



Department of Outdoor Education

Graduate Student Handbook

Spring 2011

**Outdoor Education Academic Programs &
The Outdoor Center at Georgia College are accredited by:**



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Introduction

The Department of Outdoor Education is committed to high standards of academic, personal, and professional conduct to prepare students for successful careers. Outdoor education faculty reserves the right to maintain academic standards for admission, retention, compliance Georgia College academic policy, and the Association for Experiential Accreditation Program. This handbook supplements Georgia College policy as outlined in the honor code¹, current graduate and undergraduate catalogs², and the current Georgia College Student Handbook³.

The Department of Outdoor Education in the College of Health Sciences includes the Outdoor Center at Georgia College, the B.S. in Outdoor Education, the M.Ed. in Kinesiology: Outdoor Education Administration, and the minor in Outdoor Education.

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 College⁴. 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 Education⁵ 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 communities of peers, faculty, and staff, our students will discover their potential to be successful professional outdoor educators.

¹ <http://www.gcsu.edu/studentlife/handbook/code.htm> (retrieved July 25, 2011).

² <http://www.gcsu.edu/registrar/catalog.htm> (retrieved July 25, 2011).

³ <http://www.gcsu.edu/studentlife/handbook.htm> (retrieved July 25, 2011).

⁴ <http://gcsu.edu/about/index.htm> (retrieved July 25, 2011).

⁵ <http://www.aee.org/about/whatIsEE> (retrieved July 25, 2011).

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 safe⁶, environmentally sound, and effective programs and services.

⁶ 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.

Accreditation

Our academic programs and the Outdoor Center at Georgia College are accredited by The Association for Experiential Education (AEE). The AEE Accreditation Program⁷ 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 programs at Georgia College 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.

M.Ed. Overview

The M.Ed. in Outdoor Education Administration combines two years of rigorous academics with service learning and a wide range of applied learning. Classes that offered opportunities to refine technical skills are used to explore administrative functions that are transferable across other technical adventure-based activities and activity sets.

During the first year of study graduate students take a combination of traditional classroom-based and field-based courses. The cohort structure forms a foundation for course-related projects, peer collaborations, and applied learning opportunities in subsequent semesters. During the second semester of the first year of study graduate students begin to hone instructorship skills as supervised teaching assistants in selected undergraduate classes. Then in the third semester the experience is repeated as a supervised teaching assistant in selected graduate classes. Knowledge of research methodology and applications to administrative functions is interwoven.

The option of a master project or thesis in the second year of study provides a capstone experience that is focused on the student's career goals.

Program Goals

Goal 1: Outdoor education students are prepared to administer safe, environmentally sound, and effective outdoor education experiences.

1. Students will implement and supervise outdoor education experiences that reflect client goals and characteristics.
2. Students will implement and assess risk management plans for emotionally, socially, and physically safe outdoor education experiences.
3. Students will assess natural and cultural history factors for implementing environmentally sound outdoor education experiences.
4. Students will implement current Georgia College accredited policy and procedures.

Goal 2: Outdoor education students will be prepared to provide leadership in a variety of land, water, and challenge technical activities.

1. Students will complete a set of nationally recognized training programs.
2. Students will provide supervision and training in selected outdoor pursuits to a range of client groups.
3. Students will maintain currency with specific industry standards.

⁷ <http://www.aee.org/accreditation/> (retrieved August 10, 2010).

Goal 3: Outdoor education students will be prepared to supervise and utilize experiential activities with small groups to promote changes in feelings, thinking, and behavior.

1. Students will design and implement group development activities aimed at attaining client goals.
2. Students will demonstrate basic and advanced facilitation techniques and can provide supervision and feedback to others.
3. Students will develop and assess personal facilitation goals.
4. Students will assess and manage group dynamics.
5. Students will think critically about primary outcomes for group development activities and outdoor pursuits such as communication, respect for diversity, team effectiveness, shared situational leadership, problem solving, and trust and are able help others incorporate them in the design of program experiences.
6. Students will facilitate cooperative learning groups.

Goal 4: Outdoor education students will be prepared to administer programs that promote environmental stewardship.

1. Students will complete relevant nationally recognized training.
2. Students will develop environmental education lesson plans for specific ecosystems associated with technical trips, organizations or client groups.
3. Students will complete service learning requirements associated with environmental education courses in relevant settings.

Goal 5: Outdoor education students will be prepared to model and promote service learning and service to the profession and the communities in which they work.

1. Students will complete 15 hours per semester in the major in relevant service learning.
2. Students will be able to implement Georgia College accredited policy associated with service learning.
3. Students will implement and assess service learning opportunities relevant to course content.
4. Students will serve the profession.

Goal 6: Outdoor education students will be prepared to administer outdoor education programs and services in recreation, education, training and development, or therapeutic settings.

1. Students will demonstrate a command of theory and research associated with the field of outdoor education and the specific setting in which they wish to practice.
2. Students will apply comprehensive knowledge of the field to a range of professional issues and administrative functions.

Goal 7: Outdoor education students will be prepared to engage in scholarly activity and advanced study.

1. Students will be successful when applying to doctoral programs.
2. Students will present at regional, national, or international professional conferences.
3. Students will complete a research project.

Advising

Ongoing Contact with the Program Advisor and Department Faculty

The Coordinator of Graduate Studies in the Department of Outdoor Education is the program advisor for all graduate students. The program advisor supports graduate students from the point of contact through graduation to make informed decisions about their collegiate experience and to connect them with resources and services that facilitate department, school, and institutional goals. Both faculty and graduate students are expected to assume responsibility in the advisement process.

Faculty members in the Department of Outdoor Education may be in the field for extended periods of time, attending conferences, or at GC or professional committee meetings. Therefore posted office hours may be cancelled without notice due to weather conditions, flight delays, or other factors. Graduate students and faculty are encouraged to call or email faculty before coming to main campus for a scheduled meeting.

Normally advisors are expected to schedule and maintain a minimum of five office hours/week throughout the semester to avail students of opportunities for academic and other advisement. Faculty members who teach in summer session are expected to be available for advising students on a regular basis (1 hr/3 hr. credit). The Department of Outdoor Education differentiates between advising students and meeting with students about course-related matters, therefore faculty may choose to designate course-related availability that is different from the advising availability posted on the office door or on specific syllabi or use another form of communication (Skype, etc.) to discuss topics with students.

The Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education will advise students in the M.Ed. in Outdoor Education Administration. A different advisor may be selected with approval of the Department Chair.

Expectations for Advisors

1. Post advising hours on office doors (minimum 5 hrs./week), along with contact information for students who wish to make an appointment at another time.
2. Be available for academic advising during posted times unless otherwise noted on office door.
3. Understand and effectively communicate curriculum requirements, academic policies, application processes in the academic program area.
4. Encourage and guide students to define and develop clear and realistic educational plans and be responsible for success in their academic endeavors.
5. Communicate advising expectations of students.
6. Monitor and accurately document progress toward meeting educational goals and advising outcomes as advising notes in the student file.
7. Return student files to the Department of Outdoor Education office with written instructions to the Administrative Assistant about changes to the file (new file, new PoS, change in major, change in advisor, etc.).
8. Encourage students to register themselves and keep personal records of registration transactions and other documentation.

9. Actively listen to questions and concerns and take steps to provide information and support as needed.
10. Maintain confidentiality.
11. Assist with development of professional relationships with other faculty and instructors.
12. Provide information about campus resources and services.
13. Demonstrate how to use advising tools, such as PAWS, DegreeWorks, and GPA calculators.
14. Communicate via eCats email account about advising appointments (unless otherwise negotiated).

Expectations for Students

1. Schedule regular appointments or make regular contacts with advisor during each semester.
2. Schedule appointments by email, phone, signup, or a system designated by the advisor (Note that walk-in meetings may be limited to posted times unless otherwise scheduled in advance with the advisor).
3. Attend appointments as scheduled.
4. Notify the advisor in advance if unable to meet for a scheduled appointment.
5. Check eCats email messages regularly (at least 2-3 times per week). Due to legal regulations, that is the only email account your advisor is expected to use to contact you, unless otherwise negotiated. You may have this email forwarded to your permanent email account.
6. Turn off phone during an advising appointment.
7. Know the GCID#.
8. Come to appointments prepared with questions and/or topics to discuss.
9. Accept responsibility for decisions and actions.
10. Use advising resources to gather information and keep a record of your academic progress and goals.
11. Use campus services, talk to faculty and staff members, and explore extracurricular activities to facilitate your academic achievement.
12. Follow-up on referrals and inform your advisor of the outcome of referrals.

M.Ed. Requirements

In addition to required coursework, students must complete the degree notes listed in the official graduate catalog that is current at the time of acceptance into the program. Exceptions or changes to these requirements may be approved by the advisor on a per case basis in conjunction with curricular revisions or changes in accreditation or industry standards.

