

Trips Section to the RSOP Staff Handbook

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TRIPS

Background

Trips are highly visible and exciting, new, and vigorous, tend to gain much attention. We have found that the OP trips are significant in participant's lives. For many people, they are a once in a lifetime experience. They offer opportunities to experience a setting and/or skill that the person does not otherwise have the ability to do.

This is because of costs, necessary participants, skills required, equipment, and/or knowledge of the area. Another feature of our trips that is different from many other opportunities is that we provide safe and high quality instruction, transportation, and equipment on our outings.

Finally, our trip format is unique. That is, our trips are not comparable to Outward Bound, YMCA, Scouting, NOLS, or other different program trips. The reason for this is that each institution has a different purpose. The Outdoor Program incorporates all of the objectives stated earlier (ecological/cultural relationships, physical skills, interpersonal skills, experiential education) and delivers the trip to participants with an educational focus, so everyone involved develops skills and knowledge.

TRIPS POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Supervision

- All paddling, backpacking, and international trips are supervised by Randy.
 - All rock climbing trips are supervised by the Kaija.
 - Supervisor duties include:
 1. Define trips to be offered
 - Destination
 - Dates
 - Vehicles
 2. Obtain Permits
 3. Develop trip budget and marketing materials
 4. Make sure that Trip Information Packets are completed prior to distribution of marketing materials.
 5. Ensure the successful completion of the "All Staff Orientation and Training Trip" each fall (typically in October).
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6. Distribute and collect Trip Leader Applications.
7. Consult with leader selection panel to determine trip leader options and selection.
8. Randy & Kaija will meet with potential trip leaders, discuss:
 - o the trip
 - o expectations
 - o qualifications - including strengths and weaknesses
9. Go over draft of itinerary and discuss logistics with both leaders
10. Ensure that leaders respond to participant inquiries in a timely manner (max 5 working days)
11. Check with leaders on their prep for the pre-trip meeting
12. Discuss with leaders
 - o cash uses
 - o logistics on road (meal stops, when)
 - o health forms/participant needs
 - o Debrief with trip leaders after the trip
 - o Ensure that the leaders have fully completed the trip by returning gear in a functional manner and a balanced accounting is handed in.

Extended trip leader selection

Trips that are 5 days or more in length are classified as extended trips. All leaders must have participated in the "All Staff Orientation and Training Trip" and hold Advanced First Aid and Professional CPR certifications. Primary leaders must have participated in an OP extended trip, have been to the destination prior (or have equivalent experience), and hold an ACA Instructor certification for paddling based trips. Leaders in training must show an interest in becoming a Primary Leader at a future date. The leader selection panel for extended trips includes: Randy, Kaija, Pat, and Tim. This panel will distribute "Trip Leader Applications" to staff and review them regularly. Selection schedule is: for Freshman Trips, fall weekend trips, and break trips through x-mas selection will be made in late the first week of May. For Spring Break, spring weekend trips, and summer trips, selection will be made in November.

Trip classification scheme

Class A trips

Highly technical in terms of the skill and knowledge required. Examples include rock climbing, rafting, whitewater kayak, and canoe expeditions. Two highly qualified leaders will be selected. The leaders function as "co-leaders", or in permit restricted areas may be asked to lead alone.

Required certifications and training

- CPR Certification
- First Aid Certification

- Attended OP Leader training weekend or equivalent experience
- Participated in an OP Trip

Primary and Co-leader responsibilities

- Complete all tasks listed on the “Primary Leader Duties” in the OP Staff Manual
- Menu planning, food purchasing, & repackaging
- Preparing equipment + Assisting with equipment clean-up & check-in
- Group instruction & leadership
- Assist in driving

Supervisor’s responsibilities

- Pre & Post-trip meeting with leaders
- Establish goals and objectives of the trip
- Ensure proper logistics of trip

Primary Leader Compensation

- Paid 8 hours per day at established pay rate while driving and trail days. 20 hours for trip prep and follow-up

Co-leader Compensation

- Paid 8 hours per day at established pay rate while driving and trail days. 20 hours for trip prep and follow-up

Class “A” trips offered during the school year will be led by Randy, Kaija, Pat, or Tim. Leaders in training will be included as necessary on a volunteer basis.

Class B trips

These are less demanding and do not require two leaders with technical expertise. Examples include dogsledding, mountain biking, backpacking, regional sea kayaking, flatwater and easy river canoeing. One highly qualified leader is selected. The Co-Leader will be a volunteer leader.

