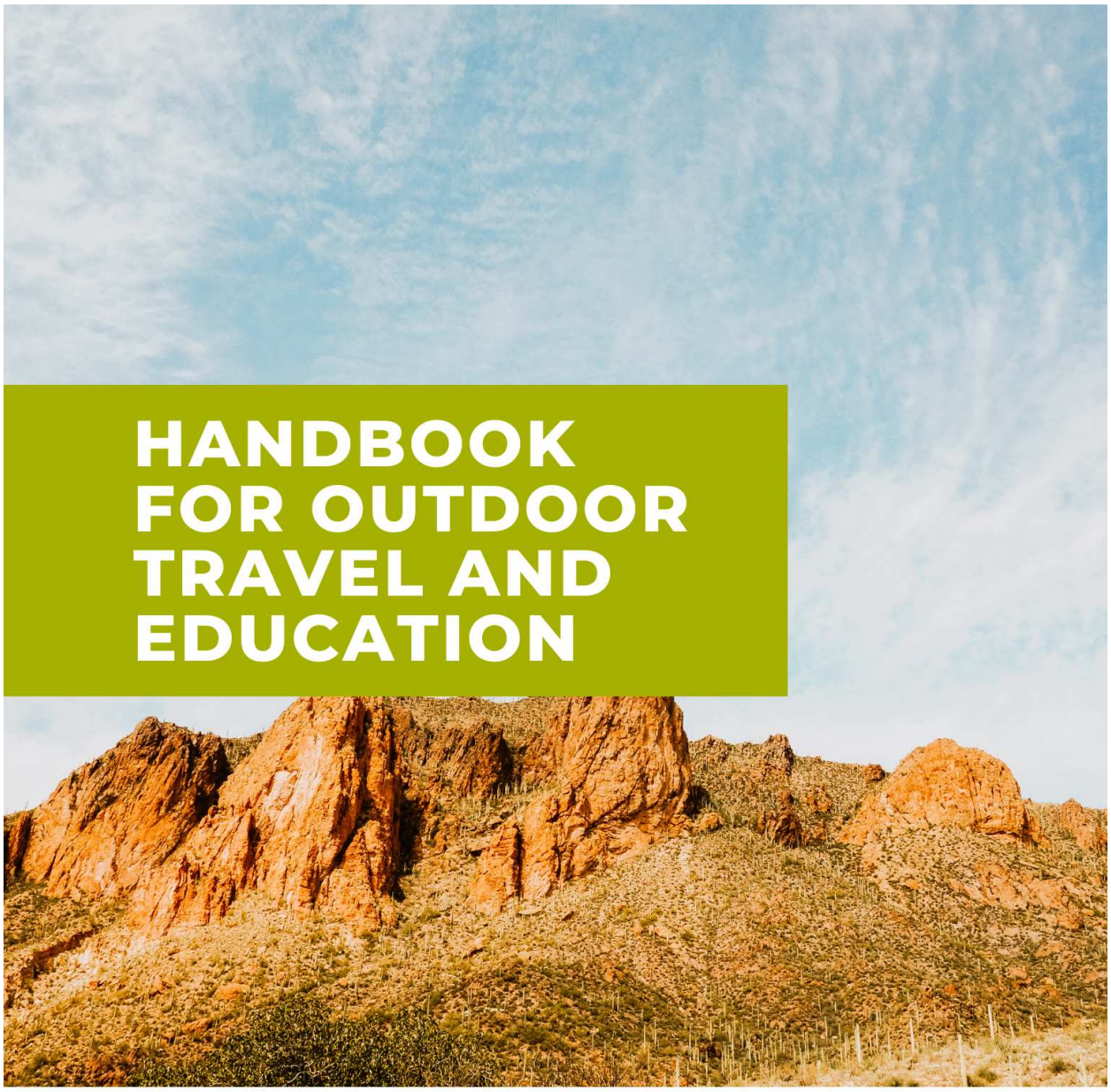
HANDBOOK FOR OUTDOOR TRAVEL AND EDUCATION



UPDATED

November 2022

Sterling
ECOLOGICAL THINKING & ACTION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 A NOTE ON NOMENCLATURE

The term "Instructor" will be used throughout this handbook to describe a faculty member, student, or staff person who is responsible for teaching, leading, or supervising an outdoor travel or outdoor education activity the conduct of which is covered by this Handbook.