Graduate Degree Notes

1. Compliance with and completion of the terms and conditions stated in the Graduate Student Handbook.
 - a. Service learning requirements completed and recorded
 - b. Facilitation requirements completed and recorded
 - c. Comprehensive exit exam passed
 - d. Professional portfolio passed
 - e. Master thesis or project policy requirements and checklist completed and submitted to the Coordinator of Graduate Studies
 - f. Graduate assistantship hours approved and submitted to the Coordinator of Graduate Studies

- g. Graduate assistantship responsibilities completed and approved by the supervisor
 - h. Keys and computer handed in
2. Completion of requirements specified in the Graduate Requirements section of the Catalog.
 - a. Application to graduate that is approved by the program advisor and the coordinator of graduate studies for the Department of Outdoor Education Submission to the Registrar by the date specified in the official University Calendar
 - b. GPA of 3.0 or better in all courses
 - c. Holds or restrictions cleared

Service Learning

Service learning is central to the Georgia College mission⁸ and a pillar of outdoor and experiential education. Graduate students serve Georgia College and the profession in several ways. Outdoor education graduate students serve communities, organizations, and the profession throughout the graduate studies residency in several ways that enhance professional development.

Some service learning requirements take place in conjunction with selected academic courses and may involve the submission of an individual or group product for assessment. Academic course components focus on integrating course goals with service learning opportunities. Course projects may include local, regional, national and international assignments that are graded and require significant student commitment or shorter, resource-based opportunities related to Leave No Trace principles.

- These service learning experiences are not voluntary and therefore cannot be submitted to the experiential transcript.
- They may be reported for program-wide service hours if approved by the course instructor.
- They should be recorded on the service log for the professional portfolio.

Some service learning requirements are considered program-wide expectations and do not take place in conjunction with selected courses. These are program-wide expectations for completing the M.Ed. in Outdoor Education Administration. They focus on integrating program-wide goals with service learning opportunities. They are voluntary, unpaid contributions to organizations that deliver outdoor education programs and/or services. They may be completed in conjunction with organizations that are external to Georgia College or in conjunction with Georgia College departments, including the department of Outdoor Education. Graduate students may not earn service hours within the unit/department in which they are appointed as a graduate assistant or when the project or task is a component of a course such as practicum, internship, or directed project. Service requirements may be supervised by graduate assistants with pre-approval by the GA supervisor. Service learning forms submitted by students are used by the Department for monitoring, assessing, and reporting in compliance with Georgia College, the University System of Georgia, and the Association for Experiential Education requirements.

⁸ <http://www.gcsu.edu/about/index.htm>

- 15 hrs per semester are required for submission, however students often complete additional hours.
- Students are responsible for submitting service hours online on the Service Hours Form no later than the last day of classes of each semester.
- The link may be found on the forms page of the DOE website or at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ODEDservicehours>.
- Service hours may not be carried over to subsequent semesters.
- Service hours are included in a student's professional portfolio therefore students are encouraged to begin the service log in the first semester of study and to be sure to enter service information into the log before submitting the form.
- 15 hrs per semester are required for submission, however students often complete additional hours and are encouraged to submit everything so that there is a backup record in the system, even though they cannot be counted in a subsequent semester.
- These service learning hours may be submitted by the students to enhance the Georgia College Experiential Transcript. Students may update the transcript online by going to the student tab on MyCats and following the directions in the channel for [Experiential Transcript](#). Students must select "faculty" as the verification authority before the submission is entered to ensure that entries are approved by the program advisor.

[Facilitation Hours](#)

Applied learning is central to the development of professional outdoor educators who are prepared to provide administrative leadership to organizations and the people who contribute to their success.

To this end, graduate students are required to "lead" others in a variety of contexts and to reflect on their leadership capacity in course-related components and program-related requirements set forth by the Department as facilitation hours. Facilitation hours provide graduate students with practical experiences through which they apply knowledge and skills learned in courses to professional settings.

- Facilitation hours must include direct leadership, instruction, or facilitation of outdoor education programs.
- Facilitation hour minimum requirements include:
 - serve as a teaching assistant in undergraduate and graduate classes (equivalent of 1/semester for two semesters) under the supervision of the instructor of record;
 - provide leadership to a minimum of one Venture Out trip per academic year;
 - complete the process of application to be considered for lead facilitator at the Outdoor Center in at least one activity (land, water, or challenge course).
- Students may not earn facilitation hours within the unit/department in which they are appointed as a graduate assistant unless approved by the graduate assistantship supervisor in advance.
- Students may not earn facilitation hours within a course they are completing such as practicum, internship, or directed project.
- Pre-approval from the program advisor must be obtained at least one week prior to engaging in the experience utilizing the pre-approval section of the Facilitation Hours Form.

- The reflection section of the form must be completed and submitted within two weeks after the experience for final approval by the advisor and entry into the Department database.
- Students should maintain a record of facilitation hours to complete the professional portfolio requirements.
- Some facilitation hours (volunteer) may be submitted for approval for the Georgia College Experiential Transcript (see above).

Professional Conference

The Department of Outdoor Education is committed to a set of core values that are enhanced by graduate student interaction with and participation in the professional outdoor education community. Graduate students are required to attend one professional conference that normally enhances career goals and are encouraged to attend additional conferences. During the conference, students are expected to attend all formal conference events including sessions, keynotes, banquets, and socials. Students are expected to exhibit high levels of professional conduct while attending the conference.

Students may be eligible to apply for conference service crews to receive a registration waiver or payment, paying part or all of the conference fees for working a specified amount of time at a conference. Scholarships for travel expenses may be available from professional organizations or the Georgia College Student Government Association for student workshops or educational sessions accepted for presentation at a conference.

In order to complete this graduation requirement, students must submit the following to the advisor within two weeks of conference attendance:

- confirmation of conference attendance (copy of I.D. badge, etc.);
- an official copy of the conference program schedule;
- list of workshops, presentations, and events attended;
- minimum 300 word, reflective analysis of learning outcomes of workshops attended to the program advisor;
- Conference attendance may be submitted by the student to the Georgia College Experiential Transcript for approval by the advisor⁹.

Synthesis Requirement Policy

Students accepted to the M.Ed. in Outdoor Education Administration will be assigned a program advisor by the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education. A new advisor may be selected with approval of the Department Chair. Graduate student program advisors must have graduate faculty status.

Synthesis Requirement

Students in the M.Ed. in Outdoor Education will select the thesis or project option by the end of the semester in which they complete eighteen (18) credit hours. Students may elect to change from the thesis to the project option up to and during the semester in which twenty-seven (27) credit hours are completed.

⁹ See the Service Hour section for details on how to submit to the Experiential Transcript.

Thesis Option

The thesis is a formal research study completed by the student under the supervision and guidance of the thesis committee. Students electing this option must be prepared to be self-directed and work independently.

Students who select the thesis option will complete six credit hours of thesis work (ODED 6993), registering for three hours of thesis during two consecutive semesters or six hours during one semester. Students who do not successfully complete the thesis in six credit hours may register for an additional three credit hours of ODED 6993 in subsequent semesters in which they receive assistance for the thesis.

Students will negotiate thesis committee chair with the faculty advisor. Students will negotiate thesis committee membership with thesis committee chair. There will be a minimum of three, and not more than five, members on the committee. A majority of members on the committee will be faculty from the Department of Outdoor Education. One committee member shall be from outside the specialization area in a relevant external department at GC, or a relevant professional setting. One committee member, having graduate faculty status, will serve as committee chair.

Students will develop a schedule for the successful completion of the thesis with the committee chair. Students electing the thesis option must submit to the committee a written proposal of the research project including a rationale for the research question, objective, or hypothesis, an overview of the literature, and a schedule for completing the study. Implementation of research methodology may not begin without approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (<http://info.GC.edu/intranet/rgs/GGrants/Compliance/ComIRBCheck.dwt>).

A final draft of the thesis is submitted to the thesis committee for approval to defend at least two weeks prior to the thesis defense. The thesis defense will be scheduled no less than two weeks in advance at a time all committee members must be present. Defenses are open to university faculty, students, and the public. The defense includes an oral presentation of the research (normally 30-45 minutes) followed by a period in which the student responds to questions from the committee and the audience. The committee will deliberate and decide, by simple majority, to accept as is, accept with revisions, or not accept the thesis. If the thesis is not accepted, the student will revise the thesis and convene a follow-up defense. One follow-up defense is permitted. Students who are unsuccessful on the follow-up defense must repeat ODED 6993. Upon acceptance of the thesis or completion of revisions as requested by the thesis committee, the student will submit a bound copy of the thesis in compliance with university policy to the University Library and to the Department of Outdoor Education office. The student may elect to provide an additional bound copy to the committee chair.

Presentation and/or publication of thesis research is highly encouraged. Students are not expected to include advisors or committee members as co-presenters or co-authors. Faculty members who agree to contribute tangible assistance to the development of presentations or manuscripts following the thesis defense will negotiate authorship in advance.

Project Option

Students who select the project option will complete ODED 6810 and a minimum of one (1) elective that is approved as relevant to the project by the program advisor.

