

RTM 151B Rock Climbing and Mountaineering (2 units)

Department of Recreation and Tourism Management
California State University Northridge

Spring 2008
Redwood Hall 153

Delayed start: First class 9:00-11:45 on Saturday March 29 for orientation to on-line lectures.

Special pre-field class meeting on April 22 at 7:00 pm (Redwood #153).

The three day field class meeting in the Sierra or high desert on April 25-27, 2008 (all day)

INSTRUCTOR: Al Wright, Ph.D.
Office: Redwood Hall – Room 267
Office Hours: Consult instructor website

Questions: alan.wright@csun.edu
Phone: 818-677-7601
Website: www.csun.edu/~vcrec004 or
www.alanwright.info

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Basic elements of rock-climbing, mountaineering and alpine travel will be examined, including climbing ethics, fitness and the physiological effects of environmental stress and work at high altitudes. Emphasis will be on safety, proper use of equipment, climbing technique and minimizing impacts on the natural environment. Arranged field trips are 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:

1. Have an increased understanding of and appreciation for the natural environment and synthesize this knowledge with individual philosophy to put minimum impact into practice
2. Develop the basic skills and ethics required for safe mountaineering and rock climbing
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the equipment necessary for safety and comfort in various climbing activities
4. Analyze the relevant factors in creating a safe and beneficial climbing trip and carry out a successful trip on their own
5. Identify development of their own self-confidence and self-awareness in conjunction with understanding of the needs of a group

COURSE CONTENT:

- I. Overview of Mountaineering
 - a. Historical and cultural perspectives
 - b. Climbing types and classifications

- c. Signals and communication
 - d. Ethics: climbers and the environment
- II. Mountaineering Equipment
 - a. Clothing and footwear
 - b. Rope and webbing
 - c. Hardware: carabineers, chocks, etc.
 - d. Safety equipment: helmet, harness, etc.
- III. Beginning Rock Climbing Techniques
 - a. Bouldering safety: spotting
 - b. Proper use of hands and feet
 - c. Role of balance and friction
 - d. Three point rule
 - e. Down climbing
- IV. Introduction to Rope Handling
 - a. Rope: types, selection, care
 - b. Knots: climbing, anchoring
 - c. Top-rope belay techniques
- V. Specialized Rock Climbing Techniques
 - a. Mantles and liebacks
 - b. Jam cracks and chimneys
 - c. Rappelling (assisted)
- VI. Field Exam
 - a. Knots demonstrated
 - b. Belaying demonstrated
 - c. Lowering Climber demonstrated
 - d. Rappelling demonstrated (un-assisted)

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

1. Methodology: Lectures and experiential laboratory sessions will enable students to develop the skill competencies necessary for a safe outcome in rock climbing and mountaineering. Students will receive lecture material, participate in class discussions, take exams and have direct experience in development of climbing skill competencies.

2. Schedule of Instruction: The class meets for 30 hours of instruction as a 2 unit class. The course is run in a non-traditional intensive format to maximize learning through experiential education methods. The class begins with face to face orientation and introductory lectures, followed by several on-line lectures (virtual class meetings), then there is a mandatory pre-field class meeting on campus, and finally the three day experiential class in a wilderness setting.

Specifics for Spring 2008. –

First class meeting in Redwood Hall 153, 9:00-11:45 Saturday March 29 for lecture and orientation.

The class then moves to on-line class meetings between 3/29 and 4/25-27/08.

Special pre-field class meeting on April 22 from 7:00-8:30 pm (Redwood #153).

The three day field class meeting in the Sierra or high desert on April 25-27, 2008 (all day)

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. Advanced climbing technique and performance is not part of the evaluation process.

Evaluation Tools:

- a. Examination: 50%
- b. Active Participation: 50%

Text: Mountaineering: Freedom of the hills. (2003). 7th edition. Seattle: The Mountaineers.

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 field class session.

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.

D. Field Trip Advanced Information about Equipment and Student Costs

More detailed information will be provided during the class to indicate what to bring, maps, and so forth for the required field class. This information is preliminary and general in nature.

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.** Students can download the form provided on-line at the class website 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.

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

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

Sunscreen

Sun glasses

E. 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 = could be \$4 per student depending on the final field class location.
- c. Food = students provide their own food for field trips so cost varies according to your taste.
- d. Equipment rentals = None, CSUN can provide all essential trip gear. Students may choose to rent climbing shoes from a local climbing store.
- e. Students may choose to provide their own backpack, sleeping bag, and other assorted camping gear though there is no obligation to provide these as CSUN can provide those for you.

The Syllabus: This syllabus contains most 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.

Updated November 21, 2007