Basic Canoeing Syllabus- Fall Term
Oed-035-01

Read: Using Guided Problem Solving in Teaching Canoeing Strokes  
Read: Tandem Canoe Stroke Technique Summary  
Read: Lightning Safety in the Field  
A Simple Rope System for Tying Down Canoes and Pre-Rigging a Stirrup Rescue

Location: Off campus  
Lab: Thursday, 12:30-5:20  
Instructor: J. Grant White  
Office: 312 Wheeler  
Phone: Ext. 1350  
E-mail: gwhite@northland.edu

Text: "The canoe is the royalty of watercraft, and even the most fat and fatuous of them is infinitely exalted in my mind above the power pig. A canoe is something from which humanity fairly oozes. It's a wing that's flown on the pleasurable fuels of perspiration, perception and intelligence. To paddle even a poor one is to partake of broadened perceptual universe; to become immersed in paddling a good one is to partake of some kind of godhood."

Harry Roberts
Page 13, Wilderness Camping, Vol. 6, No. 6, 1977

Introduction
This course is designed to introduce you to the knowledge and skills needed to safely enjoy canoeing for recreation, relaxation, lifetime physical fitness, or work.

As an activity, canoeing is often viewed as being about as common as dirt; totally uncomplicated, and absolutely without risk. That the exact opposite is, in fact, the case means that many people know so little about the activity that they have no grasp of the variety of skills or magnitude of skill level possible, nor do they appreciate the potential risks or possess the means of avoiding them. If this course goes as planned, none of these statements will apply to you when it is completed.

Unique to North America, the lightweight open canoe was absolutely essential to both the Native North Americans and the early Europeans for subsistence, work, exploration, commerce, and general transportation. In the early days, the waterways were often the paths of least resistance through the wilderness, particularly when heavy loads were involved. This remained true even when the direction of travel happened to be upstream. Local waterways such as the Boise Brule, St. Croix, Bad, White, and Namekagon rivers were used in this way long before they were used for recreation.

While other types of boats can out-perform the canoe in specific categories of performance, no other boat is, at the same time, as fast, as maneuverable, as seaworthy, or can carry as great a load for its size as the canoe and still be lifted and carried over land to the next body of water.

Modern canoeing includes the disciplines of tripping, flat water cruising, white water paddling, freestyle paddling, poling, lining, tracking, portaging, sailing, and various categories of competition in nearly all of these areas.
**Course Goals**

- To help students to appreciate the potential for skill development and diversity within this activity
- To inform students regarding care of equipment
- To provide a solid foundation of both flat water and moving water paddling techniques and the means for students to self-critique and continue to learn on their own
- To promote an understanding of the potential hazards associated with canoeing and provide the knowledge and skills necessary to recognize and avoid them
- Acting upon the assumption that students are enrolling in the course out of a genuine interest in the activity; to provide students with information that will enable them to make informed purchases of canoes and canoeing equipment

**Outcomes**

Upon completing the course, students will have developed a:

- Functional understanding of the interactions among boat, paddle, and water, and ability to apply same to produce efficient, effective canoe strokes. Included will be the concepts of:
  - Paddle power face
  - Law of action-reaction
  - Law of inertia
  - Effective power transfer
  - Effective paddling biomechanics
- Functional ability to use basic rescue techniques
- Functional understanding of water hydraulogy and river/lake safety
- Functional understanding of canoe design and construction
- Functional ability to paddle either bow or stern on either the right or left side, in both quiet and moving water

“If the wind blows when docking, if the lake becomes rough, if the river drops through rapids, the ordinary canoeist grows uneasy, is easily dislodged from his seat, and is often in danger. The skilled canoeist merely becomes more interested and he can put himself in a position of safety whenever he wishes.”

