

RTM 151H Caving (2 units)
Department of Recreation and Tourism Management
California State University Northridge

Spring 2013
Redwood Hall 151 – Saturdays 1:00-2:50 pm

First Session is March 23

Class Meetings on March 23 and April 6; plus important online sessions.

Field Class April 26, 27 and 28 (all day all three days)

No class March 30, April 13 and April 20

INSTRUCTOR:

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Introduction to the safe exploration of caves and the underground environment, including cave formations and features, techniques and special hazards. A few lectures on cave recreation history, geology, biology, etc. Emphasis on safety techniques for horizontal and vertical caves, environmental awareness, and skill development. Arranged field trip is required.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Departmental Student Learning Outcome #1:

“Students will demonstrate critical thinking including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in the fields of play, leisure, recreation, parks, and/or tourism through a variety of pedagogies.”

At the conclusion of the course the students will be able to ‘think better’ (SLO #1) and also:

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 backcountry camping experience.
3. Develop navigational skills and safe backcountry travel techniques.
4. Apply safety techniques for group exploration of horizontal caves
5. Apply safety techniques for ascending and descending in vertical caves
6. Evaluate the environment and appropriately manage risks
7. Appropriately navigate a group in cave environments

8. Synthesize information related to group impacts on underground environments and the Leave No Trace philosophy
9. Describe the clothing and equipment necessary to safely navigate caves
10. Demonstrate the basic skills required for safe single-rope ascending and descending

COURSE CONTENT:

- I. Introduction
 - A. Planning and information gathering
 - B. Preparation: mental and physical
 - C. General requirements of resource management agencies
- II. Regulation of body temperatures
 - A. Heat transfer mechanisms
 - B. Heat production
 - C. Insulations principles and materials
 - D. The layering system
- III. Cold emergencies
 - A. Hypothermia: symptoms, treatment
 - B. Frostbite: symptoms, treatment
 - C. Prevention
- IV. Water and heat emergencies
 - A. Bodily requirements for hydration
 - B. Dehydration and heat exhaustion
 - C. Hyperthermia: symptoms, treatment
 - D. Water: sources and purification
- V. Altitude
 - A. Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS)
 - B. High Altitude Pulmonary Edema (HAPE)
 - C. High Altitude Cerebral Edema (HACE)
 - D. Acclimatization and prevention
- VI. Environmental considerations
 - A. Minimal impact philosophy
 - B. Ecosystems and environment sensitivity
 - C. Animals and human visitors
 - D. Minimum impact camping and travel techniques
- VII. Environmental hazards
 - A. Weather
 - B. Snakes and reptiles
 - C. Mammals
 - D. Ticks, scorpions, spiders
 - E. Fires

- VIII. Backcountry travel techniques
 - A. Navigation with map and compass
 - B. Hiking techniques: conserving energy
 - C. Crossing water hazards
 - D. Safety
- IX. Food in the Backcountry
 - A. Nutritional and caloric requirements
 - B. Menu suggestions: freeze dried/ dehydrated
 - C. Cooking techniques
 - D. Preparation, packaging and storage
- X. Basic first aid
 - A. Safety: judgement
 - B. True emergencies: bleeding & breathing
- XI. Short term survival
 - A. Priorities
 - B. Shelters
 - C. Water & Food
- XII. Introduction to caving
 - a. History of cave exploration
 - b. History of caving in N. America
 - c. Spleotherms and cave formation
 - d. Scientific and recreational values
- XIII. Cave formation and morphology
 - a. limestone cave development
 - b. limestone cave features
 - c. Glacial Caves
 - d. Lava tubes
 - e. Miscellaneous cave types
- XIV. Specialized equipment
 - a. Helmets
 - b. Lighting
 - c. Clothing
 - d. Technical gear
- XV. Horizontal exploration techniques
 - a. Caving maps
 - b. Climbing techniques
- XVI. Vertical exploration techniques
 - a. Rappelling
 - b. Ascending techniques
 - c. Traverses
- XVII. Safety issues
 - a. Lightning
 - b. "bad air" dangers
 - c. Immersion hypothermia
 - d. First aid and rescue operations

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

Students will receive lecture material including power points, participate in class discussions, take exams and have direct experience in development of caving skill competencies on campus and on a field trip.