1.2 THE SCOPE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook provides procedures for conducting outdoor travel and outdoor education activities that are part of the Sterling College Outdoor Orientation Program (ASOP:Expedition 1), Outdoor Education (OE) Programs and classes, Field Studies (FS), the Wendell Berry Farming Program, and other components of the curriculum. Any activity the conduct of which is covered by this Handbook must be conducted according to the policies and procedures provided in this Handbook.

1.3 HISTORY OF OUTDOOR TRAVEL AND EDUCATION AT STERLING COLLEGE

Sterling School was founded in 1958 as a boys' college preparatory school. The educational philosophy of the school was rooted in the precepts developed by Kurt Hahn, founder of Outward Bound. Hahn believed that students could discover their untapped potential through a combination of academics, physical challenge, craftsmanship, and service to others. Outdoor challenge, originally exemplified within the "Bounder" Program, and currently mostly in the context of Outdoor Orientation, Outdoor Education and some Field Study programs, has been integral to Sterling since the School's inception. The name "Bounder" was derived from "Outward Bound", and was used to designate a series of outdoor challenge based core courses including the course that is now called Expedition 2, (also known as Winter Expedition) the whitewater canoeing class, and the introductory rock climbing class. In late November, 1964, the first Winter Expedition bivouacked at the base of West Mountain near the Canadian border. Winter Expedition, renamed Expedition 2 in 2018, was until 2017 a signature element of the Sterling experience, as the culminating event of the first semester, and as of 2018 is an elective course taken by up to 18 students each fall. When the alternative preparatory school market waned in the early 1970's, Sterling began offering the Academic Short Course in Outdoor Leadership, a co-educational 21-day program for 13 to 16 year olds. An extension of this idea became the year-long Grassroots Project, which led

Sterling into the world of higher education. Outdoor challenge, leadership development, and team building continued to be integral parts of the curriculum throughout the subsequent evolution of the program to an accredited two-year Associates Degree program in 1987. The transition into a two-year program led to requests from students to extend the Bounder experience into the second year, because they valued the opportunities for personal and group learning provided by the program. This led to the development of the third semester of Bounder, utilizing rock climbing as a basis for personal growth and group development. When Sterling began developing its baccalaureate program, Outdoor Education was an obvious choice for one of the majors to be offered, building on the skills and experiences provided in Bounder, and reflecting also Sterling's historical background in teaching leadership through the short courses. In spring of 2007 the decision was made to eliminate the paddling component of Bounder II and the entirety of Bounder III from the core curriculum. Both whitewater paddling and introductory rock climbing became elective courses.

Bounder II, officially titled "Community Building through Winter Recreation, emphasized the cultivation of qualities essential to effective group membership and leadership through outdoor activities that included snowshoeing (a half-day session and an evening trek), team orienteering (one half day session), and cross-country skiing (two half-day sessions). Students explored the possibilities provided by human-powered endeavors through both the outdoor activities and through making their own paddle using hand tools. This course was discontinued in 2019 as part of a curricular re-organization.

In fall of 2018, due primarily to declining completion rates on Winter Expedition, the decision was made to no longer require a winter backpacking trip for incoming students. Instead, the College adopted a more traditional late summer Outdoor Orientation model, with a required four day backpacking trip (Expedition 1), upon students' arrival in August. This course has been integrated into A Sense of Place, and replaces some aspects of our original Bounder 1 program. As indicated above, we took the winter component of Bounder 1 and created an elective Outdoor Education class called Expedition 2.

Another important aspect of Sterling's history of outdoor travel and education is the Global Field Study Program, whose history can be seen in the GFS Manual. We will note here that 2016 saw the renewal of the Sterling College Southwest Field Semester, which now runs for ten weeks every Spring Semester.

In summary, much has changed in how Sterling College engages students in outdoor travel and education. Changing demographics and culture combined with a variety of internal and external pressures have caused us to reduce our core

curriculum, much of which was based in direct experience in the outdoors, and foster more self direction in student class selection, while also seeking the delicate balance between flexibility and solid learning progressions. The inevitable tensions that result are an ongoing work in progress.

1.4 DESCRIPTION OF A SENSE OF PLACE, OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAMS, AND FIELD STUDIES PROGRAMS

A Sense of Place: Expedition 1 consists of a four day backpacking trip on the Long Trail. This class occurs in the Fall and the trip takes place during the fall intensive. During this trip, students are introduced to an array of outdoor travel and camping skills, group problem solving, asking for and giving support, and trust building through active participation in activities, classes, backcountry living, and discussion and reflection.