The project is a capstone experience that leads to professional growth related to the student's career goals. Examples of projects may include, but are not limited to, an extensive, focused literature review, analysis of case studies, professional conference presentation, piloted curriculum development or revisions, piloted instructional technology, program or facility development, web site development, or administrative or instructional manuals.

Students will negotiate project committee membership with the faculty advisor. Projects may be supervised by a single faculty or a committee of up to three faculty. A majority of members on the committee will be from the Department of Outdoor Education. Committee members may be from outside the specialization area and may be in the Department of Outdoor Education, a relevant external department at GC, or a relevant professional setting. One committee member, having graduate faculty status, will serve as committee chair.

Students must submit a written proposal for the project to the committee for approval. Students will submit one or more drafts of the project to the committee for review. The defense of the project will be a formal presentation in a format appropriate to the project. Formats may include, but are not limited to, a formal oral presentation, conference presentation, or program implementation. Following the defense, the committee will deliberate and will decide, by simple majority, to accept as is, accept with revisions, or decline/not accept the project. If the project is not accepted, the student must revise the project and convene another defense. Students who are unsuccessful on the first attempt may repeat the defense once. Students who are unsuccessful on the follow-up defense must repeat ODED 6810.

Master Thesis Synthesis Option Checklist

Students will select the thesis or project option by the end of the semester in which they complete (18) credit hours. Students may elect to change from the thesis to the project option up to and during the semester in which twenty–seven (27) credit hours are completed.

The thesis is a formal research study completed by the student under the supervision and guidance of a thesis committee. Students electing this option must be prepared to be self-directed and work independently.

Student Name:	GCSU ID:
Thesis Committee Chair:	Graduate Program Advisor: Jude Hirsch
Thesis Committee Members:	ODED 6973 taken: F ____ S ____ SU ____ F ____ Comments:
Part A: To be completed by the thesis committee chair and submitted at the end of the first thesis course to the department chair.	

Requirement	Comments	Signature & Date
Thesis <u>committee members</u> negotiated with program advisor.		
<u>Schedule for completion</u> of the thesis approved by thesis committee.		
<u>Written proposal</u> approved by thesis committee (to include rationale, objective(s) or hypothesis, literature overview, final schedule/critical path for completion).		
<u>IRB</u> approved, scanned, and sent to the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education for upload to Legato (file name: LastName_IRB_date).		
Part B: To be completed by the thesis committee chair at the end of the second and third thesis courses and submitted to the department chair.		
Requirement	Comments	Signature
<u>Final draft</u> submitted (two weeks prior to defense).		
<u>Defense</u> scheduled.		
<u>Defense announcement</u> sent to university community.		
Student <u>defends thesis</u>		
<u>Revisions</u> approved.		
<u>Bound copy</u> submitted to the library as per GCSU policy.		
<u>Signed coversheet and this checklist</u> submitted to the Chair, Department of Outdoor Education.		

Master Project Synthesis Option Checklist

Students will select the thesis or project option by the end of the semester in which they complete (18) credit hours. Students may elect to change from the thesis to the project option up to and during the semester in which twenty –seven (27) credit hours are completed. Students who select the project option will complete ODED 6810 and a minimum of one (1) elective that is approved by the program advisor as relevant to the project and normally taken prior to the project course.

The project is a capstone experience that leads to professional growth related to the student's career goals. Students electing this option must be prepared to be self-directed and work independently.

Student Name:	GCSU ID:	
Project Committee Chair:	Graduate Program Advisor: Jude Hirsch	
Project Committee Members:	ODED 6973 taken: F ____ S ____ SU ____ F ____	
	Relevant Elective Course:	
Part A: To be completed by the project committee chair at the end of the project course and submitted to the department chair.		
Requirement	Comments	Signature & Date
Thesis <u>committee members</u> negotiated with <u>program advisor</u> .		
<u>Written proposal</u> approved by project committee (to include project name, learning outcomes, project tasks/products, critical path for submission of project tasks/products).		
<u>IRB</u> approved, if appropriate, scanned and sent to Toyia Barnes for upload to Legato (file name: LastName_IRB_date).		
<u>Final project task product drafts</u> submitted to the committee (two weeks prior to defense).		
<u>Defense</u> scheduled.		
<u>Defense announcement</u> sent to university community.		
Student <u>defends project</u>		
<u>Revisions</u> approved.		

Exit Exam

Georgia College is Georgia's public liberal arts university. As such, there is a strong emphasis on transformative, active learning experiences in and out of the classroom and a focus on student outcomes, with particular attention to the development of:

- strong communication skills (oral and written);
- critical and analytical thinking skills;
- a broad understanding of global issues;

- an appreciation for diversity;
- an ability to integrate information across disciplines;
- application of knowledge;
- a foundation for making moral and ethical decisions;
- civic responsibility.

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia requires that graduate students pass a comprehensive exit exam. Graduate students will complete exit exam requirements no later than the semester of their final outdoor education major course (excluding synthesis requirement completion). The exit exam consists of two parts: a written comprehensive exam and a professional portfolio; students must pass both parts satisfactorily. Additional information may be obtained from the faculty advisor.

Comprehensive Exam

The exam is developed by program faculty to test comprehensive knowledge of theory and practice in outdoor education. Students are encouraged to refer to course syllabi content and resources as they prepare for the comprehensive exam. The exam questions will require students to synthesize and apply concepts, theories, principles, and praxis covered in courses and related experiences to a range of topics and issues that demonstrate master-level comprehension and application. Times and dates are set to accommodate the outdoor education calendar.

Evaluation of the Comprehensive Exam

The exam is administered by faculty in the Department and submitted for review by at least two faculty members. Each question written by the graduate student is graded by at least two faculty members with expertise related to the question topic. Each question is graded on a 10-point scale. Passing criteria include:

- minimum score of 6.0 on all questions;
- average of at least 7.5 across all questions.

If the exam does not meet these requirements, the faculty advisor will coordinate arrangements for re-testing. Re-test options include, but are not limited to, an oral interview with faculty members, rewriting specific questions, or rewriting the entire exam. Faculty reserve the right to determine appropriate timing for a complete rewrite. In some cases it may be appropriate to wait until the following semester. See examples of Comprehensive Exam Questions in Appendix A.

Professional Portfolio

The professional portfolio is a comprehensive collection of artifacts (selected academic accomplishments, professional competencies, and professional experience) developed by the student throughout the program. It is presented as a professional web page. Artifacts for the portfolio may be developed as course assignments or prepared by the student throughout the program of studies. Students are expected to continually update artifacts (such as trip logs, equipment lists, leadership log) and review and revise others (such as philosophy statements, professional goals and objectives, etc.) prior to submitting the portfolio for final evaluation.

Evaluation of the Professional Portfolio

The URL for the web page professional portfolio is to be submitted to all faculty members in the Department for review of general rubric criteria and specific artifacts related to areas of specialization no later than two weeks prior to the end of the spring semester prior to graduation. Passing criteria is a minimum of “meets expectations” as defined on the professional portfolio rubric.

If the portfolio does not meet in any area, the student will revise and resubmit the portfolio within 5 days of receiving the graded assessed rubric. See Professional Portfolio Rubric in Appendix B.

Contents and Organization of the Professional Portfolio

The professional portfolio will contain, at minimum, five organizing sections including service learning, environmental stewardship, leadership, scholarship, and professional development. Artifacts should be attractively presented, clearly titled, and hyperlinked in the portfolio. Downloading a text version of some artifacts is acceptable to facilitate updating content. Students are encouraged to add other documents to these minimum requirements. Some additional sections or documents include a photo gallery, videos, prior job descriptions or graduate assistantship responsibilities, etc. In some cases students will select the best example of their work to include in the portfolio (example of a research project, a program design, or curriculum) and in other cases the artifact is continually updated (logs). A list of potential artifacts includes (optional artifacts are noted):

Service Learning

- Examples of class related service learning project reports/reflections/descriptions
- Service Learning Log
- Experiential Transcript (optional)

Environmental Stewardship

- Environmental ethic statement
- Examples of environmental stewardship leadership or service projects

Leadership

- Leader-of-the-day reflection comments
- Instructorship philosophy
- Leadership & Self-Deception Response Paper
- Field Instruction Assessment Paper
- Diversity statement
- Challenge Course Facilitation Log
- Video clip of self in action & reflection comments
- Examples of formal teaching artifacts: event plans; overview of roles, responsibilities, and reflection on graduate facilitation hours
- Examples of reflection on graduate facilitation hour reports

Scholarship

- Educational philosophy

- Academic writing sample
- Research reports or presentations
- Project examples
- Research project proposal

Professional Development

- Resume (may include links to artifacts)
- Professional conference reflection
- Summary of outside trainings, certifications, workshops attended (optional if details are on resume)

Admission

Applications to Georgia College graduate programs are online at <http://graduate.gcsu.edu/>. Requirements for admission are listed under the M.Ed. in Kinesiology: Outdoor Education Administration at <http://graduate.gcsu.edu/futurestudents/programs>.