Required certifications and training

- CPR Certification
- First Aid Certification
- Attended OP Leader training Wknd or equivalent experience
- Participated in an OP Trip

Primary leader responsibilities

- Complete all tasks listed on the “Primary Leader Duties” in the OP Staff Manual

Co-leader responsibilities

- Menu planning, food purchasing, & repackaging

- Preparing equipment
- Assisting with equipment clean-up & check-in
- Group instruction & leadership
- Assist in driving

Supervisor's responsibilities

- Pre & Post-trip meeting with leaders
- Establish goals and objectives of the trip
- Ensure proper logistics of trip

Primary Leader Compensation

- Paid 8 hours per day at established pay rate while driving and trail days. 20 hours for trip prep and follow-up (Freshman trips receive 8 hours of prep)

Co-leader Compensation

- Free trip and OP Staff Hat or T-shirt

Class C trips

These are non-technical or "canned" weekend trips that utilize the "volunteer staff".

Required certifications and training

- CPR Certification
- First Aid Certification
- Attended OP Leader training Wknd or equivalent experience

Primary leader responsibilities

- Complete all tasks listed on the "Primary Leader Duties" in the OP Staff Manual

Co-leader responsibilities

- Menu planning, food purchasing, & repackaging
- Preparing equipment
- Assisting with equipment clean-up & check-in
- Group instruction & leadership
- Assist in driving

Supervisor's responsibilities

- Pre & Post-trip meeting with leaders
- Establish goals and objectives of the trip
- Ensure proper logistics of trip

Primary Leader Compensation

- \$100 Stipend for weekend trips

Co-leader Compensation

- Free trip and OP Staff Hat or T-shirt

Primary Leader Duties

1. Meet with Leader in Training to discuss goals and objectives, and strength and weaknesses
2. Modify cover letter, itinerary, and equipment list if necessary.
3. Finalize trip packet with the Trips Supervisor.
4. Obtain reservations as needed
5. Obtain copies of trip files, books, brochures, etc. - read them and learn natural and cultural history of the area, and about the specific sites you are visiting. Convert files to 3-ring notebooks for recurring trips.
6. Respond to participant inquiries within a maximum of 5 working days
7. Reserve Games Room and OP equipment
8. Prepare for pre-trip meeting
9. Conduct pre-trip meeting, see outline
10. Modify a menu from an established menu
11. Check MP4 for food and equipment - set it aside
12. Purchase Food - see "Purchasing Guidelines"
13. Lead the trip
14. Get participant feedback by asking questions and distributing the "Trip Evaluation" form.
15. Clean and return equipment to MP4 and Games Room
16. Debrief trip with co-leader - make notations for trip file
17. Do trip accounting - on computer
18. Trip follow-up - thank-you and Group photo to participants
19. Return all files and materials

MENUS

The quality of your menu often will determine the quality of the trip, in the mind of the participant. So, you need to have a great menu. Through the history of the Outdoor Program, many different meals have been tried and proven to be tasty and nourishing. A listing of these past menus are on file in a 3-ring notebook in Randy's office. DO NOT CREATE MEALS FROM

SCRATCH! Take the past menus and adapt them to your mode of travel and number of participants. Some of the menus are on computer - so they can easily be modified. If you need help adapting menus, check with Tim, Randy, Kaija, or Pat.

This also helps ensure a consistency of quality and we are able to use leftover food from previous trips. Check the food storage area in MP4 for leftovers that you might be able to use.

PRE-TRIP MEETING OUTLINE

Prior to any major planning for a trip, the trip leaders must set up a meeting with both Kaija and Randy. This will help the leaders lay a foundation for the trip and begin proper planning.

