



## **Department of Outdoor Education**

### **Policy & Procedures Manual**

2011



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## **Section One: Outdoor Education at Georgia College**

### **History**

There have been many important faces and changes over the decades as Georgia College has taken its place as a leader in the field of outdoor education. This Policy and Procedures Manual (PPM), together with the Challenge Course Facilitator Handbook (FH), and all their revised editions, contains benchmarks that have been, in part, necessitated by standards set forth by The Association for Experiential Education Accreditation Council. Accreditation is both a privilege and a responsibility. It carries with it a commitment to excellence that demands quality and accountability. It offers the distinction of being a member of a group of organizations committed to excellence and the willingness to stand up to the test of peer review. This brief historical account reflects the people and events that have contributed to where we are today.

During the 1960s and 70s, Floyd Anderson, the former Chair of the Department of Health, Physical Education & Recreation, conducted summer outdoor education workshops at Lake Laurel Lodge. These workshops provided the professional and academic foundation for the outdoor education programs and services at GC today.

In 1985, Dr. Ed Speir, then President of Georgia College, participated with twelve faculty and staff, representing academic affairs, student services, and business services areas, in a five day course at North Carolina Outward Bound. One of the outcomes of this adventure was the commitment to deliver more wellness and outdoor education opportunities to Georgia College students, faculty, staff and the surrounding community. A Task Group on Wellness and Environmental Education Projects and Programs was established and, under the direction of Dr. Jim Wolfgang (then Chair of the Department of Health & Physical Education and Recreation) outdoor education wellness courses became a reality. A Wellness Committee became campus wide in 1985 and in 1987 an Adventure Subcommittee was formed, including Floyd Anderson, John Lawler, Mary Jane Phillips, Ken Sexton and Lee Gillis (chair), to oversee these courses.

During this period a Ropes Course Sub-committee was formed and a group, including Mary Jane Phillips, Janet Buckworth, Ed Speir, Arnie Wade, Eve Puckett, Ken Sexton and Lee Gillis (chair), built several low

course elements. They investigated the potential for using ropes courses in the university setting and as a result Karl Rohnke of Project Adventure Inc. came to Georgia College to complete a site evaluation in preparation for building a high ropes course. In 1988 the first high ropes course was built in Nesbitt Woods behind Centennial Center.

Exciting changes were taking place on the academic side as well. Harriett Whipple and Kathryn Powell, in the late 1980's, envisioned an academic degree with a major in outdoor education. In the early 1990's, Dr. Mike Wisnyai was hired to teach outdoor education wellness courses and to establish a relationship with the local school system to nurture outdoor education community programming. When, in 1992, Dr. Wisnyai left Georgia College, Jim Wall was hired to teach outdoor skill courses, develop an outdoor club, and to cooperate with Drs. Whipple and Powell to design and implement a Bachelor of General Studies major in Outdoor Education. This undergraduate degree became a reality in 1995. Two important developments are evident today as a result of this period of growth in outdoor education at Georgia College.

First, the outdoor club grew to become the Outdoor Education Center at Georgia College (OEC). In 1997, the Outdoor Education Center, along with Lake Laurel and the Power Point Recreation Area, became part of the Division of Continuing Education & Public Services. Dana Turner was hired in 1998 as the first Director of Campus Recreation and Outdoor Education. When Dana left to take a job in New Zealand, Todd Weatherly, a graduate student in the Outdoor Education Administration program became Acting Director of the OEC for most of the 1998-99 academic year. Beth Hohnadel was hired in March 1999 as the Director of the Outdoor Education Center and, through the dedication of Dr. Harriett Whipple and others, Lake Laurel has continued to develop as an Outdoor Education Center of excellence.

Secondly, two internationally recognized graduate programs were developed at Georgia College. In the spring of 1992, Jim Wall, Dr. Ed Speir, and Dr. Lee Gillis attended the Southeast Regional Conference of the Association for Experiential Education. A pivotal conversation with Dr. Mike Gass from the University of New Hampshire spurred interest in graduate programs. The three returned to lay the foundations for the M.S. in Psychology, with emphasis in Adventure Therapy and the M.Ed. in Health and Physical Education, with emphasis in Outdoor Education Administration. Due to changes in licensure and the public health

system, the Masters in Psychology, Adventure Therapy Track ended its short life in 1997. Jim Wall remained as the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs from 1994 to 1997.

In 1996, Dr. Jude Hirsch teamed with Jim Wall to teach outdoor education in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation (HPER). Dr. Hirsch became the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs in 1997. During the 1996-97 academic year, HPER put forth a proposal to offer a B.S. in Outdoor Education. The Board of Regents approved the degree and several new courses at the undergraduate level were developed. In 1996, HPER moved from the School of Education to the School of Health Sciences (now College of Health Sciences) where it enjoys an association with the School of Nursing and the Department of Music Therapy.

A more recent development in outdoor education academic programs is the requirement for students in the B.S. to complete a cognate area of specialization in environmental education, management, health and physical education, or therapeutic use of adventure. Undergraduate students are required to do a minor or second major in a related subject like biology, marketing, physical education, or psychology.

The 1999-2000 academic years brought a number of changes for GC and the outdoor education programs. Jim Wall left GC to focus on his business, Cornerstone Designs and Dr. Jimmy Griffin began his tenure at GC in the fall of 2000 as an Assistant Professor of Outdoor Education. The termination of the lease that GC maintained with Georgia Power for use of Power Point Recreation Area was announced. However, an agreement was secured for the use of Rocky Creek Park (Georgia Power) during its off-season, providing excellent lake access and support facilities for classes and related programs.

The development of student housing in the Nesbitt Woods between Centennial Center and the Smith House began a series of location changes for outdoor education programs and the OEC. A portion of the West Campus Athletic Complex was developed for outdoor education offices, equipment storage facilities, a classroom, and a new challenge course adjacent to the facility was constructed. In addition, as of September 2000 the OEC was transferred back to the Department of Health, Physical Education & Recreation. In the spring of 2002, construction of dormitories at West Campus displaced the challenge

course and much of the academic outdoor teaching space resulting in a new environmental education area, challenge course equipment management facilities, and challenge course (Project Adventure, Inc.) being built near the southwestern edge of West Campus. When Dr. Jimmy Griffin left GC, Dr. Jeff Turner, a graduate of the M.Ed. program, was hired to support academic programs.

In the spring of 2005, continued growth at West Campus necessitated the move of outdoor education classes to a temporary location in Lake Laurel Lodge and plans were approved to move the OEC and related facilities to the cabin at Lake Laurel Campus. In November of 2005, the OEC moved to its new home and in January 2006 the new challenge course (Experiential Resources Inc.) and related facilities were completed. The Yurt, originally located at Lake Laurel Campus, has followed the program to its various relocations and is now permanently located back at Lake Laurel Campus adjacent to the challenge course.

Beginning in the 2007-08 academic year, significant changes in program leadership were made each year. In 2007-08, Dr. Hirsch served as the interim co-chair for the Department of Kinesiology (previously HPER) and Dr. Turner served as the interim Director of the OEC. The following year (2008-09), Dr. Hirsch became the Chair of the Department of Kinesiology, Dr. Turner became the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs, and Dr. Will Hobbs joined the outdoor education faculty.

In spring 2009 a 5-year business plan for the Outdoor Education Center was submitted to Dr. Dorothy Leland, President of Georgia College & State University. It was approved and in the fall of 2009, Liz Speelman was hired as the first fulltime director of the new Outdoor Center at Georgia College (OC). The Venture Out student club, previously administered by Student Activities, moved to the OC resulting in the consolidation of outdoor academic and non-academic programs with administrative oversight by the Department of Kinesiology.

During the summer of 2010, Dean Gangstead of the College of Health Sciences provided the administrative support to allow outdoor education programs at Georgia College to leave the Department of Kinesiology and form the new Department of Outdoor Education. This new department is thought to be the only existing Department of Outdoor Education at a public university in the United States.

Outdoor education programs at Georgia College are recognized within the institution and the profession for their excellence. In 2006, the Association for Experiential Education recognized GC Outdoor Education programs as the Organizational Member of the Year for its five-year record in excellent programming, contribution to the field, and exemplary ethical standards. In 2007, outdoor education programs were awarded the GC Program of Excellence Award and in 2008 outdoor education academic programs and the Outdoor Education Center were selected to represent the College of Health Sciences as a GC Program of Distinction.

Outdoor education academic programs and the Outdoor Center at Georgia College continue to be accredited by the Association for Experiential Education; one of only two jointly accredited programs in the United States. Georgia College outdoor education programs are nationally recognized for their professional leadership and programming and creating exemplary opportunities for professional education and service learning that benefits students, faculty, and a wide range of client groups.

## **Department Mission**

The mission of the Department of Outdoor Education is to provide a learning community of faculty, staff, and students dedicated to the development of professional outdoor educators who are grounded in the liberal arts tradition at [Georgia College & State University](http://gcsu.edu)<sup>1</sup>. The Department is committed to exemplary teaching, scholarship, service, and practice that promotes holistic wellness, fosters stewardship of natural environments, and creates opportunities for positive change. We ascribe to the principles of experiential education set forth by [The Association for Experiential Education](http://www.aee.org)<sup>2</sup> and believe that professionalism is central to the pursuit of excellence.

## **Core Values**

### **Wellness**

We believe in holistic wellness that includes health, effectiveness, and sustainability, and that these aspects of wellness are interdependent. We believe in a systems view of wellness in which our graduates will serve as agents of change that are able to improve the overall wellness of human and non-human individuals and communities.

### **Natural Environments**

We believe that natural environments are powerful teachers and that through interactions with these environments people are changed in ways that are not possible when education is limited to traditional classroom settings. We believe that natural environments provide learning opportunities through direct experience with natural consequences that encourage connectedness and stewardship of the non-human world.

### **Adventure**

We believe that learning should be an adventure that provides opportunities for students to challenge themselves to take intellectual, social, emotional, and physical risks that enhance personal and professional growth. We believe that within the context of learning

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1 <http://gcsu.edu/about/index.htm> (retrieved August 10, 2010).

2 <http://www.aee.org/about/whatIsEE> (retrieved August 10, 2010).

communities of peers, faculty, and staff, our students will discover their potential to be successful professional outdoor educators.

### **Experiential Education**

We ascribe to the principles of experiential education set forth by the Association for Experiential Education. We believe in the intentional use of direct experience supported by reflection, critical analysis and synthesis. We believe that our students should be actively engaged throughout the learning process in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, and constructing meaning.

### **Leadership**

We believe that leadership in outdoor education must be grounded in a transformational perspective that is primarily focused on envisioning and creating opportunities for positive change. We believe that leadership demands a high level of moral fitness that includes authentic individuals operating out of genuine care for others. We believe that positive change is possible through the creation of an atmosphere of trust in which followers feel safe and supported as they engage in challenging experiences.

### **Professionalism**

We believe that professionalism is an ethical responsibility and that the pursuit of excellence is central to personal and professional growth. We believe that professionalism requires taking pride in a job well done and personal accountability for actions and responsibilities. We believe that professionalism requires maintaining and modeling a positive attitude in the best of circumstances and the most challenging of circumstances. We believe that professionalism is demonstrated by showing respect for self, others, and the environment and continuous engagement in creative and intellectually challenging opportunities for developing personal and professional competence.

### **Academic Program Mission**

Outdoor education academic programs at Georgia College develop professional outdoor educators committed to innovative and authentic leadership. Students learn through direct experience and meaningful relationships with other students, faculty, community members, and the natural and cultural settings in which outdoor educators practice. Our graduates create opportunities for positive change in individuals, communities, and society.

### **Outdoor Center at Georgia College Mission**

The Outdoor Center at Georgia College provides excellent technical training, outdoor recreation education, leadership training, and group development experiences. We serve outdoor education professionals, Georgia College faculty, staff, and students, and members of the surrounding community. We provide programs and services led by competent personnel in compliance with The Association for Experiential Education accreditation standards. The Outdoor Center at Georgia College seeks to enhance the mission of the state's public liberal arts university through safe<sup>3</sup>, environmentally sound, and effective programs and services.

### **Academic Programs and the Outdoor Center**

Outdoor education academic programs offered by the Department of Outdoor Education include the B.S. in Outdoor Education, the M.Ed. in Kinesiology: Outdoor Education Administration, and the minor in Outdoor Education. The OC offers services to GC alumni, faculty, staff, students, the surrounding community, and professional outdoor educators. Both work closely together to provide students with unique opportunities to gain professional experience with a variety of client groups and for the OC to provide excellent services to its clients. General administrative oversight of both is provided by the Chair of the

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<sup>3</sup> Outdoor activities by their nature involve inherent risk. Every effort is made to provide programs that respect emotional, social, intellectual, and physical safety. However, it is impossible to anticipate all factors that impact safety. Students acknowledge their understanding of and agreement to participate in potentially unsafe programs by signing appropriate risk management forms.

Department of Outdoor Education and specific administrative oversight is provided by the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs and the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College.

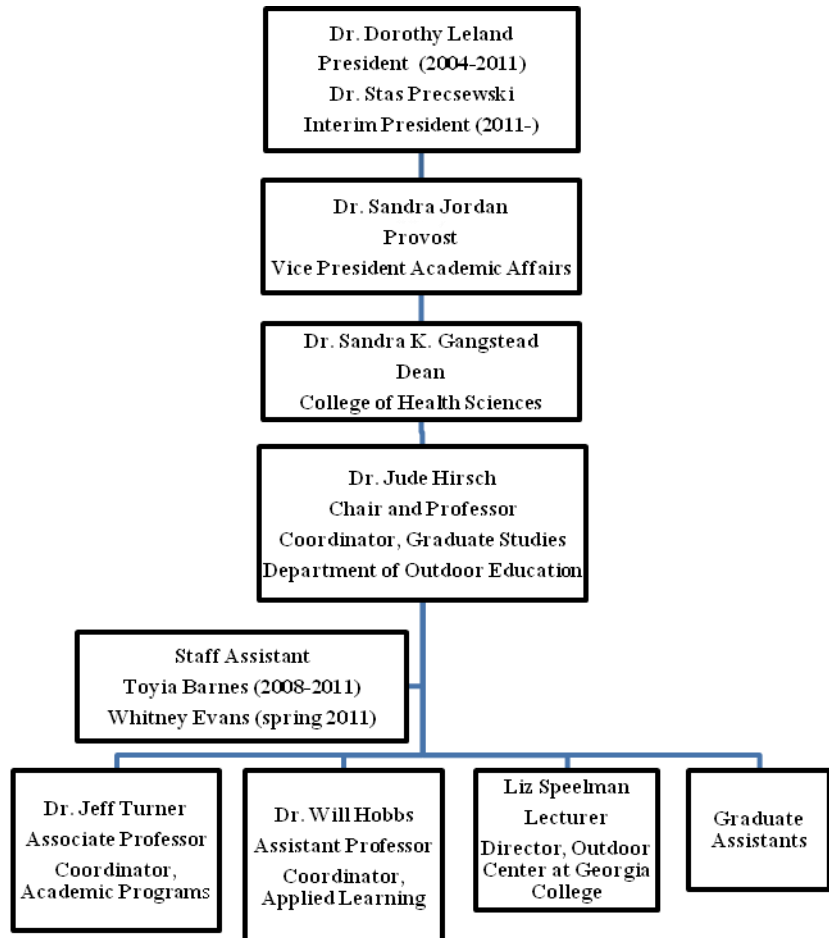
### **Accreditation**

Outdoor education academic programs and the Outdoor Center at Georgia College are accredited by The Association for Experiential Education (AEE). The AEE Accreditation Program<sup>4</sup> is the nation's first accreditation process focusing on adventure-based programs. AEE accreditation serves the public, the profession of experiential education, and the organization under review. Outdoor education programs at Georgia College & State University were first accredited in 1997 and received the AEE Organization of the Year Award in 2006 for program excellence, contribution to the field, and ethical practice.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.aee.org/accreditation/> (retrieved August 10, 2010).

# Organization Chart



## **Policy System**

Outdoor education academic classes teach knowledge and skills that may be applied to the broad range of settings in which graduates are employed. Outdoor Center at Georgia College (OC) programs use specific policy and procedures for selected activities to ensure consistency in program delivery. Handbooks, manuals, and course syllabi provide detailed information and may apply to academic programs or courses, OC programs and services, or administrative functions.

### **Department of Outdoor Education Policy and Procedures Manual**

The Department of Outdoor Education PPM applies to all activities, unless otherwise stated in a handbook or manual.

The PPM provides four types of information including:

1. **Definitions** are stated at the beginning of most sections or sub-sections. They provide common language for faculty, staff, and students to use when reading this manual and other related documents, in classes or training, and delivering programs to professional colleagues or clients.
2. **Policy** describes “what” facilitators will do. Policy is the least flexible expectation and uses words like *will*, *must*, or *shall*. Policy statements are organized using numbers.
3. **Procedures** describe “how” policy is typically implemented. Procedures provide flexibility by using words like *should*, *may*, or *includes, and is not limited to*. Adjustments to procedures are based on factors such as client group characteristics and readiness, contextual factors such as weather, and program or course outcomes. Procedures are organized using lower case letters and are normally as subsets of the policy statements to which they refer.
4. **Curriculum** is the highest level of detail and may include instructional content, strategies, or specific outcomes associated with implementing policy and procedures. Curriculum is organized using bullets and is normally a subset of the procedural statement to which it refers.

### **Facilitator Handbooks**

Facilitator handbooks clearly delineate policy and procedures that apply to OC programs and services. They normally provide more in-depth information about program design, delivery, and evaluation for specific activities. Facilitator handbooks are used in conjunction with the PPM.

### **Handbooks and Manuals**

Academic handbooks and manuals clearly delineate policy as procedures that apply to outdoor education academic programs, courses, or specific course experiences. They provide information about expectations for student performance, course logistics, and assignments. They support course syllabi and assignment descriptions. Academic handbooks and manuals are used in conjunction with the PPM and are consistent with Georgia College policy.

**Notes:**

## **Section Two: Personnel Administration**

### **Outdoor Education Faculty and Staff**

#### **Outdoor Education Staff**

Outdoor Education Staff (OE Staff) refers to faculty and outdoor education graduate assistants. The Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education or an approved designee provides oversight to OE Staff.

OE Staff is a sub-committee of the Outdoor Education Safety and Risk Management Committee (SRMC), that meets regularly, normally alternating weeks, to address matters related to the administration of outdoor education programs at Georgia College. Safety and risk management matters may be referred to other members of the SRMC for advisement, approval of proposed actions, or changes to policy and procedures.

#### **Outdoor Education Faculty**

Full-time faculty members will serve as teachers and student advisors in academic programs, supervise graduate assistants, develop and implement policy and procedures, maintain compliance with accreditation standards, serve the university and the profession, and engage in scholarly activity. Full-time faculty members may be asked by the Chair to serve in other roles as appropriate.

Faculty roles and responsibilities may extend beyond academic programs to the OC, the Department of Outdoor Education, the College of Health Sciences, or Georgia College.

Part-time faculty members teach assigned courses in academic programs as approved by the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education in consultation with the Coordinator of Academic Programs. Full-time faculty members may be asked by the Chair to serve in other roles as appropriate.

#### **Chair, Department of Outdoor Education**

The chair of the Department of Outdoor Education is responsible for providing administrative leadership for the department and for implementing the department's and college's goals with attention to the objectives for academic programs and service units in the department. The chair participates in the development of Georgia College policy and represents the department on Georgia College administrative teams. Responsibilities include oversight to strategic management; recruitment,

orientation and advisement of students, faculty, and staff; faculty and staff development and performance evaluation; program review and evaluation; course scheduling and teaching assignments; recommendations for promotion, tenure, and awards; curriculum and program development, assessment, review, and accreditation; and fiscal, equipment, and facility management.

**Coordinator, Outdoor Education Academic Programs**

One faculty member will serve as the Coordinator of Academic Programs. The Coordinator will provide administrative oversight and leadership to academic program functions including scheduling, academic assessment, advisement assessment, application processes, reporting, course budgeting, and academic equipment (in consultation with the Director of the OC). The Coordinator will collaborate with full time faculty to provide direction to academic curriculum review and revision and academic program compliance with AEE standards.

**Coordinator, Applied Learning**

One faculty member shall serve as the Coordinator of Applied Learning. The Coordinator will provide administrative oversight and leadership to academic program functions that include applied learning such as, but not limited to, internships, practica, and service learning. The Coordinator will develop and submit for approval of the Department, policy, procedures, and related documents for applied learning components in academic programs in compliance with GC policy. The Coordinator will collaborate with full-time faculty to provide direction to applied learning compliance with AEE standards.

**Director, Outdoor Center at Georgia College**

The Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College will provide administrative oversight and leadership to the OC including program development, marketing, personnel management, planning, and facilities and equipment management. The Director has faculty status and will also engage in academic program planning, delivery, and assessment as appropriate. The Director will collaborate with full-time faculty to provide direction to policy review and revision, as well as monitor and evaluate the OC Business Plan.

**Outdoor Education Graduate Assistants**

Graduate assistants are appointed by the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education in consultation with outdoor education faculty. Graduate assistants must be approved for regular admission to the graduate program.

Graduate assistants are Georgia College employees, paid directly or “in kind” to support academic programs and the OC in the Department of Outdoor Education. Job descriptions are revised and assigned annually based on program needs, competence, and past performance evaluation.

Graduate assistants are expected to work 20 hours per week and make up hours missed due to course requirements, conference attendance, or personal leave. Graduate assistants are supervised by full-time faculty members who assign duties and approve time sheets.

#### **Internship, Practica, and Directed Project Students**

Students may complete internships, practica, or directed projects in conjunction with the OC or the outdoor education academic program. In consultation with the Coordinator of Applied Learning, each student will complete a contract that lists assessable learning outcomes, specific work products and their overall percentage of the final grade, and the expected timeline for completion of each product. Contracts are approved by the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education, normally by the conclusion of the first week of classes to which the contract applies.

#### **Administrative Support Staff**

Administrative support in the Department of Outdoor Education may include administrative assistants and student workers funded by federal or state allocations. They support department-wide functions related to academic programs and the OC in functions such as equipment acquisition, maintenance of student files, marketing, fiscal management, and general reporting.

#### **Program Staff**

Program Staff refers to faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, alumni, and others who work for the OC or assist with an outdoor education academic courses. They may be paid or volunteer to work with internal or external client groups. They may assist with the delivery of components of academic programs such as class trips or in-class activities.

## **Hiring**

Individuals interested in working at the OC should contact the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College directly. A lead facilitator or a faculty member may also recommend new program staff.

### **Personnel File**

1. Personnel files will be established for all staff, volunteer or paid, who work for the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or assist with academic classes.
2. Personnel files will include completed Activity-Specific Skills Checklists, Policy and Procedures Review Form, Staff Medical Information Form, Assumption of Risk and Informed Consent Form(s), copies of current medical training certifications, and Personnel File Record.
3. Program staff will sign a Policy and Procedures Review Form acknowledging understanding of and agreement to implement current policy and procedures as represented in the PPM, handbooks, course manuals or course syllabi.
4. Program staff must complete paperwork required by GC Human Resources and comply with requirement for being paid through ADP electronic payroll vendor to work for the OC.

### **Program Staff Designations**

1. Program staff designations include lead facilitator, assistant facilitator, or technician.
2. Program staff may be designated at any level for multiple activities as noted in Sections 8-10 of this manual (i.e. lead facilitator for challenge course programs, assistant facilitator for rock climbing programs, and a technician for all other programs).
3. Program staff designations are recorded on the Personnel File Record.
4. Program staff are supervised by full time faculty or approved graduate assistants and may be responsible for program planning, delivery, evaluation and/or logistics.
5. Program staff are approved based on the successful completion of specific classes and/or professional qualifications and experience.
6. Program staff may seek promotion by contacting the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or by recommendation from a current lead facilitator or an OE Staff member.
7. Approval of a change in program staff designation is based on, but not limited to, the successful completion of and performance in specific classes, professional qualifications and experience, performance at staff training, facilitator peer evaluation, and feedback from lead facilitators and faculty members.
8. Program staff candidates for lead facilitator status will be required to complete the following actions.
  - a. Shadow a current lead facilitator and then be shadowed in the role of lead facilitator by an approved lead facilitator.
  - b. The lead facilitator approved to be shadowed will mentor the candidate in the roles and responsibilities of a lead facilitator throughout program design, implementation, and evaluation.
  - c. While being shadowed in the role of lead facilitator the candidate will serve as the lead facilitator while being observed by a designated lead facilitator.