For application information contact:

Jude Hirsch, Ed.D.
 Professor and Chair
 Department of Outdoor Education
 Coordinator of Graduate Studies
 Professor
 jude.hirsch@gcsu.edu
<http://hercules.gcsu.edu/~jhirsch/>

Regular Admission Requirements (prior to August 2011)

The following formula is used to determine eligibility for regular admission:

- GRE score (verbal + qualitative) + [(upper division) x 100] = 1200 or more
- In addition to meeting the formula for admission, applicants must:
- Have an undergraduate GPA of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale
 - Have successfully completed undergraduate statistics course
 - Submit a letter of application indicating why you have chosen a career in outdoor education administration, your teaching/professional philosophy, and how the program of study meets your career goals
 - Provide a current resume; copies of any relevant, current training certificates or certification cards
 - Provide 2 letters of reference signed by the referee
 - Complete an in-person or telephone interview

Provisional Admission

- GRE score (verbal + qualitative) + [(upper division) x 100] = 1100-1999

To gain regular admission, provisional students must complete 9 hours of graduate coursework at GCSU with no less than a "B" in each course approved by the Department of Outdoor Education Graduate Coordinator and the advisor.

Conditional Admission

Applicants who apply too late for full consideration for admission and/or have not submitted all required documents for evaluation may be assigned conditional admission status for one semester only with permission of the Department of Outdoor Education Graduate Coordinator. This option is discouraged because students failing to submit all required documents or do not meeting admission requirements will be required to withdraw from the University. After one semester on conditional status, students must have achieved regular admission.

Admission Requirements (after August 2011)

- GRE score verbal + quantitative: 35 pts.
- Upper division GPA (minimum 2.75):10 pts.
- Letter of application indicating why you have chosen a career in outdoor education administration, your teaching/professional philosophy, and how the program of study meets your career goals: 15 pts.
- Current resume; copies of any relevant, current training certificates or certification cards: 15 pts.
- 2 letters of reference signed by the referee: 10 pts.
- In-person or telephone interview: 15 pts.
- Note:
- Regular admission status is a necessary condition for consideration for a graduate assistantship.

Regular Admission

- A minimum combined score of 75 must be achieved for regular admission.

Provisional Admission

A minimum combined score of 68 must be achieved for provisional admission.

Conditional Admission

Applicants who apply too late for full consideration for admission and/or have not submitted all required documents for evaluation may be assigned conditional admission status for one semester only with permission of the Department of Outdoor Education Graduate Coordinator. This option is discouraged because students failing to submit all required documents or do not meeting admission requirements will be required to withdraw from the University. After one semester on conditional status, students must have achieved regular admission.

Retention

Academic programs at Georgia College are rigorous and intense programs that place physical, emotional, intellectual, and social demands on students. For example, in addition to traditional classroom settings, courses include field trips, technical training, internship and practica, or service learning. These demands are commensurate with essential competencies considered

necessary for professionals in the field of outdoor education and to meet expectations set for by [The Association for Experiential Education Accreditation Council](#)¹⁰.

Candidates accepted into the M.Ed. in Outdoor Education Administration are expected to verify that they understand and can meet these expectations. Noncompliance with these expectations may result in a student being temporarily or permanently dismissed from the program.

Reasonable accommodations may be approved by outdoor education faculty in compliance with ADA guidelines. The office of Student Support Services will normally evaluate requests for accommodation and confirm that the stated condition qualifies as a disability under applicable laws. Students who are able to meet these expectations with reasonable accommodations are eligible to participate in the program of study and additional requirements for the degree. Accommodations that will change the nature of outdoor education professional development, or place instructors or students/clients in unsafe situations may be denied.

Abilities, Skills, and Conduct and Academic Expectations

Communication Abilities

Students will be able to:

- read and understand documents written in English (policies, procedures, etc.);
- interpret written directions accurately;
- convey information clearly through writing;
- effectively present information orally to individuals or groups (teaching explaining procedures, giving oral reports);
- interact with others in a non-confrontational manner;
- obtain and document information accurately by computer.

Emotional Abilities

Students will:

- monitor and manage personal emotions appropriately (stress, frustration, fatigue, etc.);
- provide clients with appropriate emotional support;
- remain flexible in adapting to unexpected, stressful situations;
- perform multiple responsibilities concurrently;
- be able and willing to change behavior when it interferes with productive relationships;
- demonstrate good judgment.

Sensory Abilities

Students will:

- have tactile sensitivity to vibrations, temperature, surface conditions, etc;
- have hearing at 20 decibels (with correction if needed);
- have visual accuracy at 20/60 (with correction if needed).

¹⁰ <http://www.aee.org/accreditation> (retrieved August 10, 2020).

Gross & Fine Motor Skills

Students will be able to:

- move comfortably across uneven terrain;
- carry up to 50 lbs over long distances (i.e., three miles) and 100 lbs over short distances (i.e., one-half mile);
- safely bend, lift, and twist;
- work comfortably and competently at heights, in confined spaces, and on water;
- safely grasp and manipulate small objects.

Professional Conduct

Students will:

- interact productively, cooperatively, and in a collegial manner with individuals of differing personalities and backgrounds;
- demonstrate personal accountability for actions and responsibilities;
- maintain and model a positive attitude in the best and most challenging circumstances;
- show respect for self, others, and the environment;
- continually engage in creative and intellectually challenging opportunities for personal and professional growth;
- be punctual and perform work in timely manner;
- learn and abide by professional and ethical standards of practice;
- represent Georgia College and the Department of Outdoor Education in an exemplary and professional manner in and out of class.

Class Behavior

Student will:

- demonstrate an ability to effectively and respectfully relate to others, think critically and skillfully, and strive for excellence in their academic endeavors;
- support personal and group learning;
- contribute to the learning outcomes;
- model professionalism towards the immediate group and other groups that may be encountered;
- complete assignments and submit them on time;
- communicate thoughts and ideas clearly and in an appropriate manner;
- present themselves in an appropriate manner in front GC and external groups;
- make meaningful contributions to class discussions and activities;
- collaborate effectively in groups and organizations;
- relate to peers and colleagues in a professional manner;
- take leadership roles as appropriate;
- exhibit maturity and wisdom in personal and professional decisions;
- comply with accredited policy and procedures.

Ethical Behavior

Students will:

- comply with Georgia College policies and regulations in their personal and professional conduct;
- comply with Department of Outdoor Education policies and procedures in manuals and handbooks;
- comply with codes of ethics/conduct relevant to preferred practice and industry standards;
- avoid behaviors that interfere with the performance of professional duties;
- avoid behaviors that compromise the well-being of clients, students, faculty, staff, or colleagues including violent or repeated confrontation with others, indications of substance abuse, or physical/psychiatric disorders;
- agree to leave the immediate context until outdoor faculty, in consultation with other professionals as needed, determine if subsequent change in the student's behavior is sufficient to warrant re-admission to classes, activities, field instruction, and/or continuation in outdoor education programs or services.

Legal Violations

Students charged by law enforcement authorities with a felony or misdemeanor may be refused admission or continuation in outdoor education programs without prejudice until an official determination can be made regarding the offense. Students convicted of a felony or misdemeanor for conduct that constitutes a threat to the well-being of clients, students, faculty, staff, or colleagues will not be admitted to classes, activities, and/or field instruction until there is evidence of rehabilitation. Serving a sentence alone does not necessarily constitute evidence of rehabilitation. Following a conviction, the student will be informed in writing by the faculty of criteria that constitute rehabilitation.

Student Performance Review

Review Process

The student performance review process is intended to provide performance feedback to the student about concerns related to the expectations and degree requirements set forth in this Handbook.

At the conclusion of each semester, faculty review students in academic programs on a per-case basis using the criteria found on the Student Performance Assessment form (see [Appendix B](#)). A student for whom faculty identify one or more concerns will be invited in writing to meet with the program advisor to review the performance assessment and develop a plan to address and monitor improvement outcomes. The program advisor will place copies of correspondence and a summary of this meeting in the student file. Pending student response, no further action may be required.

In the case that a student is not able or willing to improve, or a concern is apparent that warrants immediate attention, the program advisor or course instructor will complete the Student Performance Assessment. The program advisor will invite the student in writing to meet to review the summary. The advisor will then document the student's perspective on the Student Performance Review Summary form (see [Appendix C](#)). The program advisor may elect to develop a plan to address and monitor improvement outcomes or initiate a formal review by the

Department of Outdoor Education (see below). The advisor will place copies of correspondence and a summary of this meeting in the student file.

The formal review includes the following:

Coordinator of Graduate Studies will form a Review Committee. The committee will consist of the Coordinator of Academic Programs (or designate), one faculty member in the Department of Outdoor Education (Committee Chair), the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education or (designate), and at least one student from the academic program. Additional committee members may be added as appropriate.

The Coordinator of Graduate Studies will inform the student in writing of the review process and schedule a committee meeting with the student. The student will be informed of their right to bring relevant information concerning the facts to the committee's attention, or offer other information that the student may wish the committee to consider. The faculty member initiating the review process will be invited to speak to the committee.

