, so students will need to be prepared (see below). As part of an experiential process of learning, participants will gain first-hand insight into being students and part of a group involved in an outdoor education program.

To provide additional experience and insight not possible in regular class meetings, there will be several weekend outings throughout the semester to practice outdoor skills such as backpacking, rock climbing, white-water rafting, mountain biking, and XC skiing. As well, students will have opportunities to observe and participate in other outdoor education programs offered by MOLA.

BEING PREPARED Part of outdoor education is learning to be comfortable in the outdoors. Therefore, students will need to be properly prepared each week. Before you arrive for class, you should have something to eat, check the weather, dress appropriately in several layers and sturdy outdoor shoes, and apply any sunscreen, etc. that you wish. When you arrive for class, you need to bring a backpack with extra food, a liter of water, extra clothing layers including rain protection, ballcap, sunglasses, journal, clipboard, portable chair, other class materials, and any other field gear/guides you wish.

EVALUATION All components count equally:

- 1. Portfolio** Students will develop their own personal teaching resource by gathering materials from class and other sources that pertain to each of the weekly topic areas. Materials should be organized into sections and presented in a 3-ring binder with introduction and table of contents.
- 2. Journals** Students will be expected to make weekly journal entries for class following specific assignments and focus questions, along with notes from class meetings, field observations, and personal thoughts. Assignments will be collected each week for evaluation.
- 3. Outdoor Teaching Session** All students will work with a partner to present a one hour lesson to the rest of the class in a relevant area of interest. Partners will develop a proposal and outline for the lesson, along with a formal lesson plan on the day of the presentation. Classmates will help provide feedback on the lesson.
- 4. Participation** Because of the nature and small size of this class, everyone will be an important presence. Students are expected to be present and on time for all class meetings, to come prepared with assignments completed, to contribute frequently to discussions, and to critically examine their own role in the group.
- 5. Group Project** The entire class will work together on a service project.
- 6. Final Exam** Comprehensive essay.
- 7. Grad Student Research Paper** Students seeking graduate credit will be asked to develop a line of thought pertaining to personal and professional beliefs and approaches to outdoor education, referencing at least five other scholarly works, in a paper of at least eight pages in length. Due by final exam.

COURSE CONTENT

EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Outdoor Education - What Is It and Who's Involved?

Sense of Place

Educational Philosophy

Learning Theory

Lesson Plans and Curriculum Design

Journaling: Applications, Strategies

THE GROUP

Leadership, Judgment, Decision-Making

Group Development and Dynamics

Behavior Management, Discipline

Group Initiatives and Team-Building

OUTDOORS

Logistics and Planning

Risk Management

Outdoor Ethics, Leave No Trace

OUTDOOR SKILLS FIELD TRIPS

Whitewater Rafting
Backpacking
Rock Climbing
Mountain Biking
XC Skiing

*“Climb the mountains
and get their good tidings.”*
John Muir