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION:

Departmental Student Learning Outcome #1:

“Students will demonstrate critical thinking including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in the fields of play, leisure, recreation, parks, and/or tourism through a variety of pedagogies.”

Assessment Tools:

- a. Embedded questions on final written exam
- b. Ability competency testing per certification standards where applicable
- c. Students are evaluated on mastery of knowledge, basic skills, and application of critical thinking skills by demonstrating good judgment.

Evaluation Tools:

- a. Examination: 50% (general topics and cave topics)
- b. Active Participation and Experiential Learning: 50%

Text: Reading Packet.

Class Field Trip: The specific weekend for the class trip is found on the first page of this syllabus. Because the trip encompasses over 75% of the time in this class, attendance on this trip is **mandatory**. Make sure you are available from Friday morning to Sunday afternoon of the weekend corresponding to your trip. If you have a commitment during the weekend trip, you will have to drop the class. Unfortunately, there is no way around this. **BE AWARE OF WHICH SECTION YOU HAVE REGISTERED FOR, AND MAKE SURE THAT WEEKEND FITS YOUR SCHEDULE!**

OTHER FIELD CLASS INFORMATION AND MISC CLASS POLICIES:

A. Grading Criteria

1. The CSUN criteria for grading will be strictly followed including that an “A” represents “Outstanding” work and “an innovative application of the subject matter.” Refer to CSUN catalogue for additional details. Because class participation is such a significant part of the grade, attendance will be taken and failure to attend all class sessions will compromise your grade. Failure to attend the weekend field class will result in a failing grade for the class.
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.” Credit/No Credit grading option must be requested on SOLAR by the appropriate deadline.

B. Students may not attend the field trip without review of the field trip information by the instructor prior to the field class. You must attend that class session. In addition to being adequately prepared for the environmental demands of the field setting, students are required to complete a release form and insurance verification form PRIOR to the field class session. We will complete these in class on April 6.

C. In order to create a safe, welcoming, and productive learning environment, students are expected to respect each other, the facilities and equipments. Abusive, violent, disrespectful or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students are referred to the policies and regulations section of the University Catalog for university policies and code of conduct information.

D. Communication: Students are expected to have access to their CSUN email account and the web learning platform for the class. The instructor will send class announcement to students via students' official CSUN emails. If you have a primary email that is not your CSUN account, please have your CSUN email forwarded to your primary email.

E. Late Assignment: Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of 15% off per day. Assignments submitted more than three days late will not be accepted without prior arrangement with the instructor. No assignments will be accepted after the last official day of class.

F. Make-up Work: Make-up assignments or exams will be given only when students meet the following conditions:

a. Conditions creating a delay in submissions include: hospitalization, death in the family, or other emergencies. Verification must be documented via email. Acceptable documentation includes a letter from a physician, a newspaper obituary, or a memorial service program.

Please contact the instructor if you have any questions regarding your eligibility to delay an assignment with no penalty.

G. Academic Honesty: According to the University's policy on academic honesty, no form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Any student found cheating, plagiarizing a written assignment, or committing any other infraction against CSUN's policy will either receive a failing grade for the assignment or the course. Student behavior will be reported to the university and the report may request further disciplinary action. Please refer to www.csun.edu/a&r/soc/studentconduct.html for additional information.

H. Students are encouraged to be proactive and seek out the instructor as soon as they have any concerns about the class or their performance. The end of the semester is too late to take action to bring up a grade.

I. All assignments must be typed, double spaced, 12-point font, 1 inch margins and should follow the American Psychological Association (APA) style (6th ed.).