### **Program Staff Qualifications**

1. Program staff qualifications are specific to a designated status and activity type.
2. The minimum requirements for Program Staff listed below apply to part-time, full-time, contract, and volunteer staff.
3. All Program staff are expected to demonstrate:
  - technical proficiency related to the conduct of program-relevant activities;
  - good judgment and decision making;
  - maturity, responsibility, and integrity;
  - safety consciousness;
  - professionalism;
  - teaching ability;
  - effective communication skills;
  - ability to create a positive program atmosphere for staff and participants;
  - organizational skills;
  - flexible leadership style;
  - appropriate facilitation skills;
  - group management skills;
  - servant leadership;
  - commitment to program excellence, professionalism; professional development;
  - commitment to participant-centered programming based on client goals and characteristics; and
  - knowledge of and ability to implement OE policy as stated in current manuals, handbooks, and related forms.

### **Lead Facilitator**

1. In addition to the general competencies listed above, lead facilitators will demonstrate:
  - management of program planning, delivery, evaluation, and logistics;
  - development of program specific emergency action planning;
  - development and support of program staff goals in collaboration with program team members;
  - cooperation with program staff and OE Staff to meet deadlines for program planning and the submission of relevant pre and post program documents;
  - current CPR, First Aid, and epinephrine administration certification;
  - current Wilderness First Responder for wilderness context programs;
  - completion of additional requirements as established by OE Staff on a per case basis.

### **Assistant Facilitator**

1. In addition to the general competencies listed above, assistant facilitators will demonstrate
  - attendance and appropriate participation in program planning, delivery, evaluation, and logistics;
  - knowledge of program-specific emergency action plans,
  - commitment to participant-centered programming based on client goals and characteristics;
  - development of personal and professional goals in collaboration with program team members
  - cooperation with Program Staff and OE Staff to meet deadlines for program planning and the submission of relevant pre and post program documents
  - current CPR, First Aid, and epinephrine administration certification
  - current Wilderness First Aid for wilderness context programs;
  - completion of additional requirements as established by OE Staff on a per case basis.

### **Technician**

1. Technicians will avoid direct responsibility for safety systems unless approved by the lead facilitator to do so and directly supervised by an assistant or lead facilitator.

2. In addition to the general competencies listed above, technicians will demonstrate attendance and appropriate participation in program planning, delivery, evaluation, and logistics, and knowledge of specific emergency action plans.

## **Personnel Responsibilities**

Personnel responsibilities apply to academic courses and Outdoor Center at Georgia College (OC) programs as appropriate for specific courses or programs. The Lead Facilitator Checklist applies to OC programs. The Master Trip Checklist applies to trips. Other forms apply as appropriate according to procedures outlined for each in Section Three: Program Administration. Detailed information may be included in facilitator handbooks, course manuals, or course syllabi.

### **Lead Facilitator or Course Instructor**

1. The lead facilitator or course instructor will provide oversight and supervision to program design, implementation, and evaluation; group management, site safety and security; and equipment and personnel management.
  - a. Obtain appropriate forms at <http://hercules.GC.edu/~jhirsch/resources/forms/index.html>.
  - b. Disseminate and collect participant, student, and personnel student forms as appropriate.
  - c. Inspect program site, facilities, and equipment.
  - d. Arrange for the completion of program evaluation or personnel assessments.
  - e. Return equipment and completed equipment reservations forms.
  - f. Submit the completed program file.
  - g. Submit completed program evaluation forms.
2. The lead facilitator or course instructor will communicate with participants, client sponsors, and outdoor education students.
  - a. Establish or review program goals.
  - b. Obtain relevant participant information.
  - c. Communicate program logistics such as transportation, facilities, equipment, clothing, accommodation, and food requirements.
3. The lead facilitator or course instructor will review participant forms with program staff as appropriate.
4. The lead facilitator or course instructor will ensure that program administration, personnel, student, and equipment management forms are complete and processed in a timely fashion.
5. The lead facilitator or course instructor will arrange program or course logistics.
6. The lead facilitator will communicate supervision and emergency action plans to program staff.

7. The lead facilitator or course instructor will interpret the American's with Disabilities Act taking into account reasonable accommodations that do not jeopardize program outcomes or the safety of program staff or participants (see Appendix 2).
8. The lead facilitator or course instructor will interpret Leave No Trace principles that enhance program goals and environmental and social awareness (see Appendix 1)
9. The lead facilitator will arrange and facilitate meeting(s) with program staff.

### **Program Staff**

1. Program staff will maintain complete and current academic and personnel files.
  - a. Submit copies of certifications, certificates of training, or refresher training cards that are not awarded or distributed by DOE faculty to the DOE office;
  - b. Update the personnel file checklist annually.
2. Program staff will maintain competency in knowledge, skills, and values associated with program activities for which they are designated.
3. Course instructors will submit completed competency checklists to the Director of the Outdoor Center at the conclusion of each semester in which relevant skills are tested for inclusion in the personnel file.
4. Program staff will represent the DOE in a professional manner.
5. Program staff will wear a staff T-shirt, unless otherwise negotiated, for non-wilderness context programs.
6. Program staff will plan and implement programs and services in compliance with relevant DOE policy documents.
7. Program staff will participate in program planning meetings to discuss:
  - client or course goals and objectives;
  - client group characteristics, needs, and potential expectations;
  - relevant policy and procedures;
  - relevant participant, program administration, and personnel forms;
  - rules, regulations, and access and legal statutes for the area in which the activity is conducted;
  - field supervisor or administrative backup logistics and contact information;
  - program and personnel evaluation/assessment forms including the OC client sponsor/participant program evaluation, student assessment of student assistants in academic classes, and student assessment of teaching in academic classes.
8. Program staff will develop program designs for approval by the appropriate administrator using the Program Design Template.
9. Program staff will consider the following content as potential components for program design:
  - activities, sites, and processing strategies that are appropriate for participant characteristics and program goals;

- environmental, facility, and equipment stewardship as a component of program design;
  - emotional, social, intellectual, and physical safety as a component of program design;
  - intended program sites and activity structures or centers related to design and delivery options;
  - program staff roles and responsibilities.
10. Program staff will support opportunities for facilitators to challenge themselves as appropriate by discussing:
    - learning goals and negotiate appropriate roles and responsibilities;
    - delivery and processing strategies that enhance client group or class goals.
  11. Program teams will meet prior to participant arrival to prepare facilities and equipment, and review program logistics as appropriate.
  12. Scout or inspect program areas, activity structures, or activity centers prior to program use to ensure that it is free and clear from obvious hazards such as water, loose rock, debris, and insects.
  13. Program teams will meet and greet participants on arrival to conduct the program briefing.
  14. Program teams will adjust program design and specific activity dimensions based on ongoing participant assessment, environmental factors, and program goals.
  15. Activity dimensions such as, but not limited to travel speed, level of processing, participant roles, and language may be adapted accordingly.
  16. Program design elements such as, but not limited to risk progression, specific activities, breaks, and event location may be adapted accordingly.
  17. Program staff will model and teach LNT principles as appropriate.
  18. Program staff will teach appropriate skill sequences, safety procedures, and equipment management based on program and instructional goals, client characteristics, and context and environmental factors.
    - a. Structured and semi-structured opportunities for practice and feedback may be offered.
    - b. Pre-trip instruction may be necessary based on program goals, participant readiness, and prior developed skills.

- c. Individual, small and larger groups may be used to introduce, practice, or apply technical skills or group or leadership competencies.
- d. Technical skill instruction may be supplemented by topics including, but not limited to:
  - gear and clothing selection, use, and management for expected terrain and weather;
  - environmental impact and interpretation;
  - health, hygiene, first aid and emergency procedures;
  - individual and group behavior and team effectiveness;
  - hydration and nutritional requirements.

## **Training and Professional Development**

1. New faculty members will attend a campus-wide new faculty orientation and are mentored by current, full-time outdoor education faculty members.
2. All graduate students who are assigned assistantships at Georgia College will complete a general graduate assistant orientation.
3. Outdoor education graduate assistants will be trained by faculty members and senior outdoor education graduate assistants in the roles and responsibilities specific to their responsibilities in outdoor education programs and services.
4. Program staff who are students in an outdoor education major will be trained in academic classes and successfully complete a series of general training modules and relevant Activity-Specific Skill Checklists.
  - a. General modules may be delivered in ODED 2110, 2120, 3010, 4500, 4520, and 4640 for undergraduate students and in ODED 6953, 6923, 6933, and KINS 6823 for graduate students.
  - b. Relevant Activity-Specific Skill Checklists are normally completed ODED 3020, 3110, and 3120 for undergraduate students and ODED 6906 for graduate students.
5. Additional training will be conducted by OE Staff on a needs or interest basis.
  - a. In some cases, current, relevant certificates of training may be used to satisfy all or part of required technical skills.
6. Program staff will attend annual staff training and/or refresher training.
  - a. Exceptions and arrangements for make-up dates are approved on a per case basis.
7. Additional required or elective training will be available to address changes in policy, industry/accreditation standards, curricula, technical skill competency criteria, program venues or equipment.
8. Open enrollment training consistent with the OC mission may be offered to enhance the activity-specific leadership capacity of the OC or in support outdoor education academic programs.

## **Ethical Guidelines**

1. Changes to these guidelines must be defensible based on current professional and accreditation standards; careful situational analysis; the best interest of participants, staff members, and the organizations served; and outdoor education policy.
2. Program staff will comply with the following ethical standards while representing the Department of Outdoor Education.
3. Program staff is expected to exhibit a high level of integrity in their practice.
  - a. Be fair, honest, and respectful during interactions with participants and other professionals.
  - b. Represent personal and professional competency honestly and provide programs within the boundaries of one's competence.
  - c. Stay current about information in the field and participate in ongoing professional efforts to maintain knowledge and skills.
  - d. Strive to be aware of personal belief systems, values, needs, limitations and the effect of their impact on participants and other professionals.
  - e. Accept responsibility for personal behavior and decisions.
  - f. Avoid situations where personal problems or conflicts may impair work performance or judgment.
4. Program staff is expected to be socially responsible for their actions and serve as effective advocates for the field of outdoor education.
  - a. Avoid misrepresenting the profession.
  - b. Avoid making statements that are false, misleading, or deceptive when describing services, products or fees.
  - c. Be aware of professional responsibilities to community and society.
  - d. Conduct programs in a manner that has minimal impact on the environment.
  - e. Obtain permission or permits to use land from private landowners or public land managers as required.
  - f. Comply with relevant local regulations or laws.
5. Program staff is expected to be responsible for the overall quality of their professional work.
  - a. Plan experiences with the intent that decisions made during and after the experience are in the best interest of the participant.
  - b. Offer a program only if it is reasonably clear that the participant will benefit from the experience.
  - c. Adapt programs to best meet the needs of participants.

- d. Be aware of and tactfully dealing with inappropriate behavior from others.
  - e. Clarify roles and responsibilities with other staff and holding self and others accountable for these responsibilities.
  - f. Comply with Department of Outdoor Education policy and procedures as written in the current version of the PPM and FH.
6. Program staff is expected to respect the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all people.
- a. Provide participants with appropriate information about the nature of programs, their rights, the actual risks associated with the activity, and the responsibilities of the provider.
  - b. Ensure that participants understand anything that they are signing.
  - c. Respect participants' rights to refuse or consent to services or activities.
  - d. Respect participants' rights to make decisions and understand natural consequences.
  - e. Respect participant's rights to decide the extent to which confidential material can be made public, except under extreme conditions such as when required by law, to prevent a clear and immediate danger to a person or persons, or if permission has previously been obtained in writing.
  - f. Strive to be sensitive to cultural and individual differences, including age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and socioeconomic status.
7. Program staff is expected to provide for the welfare of participants and other staff.
- a. Provide for the physical needs of participants (water, nutrition, clothing, shelter, rest, or other essential needs).
  - b. Avoid exploitation, misleading, or harassing participants or other staff.
  - c. Avoid dual relationships with participants that could impair professional judgment (e.g. sexual relationships, inappropriate physical contact, etc.).
  - d. Recommend that participants needing services beyond the scope of service provided by program staff should seek assistance from the appropriate student service at Georgia College (<http://GC.edu/studentlife/index.htm>) or an appropriate medical professional.

**Notes:**

## **Section Three: Program Administration**

### **Definitions**

**Trips** are programs in which participants travel to a location for one or more nights. A trip may be an OC program or a component of an academic class. A trip may take place in wilderness or non-wilderness contexts.

**Workshops** are programs for which overnight supervision is not required. A workshop may be an OC program or a component of academic class. A workshop may take place in wilderness or non-wilderness contexts.

**Internal contracted services** require contracts that are initiated by the DOE for services provided by the OC to internal or external client groups and are approved compliance with GC policy.

**External contracted services** require contracts that are initiated by the DOE for services provided by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor for OC programs or academic class components and are approved in compliance with GC policy.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Party Contracts** require contracts to be initiated by the service provider for OC programs or academic class components and are approved in compliance with GC policy.

### **External Contracted Services & 3rd Party Contracts**

1. The Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs will develop and administer external contracted service contracts or 3rd party vendor contracts according to Georgia College and DOE policy and industry and accreditation standards using approved contract formats.
  - a. Negotiations should include, but are not limited to:
    - GC faculty and staff and vendor roles and responsibilities,
    - costs,
    - cancellation or rescheduling policy,
    - minimum and maximum numbers,
    - equipment,
    - accommodation,
    - logistical support, and
    - risk management.
  - b. Vendors may be asked to provide evidence of:
    - compliance with accredited or industry standards;
    - ability to meet Department of Outdoor Education program goals as they pertain to the contract;
    - appropriate risk management planning;
    - appropriate staff qualifications;
    - appropriate levels of insurance as the primary coverage;
    - safety and accident records;
    - copies of necessary licenses and permits;
    - professional affiliations, accredited status, or certification; and
    - contact information for of references.
2. Vendor files will be located in the Department of Outdoor Education office.
  - a. Vendor files may include documentation gathered during the selection process, past contracts, assessment data, and other relevant documents such as, but not limited to policy manuals, assessment documents, accreditation verification, and logistics.
  - b. AEE accredited vendors may not be asked to submit documentation based on factors such as DOE experience with the vendor, past performance, or negotiated roles and responsibilities for GC personnel in the service delivery.

### **Program Cancellation**

1. OC contracts will state that either party may renegotiate terms no less than 10 days in advance of a program.
2. 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor contracts will include a cancellation policy.
3. Programs may be cancelled if conditions compromise participant or program staff safety or program effectiveness for reasons such as, but not limited to:
  - leader/participant ratios;
  - severe or multiple incidents or accidents;
  - hazardous environmental conditions;
  - equipment limitations;
  - unmanageable group dynamics; or
  - inability of the field supervisor system to operate effectively.
4. The lead facilitator or course instructor, normally in consultation with the field supervisor, client contact and/or 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor, is responsible for the decision to cancel a program.
5. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or field supervisor will notify the client sponsor, participants, students, vendors, OC staff, and others as appropriate in a timely manner.
6. Requests for changes to a contract will be approved by the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College.

## **Child Protection**

**Child** is a person less than 18 years of age.

**Child abuse** is harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare by a person responsible for the child's health or welfare, which occurs through non-accidental physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, or maltreatment.

**Child neglect** means harm to a child's health or welfare by a person responsible for the child's health or welfare which occurs through negligent treatment, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, and medical care.

**Department** is the appropriate government department.

1. In Georgia reporting will be handled through the local county Department of Family and Children's Services (<http://www.dfcs.dhr.georgia.gov/portal/site/DHS-DFCS/>).
  - a. Contact information for other states may be found as needed at <http://www.childabuse.com/report.htm>.
2. If a program staff member suspects signs of abuse or neglect or a child confides in a staff member about having been abused or neglected, the staff member will report the observations or the conversation to the lead facilitator or course instructor.
3. Program staff will NOT discuss suspected child abuse with participants or other program staff client or other staff members.
4. The lead facilitator or course instructor will report suspected signs of child about child abuse or neglect to the field supervisor or administrative backup for action in accordance with local and state law.
5. If a child is injured seek medical seek medical treatment at the nearest hospital in consultation with the field supervisor or administrative backup.

### **Staff/Participant Ratios**

1. A minimum of two (2) program staff will be assigned to a program.
2. A minimum of one qualified lead facilitator or course instructor will be assigned to a facilitation or course instruction team.
  - a. A Wilderness First Responder shall be present on all outdoor education programs that operate in wilderness contexts.
  - b. A first aid, epinephrine administration, and CPR-certified person shall be present at all outdoor education in non-wilderness contexts.
3. Participants designated as lead or assistant facilitators may be included in staff/participant ratios for academic courses and staff trainings with approval of the appropriate administrator.
4. Client agency staff may be included in a staff/participant ratio (i.e., teachers and therapists) provided they are able and willing to play a supervisory role in program delivery and are informed of their roles and responsibilities in advance of the program implementation.
5. Technicians will not be included in staff /participant ratios.
6. Changes to the staff/participant ratios stated below will be approved by the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College, the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs based on client needs, characteristics, or context.
  - a. In most cases, if a change to these guidelines is justifiable, the ratio will decrease.

**Staff/Participant Ratios**

<b>STAFF/PARTICIPANT RATIOS</b>	
<b>**Minimum of 2 staff for all programs.**</b>	
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Staff:Participant</i>
<b>Land</b>	
Camping	<b>1:10</b>
Caving	<b>1:6</b>
Hiking and Backpacking	<b>1:8</b>
Mountain Biking	<b>1:8</b>
Tree Climbing	<b>1:8</b>
Top Rope Climbing	<b>1:6</b>
Rappelling	<b>1:6</b>
Solo	<b>1:8</b>
<b>Water</b>	
Swimming	<b>1:10</b>
Flatwater Canoeing	<b>1:8</b>
Kayak Touring	<b>1:6</b>
Whitewater Canoeing, Kayaking, or Rafting	<b>1:6</b>
<b>Challenge Course</b>	
Group Development Activities	<b>1:12</b>
Low Challenge Course	<b>1:10</b>
High Challenge Course-dynamic elements	<b>1:8</b>
High Challenge Course-static elements	<b>1:8 (min 3 staff)</b>
Service Projects	<b>1:10</b>
Environmental Education	<b>1:12</b>

## Forms

Forms are used to:

- a. Document that the academic program and the OC are in compliance with accredited policy and procedures.
  - b. Support program planning and implementation by providing information about participants and program sponsors or organizations which assist in the planning process, checklists and guidelines for lead facilitator or course instructors to follow, and information to be communicated to participants.
  - c. Communicate administrative, equipment management, and logistical information to OE staff or other university departments.
  - d. Document completion of academic requirements.
1. Program staff will complete required forms for specific program or activities.
  2. Forms are completed and administered according to policy; reviewed by lead facilitators, course instructors, and/or administrators and submitted in a timely fashion.
    - a. Write in ink using professional, legible writing style.
    - b. Enter all required information;
    - c. Include last names.
    - d. Use N/A to indicate that a question or space does not apply.
    - e. Write and explanation for unknown or unavailable information in the appropriate place.
    - f. Add missing information in a timely fashion.
    - g. Initial changes or notes.
  3. Program staff and participants will update, initial, and date original, multi-use Medical Information forms prior to a trip.
  4. Original Medical Information forms will be copied and returned to the appropriate file.
  5. Copies of original Medical Information forms are placed in the field file and field supervisor file for the duration of a trip.
    - a. At the conclusion of a trip one set is placed in the program file by the lead facilitator or course instructor.
    - b. The second set of forms may be shredded or used for a subsequent back-to-back trip at the discretion of the lead facilitator or course instructor.
  6. Informed Consent/Assumption of Risk (IC/AR): Use of Personal Vehicles forms are not copied for field or program files.

7. OE staff will ensure that students and program staff have completed IC/AR: Use of Personal Vehicles.
8. Additional Georgia College forms or processes will be used for facility reservation, human resources, and other purposes.

#### **Personnel Forms**

1. Personnel forms are placed in program staff personnel files unless otherwise noted.
2. Activity-Specific Skills Checklists are completed by OE Staff in conjunction with OC training and/or academic courses.
3. Facilitator Feedback forms are completed by program staff after OC programs.
4. Facilitator Handbook Review forms are completed by OE Staff and program staff on a yearly basis.
5. Staff Informed Consent, Assumption of Risk and Insurance Certification & Waiver of Liability and Covenant Not To Sue forms are completed by program staff and placed in the personnel file.
6. Personnel File Record forms are completed and updated by program staff and the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College as appropriate. Copies of professional training certificates are placed in the personnel file. Expiration dates are recorded on the Personnel File Record form.
7. Policy and Procedure Review forms are completed by OE Staff and program staff on a yearly basis and placed in the personnel file.
8. Staff Medical Information forms are completed by program staff and OE Staff and updated as necessary. Copies are placed temporarily in program files for access during programs and transferred to personnel files at the completion of the program.

#### **Program Administration Forms**

1. Program Administration forms are placed in program files unless otherwise noted.
2. Accident/Incident Report forms (I/A) are completed by OE Staff or program staff and normally signed by the injured party. Original forms are submitted to the fulltime direct supervisor for review, presentation, and follow up by OE Staff. I/A actions are noted on the original form and submitted to the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education for review and submission to the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs for reporting in the AEE annual report.

3. Client Intake Assessment forms are completed by the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or designee and reviewed by the lead facilitator prior to program planning.
4. Lead Facilitator Checklist forms are completed by the lead facilitator and reviewed by the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or designee prior to program delivery.
5. Master Program Checklist forms are completed by the lead facilitator or course instructor for trips and reviewed by the field supervisor.
6. Pre-Trip Meeting Record forms are completed by lead facilitator or course instructor for trips and workshops that have an orientation meeting or where a payment is collected.
7. Program Design forms are completed by the lead facilitator for workshops.
8. Program Evaluation forms are completed by participants or sponsors in OC programs.
9. Program File Summary forms are completed by the field supervisor and lead facilitator or course instructor for review, completion, and placement in the program file or distribution to appropriate OE Staff.
10. Route Plan and Detail forms are completed by the lead facilitator or course instructor for trips.

#### **Participant Forms**

1. Participant forms are placed in program files unless otherwise noted.
2. Combined Medical Information, Informed Consent, Assumption of Risk and Insurance Certification & Waiver of Liability and Covenant Not To Sue forms are completed by the participant or legal guardian and reviewed and signed by lead facilitator or course instructor. This form is required for workshops unless individual medical information and IC/AR forms are used.
3. Informed Consent, Assumption of Risk and Insurance Certification & Waiver of Liability and Covenant Not To Sue forms are completed by the participant or legal guardian and reviewed and signed by lead facilitator or course instructor. This form is required for trips and may be used for multi-day workshops in place of the combined form. It is used with Medical Information form.
4. Medical Information forms are completed by the participant or legal guardian and reviewed and signed by lead facilitator or course instructor. This form is required for trips and may be used for workshops in place of the combined form. It is used with the

Informed Consent, Assumption of Risk and Insurance Certification & Waiver of Liability and Covenant Not To Sue form.

**Equipment Forms**

1. Equipment forms are completed by the lead facilitator, course instructor and submitted to the equipment and facilities graduate assistant for processing and placement in the appropriate file.
2. Activity-specific Equipment Reservations forms are completed by the lead facilitator or course instructor. Copies are placed in the program file.
3. Equipment Inspection and Maintenance forms are completed by OE Staff and reviewed by the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or designee.
4. First Aid Kit Inspection forms are completed monthly by the Equipment and Facilities Coordinator. The original is placed in a file in the equipment room and a copy is placed in the first aid kit and used to record the use of kit contents during workshops and trips.
5. Pantry Request forms are completed by the lead facilitator or course instructor. A copy of the form is placed in the program file.
6. WFR Kit Inspection forms are completed by the Equipment and Facilities Coordinator. The original is placed in a file in the equipment room and a copy is placed in the WFR kit to be used to record the use of kit contents during programs and courses.
7. Program Staff Equipment Reservation forms are completed by program staff in order to use program equipment for professional development activities such as technical training, certification workshops, scouting trips, or personal skill development associated with an academic requirement. The form is submitted to the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs for approval. Upon approval, the form is submitted to the equipment and facilities graduate assistant for processing.

### **Document Management**

1. Documents are maintained as per USG archival policy (<http://www.usg.edu/usgweb/busserv/series/search.phtml>).
2. OC archived files are located in the office of the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College in storage boxes organized according to file or form type.
3. Official student files are located in the Department of Outdoor Education office.
4. Current OC program and personnel files are located in the OC Assistant's office to permit OE Staff and Program Staff to review past program or course information, and to facilitate personnel allocation to program or course teams.
5. Master files contain original Medical Information Forms, IC/AR: Use of Personal Vehicles Forms, and Student Handbook Sign-off Forms. Master files are located in the Department of Outdoor Education.

**Notes:**

## **Section Four: Risk Management**

Risk management is a system that maximizes the effectiveness of programs while minimizing the number and severity of program incidents and accidents. Policy and procedures are central to risk management and together with good judgment, training, and support provide a framework for planning, implementing, and evaluating programs and services.

