

# Backpacking Course Outline

## Dixie State College of Utah – Spring 2013

### Identifying Information

Course Number: PEHR 1535-50b  
 Course Name: Backpacking  
 Credit Hours: 1 Credit Hour  
 Times: Thursdays 5:15 - 7:45pm  
 Location: University Plaza Building B - room 110B + nearby outdoor sites  
 Fees: You paid a lab fee that helps buy consumables for class.  
 Text: None that you are required to buy. However, you will be creating a significant and detailed individual compilation of materials into your own "textbook." Sources for those materials is primarily the Internet  
 Equipment: Any equipment that you need for class is mostly your responsibility. At minimum, a backpack, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, access to tent space, appropriate clothing, and cooking/eating supplies are needed. I can personally provide a few things, but those arrangements are informal. Also, much of this is available at the Outdoor Rentals Center on campus for a reasonable fee.  
 Instructor: Dr. Robert G. Snow  
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 Office: Holland Centennial Commons 5<sup>th</sup> floor IT Center – 597L

Syllabus and schedule changes will be e-mailed. **Please NOTE:** I rarely cancel or reschedule class activities. In particular, a bit of inclement weather (rain or snow) does not necessarily cancel class. If you do not hear from me, class is going forward and your attendance will be expected. It is **required** that you routinely monitor your personal **Dixie Student E-Mail-DMAIL** account or whatever account you've forwarded it to. It is also a good idea to routinely check your email in the afternoon of class days to look at location maps and to see if there has been a change of venue or plan.

### General Course Description

This course will cover the selection and care of equipment; techniques and tips for an enjoyable trip; nearby locations of merit; regulations, politics and legal issues; menus and cooking; finding your way in the wilds; associated activity and science study; safety, self-rescue and emergency strategies; and finally, moving gently through the wilderness.

### Course Objectives

Consequently, & to be more specific, the objectives of this course are:

1. To introduce the student to the basic principles pertaining to the provision of safe and enjoyable activity revolving around overnight backcountry foot-powered trips.
2. To give the student a chance to learn about the specific equipment and tools commonly used for backpacking
3. To give the student an opportunity to learn and practice pertinent skills and techniques
4. To give the student exposure to safety and health-oriented topics pertaining to the outdoor environment
5. To provide a forum for sharing of materials and information related to larger setting in which backpacking takes place, including politics, conservation, history, lore and folklore, etc.

### Schedule:

Date	Location	Description
March 21	Classroom	Mile wide & inch deep – Course requirements & outline - getting organized and acquainted
March 28	Vernon Worthen Park	Major Equipment Survey – tents, sleeping bags, packs, care/selection/use.

April 4	Classroom	Backpacking skills – more equipment discussion, danger, scenarios, strategy, <b>DUE: pocketable survival kit</b>
April 11	Nearby Hills – probably Pioneer Park	Map reading, Route finding, GPS and Compass, <b>Personal textbook item to be shared DUE</b>
April 18	TBA	Overnight fieldtrip prep
April 25	Classroom	Places of local merit, lessons learned <b>Textbook DUE</b>
May 2	Classroom Finals Week	Final Grade Calculation & Review –sign-up sheet passed around April 24 – 5-10 minute personal sessions/ student

Please note that the actual date of the overnight is always subject to discussion and modification based on student capability. We will try to definitively try to nail it down the first class but be aware it sometimes happens that a Friday/Saturday experience is difficult and we then sometimes choose to do a Saturday/Sunday outing. Despite the schedule listed above, the last three weekends of the Semester could conceivably also come into play.

Each student will be **required** to meet with me individually during finals week to review your grading worksheet and make sure we are in agreement. These sessions typically take about five minutes per student. A sign-up sheet will be passed around at the last class. If you fail to appear, the otherwise earned grade will be lowered by one full letter grade – from an A to a B etc.

There is no such thing as an excused absence for this class. You are adults, and I expect you in class. If you are not there I assume you have a good reason. You don't need to tell me what that reason is. However, I expect that students will take the initiative and make up work they missed and do additional work to compensate for the missed opportunities as appropriate.

It is rare that someone who attends every session and does the assignments on time gets a very bad grade and equally rare that someone who misses class sessions &/or does things at the last minute or late gets a very good grade. Absence just complicates things for you and for me. This is a short efficient experience without any available room for accommodation. Plan ahead. In particular, it is a grade killer to miss the overnight.