To address the needs of students entering at the start of the Spring Semester, A (Winter) Sense of Place (WASOP) exposes students to winter travel and recreation through cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Recognizing that not all students will be prepared for an extensive winter trip the objectives of ASOP remain the same and are achieved through pathways suited to the weather and capabilities of the students.

Throughout A Sense of Place programs, briefing, debriefing, and journaling emphasize the transference of learning from program activities to both academic and social aspects of life at Sterling as well as in other arenas within students' lives. The skills and attitudes learned in A Sense of Place are useful throughout a student's career at Sterling, as other coursework may require group communication and problem solving, on, for example, a field studies program abroad; or conflict resolution within a team of students working together on, for example, a research project. Outdoor travel skills come in handy in a range of other classes both on campus and in the field study programs. Social skills learned within A Sense of Place are applicable in on-campus residence life, in interpersonal relationships at Sterling and elsewhere, and in employee/employer relationships throughout life.

The Outdoor Education Program at Sterling College combines the study of educational and leadership theory and practice with technical outdoor travel and adventure skills. Students explore issues ranging from ethical controversies and risk management to program design and gender dynamics. The core curriculum at Sterling foundationally supports this major, providing every student with a solid

background in ecology and an introduction to expedition skills in A Sense of Place. Coursework for the major includes a range of technical skills such as rock & ice climbing, nordic skiing, flatwater and whitewater canoeing, wilderness first aid, off-trail navigation, challenge course instruction, and backpacking in a variety of terrains and seasons. Additionally, students explore nutrition and food planning, expedition design and planning and other logistical aspects of outdoor programming. Skills related to interpersonal interactions, group dynamics, leadership, equity, and facilitation are taught both throughout the curriculum, and in specific courses. Educational theory is provided in a range of courses that combine theory with practice. Hands-on leadership and teaching experience takes place in the context of coursework, the Work College Program, Teaching Assistantships, and internships.

In 2018, the Outdoor Education major added a requirement that every student majoring in OE complete a semester in the field, comprising approximately 10 weeks, with 15 credits of integrated coursework.

Field Studies Programs are courses that take place off the Vermont and Kentucky campuses and outside of the geographic regions in which these campuses are located. Descriptions of these programs, as well as the policies and procedures applicable to them, can be found in the Global Field Studies Manual 2019-2020 .

1.5 THE ROLE OF OUTDOOR TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Many courses throughout the Sterling College curriculum utilize outdoor travel skills as a means of pursuing academic goals. Students in a wide range of classes across the curriculum may canoe, hike, camp, ski, and snowshoe simply as a means of accessing remote locations. While the specific goals of these activities will likely differ from the goals of a given Orientation Program or Outdoor Education class, the general approaches identified in this Handbook apply across the curriculum.

1.6 GENERAL AND ETHICAL GUIDELINES

1. The educational philosophy in these programs is that students learn material best through direct experience. Instructors structure experiences that will provide participants with challenges, and facilitate learning from these experiences through an emphasis on natural consequences, and structured reflection.

2. Students are fully informed of the risks inherent in each activity prior to the experience.
3. While instructors will at times attempt to impel students into growthful experiences, they also use the Challenge by Choice philosophy to ensure that students take ownership of their experience, and are not pushed beyond what is educationally positive for the individual. Experiences are structured in a manner that provides maximum opportunity for all students to participate to the best of their ability.
4. Instructors recognize the right of all students to be treated with dignity and respect, and emphasize the value of each individual through establishing agreements and guidelines regarding treating each other with respect, valuing oneself and others, and personal accountability.
5. Diversity is welcomed in our programs and it is recognized that different educational approaches are required to meet the needs of different populations. The goal is to create a learning community which is free of prejudice and discrimination and which promotes emotional as well as physical safety while fostering respectful dialogue.
6. Instructors work to a high level of professionalism and adhere to all college policies.
7. Instructors enforce the Sterling College Drug and Alcohol Policy.
8. Instructors adhere to policy regarding relationships with students.
9. The principles of Leave No Trace are used in the backcountry. Best practices for the area are followed based on evaluation and discussion of the environmental impact and educational benefits of various approaches.
10. Participant confidentiality is respected.