Monitoring includes oversight of program operations, review and revision of staff training, development, and personnel supervision.

Management includes processes that are used to proactively anticipate risk and minimize incidents and accidents during the planning and delivery of programs and services. Response includes emergency action processes for responding to specific incidents or accidents.

### **Safety and Risk Management Committee (SRMC)**

1. SRMC membership will consist of:
  - OE Staff,
  - GC Director of Legal Affairs,
  - GC Director of Student Health Services ,
  - GC Medical Advisor,
  - external advisor, and
  - specialized advisors as required.
2. Advisors will be available to field supervisors and course instructors on a needs basis.
3. OE Staff will meet twice a month to conduct ongoing business including, but not limited to review and action for incident/accident reports, and risk management functions related to equipment, facilities, personnel, and academic and program management.
4. The committee of the whole (OE Staff and advisors) will meet as necessary (face-to-face or by conference call) to provide specialized support and advisement to OE Staff; collect, analyze, and interpret information related to safety and risk management in academic and OC programs; and recommend and approve policy and procedures.

## **Incident/Accident Reporting**

Incident and accident reports are used to identify trends that require immediate or future action, monitor policy and procedures, evaluate program quality, and establish professional development priorities.

1. The lead facilitator or course instructor is responsible for deciding to complete an incident report for minor medical incidents that do not require first aid or are behavioral, facility, or equipment related that do not interfere with program or course implementation.
2. Reports will be completed for an incidents that require:
  - more than simple first aid such as the application of a band aid;
  - more than cursory staff attention;
  - follow-up care by staff in the field, a medical professional, therapist, psychologist or social worker;
  - use of prescription medications;
  - evacuation from the field;
  - a loss of a day or more of participation in the program or interfere with active participation in a program or class for a significant period of time; or
  - are considered a near miss<sup>5</sup>.

### **Reporting Procedures**

1. OE Staff or Program Staff will complete Incident/Accident Report (I/A) forms.
2. I/A forms will be located in the First Aid or WFR kit.
3. I/A reports will be complete, objective, and include a full description of relevant information to enable OE Staff to review the form and determine action as necessary.
  - a. Additional relevant information may be submitted with the incident report such as SOAP notes, witness accounts, incident notes.

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<sup>5</sup> Adapted from: Leemon, D. .Adventure Program Risk Management Report Incident Data From 1998–2007. retrieved 11-28-10/

[http://www.nols.edu/wrmc/pdf\\_files/wrmc\\_2008\\_poster.pdf](http://www.nols.edu/wrmc/pdf_files/wrmc_2008_poster.pdf),

Near misses are close calls that did not result in an injury. Near misses can be unusual, fascinating or scary. Near miss incidents are worth recording and studying because they may be predictors of injuries or policy, training, facility or equipment needs. Near miss incidents can be due to environmental or human factors.

- b. Record first and last names of all parties and print the name under potentially illegible signatures.
  - c. Write narratives in a clear and professional manner.
  - d. Do not indicate fault or responsibility.
  - e. State the facts.
  - f. Make every effort to obtain the injured party's signature or have a witness sign the form if the injured party is in transport or unable to do so.
4. In the case of an accident where a participant is transferred to EMS personnel:
- a. Provide EMS personnel with insurance information and medical information, but do not give the Medical Information Form away (it seldom returns).
  - b. Record the name of EMS personnel and the location of the primary care facility to which the injured party is being transported on the Medical Information Form.
  - c. If the person returns to the program, note the name of the physician giving permission to do so on the Medical Information Form.

### **Review and Follow-Up**

1. Completed Incident/Accident Report forms are submitted with the program file for review at OE Staff meetings.
2. OE Staff will review the form and recommend actions that may include, but are not limited to:
  - policy or procedural revision;
  - staff training;
  - equipment repair or replacement;
  - curriculum revision; or
  - no action taken.
3. OE Staff meeting minutes will contain a brief summary of the action taken.
4. The reviewed form will be signed by the chair of the OE Staff meeting or designee.
5. The original form will be reviewed by the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education.
6. Original forms will be stored in the Department of Outdoor Education.
7. A summary of I/A will be submitted to the Association for Experiential Education (AEE) Accreditation Program with the Annual Report.
8. The AEE Annual Report will be distributed to the SRMC.
9. In the event of a serious accident or fatality the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education or designee will follow GC policy including, but not limited to:
  - on-going communication with the patient and/or patient's family;
  - provision of relevant information and documentation to GC administrators and the Director of Administrative Services (DOAS); and
  - the development of an accident assessment report.

### **Program Staff Incidents/Accidents**

1. OE Staff and Program Staff are required to complete an online orientation with Human Resources which includes policy and procedures for reporting an incident/accident and follow up procedures. The online orientation can be found at <http://intranet.GC.edu/orientation/welcome>.
2. OE Staff & Program Staff that are injured in the performance of their duties will be familiar with the following guidelines provided by Human Resources also available at found at ([http://info.GC.edu/intranet/human\\_res/workerscomp.html](http://info.GC.edu/intranet/human_res/workerscomp.html)).
  - a. If you suffer an injury while performing your duties for Georgia College, you must immediately report the injury to your supervisor. You have 31 days to report the claim to your supervisor. Your supervisor will forward your claim to the Human Resources Department. Supervisors, please notify Kim Gore immediately of any on-the-job incidents even if the incident requires no medical attention.
  - b. In the case of an emergency you may be treated at an emergency room. You may follow up with a primary care physician after release from the emergency room as necessary. A primary care physician is any physician on the Conformed Panel of Physician list with the exception of a chiropractor.
  - c. If the incident requires treatment at an emergency room or a visit to a primary care physician, do not present an insurance card. If an insurance card is presented the fee will be charged to your insurance provider instead of the Department of Administrative Services (DOAS).
  - d. A Human Resources representative will provide the employee with the workers' compensation claim number and information. A Human Resources representative may at times provide the medical care provider and/or the insurance company with the workers' compensation contact and billing information.
  - e. Submit either an Incident Report form or an Accident Investigation to Human Resources, CBX 028, Attn: Kim Gore, immediately after the incident. To report the incident in a timely manner, you may fax the form so that we can report the incident to DOAS. After faxing, we will need the original form either dropped off or mailed to our office. A Human Resources representative will provide the employee with a contact number

to our Managed Care Organization (MCO) for a physician referral.

- f. Failure to seek treatment for job related injuries from the Conformed Panel of Physicians may jeopardize payment of medical bills and other charges under Workers' Compensation and you may be personally liable for the injuries.
- g. It is important that you submit a physician's diagnosis, medical bills, verification of rehabilitation, prescriptions and any correspondence relating to the Workers' Compensation claim in a timely manner to Human Resources. Failure to do so may delay payment of medical services rendered.

## Wilderness Context

Wilderness context is a concept that recognizes that reasonable access to definitive care may not be possible in some locations in which programs take place. Therefore a decision to consider a program location to be in a wilderness context is a decision to define it as be in unreasonable time to definitive care. This decision is based on a set of complex factors that dictate action.

1. Wilderness context is defined as by “unreasonable time” to definitive care.
2. Factors that will be considered when assessing a medical emergency to be in a wilderness context include, but are not limited to:
  - nature and scope of the medical emergency;
  - patient assessment data or progressive deterioration;
  - access to local EMS;
  - leadership or participant credentials;
  - participant characteristics and ability to respond to an emergency situation such as a long, rough distance to evacuate, skill level, age, or affect;
  - unavailability or stress on resources on hand to support emergency response; and
  - environmental factors such as darkness, cold, heat, wind, rain, storms, or altitude.
3. When it is not possible to assess the above factors or the nature of the medical emergency is extreme, a wilderness context will be defined as more than 1 hour to definitive care.

## Wilderness Context Field Supervisor System

**Field Supervisor Pager is:  
866-647-3157**

**Codes:**

- 1234567:** indicates the field supervisor is “on belay”
- 7654321:** indicates the field supervisor is “off belay”
- 911** (before phone number): indicates an emergency

**Additional or partial codes may be negotiated to accommodate multiple group participation, leadership handoffs, or completion of a program segment or minor changes to a route plan.**

1. The field supervisor system will provide redundancy during planning, program delivery, and emergency response.
2. The field supervisor system will support safety, program effectiveness, logistics, facilitator or course instructor decision making for trips and workshops in wilderness contexts.
3. The field supervisor system will include the lead facilitator or course instructor, a field supervisor, and a field backup person for specific trips or workshops in a wilderness context.
  - a. The Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or designee will serve as the field supervisor for OC programs.
  - b. OE faculty or designee will serve as the field supervisor for academic classes.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### ***Lead Facilitator or Course Instructor***

1. The lead facilitator or course instructor will negotiate the field supervisor in conjunction with the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs.
2. The lead facilitator or course instructor will provide communication between the group in the field and the field supervisor.
  - a. Activate and deactivate the field supervision system (on belay and off belay).

- b. Notify the field supervisor of significant changes to the program (e.g., route or campsite changes).
  - c. Consult with the field supervisor in the event of an emergency.
  - d. Communicate information from the SOAP summary of information gathered during the patient assessment (PAS).
  - e. Only information that may have a bearing on field treatment or the EAP should be communicated routinely.
3. The lead facilitator or course instructor will check for messages from the field supervisor at least once a day or as negotiated.

#### Trips

1. The lead facilitator or course instructor will develop a complete program file that includes, but is not limited to, the required forms and supplementary information indicated on the Master Program Checklist.
2. The lead facilitator or course instructor will review the completed program file with the field supervisor at least 24 hours in advance of the start of the program.
  - a. Field backup personnel may be present at this time.
  - b. Students may be present at this time for the purpose of enhancing educational outcomes.
3. In the event that additional information is requested by the field supervisor, the lead facilitator or course instructor will ensure the field file is complete and prior to going on-belay.
4. The lead facilitator or course instructor will obtain the program file from the field supervisor after the program to prepare it for submission for OE Staff review.

#### Workshops

1. The lead facilitator or course instructor will complete the Program File.
2. The lead facilitator or course instructor will review the completed program design and program file with the field supervisor at least 24 hours in advance of the start of the program.
  - a. Field backup personnel may be present at this time.
  - b. Students may be present at this time for the purpose of enhancing educational outcomes.
3. In the event that revisions are requested by the field supervisor, the lead facilitator or course instructor will ensure the program file is completed prior to going on belay.

### ***Field Supervisor***

1. The field supervisor will comply with GC and DOE policy.
2. The field supervisor will be functional and accessible on a 24-hour basis for the duration of the trip or workshop.
3. The field supervisor will possess appropriate emergency response competencies.
4. The field supervisor will select a competent field backup who is accessible to the field supervisor and prepared to go into the field for the duration of the trip or workshop.
5. The field supervisor will review and approve the program file.
  - a. Review the file and its contents with the lead facilitator to ensure proper planning has occurred.
  - b. Request additional information as necessary in order to respond to emergencies effectively.
  - c. Sign Master Program Checklist or Program Design Template indicating approval to implement the trip or workshop.
  - d. Ensure that the program file is accessible at all times.
6. The field supervisor will transfer the program file to the lead facilitator or course instructor at the conclusion of the trip or workshop.
  - a. Complete relevant sections of the Program Summary form.
7. Maintain communication between the group in the field and GC.
  - a. Provide the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education ([jude.hirsch@GC.edu](mailto:jude.hirsch@GC.edu)), the Dean of the College of Health Sciences ([sandra.gangstead@GC.edu](mailto:sandra.gangstead@GC.edu)), and the Director of Public Safety ([dave.groseclose@GC.edu](mailto:dave.groseclose@GC.edu)) the following information prior to departure (normally 24 hours):
    - program name, location and dates;
    - estimated time of departure and arrival;
    - names of facilitation team;
    - names of participants; and
    - field supervisor contact information.
  - b. Monitor the beeper at all times in order to be available to the group in the field or to external individuals needing to contact someone in the group.
8. Implement emergency response procedures in accordance with GC and DOE policy and the specific of the situation.
  - c. Consult with field staff to about appropriate course(s) of action.
  - d. Maintain communication with the lead facilitator or course instructor in the event of a severe weather warning at or on a

- trip or workshop location, campus emergency, family emergency, or other significant event.
- e. Implement emergency action procedures if the group does not return or provide notification of a change within two hours of the estimated time of program completion or arrival at the return destination.
  - f. Assist with, manage, or obtain appropriate professional assistance, for emergency debrief processes.
9. The field supervisor will contact the field backup when the group goes on belay, off belay, and in the event of a change to the route plan or in the case of an emergency.

***Field Backup***

1. Be accessible to the field supervisor on a 24 hour basis.
2. Assist the field supervisor as necessary.
3. Be ready and able to go into the field to assist Program or OE Staff.
4. Replace the field supervisor if necessary.

**Non-wilderness Context Administrative Backup**

1. Administrative backup for trips and workshops that are not expected to take place in a wilderness context will be the direct supervisor of the program or an appropriate designee.
2. The administrative backup will be available by cell phone for the duration of a trip or workshop.
3. The administrative backup will be briefed by the lead facilitator or course instructor.
  - a. Briefing information may include, but is not limited to, program design, logistics, and additional information as requested by the administrative backup.

## Challenge by Choice<sup>6</sup>

Challenge [of and] by choice is a request of participants to challenge themselves and participate fully in an experience. It recognizes that any activity or goal may pose a different level and type of challenge for each group member and that authentic personal change comes from within. It contributes to an environment where participants are asked to search for opportunities to stretch and grow during an experience. It challenges each group member to optimal learning opportunities. All group members are asked to add value to the group experience by finding a way to contribute to the group's efforts while also seeking to find value in an experience.

1. Program staff will discuss challenge of and by choice at the pre-briefing and as appropriate throughout program implementation.
2. Program participants will not be forced, pressured, or coerced to engage in an activity.
  - a. Encourage participants to examine and respect thoughtful choices.
  - b. Provide a supportive and caring atmosphere in which participants can stretch themselves.
  - c. Encourage individuals and the group to accept responsibility for decisions about challenging themselves.
  - d. Encourage individuals and the group to set goals that provide the greatest opportunities for growth and learning.
  - e. Present participants with appropriate challenges.
3. Program staff will acknowledge a participant's decision not to participate in specific activities without pressure or coercion.
  - a. Discuss options for engagement at some level.
  - b. Define success as committed engagement.
  - c. Take into account a participant's physical, emotional, and social abilities.
  - d. Celebrate success.
4. Program staff will not compromise the emotional, social, intellectual, and physical safety of other participants or staff when negotiating a level of challenge that is appropriate for a group member or group.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.pa.org/about/glossary.php> (retrieved December 04, 2010)

5. Participation in DOE academic programs is required in compliance with Student Handbook expectations, course syllabus, and assessment procedures.
  - a. Exceptions may be made on a per case basis for legitimate reasons such as, but not limited to family emergencies and medical excuses.
  - b. Documentation may be requested by a course instructor.
  - c. Make-up alternatives are at the discretion of the course instructor and may not be an option during the semester in which the exception is granted.

## **Program Briefing**

The program briefing provides participants with information about relevant topics, procedures, activities, and participation before the program begins. It is an opportunity to establish rapport, observe participant behaviors, answer questions, obtain new information, and set a positive, interactive tone for a program.

1. Program staff will present the program briefing prior to the commencement of a program.
  - a. One program staff may present the program briefing; however all program staff are encouraged to be present and introduced at this time.
  - b. The program briefing may incorporate selected initial stages of program elements such as icebreakers, expectations, or goal setting activities.
2. All programs will include pre-program briefing that is specific to the client and the program.
  - a. Pre-program briefing materials may be sent to participants living at a distance or otherwise unable to attend a face-to-face briefing as may be the case in open enrollment professional trainings, provided there is a face-to-face review of the materials at the beginning of the program.
  - b. Trip pre-program briefings normally take place at least 12 hours before the start of the trip at a pre-designated time or in an academic class.
  - c. Workshop pre-program briefings may take place on-site at the beginning of the workshop.
  - d. The timing, duration, and location of a pre-program briefing for minors that may include parents or guardians should be negotiated based on parent availability.
3. Pre-program briefing topics will include, but are not limited to:
  - overview of program including program goals and schedule;
  - participant pre-requisites and expectations;
  - physical conditioning, functional abilities, or behavioral expectations or contracts;
  - program logistics including transportation, equipment, and food;
  - general program safety briefing, medical screening (as described below), overview of risk management forms as appropriate;

- overview of Alcohol, Drug, and Medication policy (client appropriate);
  - housekeeping; and
  - expectations for participation (challenge of and by choice).
4. Participants will be made aware of the nature and scope of risks involved in program prior to the beginning of a program.
- a. State that Risk Management forms are important documents that must be completed by all participants.
  - b. Review relevant information related to informed consent and assumption of risk out loud, answering questions, and allow time for participants to read and sign the forms that are incomplete.
  - c. Communicate to participants that informed consent means that participants have been informed of and understand risks associated with an activity, and that they are participating in the activity voluntarily.

## **Safety Briefings**

1. Program staff and course instructors will conduct activity-specific safety briefings at the beginning of an activity change and when subjective or objective factors change during an activity.
2. The lead facilitator or course instructor is responsible for checking that all participants hear and have an opportunity to ask questions about a safety briefing.
3. A safety briefing should include, but is not limited to, the following information:
  - inherent dangers in the area, along with preventative information (flashflood, poisonous flora and fauna, lightning and other weather-related dangers, widow makers, and natural disasters, etc.);
  - inherent dangers in the activity, along with preventative information (water safety, site management, accident prevention, etc.);
  - participant & staff responsibilities related to the conduct of the activity and emergency procedures;
  - safety equipment use and location; and
  - challenge of and by choice.

## Medical Screening

Medical screening is a review of participant and program staff medical information. The process is used to design and, when possible, adapt programs to meet participant needs and limitations of participants and help participants to make informed decisions about appropriate participation in program activities. The process helps to ensure that pertinent medical information is complete and approved by the participant or a parent or guardian and available to staff and to medical providers in the case of an accident. Timely medical screening may determine the need to request that a participant receive medical clearance prior to participating in a program or a specific activity, or when a doctor has previously limited the scope of activity for a participant.

1. Program staff will comply with HIPAA Privacy Rule (<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/>) in all matters pertaining to health information privacy before, during, and after a program.
2. All program participants and staff will complete a medical screening process.
3. It is the responsibility of the lead facilitator or course instructor to ensure that medical information is located in a secure location and available for emergency response.
4. Sponsoring organizations or individual participants will be asked to submit completed Medical Information forms at least 24 hours prior to the beginning of a program.
5. Completed medical information forms are reviewed and signed by the lead facilitator or course instructor.
  - a. Ensure the forms are complete and signed by the participant or parent/guardian.
  - b. Note the need for additional information or actions about medically related conditions that may include, but are not limited to:
    - clarification about medication or side effects;
    - explanation of items answered in the affirmative (see Medical Screen Follow-up Questions and Actions);
    - equipment constraints or adaptations; or
    - the need for medical clearance from a physician.
6. Requests to participants for additional information will be addressed in a sensitive manner with regard for participant confidentiality and emotional safety.

7. Unresolved questions or concerns should be directed to the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs.

### **Medical Screening Follow-up Questions and Actions**

#### **Have you experienced an asthma attack at any time in your life?**

1. Have you visited the emergency room in the last year due to your asthma?
2. Have you had to use epinephrine following an asthma attack in the last year?
3. Were you diagnosed with asthma in the last year?
4. How often do you use your inhaler to treat your asthma or wheezing?
5. Is there anything else you think we should know about your asthma?

*Response: If the participant has a prescribed rescue inhaler and has needed it, epinephrine, or emergency treatment in the past six months, he or she must bring the inhaler to the program.*

#### **Have you ever been diagnosed with type I or type II diabetes?**

1. Have you visited the emergency room in the last year because of your diabetes?
2. Do you have poor circulation due to your diabetes?
3. Were you diagnosed with diabetes in the last year?
4. Will you be carrying insulin or wearing an insulin pump during your outing?
5. Is there anything else you think we should know about your diabetes?

*Response: Make sure the participant has opportunities to eat, drink, and test blood sugar if necessary.*

#### **Have you ever visited a medical professional for a serious allergic reaction, or have you ever been given a shot of epinephrine for an allergy or anaphylaxis?**

1. What triggers your allergies?
2. Have you had a serious allergic reaction in the last year?
3. Have you ever been given epinephrine because of your allergies or anaphylaxis?
4. Will you be bringing/carrying epinephrine on the outing?
5. Is there anything else you think we should know about allergies?

*Response: If the participant has a prescribed Epi Pen, he or she must bring it to the program. Facilitators should monitor for potential exposure to the allergen.*

**Have you ever received medical treatment for angina, a heart attack, any type of heart disorder/disease, or high blood pressure?**

1. Were you diagnosed with a heart condition within the past year?
2. Are you able to exert for long periods without experiencing angina pain?
3. Have you had chest pain in the past six months? If so, did you see a doctor?
4. How often do you take medication for chest pain?
5. Have you been hospitalized within the last year because of a heart condition?
6. Is your blood pressure under control?
7. Has your physician ever asked you to limit your physical activity? Are these limitations current?
8. Is there anything else you think we should know about your heart condition or blood pressure?

*Response: Any participant who has been instructed by a physician to limit his or her activities must obtain that physician's clearance to participate in the program.*

**Have you ever seen a medical professional following a seizure, or are you currently being treated for any type of seizure disorder?**

1. Are you currently taking medication for your seizures?
2. When is the last time you had a seizure?
3. Were you diagnosed with a seizure disorder in the last year?
4. Has your physician ever asked you to limit your activities?
5. Is there anything else you think we should know about your seizures?

*Response: Any participant who has been instructed by a physician to limit his or her activities must obtain that physician's clearance to participate in the program.*

**Have you had broken bones or joint injuries that cause recurring problems?**

1. Has your physician asked you to limit your physical activity?
2. Is there anything else you think we should know about your injury?

*Response: Any participant who has been instructed by a physician to limit his or her activities must obtain that physician's clearance to participate in the program.*

**Are you currently pregnant?**

1. At what stage is the pregnancy?
2. Have you had any complications?
3. Has your physician asked you to limit your physical activity?

*Response: Any participant who has been instructed by a physician to limit her activities must obtain that physician's clearance to participate in the program. Women in their third trimester of pregnancy should not participate in most of our programming.*

**Have you been diagnosed with any other medical condition or asked by your physician to limit your activities in any way?**

*Response: Any participant who has been instructed by a physician to limit his or her activities must obtain that physician's clearance to participate in the program. Other conditions should be monitored as necessary.*

### **Medical-Approved Wilderness Protocols**

I approve the following protocols for use by certified Wilderness First Responders trained by WMA, WMI, or SOLO when facilitating a program if transportation time to primary care is unreasonable. I also approve the anaphylaxis protocol for use by staff with American Red Cross epinephrine administration or Wilderness First Responder certification in which no minimum transport time is required. Personnel should act according to specific training for these protocols.

- Anaphylaxis
- Spinal Injuries
- Joint Dislocations
- Wound Management
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
- Severe Asthma

Georgia College Medical Advisor: Dr. Michael Duke  
(original signature on file)

Effective: Spring 2011

### **Alcohol**

1. GC is a Drug Free Work-Place, therefore alcohol is not permitted for use by participants or staff during outdoor education programs or courses.
2. The lead facilitator or course instructor will ensure that this policy is clear and that participants are willing to remain in compliance.
3. Infractions by GC students are subject to GC disciplinary procedures, including dismissal from OE academic programs.

### **Tobacco**

1. Tobacco in any form will *not* be used during scheduled program times.
2. Tobacco may be used during breaks in an appropriate area designated by the lead facilitator or course instructor.
3. Tobacco users will be instructed to dispose of all tobacco-related waste in an appropriate manner.

### **Drugs**

1. GC is a Drug Free Work-Place, therefore illegal drugs are not permitted for use by participants or staff during outdoor education programs or courses.
2. The lead facilitator or course instructor will ensure that this policy is clear and that participants are willing to remain in compliance.
3. Infractions by GC students are subject to GC disciplinary procedures, including dismissal from OE academic programs.
4. Prescription drugs will be labeled appropriately and only used only by the person in whose name the prescription was issued.
5. The lead facilitator or course instructor will note and initial on the Medical Information Form the use of prescription drugs that were previously not listed by a participant or guardian.
6. Program staff, the course instructor, or client supervisory staff will carry and administer prescription and non-prescription drugs for minors.
  - a. Medication necessary for immediate administration such as asthma inhalers and Epi-pens should be carried by minors as appropriate.

