

## **Introduction to Arctic Backpacking**

1-Credit

Instructor-Frank Olive

Contact: 474-6027; folive@alaska.edu

June 13<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>

**Field trip fee: \$450**

### **Course Meetings-**

Pre-Trip Meeting- Outdoor Adventures office at 519 Copper Lane

Friday 6/13 5:30pm-7:30pm

Classroom- Outdoor Adventures Office at 519 Copper Lane

Saturday 6/14 9am-5pm

Classroom- Outdoor Adventures Office at 519 Copper Lane

Sunday 6/15 11-5pm

Field Trip- Brooks Range Backpacking

Monday 6/16- Sunday 6/22

### **Course Description**

This course is designed to introduce students to the art of backpacking the Arctic. We will cover a wide range of topics regarding multiday hiking in the Brooks Range. We will go over route planning, food preparation, gear choices, and emergency preparedness here in Fairbanks. We will then head out for a week long backpacking trip in the Brooks Range. This environment will provide many opportunities for instruction and learning moments. We will specifically discuss navigation, river crossings, camp selection, safe bear practices and many of the Leave No Trace camping ethics that are important while backpacking in the Arctic.

### **Course Goals**

The students should leave this course with a good understanding of backpacking in the Arctic. This class will provide students with an understanding of the gear that they need for backpacking and its correct use in the field. This class will also help develop a good sense of judgment for future backpacking trips. Hopefully the students will also leave the course with a love and respect for the arctic environment in which they have traveled.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Students should be able to plan a route and put together the logistics of their own backpacking trips. After this course students should be able to navigate in the wilderness with a map and compass. Students will know and be able to follow the Leave No Trace wilderness principles. Students will be able minimize their risk of a negative bear encounter by practicing bear safe procedures.

## Appropriate Student Background

There are no prerequisites for this course; however, enrollees must be in adequate physical condition to carry a 40+ pound pack over rough arctic tundra for a week. Students must be willing to: travel in inclement weather, have wet feet, do river crossings, deal with lots of bugs, and travel over steep and unstable terrain.

## Instructional Methods

The course will use both classroom discussion and field learning. The classroom discussion will be prior to the field trip. During the field trip, the instructor will discuss potential situations and challenges as well as demonstrate skills to be mastered by the students. The students will then have time to learn/practice those skills through application by active participation in backpacking. The students will have a final scenario based on the skills learned in the class.

## Grading

This is a pass/fail course.

Trip Preparation 25%

Field Scenarios (navigation, campsite selection, route finding, etc.) 25%

Field Notebooks 25%

Participation in the expedition experience 25%

70%- will be considered a passing grade

## Grading Rubric for Arctic Backpacking

	5 (Excellent)	4 (Good)	2-3 (Fair)	0-1 (Poor)
<b>Trip Preparation</b>	Student has their personal gear kit for the trip together, organized and complete. Student works hard to make sure that the food, logistics and group gear are thoroughly prepared	Student has most of their personal gear together. Student actively participates in food shopping, logistics and group gear participation	Student has an incomplete or unorganized personal gear kit. They don't do their share of the pre-trip preparations with the group food and gear.	Student has not taken the necessary steps to get any of their gear together. They are absent from the trip preparation or don't do anything to make the logistics for the trip happen
<b>Field Scenarios</b>	Student fully grasps the concepts presented in LNT, navigation, route finding and other field lessons and can then implement them on their own	Student has a good grasp of the field concepts that are presented and can demonstrate these concepts with a little help	Student has a partial understanding of the different field scenarios and has trouble demonstrating any of those lessons.	Student has no grasp of the field concept lesson that are presented and can't demonstrate any of them without significant help
<b>Field Notebook</b>	Student fully utilizes the field note book for taking notes and checking lists before the trip, thoughts and reflections in the field and also has notes taken during the field scenarios	Student takes some notes in the notebook about the trip prep and lesson and also writes some reflections while out on the trip.	Student has a notebook but doesn't use it much	Student doesn't have a field notebook
<b>Participation in the Expedition Experience</b>	Student engages with the group in a positive manner. They pitch in and do more than their share of the camp chores. They also are encouraging and patient with other members of the group	Students are positive and helpful most of the time. They do their share of the camp chores and participate in the decisions that the group makes	Student is sometimes unengaged or negative with other members of the group. They only participate in some of the group discussions and mainly do camp chores that benefit themselves directly.	Student is not engaged with the group at all. Never does any camp chores and is negative, sullen and makes no effort to resolve any issues within the group

**Equipment**

Outdoor Adventures will provide: tents, backpacks, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, stoves, and pots. Students will need to have clothing that is appropriate for being outside in the arctic summer environment of Alaska.

**Course Material**

There is no text book. Students will need to have a field notebook and pencil for the course.

**Course Assignments**

Students will be expected use the notebook to create a future reference for backcountry travel. This should include: Notes about gear, notes about food choices including likes/dislikes and amounts, daily distances and times, route hints and reminders for next time, general reminder notes, and reflections about the trip (I.E. why you are there?) This notebook can also contain references and helpful hints such as navigation reminders

**Risk Tolerance**

Due to the nature of outdoor travel there are certain risks in this class. Acceptable risks include: hiking up steep hills with a backpack of 50+ pounds for many miles of rough terrain, doing stream crossings, camping out for seven days in Alaska arctic weather, dealing with wildlife, snowstorms, wind, ice and mud. Driving risks may include slick and snowy roads, poor visibility, and wildlife.

**Students with Disabilities**

The Office of Disability Services implements the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and insures that UAF students have equal access to the campus and course materials. The instructor will work with the Office of Disabilities Services (203 WHIT, 474-7043) to provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. Please inform the instructor of any disabilities during the first class session.