1.7 Use of Subcontractors

For the most part, Sterling College instructors lead activities. However, on rare occasions, the College may choose to contract a person or vendor to conduct or lead an activity. In the event this happens, steps are taken to assess the subcontractor's competencies and credentials prior to the program. The subcontractor assessment form in Appendix G will be completed by the instructor in charge of the course and filed with the Dean of Academics, and a post-program evaluation will take place as described in Appendix G.

2. RISK MANAGEMENT

2.1 GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. The principal responsibility of each instructor in any class, lab, work session, or trip is to ensure that risk management procedures are followed.
2. The general frame of mind that Sterling College seeks to promote is one of readiness based on concrete knowledge, organization of that knowledge, and the ability to apply the organized knowledge under the stress of an emergency situation. This involves recognition that emergencies are possible, and that by learning some specific skills and practicing problem identification and intervention skills, it is possible to help each other. Keeping calm and preventing further injury are part of this attitude of readiness.
3. Instructors will provide appropriate levels of briefing and training regarding the hazards, dangers, and risks in all activities. Use of competency exams is encouraged where appropriate. When appropriate, participants are informed of evacuation routes, contingency plans, and emergency procedures.
4. Additional Backcountry/Wilderness Instructor/Coordinator Qualifications
    a. ***Definitions*** (all assume off-campus field settings):
        i. Frontcountry: Two hours or less from definitive medical care.
        ii. Backcountry: More than two hours from definitive care.
        iii. Wilderness: More than one full day's travel for an able bodied person, from definitive care (for example, more than 10-12 trail miles from the nearest roadhead)
    b. ***Positions:***

        Extended field programs (semesters, summer programs and intensives; programs that occur away from campus-based support and typically are in backcountry/wilderness for 1 week or more)

        i. Lead Instructor
        ii. Instructor (including adjunct faculty)
        iii. Field Assistant

        Short field programs (Expedition 1 and 2, regional field trips within range of campus-based support and typically in backcountry/wilderness for less than 1 week)

c. ***Basic Qualifications for overnight backcountry travel*** *(documented in a concise expedition resume):*

*Certifications must be current and experience is weighted towards recent years

1. Wilderness First Responder or WEMT medical certification 1 instructor per group should have ground experience with a variety of scenarios as well as experience as incident commander.

2. Backcountry/Wilderness Field Days (ideally a mix of institutional and personal experience) Field days include full days in backcountry/wilderness with overnights.

Backcountry: 7 days per year

Wilderness: Lead Instructor 50 field days in a ten year period (co-instructor or field assistant must meet minimum backcountry qualifications).

3. Institutional Leadership Field Days

Backcountry: 3-4 days per year

Wilderness: Lead Instructor 50 leadership days in a ten year period

4. Trainings and additional certifications (pending activity—see activity specific competencies)

5. Content area education and expertise. Approved institutional training and experience or equivalent (see activity specific competencies)

5. In general, and especially in remote situations, instructors must be skilled in conducting activities at a higher level of technical difficulty than the activity they are leading with students. For example, an instructor in charge of students paddling Class II whitewater should be skilled in paddling and rescuing in Class III whitewater. Similarly, an instructor supervising students on a backpacking trip should be familiar with and skilled in navigating more difficult terrain than the terrain in which their backpacking trip will be conducted.
6. Instructors will be experienced and skilled in the safe use and inspection of equipment they or their students use.
7. Prior to backcountry experiences, students will be instructed in what to do in the event of being lost. An official search party will begin 12 hours

after expected arrival. However, instructors will initiate and coordinate a search earlier, as circumstances require.