1. Introductions
 - a. Name
 - b. Background
2. Expectations
 - a. Participants
 - b. Leaders
3. Define roles/duties
 - a. Leaders - safety, driving, etc (have right to limit participant exposure)
 - b. Participants
4. Risk and emergency procedures & health/safety contract
5. Rules - see "policies"
6. Trip itinerary
 - a. Times
 - b. Alternatives, options
 - c. Modes of travel
 - d. Emergency contacts
 - e. Prior physical/mental preparation
7. Equipment
 - a. Personal
 - b. Group
 - c. No alcohol or recreational drugs
8. Food - preferences and avoidances

9. Resource information - guide books, pamphlets, cultural history books
10. Final business
 - a. Health, Liability forms
 - b. Payments
11. Departure time and meeting places
 - a. finalize non-Duluth pick up times and places
12. Follow up - Contact those who did not attend the meeting and inform them of information discussed at meeting.
13. Parking - Cars must be parked in lot assigned by Campus Police or at the Aquatic Center. Post official parking permit (get from Beth) on dash that will inform police that the owner is on an Outdoor Program trip. (check with Beth for current policy for parking on campus) Outdoor Program does not pay for parking tickets. Encourage people to get dropped off by someone else. Lock car doors and put valuables in the trunk.

LEADERSHIP

This section is included here to provide the reader with an introduction to leadership. It is not meant as a manual, but a starting point to pursue additional areas of leadership

Leadership is getting the group committed and involved to work together to achieve a common goal.

GOALS & EXPECTATIONS

- Leaders must find out individual goals & expectations
- This is very important in satisfying a participant's needs and desires
- Provides participants with an increased likelihood that this experience will be what they want and will be the best possible
- Make sure that expectations are aligned. This reduces chances of dissension.
- Leaders must find out their goals as well as program goals. Individual goals can be blended with leader/program goals to make a complete and satisfying experience.

Decision Making

The following is one of many techniques for decision making and problem solving.

- Brainstorm - Members of the group come up with ideas.
- Figure out possible options - Choose possible options from brain storming session.
- Try the best option
- Evaluate - This is an ongoing process (ex. around the campfire: "How did it go ?")
- Transfer -Transfer this process and result to everyone's daily lives

CONFLICT

- All groups have conflict
- The conflict must be broken down into behavior or personality types of conflict
- Behavior conflicts are changeable
- Personality conflicts are not changeable
- Figure out: "Where are we presently with this conflict?"
- "Where do we want to get to?"
- From this information devise agreeable plans of behavior modification.
- Follow through with the plans.
- Evaluate

Leader Influence and Impact

A leader may influence and impact a group by doing the following.

- Facilitating learning
- Stimulating independence in thought and action
- Delegating and giving full responsibility for various tasks
- Offering and receiving feedback
- Finding merit in the development and achievement of others
- Giving autonomy to persons and groups
- Freeing people to do their own thing
- Expressing their own ideas and feelings as one aspect of the group
- Accepting "unacceptable" innovative creations that emerge

A properly facilitated group will:

- Allow a person with diverse attitudes and skills to gain entry into the group.
- Show respect by allowing members to freely express emotions and sentiments.
- Clearly define problems and accept them as issues which must be addressed.
- Allow members to plan various steps of the experience which will lead to expression of a wide range of feelings and attitudes.
- Participants are recognized for their uniqueness and strengths which leads to the development of a mutual trust.
- Promote multiplication of leadership, where individuals respect themselves and the qualities they possess.

- Support individual actions if they are safe and non-threatening to others.
- Have common experiences which can be used to clarify and strengthen relationships.

People in groups need:

- A SENSE OF BELONGING
- “A feeling that no one objects to my presence.”
- “A feeling that I am sincerely welcome.”
- “A feeling that I am needed for my total self.”
- A SHARE IN THE PLANNING OF THE GROUP GOALS
- To know that feelings will have a fair hearing
- A sense that group goals are within reach and make sense
- A share in the making of the rules of the group - the rules by which the group will live and work toward its goals
- Clarification of what is expected of each individual.
- Responsibilities that challenge, yet are within each individual’s abilities.
- To be kept well informed
- Confidence in their leader. This is based upon consistent, fair treatment of all participants as well as recognition when it is due.

Why people join groups:

- They are interested in what the group does.
- They are attracted because of people in the group. Examples:
- Attitude similarity
- Belief congruence
- Personality similarity
- Race similarity
- Sex similarity
- Economic similarity
- Because of the activities the group conducts.
- The need for affiliation reduces anxiety
- Individuals desire to affiliate with others whose abilities are equal to or greater than their own.
- Opportunities to learn new skills.

Group Building Techniques for the Trail:

- Leader of the day - Assign or request a leader for the day and explain to him/her what tasks are to be done then help them through the leadership process.
- Rotate tenting partners
- Rotate paddling partners
- A reading-a-day conducted by each participant
- Set cooking groups which rotate responsibilities.