J. Students are advised to consult with campus services to receive assistance if they have concerns regarding skills in areas such as writing or studying or computer skills or have unique needs.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES). In keeping with the University's policy, reasonable accommodation is provided for students with disabilities that might affect their course participation or assignment completion. Any student with disabilities should contact DRES at 818-677-2684 or dres@csun.edu. DRES is located in Bayramian Hall room 110 (BH 110). Please visit www.csun.edu/dres/index.php for additional information and/or assistance. The National Center on Deafness (NCOD) is located on Bertrand Street in Jeanne Chisholm Hall and can be reached at (818) 677-2611. You are not required to disclose your disability to me in order to receive accommodation during this course.

Learning Resource Center (LRC) and Writing Center. The LRC is committed to helping students become better writers, critical thinkers, and communicators by providing face-to-face and electronic consultation, tutorials, reference manuals, and links to Web writing resources. As part of the LRC, the Writing Center staff is available to help students during the conception, research, drafting, or revision stages of a paper. Students may visit the Writing Center in Bayramian Hall room 408 (BH 408) or call 818-677-2033 to make an appointment. Walk-ins are available on a limited basis. For additional information and/or assistance, please visit www.csun.edu/lrc.

University Counseling Services (UCS). Students sometimes experience significant confusion and distress when trying to manage school, work, relationships, and family responsibilities. UCS provides free and confidential consultations to help students deal with academic stress, relationship problems, family/roommate conflicts, personal growth, crisis events (e.g., rape, divorce, assault) and other mental health issues (e.g., anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation). Students may visit UCS in Bayramian Hall room 520 (BH 520) or call 818-677-2366 (V), 818-677-7834 (TTY) for an appointment. UCS is located on the web at www.csun.edu/counseling.C. 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. The consequence for use of alcohol or illegal drugs in a field class is a failing grade for the class.

K. Field Trip Advanced Information about Equipment and Student Costs

1. More detailed information will be provided during the class to indicate what to bring, maps, and so forth for the required field class. We will go over the trip in detail at the April 6th class.

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 should bring proof of insurance coverage to the pre-field class meeting (April 6th) as well as vehicle plate numbers. Students can download the form provided on-line and bring that form to the pre-field class meeting.

Students must meet the instructor at the designated field site location identified in the pre-trip information. 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. This is particularly important for this class as we meet at a locked gate in an area with no cell phone reception. If you are late, the gate will be locked when you arrive.

Note that there is road construction in the parks that can delay your trip to Crystal Cave.

Detailed explanation of any personal gear necessary for the field experience will be reviewed in class and any university issued gear will be provided. Common personal gear for the field class could include:

Rain Gear/ Shoes/ Food/ Water Bottles

Clothes:

Loose-fitting & flexible pants and shirts (wind pants and wind breaker)

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

Sunscreen/ Sun glasses

Flashlights and/or headlamps (3 light sources)

Knee pads

2. Expenses the student can expect:

a. Gas cost will vary depending on vehicle and current prices. Round trip travel to the field site may be 280 miles. Costs will be reduced if shared with car pool.

b. Campsite fees and entrance fees = will be \$20 per car for the weekend and if you do not ride share that becomes an individual cost.

c. Food = students provide their own food for field trips so cost varies according to your taste.

d. Equipment rentals = (\$5.00 cleaning fee). CSUN can provide backpack, sleeping bag and ensolite pad through AS Outdoors rental shop.

e. Students may choose to provide their own backpack, sleeping bag, and other assorted camping gear (no stoves or technical safety gear) though there is no obligation to provide these as CSUN can provide those for you.

The Syllabus: Time has been spent writing this syllabus to include essential class information. Please read it rather than sending an email asking questions that are easily answered in this document. Also check for other key documents posted at the class website. Then if you have questions please ask the instructor in class and/or send an email.

Updated: