Tompkins Cortland Community College

Master Course Syllabus

Course Discipline and Number: RECR 159 **Year: 2025-2026**

Course Title: Introduction to Outdoor Experiences **Credit Hours: 1**

I. Course Description: This course will introduce students to a variety of outdoor skills and knowledge. Research shows that contact with nature and the outdoors has numerous health, psychological, and physical benefits. However, the single largest barriers to participating in outdoor recreation activities and connecting to nature are lack of knowledge, skills, and/or fear. This course for beginners introduces students to a multitude of outdoor recreational activities to build familiarity with recreating safely outside. It covers the fundamentals of several different outdoor recreational skills as lifetime leisure activities including, but not limited to, camping, trail navigation, snowshoeing/skiing, hiking, and teambuilding while following Leave No Trace guidelines. Additional fee required to cover the transportation and equipment costs of a mandatory camping trip. Prerequisites: None.1 Cr. (2 lab). Fall and/or spring semesters.

II. Additional Course Information:

1. This course is designed specifically for students with little or no experience in outdoor recreation. Students will be provided hands-on instruction in all the activities covered in this course.
2. There will be an additonal fee associated with this course to supplement the cost of the chosen activities.
3. Students participating in all outdoor recreation and fitness activities should consult their personal physician to ensure they are healthy enough to participate. Students with disabilities are encouraged to enroll in this course and will be accommodated.
4. Specific outdoor skills and topics covered in this course can change from semester to semester based on the season and will be chosen based on the needs of the students and resources available.
5. Students will want to outfit themselves with non-cotton clothing for the weather and a sturdy pair of outdoor hiking boots or shoes. Comfortable rain gear is recommended as well. All other equipment for this course will be provided such as skis, camping gear, helmets, etc.
6. This is an experiential education course. Active participation in the outdoor activities in this course is required. Since students are being introduced to different activities, they will not be required to master but must attempt all outdoor activities for success in the course.
7. For some activities, students will be required to turn off and keep off digital devices.
8. The course emphasizes development of the student's proficiency, competency, and leadership abilities in a skill/knowledge area of outdoor recreation.
9. This course can be used by Outdoor Recreation majors to fulfill an outdoor activity elective requirement.

III. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Actively participate in several different outdoor recreational activities.
2. Demonstrate respect for all areas by following *Leave No Trace Guidelines* for each Outdoor Recreation activity in which they are participating.
3. Explain the value, meaning, and benefits of outdoor recreation in their lives, specifically as it relates to their life goals.

4.	Explain and demonstrate the proper use and care for equipment that is used for outdoor recreation activities.
5.	Apply the following concepts: dressing in layers in preparation for various weather conditions, prevention and treatment of hypothermia, trip planning, proper nutrition for strenuous activities, safe off trail travel, and trail etiquette.

IV. Tompkins Cortland Institutional Learning Outcomes; Program Learning Outcomes; SUNY General Education Outcomes

Tompkins Cortland ILOs N/A

Complete this section for "service" courses only (e.g. courses that are required of all students; courses that are not program specific but satisfy liberal arts requirements; or commonly used in multiple academic programs to meet non-program-specific requirements). Check only Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) that are meaningfully developed and assessed in this course. For each ILO chosen, include the SLO to which it aligns.

Students will:

☐ Communicate effectively, in oral and written forms, taking into consideration audience and purpose.

☐ Apply principles and methods of scientific inquiry and quantitative reasoning appropriate to their discipline.

☐ Use information, critical thinking, and the creative process to solve problems and reach conclusions.

☐ Use technology appropriate to their discipline.

☐ Describe the ways in which social, economic, or environmental sustainability depends on their own and the collective contributions of a diversity of ideas and people.

Program Learning Outcomes N/A

Complete this section for program-specific courses (e.g. those that share the same 4 letter designation as the academic program or satisfy requirements in related programs). List the academic program(s) here and note which Student Learning Outcomes align to specific Programmatic Learning Outcomes. Please see the MCS Instructions for more details.

Specify the Academic Program

SUNY General Education Outcomes N/A

If this course **assesses** a SUNY GEN ED Outcome, check all that apply and indicate which course outcome(s) address each checked item:

☐ CRITICAL THINKING - Students will:

a. identify, analyze, and evaluate arguments as they occur in their own or others' work; and
b. develop well-reasoned arguments.

☐ INFORMATION MANAGEMENT - Students will:

a. perform the basic operations of personal computer use;
b. understand and use basic research techniques; and
c. locate,) evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of sources.