8. Students will be instructed in basic first aid procedures and techniques prior to extended backcountry experiences. These may include bleeding, respiratory failure, shock, appropriate heat and cold related problems, and contents and use of first aid kits. First aid instruction will be prefaced with a session explaining the importance of safety, and the place of prevention in forestalling emergencies.
9. On field outings, at least one leader has first aid training. See #4 above for guidelines for frontcountry, backcountry, and wilderness field settings.
10. On field outings, sufficient emergency equipment must be carried to manage first aid situations in an outdoor environment. For example, in winter travel this may include a foam pad, tarp, and sleeping bag.
11. Instructors will review student medical forms prior to backcountry activity sessions and are prepared to address special medical situations before or during the activity.
12. If a student requires prescription medication to manage a medical condition, they must carry a sufficient quantity for the duration of the trip and must be informed about appropriate storage practices. For trips occurring in remote settings, the instructor may consider carrying a second set or splitting the student's prescription and carrying half.
13. Over the counter drugs are available to of age students and underage students who have a signed parental consent form.
14. Sterling College does not authorize the use of any specific wilderness medical protocols that are considered outside the scope of practice for a non-medical professional, including clearing the spine, reduction of dislocations, administration of prescription medications, cessation of CPR, and the removal of impaled objects. However in the event of medical situations arising in a remote backcountry setting, Sterling College Instructors/Staff must provide treatment commensurate with their training and abilities and use their best judgment.
15. Instructors will report incidents as specified under "General Emergency Procedures". The reporting process includes debriefing the incident in a timely fashion. This practice ensures ongoing internal review of our risk management policies.
16. First Aid Kits are kept in the following locations: each vehicle, each residence, the Logging Shop, the Wood Shop, the Maintenance Garage, the Farm Barn, the Main Office, the Kitchen, and the Wellness Center. In addition, instructors take a first aid kit with them to all outdoor classes. First aid kits for periodic field use are stored in the Gear Room. The Wellness Center maintains the campus First Aid Kits once a semester. Instructors must check contents before relying on the kit in the field.

17. All Instructors must ensure that students are suitably briefed, trained, clothed, and equipped. The briefings and supervision should include an emphasis on the need for each student to understand and accept a reasonable level of responsibility for their own safety as well as those around them. When conducting extended experiences, Instructors will also ensure that students are provided with adequate food, water, and shelter. Instructors will ensure that all activities proceed at a pace that is appropriate for all group members and that will minimize opportunity for injury or illness.
18. Instructors of trips will provide instruction on, and resources for, proper hygiene in backcountry situations.
19. Instructors conduct a risk assessment of any new sites prior to use with students. This risk assessment should include in-person reconnaissance if possible, but should also include use of guidebooks, local contacts, land managers etc. If the instructor is not able to conduct an in-person reconnaissance, they must submit a proposal for use of the site to the Risk Management Committee, during a Fall or Spring semester (while the committee meets regularly). Use of such a new site is contingent upon approval of the Risk Management Committee.
20. Activity sites and/or terrain are selected so that participants are appropriately challenged and have successful experiences. The venues used for outdoor programs include rivers, lakes, mountains, forest, canyons, cliffs, and deserts. Most venues we utilize are places where individual instructors have traveled and taught for many years. Locations for our programs are selected with appropriate learning progressions and skill development in mind. Instructors must be acquainted with the terrain, difficulty, weather conditions, access, degree of remoteness, and hazards of sites used for programs. If instructors have not actually used the site, they must be deeply familiar with similar sites and obtain information about terrain, difficulty, weather, access etc from guidebooks, people familiar with the site, and other relevant resources. Sites are selected with the abilities, skill level, and physical and psychological readiness of the participants in mind, and in accordance with a curriculum for progressive skills development.
21. If Sterling College students or faculty, when traveling off campus, conduct home stays, sites will be selected based upon the recommendation of known and reliable local contacts. Similarly, if students or faculty stay at commercial lodging, lodging will be selected based upon recommendations made by reliable local contacts, and based upon instructor judgment.

2.2 GENERAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In all emergencies, instructors must respond according to their level of training, and seek additional resources as needed. Note: in the event that a student is the most qualified first responder at the scene, the instructor may delegate medical care to that student.

In the case that a medical emergency includes a trip to the hospital, calling First Responders, evacuation from the field, or includes any incident resulting in temporary or long-term disability, the President's Office will be contacted. If the emergency constitutes a crisis, defined as any event or situation that will have significant harmful impact on the Sterling College Community, the Crisis Communications Plan will be followed. Examples of such include an act of physical violence, major fire, and serious work crew or field accident.