Deforest Eveland

Mankato State University graduate student, Dept. of Experiential Education (and “skilled canoeist”), Spring 1977

**Class Schedule**

**Week 1**

Introduction to the class
Safety talk, paperwork, etc.
Basic concepts, fit paddles and P.F.D.s, learn to load the trailers, canoe lifts, portage techniques, etc.

Read Chaps. 1 & 2

**Week 2**

Basic flat water instruction and rescue--Twin Lakes/Birch Grove or Long Lake

Read Chap. 3

**Week 3**

Canoe orienteering/practice straight line travel--Mineral Lake

Read Chap. 4

**Week 4**

Classroom (T.B.A.); water hydraulogy, theory of paddling moving water, river safety

Read Chap. 5

**Week 5**

Strokes and maneuvers for moving water--White River Flowage
Week 6
Moving water on the White River from Pike River Road to Sutherland Landing

Read Chap. 7

Week 7
Moving water on the White River from the reservoir to Hwy. 13 or T.B.A. based on conditions

Read Chap. 8

*Depending on interest, there will be an evening presentation on canoe design and construction (a “canoe buyer’s guide”) the time and location T.B.A.

Equipment Requirements
In order to safely participate in this class, you will need to come prepared for cold, wet conditions with extra layers of warm clothing with properties that will allow them to keep you warm when wet (this includes wool, synthetic fleece and pile, polypropylene, Thermax, Thinsulate, Capilene, et.al.-- the list does not include cotton and acrylic), good rain gear (bring it every time!), a warm hat, waterproof boots (i.e.- “barn boots”) or shoes that can take repeated wetting without damage, a day pack with a garbage bag (two, doubled is better) or dry bag in which to keep your clothing dry, and a water bottle along with high energy snacks.

Grades
Students in this class will receive a letter grade for their work. Grades in this class will be calculated on a straight percentage basis. This is accomplished by dividing the number of points earned by the total number of points possible. I do not grade on improvement except to the extent that improved scores will bolster the student’s overall point total. Full and enthusiastic class participation is expected of all students and should not be viewed as something extra that can be counted on to compensate for poor performance on written assignments.

In addition to attending every session, each student will write a research paper, which will be due at the end of the session. The papers will be graded and then copied and assembled into information packets, which will be distributed to students in the class. The papers should represent thorough research of a specific and focused topic. Papers should be concise while providing thorough coverage of the topic in question. A selection of Dexter Library and Internet resources are assembled at the end of this syllabus.

The grading scale is as follows: 93-100 A; 90-92 A-; 87-89 B+; 83-86 B; 80-82 B-; 77-79 C+; 73-76 C; 70-72 C-; 67-69 D+; 60-66 D; 0-59 F.

Attendance
Students must understand that attendance is of paramount importance in any activity class. It is more important than, and cannot be made up by the written assignment. This class meets 7 times. Therefore, if classes are missed, each class will be considered to be worth 14% of the class, and 14% per session missed will be deducted from the final percentage total.

Students in the class will be expected to attend each session and participate to the fullest. Excused absences include illness, school sponsored activities, and selected family obligations. Missing a class to study for another class is not excused on the basis of it being a school sponsored activity. Misses must be made up by researching the topics covered in class on the day in question, and writing a summary of the findings. Skills instruction and practice may be able to be made up during evening pool sessions. Such make-up sessions must be arranged in advance with the professor.

Under no circumstances should a student assume that by merely submitting a paper, they have made up for 100% of the class missed. In order to be considered equivalent, the paper must reproduce the content covered on the day missed, and be of adequate length, substance, and quality based on the judgment of the course professor. For purposes of calculating a final grade for the class, the paper will be graded, and the 14% deduction for the one absence will be reduced, commensurate with the quality of the make-up assignment. Therefore, the degree to which the paper actually substitutes for the class experiences on the day missed, will be directly reflected in the final grade. Whether a teaching segment or practical period is missed, the student must meet with the professor to discuss the possible make-up work. Only one miss (equivalent to one week of the course) can be made up in this way. Any student missing more than one session must drop the class.

