SNOWSHOEING
OED 044-01

Read: Snowshoeing, the Under-Used Winter Workout

Meeting Time:             W 12:30-5:30 p.m.
Meeting Place:            The “Outpost” unless otherwise specified
Instructor:                   J. Grant White; Wh 312/ Ext. 1350

The first session will take place in the “Outpost” and will consist of a presentation on snowshoes and bindings and taking care of some class business.

Thereafter, the class will travel by van to various appropriate locations. Rather than simply snowshoeing, the class will contain elements of natural history such as animal tracking, coverage of winter safety issues, navigation, emergency procedures, and ice safety.

Because we will be outside in a winter environment, your clothing selection is a matter of both personal and group safety. A warm hat is mandatory. Try to obtain long underwear made of wool or one of the synthetics such as “Thermax” or polypropylene as any of these will keep you warm even when wet. Dress in multiple, light layers made of materials that will keep you warm when wet such as wool or one of the pile or fleece garments. A light wind shell is best over layers such as these. Avoid heavy coats, which allow few adjustment options beyond on or off. You will become wet from perspiration and then chilled in something such as this. You will need and can rent a daypack in which to store clothing layers as you heat up. Wool pants or wind pants over “polypro” or fleece will be best in cold weather, mittens are warmer than gloves, and you will need a pair of warm boots such as a felt lined shoe pack (e.g.- “Sorel” boots). Small format, narrow toed boots with heels (in particular) will not work in snowshoe bindings.

Outcomes:

• Functional ability to dress appropriately and adjust layers in response to a variety of weather conditions and levels of activity
• Functional ability to snowshoe through a variety of terrain and vegetation environments
• Functional ability to build an emergency fire and construct an emergency shelter
• Functional ability to navigate in the winter environment and use a compass to crash out of the woods
• Functional ability to recognize, avoid, and administer first aid for common cold related medical problems

Grading

As of fall semester 1999, students in all Outdoor Education activity classes will receive a letter grade. 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 in other aspects of the class.
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, either the knot exam or 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 being a school sponsored activity. Missed classes must be made up by researching an appropriate topic and writing a summary of the findings, or by completing an alternative substitution activity. Either alternative must be arranged in consultation with the instructor.

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, or substitute for, 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. In any case, 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.

Some possible topics for the research paper include, but are not limited to:

- Dressing for cold weather activities
- The use of vapor barriers in a layering system
- Focused topics related to hypothermia or frostbite such as causes and prevention or treatment
- Construction of a specific style of snow shelter
- Ice travel and safety
- Surviving an unplanned night in the winter woods
- Selecting snowshoes
- History of snowshoeing
- Guidelines for assembling an emergency pack for snowshoeing
- Describe techniques for building an emergency fire on deep snow
- Snowshoeing techniques
- Winter trail nutrition

The attached list of Internet and Dexter Library resources should provide a starting point for selecting and researching a topic.

Yahoo! Recreation—Snowshoeing
http://dir.yahoo.com/Recreation/Outdoors/Snowshoeing/

Carl Heilman’s Snowshoes and Snowshoeing
http://www.carlheilman.com/snowshoe.html

Gorp Snowshoeing
http://www.gorp.com/gorp/activity/hiking/skills/snowshoe.htm

Snowlink Learn and Improve—Snowshoeing
Snowshoe Equipment Resources
http://www.cross-countryski.com/snowshoes.html