1. For an in-field or on-campus medical injury (MINOR), the instructor will:
    a. Assume leadership position and survey the scene for safety.
    b. Assess injury and response needed.
    c. Treat and transport to Wellness Center or Residence Hall OR if an incident occurs in a remote setting, treat and follow Emergency Evacuation Procedures.
    d. Retrieve student medical file from the Wellness Center.
    e. Arrange transportation to and from medical facilities if necessary.
    f. Fill out SOAP note and incident report form and file it with the Chair of the Risk Management Committee. This should be completed within 24 hours of the incident. The person filling out the incident report form should be the person in the supervisory role at the site of the incident. The person completing the incident report will also debrief the incident with their supervisor and/or a member of the Risk Management Committee.
2. For an in-field or on-campus medical injury (MAJOR) the instructor will:
    a. Assume leadership position and survey the scene for safety.
    b. Assess injury and response needed.
    c. Treat and monitor injury in accordance with training.
    d. If the emergency takes place in a remote setting, follow Emergency Evacuation Procedures.
    e. If necessary, send runner(s) to phone to call:
        i. 911 with information on the nature of injury and location.

ii. Main Sterling Office to report injury and request additional assistance, for example, large first aid kit, blankets, litter, etc.

f. The person receiving this call will document the call, noting who called, what happened, the exact location of the injured party, and what is needed. They will:

i. send people to retrieve needed items including medical form;

ii. call the Executive Assistant to the President to notify them of the accident. If the Executive Assistant is not available, they should contact the Senior Vice President. In the event neither person can be contacted, call the pager.

iii. send personnel to ensure the ambulance locates the scene, if indicated.

iv. remain by the phone.

g. Fill out SOAP note and incident report form and file with the Chair of the Risk Management Committee. This should be completed within 24 hours of the incident. The person filling out the incident report form should be the person in the supervisory role at the site of the incident. The person completing the incident report will also debrief the incident with their supervisor and/or a member of the Risk Management Committee.

2.3 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation:

1. The instructor will assess the patient, perform necessary first aid in accordance with training, and control the scene.
2. At this point in any evacuation, many things may happen simultaneously. The following is an outline, not necessarily a sequential list.

a. Document: Record the assessment, mechanisms of injury, first aid given, and changes in the patient's condition.

b. Organize: Assume leadership and delegate responsibilities. Keep everyone occupied and cared for.

c. Decide upon an evacuation strategy. Consider remoteness of location, severity of injury and condition of patient, condition of the group, the amount of daylight available, weather conditions, availability of rescue personnel, and the applicability and availability of communication technology for expediting an evacuation.

d. Message: Determine if a message to the appropriate rescue and/or Advanced Life Support team is necessary. In the case of serious accidents, calling 9-1-1 directly is appropriate. In the case of less serious accidents, it is appropriate to call Sterling College and request assistance with an evacuation. If the

instructor does not have access to communication technology, runners will be sent to the nearest telephone.

3. Runners: One instructor and one student will be sent if there is an instructor to stay on location. Otherwise, two or more students may be sent. Runners should be prepared to spend the night out, and will carry: food, stove, shelter, extra clothing, and sleeping bags.
4. Message content will include:
   a. Copy of documentation of patient assessment with as much information as possible.
   b. Documentation of the evacuation plan including:
      Timetable
      Backup plans
      Travel routes
   c. Marked maps showing:
      Location of accident
      Present location of group and of patient
      Route out and access point(s)
      Destination
   d. Any special requests (oxygen, doctor, litter, blankets, more people to help carry litter, etc.)
5. Any evacuation must be reported to Sterling College. Information reported should include name, location, phone number from which the call is being made, evacuation plans and needs, and information about patient condition. Runner(s) should remain by telephone for some time in case a return call is made and should wait for help to arrive before returning to aid in the evacuation.

2.4 GENERAL TRIP GUIDELINES

1. Trips should be planned in advance as much as possible. Trip needs should be coordinated with other faculty, landowners, federal and state agencies, the Sterling van fleet, the Sterling Kitchen, and others who will be affected. Instructors will schedule pre-trip meetings for briefing students about the trip. Written gear lists are recommended for trips of more than one day.
2. Trips using State Land or National Forests should be planned well in advance and appropriate permits must be acquired.
3. Van use must be scheduled well in advance. The online vehicle calendar is used for scheduling vehicles. Departure and return dates and times should be

included on the calendar. If there are conflicts, they should be worked out with the other driver involved. Vehicle use policies as described in the Driver Handbook will be followed.

4. Trip mileage is documented on the run sheet in the vehicle. Vehicles should be gassed up if the trip brings the tank to below one-half full. Sterling College has an account with Paul's garage and gas station in Craftsbury and the C Village Store; a purchase order is required to use these accounts. If vehicles are filled with gas elsewhere, reimbursement can be obtained through use of a check request form (found in the faculty workroom or online). This kind of expenditure should be anticipated and requested in a course budget prior to the semester.
5. Canoe use must be scheduled with the current canoe manager.
6. Instructors taking students overnight or to remote settings must file a trip plan. These forms are kept in the faculty workroom. Active trip plans are placed in the folder on the bulletin board labeled: "Active Trip Plans". After a trip is completed the form should be removed. Alternatively, for short trips that require a trip plan, an electronic copy of the trip plan can be shared with the supervisor of the person leading the trip.
7. If food is required from the Sterling Kitchen, a food request form should be submitted to the kitchen at least one week in advance of the trip. This form is located online.
8. Copies of the medical forms for participating students must be requested from the Wellness Center a week in advance. These must be reviewed prior to departure, and any medical situations that may be problematic should be discussed with the student in a confidential setting. Medical forms should be brought in the field to aid in providing care in case of injury, and so insurance information is available in the event of a trip to the hospital.
9. The instructor must bring a field First Aid Kit.
10. The instructor must ensure that all members of the trip are suitably briefed, trained, dressed, equipped, and in good health.
11. The instructor must ascertain that there is an administrator on call at Sterling and on- campus personnel who are prepared to help with field emergencies, including an evacuation. If your trip takes place during a time when the offices are closed arrangements should be made for an employee in town to be on call.
12. Instructors who are solo instructing must follow all procedures for Solo Instructing. Decisions about safe student/instructor ratios should be based on the difficulty of the activity, skill level and maturity of the group, weather conditions, and the instructor's ability to effect a rescue.
13. Hatchets & axes are restricted to those students who have received specific training. Use is usually restricted to contact splitting and pounding stakes.

14. All vehicle policies and procedures must be followed when using Sterling College vans.
15. If Sterling College students or faculty, when traveling off campus, conduct home stays, sites will be selected based upon the recommendation of known and reliable local contacts. Similarly, if students or faculty stay at commercial lodging, lodging will be selected based upon recommendations made by reliable local contacts, and based upon instructor judgment.

2.5 STUDENT SUPERVISION AND LEADING OF ACTIVITIES

Students may be allowed to supervise or lead activities after being approved for that specific role by a faculty member who is familiar with the student's capabilities, experience, and reliability. Students in such a position must read this handbook and follow all policies and procedures. Students in leadership and supervisory roles are also responsible for returning gear in good condition and in a timely fashion, and must replace any gear that is lost or damaged. Such roles include TA for an OE course, which would mean working closely with the instructor on all aspects of curriculum planning and delivery, including assisting on backcountry trips or other outdoor activities; Work College jobs such as, Adventure Coordinator and OE class assignments which could include designing and facilitating the After School Adventure Program at Craftsbury Academy. Supervision by Sterling instructors of Sterling students in all such roles will vary depending on the nature and location of the activity, experience and skill level of the student in charge of the activity, the population, and environmental conditions. Levels of supervision can range from indirect supervision (e.g. meeting with the student periodically for briefing, planning, troubleshooting, and debriefing); to direct supervision, (i.e. the Sterling Instructor being present throughout the activity session and intervening and assisting as necessary).

2.6 CONSIDERATIONS FOR EXTENDED FIELD PROGRAMS

1. General: Instructors will follow Guidelines from the Global Field Studies Manual as appropriate. Behavior of instructors and students should be culturally appropriate and safe at all times.
2. Drug and alcohol policy: In general, the Sterling College Drug and Alcohol Policy applies in the context of extended field programs. Instructors reserve the right to send violators of this policy home at the students' expense. Instructors may use their discretion in following in-country laws in instances where the drinking

age is lower than in the U.S. and where use of alcohol is appropriate to the context and activity.

3. Medical practices and protocols: Instructors will carry and be trained and authorized to use a range of prescription drugs while traveling with students on extended field programs, especially in remote locations. What drugs are carried will depend upon the location, duration, and nature of the program. Instructors carrying such drugs will be explicitly trained in their use, and will document any use of prescription drugs in the field.

2.7 CONSIDERATIONS FOR SOLO INSTRUCTING

Solo instructing may occur in situations where the group skill level is high in relation to the activity difficulty and the instructor is familiar with the terrain and is skilled in all aspects of conducting the activity, group management, and rescue. When solo instructing, the instructor will inform the group of the extra responsibilities the group must take on due to the situation and will brief students on emergency procedures, location of first aid kit, van keys, and the closest medical facility. The instructor will also delegate, or ask the group to elect, a "second in command" in the event the instructor is injured. The instructor will make group members familiar with which group members have first aid training.