The committee will take one of four actions to be determined by consensus:

1. Continue status as an outdoor education major without conditions.
2. Continue status as an outdoor education major with stated conditions.
3. Terminate status as an outdoor education major with stated conditions for reapplication.
4. Terminate status as an outdoor education major.

The Chair of the committee will write a summary report of the deliberations of the committee and action taken, including documents related to the review process, for submission to the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education. The Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education will notify the student (via certified mail) and the Dean of the College of Health Sciences of the Review Committee's decision and action. The student will be directed to university support services as appropriate.

Students may appeal the decision of the Review Committee in accordance with the Student Academic Appeals Process as set forth in the university graduate catalog.

Re-admission to Academic Programs

Students may apply for re-admission by notifying the program advisor of intent to re-apply to the program. Faculty will evaluate the subsequent application to the program, other documents related to the review process, and conditions set forth by the Review Committee. The Coordinator of Graduate Studies will notify the applicant of the decision in writing. Students readmitted to the program will still be required to complete remaining degree requirements in the current catalog.

Georgia College Policy for Academic Probation and Dismissal

Graduate students are placed on graduate academic probation if the student's institutional graduate grade point average falls below a 3.00 at any point during his or her graduate studies. A graduate student will be dismissed if the student is placed on academic probation for more than one semester, receives more than one C during his or her graduate studies.

Student Documentation

Student File

Student files are stored in a secure location in the Department of Outdoor Education office in Health Sciences (HSB suite 336). Students have access to their files through the Department. Access to student information is in accordance with FERPA. Students are encouraged to maintain a copy of all forms and certificates in a personal file.

Students are also responsible for ensuring that certificates of training and copies of completed Georgia College forms related to outdoor education programs of study and registration are placed in the student file in a timely fashion. The Coordinator of Graduate Studies will review the file prior to submitting graduation applications to the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education.

Outdoor Center Personnel File

Students will establish a personnel file with the Outdoor Center at Georgia College upon successful completion of selected courses or approval of the Director of the Outdoor Center, in collaboration with faculty. Students are responsible for keeping the personnel file up-to-date and successfully complete relevant course requirements to work at the Outdoor Center.

Professional Development Training

Students may be required to complete professional training workshops in conjunction or as prerequisites to ODED courses. These trainings vary across programs of study, courses, compliance with industry standards, and/or vendor contracts. A list of training requirements for relevant classes is published at the beginning of each semester. Related course fees are distributed to students at the beginning of specific courses and may include transportation, food, accommodation, contracted services, supplies, and certificate granting fees.

Equipment

Personnel Professional Equipment

Students are expected to own or have access to personal equipment that is suitable for the demands of the program and future employment in the field. A list of required equipment will be made available to students at the time of application. Selected discounts are available through the Department professional equipment acquisition agreements. Access is a privilege available to students enrolled in outdoor education programs and students are expected to comply with vendor guidelines for purchasing equipment. Noncompliance may result in a loss of privileges for the student and/or the Department of Outdoor Education.

Program Equipment

Students are expected to demonstrate professionalism and responsibility through stewardship of Georgia College equipment by following policy requirements for care and use, completing forms in a timely fashion, and returning equipment clean and inspected in a timely fashion. Damaged or lost equipment is the responsibility of the student or group to whom the equipment is issued. Student accounts may be charged for replacement or maintenance of damaged or lost equipment that is a result of poor equipment stewardship.

[Financing Your Education](#)

The M.Ed. in Outdoor Education Administration is listed on the Academic Common Market. This means students from Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia may be eligible for in-state tuition rates based on the lack of availability an outdoor education administration major in their home state. More information can be found on the [Southern Regional Education Board website](#).

[Graduate Assistantships](#)

The graduate program in Outdoor Education Administration at GCSU has a strong history of successfully placing interested incoming full time students in graduate assistantships. Students awarded graduate assistantships currently receive tuition remission graduate course load and a modest stipend. Graduate assistantships are normally renewable for up to five semesters at the discretion of the Department of Outdoor Education.

Students interested in applying for graduate assistantships must achieve regular admission to the M.Ed. in Outdoor Education Administration. Conditional admission does not qualify a student for a graduate assistantship in the first semester. Applications are available online on the Georgia College admissions web site.

Students applying for graduate assistantships in departments other than the Department of Outdoor Education must be appointed through the Department of Outdoor Education based on the relationship between the academic program and the assistantship responsibilities. Departments that have, in the past, awarded graduate assistantships to outdoor education graduate students include Academic Outreach, Academic Enhancement, Wellness Center, Student Activities, Instructional Technology, and various academic departments in other colleges at Georgia College.

Students awarded graduate assistantships in the Department of Outdoor Education are sent a list of available assistantships that are available and asked to apply for two options. The application process includes a letter of application explaining how the assistantship meets with career goals and how existing qualifications or professional experience enhance the candidate's ability to fulfill the assistantship responsibilities.

Graduate assistants are expected to work 20 hours per week and must be available to work at times like evenings, weekends, and holidays as necessary to fulfill the expectations set by the supervisor and the Department of Outdoor Education.

Graduate assistants are considered employees of Georgia College and considered an investment in the Department and the student's education. The Department of Outdoor Education and Georgia College invest a considerable amount of time and financial resources in graduate assistantships and expect students to consider the cost of tuition waiver and the stipend an employment contract that is monitored through employee performance assessment.

Graduate students awarded graduate assistantships are expected to attend the Department of Outdoor Education Orientation and to work with prior graduate assistants and faculty supervisors to prepare for the start of the academic year or semester in advance of the first week of classes.

Some graduate assistantships are considered 12 month appointments. Students awarded 12 month appointments are expected to attend summer session. Students may request a different graduate assistantship in the second year of study or be offered at different assistantship at the discretion of the Department.

Miscellaneous Tips from Current Graduate Students

1. Expect current students to be a source of information and training about graduate assistantship responsibilities and logistics.
2. The date of first paycheck for the fall semester is September 30.
3. Graduate students pay student fees each semester. See Tuition/Fees on [Admissions webpage](#).
4. 12 month GA's summer pay schedule (April 30, beginning of July, beginning of Aug).
5. One important advantage to staying in Milledgeville for the summer is that taking summer classes enables more time in regular semester to focus on thesis or project requirements. Some students end up staying a second summer because the synthesis requirement is not completed – and paying tuition to take the course.
6. Another advantage is that there is a lot of professional development because the graduate assistants that stay in summer do a little of bit of everything and get lots of face time with client groups at the Outdoor Center and may be paid in addition to the stipend if the work is above the required assistantship time.
7. Summer schedules are more flexible and time off to do short jobs for other organizations or take a break from Milledgeville may be negotiable.

Scholarships

Each year, students currently enrolled at Georgia College who plan to return the following academic year have the opportunity to apply for Scholarships for Returning Students. Note that these scholarships are not available to incoming freshmen or transfer students. The Georgia College Financial Aid Office maintains an on-line application for all institutional scholarships which is accessed via the student's myCATS account. The scholarship application is typically available late Fall Semester in the first year of study for the upcoming academic year. Most deadlines are the first Friday of February. The Financial Aid Office notifies all enrolled students by e-mail when the application is available. So make sure you forward your bobcat account to your permanent email address so you don't miss anything.

Online Databases:

[CollegeDegrees.com](#)

[FinAid.org](#)

[Gradview.com](#)

[Scholarships.com](#)

Loans

Information about loan applications and eligibility can be found at [Financing Your Education](#).

Employment

Another option is gaining employment on or off campus. While the first year of the program makes maintaining outside employment challenging, students have chosen this route in the past. There are lots of businesses in the area that offer part-time employment. There are also on campus opportunities as well. The [University Student Employment](#) program provides additional opportunities for students to secure campus employment. While financial need often is not a factor for graduate students, earnings under this program could affect other aid received. Students are interviewed and hired by various academic, service, or administrative units at Georgia College. Some students also seek outside employment in Milledgeville.

It is important to note that the outdoor education schedule is very busy. Students are highly encourage not to hold employment and a graduate assistantship and to be very clear with potential employers about the odd hours and multi-day trips that are the norm in the program.

