PE 1635

Division: Social and Behavioral Science
Department: Physical Education
Course: PE 1635
Title: Backcountry Skiing
Catalog Description:

This course is designed to help students learn how to control ski descents in ungroomed back country conditions. The students will learn to dig and analyze snow pits for avalanche prediction. They will locate buried avalanche transceivers. An emphasis is placed on proper route selection to remain safe in the backcountry. This course may be repeated for credit.

General Education Requirements: N/A
Semesters Offered: Spring
Credit/Time Requirement: Credit: 1; Lecture: 0; Lab: 2
Clock/Hour Requirements: 0
Offered for Non-Credit: No
Credit/Clock Comments: Four hours per week for eight weeks
Prerequisites: Beginning cross country skiing or instructor approval

Justification:

This course fulfills elective credit at Utah State University.Lifetime recreational activities such as backcountry skiing develop physical skills that form the basis of a healthful life-style. This is important in a society with so many health dangers related to sedentary life-styles.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Students learn to ascend and descend a variety of backcountry slopes. They learn to recognize safe travel routes to these slopes and then determine by observations and snowpack analysis if its safe to approach and descend the slopes. They have a two to three day avalanche training experience. Part of the class is in the classrooms learning the basics of avalanche prediction/avoidance. The rest of the class is in the field practicing scenarios and digging snow pits, and locating buried transcievers. This class is variable depending on where the students are skiing, and is dictated by the skill level of the students and the potential hazards on the mountain.

Content:

Students will learn safe winter backcountry travel techniques such as route selection, determining snow pack stability, determining slope angles, aspects, and how the weather has affected the snow pack. Group dynamics and the human factors that contribute to poor judgement are emphasized. Students learn how to dress for the winter backcountry. They practice various ski turns to control their descents such as the telemark, parallel, and kick turns. They learn to tour through ungroomed snow and to ascend slopes prior to descents (this is a very good cardiorespiratory fitness activity.

General Education Outcomes:

10) Apply personal-fitness and wellness-management principles to lifestyle choices.
Backcountry skiing is a highly aerobic activity which also emphasizes muscular strength. This translates into increased fitness levels for the students. This is a lifetime sport which increases fitness for as long as the person engages in the sport.

Key Performance Indicators:

A comprehensive written examination is given to test avalanche knowledge. The instructor observes and helps correct problem areas in learning turns. The class discusses possible route selections and slopes to ski and then they determine if what they want to do is safe based on facts and observations. The instructor has total veto power if he is in disagreement. Group dynamics are observed and evaluated. Attendance and participation are graded heavily. The following is an approximate breakdown of grading: attendance,50%; avalanche class,20%; avalanche paper,10%; final test,20%. Percentages are approximate.

Representative Text and/or Supplies:

1. O' Bannon, Allen and Clelland, Mike. Allen and Mike's Really Cool Backcountry Ski Book. The Globle Pequot Press. 2. Fredston, Jill A and Fesler, Doug. Snow Sense. Alaska Mountain Safety Center, Inc. (current editions)

Optimum Class Size: 15
Maximum Class Size: 15

Signatures:

I hereby submit this course syllabus:

Virgil Ash, M.A., Associate Professor

I hereby find this course consistent with the goals and resources of the Physical Education Department:

Bob Trythall, MS, Associate Professor, Chair

I hereby find this course consistent with the goals and resources of the Social and Behavioral Science Division:

Sue Dalley, M.S., Associate Professor, Dean

I have discussed the need for library resources related to this class with the person submitting the syllabus:

Lynn Anderson, MLIS, Technical Services Librarian (Main Campus)

Michelle Olsen, MLS, Campus Librarian (Richfield Campus)