

STUDENT ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PRESCOTT COLLEGE FIELD COURSES

The health, wellbeing, and welfare of Prescott College (PC) students and staff and the effective education of our students are among our highest priorities. The wilderness environments utilized by many PC field courses are remote, dynamic, and physically and emotionally challenging. The nature of the living and traveling conditions in these environments combined with the challenging educational activities we conduct, require each student to be capable of dealing with the inevitable challenges and to be fully committed to working hard, taking personal responsibility, and to working effectively in the student group to achieve the goals of each course.

The Essential Eligibility Criteria are applicable for all students who wish to enroll in PC Field courses and/or PC field activities. Prescott College is committed to providing equal access to educational experiences for all students. Within the abilities of the course instructors and in careful consideration of safety issues specific to a given environment, Prescott College will make reasonable attempts to accommodate the individual needs and differences of each student as long as it does not compromise our ability to manage risks, or the educational experience of the other students.

In the guidelines listed below, a qualified person is one who can meet a majority of the EEC for participation in the program activity. If concerns arise about whether a student is a qualified person for a specific course the instructor(s) will bring the matter to the attention of the Field Risk Manager (or designee) for discussion and resolution.

Section One: EEC PC - All Field Courses

The following section lists EEC for participation for all Prescott College Field Courses

1.a. Safety and Judgment - Each participant must be able to...

Following appropriate instruction, independently identify and recognize environmental hazards. These hazards may include, but are not limited to, falling objects/rocks, loose rock and unstable surfaces, rugged steep and uneven terrain, cliff edges, crevasses, moving water (fast or slow) such as rivers, creeks, surf, or tides; and potentially hazardous animals and insects.

2. Recognize and act to reduce the hazards and risks posed by other course

members, which include, but are not limited to, fatigue, state of mind, and actions that may influence judgment and decision-making.

3. Recall and act to reduce hazards and risks previously explained by instructors.

4. Effectively alert and warn others of potential or impending dangers such as falling rocks, aggressive animals, or other environmental hazards.

5. Effectively signal or notify course instructors or other course members of personal distress, injury, or need for assistance.

6. Act reliably around the above stated hazards to minimize risk even when not directly supervised.

7. Independently perceive, understand, and follow directions and instructions given by others to be able to successfully execute appropriate and perhaps unfamiliar, techniques to avoid hazards and /or manage risks. These directions may be given before the hazard or risk is encountered or may need to be given during exposure to the hazard/risk and out of necessity and practicalities are often given orally.

8. Stay alert and to focus attention for up to several hours at a time while traveling in wilderness terrain, attending classes, or receiving instructions.

9. Respond appropriately to stress or crisis such as when encountering large and/or potentially hazardous animals, severe weather, or a medical emergency.

10. If taking prescription medications, maintain proper dosage by self-medicating without assistance from instructors or others (except in emergency situations).

1.b. Leadership and Expedition Community - Each participant must be able to...

1. Work effectively as a member of a team despite potentially stressful and difficult conditions. This may require problem solving on an interpersonal or group level as well as a willingness to accept differences.

2. Contribute to a safe and inclusive learning environment—no verbal or physical inappropriate behavior of others is tolerated for any reason.

3. Willingly and equally share responsibility for completing group chores. Each student may not do an equal share each day, but over a period of several days each

student should do an appropriate share. All students are learning the skills and being challenged by the conditions and activities; there can be no expectation that any other student will be able to assume a greater share of the work in order to routinely accommodate another.

4. Effectively and appropriately communicate ideas and concerns on an individual and group level.

5. Have the cognitive ability to learn necessary skills given normal time limitations of a PC course.

6. Not require an inordinate amount of special accommodation and individual attention that would prevent the course instructors from attending equally to the needs of other participants.

1.c. Environmental Ethics - Each participant must be able to...

1. Learn and then practice Leave No Trace camping and travel techniques.

1.d Outdoor Skills: Camping - Each participant must be able to...

1. Learn and competently perform the fundamental camping skills of finding a campsite, setting up a shelter, and cooking with a camp stove.

2. Accept personal responsibility for remaining adequately hydrated, fed, and properly dressed as needed to maintain health and to be able to avoid environmental injuries such as hypothermia, heat illness, sunburn or frostbite.

3. Perform, after being instructed, the above activities independently in cooperation with course mates without direct instructor supervision.

4. Move about the campsite in order to attend classes, attend to toileting needs, and contribute to camping tasks as necessary.

5. Live in a physically demanding, remote backcountry environment for the uninterrupted period of the course length, which can range from one to four weeks or more. Conditions of this environment may vary from cold (below minus 20° F) to hot (above 90° F) depending on course location and season and may include, but is not limited to, rain, snow or hail, uninterrupted sun and/or wind, or the absence thereof. The remoteness is such that it may require at minimum 1-day's travel, but

perhaps in excess of 1 week's travel, to reach the nearest road head and advanced medical care.

Section 2: EEC Specific to Course Type

The following lists the EEC specific to different course types or activities. All students must satisfy the EEC listed in section one and the EEC in section two that are specific to the course type.

2.a. Wilderness Hiking Course (including Wilderness Orientation) -

Each participant must be able to...

1. At minimum, travel over and negotiate through varied wilderness terrain with a backpack weighing up to or exceeding 60 pounds or 40%–45% of body weight. (Some hiking courses are designed with pack weights less than 60 pounds.)

