**PLS 350: Adventure Education Leadership (3 Credits)   
Course Syllabus – Fall, 2015**

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| **Instructor:** | David A. Graefe, Ph.D. | **Class Meets:** | Tuesday and Thursday 11:00 – 12:15 PM |
| **Office:** | 201 Prichard Hall | **Classroom:** | Morrow Library Commons |
| **Phone Number:** | (304) 696-2608 | **Office Hours:** | Monday 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM  Wednesday 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM  Or by appointment |
| **E-Mail:** | graefe@marshall.edu |

**Course Description (from catalog):**

This course focuses on preparing students to be outdoor adventure education leaders, facilitating programs in both the front and back country and utilizing adventure education techniques in an outdoor setting.

**More Description:**

This course is experiential in nature. Students will participate in a variety of activities (both in class and in the field) that are designed to facilitate personal and group development. Through completion of these activities, students will learn the theoretical foundations and technical skills that are necessary to provide high-quality adventure education programs to a variety of audiences. Attendance and participation are extremely important in this class.

**Course Format:**

Class will meet on Tuesday and Thursday each week from 11:00 to 12:15 PM, unless otherwise specified by the instructor or course schedule. Materials will be presented and discussed using lectures, in-class discussions, classroom activities, and student projects and presentations. Students will be expected to attend class and participate in class discussions, complete written homework assignments, participate in and lead group activities, and prepare and present a final paper and presentation on a topic of their choice related to adventure education leadership (topic must be approved by instructor).

**Required Texts, Additional Reading, and Other Materials:**

The following textbooks are required for the course:

* Martin, B., Cashel, C., Wagstaff, M., & Breunig, M. (2006). *Outdoor Leadership: Theory and Practice*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
* Other readings as assigned and provided by the instructor.

Assigned readings are an essential component of this course and provide students with a baseline of knowledge that will be expanded upon through more detailed and complex in-class activities. Students will be required to complete assigned readings prior to the class period in which the material will be discussed.

Supplemental course materials (e.g., handouts, reading assignments, etc.) will be posted to the Blackboard website (<http://www.marshall.edu/muonline/>).

**Desired Objectives/Outcomes:**

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| **Student Learning Outcomes** | **How Practiced in this Course** | **How Assessed in this Course** |
| Students will understand the foundations of adventure education leadership in the United States and abroad | In-class and out-of-class activities, discussions, textbook readings | Participation, homework assignments, group facilitation |
| Students will practice self and group leadership in team exercises and activities | In-class and out-of-class activities, discussions, textbook readings | Class participation and group facilitation |
| Students will develop an understanding of group dynamics and will demonstrate the ability to effectively facilitate a diverse group of team members | In-class and out-of-class activities, discussions, textbook readings | Class participation and group facilitation |
| Students will demonstrate the ability to think critically and solve problems in real-time | In-class and out-of-class activities, discussions, textbook readings | Class participation, writing assignments, and group facilitation |
| Students will develop an understanding of environmental ethics and the impacts of human behavior on the environment | In-class and out-of-class activities, discussions, textbook readings | Class participation, writing assignments, and group facilitation |
| Students will become familiar with safety and risk management issues related to adventure education | In-class and out-of-class activities, discussions, textbook readings | Class participation, writing assignments, and group facilitation |
| Students will demonstrate professionalism and organizational skills related to program development and facilitation | In-class and out-of-class activities, discussions, textbook readings | Class participation, writing assignments, and group facilitation |

**University Policies:**

By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy by going to [www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs](http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs) and clicking on “Marshall University Policies.” Or, you can access the policies directly by going to <http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802>.

Academic Dishonesty/ Excused Absence Policy for Undergraduates/ Computing Services Acceptable Use/ Inclement Weather/ Dead Week/ Students with Disabilities/ Academic Forgiveness/ Academic Probation and Suspension/ Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students/ Affirmative Action/ Sexual Harassment

**Attendance Policy and Make-up Work:**

In-class participation is an essential component of this course and students will be expected to attend each class unless they have a valid university-approved excuse (see university excused absence policy). I will be happy to meet with students who miss class with a valid excuse to discuss course material and how missed work can be made up. However, I will not re-lecture to students who miss class during office hours, and it will be the students’ responsibility to catch up on missed material (e.g., readings, in-class exercises, etc.).

**Assignment Submission and Late Policy**

All assignments must be turned in **at the beginning of class** on the specified due date. Except under special circumstances with written justification, assignments turned in after the due date will be penalized with a 10% reduction in points for each day late, including Saturdays and Sundays (i.e., one day late = 90% highest possible score, two days late = 80% highest possible score, etc.). Assignments will not be accepted more than one week after the original due date.

**Course Requirements / Assignments**

Students will be evaluated in this course based on their performance in the following categories…

* Participation – this class is experiential in nature and attendance and participation are extremely important. Students will earn participation points by showing up for class, asking relevant questions during lectures, completing in-class and out-of-class activities, and contributing to classroom discussions and assignments. Contrarily, participation points will be deducted from students who make a habit of skipping or disrupting class (e.g., arriving late or leaving early, using cell phones or other distracting devices, intentionally distracting other students, etc.). Individual class participation grades will be awarded at the discretion of the instructor. A large proportion of this course is based on in-class discussion and participation. Therefore, students who miss classes due to university excused absences may be asked to complete written assignments (in addition to the regularly scheduled homework assignments) in order to make up for work / discussion missed during those classes.
* Technical skill development – Being an adventure educator requires proficiency in activity-specific technical skills. Students will be required to attend a workshop designed to teach activity-specific technical skills at least once during the semester. Upon completion of the workshop, students will be required to write a reflective report summarizing what they learned and how they benefited as an adventure educator. Each of the following free workshops will last two-hours and will start at 5:00 PM at the Rec. Center.
  1. August 26th – Bike tire repair workshop at the Rec. Center to learn proper techniques for repairing and changing bicycle tires. No previous experience necessary.

* 1. September 23rd – Natural climbing anchor workshop that will teach participants how to set up a natural climbing anchor. No previous experience necessary.
  2. October 21st – Hiking workshop that will teach participants to properly prepare for hiking trips. No previous experience necessary.
  3. November 18th – GriGri workshop that will teach participants proper techniques for using a GriGri belay device for rock climbing. No previous experience necessary.
  4. No Date – Providing a safe environment during adventure education activities is extremely important. Therefore, anyone wishing to become an adventure educator will need to have basic knowledge of CPR and First Aid techniques. Students may choose to gain this knowledge by taking an online course (offered by the Red Cross). Students who choose this option will be responsible for paying the $30 course fee. Students who already have these certifications may not simply present them for assignment credit – they must either take the course to recertify or choose another activity for technical skill development.

**Students will be required to pre-register for the workshop of their choice no later than one week before the workshop date. Students may register for these workshops at the Marshall University Recreation Center website (**[**http://www.marshallcampusrec.com/departments/outdoor-pursuits/**](http://www.marshallcampusrec.com/departments/outdoor-pursuits/)**). Students wishing to participate in a workshop other than those listed above may be granted permission from the instructor if the workshop meets the requirements of this assignment (workshops must be pre-approved by the instructor).**

* Written assignments – students will be required to complete several written homework assignments throughout the course of the semester. Many of these will take the form of reflection papers focusing on classroom and field activities. The content and format will vary and will be specified for each assignment. Grading of written assignments will be based both on what is presented (content) as well as the style and adequacy of the presentation (process). Written assignments should be neat, succinct, and clear. All homework assignments must be typed (12 –point font, double-spaced), printed, and handed in at the **beginning** of class on the date the assignment is due (see Late Policy for more detail).
* Field Trip Participation and Reflection– Students will be required to participate in a field trip to Morehead State University to participate in a two-day challenge course involving both low and high ropes courses. The date and time of the trip will be announced several weeks in advance, and I will cancel a regularly scheduled class meeting to make up for the time spent in the field. This trip will be free for students and all-inclusive (covering transportation, food, camping equipment and fees, and low and high ropes course programs). This field trip is a course requirement and all students are expected to participate. However, if you absolutely cannot make it due to a scheduling conflict, I will provide you with an alternative assignment focusing on adventure education and leadership. Fees and/or costs for any approved alternative assignments will be paid by the student.
* Group facilitation – Each student will be responsible for facilitating a teambuilding group activity or technical skill seminar during class this semester. Students will be graded based on their ability to plan and facilitate a successful group activity. Students will be responsible for acquiring the equipment and materials necessary to lead their activities.
* Term Paper and Presentation – Students will be required to prepare a term paper on a topic of interest to them relating to adventure education leadership (topic must be approved by instructor). Each student will prepare a written paper along with a PowerPoint presentation to be delivered in front of the class. The term paper and presentation will be completed in lieu of a final exam.

**Evaluation Method / Grading Policy:**

The evaluation categories described on the previous page will contribute to your overall course grade as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Participation | 20% |
|  | Survival simulation paper | 10% |
|  | Technical skill development | 10% |
|  | Written reflection papers | 30% |
|  | Term Paper and Presentation | 20% |
|  | Group facilitation | 10% |
|  | **Total** | 100% |

This class will employ a weighted grading system. To determine your grade in this course, fill in your percentage score for each evaluation category below, multiply each score by its weight, and then add the values in the final grade column to find your overall grade out of 100. In addition to handing graded assignments back to you in class, I will post grades for individual assignments and exams on blackboard. However, please remember that you **must** use the weighted grading system shown below to determine an accurate portrayal of your overall course grade. I am happy to meet with you to discuss your course progress/grade during office hours throughout the semester.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Category** | **Your Score**  **(out of 100)** |  | **Weight** |  | **Contribution to**  **Final Grade** |
| Participation | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | X | .20 | = | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Survival simulation paper | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | X | .10 | = | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Technical skill development | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | X | .10 | = | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Written reflection papers | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | X | .30 | = | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Group facilitation | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | X | .10 | = | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Term Paper | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | X | .15 | = | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Term Paper Presentation | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | X | .05 | = | \_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| **Final Grade (out of 100)** | | | | = | **\_\_\_\_\_\_** |

Final letter grades will be determined using the following scale:

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | 90-100 | A |
|  | 80-89 | B |
|  | 70-79 | C |
|  | 60-69 | D |
|  | Below 60 | F |

The instructor reserves the right to change these values depending on overall class performance and/or extenuating circumstances.

**Academic Dishonesty Policy:**

Academic Dishonesty will not be tolerated in this or any other course at Marshall University. As a member of this class, it is your responsibility to read and abide by rules set forth in the official Marshall University Academic Dishonesty Policy. Acts of academic dishonesty include cheating, fabrication/falsification, plagiarism, bribes/favors/threats, and complicity (i.e., helping others to commit dishonest acts). Anyone found to be cheating, plagiarizing the work of others, or violating this policy in any other way will be subject to serious penalties including failure of the course. In extremely flagrant cases, additional sanctions may be pursued through the Office of Judicial Affairs. Please refer to the Marshall University Undergraduate Catalog for a full definition of academic dishonesty.

**Communication:**   
I will post course content on Blackboard (e.g., syllabus, assignments, readings, etc.), so be sure to check for new materials regularly. Your MU e-mail address will be used to make any general announcements, last minute schedule changes, etc. I recommend that you monitor your MU email and Blackboard accounts at least once a day. Also, I will only respond to emails that you send me from your official MU email address – it is the only way for me to be sure that I am responding to you (and not someone else pretending to be you).

**Classroom Learning Environment:**   
To maintain the best possible environment for learning, the following standards for acceptable behavior will be followed by all students in this class:

* Turn off all cell phones and pagers before entering class. Do not text during class.
* Be on time for class and don’t leave early.
* Don’t have conversations during class that distract others.
* Don’t disparage other students – treat all class members respectfully.
* Don’t use profanity in class.
* Do not use tobacco during class.

Students who violate these standards and policies will be asked to leave class.

**Policy for Students with Disabilities:**

Marshall University is committed to equal opportunity in education for all students, including those with physical, learning and psychological disabilities.  University policy states that it is the responsibility of students with disabilities to contact the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS) in Prichard Hall 117, phone 304 696-2271 to provide documentation of their disability.  Following this, the DSS Coordinator will send a letter to each of the student’s instructors outlining the academic accommodation he/she will need to ensure equality in classroom experiences, outside assignment, testing and grading.  The instructor and student will meet to discuss how the accommodation(s) requested will be provided.  For more information, please visit <http://www.marshall.edu/disabled> or contact Disabled Student Services Office at Prichard Hall 11, phone 304-696-2271.

**Course Schedule:**  
The following outline delineates the tentative class schedule with topics to be addressed during the course. Please note this is a tentative schedule and it may change as the class progresses:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Day** | **Topic** | **Assignment** |
| 8/25 | T | Course intro, syllabus and schedule overview |  |
| 8/27 | R | Intro and history of adventure education | Chapters 1 and 2 |
| 9/01 | T | Survival simulation |  |
| 9/03 | R | Survival simulation |  |
| 9/08 | T | Theories of leadership | Chapter 4 |
| 9/10 | R | Leadership in practice | Chapter 5, **survival simulation reflection report due** |
| 9/15 | T | **Rec. Center / Outdoor Pursuits tour** |  |
| 9/17 | R | **Climbing wall session at Rec. Center** |  |
| 9/22 | T | Judgement and decision making | Chapter 6 |
| 9/24 | R | Values and ethics | Chapter 7, **reflection report due** |
| 9/29 | T | Understanding facilitation | Chapter 8 |
| 10/01 | R | Facilitating personal development | Chapter 9 |
| 10/06 | T | **Teambuilding** |  |
| 10/08 and 10/13 | R/T | **No class meeting – makeup for field trip** | Chapter 13 and Chapter 14 |
| 10/15 | R | Facilitating group development | Chapter 10 |
| 10/20 | T | Program management | Chapter 15 |
| 10/22 | R | Safety and risk management | Chapter 16 |
| **10/24 – 10/25** |  | **Overnight field trip to Morehead State University** |  |
| 10/27 | T | Expedition planning | Chapter 17 |
| 10/29 | R | Group facilitation 1&2 |  |
| 11/03 | T | Group facilitation 3&4 | Reflection reports due |
| 11/05 | R | Group facilitation 5&6 | Reflection reports due |
| 11/10 | T | Group facilitation 7&8 | Reflection reports due |
| 11/12 | R | Group facilitation 9&10 | Reflection reports due |
| 11/17 | T | Group facilitation 11&12 | Reflection reports due |
| 11/19 | R | Group facilitation 13&14 | Reflection reports due |
| 11/24 | T | **No Class – Thanksgiving break** |  |
| 11/26 | R | **No Class – Thanksgiving break** |  |
| 12/01 | T | Term paper presentations |  |
| 12/03 | R | Term paper presentations |  |

Every student is responsible for all materials presented in class, including lectures, notes, and handouts. In case you are not present for a class, you should contact me to receive information about the material presented in that class. Class attendance is very important.