

LSRC 351 PRACTICES OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Department of Recreation and Tourism Management
California State University Northridge

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A study of outdoor education philosophy and methods as applied to the outdoor educator. The course will include the history, development, and basic principles of outdoor/ environmental education but will emphasize program models and strategies for teaching, interpreting, and program planning for/in outdoor environments.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. The student will comprehend the historical development of the outdoor education field and the current delivery systems of outdoor education to the general public.
2. The student will practice the development of a natural history program for a community group.
3. The student will comprehend adventure education models for at risk youth, team development, leadership development, and environmental action.
4. The student will identify resources on adventure based learning activities and natural history learning experiences.
5. The student will develop additional skills in instruction and group facilitation when working with groups.
6. The students will observe other practitioners demonstrating the art of interpretation and leadership for/in the outdoors environment.
7. The student will understand professional management issues in outdoor education such as accreditation, certification, risk management, career paths, and others.

**COURSE CONTENT:
SCHEDULE:**

WEEK	SUBJECT
1	Class introduction/ Review of history of outdoor education
2	Facilitation skills in learning groups
3	Field trip observations of nature center program and outdoor schools.
4	Review of environmental knowledge base
5	Design of nature interpretation programs
6	Learning theories and instructional skills
7	In class presentations of research reports
8	Outdoor education today/ issues and trends Exam I
9	Natural history program plans due
10	Adventure education models
11	Youth camping program models
12	Advanced coaching techniques for teams
13	Management issues in outdoor education programs
14	Management issue in outdoor education programs
15	Final examination review

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

The class will combine readings, lectures and experiential activities designed to develop the knowledge and skill competencies necessary for safe and effective delivery of nature interpretation programs and adventure education programs.

METHODS OF EVALUATION:

Exams	25%
Experiential Project in Nature Interpretation. . . .	30%
Experiential Project in Adventure Learning	25%
Field Observations	10%
Story Telling Project	10%

1. Project Uno: Nature Interpretation Term Project (200 pts)

This project is designed to give you a hands-on experience in nature, historical, or cultural interpretation from start to finish. The student begins with subject research and finish with a field presentation to an audience. Please follow the guidelines below.

- a). The student will first research a narrowly focused (e.g. one animal, one process, one group, or historical event), locally relevant, 'interpretable' (can be shown, felt) topic. You should talk to me about your idea soon because the topic is due the third week of class.
- b). Your research may include interviews of local experts but must also include work in the library, especially recent journal articles (at least 4). Your goal should be to "get to know" your subject and its role/connection with the environment. Write a **1200-1750 word paper** (5-7 pages) and **present the results orally** (5-8 minutes) in class starting on the seventh week of class.
- c). Next, this research will be turned into an interpretation program, targeted to a specific population and implement your program at a local setting. This will include:
 - a. choosing and visiting your site
 - b. preparing a 2-3 page **program plan** complete with individual objectives, activities, group organization, time line, safety and environmental concerns.
 - c. program implementation (arranged at site/ video)
 - d. program evaluation (1-2 pp typed) (12/3)
- d). Evaluation points will be awarded for each step of the project as outlined below.
 - a. Final draft of paper70 p.s.
 - b. Oral presentation in class (CR/NC). . 20 p.s.
 - c. Program plan submitted. . . . 40 p.s.
 - d. Program implemented (CR/NC) 40 p.s.
 - e. Program evaluation 30 p.s.

2. Project Two - In Class Adventure Learning Activity (100 p.s.)

The goal of this assignment is to introduce your fellow classmates to action-oriented outdoor education methods and practice your small group teaching skills. Follow the guidelines outlined below.

The student will sign-up to lead two in-class sessions focusing on adventure games & initiatives. Session one will consist of five quick intros of a game or initiative and will be done in 20 minutes. The goal is to allow you to focus on briefing skills and to teach all of us some new events for our bag of tricks. A worksheet/reference card will be submitted for session one which identifies where this event can be located for future reference by fellow students.

The second session will be 20 minutes and will usually consist of one event with a brief intro and your focus will be on intervention and debriefing skills the second session will be videotaped and you will write a 1-2 page evaluation of your facilitator skills. You must also be willing to serve as a collaborator on someone else's tape and provide some handwritten and oral feedback to your colleague about their facilitation skills.

The adventure activity leadership project will be worth 100 points.

Session one: 5 events/ 20 minutes - 30 points

Session two: 1 or 2 events / 20 minutes - 30 points

Evaluation paper: 1-2 pages - 30 points

Collaborator: - 10 points

3. Project III - Observations Journal (50 p.s.)

You will keep a journal during the semester and include the following learning observation as a minimum. Some of these experiences may be part of field observations scheduled during class times.

- a. Museum observation (10 p.s.)
- b. Nature visitor center observation (15 p.s.)
- c. Outdoor education school observation (15 p.s.)
- d. Adventure program observation (10 pts.)

4. Classroom Quizzes (200 p.s.)

During the semester there will be two recall oriented exercises to review your memory of class lectures and reading assignments.

5. Storytelling (50 points)

During the course of the semester (beginning with week four) we will develop our communication skills by working on our storytelling skills. You will select a story with a historical, natural, ethical/moral base, show the story to the professor, memorize the story, and present the story to your classmates.

TEXTS