- Resupplies of food occur every 7–13 days (depending on course type, route, and pre-arranged logistics). Thus students need to be able to carry gear, food and personal items or personal medications, (such as insulin) needed for that ration period. A limited amount of necessary personal items may be sent in at each resupply.
- Travel conditions may include, but are not limited to, rough, rugged, uneven steep and sloping terrain; human made and animal made trails; rocky terrain that may range from smooth bedrock to extensive areas of large rock boulders (boulder fields); needing to cross rivers and creeks without the aid of bridges up to three feet or more in depth; ascending, descending or traversing slopes covered in snow, rocks or vegetation; bushwhacking off trail through thick standing and/or downed vegetation. Any and all travel can occur during periods of inclement weather or nighttime hours.
- Travel distances can range from less than one mile to more than ten miles in one day. On average, a block length field course travels up to or exceeds 100 miles during the course.
- Travel duration can range from less than one hour to more than 12 hours in one day and occur on successive days.

2. Have average strength and endurance and basic balance and agility to safely travel through such terrain with a backpack.

3. Have the ability to have a third point of contact for balance purposes, such as with hand(s) or to hold an ice axe/walking stick, for travel through deep

ivers, on snow slopes or ascending or descending slopes.

4. To stay alert and to focus for several hours at a time while traveling. Although groups will often be able to take hourly breaks or camp early if weather becomes hazardous, occasionally this is not possible. Examples include: descending/ascending a 2000' boulder choked gully; descending a peak with a threatening thunderstorm; descending a mountain pass in similar conditions.

2.b. Mountaineering or Climbing Course

The requirements for Wilderness hiking courses apply to mountaineering and climbing courses with the addition of the following:

Each participant must be able to...

1. Effectively and independently communicate standard climbing commands over the distance of a full rope length when participating in multi-pitch rock climbing, alpine mountaineering or during glacier travel.

- The potential necessary communication of climbing signals, may include, hand signals, spoken signals or a rope tug system. Electronic aids are likely not reliable.
- Communication includes both: a. Direction from the instructor as to what the student should do (e.g. if the student falls 30 feet into a crevasse, direction regarding the procedures to be used needs to be communicated; on a multi-pitch climb if the rope becomes jammed and the instructor and student must communicate and work together to figure out what the problem is and how best to solve it). b. Response from the student to the instructor (e.g. if a student falls or has difficulty with a section of the climb and the instructor has to determine, by asking questions, about the student's well-being and whether rescue procedures are necessary).

2. Provide a reliable belay to another climber during roped climbing. To do so, a student must be able to reliably manipulate a climbing rope through a belay device such as an ATC, Grigri, or other such device and understand the necessary climbing signals. The instructors leading the course may deem a backup belay person is necessary.

3. Independently tie the overhand and figure of eight series of knots.

4. Perform a self arrest with an ice axe if traveling on snow or glaciers.
5. Reliably and independently perform simple technical tasks such as tying into a rope, clipping into an anchor and getting into a harness without the direct supervision of an instructor.

2.c. Winter Ski or Snowboard Course

Each participant must be able to...

1. Move on skis or snowboard over flat to steep (35 degree) unpacked snow-covered terrain.
2. Move a load of gear weighing at minimum 60 lbs. by means of sled, backpack or some combination thereof.
3. Travel from camp to camp, which may take all day (8+ hours).
4. Shovel snow in order to perform camp chores and to participate in rescues where people, gear or shelters have been buried in the snow such as in an avalanche or drifted in during a storm.
5. Perceive and differentiate signals from an avalanche transceiver (transceivers are currently manufactured to transmit visual or audio signals) and efficiently move over avalanche debris without skis.
6. Withstand cold temperatures (-20 degrees F or colder).

2.d. Wilderness Horsepacking Course

Each participant must be able to...

1. Mount and dismount a horse independently and in situations where a horse might be in distress and rapid dismount is necessary and assistance to remount is not possible.
2. Balance independently in the saddle.
3. Control a horse by giving it signals to stop, move, turn left or right, and calm down. This is typically accomplished through leg, hand and/or voice signals.
4. Lift minimally up to 35 lbs. in order to pack a horse.

5. Walk one to two miles on trail when or if horse is injured, ill or unable to carry a rider.

6. Move over uneven mountain or desert terrain at camp in order to attend to and care for the horses.

2.e. Sea Kayaking, Whitewater and River Field Courses

Each participant must be able to...

1. Efficiently control a paddle with both hands and pull it with adequate force through the water in order to steer and propel the boat forwards and backwards.

2. Perceive, understand and respond to audible and visual commands given by a boating partner or shore support or to communicate such commands to boating partners or shore support as commonly used to maneuver a boat to maintain proper heading, to avoid obstacles, or to safely navigate a surf zone or rapids. Such commands may be used in a tandem canoe, a double sea kayak or a paddle raft or between group members while traveling in separate vessels.

3. Independently exit a capsized boat, fend for self while in the water away from the boat, attain and maintain correct body position if out of boat in a rapid or in rough seas, exit out of the water to shore, grab onto another boat or rope for rescue purposes, and/or perform self rescue or cooperate with assisted rescue. Sea kayak students must be able to independently re-enter a sea kayak at sea, without contact with the bottom, using accepted methods of independent re-entry.

4. Following instruction and before engaging in open water travel or rapids, consistently perform a calm and controlled kayak wet exit without hesitation or assistance.