One of the most frustrating things that can happen as we gather for class in the various locations is that some students can't find us. Basic route and place finding skills are on display and I have some ideas about how to improve our performance in this area that I will be discussing with you.

## Grading and Evaluative Process:

- Participation -200 points possible, 25 points for full participation in each evening session, and 50 for the overnight.
- Demonstration item – The class should result in the student acquiring one new skill or piece of equipment and be able to talk briefly about it – what it is, why it is important, how the selection was made. Also could be performance related (poem, story, music) – 40 points - the talking/demo/performance is done on the overnight trip.
- Recreation TEXTbook: 100 points possible (70 (content) + 20 (organization/presentation) + 10 for item e-mail shared w class)) – please note that the end result of this assignment is a **TEXTBOOK!** With all the variety that implies.

Each student will be expected to produce their own outdoor textbook with equipment hints, activity related information, safety and survival procedures and similar appropriate content. There should be at least 50 different items (it would be rare that a fully qualified item would be less than 1 page in length and most should perhaps be 3 or 4 pages per item), organized neatly and properly attributed. One item from that book will be produced in quantity and shared with all the rest of the class by e-mail on or before April 11, 2013.

The textbook itself is due April 25<sup>th</sup>. It is my strong preference that students assemble a virtual text that is totally electronic media (a single organized file) that can be e-mailed (or CDROM burned), by 11:59pm that same day. I will reward 10 extra points if it is turned in a week early (by April 18th). All materials in the textbook **MUST** be properly attributed – even if from a relative etc.

I expect that there will be a title page, a table of contents, items grouped by category, neatly presented, and represent **AT LEAST 10-15 DIFFERENT** sources (more is better). It is my experience that students who fully take advantage of this opportunity end up with something that is at least 100-150 dense pages in length (sometimes even 500 – but quantity as opposed to quality is not often wonderful). A listing of sources is required. You have some freedom in document format but in general, MSWord, PDF, and RTF documents are the easiest to deal with. I'm generally not very fond of Power Points (they tend to be "fluffy" - pretty but lack the kind of comprehensive detail I'm looking for).

The filename for any file you turn in as part of homework MUST include your name as well as a descriptor.

Friendly Advice – please go back and re-read this paragraph a couple more times; these details and getting them right are extremely important!

- Late Assignment penalty of 5% /school day.

We will be using the mandated Departmental grading scale:

### **FCS/PEHR Grade Scale**

A = 95%-100%	B+ = 88-90%	C+ = 78-80%	D+ = 68-70%
A- = 91%-94 %	B = 84-87%	C = 74-77%	D = 64-67%
	B- = 81-83%	C- = 71-73%	D- = 61-63%

If you should get into grade related trouble it is possible to perform extra credit but prior approval MUST be negotiated (This means that you have to get prior WRITTEN – email works best) approval from the instructor)). Extra credit possibilities include research and writing on a obviously related topic, a submitted article to a outdoor magazine, or something similar.

### **Some General Information:**

Dixie State College is committed to a policy of cheerfully providing reasonable accommodation to any student with a situation or condition that might otherwise constrain full participation. The following DSC statement should clarify: “Proper documentation of a disability is required in order to receive services or accommodations. Any student eligible for and requesting reasonable academic accommodations due to a disability must provide a letter of accommodation to their professor from the Disability Resource Center within the first two weeks of the beginning of classes. Please contact the Center on the main campus to follow through with the documentation process. You may call for an appointment and further information regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) at 652-7516.” (My limited experience with this process suggests that it is best completed BEFORE our class ever starts – these PEHR classes are brief - things happen quickly and sometimes we need to change something in order to be appropriately accommodating).

You are responsible for your own transportation to and from our off campus sites. While it would seem to be a good idea for you to car pool to these remote sites, I cannot, for liability reasons, have anything to do with the arrangements.

However, I do reserve the right to take appropriate action if, in my judgment, a driver is endangering other class members with reckless or intoxicated driving or anything similar.

I also reserve the right to disallow the participation of any class member that in my judgment creates a possible safety issue, or inappropriate/counterproductive conflict or situation. Should such measures become necessary, the student(s) involved will be required to immediately leave the vicinity but will be responsible to arrange to meet with me within 2 school days (48 hours) to resolve any outstanding issues or questions.

While on field trips, we are essentially at an extension of the campus. This means that you are expected to act responsibly and behave in a way that brings credit to the College; specifically, any evidence that a class member is doing something dangerous, illegal, or against College policy can be punished (at the very least) by removal from the class, including loss of credit. Included in this type of boorishness would be use of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, sexual harassment, cliff diving, firearm or fireworks use, etc. You get the idea.