- b. Program staff and course instructors may carry an extra set of prescription drugs at the request of a parent or guardian of a minor.
  7. Participants over the age of 18 will carry and administer their own prescription and non-prescription drugs.
    - a. Program staff and course instructors may carry an extra supply of prescription drugs at the request of a participant or on the advice of the GC medical advisor or designee.
    - b. Program staff and course instructors should be aware of non-prescription drugs carried by participants over the age of 18 and when they are taken.
    - c. Program staff and course instructors should be aware of the improper use of prescription or non-prescription drugs, including, but not limited to:
      - sharing medications with other participants;
      - possession of prescription drugs belonging to someone else; and
      - overuse of prescription or non-prescription drugs.
  8. Drug tracking systems will be used at the discretion of the lead facilitator or course instructor in consultation with the appropriate administrator or the field supervisor.
    - a. The appropriate administrator or field supervisor may consult with the DOE medical advisor or designee.

### **Exiting a Participant, Student, or Staff Member**

1. Grounds for exiting a participant, student, or staff member from a program include, but are not limited to:
  - possession of or use of alcohol or illegal drugs;
  - use of illegal or prescription drugs that are prescribed to someone else;
  - consistent behavior that compromises the health and safety of participants, staff members, or program effectiveness; or
  - consistent non-compliance with DOE policy.
2. Prior to a decision to exit a participant, student, or staff member from a program, the lead facilitator or course instructor will consult with the field supervisor or administrative backup to consider:
  - details of the behavior, context, and program;
  - attempted or potential strategies for continuance in a program;
  - impact on the participant, student, or program staff member, other participants students, or program staff members; the program or class; or
  - factors related to the exit logistics.
3. In the event that it is determined that a participant, student, or staff should leave the program, the following guidelines will be implemented.
  - a. Speak to the individual in a confidential context.
  - b. Attempt to dismiss the individual from further participation in the program as quickly as possible.
  - c. Escort the individual to a safe place and provide supervision as necessary.
  - d. Arrange transportation to the program start location or another agreed upon location in conjunction with the field supervisor.
4. Individuals who are exited from a program for the above reasons are responsible for travel expenses.
5. The lead facilitator or course instructor will discuss program continuance with the group and inform the field supervisor or administrative backup.
6. The field supervisor or administrative backup will notify the emergency contact person listed on the Medical Information form or agency sponsor listed on the program contract as appropriate and in compliance with HIPAA Privacy Rule (<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/>).
7. The lead facilitator or course instructor will complete the I/A form.

### **Notification Protocol**

1. In the event of a fatality or serious accident the lead facilitator or course instructor will implement the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) and notify the field supervisor or administrative backup.
2. The field supervisor or administrative backup will notify the appropriate administrator in order of chain of authority as available, as well as Public Safety, the Director of University Communications, and support services as appropriate.
3. In the event of an off campus minor accident, the lead facilitator or course instructor will implement the EAP and notify the field supervisor or administrative backup.
4. The field supervisor or administrative backup will notify the emergency contact person listed on the Medical Information form and the appropriate administrator.
5. In the event of a minor accident on campus the lead facilitator or course instructor will implement the EAP, inform the emergency contact person listed on the Medical Information form, and notify the field supervisor or administrative backup.

### **Information to an Emergency Contact**

1. The following guidelines will be used when speaking to an emergency contact person in the event of a minor accident.
  - a. The opening statement to an emergency contact should immediately convey the wellbeing of a participant if possible (e.g. this is [your name] with GC, [student or participant name] is fine, but I need to inform you of a situation)
  - b. Think through what you will say before speaking.
  - c. Organize the facts and be accurate in conveying them.
  - d. Anticipate possible questions.
  - e. Explain the situation using precise, objective language.
  - f. Explain what is being done in response to the situation.
  - g. Be sensitive to feelings and concerns.
  - h. Provide appropriate follow up contact information if possible.
  - i. Direct follow up conversations to appropriate GC personnel and when possible provide contact information, such as the beeper or cell phone number of the field supervisor or the administrative back up.
  - j. Avoid stating conclusions, causes, or interpretation of the event.

### **Information to the Press**

1. Information about a serious accident or fatality will be released to the press by the Director of University Communications or an appointed representative of GC.
2. Program staff will direct inquiries from the media to the field supervisor or administrative backup and return to supporting participants and staff in the field.
3. Program staff will avoid speaking to anyone about:
  - assessment of fault or criticism of conduct;
  - assessment of GC policy, equipment, or facilities;
  - information regarding the nature of the injury or illness;
  - names of participants or parties involved; or
  - estimates of property damage.

## **Emergency Response System**

Emergency response is a comprehensive plan (EAP) for accident prevention and management of a complex and potentially dangerous situation for facilitators, participants, and the patient that is communicated to participants and staff as appropriate. The first line of defense is prevention in the form of good planning and participant preparation.

1. The lead facilitator or course instructor shall ensure that a context specific first aid kit is accessible at all times.
2. The lead facilitator or course instructor will manage the emergency action plan (EAP).
3. An assistant facilitator will manage the EAP in the event that the lead facilitator is unable to do so.
4. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee shall communicate with the field supervisor or administrative backup in a timely fashion.
5. The EAP manager shall operate within the medical protocols of their training.
6. First aid will be administered by trained personnel and in accordance with procedures set forth by the training organization.
  - a. A Wilderness First Responder shall be present at all outdoor education programs that operate in wilderness contexts.
  - b. A first aid, epinephrine administration, and CPR-certified person shall be present at all outdoor education programs in non-wilderness contexts.
7. General emergency response procedures shall include:
  - a. Survey the situation.
  - b. Eliminate dangers or remove people from dangerous situations.
  - c. Develop an action plan taking into account the nature of the emergency, size of group, terrain, weather, time and distance from help, etc.
  - d. Implement first aid, rescue, or search procedures as appropriate.
  - e. Triage multiple patients to determine who to help first based on two criteria: 1) triage implies making the most efficient use of available resources and 2) do the most good for the most people.
  - f. Attend to the physical and emotional needs of group members.
  - g. Consider setting up a temporary base camp and keep the group informed, protected from elements, well-fed, etc.

- h. Keep group members safe and busy to reduce anxiety levels.
- j. Complete appropriate forms, e.g., incident report, SOAP note, etc.
- k. Obtain written statements from eye witnesses to the accident and ask for signatures and printed names at an appropriate time;
- l. Facilitate emergency debrief with group members as needed.
- m. Communicate with the field supervisor or administrative backup continuously.

### External Assistance

1. If the group is unable to manage an emergency situation on its own, external assistance shall be requested in consultation with the field supervisor or the administrative backup.
2. The field supervisor, administrative backup, or program staff will manage a request for external assistance and related logistics based on context and the nature of the emergency.
  - a. Call 911 and ask for emergency personnel.
  - b. Notify appropriate land management authorities (ranger, forester, etc) listed on the Route Plan.
3. If phone access is not available a messenger party should be sent to the most effective point of communication.
  - a. Leave at least one medically qualified person with the patient.
  - b. If possible assign three members to the messenger party including one staff member.
  - c. Carry detailed information about the location of the accident or emergency response base (coordinates, map, description, etc.).
  - d. Carry detailed information about the context and the situation.
  - e. Carry field supervisor or administrative backup contact information.
  - f. Use a SOAP note.
  - g. Carry supplies and equipment as appropriate including, but not limited to food, water, extra clothing, and emergency shelter;
  - h. Move quickly but without rushing.
  - i. Avoid potential injury.
  - j. Avoid splitting up.
  - k. Conserve energy to lead the rescue party back to the emergency base camp.

## **Evacuation**

1. The lead facilitator or course instructor will determine the need for and feasibility of implementing an evacuation system to transport a patient or patients to an EMS point of transfer or directly to a definitive care facility.
  - a. An evacuation system may involve program staff, participants, the field supervisor administrative backup, and/or EMS authorities.
  - b. An evacuation system may be developed and implemented by staff and participants based on available resources and equipment, context, participant characteristics, environmental conditions, and nature of the emergency.
2. EMS will be in charge of medical issues once on the scene.
3. Program staff will assist EMS authorities as appropriate.
4. EMS will determine the need for and manage helicopter evacuation logistics.
5. EMS authorities will manage evacuation from the point of transfer to definitive care.

### **Medical Emergencies**

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will provide appropriate first aid in the event of a medical emergency.
  - a. Complete an initial patient assessment.
  - b. Apply first aid according to approved medical protocols.
  - c. Treat symptoms in order of priority or simultaneously if possible: airway, breathing, circulation, severe bleeding, shock, and stabilize the neck as appropriate.
  - d. Attend to environmental hazards.
  - e. Maintain body temperature and make the patient as comfortable as possible.
  - f. Complete detailed patient assessment and documentation.
  - g. Use SOAP note protocol as appropriate.
  - h. Monitor the patient and administer first aid as appropriate.
  - i. Assess and record vitals at regular intervals.
2. Contact the field supervisor or administrative backup to discuss program continuation or cancellation.
3. In the event of a fatality do not move the body unless instructed to do so by legal authority.

## **Universal Precautions to Prevent Transmission of Blood-borne Pathogens<sup>7</sup>**

**Universal precautions** apply to blood, other body fluids containing visible blood, semen, and vaginal secretions. Universal precautions also apply to tissues and to the following fluids: cerebrospinal, synovial, pleural, peritoneal, pericardial, and amniotic fluids. Universal precautions involve the use of protective barriers such as gloves, gowns, aprons, masks, or protective eyewear, which can reduce the risk of exposure of the responder's skin or mucous membranes to potentially infective materials.

Universal Precautions require that staff administering aid consider every person and all blood and body fluids, to be a potential carrier of infectious disease. An exposure that might place a staff member or participant at risk for HBV, HCV, or HIV is defined as a percutaneous injury (e.g., a needle stick or cut with a sharp object such as a knife) or contact of mucous membrane or non-intact skin (e.g., exposed skin that is chapped, abraded, or afflicted with dermatitis) with blood, tissue, or other body fluids that are potentially infectious.

Universal precautions do not apply to feces, nasal secretions, sputum, sweat, tears, urine, and vomitus unless they contain visible blood. Universal precautions do not apply to saliva except when visibly contaminated with blood or in the dental setting where blood contamination of saliva is predictable.

1. Use protective barriers (gloves, masks, and protective eyewear) to prevent exposure to blood, body fluids containing visible blood, and other fluids to which universal precautions apply. The type of protective barrier(s) should be appropriate for the procedure being performed and the type of exposure anticipated.
  - a. Wear non-latex gloves when anticipating contact with blood, body fluids, tissues, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, or contaminated surfaces. Gloves should be removed and properly discarded after contact with the patient.

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<sup>7</sup> [http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/bp\\_universal\\_precautions.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/bp_universal_precautions.html) (retrieved December 6, 2010)

- b. When possible, use a pocket mask provided in the first aid kits for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
  - c. Use general-purpose utility gloves (e.g., rubber household gloves) for tasks involving potential blood contact such as instrument cleaning and surface decontamination procedures.
  - d. Persons with open cuts or lesions on their hands should refrain from dressing a wound for another person, regardless of whether he/she is wearing gloves.
  - e. Immediately and thoroughly wash hands and other skin surfaces that are contaminated with blood, body fluids containing visible blood, or other body fluids to which universal precautions apply.
2. Use caution to prevent needle stick injuries when using, cleaning, or disposing of needles or other sharp instruments.
    - a. Do not recap used needles by hand.
    - b. Do not remove used needles from disposable syringes by hand.
    - c. Do not bend, break, or otherwise manipulate used needles by hand.
    - d. Place used disposable syringes and needles and other sharp items in puncture-resistant containers for disposal.
  3. Handle needles and other sharp objects carefully.
    - a. To prevent needle-stick injuries, needles should not be recapped, purposely bent or broken by hand, removed from disposable syringes, or otherwise manipulated by hand.
    - b. Sharp objects should be placed in puncture-resistant containers for disposal.
  4. Wrap disposable items contaminated with blood or other body fluids in gauze and place them in a biohazard or sealed container that prevents leakage for storage and transportation back to GC.
    - a. Handle potentially contaminated laundry as little as possible and with minimum agitation to prevent gross microbial contamination of the air and of persons handling it.
  5. Dispose of potentially inappropriate biohazard containers at the Student Health Center.
  6. Report immediately all needle stick accidents, mucosal splashes or contamination of open wounds with blood or body fluids.
    - a. When indicated, CDC guidelines for the management of occupational exposures to HBV, HCV, and HIV and recommendations for post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) will be implemented.

7. If a person reports that he/she has HIV, AIDS, Hepatitis B, or Hepatitis C before or during an Outdoor Education program, consider the following guidelines in effect:
  - a. Reassure the person that this information will be kept confidential. Offer to listen to the participant's concerns, such as fear of having this virus, fear of being ostracized, fear of telling loved ones, etc.
  - b. Privately counsel the person about proper infection control measures (means of transmission and acceptable procedures) and obtain a verbal commitment that he/she understands this information and will abide by it during the activity.
  - c. Address the participant's concerns such as fear of spreading the infection to other participants or staff. Reassure the person that the likelihood of infecting anyone else is extremely low provided the correct procedures are followed.
  - d. If there is reason to believe that the infected person may have engaged in behavior that would have exposed another participant or staff during the activity, consult the appropriate administrator as soon as possible.
  - e. Maintain confidentiality unless otherwise instructed by legal counsel.
  - f. Refer to HIV counseling services and the national AIDS hotline at the CDC (1-800-CDC-INFO) as appropriate.
8. Participants and staff should refrain from sharing "community items" such as water bottles and eating utensils.
9. Avoid direct mouth-to-mouth contact and use a protective device if rescue breathing is necessary.

## Technical Rescues

A **technical rescue** is one in which some level of technical competency is required to bring a participant(s) to a safe place. Remember, the first line of defense is prevention. The best rescue is the one that is not needed.

Most rescues, regardless of activity or environment, may be categorized into one of four levels that are normally implemented in sequence. However, there may be cases in which the decision to proceed to a more complex response is appropriate. Determine the level of rescue that is necessary based on the nature and context of the situation and the type of activity. Take into account speed, safety, and simplicity because generally, the faster, safer, and simpler an option is, the better it is.

**Level I** rescues are assisted self-rescues in which the responder provides psychological support to a person from a position of relative safety in order to help a participant help them self. The responder normally provides verbal, emotional or technique support to increase the participant's ability or desire to self-rescue.

**Level II** rescues are assisted self-rescues in which the responder provides physical or equipment support from a position of relative safety in order to help a participant to help them self. The responder normally provides equipment and instruction to aid self-rescue.

**Level III** rescues increase the complexity, time to respond, and relative safety of responders who make physical contact with the participant to provide a basic mechanism for moving the participant to a safer place.

**Level IV** rescues further increase the complexity, time to respond, and relative safety of responders who make physical contact with the participant to provide a more advanced mechanism or procedures for rescue that involves greater risks for both the rescuer and the participant.

### Rescue Levels I-IV: Examples

Level	Examples
I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Verbally</b> encouraging a challenge course or rock-climbing participant to trust their belay system and be lowered, or to gain a position from which they can continue.</li><li>• Verbally encouraging a capsized paddler to swim aggressively to an eddy or shore.</li></ul>
II	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Sending</b> an etrier out to a participant who has fallen off a cable and cannot regain the foot cable.</li><li>• Throwing a rope to a capsized paddler to bring them to shore quickly.</li><li>• Applying a vector pull to a belay system to help a rock climber reach a hold and continue climbing.</li></ul>
III	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Moving out on an element to a stuck challenge course participant, attaching a rescue belay system, <b>removing</b> their initial belay system, and then lowering them safely to the ground.</li><li>• Going out in a boat to bring back a capsized paddler who is separated from their boat.</li><li>• Rappelling to a stuck rappeller to help release a jammed rappel device.</li></ul>
IV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Moving out on an element to a stuck challenge course participant, attaching a rescue belay system, <b>cutting away</b> their initial belay system, and lowering them to the ground.</li><li>• Wading into surf to bring back a distressed swimmer capsized by surf.</li><li>• Performing a belay escape and climbing self-belayed to a pinned climber.</li></ul>

## Missing Person

1. Students will be instructed to consider themselves late if they know where they are, but are unable to make a scheduled contact or rendezvous.
  - a. Reach the intended rendezvous and stay put until contact is made.
2. Students will be instructed to consider themselves lost if they are unable to confidently determine their location.
3. Participants will be informed in the safety briefing about procedures for leaving the group and what to do if they become lost.
  - a. Do not panic; help is on the way.
  - b. Stay put or find a visible location in close proximity and await rescue.
  - c. Do not wander; limit the area that will need to be searched.
  - d. Returning to a familiar place may be dangerous; do so only if it is a safe, short distance and you are absolutely sure that you can recognize the place (trailhead, stream crossing, lake, or other feature).
  - e. Blow three strong whistle blasts spaced by 2-3 seconds every few minutes, look and listen for rescuers and be prepared to respond by increasing the time and spacing of blasts, calling, or making signals to the rescuers.
  - f. Take inventory of equipment and supplies and keep all equipment with you.
  - g. Conserve heat and energy.
  - h. Put on more clothes at the first sign of a chill. Stuff dry leaves or moss in the open spaces in clothing.
  - i. Think about finding a shelter and building a small fire for warmth and to serve as a signal to rescuers about an hour before darkness sets in.
  - j. In the event of an accident, try to self-administer first aid and keep warm and dry.
4. Groups will implement preventive measures such as a buddy system, safe trail hiking behavior, communication systems, and signaling throughout the program.
5. Participants will carry a whistle attached to the backpack, belt, boot or lifejacket while traveling in the backcountry.
6. Participants will be informed about the universal distress signal (three of anything – whistle blasts, shouts, ground signals, etc.).

### **Search Procedures**

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage search procedures and communication with the field supervisor or administrative backup, Emergency Medical System (EMS) authorities as appropriate.
2. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will implement search and rescue (SAR) guidelines.
  - a. Gather pertinent information including:
    - when and where the person(s) was last seen;
    - what they were doing;
    - physical or emotional state;
    - clothing description;
    - gear description;
    - food and water availability;
    - footwear and footwear print description.
  - b. Appoint a leader of search teams.
  - c. Maintain a log and map of SAR events.
3. Missing person land search procedures will include three, normally sequenced, increasingly more complex search protocols that require increased coordination, time, and resources.
4. Missing person water search procedures will normally be conducted by DNR or Coast Guard authorities with motorized vehicles and the capacity to initiate a Possible Assistance Needed (PAN) call.
5. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will DNR or Coast Guard authorities based on the length the length of time a boat has been missing and environmental conditions.
  - a. Preliminary land-based procedures may be initiated prior to or while waiting for assistance by appropriate authorities.
6. The lead facilitator or course instructor will complete the I/A report.

### ***Initial Search***

Initial searches are fast, efficient, searches of the immediate area where the person was last seen or may thought to be located.

1. Search teams are dispatched quickly with specific, controlled areas to search and time limits for returning to a designated base of operations.
2. Assign teams of two or more people to search the immediate area such as:
  - camp sites;
  - on-trail rest stops;

- sleeping, cooking, latrine, and water gathering areas that can be checked quickly; and
  - other local trails and rest stops within 300 ft (100m).
3. Instruct teams to clearly and loudly call the person's name at regular intervals (approximately 30 seconds) and to remain silent in order to hear a reply or the use of a whistle by the missing person.
  4. Instruct teams to look around for evidence of the person leaving the trail or creating a distress or a signal.
  5. Instruct teams to pay close attention to making verbal contact around obvious hazards without jeopardizing the safety of searchers.
  6. Instruct teams to coordinate watches, or in their absence, use another method for determining distance and time to return to the designated base of operations.

### ***Hasty Search***

Hasty searches extend the range of the initial search to time controlled visual/vocal searches of immediate trail systems and accessible hazardous areas.

1. Search teams are dispatched by the search manager as quickly as possible after the initial search to areas that require a higher level of investigation and respect for environmental hazards.
  - a. Time limits for returning to a base of operations should be lengthened on the basis of terrain, time of day, weather, relevant information about the missing person, and the potential need to organize an extensive search.
  - b. The search manager may consider, in consultation with the field supervisor or administrative backup, placing EMS on alert at this time.
2. Assign teams of two or more people.
  - a. Consider using initial search teams or reallocating searchers on the basis of experience or some other factor that will expedite the search.
3. Instruct teams to search the trail 1500 ft (500m) in both directions looking to both sides for evidence of entry and distress signals.
4. Instruct teams to search with caution hazardous areas such as cliffs, stream beds, slides, and rock outcroppings within 50-100' from the trail.
5. Instruct teams to clearly and loudly call the person's name at regular intervals (approximately 30 seconds) and to remain silent in order to hear a reply or the use of a whistle by the missing person.

7. Coordinate watches, or in their absence, use another method for determining distance and time to return to the designated base of operations.
8. Communicate with the field supervisor and EMS authorities as appropriate.

### ***Extensive Search***

Extensive searches extend the range of the hasty search to basic patterns of visual/vocal sweeps beyond immediate trail systems and accessible hazardous areas.

1. The lead facilitator or course instructor will make the decision to conduct an extensive search in consultation with the field supervisor or administrative backup.
2. Conduct an extensive search if the hasty search is not successful and with regard to the size and ability of group members to conduct a search of this nature, terrain, time of day, weather, relevant information about the missing person, and the need to contact EMS authorities.
  - a. Basic patterns of visual sweeps in the area may be implemented while finalizing logistics with EMS authorities.
  - b. The safety and well being of participants and staff should be a priority.
  - c. Consider keeping the group together, setting up camp, making plans to move the group to a more suitable location, or cancelling or postponing the program.
3. Contact EMS or land management authorities by cell phone or messenger party sent to the nearest point of contact.
  - a. In the event that the missing person is located before the messenger team returns consider whether to send another team to inform them that the person has been found or wait for the team and authorities to arrive.
4. Assign search teams on the basis of areas the nature and size of areas to be searched.
  - a. Designate search team leaders to coordinate basic patterns of visual sweeps along a bearing or feature, and to communicate instructions to searchers.
5. Determine appropriate basic patterns of visual sweeps for the area(s) using the following guidelines.
  - a. Form a line, spaced so that each searcher can see the person to the left and right.
  - b. Implement communication systems during basic patterns of visual sweeps.

- c. The first searcher in the line follows a designated bearing denoting a boundary line.
  - d. The line moves forward, parallel to the established boundary line.
  - e. Stop pre-determined intervals to confirm the presence of all team members, perform a visual sweep and call the missing person by name.
  - f. Pay close audio and visual attention to brush piles, fallen logs, overhangs, boulders, and rock piles.
  - g. The person farthest from the searcher walking the boundary line should mark or note distinguishable features to create a new boundary line.
  - h. When the end boundary is reached the entire line rotates around person marking the next boundary line to proceed in the opposite direction.
  - i. The process is repeated until the person is found, EMS take over, or the search is called off.
6. Assign search team equipment including a flashlight/headlamp, extra layers, map and compass, rainwear, water and food, and first-aid and rescue equipment appropriate to skill level and training.
  7. Instruct teams to clearly and loudly call the person's name at regular intervals (approximately 30 seconds) and remain silent in order to hear a reply or the use of a whistle by the missing person.
  8. Instruct teams to coordinate watches, or in their absence, use another method for determining distance and time to return to the designated base of operations.
  9. Communicate and collaborate with the field supervisor and EMS authorities as appropriate.

## **Inclement Weather: Wilderness Context**

### **Lightning**

Lightning strikes accompany thunderstorms; therefore the best line of defense is to anticipate inclement weather in planning and field observation of weather conditions. Lightning strikes are the leading direct meteorological cause of casualties in the United States. Lightning may take the form of a direct lightning strike, an induced current near a direct strike, and/or ground currents.

1. Anticipate inclement weather during planning process.
  - a. Note potential storm patterns and obtain weather forecasts.
  - b. Know locations of potential shelters or protective natural features for the program destination.
  - c. Listen to radio and television newscasts for the latest information or check Doppler information from the National Weather Service.
2. Instruct participants about specific lightning protocol during the program briefing if a storm is forecasted or in a safety briefing at the first sign of an unexpected storm.
  - a. Determine the distance between the group and nearby lightning by counting the interval between a flash and the following thunder and dividing the number by five to estimate the distance (in miles) that the lightning is away from your group.
  - b. Groups should prepare to stop travelling and move into lightning drill when a storm is five miles away or less (25 seconds or less between flash and boom).
  - c. Groups should be seated in lightning drill position when the storm is three miles away or less (15 seconds between flash and boom).
  - d. Groups may get out of lightning drill position when the storm is three miles or more away and commence activity when the storm is five miles or more away.
  - e. Be prepared for a lengthy stay in lightning position if a storm is not moving fast.
  - f. Prepare for hypothermia by using raingear and insulating clothing.
  - g. Encourage consumption of water and food/snacks.
  - h. If a storm occurs at night while participants and staff are sleeping it is best to stay inside shelters in lightning drill

position unless shelters are in an exposed location such as a peak or along a beach.