Appendix A: Professional Portfolio Evaluation Rubric

Criteria	Exemplary (x5)	Proficient (x4)	Partially Proficient (x3)	Incomplete (x0)	POINTS
Artifacts Included (x2)	All required and additional artifacts are included in the portfolio.	All required artifacts are included in the portfolio.	Most required (all but 2-3) artifacts are included in the portfolio.	Many required (more than 3) artifacts are missing from the portfolio.	
Artifact Descriptions (x1)	Each artifact is accompanied by a Caption, Reflection or Explanation that articulately explains the importance of that particular work.	Most of the artifacts are accompanied by a Caption, Reflection or Explanation that articulately explains the importance of that particular work.	Some of the artifacts are accompanied by a Caption, Reflection or Explanation that articulately explains the importance of that particular work.	None of the artifacts are accompanied by a Caption, Reflection or Explanation that articulately explains the importance of that particular work.	
Text Elements (x1)	The portfolio is easy to read with appropriate visual organization of information using fonts, point size, bullets, italics, bold, and indentations for headings and sub-headings.	The portfolio is generally easy to read with appropriate visual organization of information although a few minor format changes would improve readers' accessibility to the content.	The portfolio is often difficult to read due to inappropriate visual organization of information with some formatting tools under- or over-utilized which decrease the readers' accessibility to the content.	The portfolio is difficult to read due to inappropriate visual organization and layout of information. Many formatting tools are under- or over-utilized and decrease the readers' accessibility to the content.	
Layout (x1)	The background and colors enhance the readability of text. All of the photographs, graphics, sound and/or video enhance	The background and colors enhance the readability of text in most places. Most of the photographs, graphics, sound and/or video	The background and colors are distracting in some places and decrease the readability of text. A few of the photographs, graphics, sound	The background and colors are distracting and decrease the readability of text. The photographs, graphics, sounds, and/or videos are inappropriate, do	

	reflective statements, create interest, and are appropriate examples.	enhance reflective statements, create interest, and are appropriate examples.	and/or video are inappropriate, do not enhance reflective statements, or detract from the content.	not enhance reflective statements, or detract from the content.	
TOTAL POINTS					/50

Comments:

Appendix B: Student Performance Assessment

Student name: _____ GCID: _____

Prepared by: _____ Date: _____

This form is completed by the faculty advisor when a student who is not able or willing to improve after an initial meeting to discuss concerns about non-compliance with expectations listed in the Outdoor Education Student Handbook or by the course instructor when there is a concern that warrants immediate attention.

<p>SC = some concern Student exhibits behavior that may negatively influence professional development and/or have potential impact on regular and consistent functioning. Behavior has been noted by at least one person, however it is not pervasive.</p>
<p>MC = major concern Student exhibits behavior that negatively impacts professional development and has an impact on regular and consistent functioning. Behavior has been noted by more than one person and appears pervasive.</p>

Student Performance Criteria	Level of Concern
This student turns assignments in on time.	
This student articulates thoughts clearly and in an appropriate manner.	
This student presents oneself in an appropriate manner in front of groups.	
This student makes appropriate contributions to class discussions and activities.	
This student works effectively in groups and organizations.	
This student relates to peers and colleagues in a professional manner.	
This student takes leadership roles.	
This student demonstrates physical and emotional functional skills for the profession.	
This student demonstrates the ability to lead and facilitate outdoor education activities.	
This student processes multiple, complex concepts.	
This student makes reasonable professional and personal decisions.	
This student understands of accepted practices for the profession.	

Comments:

Appendix C: Student Performance Review Summary

Student name: _____
Prepared by: _____

GCID: _____
Date: _____

This form is completed by the faculty advisor, in consultation with the course instructor and the student. It provides detailed information about potential non-compliance with expectations listed in the Outdoor Education Student Handbook.

- 1. Academic Performance:
- 2. Personal & Professional Performance:
- 3. Actions to Date:
- 4. Outdoor Education Faculty Recommendations:
- 5. Student Comments:

Signatures

Student: _____
Faculty Advisor: _____

Date: _____
Date: _____

Appendix D: Comprehensive Exam Sample Questions

The following questions have been used to create individual student comprehensive exams. Each exam normally is comprised of 5-7 questions from which the student selects a defined number to write. The exam is normally 3 hours and takes place in a computer lab. Students are advised to begin studying for the exam during the penultimate semester of study in the major. These questions are representative samples and may or may not appear on the exam in this format. New questions may be developed to better represent course content or changes in preferred practice or industry of accreditation standards. Please see the program advisor or a specific course instructor for study guidance.

1. A common criterion for defining a profession is the existence of a discipline-specific knowledge base that guides practice. Briefly describe three empirical research articles and how their findings guide your professional practice.
2. Arguably, the most important line of defense for an educational treatment is its actual impact on the individual. As an educator, you will be confronted by many skeptics who will suggest teaching methodologies such as experiential, outdoor, and/or environmental education make little, if any, impact on a student. Outline strategies that can be utilized to learn if a particular treatment has achieved success. Through your discussion, cite examples that would represent particular outcome-based studies. Make sure to take into account both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Defend what you perceive to be the most accountable evaluation strategy.
3. Based on a brief account of the history of outdoor education, what future directions do you expect the field to take?
4. Based on the principles of experiential education ascribed to by The [Association for Experiential Education](#), write a Philosopher's Stone for experiential education.
5. Briefly discuss the emergence of urban and/or artificial (ropes courses, whitewater parks) settings as substitutes for natural/wilderness settings in outdoor programming. Compare/contrast these two settings in terms of outcomes, benefits, risk management, staff training, fiscal resources, location, etc.
6. Briefly share at least four historical events that you feel have had the greatest impact on the outdoor education profession today. Explain and defend your answers.
7. Coleman describes the difference between "Information Assimilation" and "Experiential Learning". Develop an example of one concept, idea, or skill that can be taught using these models. Describe when it would be best to use one model over the other.
8. Compare and contrast Coleman's, Kolb's, and Priest & Wurdinger's models of experiential learning. Which of these models do you intend to apply in your own practice?
9. Compare and contrast the 10 facilitation guidelines, p. 188-189 with the four facilitation assumptions, p. 188 proposed by Priest & Gass. (Priest, S. & Gass, M. (2005). *Effective Leadership in Adventure Programming*. 2nd. Edition. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.). Discuss how both impact processing experiential education.
10. Compare and contrast the development of three of the following organizations: the Association for Experiential Education, Outward Bound, the National Outdoor Leadership School, the Wilderness Education Association, and Project Adventure.

11. Compare and contrast the roles and responsibilities of the facilitator associated with effective experiential programming for recreation, education, development, and therapeutic client groups.
12. Compare and contrast the terms leadership, mentor, facilitator, instructor, and teacher and discuss how they relate to processing experiential education.
13. Compare and contrast three definitions or models of outdoor education. How do the differences in each model allow greater or lesser practice for outdoor educators?
14. Describe a sociological and a psychological explanation of why people seek adventure. Which one better supports the general adventure education literature?
15. Describe five major theories utilized in adventure education. Discuss their development and how they have been incorporated in pedagogy, practice, and research.
16. Describe the behaviors of a group, other than your cohort, that you have been a member of using [Tuchman's](#) classic description of the five stages of group development model. Discuss how processing experiential education may enhance transfer of learning in each of the stages.
17. Describe the historical development of challenge courses. How do these programs differ from other adventure activities such as rock climbing, caving, canoeing, coastal kayaking, and backpacking in the types of outcomes that they are commonly used for and the process by which the outcomes are reached?
18. Describe the relationship between stages of group development and leadership style using examples from a specific outdoor pursuit.
19. Develop a set of facilitation guidelines that you would use to supervise adventure-programming staff.
20. Dewey said, "Just as two points define a straight line, so the present standpoint of the child and the facts and truth of studies define instruction." Discuss the meaning of this statement and its possible applications in Outdoor Education. Draw from other thinkers and philosophers to support your answer.
21. Differentiate between outdoor leadership certification and outdoor leadership preparation.
22. Discuss conceptual definitions of outdoor education that are presented in the field and offer a critique of at least one of these definitions. Which of these definitions do you intend to apply in your own practice? Include a rationale and any pertinent citations to support your decision.
23. Discuss how the concepts of risk, uncertainty, challenge, and mastery support the premise of adventure programming.
24. Discuss the "heresies/syndromes" in Wichman's article on "Babies and the Bathwater". How you would prevent these from occurring?
25. Discuss the "expedition" as a metaphor for group development.
26. Discuss the broad area of risk management and relate these components to programming issues often present in outdoor recreation/education/therapy programs.
27. Discuss the conservation movement and how it has impacted the Outdoor Education movement.
28. Discuss the historical developments of various streams in Outdoor Education, including camping, environmental interpretation, adventure education, environmental education. Be sure to link these developments with the broader social movements and events that were also occurring in North America and globally.

