

PEOL 381 - Ski Touring 1 Outing

opp.uoregon.edu/snow/snowcourses.html

Course Description

A. General Description

Ski touring combines cross-country skiing and backpacking. In this course, a variety of cross-country ski techniques are taught over the course of a three-day outing in the Oregon Cascades. In addition to developing basic cross-country skiing skills (with and without a large pack), you will have the opportunity to practice winter route finding and navigation, refine winter camping techniques, and learn the basics of avalanche safety awareness. The highlight of the course is an all-day ski tour with light packs through spectacular backcountry terrain!

B. The Physical Environment

Winter weather in the Oregon Cascades can change rapidly. Below-freezing temperatures with strong winds and blowing snow can quickly change to clear, warm and sunny conditions. Safe travel under winter conditions requires proper clothing and equipment, careful navigation and route selection and constant self-monitoring of your condition.

The first day will be spent traveling steadily uphill to a campsite located just below treeline at an elevation of approximately 5000'. On the second day we will practice skills in the context of a ski tour to a nearby lake or viewpoint, adjusting our route as necessary depending on the skills of the participants and the snow and weather conditions. On the last day of the outing we will practice skills during a short ski tour, then pack up camp and return to our vehicles by mid-afternoon.

Outing Course Demands and Expectations

Ski touring with a large pack can be physically and mentally demanding for novice skiers. A great deal of energy is usually expended maintaining balance, at the expense of forward progress. Skiing uphill and downhill can be also be challenging. Slips while skiing uphill sap energy, and falls are common on downhill stretches. Skiing with a large pack, or in demanding snow and/or weather conditions can be frustrating.

It's imperative that you understand what is required of you in terms of preparation, fitness, physical comfort, attitude and conduct. We encourage you to maintain a questioning attitude! If you are unsure of something, ask!

As a participant in this outing course, you are expected to:

- a) comply with the clothing and equipment requirements. The Outdoor Pursuits Program maintains a limited supply of certain items for student use at no charge. You must provide your own ski touring equipment. Rentals are available locally. You must also provide your own food. Transportation is covered in the cost of the course.
- b) be physically fit. You will be required to demonstrate a reasonable level of aerobic fitness by running 2 miles in less than 20 minutes during a pre-outing classroom session.
- c) monitor your health and comfort, eat and drink regularly, and inform your instructor if you become uncomfortable or exceed your limits of personal safety. Your enjoyment of the course will be improved by maintaining a positive attitude and by being mentally prepared for a new set of challenges each day.
- d) know and practice minimum impact camping techniques specific to the winter environment.

YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS OUTING if you fail the fitness test, arrive at the outing with inadequate equipment, or if in the instructor's opinion, your participation (for whatever reason) could compromise your or the group's safety.

You are highly encouraged to obtain adequate health and accident insurance prior to participation in this outing.

You are also required to read, understand, and sign the *Statement of Risk, Assumption of Risk, and Release of Liability* document, *Health Disclosure* form, and *Outing Policies* document prior to participation in this outing. Allow enough time to thoroughly read each document and bring any questions you may have to the course instructor.

Prerequisites/Corequisites to Participation

Ski Touring Preparation is a corequisite to participation. Instructor consent is also required.

Course Objectives

The Outdoor Pursuits Program emphasizes safe and responsible participation in outdoor activities. In addition to meeting the objectives of prerequisite and corequisite courses, upon completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate introductory level proficiency in flat track, uphill and downhill ski techniques while carrying a backpack.
2. Demonstrate proficiency in environmentally sound winter camping techniques.
3. Effectively utilize a map and compass while route finding in a winter environment.
4. Maintain a comfortable body temperature while skiing in the full range of environmental conditions likely to be encountered on a ski tour in the Oregon Cascades.
5. Explain how to dig a hasty pit and perform basic snow stability tests.
6. Recognize common avalanche hazards from field observations.
7. Generate an adequate list of the personal and group equipment necessary for a multi-day ski touring outing.

Evaluative Criteria

Students enrolled for credit will be graded in the following areas. The instructor will provide specific information.

Fitness Test: Run two-miles in 20 minutes or less during a scheduled class session prior to the outing.

Gear and clothing preparation: show up on time at the meeting point with all of the required items of clothing and equipment.

Outing participation - full attendance, and compliance with OPP Attendance and Participation policies is required. You will also be evaluated on your personal organization and contribution to the group effort.

Competence - must be demonstrated in the following areas:

- a) skiing - adequately perform basic flat-track, uphill and downhill cross-country ski technique;
- b) equipment use and care - demonstrate correct use and care of ski touring equipment;
- c) winter camping skills - follow minimum impact camping techniques specific to the winter environment;

This is a pass/no-pass course. To be considered for a passing grade, you must:

1. Attend the entire outing.
2. Attend the post-outing meeting. No exceptions!
3. Pass the fitness test within the term and prior to the outing.
4. Complete written assignments by the deadline and earn a grade of 80% or better.

Refund Policies

If participation is disallowed due to failure to meet the requirements for participation specified above, or because you chose not to participate in the outing for any reason other than a documented family or medical emergency, fees will NOT be refunded.

Course fees may be carried over to the next offering of the same outing course ONLY in cases of officially documented medical or family emergencies.