3. Utilize a verbal check-in system at regular intervals to ensure participants and staff are accounted for in the event that visual contact is impaired.
4. Wait out the storm or call for emergency assistance as necessary.

#### ***Land Protocols***

1. Seek a sheltered location or move indoors until activity can resume.
  - a. Avoid high, exposed areas such as summits, ridges, tops of cliffs, overhangs, shallow caves, ditches, gullies, streams, tall trees, poles, large boulders, and high open areas such as fields and meadows to avoid splash injuries or ground currents. Get below tree line.
  - b. Avoid long conductors such as fences; power, phone or rail lines; wet extended ropes; wet lichen covered rock, cracks, crevices; and overhangs, caves and tree roots.
  - c. In wide open spaces or gently rolling hills, the safest place is a ravine or relative depression.
  - d. Seek shelter under a uniform tree canopy where possible.
  - e. When between trees of equal height the best position is equidistance from both.
  - f. Don rain gear and appropriate foot wear if time permits.
2. Minimize body contact with the ground.
  - a. Squat or crouch as low as possible with feet together and arms around legs. If this position is not possible for the duration of the storm, the next best position is kneeling with heels touching each other. If this position is not possible for the duration of the storm the next best position is sitting with arms folded across legs.
  - b. Avoid touching metal objects.
3. Disperse group members at least 15 feet apart with facilitators spaced among the group.
4. Avoid contact with exposed metal such as climbing hardware, pack frames, and personal gear.

#### ***Water Protocols***

1. Paddle toward the nearest accessible point of land.
  - a. Instructors should be in separate boats and in sight of each other, normally flank and middle positions.
  - b. If getting off the water is not possible, get as close to a protective shoreline as possible and assume convoy position

- assuring that boats are at least one boat length away from each other to avoid multiple injuries from a strike.
- c. In open boats, insulate the seat with a foam pad or spare life jacket and elevate feet with a pad or pack.
  - d. Avoid contact with exposed metal boat parts.
  - e. Anchor boats to a separate fixed non-metal object if one is available.
  - f. It may be best to stay on the water when on steep river gorges if getting onto land is hazardous.
2. Wait out the storm or call for emergency assistance as necessary.
  3. Once land is reached follow land protocols.

### **Flash Floods**

Flash floods normally accompany thunderstorms; therefore the best line of defense is to anticipate inclement weather in planning and field observation of weather and topographical conditions. They are primarily a function of topography and rain. Rain occurring miles away may cause a flash flood if there is a large drainage area upstream.

1. Anticipate inclement weather during planning process.
  - a. Note potential flood risks and elevation above flood stages in route planning.
  - b. Know locations of potential shelters or appropriate natural features for the program destination.
  - c. Listen to radio and television newscasts for the latest information or check Doppler information from the National Weather Service.
2. Instruct participants about flash flood protocol during the program briefing as appropriate or in a safety briefing at the first sign of an unexpected storm in potential flash flood areas.
  - a. Begin preparations to move to a place of safety.
  - b. Identify flood-safe zones and evacuation routes.
  - c. Travel and camp above the high water mark if possible.
  - d. Avoid waterways, low lying enclosed areas, canyons, ravines, ditches, and areas downstream of dams or causeways.
  - e. Prepare emergency supplies.
3. Watch for signs of an imminent flash flood including a rise in water level, changes in water turbidity, distant thunderstorms and local changes in environmental conditions such as changes in wind direction and speed, barometric pressure and temperature, or hear rumbling or feel the ground shaking.
  - a. Begin preparations to move to a place of safety.
  - b. Identify flood-safe zones and evacuation routes.
  - c. Travel and camp above the high water mark if possible.
  - d. Avoid waterways, low lying enclosed areas, canyons, ravines, ditches, and areas downstream of dams or causeways.
4. Avoid driving into water more than two feet deep.
  - a. Abandon vehicles immediately if stalled in water and move to high ground.
5. Turn around when roads are flooded and use additional caution at night when it is difficult to determine water levels.
6. Wait out the flood or call for emergency assistance if necessary.

## **Tornados<sup>8</sup>**

Tornados form as a thunderstorm's gust front kicks air up into a skinny, twisting, stringy funnel that may last only a few minutes or as the spin that keeps a massive storm going spawns one that can last for hours and do significant damage. The National Weather Service issues tornado watches and warnings. A tornado watch indicates that conditions are conducive to the development of tornadoes in and close to the watch area. A tornado warning indicates that a tornado has actually been sighted by spotters or indicated on radar and is occurring or imminent in the warning area.

A tornado may be seen as a strong, rotating column of air extending from the base of a cumulonimbus cloud to the ground or a funnel cloud rotating column of air extending from a cloud, but not reaching the ground. A severe thunderstorm that may produce tornados has winds of 58 mph or greater or hailstones three-quarters of an inch or larger in diameter.

1. In the event of a tornado watch prior to a workshop or trip in wilderness context adapt logistics accordingly or postpone the program.
2. In the event of a tornado warning prior to a workshop or trip in wilderness context postpone or reschedule the program.
3. Anticipate inclement weather during planning process and program implementation.
  - a. Know locations of potential shelters or appropriate natural features for the program destination.
  - b. Listen to radio and television newscasts for the latest information or check Doppler information from the National Weather Service.
4. Instruct participants about tornado protocol in a safety briefing at the first sign of a tornado.
  - a. Lie down in a ditch or other low area.
  - b. Protect the head from falling objects or flying debris.
  - c. Get out of vehicles.
  - d. Prepare emergency supplies.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.weather.com/> (retrieved December 10, 2010)

### **Inclement Weather: Non-wilderness Context**

A tornado may be seen as a strong, rotating column of air extending from the base of a cumulonimbus cloud to the ground or a funnel cloud rotating column of air extending from a cloud, but not reaching the ground. A severe thunderstorm that may produce a tornado has winds of 58 mph or greater or hailstones three-quarters of an inch or larger in diameter. Listen to radio and television newscasts for the latest information or check Doppler information from the National Weather Service. Consider subscribing to the free GC emergency notification system at <http://www.GC.edu/emergency/connected.htm> .

1. Anticipate inclement weather during planning processes and program implementation.
  - a. Listen to radio and television newscasts for the latest information or check Doppler information from the National Weather Service.
  - b. Consider subscribing to the free GC emergency notification system at <http://www.GC.edu/emergency/connected.htm>.
2. At East Campus the most appropriate shelter to seek during a severe a thunderstorm or tornado is Lake Laurel Lodge or the Outdoor Center Cabin.
  - a. Seek immediate shelter in an interior room away from doors and windows until the warning has passed.
3. At East Campus shelter during non-severe inclement weather includes Lake Laurel Lodge, the Outdoor Center Cabin, the YURT, the Equipment Shack, or personal vehicles.
4. In the event of a tornado watch programs will be adapted to move inside a sound building.
  - a. If not possible, the program should be postponed or rescheduled in advance.
5. In the event of a tornado warning scheduled programs should be postponed in advance.
6. If a tornado appears without warning and a sound building is not available terminate the program immediately and instruct everyone to lie down in a ditch or other low area.
7. Do not seek shelter in vehicles during a tornado.

## **Flora & Fauna**

1. Program staff and course instructors will be aware of common, dangerous flora and fauna for a given area.
  - a. Local resource management authorities may be contacted for information about local hazardous flora and fauna.
  - b. Information may be available in site files located at the OC office, past program files, or guidebooks.
2. Participants will be instructed to avoid contact with common, dangerous flora and fauna in the wild at the pre-program meeting and relevant safety briefings.
  - a. Topics may include, but are not limited to:
    - minimal impact behaviors such as fauna harassment, feeding, and attempts to handle wild animals;
    - fauna habits and habitat;
    - impact of environmental conditions and other factors on the color, shape and size of flora and fauna;
    - blooming, rutting, migration, and other events that may vary with weather, latitude, and geography; and
    - participant variations in sensitivity to toxins that may vary with age, weight, and physical conditions.
3. In the event that edible wilds are a curriculum component, related activities will be closely supervised by program staff or course instructors.

**Notes:**

## **Section Five: Logistics**

### **Equipment Management**

Equipment management is a comprehensive system for ensuring that appropriate equipment for outdoor education programs is available and functioning. The system requires that faculty, staff, and students implement components of the system including acquisition planning, storage, inspection, repair, and maintenance. It requires knowledge of accreditation and industry standards, as well as specific manufacturer specifications. Department of Outdoor Education manages program, group, and personal equipment, along with storage facilities and maintenance equipment.

1. Lead facilitators and course instructors will review and submit equipment reservation forms for specific programs including:
  - program equipment that is activity-related and used for instructional or program delivery purposes;
  - group equipment that may be used by sub-groups within a program such as a cook group or a tent group for the duration of the program; and
  - personal equipment that may be used by individual participants to support participation in a program.
2. Equipment reservation forms will be emailed to the equipment and facilities graduate assistant by the lead facilitator or course conductor one week prior to a program to ensure that the request can be met.
  - a. Exceptions may be negotiated in advance and approved on a per case basis based on the availability of staff to process an equipment request or the need to respond to circumstances beyond the control of a lead facilitator or course instructor.
  - b. Program equipment is normally provided on a first come, first serve basis.
  - c. Information such as, but not limited to, activity descriptions, site specifications, or rope type should be included to assist equipment staff to select appropriate equipment.
  - d. Forms should be complete, written clearly, and include contact information.
3. Equipment reservation forms are returned to the equipment and facilities graduate assistant by the lead facilitator or course instructor after a program.
  - a. Include information on the form for maintaining rope use logs for challenge course and climbing programs.

- b. Clean and inspect equipment prior to returning it to the equipment and facilities graduate assistant.
    - c. Clearly state or graphically identify maintenance and repair requirements on the equipment reservation form and program summary form.
    - d. Note lost or destroyed equipment on the program summary form.
    - e. Note use of first aid supplies on the WFR kit and on the FA kit.
  4. Program staff and course instructors are responsible for using program equipment and monitoring the use of group and personal equipment according to manufacturer specifications and DOE policy.
    - a. Inspect program equipment prior to use.
    - b. Emphasize the importance of equipment stewardship.
    - c. Model behavior that demonstrates a high regard for equipment.
    - d. Teach participants appropriate procedures for using and caring for equipment.
  5. Students taking outdoor education classes are expected to obtain personal equipment as per the current professional equipment list that is distributed on acceptance to an outdoor education academic program.
    - a. Students may purchase personal equipment through DOE professional equipment acquisition plans in accordance with manufacturer or distributor agreements and DOE payment policy.
  6. Program staff will be permitted to reserve equipment on a per case basis for use during approved professional development activities such as technical training, certification workshops, scouting trips, or personal skill development associated with an academic requirement.
  7. Program staff may not reserve equipment for use by others.
  8. Program staff will agree to the terms and conditions for equipment use, care, maintenance, and replacement as outlined on the equipment reservation form.

### **Equipment Acquisition, Inspection, and Maintenance**

1. The Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs and the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College will manage an Equipment Acquisition Plan in collaboration with outdoor education faculty.
2. The chair of the Department of Outdoor Education will approve and process equipment acquisition requests as per GC policy and with regard for the availability of funding and priorities set by program staff.

### ***New Equipment***

1. The equipment and facilities graduate assistant will manage the receipt of new equipment in collaboration with the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College.
  - a. Match received equipment and supplies to the original purchase order for approval for payment and transport to East Campus.
  - b. Complete initial inspection of new equipment and supplies prior to use or return to the manufacturer.
  - c. Assign inventory ID and enter non-disposable equipment into the master inventory data base prior to use.
  - d. Update manufacturer specification files.
  - e. Create or update supplemental inventory-use documents such as rope logs and reservation forms.

### ***Existing Equipment***

1. The equipment and facilities graduate assistant will manage existing equipment in collaboration with the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College.
2. The challenge course will be inspected annually by an ACCT vendor.
3. The challenge course will be inspected annually by OE program staff.
4. Rope logs will be current for challenge course, climbing, rappelling ropes, and tree climbing ropes.
5. Ongoing repair and maintenance of equipment will be completed based on regular use inspections and information submitted by program staff, and on equipment reservation forms.
6. A comprehensive annual equipment inventory will be conducted.
7. Equipment will be retired according to manufacturer recommendations or ongoing inspection recommendations that reveal excessive wear, damage, malfunction, or other questionable characteristics.
8. Retired equipment may be destroyed and disposed of.
9. Retired equipment that is not disposed of may be used for appropriate instructional purposes such as knot practice ropes, inspection examples, or teaching maintenance skills.
10. Retired equipment that is not disposed of will be marked with white tape or paint.
11. Climbing, challenge course, and rappelling ropes will be retired after a maximum of 5 years or 500 hours of use or as indicated by ongoing inspection.

### **First Aid and Wilderness First Responder Kits**

1. First aid and wilderness first responder kits will be managed by the equipment and facilities graduate assistant in collaboration with the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College.
2. First aid and wilderness first responder kit supplies will be stored in an appropriate and secure location.
3. Stocked first aid and wilderness first responder kit supplies will be inventoried and inspected prior to the beginning of each semester.
  - a. Submit the supply list to Student Health Services for assessment of what supplies can be provided or ordered through them.
  - b. Additional supplies are purchased by the Department of Outdoor Education.
4. All kits will be visually inspected when they are returned by a group for cleanliness, damage, and supply use.
5. A first aid or wilderness first responder kit will accompany all programs.
  - a. Additional kits may be requested on the equipment reservation form.

### ***First Aid Kits***

1. A first aid kit will accompany programs that take place in a non-wilderness context.
2. First aid kits will be cleaned and restocked monthly.
  - a. Maintenance may be necessary at any time based on visual inspections or feedback from program staff.
  - b. Inspect content for quality and quantity of appropriate supplies, expiration dates, cleanliness, and organization.
  - c. The inspection date should be noted on the new inventory form.
3. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee is responsible for ensuring that first aid kit contents that are used during a program are recorded on the inventory form.
  - a. Concerns or maintenance needs should be noted on the program summary form.
4. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will return clean first aid kits at the conclusion of a program.

### ***Wilderness First Responder Kits***

1. A wilderness first responder kit will accompany programs that take place in a wilderness context.
2. First aid kits will be cleaned and restocked per use.
  - a. Additional maintenance may be necessary at any time based on visual inspections or feedback from program staff.
  - b. Inspect content for quality and quantity of appropriate supplies, expiration dates, cleanliness, and organization.
  - c. The inspection date should be noted on the new inventory form.
3. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee is responsible for ensuring that wilderness first responder kit contents that are used during a program are recorded on the inventory form.
  - a. Concerns or maintenance needs should be noted on the program summary form.
4. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will return clean wilderness first responder kits at the conclusion of a program.

### **Use of Personal Equipment**

1. The lead facilitator or course instructor will approve, prior to use, specialized personal equipment that is not reserved through the OC.

### **Equipment Rental**

1. The Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College will manage requests to rent equipment on a per case basis.
2. As per the University System of Georgia policy, equipment purchased by state funds may not be rented.
3. As per DOE policy, equipment used for classes or equipment that is considered to be required for life-support or emergency response may not be rented.

## **Transportation**

### **Personal Vehicles**

1. Outdoor education students will complete an Assumption of Risk and Informed Consent: Use of Personal Vehicles for Outdoor Education Courses or Programs.
  - a. Outdoor education students may elect to use personal vehicles to transport themselves to and from outdoor education programs and courses that take place at a location other than a GC facility.
  - b. Lead facilitators and course instructors are advised to obtain the names of students and en route contact information using the Outdoor Education Personal Vehicle Log for extended travel.
  - c. Lead facilitators and course instructors are advised to provide complete and appropriate directions to a designated start site.
  - d. Lead facilitators and course instructors should encourage students to drive safely and allow adequate time to get to a start site.
2. Fuel for personal vehicles may not be purchased with a GC fuel card.

### **Non-GC Rental Vehicles**

1. Program staff will use non-GC rented vehicles in compliance with the renting agency rules and regulations, and outdoor education policy and procedures.
2. Drivers must meet minimum age requirements and other restrictions as established by the rental agency.
3. Fuel for rented vehicles may not be purchased with a GC fuel card.

### University Vehicles

1. OE staff will be approved to drive university vehicles.
  - a. Potential drivers must complete approval requirements in compliance with GC Human Resources (online training).
  - b. Students will submit a three to five year driver history report from the Department of Motor Vehicle Safety from the state that issued the driver's license.
  - c. The original driver history report and a copy of the driver's license are submitted to the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College.
  - d. Specific university vehicles may require drivers to have a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) or require the use of a driver employed and trained within the GC Parking & Transportation Services department.
  - e. A copy of the CDL is submitted to the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College.
2. Student driver documentation is located in the office of the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College and faculty documentation is located in the personnel file in the Department of Outdoor Education.
3. Use of university vehicles will be in compliance with GC and Department of Outdoor Education Policy.
4. University vehicles and trailers are maintained and inspected by the GC Plant Operations staff on a regular basis or as needed.
  - a. Maintenance records are filed by the foreman of the Automotive Shop.
5. Fuel is purchased with the vehicle gas card at any gas station that will accept a Wright Express gas card.
  - a. Every driver must have a unique driver identification number to be used with the gas card.
  - b. The gas card may be used for gas or other fluids necessary for the operation of the vehicle.
  - c. A printed receipt must be obtained.

*For Outdoor Education Truck:*

    - Original receipts should be left in the outdoor education truck logbook in the Outdoor Education truck.
    - The Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College will submit original receipts with the monthly fuel consumption report as appropriate for outdoor education vehicles.

*For GC Rental Vehicles:*

- Original receipts for GC rental vehicles must be turned into Parking & Transportation Services with the Vehicle Transportation Request form during normal work hours for or, if the office is closed when the vehicle is returned, placed in the envelop and left in the vehicle.
- Parking & Transportation Services will be responsible for submitting appropriate fuel receipts in accordance with GC policy to the university Administrative Services department.

## **Trailers**

1. OE staff and program staff will successfully complete trailer training with an outdoor education faculty member or an approved designee.
2. Trailer training shall include:
  - a. Observation of a faculty member or approved designee driving with a trailer on a workshop or trip.
  - b. Observation of the trailer trainee driving with a trailer on a workshop or trip.
  - c. Trailer trainees will be instructed about how to compensate for the extra length and weight of a trailer when passing vehicles, stopping, parking, or turning.
4. Spotters will be used when backing up trailers.
5. Approved drivers are responsible for hooking up a trailer to the towing vehicle correctly.
  - a. Attach trailer to vehicle using the correct sized ball hitch.
  - b. Secure hitch with padlock in “down” position.
  - c. Attach safety chains and lighting harness.
  - d. Complete preflight check of vehicle and trailer.
6. Approved drivers are responsible for supervising the loading and unloading of trailers.
  - a. Select loading and unloading zones with minimal hazards such as parking lots, designated pull outs, or rest areas.
  - b. Do not stand close to or on a roadway to unload a trailer.
  - c. Pull the trailer well off the road or find a more suitable area.
  - d. Spot people as necessary when loading and unloading equipment.
  - e. Confirm that all loads are secured.
  - f. Use tarps to cover equipment in an open trailer to avoid losing or damaging equipment.
  - g. Secure equipment that flaps and tie cord-ends tied away from tires.
7. Approved drivers are responsible for damages to other people, property, and vehicles that are a result of objects coming off trailers.
  - a. Check the load at every stop.
8. Approved drivers are responsible for transporting canoes and kayaks appropriately.
  - a. Canoes should rest on their gunwales and be secured with at least 2 tie-downs.
  - b. Canoes shorter than 15 feet long should also be secured with painters.

- c. Kayaks should be loaded stern-forward with the innermost kayak's cockpit facing the interior of the trailer and the outer two kayaks' cockpits facing out.
- d. Boats should be transported empty of equipment and with all hatch covers stored securely in bulkheads.

**Kubota**

1. OE and program staff will successfully complete Kubota training with an outdoor education faculty member or an approved designee.
2. The key to the Kubota will be located in the OC equipment room.
3. Notify the equipment and facilities graduate assistant that fuel is needed if the tank is less than half full.
4. Use low gear between the OC and the post at the top of the hill.
5. Additional operation guidelines are on the laminated card stored in the Kubota.

### **Vehicle Operation**

1. The lead facilitator or course instructor will complete the pre-flight checklist prior to departure and the post-flight checklist upon return including recording mileage.
2. Drivers are expected to obey the law at all times.
3. Drivers are responsible for paying tickets and fines.
4. Drivers will be alert and minimize distractions while driving.
  - a. Drivers should change or rest at four-hour intervals (maximum) to avoid fatigue.
  - b. The person in the passenger seat should remain alert and assist with navigation and passenger supervision as appropriate.
  - c. Drivers should refrain from using cell phones and eating while driving.
5. In accordance with state of Georgia and GC policy, drivers are responsible for ensuring that passengers are wearing seat belts when a vehicle is in motion.
  - a. Ask passengers if their seatbelts are fastened and get a verbal response from all passengers.
6. Vehicle doors will be locked when a vehicle is in motion.
7. Secure gear in passenger areas below seats.
8. The lead facilitator or course instructor is responsible for the security and care of all program vehicles.
  - a. Doors should be locked when a vehicle is left unattended.
  - b. Unattended vehicles should be parked in a public area or designed parking lot.
  - c. Valuable items should not be left in an unattended vehicle.
9. The lead facilitator or course instructor is responsible for vehicle keys and fuel card security.
10. Tobacco products, alcohol, and illegal drugs are prohibited in all vehicles.
11. The lead facilitator or course instructor is responsible for ensuring that vehicles are cleaned and inspected at the conclusion of a program.
12. The lead facilitator or course instructor is responsible for ensuring that gas card receipts are completed and left in a DOE or GC vehicle respectively.
  - a. For DOE vehicles, write the course ID or OC program name, and date(s) on the receipt.

### **Pre-flight Vehicle Checklist**

- Inspect the overall external condition of the vehicle and trailer, noting damage or maintenance needs that should be reported.
- Inspect the overall internal condition of the vehicle, noting damage or maintenance needs that should be reported, and disposing of garbage or unrelated equipment.
- Check fluid levels as appropriate.
- Inspect tires and add air as necessary to specifications on tire wall.
- Turn on windshield wipers and note the presence of adequate washer fluid delivery.
- Inspect head, running, turn, and brake light functions on vehicles and trailers.
- Double check security of any load.
- Double check trailer connection.
- Locate and inspect emergency equipment in the vehicle. A basic first aid kit, fire extinguisher, and roadside emergency kit should be available in at least one vehicle per program. Trailers should include a spare tire, jack, and lug wrench.

### **Post-flight Vehicle Checklist**

- Return the program truck and kayak trailer boat compound.
- Inspect the overall external condition of the vehicle following the trip, noting any damage or maintenance needs.
- Remove trash and equipment from interior and cargo areas.
- Leave any gas card receipts with the gas card in the vehicle.
- Return any borrowed keys to their proper location.
- Report any damage, maintenance needs, or incidents to the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs immediately via an incident/accident report within 48 hours of returning.

### **Travel Authorization and Reimbursement**

1. A Travel Authorization form will be completed and approved prior to travel.
  - a. Submit the completed form to the immediate supervisor or course instructor for submission to the chair of the DOE for approval at least two weeks prior to travel.
2. Reimbursable fuel for rented vehicles or approved personal vehicles will be purchased using a personal credit card or cash.
3. Original receipts are submitted with the completed Travel Reimbursement form in compliance with Georgia College auditing and accounting procedures.
  - a. Write the course ID or OC program name, and date(s) on the receipt.
4. Submit the completed Travel Reimbursement form and receipts to the immediate supervisor or course instructor for submission to the chair of the DOE for approval of payment.
5. In the event of a breakdown in a rented vehicle follow the renting agency instructions.
  - a. Contact the field supervisor or administrative back up.
  - b. The driver is responsible for completing the I/A report.
6. In the event of a breakdown in a GC vehicle contact GC Public Safety at 478-445-4400 after 8 am and 5 pm or Plant Operations at 478-445-4467 between 8 am and 5 pm.
  - a. Do not continue to operate the vehicle unless instructed to do so by GC personnel.
  - b. Contact the field supervisor or administrative backup.
  - c. The driver is responsible for completing the I/A report for review by OE Staff.
7. In the event of an accident in a rented vehicle:
  - a. Call 911.
  - b. Get passengers to a safe place.
  - c. Contact the field supervisor or administrative backup.
  - d. Contact the rental agency as appropriate.
  - e. Stay on the scene until police arrive.
  - f. Do not assess blame.
  - g. Do not attempt to push a vehicle to safety.
  - h. Do not operate a vehicle unless instructed by authorities.
  - i. The driver is responsible for completing the I/A report for review by OE Staff.
8. In the event of an accident in a university vehicle follow the instructions on the yellow card in the glove compartment.