29. Discuss the historical role of the outdoors in education. Include key philosophers, thinkers, educators, events, and organizations in your answer. Conduct an assessment of the non-human world in outdoor education today. What is its primary role and/or function today? Is this in alignment with or contrary to historical ideas?
30. Discuss the importance of planning to the delivery of safe, environmentally sound and effective outdoor education programs and services.
31. Discuss the importance of situational assessment in outdoor leadership. Provide specific examples to support your answer and conclude with a brief discussion of the role of situational assessment in judgment development.
32. Discuss the legal responsibilities of the outdoor professional. Compare/contrast these responsibilities as they vary from program setting to setting.
33. Discuss the meaning of the following statement: “Effective outdoor leaders should remind themselves that the experience possesses the resources to be more powerful than their best efforts.”
34. Discuss the need for “forms” in an outdoor education program. Provide examples of different types of forms in your answer.
35. Discuss the relationship between program design and participant outcomes. Include strategies for developing meaningful outcomes and assessing the effectiveness of program design. Cite examples from appropriate theoretical models to support your answer.
36. Discuss the relationship between Self-Efficacy (SE) and Social Learning theory (SLT). Be sure to define each term clearly. Conclude with a discussion of the long-term effects of Outdoor Education on SE in an individual. Include any pertinent citations to support your answer.
37. Discuss the relationship between the following terms: outdoor education, adventure education, environmental education and experiential education.
38. Discuss the role of research in providing safe, environmentally sound and effective outdoor education programs and services.
39. Discuss the role of the outdoor leader in an expedition setting. Be sure to identify critical elements of leadership practice and appropriate strategies for developing those elements in the individual.
40. Discuss the role research can play in providing safe, environmentally sound and effective outdoor education programs and services.
41. Discuss the roles and responsibilities of a facilitator in adventure programming using the components of the 5D model.
42. Discuss the use of expeditions as an educational tool. What aspects of expeditions support change? What types of change can best be supported by such long-term experiences?
43. Discuss the value of sound judgment as a trait of a competent outdoor educator. Provide examples. Discuss ways that an organization can support further development of instructor judgment or retard judgment development.
44. Discuss, at length, some of the key issues facing the field of Environmental Education. Why these and not others? How has the field addressed these issues? What else needs to be done?
45. Discuss, at length, some of the key issues facing the field of Outdoor Education. Why these and not others? How has the field addressed these issues? What else needs to be done?
46. Discuss, with examples, the role of research in the field of outdoor education.
47. Expedition behavior is a foundational concept to group dynamics while on an extended trip. Define the concept, providing proper citations as appropriate, and discuss specific strategies

an outdoor leader may use to encourage and improve EB while on an extended backcountry course.

48. Explain “challenge of and by choice” and “behavioral contracting”. Discuss how these concepts enhance transfer of learning and provide examples of processing strategies for maximizing their use and connections to primary outcomes associated with team effectiveness.
49. Explain the concept of direct and purposeful experiences and describe examples of typical opportunities to use them on a backpacking trip for process group development transfer of learning.
50. Explain the relationship between social, emotional, physical, and intellectual safety considerations and processing experiential education. Discuss the role of the facilitator in creating and sustaining a safe environment, using specific examples of processing strategies.
51. Explain the statement: “facilitators are responsible ‘to’ and not ‘for’ the learner.” Select two sub-categories in each of the main categories in the Basic Facilitation Rubric to describe how processing experiential education supports this statement.
52. Explain the statement: “outcomes of experience cannot totally be predicted.” Select two sub-categories in each of the main categories in the Advanced Facilitation Rubric to describe how processing experiential education supports this statement.
53. Gillis and Ringer propose three types of therapeutic use of adventure programs. Define each and describe a contemporary program that utilizes each.
54. How do Gass’ six generations of processing relate to the four program settings?
55. Kurt Hahn developed Outward Bound partly from William James’ challenge to find a “moral equivalent of war”. What did James mean by this and was Hahn successful? Do adventure education programs today provide an answer for James’ challenge?
56. List each of the outcomes items on the team effectiveness scale. Develop a handrail question for each one and a list of bulleted points that you might expect to use to refer to in a processing session. Explain how this reference might be used for frontloading and framing activities for a range of client groups.
57. List the “historical” 8 events that have most informed the outdoor education profession today. Defend your answers.
58. Make a case for or against conducting one-day adventure programs. If you are in favor of conducting one-day adventure programs, describe how you would implement such programming to reach its maximum effectiveness. If you disagree with one-day adventure programming, describe alternatives that you would implement in their place.
59. Many scholars have decried the lack of research in the field of outdoor education. Describe challenges that have minimized the quantity and quality of research being conducted Discuss alternatives for how outdoor education programs can better support research.
60. Nicolazzo’s levels of competency provide valuable insight into staff training and development. Define the competency levels and discuss their utility in program design, staff training, assessment, and development.
61. Outdoor Education is positioned to play a significant role in sustainability and the “green” movement. Discuss the strengths and limitations of the field in addressing and mitigating the detrimental effects of human interaction with the non-human world. Defend what you perceive to be the most feasible solution to these challenges.

62. Outdoor educators have the potential to help people understand and appreciate the need for a sustainable society. Discuss why this statement is important and how you might achieve this goal.
63. Provide a short treatise on the concept of decision-making. In this treatise, discuss different conceptual frameworks, research strategies, and implications for both research and practice. Connect this work to the adventure field, both conceptually and through professional practice.
64. Scholars suggest that a primary ingredient of Adventure is some level of interaction between (a) an uncertain outcome and (b) the participant's skill. Explain this interaction and why it is essential for Adventure. Provide multiple specific examples to support your answer.
65. Select a specific client. Generate three client goals that will form the basis for this short discussion. Discuss how processing their experience can help them reach their goals.
66. Select an adventure activity from the following list: rock climbing, canoeing, coastal kayaking, backpacking, or challenge course. Provide examples of how each of the following factors – client population, client goals, and environmental conditions – might change specific technical skill competency.
67. Select an adventure activity from the following list: rock climbing, caving, canoeing, coastal kayaking, or backpacking. Provide examples from the activity that highlight its potential for enhancing human (intrapersonal and interpersonal) skill outcomes?
68. Select three authors (non-GCSU) that you feel have had a great influence on outdoor education or adventure. As appropriate, identify and discuss some of their specific writings, research, and publications and how these have contributed to the field.
69. The Outward Bound Process model suggests that novel, natural environments should be used. Which is more important: natural settings or novel settings?
70. There is significant debate regarding the ethical use of Native American traditions in outdoor education programs, especially in camps. Provide a rationale for and against their use and then defend one argument or the other.
71. Use examples of your own experiences in this program to explain the three types of transfer of learning – specific, non-specific and metaphoric.
72. Use GRABBSS, APPLE, and CHANGES models to explain how ongoing assessment relates to facilitating experiential education.
73. Use the 12 outdoor leadership elements and ten capabilities critical to outdoor leaders (Priest, S. & Gass, M. (2005). *Effective Leadership in Adventure Programming*. 2nd. Edition. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics. p. 3-4) to explain competencies related to processing experiential education.
74. Use the swimming pool analogy to explain how outcomes associated with adventure programming deep across settings.
75. Walsh & Golins (1976) Outward Bound Process model is an explanation of a structured learning experience. Thus, we should be able to integrate the OB model with at least one theory of experiential learning (Kolb, 's Coleman's, Wurdinger & Priest's, etc.). Choose the theory of experiential learning that you think is the best fit with the OB model. Explain how it can be integrated with the OB model and why it is a superior fit than the other experiential learning theories.
76. Walsh and Gollins Outward Bound Process model describe three novel settings that form the basis of adventure education. Describe these three settings and how the support change.

77. What are the benefits of using urban and/or artificial (ropes courses, whitewater parks) in outdoor programming instead of natural/wilderness settings? How does each connect more or less to different clients/students?
78. What disciplines/fields have contributed most significantly to our knowledge about non-formal teaching and learning? Where are the gaps in our knowledge of this concept? What are your recommendations for the most important knowledge needs in our field? Why?
79. What forms has outdoor education taken over the past 150 years? Is it the same now as in the past or has it evolved?
80. What is a risk management plan and why is it important?
81. What is program evaluation and how might an outdoor education administrator use it?
82. What is the relationship between Leave No Trace practices and principles and the interdisciplinary definition of Environmental Education that includes the study of ecosystems, human impact on ecosystems, and how to live lightly on ecosystems.
83. What sets experiential education apart from traditional/didactic education? What is the source of knowledge in each?
84. What would adventure education be like without challenge by choice and behavioral contracting?
85. What would you include in a staff training session about expedition planning?
86. What would you tell someone who has no idea what a challenge course is to convince him or her that an organization or group should consider it as a worthwhile experience.
87. Write four evidence-based outcomes for a group of your choice that is interested in team effectiveness. Select two group development activities and two high challenge course elements and describe how their structural and perceptual features will enhance each of the outcomes.
88. Write four evidence-based outcomes for a group of your choice that is interested in team effectiveness. Select two group development activities and two high challenge course elements that structurally and perceptually match these goals and describe processing strategies that would enhance indirect transfer of learning.
89. Write one outcome goal for effective communication and respect for diversity in the group (elements of team effectiveness). Write two evidence-based objectives for each goal. Describe behaviors you would expect to see if a group was accomplishing the objectives and what you would expect to see if the group was not accomplishing the objectives.
90. Write one program outcome goal each for decision making and leadership (elements of team effectiveness). Write two evidence-based objectives for each goal. Describe behaviors you would expect to see if a group was accomplishing these objectives and what you would expect to see if the group was not accomplishing these objectives.
91. Write one program outcome goal each for group cohesion and trust/support (elements of team effectiveness). Write two evidence-based objectives for each goal. Describe behaviors you would expect to see if a group was accomplishing these objectives and what you would expect to see if the group was not accomplishing these objectives.
92. Write one program outcome goal each for problem solving and support/trust in the group (elements of team effectiveness). Write two evidence-based objectives for each of these goals. Describe behaviors you would expect to see if a group was accomplishing these objectives and behaviors you would expect to see if the group was not accomplishing these objectives.