Please dress appropriately – Personal safety is always a concern and open toed shoes or flip flops can be a problem. Long sleeves and long pants are helpful for similar reasons as well as helping deal with cool or even stormy evenings. Because I want to be the sole focus of class attention; please also dress with a goal of not becoming a distraction.

I expect you to come to class on time and to stay for the entire period. It is also expected that you remain attentive and actively participate in the various opportunities. By the way, I will try very hard to start class as soon as possible after 5:15. I expect the class members to be ready at that time and consider routine lateness to be sign of troubling disrespect to the rest of the class and to me. Another thing that I object to is cell phones that ring during class. Please turn them off or if you are expecting an emergency call, set them to vibrate only and immediately find somewhere quiet to answer if you must.

Only registered class members will be allowed to participate in class activities. Please, do not bring your girl or boyfriend, wife, or kids to any class.

We will be doing some outdoor cooking in this class. If you have any food allergy, it is imperative that you inform me immediately. Sometimes these things can sneak up on us in an undesirable or even dangerous way – for example, I've been known to unexpectedly use peanut butter as a thickening and flavor agent in a sauce or nuts in baked desserts in ways that are somewhat difficult to detect. Please help me keep you safe.

## Course Content

### 1. Equipment

#### a. The Backpack itself

- i. External Frame
- ii. Internal Frame or rucksack
- iii. Sizing and carrying capacity
- iv. How to load and organize
- v. Getting it on and off
- vi. Care and maintenance

#### b. Sleeping Gear

##### i. Sleeping Bag

1. Insulative materials
2. Designs/ratings & selection
3. Cleaning and repair

##### ii. Pad

1. Open cell
2. Closed cell
3. Mattresses – air inflated
4. Other variations

#### c. Tent or shelter

##### i. Designs

##### ii. Materials and care

##### iii. Techniques for use

#### iv. Siting/ Locations / bombproofing

##### 2. Sticks & staffs

##### 3. Clothing & footwear

##### a. Hats & scarves

##### b. Undergarments & support stuff

##### c. Fabrics & colors

##### d. Shirts

##### e. Pants & shorts

##### f. Shoes and boots (selection and care)

##### g. Socks

##### h. Principles of layering

##### i. Weather options

##### i. Rainy and/or Snowy (+ winter trips)

##### ii. Hot and/or Dry Weather

#### 4. Specialty Equipment

##### a. Ropes & Climbing Stuff

##### b. Science & Photography

##### c. Fishing

#### 5. Food and Food Preparation

##### a. Menu planning

##### i. Breakfast

##### ii. Lunch and snacks

##### iii. Dinner

##### iv. Other

##### b. Sources for things

##### i. Dehydrated vs. freeze dried

##### ii. Your own pantry

##### iii. Wild foods

##### iv. (re)Packing & storage, food safety

### c. Cook Tools

#### i. Stoves and fuels

#### ii. Pots and Pans

#### iii. Utensils & spices

#### iv. Open fire (safety) & fuel gathering

#### v. Special processes (baking etc.)

#### 6. Other essential stuff – knives, flashlights, etc.

#### 7. Water – finding/carrying/treating/safety

#### 8. Route finding related matters

##### a. Reading a Contour Map

##### b. Estimating distances & finding best routes

##### c. Compasses

##### d. GPS and related tools

#### 9. Basic Skills

##### a. Walking

##### b. Scrambling

##### c. Water crossings

##### d. “Watch the ounces and the pounds will take care of themselves.”

#### 10. Emergencies/Safety/survival

##### a. What is dangerous and how to cope

##### i. Weather- Rain/wind/snow/heat

##### ii. Animals (& insects)

##### iii. Ouchies - Falls/cuts/blisters

##### b. Survival Kits & contents

##### c. Self inflicted stupidities and how to deal with companions that indulge

#### 11. Hygiene

##### a. Potty stuff

##### b. Staying clean & healthy + other hygiene related items

#### 12. Nearby locations of merit

##### a. Desert

##### i. Arizona Strip

##### ii. Mojave (mostly Nevada)

##### b. Mountains

##### i. Pine Valley

##### ii. Cedar Mountain

##### iii. Boulder and 1000 Lake

##### c. Parks

##### i. Grand Canyon

##### ii. Zion

##### iii. Arches & Canyon lands

##### iv. Escalante (Staircase)Canyons

##### v. Paria area

#### 13. Moving gently through the wild world