- a. Call 911.
  - b. Get passengers to a safe place.
  - c. Contact the field supervisor or administrative backup.
  - d. Report the accident to the number on the yellow card.
  - e. Stay on the scene until police arrive.
  - f. Do not assess blame.
  - g. Do not attempt to push a vehicle to safety.
  - h. Do not operate a vehicle unless instructed by authorities.
9. The driver of the vehicle is responsible for calling and reporting the accident to this phone number.
  10. The driver is responsible for completing the I/A report including the phone number on the yellow card for review by OE staff.
  11. In the case of personal injury follow the Emergency System Management and Communication Protocol policy.

## **Food Pantry**

1. The Coordinator of Academic Programs will manage the DOE food pantry in consultation with the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College.
  - a. The food pantry request form should be regularly updated to reflect market prices.
  - b. The academic program graduate assistant responsible for food pantry distribution should communicate general non-perishable food pantry supply needs to the Coordinator of Academic Programs in a timely fashion to permit bulk ordering.
  - c. The academic program graduate assistant responsible for food pantry distribution should communicate specific perishable food pantry supply needs to the Coordinator of Academic Programs in a timely fashion to ensure acquisition and storage prior to a program.
2. Lead facilitators and course instructors will submit food pantry requests to the appropriate administrator for approval and distribution to the graduate assistant responsible for filling food pantry orders.
  - a. Food pantry requests should be approved based on course or program budgets as submitted.
  - b. The food budget for a course or program should take into account the menu or ration planning, special dietary needs, and program context, and course timeline.
  - c. Food refunds to participants are approved on a per case basis for reasons beyond the participant's control.

### **Placing Requests**

1. The lead facilitator or course instructor will request by email a current food pantry order form at least one week prior to a program.
2. The lead facilitator or course instructor will collect and submit completed forms via a single email to the academic program assistant responsible for food pantry distribution no less than three days prior to a program.

### **Order Fulfillment**

1. The academic program graduate assistant responsible for food pantry distribution is responsible for the oversight of food pantry the distribution of food pantry supplies.
  - a. Ensure that all food safety and administrative responsibilities are met.
  - b. Coordinate with the lead facilitator or course instructor to schedule and organize order fulfillment typically 1-2 days prior

- to a program. Assist the course instructor or designee, and in some cases participants to fill the pantry request.
- c. Ensure that food is stored in a separate Rubbermaid bin and/or in a clearly marked area in the refrigerator.
  - d. Clean all surfaces before and after filling a pantry order.
2. The lead facilitator or course instructor will inspect the final order to ensure that all requested items are present.

**Program Wrap-up**

1. Food that is left over from a program will be distributed to participants or be disposed of in the thicker black bags and placed in the large trash cans outside the lodge.
2. Reusable containers will be cleaned, dried, and returned with program or tent group equipment.
  - a. Food containers should not be left in the sink, drying rack, or dishwasher.
3. The academic program graduate assistant responsible for food pantry distribution will inspect food pantry containers and return them to the appropriate locations.

### **East Campus Facilities and Program Areas**

1. The Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College will provide oversight to the management of outdoor education facilities and program areas at East Campus.
2. East Campus facilities and program areas will be reserved in R25.
  - a. Access the Facility Availability and Request Form in Favorite Links on the MyCats page.
  - b. Query the R25 page to see availability of East Campus facilities including:
    - Lake Laurel Lodge;
    - Outdoor Center Cabin;
    - YURT;
    - Challenge Course;
    - Pavilion; and
    - Deck.
  - c. Enter a request for relevant facilities using outdoor education as the requestor.
3. Non-DOE group approval for the use of LLL is made on a per case basis and is normally restricted to GC academic classes or GC meetings that will not interfere with academic or OC program delivery.
4. Graduate assistants, internship and practica students will be assigned duties related to the management of DOE facilities and program areas at East Campus on a needs basis or as part of a formal, ongoing agreement.
5. An OE staff member will be the primary liaison for non-DOE groups as necessary.
  - a. Keep phone or beeper on at all times.
  - b. Check in once a day with primary contact or group agency sponsor.
  - c. Respond to the needs of the group and consult the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or designee as necessary.
6. OE and program staff is responsible for assisting with the security, care, and maintenance of outdoor education facilities and program areas at East Campus.
  - a. Report maintenance needs to the Director of the OC.
  - b. Report cleaning supply needs to the Director of the OC.
  - c. Keep facilities clean and free of trash that may attract critters or be unsightly.
  - d. Inspect refrigerators for dated contents or spills and discard appropriately.

- e. Communicate stewardship expectations stewardship of DOE facilities and program areas at East Campus to program participants and OE students.
- f. Put rearranged furniture back to its original format for programs and classes that follow.
- g. Lock doors and turn off lights if they are the last person to leave the area.
- h. Assign an OE Staff member to complete the following logistical tasks prior to and after LLL has been used by a non-DOE group.

## **Lake Laurel Lodge Use by Non-DOE Groups**

### ***Preparation***

1. Lake Laurel Lodge (LLL) will be inspected one week prior to a group arriving to ensure that work order maintenance requests can be filled in a timely fashion.
  - a. Report maintenance needs or concerns to the Director of the OC by email to enable a description to be included in the work request.
2. LLL will be cleaned, at minimum, one day prior to a group's arrival and the day following a group's departure.
3. Schedule cleaning with custodial services in Plant Operations at least one week prior to group's arrival by submitting a work request online at [work.request@GC.edu](mailto:work.request@GC.edu).
  - a. The work request should be specific about what facilities need to be cleaned (by room), what supplies need to be provided, and what special cleaning needs to occur beyond basic cleaning or during the client or group stay.
  - b. Work requests should be copied to the Director of the OC.
4. Inspect the LLL and prepare it for overnight accommodation at least one day before a group arrives.
  - a. Stock bathrooms with toilet paper, paper towels, and soap.
  - b. Stock clean washcloths and dish towels in kitchen.
  - c. Check water by running faucets until the water runs clear.
  - d. Check for insects and rodents.
  - e. Submit any necessary work orders to fix problems.
  - f. Remove all trash to the dumpsters.
  - g. Ensure that technology lectern is locked unless the client has negotiated otherwise.

### ***Group Liaison***

1. The group liaison will be available to the group to address concerns or problems the group has with East Campus facilities or program areas.
  - a. Keep phone or beeper on at all times.
  - b. Check in once a day with primary contact.
  - c. Respond to the needs of the group or contact the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or designee.
  - d. Keep a record of interactions with the group including, but not limited to maintenance, service, or equipment issues and schedule changes.

### ***Group Arrival***

1. The group liaison will prepare LLL on the day of the group's arrival.
  - a. Arrive at the facility at least 30 minutes before the scheduled time of arrival.
  - b. Complete a final check of the lodge to ensure all of preparatory tasks (listed above) have been completed.
  - c. Adjust thermostats.
  - d. Open cleaning supply closet.
2. The group liaison will greet and orient the group when it arrives at East Campus.
  - a. Introduce yourself to the group sponsor and participants.
  - b. Discuss parking etiquette and driveway safety with the group.
  - c. Provide tour of facility including bathrooms, main room, kitchen, and bunkrooms.
  - d. Provide the group sponsor with relevant keys.
  - e. Ask if the group needs any personal linen such as sleeping bags, pillows, bed linens, or towels and make a note of any items distributed.
  - f. Provide liaison contact information for the duration of program and discuss departure and evaluation procedures as appropriate.
3. The group liaison will note areas to which the group will have access.
  - a. Groups normally have access to LLL and the area below the dam.
  - b. Note that the lake is not available for swimming or boating.
  - c. Note other informal use areas such as the lake trail.
  - d. Note use limitations such as the challenge course and YURT as appropriate.
4. The group liaison will discuss the Lodge Usage Guidelines and leave a copy with the group sponsor or designee.

### ***Group Departure***

1. The group liaison will arrive at the facility 30 minutes before the group's schedule departure.
  - a. Distribute program evaluation forms as appropriate.
  - b. Ask the group sponsor to share impressions, highlights, or concerns.
  - c. Record comments for submission to the Director of the OC.
2. Inspect and "reset" the facility following the group's departure.
  - a. Inspect entire lodge for damage, theft, or articles left behind and record observations.
  - b. Collect linens and place them in laundry in the OC.

c. Contact client regarding any items left by the group.

**Notes:**

## **Section Six: Environment, Culture, and Service Learning**

1. Lead facilitators and course instructors will manage formal and informal opportunities for service learning in DOE programs (see Appendix 3).
  - a. Service learning may be integrated into specific OC programs or academic courses or across academic courses, departments, or internal and external organizations.
2. The lead facilitator or course instructor will coordinate service learning experiences with host agencies and land management personnel and in compliance with DOE policy and related documents unless otherwise approved in collaboration with the host organization.
  - a. Select service learning experiences based on program or course goals and client characteristics.
  - b. Conduct host agency orientation to GC and student orientation to host agency services, cliental, mission, and context.
  - c. Ensure that participants have the skills and knowledge needed to perform the service.
  - d. Insure that logistics are complete and communicated to the appropriate people including, but not limited to, fees or fundraising expectations, clothing, equipment, accommodation, travel, food, and water.
  - e. Implement strategies for bringing recognition to the project and participants.
  - f. Implement activity-specific policy for technical activities conducted during service projects.
  - g. Inspect and carry appropriate medical supplies and other relevant emergency equipment.
  - h. Implement safety and emergency procedures specific to the activity.
  - i. Complete forms as necessary.
3. The lead facilitator or course instructors will ensure that formal, informal, volunteer, and required service learning that is not reported directly by OE students is done so in compliance with GC and DOE policy and procedures.
4. Program staff will provide opportunities for participants to develop social and place-based connections.
  - a. Informal, voluntary, or required service learning projects may be incorporated into program activities.

- b. Themes that relate to program goals or context like logging in national forests, water resources in the southeast, population growth impact on Lake Sinclair, or global issues that impact local communities may provide opportunities for integrative learning.
  - c. Processing strategies may include opportunities to discuss and define socially acceptable behavior and foster an understanding about how one's behaviors affect others.
  - d. Topics for processing service learning experiences may include, but are not limited to:
    - fitting service into existing activities;
    - working with people you enjoy or interested in getting to know better;
    - meaning and benefit associated with serving to learn and learning to serve; and
    - locally-based opportunities for community service.
5. Program staff will relate relevant environmental literacy, environmental education strategies, and technical skill topics, skills, and attitudes to Leave No Trace principles.
  6. Program staff will research and share information about the natural and cultural heritage specific to program contexts including, but not limited to:
    - local and regional ecosystems;
    - historical and physical geology;
    - hydrological processes;
    - past and present human cultures;
    - human impact on natural settings; and
    - weather and climate patterns and trends.
  7. Program staff will model socially and environmentally sustainable behavior.
    - a. Avoid generalizations about human impact on the environment.
    - b. Avoid judgments about other person's values.
    - c. Encouraging conversations about program experiences that make connections to participant's lives at home.
    - d. Encourage conversations that lead to social and environmental awareness of oneself, others, and local, national, and global natural and cultural communities.
    - e. Use constructive controversy techniques to enhance critical thinking.
    - f. Walk your talk – be a servant leader, follow relevant Leave No Trace Principles, plan logistics that lower the impact of the

group on the planet, take responsibility and explain your choices, offer participants immediate, tangible appreciation and reciprocity when they demonstrate environmental and social responsibility.

**Notes:**

## **Section Seven: Land-based Activities**

<b><u>Camping</u></b> Ratio 1:10/min 2
<b><u>Caving</u></b> Ratio 1:6/min 2
<b><u>Hiking and Backpacking</u></b> Ratio 1:8/min 2
<b><u>Biking</u></b> Ratio 1:8/min 2
<b><u>Tree Climbing</u></b> Ratio 1:6/min 2
<b><u>Climbing Activities</u></b> Ratio 1:6/min 2
<b><u>Solo</u></b> Ratio 1:8/min 2

The lead facilitator or course instructor is responsible for ensuring that prior sections in this manual are implemented as appropriate for land-based activities.

**Section One: Outdoor Education at Georgia College**

**Section Two: Personnel Administration**

**Section Three: Program Administration**

**Section Four: Risk Management**

**Section Five: Logistics**

**Section Six: Environment, Culture, and Service Learning**

## Camping

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage camping activities in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
2. Camping activities will be appropriate for participant characteristics and skill levels, program goals, environmental conditions and impact, and locations at which camping will take place.
  - a. Land manager guidelines for selecting and using frontcountry or backcountry campsites should be followed.
  - b. Developed campsites should be used unless the use of a pristine campsite enhances program goals or in the case of an emergency.
3. Program staff will prepare participants for camping activities including, but not limited to:
  - camp site selection;
  - equipment and site management;
  - menu planning and food preparation;
  - water purification;
  - personal hygiene;
  - waste disposal;
  - minimal impact principles;
  - shelters;
  - fire building;
  - clothing; and
  - safety and emergency procedures.
4. Campsites will be selected based on program goals and environmental factors and conditions.
  - a. Sites should provide protection from weather, adequate tent/tarp set up, and a water source.
  - b. Sites should be free from potential hazards such as loose rock, dead trees and widow makers, flash flood potential, poisonous plants, and dangerous fauna.
  - c. It may be necessary select a less appropriate site in the case of inclement weather or an emergency situation.
5. Program staff will have reliable information about weather conditions that may influence the camp site environments.
6. Program staff will use location-specific practices for minimum impact such as, but not limited to:

- a. Cook sites and fuel should be separated from the rest of the campsite.
  - b. Campsites should be 200 ft. from freshwater sources.
  - c. Shelters, cooking, food storage, and toilet areas should be 200 ft. apart from each other.
7. Groups will leave a campsite better than it was found.
    - a. Remove trash to a location at which it can be disposed of appropriately.
    - b. Fluff ground cover to discourage others from camping in pristine settings.
    - c. Complete a final sweep of the campsite before leaving to ensure nothing is left behind.
  8. Program staff and participants will maintain appropriate personal hygiene.
    - a. Wash or sanitize hands prior to preparing or eating food, and after urinating or defecating.
    - b. Clean or sterilize food pots, bowls, and utensils daily.
    - c. Do not share eating utensils, bowls, cups, mugs, bottles.
  9. Program staff and participants will use appropriate water treatment techniques for non-potable water sources such as boiling, commercial water pumps/filters, and/or chemicals.
  10. Program staff will model and teach appropriate use of stoves, gas lanterns, and fires prior to use.
    - a. One program staff member should be present in the cooking area.
    - b. Do not use portable cook stoves, lanterns, or candles inside shelters unless instructed to do so and supervised by program staff.
    - c. Store fuel outside of shelters and away from sources of flame or sparks.
    - d. Follow manufacturer instructions for priming, lighting, regulating, and fueling camp stoves and lanterns.
    - e. Use 2-burner stoves on tables at frontcountry campsites only.
    - f. Use the “light-to-run” jump-back position when lighting single-burner stoves.
    - g. Maintain a safe-circle distance of approximately 6’ when standing or sitting around a lit stove.
    - h. One person may be inside the safe-circle at a time.
    - i. Do not leave a lit stove unattended.
    - j. Stoves should be cool to the touch before they are disassembled or refueled.

11. Food will be secure from animals at night using appropriate methods such as hanging bags, locking storage containers, nearby vehicles, or kayak bulkheads.
12. Program staff will model and teach techniques for heat regulation.
  - a. Provide an equipment list that is appropriate for weather expectations.
  - b. Inspect participant equipment prior to program implementation.
  - c. Discuss appropriate clothing for weather expectations prior to and throughout program delivery.
13. The group will carry backup clothing for inclement weather or emergency response.
14. Program staff will provide oversight to the use of knives, axes, hatchets, or saws.
15. Program staff will provide oversight to the disposal of human waste.
  - a. Use designated campsites with outhouse facilities if available for camping or on route.
  - b. Discuss issues related to human waste disposal in the backcountry such as:
    - the spread of illness such as Giardiasis;
    - aesthetic and social impact;
    - minimum impact advantages;
    - pollution of fresh water sources;
    - contact with insects and animals;
    - maximizing decomposition; and
    - toilet paper and feminine hygiene products.
  - c. If possible, urinate in rocky or sandy areas away from camp.
  - d. Disperse cat holes approximately 200' away from camp, water, trails, other visitors, and gullies and note that local regulations or environmental factors may dictate greater distances.
  - e. Dig 4-6" diameter and 4-8" deep cat holes in organic, non-mineral soil.
  - f. After use mix some soil into the hole with a stick, cover with the soil plug, and disguise the area with natural materials.
  - g. Carry out toilet paper, sanitary napkins and tampons in a double bag and consider placing a crushed aspirin or used tea bag in the bag to reduce odor.

## Caving

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage caving activities in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
2. Caving activities will be appropriate for participant characteristics and skill levels, program goals, environmental conditions and impact, and locations at which caving will take place.
  - a. “Sacrificed” caves are preferred over pristine caves for novice participants.
  - b. Caves that are not prone to flood are normally preferred.
3. Program staff will prepare participants for caving activities including, but not limited to:
  - choice and care of clothing and equipment;
  - travel techniques;
  - speleological navigation;
  - groundwater hydrology;
  - cave geology and biology; and
  - cave conservation issues such as the effects of mining, road construction, and pipelines on caves.
4. Program staff will have reliable information about weather conditions that may influence the cave environment.
5. Vertical caving requiring ascending and rappelling will be conducted under the direction of qualified program staff or third party vendor.
6. Staff will notify an outside monitor of the group’s entrance into and exit from a cave.
  - a. Program staff will use the check-in and check-out procedures established by the managing agency for caves managed by an external authority.
  - b. Staff will notify the field supervisor or administrative backup when entering and exiting a cave that is not managed by an external authority.
7. Program staff will implement systems to ensure the group remains together and travels appropriately in a cave.
  - a. Develop and practice a monitoring system to account for members of the group.
  - b. Conduct head counts at regular intervals.
  - c. Staff members will normally be in the “lead” and “sweep” positions while traveling in a cave.

- d. Persons in the lead and sweep positions should regularly communicate with the group to ensure an appropriate pace and to prevent the group from becoming separated.
  - e. Avoid delays and bottlenecks that may cause people waiting to get cold.
  - f. Familiarize participants with techniques for climbing, balancing, and negotiating difficult terrain in a cave prior to entering the cave and the use of a hand-line on slick slopes or climbs.
  - g. Avoid jumping and step carefully when moving through a cave.
  - h. Move cautiously while in a cave to prevent accidental damage to cave formations.
8. Program staff and participants will follow location-specific practices for minimum impact in caves and surrounding areas.
    - a. Discuss fragile cave environments and techniques for avoiding damage to cave features.
    - b. Communicate the NSS Conservation Policy and/or LNT principles prior to cave entry.
    - c. Avoid breaking cave formations.
    - d. Discuss minimal impact processes for eliminating body fluids while in the cave.
  9. Program staff and participants will wear appropriate clothing and equipment for caving including, but not limited to:
    - helmet approved by UIAA mounted light with enough batteries/fuel to last for twice as long as a planned trip into a cave;
    - two additional, reliable light sources that do not include candles, lighters, and glow sticks;
    - synthetic or wool undergarments for warmth;
    - outer layer such as rain gear or overalls for abrasion resistance; sturdy footwear for traction and ankle support;
    - gloves that buffer oils from the hands from of cave features; and
    - a large trash bag for a personal heat shelter.
  10. Program staff will have access to extra equipment and emergency supplies including:
    - extra food and water;
    - containers for carrying out human waste;
    - extra lights and batteries;
    - extra clothing; and

- WFR kit.
11. A spinal board will be accessible to the group at all times.
    - a. The spinal board may be located in a vehicle at the trailhead or campsite.

## Hiking and Backpacking

<u>Trail and Off-trail Travel</u>
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<u>River Crossing</u>
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### Trail and Off-trail Travel

1. The lead facilitator, course conductor, or designee monitor trail and off-trail travel in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
2. Trail travel will be appropriate for participant characteristics and skill levels, program goals, environmental conditions and impact, and locations at which backcountry travel will take place.
3. Program staff will prepare participants for trail and off-trail travel in backcountry contexts including, but not limited to:
  - foot travel and energy conservation techniques;
  - backpack fitting and packing;
  - land navigation;
  - emergency response; and
  - land management regulations and resources.
4. Program staff will have reliable information about weather conditions that may influence the trail and off-trail travel.
5. Program staff and participants traveling in the backcountry will follow appropriate techniques for the current conditions of the trail and prevailing land management agency regulations.
6. Program staff and participants will follow location-specific practices for minimum impact during trail and off-trail travel.
  - a. Trail travelers should avoid leaving the trail and travel in single file.
  - b. Trail travelers should travel through rather than around obstacles that block passage on a trail such as fallen trees and puddles.
  - c. Off-trail travelers should spread group members out rather than travelling in single file.
  - d. Off-trail travelers should set group control boundaries using appropriate landmarks.

7. Program staff will conduct a safety briefing prior to trail or off-trail travel that includes, but is not limited to, relevant environmental conditions such as hidden rocks, roots, low hanging branches, slippery surfaces, hazards, boundaries, and communication protocol.

### **River Crossing**

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage river crossings in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
  - a. Monitor river conditions and weather reports prior to and during programs in areas where river crossing is planned for or may occur.
  - b. Be intentional about when and how to cross challenging rivers.
  - c. The overall physical condition of group members should be assessed prior to crossing a river.
  - d. The smallest and weakest persons in a group should be closely monitored if the water level in a river is above knee level.
  - e. Assess environmental conditions such as, but not limited to:
    - rate of flow and depth;
    - downstream hazards;
    - riverbed and shoreline characteristics; and
    - air and water temperature.
  - f. Assess available resources such as, but not limited to:
    - rescue personnel and gear; and
    - clothing and equipment for immersion incidents.
  - g. Analyze potential negative outcomes that may cause immersion or injury and the capacity of the group and program staff to respond to mitigate their potential.
2. River crossings will be appropriate for participant characteristics and skill levels, program goals, environmental conditions and minimal impact, and the locations in which river crossings take place.
3. Program staff will prepare participants for river crossing activities.
  - a. Program staff should be available and ready to intervene on significant river crossings.
  - b. Program staff should attempt questionable river crossings before participants cross.
  - c. Wear appropriately secure and stable footwear such as camp shoes, boots, or water shoes during river crossings.
  - d. Swimming policy should be followed when crossing rivers greater than waist deep.
  - e. Place a person without a pack on each side of the crossing in a position to give assistance to crossers.
  - f. Consider placing a strong swimmer downstream as a backup.
  - g. Undo the waistband and sternum strap, and loosen the shoulder straps so the pack can be quickly and easily removed if there is

a chance of falling into or being knocked down by a strong current.

4. Program staff will select appropriate river crossing techniques based on an assessment of hazards, presence of rapids and their characteristics, human-made objects and structures, river bank structure, and water depth and flow.

### ***River Crossing Techniques***

#### **Pairs Wading**

Two people face each other and hold shoulders. The larger person faces downstream to create an eddy for the smaller person. Small side-steps are taken alternately beginning with the upstream person, each supporting the other while moving.

#### **Triangle Wading**

Three people form a triangle, with the strongest person as point, facing upstream. The point calls step right, step left as the triangle moves across the river.

#### **In-Line Wading**

At least three people form a line with the strongest person in the front facing upstream and using a long stick or paddle to support themselves if necessary. Waders carefully follow holding the shoulders of the person in front.

#### **Rope Crossing**

A wading technique indicated above allows the group to establish a fixed line across the river. Individuals then cross facing upstream and on the downstream side of the rope. A final group releases the rope and cross to the other side using a technique above. At no time should a crosser be tied to a rope.

## **Biking**

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage biking activities in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
2. Bicycles and biking activities will be appropriate for participant characteristics and skill levels, program goals, environmental conditions and impact, and locations at which road or mountain biking activities will take place.
3. Program staff will prepare participants for biking activities including, but not limited to:
  - bike types and options within types;
  - sizing and adjustment techniques;
  - support, optional, and safety equipment;
  - physical fitness and nutrition;
  - road and/or trail riding techniques;
  - road and/or trail riding courtesies;
  - land access, protection, and conservation;
  - bike and equipment care and maintenance; and
  - cycling safety.
4. Bicycle skill development will be sequenced and practiced prior to more extensive riding.
5. Program staff will have reliable information about weather conditions that may influence biking activities.
6. Bicycles will be inspected prior to use for workshops and daily for trips.
  - a. Inspect brakes, cables, tires, derailleur, chain, and headset at the pre-ride check and throughout the program and maintain or repair as necessary.
  - b. Lubricate chains as needed.
  - c. Maintain appropriate air pressure in tires.
7. Program staff and participants will wear helmets.
  - a. Explain proper fit and necessity for a secure helmet.
  - b. Inspect helmets for cracks on the shell of the helmet.
  - c. Inspect straps for secure connections, fraying, and broken buckles.
8. Equipment loaded on bicycles will be secure and free from interference with tires and chains.
9. Program staff and participants will wear trim fitting clothing that is appropriate for climate and weather conditions.
  - a. Secure loose clothing prior to riding.