☐ GENERAL EDUCATION CATEGORY - Area(s):
For courses that are approved to meet one (or more) of the ten SUNY General Education categories, indicate which category the course fulfills, and which outcome(s) are aligned with the SUNY outcomes for that category:

☒ This course does not address any of the above Tompkins Cortland ILOs, PLOs, or SUNY General Education Outcomes.

V. Essential Topics/Themes

1. Leave No Trace awareness
2. Outdoor navigation
3. Dressing for the weather
4. Camping skills and techniques
5. Trip planning and participation
6. Outdoor activities participation including but not limited to teambuilding, camping, archery, hiking, snowshoeing, geocaching, rappelling, canoeing, kayaking, rafting, rock climbing, outdoor meditation
7. Outdoor skills including but not limited to tent/tarp set up, water treatment, lightweight stove lighting, food storage, food preparation, minor first aid, knot tying, backcountry navigation, weather knowledge, fire building, hygiene and sanitation

VI. Methods of Assessment/Evaluation

Method	% Course Grade
1. Experiential Education: Active participation in activities, classes, and trips	40-70%
2. Written Work: Reflection papers	10-40%
3. Outdoor Recreation Activity Skill Development	10-30%

VII. Texts – ☒ Required ☐ Recommended ☐ Used for more than one course (list courses)

1. Dury, J. and Holmlund, E (2006) (or Latest Edition). The Camper's Guide to Outdoor Pursuits: Finding safe, nature-friendly, and comfortable passage through wild places. Sagamore Publishing, Champaign, IL

Editions listed are current as of date of syllabus. More recent editions may be used.

VIII. Bibliography of Supplemental Materials

1. Goldenberg, M. and Martin, B. *Hiking and Backpacking*. Latest Edition, © (2008) Champaign, Il. Human Kinetics
2. Various trail maps based on location of trip.

3. Blanchard, J., Strong, M., and Ford, P. *Leadership and Administration of Outdoor Pursuits.* (2007) 3rd edition. State College, PA. Venture Publishing.
4. Priest, S., and Gass, M. A. (2005) *Effective Leadership in Adventure Programming*. 2nd edition. Champaign, Il. Human Kinetics.
5. Prouty, D., Panicucci, J. and Collinson, R. (2007) *Adventure Education: Theory and Applications*. Champaign, Il. Human Kinetics.
6. Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics – Documents and research.
7. Goldenberg, M. and Martin, B. (2008) *Hiking and Backpacking*. Champaign, Il. Human Kinetics.
8. Louc, Richard (2005). *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. Algonquin Books.

Editions listed are current as of date of syllabus. More recent editions may be used.

IX. Other Learning Resources

Audiovisual: None specified

Electronic: None specified

Other:
Various outdoor equipment and supplies.
Various trail maps, including smartphone applications
Transportation resources

Attendance Policy: *To maintain good grades, regular attendance in class is necessary. Absence from class is considered a serious matter and absence never excuses a student from class work. It is the responsibility of all instructors to distribute reasonable attendance policies in writing during the first week of class. Students are required to comply with the attendance policy set by each of their instructors. Students are not penalized if they are unable to attend classes or participate in exams on particular days because of religious beliefs, in accordance with Chapter 161, Section 224-a of the Education Law of the State of New York. Students who plan to be absent from classroom activity for religious reasons should discuss the absence in advance with their instructors. See college catalog for more information.*

Services for Students with Disabilities: *It is the College's policy to provide, on an individual basis, appropriate academic adjustments for students with disabilities, which may affect their ability to fully participate in program or course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Access and Equity Services, to discuss their particular need for academic adjustments. All course materials are available in alternate formats upon request.*

Academic Integrity: *Every student at Tompkins Cortland Community College is expected to act in an academically honest fashion in all aspects of his or her academic work: in writing papers and reports, in taking examinations, in performing laboratory experiments and reporting the results, in clinical and cooperative learning experiences, and in attending to paperwork such as registration forms.*
Any written work submitted by a student must be his or her own. If the student uses the words or ideas of someone else, he or she must cite the source by such means as a footnote. Our guiding principle is that any honest evaluation of a student's performance must be based on that student's work. Any action taken by a student that would result in misrepresentation of someone else's work or actions as the student's own — such as cheating on a test, submitting for credit a paper written by another person, or forging an advisor's signature — is intellectually dishonest and deserving of censure.
Several degree programs offer student learning opportunities (such as internships, field work, and clinical experiences) outside the standard classroom setting. As part of the learning process, students must understand and engage in conduct that adheres to principles guiding employment within the professional workplace. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, academic integrity, accountability, reliability, respect, use of appropriate language and dress, civility, professional ethics, honesty, and trustworthiness. Disciplinary action may be initiated for inappropriate conduct occurring while participating in any course-related project or event.