93. You are going to facilitate two challenge course programs; one for an after school program for a group of 13-14 year old students and one team building program for a group of 40-50 year old corporate clients. Describe developmental (physical, social, emotional, and intellectual) characteristics for these groups and explain how processing strategies will differ?
94. You are going to facilitate two multi-activity land trips; one for a group of 18-24 year old camp staff and one for a group of 25-40 year old teachers. Describe developmental (physical, social, emotional, and intellectual) characteristics for these groups and explain how processing strategies will differ?
95. You are going to facilitate two multiday canoe trips; one school trip for a group of undergraduate students studying river ecology and one recreation trip for a group of families. Describe developmental (physical, social, emotional, and intellectual) characteristics for these groups and explain how processing strategies will differ?
96. You are the administrator of an Outdoor Center at Georgia College at Georgia College that offers a range of adventure programs. How would you hire staff to ensure that your programs are safe, environmentally sound and effective?

Additional Questions for Graduate Students

1. Identify and discuss four research problems that you think need to be investigated in the field of outdoor education. Identify the streams of research in these areas and evaluate these from a perspective of theory development, methodological limitations, and pedagogical issues.
2. In designing a baccalaureate degree in environmental education, what courses, rationale, philosophy, outside resources, texts, etc. would you use and/or consider. Articulate your reasons and any criticisms that might be leveled at those decisions.
3. Assume you have just been hired by a mid-size North American university and asked to propose an undergraduate academic curriculum in outdoor education. What issues would you have to address in proposing such a course of study? What courses would you require (for a 4-year curriculum of 120 credit hours) and what would be the core courses for any options and specialized areas of study? What is your philosophical approach for the inclusion of these courses? How would you incorporate issues such as cooperative learning, technology, assessment, and so forth? Finally, what outside resources (organizations, agencies, councils, reading resources, etc.) might you utilize for guidance in developing the curriculum?
4. Describe, develop, and outline a research study in the outdoor therapeutic realm that you feel warrants investigation. Defend your reasons for this proposed inquiry. State at least two research questions that would reflect the premise for the study. Delineate the: a) program, b) sample to be studied, c) setting, and d) research methodology (quantitative or qualitative) including instrumentation, data collection methods, and data analyses that you would use in this research design. Justify and defend these methods over one or two others that might be used. Explain how the results of this research study would contribute to the literature in therapeutic outdoor programs and benefit the population under examination.
5. Develop a research proposal on a topic salient to the field of outdoor education or more specifically your area of specialty. Defend your topic selection. Within your proposal, develop a multi-method research design and discuss, in detail, how you would handle and treat the data. Describe the weaknesses and strengths of this approach in addition to the underlying theoretical frameworks.

Appendix E: Sample Graduate Assistantship Responsibilities

Graduate assistantships responsibilities in the Department of Outdoor Education that are supervised by Outdoor Education faculty members are designed to ensure that specific functions in the Department of lead by one graduate assistant. However, all functions are inter-related, therefore communication and coordination between faculty supervisors and graduate assistants is very important. Timeliness when asked for information or to respond to a question or complete a task is central to effectiveness.

Outdoor Education Staff meetings take place every other week and include graduate assistants and undergraduate practicum students who are working with faculty or graduate assistants. Meetings between the supervisor and individual graduate assistants are scheduled for the purpose of reporting ongoing progress and assigning/discussing work tasks.

Graduate assistants report hours and work progress on the time sheet in compliance with Department policy and are expected to keep regular office hours to enable students and faculty to make contact.

Academic responsibilities take priority over graduate assistantship responsibilities, however there are less busy and very busy times during every semester, therefore graduate assistants are expected to manage time and work tasks effectively.

Concerns should be addressed with the faculty supervisor first and the Chair of the Department of Outdoor Education in the event that an attempt to resolve a concern with the supervisor is not achieved.

Notes:

The Wellness Center Graduate Assistantship position is coming on stream fall 2011. This position is designated to manage the climbing wall in the new Wellness Center at West Campus. The position is filled for this year but will be available in fall 2012 or sooner, pending funding.

10 and 12 month graduate assistantship positions may vary based on who is graduating. Therefore designations are communicated when new graduate assistants are notified of potential position for which they can apply.

Specific responsibilities within one area (i.e. academic programs) may be revised based on supervisor assessment of demand or student competency.

All graduate assistants work for the Department of Outdoor Education, therefore all graduate assistants may be asked to perform a task outside of the responsibilities listed below if there is a need (i.e. Outdoor Center program demand for leadership, multiple trips in the field at one time, Venture Out need for leadership, Accreditation site visit, or illness or family emergencies).

**Department of Outdoor Education
Marketing and Development Assistant**

Desirable Skills

Webpage design and management; competent in MS Publisher; ability to research funding opportunities and write grants; design and implement marketing materials and initiatives

Job Description

1. Develop, market, and implement GC mission enhancement programs.
2. Implement academic program and OC marketing plans.
3. Assist with external funding proposals for GC mission-relevant OC programs.
4. Provide logistical support for conference exhibitions and GC recruitment programs.
5. Manage the DOE and OC web pages.
6. Attend OE Staff meetings.

**Outdoor Education Academic Programs
Administrative Assistant**

Desirable skills

Webpage design and management, database management, program evaluation.

Job description

1. Manage academic database for the academic program in compliance with accreditation standards and degree requirements.
2. Manage review, revision and development of policy and procedures documents.
3. Take minutes for OE Staff and the OE Safety and Risk Management Committee.
4. Assist faculty as appropriate with scholarly activity.
5. Manage the Outdoor Talk list serve.
6. Assist with DOE academic web page.
7. Assist with academic course logistics as required.
8. Attend OE Staff meetings.

**Outdoor Education Academic Programs
Logistics Assistant**

Desirable skills

Technical competency in and risk management of canoeing, kayaking, backpacking, camping, caving, climbing, navigation, and/or challenge course activities; logistical planning skills for the above activities and ability to plan and implement expedition and trip components of academic classes in compliance with AEE Accreditation standards.

Job description

1. Implement logistics for outdoor education class expeditions and trips.
3. Assist with technical skill assessments for academic courses required in the graduate and undergraduate technical cohorts.
4. Negotiate 3rd party vendor contracts for professional technical training in outdoor education classes with regard for industry standards.
5. Maintain compliance with AEE accreditation standards.
7. Attend OE Staff meetings.

**Outdoor Center at Georgia College
Outdoor Center Assistant**

Desirable skills

Client assessment, staff supervision; program design and evaluation; personnel administration, fiscal management, policy development, webpage management, program and site file management, policy implementation, and risk management planning.

Job description

1. Manage contracts for programs and services offered by the GC Outdoor Center in compliance with AEE accreditation standards.
2. Provide OEC staff training as required.
3. Supervise GC Outdoor Education Center staff in accordance with OE Policy and Procedures and the OEC Facilitator Handbook.
4. Manage the GC Outdoor Center office.
5. Submit a year-end report as required by the University System of Georgia.
6. Manage the professional acquisition program for outdoor education faculty, staff, and students.
7. Submit a year-end report detailing equipment acquisition and professional equipment acquisition plan expenditures.
8. Attend OE Staff meetings.

Outdoor Center Equipment & Facilities Coordinator

Desirable skills

Maintenance knowledge of outdoor education equipment and facilities; policy development and implementation, risk management, equipment acquisition planning; database management

Job description

1. Manage equipment at Lake Laurel Campus in compliance with AEE accreditation standards and Outdoor Education Policy and Procedures.
2. Manage permits, licenses, and regulatory requirements for vehicles, trailers, and USFS sites used for OC programs and academic classes.
3. Manage GC facilities used by the OC or the academic program.
4. Manage medical supplies compliance with WFR protocols, industry standards, and AEE accreditation standards.
5. Develop, in conjunction with OE faculty and staff, an equipment acquisition plan to meet the needs of the OC and DOE academic programs.
6. Manage a professional equipment acquisition program for outdoor education students, faculty and staff.
7. Attend OE Staff meetings.

Outdoor Center Venture Out Coordinator

Desirable Skills

Technical competency in and risk management of canoeing, kayaking, backpacking, camping, caving, climbing, navigation, and/or challenge course activities; logistical planning skills for the above activities and ability to plan and implement expedition and trip components of academic classes in compliance with AEE Accreditation standards.

Job Description

1. Plan and coordinate a schedule of Venture Out programs for fall, spring, and summer semesters.
2. Assist with trip planning logistics.
3. Provide oversight for planning, delivery and evaluation requirements in connection with VO leaders.
4. Market Venture Out programs using mediums such as Facebook, campus flyers and Bobcat Vision.
5. Deliver Venture Out programs as required.
6. Assist with Venture Out web page.
7. Attend OE Staff meetings.