10. Program staff and participants will wear closed-toed shoes.
  - a. Riding shoes that are secured at the toe and heel may be advisable for specific programs.
11. Program staff and participants will comply with traffic laws and local road riding practices.
  - a. Ride with traffic.
  - b. Use hand signals for turning and stopping.
  - c. Space groups out to provide enough space to enable vehicles to pass riders.
12. Trail riding will take place at sites within level of competency of program staff and participants.
13. Program staff will model and teach trail courtesy.
  - a. Give right of way to horses.
  - b. Announce intention to pass pedestrians and do so carefully.
  - c. Anticipating other trail users around turns and blind spots.
  - d. Minimize impact on native flora, fauna and the trail.
  - e. Set an appropriate pace and distance between riders based on trail conditions, participant skills, and other trail user needs.

## Tree Climbing

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage tree climbing activities in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
2. Tree climbing activities will be appropriate for participant characteristics and skill levels, program goals, environmental conditions and impact, and locations at which tree climbing will take place.
3. Program staff will prepare students for tree climbing activities including, but not limited to:
  - physical and psychological demands of climbing and descending;
  - appropriate verbal commands;
  - rope ties and their uses (i.e. 5/3 Blake's hitch, figure-eight family, Prussik hitch, clove hitch, double fisherman, monkey fist family, etc.);
  - proper fit, care, and inspection of helmets, saddles and ropes;
  - bridge tying and clipping into saddle;
  - B.A.C.K. checks;
  - use of weight bag to set route;
  - proper spotting techniques;
  - ascent to and descent from tree canopy, using Double Rope Technique;
  - use of backup safety systems (i.e. safety knots, fireman's belay);
  - multi-pitch climbing;
  - use of Cambium Savers; and
  - basic rescue techniques.
4. Program staff will have reliable information about weather conditions that may influence the tree climbing activities.
5. Trees approved by an arborist for tree climbing are preferred for introductory programs and novice climbers.
6. Climbing areas and specific trees will be scouted prior to program use.
  - a. Trees and surrounding areas should be free from obvious hazards.
  - b. Trees with dead limbs, debris, and insects should be avoided.
  - c. Select landing areas that are stable, and without obstructions.

7. Program staff and participants will minimize environmental impact to trees and climbing sites.
  - a. Select sites that minimize impact to native flora and fauna.
  - b. Protect trees used as anchors with Cambium Savers.
8. Program staff will teach and model appropriate equipment use and clothing needs for tree climbing activities.
  - a. Comply with manufacture instructions.
  - b. Inspect ropes and hardware prior to use.
  - c. Teach participants to check ropes and other soft goods for damage prior to use.
  - d. Avoid stepping on ropes or exposing them to excessive sunlight.
  - e. Minimize rope and webbing wear and tear by protecting them from sharp edges and using Cambium Savers.
  - f. Wear clothing appropriate for the local climate and weather conditions.
  - g. Wear clothing that is slim fitting and will not catch in hardware.
9. Program staff and participants will wear shoes that are closed at the toe and secured at the heel.
10. Program staff and participants will use double rope climbing techniques.
  - a. Designate and monitor helmet zones.
  - b. Conduct a pre-flight helmet check and B.A.C.K. check.
  - c. Perform a B.A.C.K. check before ascending or transitioning from one pitch to the next.
  - d. Spot participants during initial climbing to minimize swinging.
  - e. Teach and encourage participants to practice descents close to the ground with one hand on down rope and two fingers above knot.
11. Program staff will use appropriate backup techniques for tree climbing.
  - f. Use a fireman's belay to descend with a new or inexperienced climber while descending;
  - g. Program staff may conduct or ask a participant to conduct a safety knot check periodically.
12. Program staff will have access to appropriate safety and rescue equipment for a range of potential emergency situations.
  - a. Locate first aid and rescue equipment in an area accessible to all facilitators.
  - b. Carry appropriate rescue equipment including, but not limited to:

- extra rope;
  - extra carabiners;
  - cordelette loops and slings;
  - a pick-off strap;
  - a friction device; and
  - rescue knife or shears.
13. Program staff will use stable and appropriate anchor branches close to the trunk, are main branches, and a minimum of 6” in diameter
14. Program staff will teach and use the following communication system during tree climbing activities.

### Tree climbing Communication System

<b>Climber says:</b>	<b>Meaning and Response Needed</b>
“Help”	Universal call for emergency assistance. No false alarms!
“Stop!” or “Whoa!”	Used to get attention. All unnecessary activity should cease until problem is resolved.
“Headache”	Used to warn others that something is falling or has been dropped from the tree. Keep head down and eyes covered.
“Clear”	Response to “Headache,” – danger has passed.
“Climbing”	Climber is ascending.
“On Rope”	Climber is clipped in and ready to climb.
“Off Rope”	Climber has completed the climb and has detached from the rope.
“Throwing”	Climber is about to throw weight bag into the tree to attempt a setting.
“Down Check”	Climber is calling for confirmation that rope is touching the ground before descending.
“Check OK”	Down check is good. Participant may descend to the ground.
“Descending”	Climber is descending.
“Free Rope”	Rope is to be pulled from tree. Stand clear.
“Gate Check”	Every participant should perform a squeeze check on their carabiner.

## **Climbing Activities**

<b><u>Top Rope Climbing</u></b>
<b><u>Bouldering</u></b>
<b><u>Rappelling</u></b>

### **General Policy**

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage climbing activities in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
2. Program staff will select climbing activity sites and routes that are appropriate for participant characteristics and skill levels, individual group member and group goals, program goals, environmental conditions and impact, and locations at which climbing activities take place.
  - a. Scout sites prior to program use to ensure that they are free and clear from obvious hazards such as water, loose rock, debris, and insects or poisonous flora.
  - b. Select climbing sites that minimize impact to native flora and fauna.
  - c. Pad trees used as anchors to protect them from damage.
  - d. Base skill development sequences on program design, instructional goals, client assessment, and the setting.
  - e. Emphasize challenge by choice, goal setting, problem solving, trust, teamwork and challenge.
3. Program staff will have reliable information about weather conditions that may influence climbing activities.
4. Program staff and participants will use appropriate communication systems for climbing activities.
5. Program staff will lead climb to set up a top rope anchor with the approval of the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs or the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College or designate.
  - a. Avoid the lead climbing by selecting program-appropriate climbing sites and routes.

6. Program staff will establish appropriate safe zones at climbing activity sites.
  - a. A rock fall zone should be at least 15' from a cliff line.
7. Program staff and participants will wear properly fitted helmets when participating in climbing activities or anywhere in the rock fall zone.
8. Program staff and participants will be belayed or otherwise anchored when moving or standing within six feet of a cliff edge.
9. Program staff will teach and model appropriate equipment use and clothing needs for climbing activities.
  - a. Follow manufacturer specifications for equipment use.
  - b. Inspect ropes and hardware prior to use.
  - c. Teach participants to check ropes and other soft goods for damage prior to use.
  - d. Avoid stepping on ropes, exposure to excessive sunlight, and wear on ropes and webbing from sharp edges.
  - e. Wear clothing that is appropriate for the climate in general and the weather in particular.
10. Program staff and participants will wear footwear that is appropriate for climbing activities.
  - a. Footwear should be closed at the toe and secured at the heel.
11. Program staff will ensure access to appropriate safety and rescue equipment.
  - a. Assess potential emergency situations.
  - b. Locate first aid and rescue equipment in an area accessible to all facilitators.
  - c. Carry appropriate rescue equipment including, but not limited to:
    - extra rope;
    - extra carabiners;
    - cordelette loops and slings;
    - a pick-off strap;
    - a friction device; and
    - rescue knife or shears.

### Climbing Activity Communication System

Climber says:	Belayer says:	Meaning and Response Needed
on belay?		Are you ready? Is the belay on?
	belay on	All set. The belay will now catch you if you fall.
climbing or rappelling		I am ready to climb/rappel.
	climb or rappell	Go ahead, the rope will be controlled by the belayer.
tension		Take up all slack. My weight is coming onto the rope. <i>Take up slack until the climber indicates that's me. Assume brake position and hold until the climber indicates slack.</i> <i>No verbal answer required.</i>
that's me		You have me where I want you to have me. <i>No verbal answer required.</i>
slack		I need some slack in the rope. <i>The belayer should feed out a small amount of rope.</i> <i>No verbal answer required.</i>
watch me		I'm attempting a difficult move. I may fall.
rope or rock		A rope or another object is coming down.
	clear	You may drop the rope, the area is clear.
off belay		I am secure and indeed I will no longer need the belay. <i>Take <u>off the belay</u>.</i>
	belay off	The <u>belay is off</u> , echoed to ensure there is not misunderstanding.

### **Top Rope Climbing**

1. Program staff will prepare participants for top rope climbing activities including, but not limited to:
  - appropriate verbal commands;
  - physical and psychological demands of climbing;
  - backup belay techniques;
  - proper spotting techniques;
  - movement on rock such as types of holds, maintaining balance, three points of contact, and resting;
  - rope ties and their uses such as figure eight family, water knot or ring bend, Prussik hitch, clove hitch, Münter hitch, and double fisherman;
  - proper fit, care, and inspection of helmets, sit harnesses, and chest harnesses;
  - clipping or tying the rope and belay device into the harness;
  - proper belaying techniques and use of belay devices such as Münter hitch, ATC, and Gri Gri;
  - building and placing top rope anchors; and
  - basic rescue techniques.
2. Program staff and participants will use accepted belay techniques for top rope climbing.
  - a. Use belay devices that are approved by the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs or the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College.
  - b. Secure loose hair and clothing and remove loose or large jewelry before ascending.
  - c. Check staff and participant helmets, harnesses, knots, and carabiners prior to each climb including, but not limited to:
    - two finger harness fit on hips and legs with permission from climber;
    - helmet fit, slippage, and buckle security; and
    - visual or tactile check of buckles, safety knots, and belay hardware attachment, position, and loading.
  - d. Use backup belayers.
  - e. Spot participants where rope stretch may cause a climber to land on the ground if a fall occurs.
3. Program staff will teach and use stable and appropriate top rope anchor systems.
  - b. Use a minimum of two separate natural or three artificial anchor points for climbing systems such as:

- well-rooted, live trees at least six inches in diameter; large, immobile boulders; or other secure natural features for natural anchors;
  - well-placed, permanent climbing bolts or temporary, or artificial such as spring-loaded camming devices, stoppers, or hexes anchors; or
  - LEADSTER anchor systems that limits extension, have an angle of less than 90 degrees, are built directional to the climb in use, are solid and strong; are built in a timely manner; and are equalized and redundant.
4. Two program staff will inspect anchors and artificial placements prior to tope rope climbing.

### **Bouldering**

1. Program staff will prepare participants for bouldering activities including, but not limited to:
  - climbing techniques and movement on rock such as weight distribution, three-point stance, upper body positioning, breathing, mantling, lay-backs, balance, opposition, or friction;
  - spotting and falling techniques such as protection of the climber's head and neck area, spotting stance, and being focused and attentive; and
  - communication systems.
2. Program staff will assess and approve bouldering sites prior to participant use.
  - a. Consider height, spotting requirements, environmental characteristics, and program goals.
  - b. Determine if direct program staff supervision is required or if participants may spot bouldering activities.
  - c. Select bouldering sites that develop a strong teaching progression for roped climbing activities.
  - d. Use bouldering activities to create excitement for roped climbing activities.

### **Rappelling**

1. Program staff will prepare participants for rappelling activities including, but not limited to:
  - physical and psychological demands of rappelling;
  - appropriate verbal commands;
  - proper spotting techniques;
  - backup belay techniques;
  - proper fit, care, and inspection of helmets, sit harnesses, and chest harnesses;
  - attaching the rope and rappel device into the harness;
  - proper use of rappel devices such as ATC, Figure 8's, and rappel racks;
  - building rappelling anchors;
  - body position for rappelling;
  - negotiating the edge;
  - landing at the bottom of the rappel;
  - use of appropriate backups; and
  - basic rescue techniques.
2. Program staff will use commonly accepted rappelling techniques.
  - a. Use rappel devices that are approved by the Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs or the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College.
  - b. Secure loose hair and clothing and remove loose or large jewelry before descending.
  - c. Check staff and participant helmets, harnesses, knots, and carabiners prior to each rappel.
3. Program staff will use appropriate backup belays for rappelling activities including, but not limited to:
  - autoblock backups;
  - ascender backups;
  - external dynamic belays; and
  - bottom or fireman's belays.
4. Program staff will use stable and appropriate anchor systems for rappelling activities.
  - a. Use a minimum of one natural or two artificial anchor points such as:
    - well-rooted, live trees at least six inches in diameter; large, immobile boulders; or other secure natural features for natural anchors;

- well-placed, permanent climbing bolts or temporary, artificial (i.e., spring-loaded camming devices, stoppers, or hexes) anchors; and
  - LEADSTER anchor systems that Limits Extension, have an Angle of less than 90 degrees, are built Directional to the climb in use, are Solid and strong; are built in a Timely manner; and are Equalized and Redundant.
5. Two program staff will inspect anchors and artificial placements prior to rappelling.

## Solo<sup>9</sup>

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage solos in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
2. Program staff will use solo activities that are appropriate for participant characteristics and skill levels, individual group member and group goals, program goals, environmental conditions and impact, and locations at which solo activities take place.
  - a. Consider opportunities for reflection.
  - b. Consider the application of skills learned in other components of the program such as primitive living, survival, emergency response, or land navigation.
  - c. Consider solo opportunities following a high-impact or stressful experience.
  - d. Consider solo opportunities at the beginning and end of a program.
  - e. Consider the impact of the solo experience on subsequent program events and group dynamics.
  - f. Consider fasting an option, not a requirement.
3. Program staff will prepare participants for solo activities.
  - a. Discuss participant expectations prior to the solo.
  - b. Provide a clear rationale for the solo and associated activities.
  - c. Discuss communication procedures and program staff visitation options.
  - d. Discuss safety concerns that may not be obvious when moving off-trail to or from solo sites such as environmental hazards.
  - e. Clarify unacceptable or unsafe behaviors such as climbing trees, bouldering, fires, visiting neighboring participants, and wandering beyond established individual solo site boundaries.
  - f. Check individual solo equipment and supplies that may or may not be considered part of the solo experience such as survival kits, clothing, and shelters.
  - g. Discuss expectations for the use of journals, cameras, or a check-in system that are intended to enhance reflection on the solo experience.

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<sup>9</sup> Some content is adapted from: Bobilya, McAvoy, & Kalisch. (2005). The Power of the instructor in the solo experiences: An empirical study and some non-empirical questions. *Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning*, Volume 5, Issue 1, pages 35 – 50.



- c. Provide participants with base camp coordinates or bearings (Grid Ref or UTM) and proper equipment to assist with solo navigation back to base camp.

**Notes:**

## **Section Eight: Water-based Activities**

<b><u>Dipping and Swimming</u></b> Ratio 1:10
<b><u>Flat Water Canoeing</u></b> Ratio 1:8/min 2
<b><u>Kayaking Touring</u></b> Ratio 1:6/min 2
<b><u>Whitewater Canoeing, Kayaking, and Rafting</u></b> Ratio 1:6/min 2

The lead facilitator or course instructor is responsible for ensuring that prior sections in this manual are implemented as appropriate for land-based activities.

**Section One: Outdoor Education at Georgia College**

**Section Two: Personnel Administration**

**Section Three: Program Administration**

**Section Four: Risk Management**

**Section Five: Logistics**

**Section Six: Environment, Culture, and Service Learning**

## Dipping and Swimming

**Dipping** takes place in calm, below waist level water. Dipping will normally be an incidental activity that takes place in conjunction with another land or water-based activity.

**Swimming** takes place in above waist level water. Swimming may be an incidental activity that takes place in conjunction with another land or water-based activity or a curriculum component of a water-based activity, or a stand-alone program.

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage dipping and swimming activities in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
  - a. The American Canoe Association does not require an instructor to be trained as a lifeguard to be certified to instruct specific water-based activities.
  - b. It is recommended that program staff is trained in rescue skills for the settings and activities in which dipping or swimming may take place.
  - c. Dipping or swimming activities may take place to refresh program staff and participants; for exercise, fun or relaxation; to develop or improve swimming skills or confidence in the water, or to teach water safety skills.
2. Dipping and swimming activities will be appropriate for participant characteristics, program goals, environmental conditions and impact, and the locations at which dipping or swimming will take place.
3. Program staff will consider swimming ability and level of comfort in the water environment in which dipping or swimming will take place.
  - a. Review medical information forms that include self-report of swimming ability and follow up as appropriate.
  - b. Discuss swimming ability and level of comfort with participants prior to dipping or swimming.
4. Program staff will prepare participants for informal dipping and swimming activities and potential swimming activities associated with other water-based program activities.
  - a. Teach water-based introductory skills before going on the water or in a calm or controlled water environment.
  - b. Swimming curriculum may include, but is not limited to:
    - basic and site specific water safety;

- support, optional, and safety equipment such as life jackets and flotation devices;
  - buddy system;
  - ongoing communication;
  - self rescue;
  - boundaries;
  - appropriate behavior; and
  - self and aided rescue procedures.
5. Program staff will have reliable information about weather conditions that may influence dipping or swimming activities.
  6. Program staff and participants will wear properly fitted Coast Guard approved Type III or Type V life jackets when swimming in natural water environments or when a certified lifeguard is not present.
    - a. It may be advisable to wear a life jacket when placing boats in or taking boats out of the water.
    - b. Alternatives to Coast Guard approved Type III or Type V life jackets may be used when the activity for which they are approved is not a program component.
  7. Locate first aid and rescue equipment in an appropriate, visible location.
  8. Implement common water safety procedures for dipping and swimming activities.
    - a. Monitor all dipping and swimming activities.
    - b. Permit dipping and swimming activities between sunrise and sunset.
    - c. Establish a buddy system.
    - d. Inspect dipping and swimming areas for hazards and dangerous conditions.
    - e. Maintain an unobstructed view of swimmers.
    - f. Discuss relevant safety consideration and procedures.
    - g. Head-first diving is not permitted.
  9. Swimming in rapids is permitted based on program goals, environmental conditions, and the availability of appropriate supervision.
    - a. Identify a calm pool below the rapids where swimmers can exit.
    - b. Position at least one program staff trained in swift water rescue below the rapids with a throw rope.
    - c. Determine that the rapids are a maximum class I or II.
    - d. Confirm that program staff and participants can swim or have passed the DOE swim proficiency test and are comfortable in moving water.

- e. Assess that environmental conditions as hydraulics, river banks, the presence of hazards or dangerous conditions, and exit points are manageable.
- f. Prepare participants to swim in rapids including, but not limited to:
  - feet up;
  - on the back;
  - feet first or tucked in a ball when a hydraulic is present;
  - communication signals;
  - exit points; and
  - self and other-aided rescue procedures.

## Flat Water Canoeing

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage flat water canoeing activities in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
2. Flat water canoeing activities will be appropriate for participant characteristics, swimming ability and level of comfort in the water, program goals, environmental conditions and impact, and the locations that flat water canoeing will take place.
3. Program staff will consider swimming ability and level of comfort in the water environment in which flat water canoeing will take place.
  - a. Review medical information forms that include self-report of swimming ability and follow up as appropriate.
  - b. Discuss swimming ability and level of comfort with participants prior to flat water canoeing.
4. Program staff will prepare participants for flat water canoeing activities.
  - a. Determine and communicate to potential program participants the skill level required to participant in a program.
  - b. Teach introductory skills before going on the water or in a calm or controlled water environment.
  - c. Use appropriate American Canoe Association course curriculum to guide program development and delivery including specific courses listed in the following categories:
    - American Canoe Association: [Education/Instruction](#): Specific Curricula: [Canoeing](#), [Kayaking](#), [Rafting](#), [Safety and Rescue](#)
    - Program staff and participants will wear properly fitted Coast Guard approved Type III or Type V life jackets that are designed for the program specific water-based activity when flat water canoeing, kayaking or rafting.
5. Academic course instructors and participants will have a whistle securely attached to their life jacket in an accessible location.
6. Program staff will have reliable information about weather conditions that may influence whitewater boating activities.
7. Program staff will develop a program route that minimizes exposure to common hazards.
  - a. Avoid areas with heavy boat traffic when possible.

- b. Cross boating channels as a tight group, moving at the pace of the slowest paddler with staff corralling participants on all sides.
  - c. Night paddling may be considered appropriate based on program outcomes and should be authorized by Coordinator of Outdoor Education Academic Programs, the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College, or designee.
  - d. Inspect landing and exit points for environmental hazards and conditions.
8. Program staff will carry appropriate first aid and rescue equipment for the canoeing such as:
    - water-tight first aid kit;
    - rescue sling;
    - hypothermia kit including spare clothing;
    - maps and compasses;
    - canoe repair kit.
  9. Program staff will carry or store a minimum of one extra life jacket and two extra paddles in an accessible location such as a vehicle.
  10. Program staff will teach and model appropriate use and care of equipment.
    - a. Teach the proper use of paddles including:
      - paddle sizing;
      - use the t-grip end to push off with a paddle and only when necessary;
      - avoid using paddles as walking sticks or leaning poles, except in rescue situations; and
      - storage of paddles in a secure, out of the way place where they cannot be stepped on and, when possible with the blade up.
    - b. Teach the proper use of life jackets including:
      - adjusting for proper fit;
      - how to secure life jackets at all times;
      - avoid using life jackets as kneepads or seats; and
      - cleaning and storage of life jackets and wet or dry suits to permit adequate ventilation.
    - c. Teach the proper use of canoes including:
      - avoid dropping or dragging canoes;
      - avoid ramming the shores or docks;
      - avoid sitting on a canoe on dry land; and

- how to trim packs and other equipment to maximize balance and security for travel.

## Kayak Touring

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage kayak touring activities in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
2. Kayak touring activities will be appropriate for participant characteristics, swimming ability and level of comfort in the water, program goals, environmental conditions and impact, and the locations at kayak touring will take place.
3. Program staff will consider swimming ability and level of comfort in the water environment in which kayak touring will take place.
  - a. Review medical information forms that include self-report of swimming ability and follow-up as appropriate.
  - b. Discuss swimming ability and level of comfort with participants prior to kayak touring.
4. Program staff will prepare participants for kayak touring activities.
  - a. Determine and communicate to potential program participants the skill level required to participate in a program.
  - b. Teach introductory skills before going on the water or in a calm or controlled water environment.
  - c. Use appropriate American Canoe Association course curriculum to guide program development and delivery including specific courses listed in the following categories:
  - d. American Canoe Association: [Education/Instruction](#): Specific Curricula: [Kayaking](#), [Safety and Rescue](#)
  - e. Brief participants about safety concerns that may not be as obvious when paddling in other settings including, but not limited to:
    - hazardous flora and fauna such as sting rays, jelly fish, and oyster beds;
    - prevention of sunburn, motion sickness, and dehydration; and
    - distance between boats.
5. Program staff will have reliable information about weather conditions that may influence kayak touring activities.
6. Program staff and participants will wear properly fitted Coast Guard approved Type III or Type V life jackets that are designed for the program specific water-based activity when kayak touring.
7. Program staff will comply with American Canoe Association risk management requirements.

- a. In protected and unprotected coastal waters outfit boats with additional flotation appropriate for the venue.
  - b. In protected coastal waters carry 1 bilge pump or bailer for every 2 boats.
  - c. In unprotected coastal waters carry a bilge pump or bailer in each boat.
  - d. In unprotected coastal waters equip each boat with a paddle float.
  - e. Wear properly fitted paddling helmets during launchings and landings in breaking surf greater than one foot. Helmet use may be appropriate in other areas of rough water.
8. Program staff will carry appropriate first aid and rescue equipment for the context such as:
- water-tight first aid kit;
  - rescue sling and tow system;
  - spare spray skirt and paddle;
  - hypothermia kit including spare clothing;
  - charts and compasses;
  - VHF marine radio in unprotected coastal waters;
  - kayak repair kit; and
  - emergency signal kit.
9. Program staff will carry or store a minimum of one extra life jacket and two extra paddles in an accessible location such as a vehicle.
10. Program staff will teach and model appropriate use and care of equipment.
- a. Teach the proper use of paddles including:
    - paddle sizing;
    - use the blade to push off with a paddle and only when necessary;
    - avoid using paddles as walking sticks or leaning poles, except in rescue situations; and
    - store paddles in a secure, out of the way place where they cannot be stepped on.
  - b. Teach the proper use of life jackets including:
    - adjust for proper fit;
    - how to secure life jackets at all times;
    - avoid using life jackets as kneepads or seats; and
    - cleaning and storage of life jackets and wet and dry suits to permit adequate ventilation.
  - c. Teach the proper use of kayaks including:

- avoid dropping or dragging kayaks;
- avoid ramming shores or docks;
- avoid sitting on a kayak on dry land; and
- how to trim packs and other equipment to maximize balance and security for travel.

