

## **LSRC 151A Introduction to Backpacking**

Department of Leisure Studies and Recreation  
California State University Northridge

Fall 2006

**Pre-trip meeting: October 23 (Monday) 6:00-7:00 pm**  
**Field Class October 27-30 (all day)**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Al Wright, Ph.D.

Questions: [alan.wright@csun.edu](mailto:alan.wright@csun.edu)

**FIELD TRIP: October 27-30 at Sequoia National Forest.**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Prerequisite: LSRC 151 or concurrent enrollment. Introduction to safe backcountry travel using backpacking techniques in mountain and desert environments. Emphasis on techniques, knowledge & proper use of equipment, environmental practices and safety. Arranged field trip required.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

At the conclusion of this course the student will:

1. Gain a greater understanding of and appreciation for the natural environment demonstrated through minimum impact camping and conservation techniques.
2. Develop the ability to plan, organize and safely participate in a backpacking camping experience.
3. Increase competency in navigational skills and safe backcountry travel techniques.
4. Comprehend the proper use of fires and stoves in the backcountry environment.
5. Comprehend the technological developments and proper use of clothing designed for backpacking environments.
6. Comprehend the technological developments and proper use of tents and shelter resources backpacking environments.
7. Develop self-confidence and self-awareness in conjunction with an understanding of the needs of the group.

**COURSE CONTENT:**

**COURSE**

## **SCHEDULE:**

- I. Introduction
  - A. Planning and information gathering
  - B. Trip preparation: mental and physical
  
- II. Outdoor equipment and technologies
  - A. Clothing
  - B. Footwear
  - C. Tents
  - D. Bags
  - E. Backpacks
  
- III. Fires and Stoves
  - A. Regulations and environmental considerations
  - B. Fire starting techniques
  - C. Types of stoves
  
- IV. Environmental considerations
  - A. Minimal impact philosophy
  - B. Ecosystems and environment sensitivity
  - C. Animals and human visitors
  - D. Minimum impact camping and travel techniques
  
- V. Backcountry travel techniques
  - A. Navigation with map and compass
  - B. Triangulation
  - C. Field practice
  
- VI. Food in the Backcountry
  
- VII. Expedition behavior
  - A. Group responsibility
  - B. Group organization and travel
  - C. Group goals and expectations
  - D. Individual vs group: needs, values, desires
  - E. Communication
  
- VIII. Safety and First Aid
  - A. Common injuries: causes, treatment and prevention
  - C. Serious injuries: treatment and getting help

- D. First aid kits
- E. Conditioning and acclimatization

The course schedule will be consolidated into a three day residential experience in the back country.

**METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:**

The class will combine readings, lectures and experiential activities designed to develop the knowledge and skill competencies necessary for safe and environmentally sensitive experiences while traveling by backpack in the wilderness.

Over 80% of the class time will be spent on an extended backpacking trip in a wilderness area.

**METHODS OF EVALUATION:**

Exams . . . . . 25%  
Field Experiences . . . . 75%

1. Examinations: One examination will be given to test the readings and lecture material and will focus on comprehension. The exam will represent 25% of the grade.
2. Field Experiences: Students will be expected to satisfactorily perform techniques and skills discussed in the class outline. The class will take an extended field trip to an outdoor laboratory that will enable introduction of and initial mastery of appropriate skills.

**SUGGESTED TEXTS: see bookstore**

**FIELD CLASS INFORMATION AND MISC:**

A. Grading Criteria

1. The CSUN criteria for grading will be strictly followed including that a “A” represents “Outstanding” work and “an innovative application of the subject matter.” Refer to CSUN catalogue for additional details.
2. An Incomplete ("I") is assigned only as specified by Instructor and upon consultation and approval of the Instructor. Incompletes are normally not permitted.
3. For Credit/No Credit grading, student must be doing passing work to receive “credit.”
4. **Students may not attend the field trip if they have not attended the pre-trip meeting or met with the Instructor to review field class information.** In addition to being adequately prepared for the environmental demands of the field setting, this is because a release form and insurance verification form must be completed PRIOR to attending field trip.

B. Student Discipline

Inappropriate conduct by students (such as consuming alcohol on field trip and/or any other safety violation) is subject to discipline as provided in Sections 41301 through 41304 of Title 5, California Administrative Code. Refer to CSUN catalog for further details.

### C. Field Trip Equipment and Student Costs

Travel: Students are encouraged to car pool for financial and environmental reasons. Student choices to car pool are the full responsibility of the students. **PROOF OF CAR INSURANCE** (if driving) is required by the university. Students can indicate insurance coverage on the form provided at the pre-class meeting.

Students must meet the instructor at the designated field site location identified at the pre-trip meeting. If students are late they will not attempt to locate the rest of the class in the wilderness nor are students allowed to depart from the field class experience early.

Detailed explanation of this gear and any university issued gear will be provided at the pre-field class meeting.

Sleeping Bag

Ground cloth/Ensolite Pad

Rain Gear

Food/Water (no alcohol!)

Plastic cup and steel spoon for eating

Day Pack

Water Bottles

Clothes:

Loose-fitting & flexible pants and shirts

(If this is a climbing trip: Shirts required (no bare midriffs) and Short shorts not appropriate. Climbing shoes can be rented, but are not required. Gloves are totally optional.)

(If this is a canoe trip: swim wear needed, small day pack or ditty required)

Warm clothes (pile or wool sweater/ wind gear).

Sunscreen

Sun glasses

Lighter

Personal toiletries

D. Expenses the student can expect:

a. Gas cost will vary depending on vehicle and current prices. Round trip travel may be 300 miles. Costs will be reduced if shared with car pool.

b. Camp fee = \$1/night x 2 nights

c. Food = depends if you want PBJs or steak, should be no more than at home

d. Equipment rentals = None, CSUN can provide all essential trip gear.