Experience has shown this professor that it is impossible to anticipate all possible situations which may affect a student’s final grade. If, and when such situations arise, a decision will be made by the course instructor, based on the norms of
the profession and his best judgment. The professor may consult with departmental colleagues, the Division Head, and/or the Dean of the College.

**Canoeing Internet Resources:**

**ORGANIZATIONS**
American Canoe Association
http://www.acanet.org/

Minnesota Canoe Association
http://www.canoe-kayak.org/

Outdoor Play
http://www.outdoorplay.com/main.html

Salty Dog
http://www.seakayaker.com/

**PRESEvation**
American Rivers
http://www.amrivers.org/

**TRIP PLANNING**
TopoZone (online topo maps for the U.S.)
http://www.topozone.com/

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/index.html

Ontario Canoe Routes
http://www.myccr.com/

Manitoba Park Information
http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/parks/index.html

Paddle Manitoba
http://kohlrabi.cs.umanitoba.ca/mrcawebsite/

Canadian Canoe Links
http://kohlrabi.cs.umanitoba.ca/mrcawebsite/subpages/links.htm

Superior National Forest Virtual Visitor Center
http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/superior/?bwca.cc

Boundary Water Canoe Area
http://www.boundarywaterscanoearea.com/

Quetico Provincial Park
http://www.ontarioparks.com/english/quet.html

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
http://www.dnr.state.mi.us/index.asp

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/

**EQUIPMENT**
Cooke Custom Sewing (Excellent Custom canoe spray covers, canoe packs, tarps, mukluks, etc.)
http://www.cookecustomsewing.com/
Bell Canoe Works (In my opinion, the best designed and built personal canoes on the market--- David Yost designs)
http://www.bellcanoe.com/

Frost River
http://www.frostriver.com/

Midwest Mountaineering (OUTSTANDING outdoor gear retailer)
http://www.midwestmtn.com/

Piragis Northwoods Company
http://www.piragis.com/

Rutabaga On-Line—Your Y2K Compliant Vegetable
http://www.paddlers.com/index.html

TECHNIQUE
Canoe Poling
http://www.northernsun.bc.ca/Poling.htm

Making an Inexpensive Pole
http://www.brockeng.com/AmusingRaven/pole.htm

CANOE LINKS PAGES
The Ultimate Guide to Canoeing
http://www.canoeing.com/

Outdoorplaces.com Canoe Resource Page
http://www.outdoorplaces.com/Features/Paddle/pickcanoe/newcanoe8.htm

Outdoor Online—Canoeing
http://www.outdoor.co.jp/canoe/canoe_windex.htm

CANOE BUILDING INFORMATION
The Wooden Canoe Heritage Association
http://www.wcha.org/index.html

Che-Mun, the Journal of Canadian Wilderness Canoeing
http://www.canoe.ca/che-mun/home.html

Native Tech: Native American Technology and Art-- Birch Bark Canoes
http://www.nativetech.org/brchbark/canoe.htm

North House Folk School—Boat Building Classes
http://www.northhouse.org/classes/boat.htm

Resources for Wood Canoe Enthusiasts
http://www.paddlin.com/fivelakes/resource.htm

Wood Canvas Canoe Building Course
http://www.magma.ca/~paufacan/course_canoe_building.htm

Wood Canvas Canoe Reconstruction Course
http://www.magma.ca/~paufacan/course_reconst.htm

Wooden Canoe Directory of Builders and Suppliers

TICK-BORNE DISEASES
CDC Lyme Disease Pages
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/LYME/Id_prevent.htm
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/LYME/Prevention/Id_Prevention_Avoid.htm
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/Lyme/
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Google and Yahoo Search Engines: (great search engine—when searching as a phrase, bracket the phrase “in quotation marks”)—try;
“wood canvas canoe” or “canoe tripping”
http://www.google.com/
http://search.yahoo.com/