### **Whitewater Canoeing, Kayaking, & Rafting**

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will manage whitewater canoeing, kayaking, and rafting activities in compliance with DOE policy and related documents.
2. Whitewater boating activities will be appropriate for participant characteristics, program goals, environmental conditions and impact, and the locations at whitewater boating activities will take place.
3. Program staff will consider swimming ability and level of comfort in the water environment in which whitewater boating activities will take place.
  - a. Review medical information forms that include self-report of swimming ability and follow-up as appropriate.
  - b. Discuss swimming ability and level of comfort with participants prior to whitewater boating activities.
4. Program staff will prepare participants for whitewater boating activities.
  - a. Determine and communicate to potential program participants the skill level required to participant in a program.
  - b. Teach introductory skills before going on the water or in a calm or controlled water environment.
  - c. Review what to do in the case of a capsize including self and other-assisted rescue procedures.
  - d. Review safe distances between boats.
  - e. Review river characteristics such as obstacles, flow, current patterns, and entry and exit routes.
  - f. Review AW river signals including:
    - Vertical paddle – come center;
    - Horizontal paddle – stop, hold until further notice;
    - Paddle at a 45° angle – go in the direction the paddle is pointing;
    - Vertical paddle waving from side to side – help, get to shore and come to where assistance is needed;
    - Patting head – asking are you OK? Response by patting the head to indicate yes, I am OK.
  - g. Use appropriate American Canoe Association course curriculum to guide program development and delivery including specific courses listed in the following categories:

- American Canoe Association: [Education/Instruction](#):  
Specific Curricula: [Canoeing](#), [Kayaking](#), [Rafting](#), [Safety and Rescue](#)
  - Program staff will have reliable information about weather conditions that may influence whitewater boating activities.
5. Program staff and participants will wear properly fitted Coast Guard approved Type III or Type V life jackets that are designed for the program specific water-based activity when doing whitewater activities.
  6. Program staff and participants will have a whistle securely attached to their life jacket in an accessible location.
  7. Program staff will assess water level, flow rate, water feature, hazards, and staff and participant skill levels when selecting program locations and specific program activities.
  8. Program staff will comply with American Canoe Association risk management requirements for specific venues and activities.
    - a. Wear properly fitted paddling helmets in class II water and above or when using thigh straps (or similar outfitting) in any moving water.
    - b. Ensure an appropriate level of floatation for the venue.
    - c. In Class I-II whitewater carry 2 throw-ropes for groups of up to 10 participants and 1 throw-rope for every 5 participants for groups of more than 10 participants.
    - d. In Class III or more whitewater carry 2 throw-ropes for groups of up to 8 participants and 1 throw-rope for every 4 participants for groups of more than 8 participants.
  9. Program staff will carry appropriate first aid and rescue equipment for the canoeing such as:
    - water-tight first aid kit;
    - cordelette slings or loops;
    - hypothermia kit including spare clothing;
    - locking carabiners;
    - rescue knife;
    - throw line or bag; and
    - extra whistle.
  10. Program staff will carry or store a minimum of one extra life jacket and two extra paddles in an accessible location such as a vehicle.

**Notes:**

**Section Nine: Group Development and Challenge**  
**Course Activities**

<b><u>General Policy</u></b>
<b><u>Group Development Activities</u></b> Ratio 1:12/min 2
<b><u>Low Challenge Course &amp; Initiative Tasks</u></b> Ratio 1:10/min 2
<b><u>High Challenge Course</u></b> Ratio 1:8/min 2 (dynamic) Ratio 1:8 /min 3 (static)

The lead facilitator or course instructor is responsible for ensuring that prior sections in this manual are implemented as appropriate for land-based activities. Refer to the Facilitator Handbook for detailed information about specific structure, elements, and applications to Outdoor Center programs.

**Section One: Outdoor Education at Georgia College**

**Section Two: Personnel Administration**

**Section Three: Program Administration**

**Section Four: Risk Management**

**Section Five: Logistics**

**Section Six: Environment, Culture, and Service Learning**

## **General Policy**

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will plan, implement, and evaluate group development and challenge course activities in compliance with DOE policy, related documents, and industry standards.
  - a. Program staff will adhere LOP in the Challenge Course Facilitator Handbook for OC programs implemented at East Campus.
  - b. LOP in the Challenge Course Facilitator Handbook may be adapted in compliance with host organization policy, related documents, and industry standards for OC programs or service learning offered at external sites with approval of the Director of the Outdoor Center at Georgia College, Coordinator of Academic Programs, or designee.
2. Group development and challenge course activities will be appropriate for participant characteristics and skill levels, program goals, environmental conditions, and locations.
3. Group development and challenge course programs will be sequenced to maximize transfer of learning, regard for participant safety, and ongoing group assessment.
  - a. Exceptions to time or emphasis placed on specific components in the program design sequence may be indicated based on group readiness, program length, or program goals.

### **Program Design Sequence**

<b>Ignition</b>	<u>Introductory, warm-ups, icebreakers, and acclimatizing activities</u> are used to ignite the program, seed behavioral and safety expectations, and provide the facilitator with the opportunity to observe individual and group behavior. They develop a foundation for group building, goal setting and contracting, and they set the stage and the tone of the program.
<b>Level 1</b>	Level 1 activities take place on the ground and provide the facilitator with goal-focused assessment information about the group and its members and about client social, intellectual, emotional, and physical characteristics. Subsequent activities are selected, implemented, and processed based on this assessment information. Goal setting, contracting, and spotting/trust activities may be integrated in appropriate sequence throughout this level. Level 1 activities are FUNN, novel, and challenging. They build on ignition activities.
<b>Level 2</b>	Level 2 activities take place on the ground and provide the facilitator with opportunities to focus on goal-related skill development. Groups build competency, and begin to identify and address individual and group topics. Processing may be increasingly more intentional and in-depth. Activities are more complex and challenging, involving increasing levels of physical, social and emotional risk. Facilitators complete goal setting, contracting, and spotting/trust skills by the conclusion of this level. Level 2 activities build on Level 1 activities.

<b>Level 3</b>	Level 3 activities may take place off the ground and are used to deepen and refine goal-related competencies, develop realistic strategies and applications, and celebrate success. Groups begin to self-monitor and the facilitator's role becomes less directive. Processing becomes less facilitator driven as appropriate. The group revisits goal setting, contracting, and spotting/trust skills throughout this level. Level 3 activities build on Level 2 activities.
<b>Level 4</b>	Level 4 activities are the "peak experiences" that vary based on program goals. These activities are used to apply learning to challenging tasks. They may also include the development of action plans for application to real world settings. These experiences draw on everything the program has achieved to this point. They may include high ropes elements, demanding initiative tasks, service projects, or an expedition. Participants often demonstrate individual goal achievement and group effectiveness at this level.
<b>Closure</b>	Closure provides the facilitator, individuals, and groups with opportunities to celebrate success, acknowledge relationships, and begin the transition back to the real world. Commitment to action planning and real world applications of learning is central. Activities may be summary in nature, fun, and emotional – all at the same time!

### **Group Development Activities**

1. Program staff will inspect activity sites, facilities, and equipment prior to program delivery.
2. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will explain the purpose of an activity and present instructions in a clear manner.
  - a. Review challenge of and by choice as appropriate.
  - b. Discuss safety considerations including using appropriate communication and “bumpers up”.
  - c. Answer questions prior to starting the activity and throughout as they arise.
  - d. Encourage participants to ask for what they need.
3. Program staff will monitor activities closely for unsafe behavior such as pushing or pulling, inappropriate distance between the faller and spotters, distracting behavior, inappropriate touch, inappropriate communication sequence, or horseplay.
  - a. Intervene in a timely and purposeful fashion as necessary.
  - b. Provide backup spotting support as necessary.
4. Program staff will process activities as appropriate.

### **Low Challenge Course Elements & Initiative Tasks**

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will inspect sites, facilities, equipment, and element components prior to program delivery.
2. Program staff will explain the purpose of an activity and present instructions in a clear manner.
  - a. Review challenge of and by choice.
  - b. Discuss safety considerations including using appropriate communication.
  - c. Answer questions prior to starting the activity and throughout as they arise.
  - d. Encourage participants to ask for what they need.
3. Program staff will process activities as appropriate.
4. Program staff will monitor activities closely for unsafe behavior such as pushing or pulling, inappropriate distance between the faller and spotters, distracting behavior, inappropriate touch, inappropriate communication sequence, or horseplay.
  - a. Intervene in a timely and purposeful fashion as necessary.
  - b. Provide backup spotting support as necessary.
  - c. Maintain appropriate distance between the faller and spotters.
5. Program staff will demonstrate spotting procedures that are appropriate for each low challenge course components and initiative tasks.
  - a. Review the concept of team spotting for activities that require the collaboration of more than one spotter.
  - b. Ask the faller to designate a 'buddy spotter' to respond on behalf of multiple spotters and explain the buddy spotter role before starting that activity.
  - c. Require appropriate spotting command systems.
  - d. Remind participants that they may ask for additional spotters or be asked by the facilitator to assist with spotting.
  - e. Ask participants to agree not to attempt a solution that does not provide the group with adequate spotting.
  - f. Discuss safety considerations including stepping off a cable, platform, log, or structure and spotter body position and readiness.
  - g. Be aware of the strength and body size of group members and ask for agreement that group members do not engage in lifting, supporting, or being supported in a manner in which they are not comfortable.

### High Challenge Course Elements

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will inspect sites, facilities, equipment, and element components prior to program delivery.
2. Program staff will explain the purpose of an activity and present instructions in a clear manner.
  - a. Review challenge of and by choice.
  - b. Discuss safety considerations including using appropriate communication.
  - c. Answer questions prior to starting the activity and throughout as they arise.
  - d. Encourage participants to ask for what they need.
3. Program staff will process activities as appropriate.
4. Program staff will monitor activities closely for unsafe behavior such as pushing or pulling, appropriate distance between the faller and spotters, distracting behavior, inappropriate touch, inappropriate communication sequence, or horseplay.
  - a. Intervene in a timely and purposeful fashion as necessary.
  - b. Provide backup spotting support as necessary.
  - c. Maintain appropriate distance between the faller and spotters.
5. Program staff will demonstrate spotting procedures that are appropriate for high challenge course components.
  - a. Review the concept of team spotting for activities that require the collaboration of more than one spotter.
  - b. Ask the faller to designate a 'buddy spotter' to respond on behalf of multiple spotters and explain the buddy spotter role before starting that activity.
  - c. Require appropriate spotting command systems.
  - d. Remind participants that they may ask for additional spotters or be asked by the facilitator to assist with spotting.
  - e. Ask participants to agree not to attempt a solution that does not provide the group with adequate spotting.
  - f. Discuss safety considerations including stepping off a cable, platform, log, or structure and spotter body position and readiness.
  - g. Be aware of the strength and body size of group members and ask for agreement that group members do not engage in lifting, supporting, or being supported in a manner in which they are not comfortable.

6. Program staff will instruct participants in and model the proper use and care of equipment.
  - a. Use all equipment according to manufacturer's guidelines.
  - b. Inspect equipment before use.
  - c. Place equipment on a ground cloth or tarp out of the way of participant and facilitator traffic.
  - d. Teach the proper use of helmets to protect the head from bumps, scrapes, and falling objects including:
    - adjustment for proper fit; and
    - helmets within the "fall zone".
  - e. Teach the proper use of seat or full-body harnesses including:
    - adjustment for proper fit;
    - check harnesses for proper fit, attachment, and buckle security prior to ascending the course; and
    - require the use of a full-body harness on elements that specify to do so.
  - f. Teach the proper use of chest harnesses including:
    - adjustment for proper fit;
    - offer participants the option of using a chest harness;
    - encourage chest harness use for participants who are more susceptible to inverting in the case of a fall (i.e. participants with an apple-shaped body); and
    - require the use of a chest harness and a seat harness on elements that specify to do so.
  - g. Teach the proper use of static belay "claws" including:
    - use of static belays,/ lobster claws on static belay elements; and
    - adjustment of lobster claws to lengthen or shorten as needed.
  - h. Teach the proper use of dynamic belay ropes including:
    - attachment of dynamic belay lines to the harness using a super figure-eight, figure-eight on a bight, or bowline on a bight with a carabiner or a figure-eight follow through directly into the harness;
    - proper use of carabiners and belay devices including how to handle hardware to prevent damage by not dropping or throwing; and
    - proper loading techniques for belay devices.

## **Belay Procedures**

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, and participants will use appropriate belay procedures.
  - a. Special element belay procedures should be conducted according to local operating procedures and/or approved facilitator training.
2. Participants will climb in leading edge environments using dynamic belay procedures.
  - a. OE students may be taught to climb in leading edge environments using system that meet ACCT standards in specifically designed courses with direct supervision of the course instructor or designee.

### **Leading Edge**

1. Program staff will avoid climbing in leading edge environments by using dynamic belay systems.
2. Program staff will use leading edge belay systems that meet ACCT standards including, but are not limited to prussic belays, cable ascending systems, or LEAP anchors.

### **Participant Belayers**

1. Program staff will provide direct supervision belay systems for participant belayer.
2. Participant belayers will have a backup belayer and an anchor person or belay anchor mechanism in place prior to belaying.
  - a. A program design may include teaching participants how to belay other participants based on, but not limited to:
    - the number of facilitators available to teach, supervise, or conduct of belay systems;
    - participant readiness and characteristics for participating in dynamic belay-team systems;
    - program goals and length;
    - number of participants; and
    - physical attributes and perceptual and structural features of an element.

### **Dynamic Belay Systems**

1. Program staff will inspect staff and participant readiness to climb prior to climbing.
2. Program staff and/or participants will be prepared for climbing prior to climbing.
  - a. Ensure the harnesses and helmets are secured properly.
  - b. Ensure the dynamic belay rope is secured to the harness using an appropriate knot that is in accordance with manufacturer specifications.
  - c. Ensure that carabiners are locked with a “squeeze check” and properly positioned.
  - d. Ensure that objects, clothing, or hair that may affect the system performance or safety are removed or tucked in.
3. The primary belayer is responsible for the safety of a climber until the climber communicates “off belay”.
  - a. Belayers should remain attentive to a climber’s needs and take in or let out slack as necessary.
  - b. Program staff should have a clear view of the climber from a place on the ground that is free from environmental obstruction and will provides backup assistance.
  - c. Remind to the climber to “follow their rope up” and to prevent the belay rope from snagging on element structures that may cause a fall or result in swinging action.
  - d. Remind the climber to not hold onto the climbing rope to prevent creating slack in the system that may extend in the case of a fall.
  - e. Program staff should use an anchor when available or indicated by factors such as the level of difficult of a climb, body weight, or participant affect.
4. Belayers will control descents when a climber descends an element.
5. Program staff will initiate and manage rescue lowering procedures in the event that a staff member or participant cannot be lowered using a ground belay system.
6. Program staff and participants will use proper spotting and climbing commands.
  - a. Review spotting, belay procedures, and commands with participants prior to climbing.
  - b. Program staff and participants should not proceed to climbing without completing the appropriate command sequence.

### **Static Belay Systems**

1. Program staff will supervise participants using static belay systems.
  - a. One facilitator will be located “in the air” to supervise static belay transfers for every four participants “in the air”.
  - b. At least one facilitator on each level of a multi-leveled static course when more than one level is being used.
  - c. Position facilitators in comfortable positions when in the air on platforms or other structures.
  - d. Limit three participants to a single belay cable for individual static elements.
  - e. Limit four participants to a single belay cable for group static elements or for platform tethers.
2. Program staff and participants will use a dynamic belay system to access static elements.
  - a. Program staff will monitor climbers ascending or descending from a platform.
  - b. Establish the static belay prior to removing dynamic belay and vice versa.
3. Static belay systems will be taught at ground school prior to climbing including, but not limited to:
  - spotting and climbing techniques;
  - transfer commands;
  - dynamic belay system for accessing a static belay platform;
  - transfer from a dynamic belay to a static belay and vice versa;
  - transfers from one static element to another;
  - dynamic and static belay communication systems; and
  - participant responsibilities for personal safety and security.
4. Program staff and participants will use proper spotting and climbing commands.
  - a. Review spotting, belay procedures, and commands with participants prior to climbing.
  - b. Program staff and participants should not proceed to climbing without completing the appropriate command sequence.

### Dynamic Belay Commands

<b>Belayer</b>	<b>Climber/ Rappeller</b>	<b>Meaning and Response Needed</b>
	“on belay?”	Are you ready? Is the belay on?
“belay on”		All set. The belay will now catch you if you fall.
	“climbing”/ “rappelling”	I am ready to climb/rappel.
“climb on”/ “rappel on”		Go ahead; the rope will be controlled by the belay.
	“slack”	The climber needs some slack in the rope. <i>The belayer should feed out a small amount of rope.</i> <i>No verbal answer required.</i>
	“tension” “that’s me”	<i>The Belayer should take in rope until the climber communicates “that’s me”.</i>
	“rope” or “rock”	A rope or another object is coming down.
“clear”		You may drop the rope, the area is clear.
	“off belay”	<i>Take off the belay.</i> I am secure and will no longer need the belay.
“belay off”		The <u>belay is off</u> , <i>echoed to ensure there is no misunderstanding.</i>

### Static Transfer Communication System

<b>Participant</b> to facilitator on platform:	“Will you watch me transfer?”
<b>Facilitator</b> to participant:	“Yes I will.”
<b>Participant</b> to facilitator on platform:	“May I transfer first carabiner?”
<b>Facilitator</b> to participant:	“Transfer first carabiner. Please flip and squeeze-check gate.”
<b>Participant</b> to facilitator on platform:	“Squeeze check. May I transfer second carabiner?”
<b>Facilitator</b> to participant:	“Transfer second carabiner. Please flip and squeeze-check gate.”
<b>Participant</b> to facilitator on platform:	“Squeeze check. May I continue?”
<b>Facilitator</b> to participant:	“Thank you. Please continue.”

## Rescue Procedures

1. The lead facilitator, course instructor, or designee will management rescue procedures.
  - a. Encourage program staff to review relevant rescue procedures and risk management policy and relevant documents.
2. Program staff will have access to rescue equipment.
  - a. Locate rescue bags in a position that supports potential rescue requirements.
  - b. Inspect the contents of rescue bags prior to the program.
  - c. Encourage program staff to carry personal rescue equipment which may include shears or a knife, cordelette loops or slings, carabiners, and a belay device.
3. Facilitators will rescue a “stuck” participant using the following sequence of steps.
  - a. Move toward a participant who is unable to regain an element or needs to be lowered via dynamic belay with a rescue bag by the quickest route.
  - b. Attach rescue equipment to the belay cable using a steel carabiner.
  - c. Calm the climber with words of comfort and reassurance.
  - d. Assist the participant to climb back onto the element (talking, tension, etrier, etc.).
  - e. Continue to communicate with the participant throughout the completion of the element or gaining access to a secure location.
4. Program staff will lower a participant who is unable or unwilling to be talked back onto an element using the following sequence of steps.
  - a. Move toward a climber who is unable to regain an element or needs to be lowered via dynamic belay by the quickest route with a rescue bag.
  - b. Assess the severity of the situation and, if indicated, request that a ground facilitator call 911.
5. Program staff will perform an emergency take down using the following sequence of steps.
  - a. Communicate intentions clearly to ground crew and other program staff in the air.
  - c. Attach and lock carabiner with figure-eight device to belay cable.

- d. Hook and lock the carabiner on the rescue belay line to the climber's harness.
  - e. Make sure the ground is clear and drop the rescue bag.
  - f. Select a lowering method and communicate the chosen method to other ground crew and other program staff in the air.
  - g. Attempt to loosen and remove original belay system.
  - h. Cut the original belay system with rescue shears only if the original system cannot be removed from the participant's harness or the belay cable and after re-checking that the rescue belay system is securely attached to the climber and all slack is removed from the system.
  - i. Initiate lowering the climber to the ground.
6. Program staff will normally execute rescues for special elements such as a Zip Line from the ground necessitating that the above techniques be adapted to the element and nature of the rescue situation.

**Notes:**

## **Appendix 1: Leave No Trace Principles**

### **Plan Ahead and Prepare**

- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you will visit.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- Visit in small groups.
- Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.
- Repackage food to minimize waste.
- Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

### **Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces**

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
- In popular areas:
  - concentrate use on existing trails and campsites;
  - walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
- Keep campsites small.
- Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
- In pristine areas:
  - disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails;
  - avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

### **Dispose of Waste Properly**

- Pack it in, pack it out.
- Inspect campsites and rest areas for trash or spilled foods.
- Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
- Deposit solid human waste in cat holes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails.
- Cover and disguise the cat hole when finished.
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- Wash yourself and dishes 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap.

- Scatter strained dishwater.

### **Leave What You Find**

- Preserve the past.
- Examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

### **Be Considerate of Other Visitors**

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
- Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
- Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
- Let nature's sounds prevail.
- Avoid loud voices and noises.

### **Minimize Campfire Impacts**

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry.
- Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
- Keep fires small by using sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
- Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, and then scatter cool ashes.

### **Respect Wildlife**

- Observe wildlife from a distance and do not follow or approach them.
- Never feed animals because feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.

- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

## **Appendix 2: Universal Access**

The Americans with Disabilities Act focuses primarily on public accommodations and employment of persons with disabilities. Outdoor education programs at GC support efforts to make outdoor education activities accessible to persons with disabilities. However, the issue of accessibility is one that must be judged on the basis of participant and staff safety, and risk management. As examples, access prevention to a facility that could be considered an attractive nuisance may be a risk management issue. Some level of assurance that equipment and facilities used for classes are not tampered with is a program quality and a risk management issue. The need to expose students to universal access options may be satisfied by visiting a universal access facility managed by another organization. Therefore accommodations for people with disabilities may be reasonable in some cases and in other cases they may not, depending on facilities, equipment, or staff competency.

1. Rynders and Schleien<sup>10</sup> offer guidelines for assessing accommodations for people with disabilities that form the basis for decision making:
  - a. Adapt only when necessary. Do not assume that every activity will need to be adapted to meet the needs of the person with a disability. The goal should be to keep the participant's experience as realistic as possible. If an adaptation is warranted, seek participant input. In most cases the participant will be eager to communicate needs;
  - b. View adaptations as temporary, transitional changes. Whenever possible, facilitators should work toward engaging persons with disabilities in the activity as it was originally designed. If adaptations have been made to get the participant involved, the goal should be to reduce dependency on the adaptation;
  - c. Adapt on an individual basis. Do not assume that every participant with a disability will have a problem with eye/hand coordination or some other condition that requires special consideration. In consultation with the participant, and through

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<sup>10</sup> Rynders, J.E. & Schleien, S.J. ( n.d.). *Together Successfully*. Association for Retarded Citizens of the U.S (now the National Association of Parents with Children in Special Education).

careful observation, adaptations may be devised that meet particular needs;

- d. Adapt for normalization. If a modification for an activity is found to be appropriate for an individual with a disability, care should be taken to keep the activity as close to the original version as possible. By using unnecessary adaptations or modifications, the participant may be made to stand out from his/her peers unnecessarily.
2. Should an adaptation be unreasonable because it may create unsafe conditions for staff or participants, the lead facilitator or course instructor should inform the participant in private that he/she may not be directly involved in an activity program. The situation should be explained in such a way that the participant understands that there is a safety issue for which adaptation is not possible at this time and encouraged to participate in another way. Every effort should be made to prevent a situation of this kind prior to the program.
3. Appropriate confidentiality should be maintained. It is the option of a person with a disability to share information with a group.
4. The Outdoor Education Student Handbook contains physical and emotional expectations and responsibilities for successful application to and completion of outdoor education academic programs.

### **Appendix 3: Service Learning**

The National and Community Service Act of 1990 defines service learning as:

- A method whereby participants learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community.
- Integrated into the students' academic curriculum and provides structured time for students to think, talk, or write about what they did and saw during the actual service activity.
- Provides students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their communities.
- Enhances what is taught in school by extending learning beyond the classroom and into the community and helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others and the world in which we live.

Community service and volunteerism stress service. Empathy, an ethic of service, moral development, and involvement in much needed community programs and services are among the benefits associated with community service. However, these experiences differ from service learning in that they do not emphasize both service and learning outcomes in a way that both will occur and enhance each other. Most prominently, programs that emphasize learning always include a strong reflective component where students make sense of and enhance formal classroom learning from the service experience.

**Notes:**