2.8 LOST PERSONS: PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Prevention: What to Teach Students

1. If you are going out exploring on your own or with a buddy, let someone know where you are going and when you expect to be back.
2. How and when to contact Sterling and/or local contacts when in "trouble".
3. Stop Immediately. Do not panic. Stay calm.
4. Sit Down. Force yourself to breathe deeply, slowly. Conserve and protect the physical and mental resources you have.
5. Do not wander; this only increases the size of the area people will have to search for you. STAY PUT!
6. Think. If you know you can follow your backtrail or retrace your route, you are not lost. Return to a previous checkpoint and wait for help. But if in doubt, STAY PUT.
7. Signal. If you think others are in hearing range, blow a whistle or use controlled shouting, keeping in mind that shouting can become tiring and can increase anxiety. Three of anything is the international distress signal.

8. Make yourself visible. If you do not know where you are, find a place nearby, or a landmark, where you can be noticed from the trail or road (a meadow, high point, shore of lake, path, etc.) and then STAY PUT. If in doubt, stay where you are. Wear bright clothing and/or put bright clothing in a visible location.
9. Find or make shelter. Take stock of your resources, equipment, water, and any food. These can be important. Do not leave any equipment.
10. It is essential that you conserve body heat and energy. Be watchful of hypothermia. Put on all of your layers of clothing if you begin to get cold. You can increase your insulation by stuffing leaves (dry) into the open spaces in your clothing.
11. Make fire. Use a controlled smoky fire by day, controlled bright fire by night.
12. Be Patient. Force yourself not to worry about missing work, causing problems for others, or any thoughts that would push you into foolish, hasty actions. Look and listen for the signal of rescuers and be prepared to make your own signals.

Response: Lost Person Protocol

1. If more than 30 minutes have gone by since the person was last seen, an Initial Search should begin. This consists of shouting the person's name to attempt to get a response, assuming the person is very nearby. The group should retrace the route to the last known point where the individual was present.
2. If shouting does not bring a response, group members in pairs should perform an organized Quick Search by quickly sweeping the area, nearby trails, lookout points/cliffs, nearby streams/lakes, and any other obvious places the person(s) might be for approximately 20-30 minutes. Take a few minutes to make a plan as a group on where to go on the Quick Search before heading out. Particularly look in any areas that seem probable based on your earlier information gathering (i.e. the person was heading south, wanted to see the sun set, etc.). Look for signs of the person such as clothing or belongings as well as for the person. Shout for the person repeatedly. Listen carefully for a response.
3. If the Quick Search does not bring results within one hour a more systematic search should be initiated, a Secondary Search. Set up a "command post" having one person coordinate from this site. Search parties should be sent out in groups of at least 3 and a time limit should be set to meet back at the "post". Take time to plan out where searchers will go on the Secondary Search to cover all likely locations. In case of darkness, all searchers should be equipped with flashlights and should always be within sight of the next searcher. Take the time to write down how the person was dressed/equipped; mind frame and training/skill level of the lost person; weather conditions and time of day last seen; any medical conditions; last time the person ate. Take into consideration the condition of the remainder of the group, the terrain, distance from road

and/or telephone, and daylight hours remaining. All these factors together may influence instructor judgement regarding the timing of search efforts.

4. If Secondary Search does not bring results within one hour, a group must be sent for help in order to bring in rescue personnel for a more extensive search. Do not delay or "wait another hour." One team goes out for help; the other members continue the Secondary Search.
5. The above protocols describe how we will respond to lost individual(s). In instances of intentional unaccompanied group travel, in which the group has received some training in what to do if they get lost, and in which the group is equipped for camping out, instructor discretion may modify the above protocols.

2.9 EQUIPMENT

Outdoor Education, A Sense of Place, and GFS equipment

Sterling College owns gear that is used for A Sense of Place, Field Studies, Outdoor Education courses, or courses with an outdoor education or travel component, such as expedition travel, skiing, snowshoeing, canoeing, ice climbing and mountaineering. This equipment is maintained by designated Equipment Managers. In addition, the use of safety equipment such as ropes is documented as needed.

Climbing Wall and Challenge Course Equipment

Sterling College owns climbing gear that is designated either for the Challenge Course or for the Climbing Wall. This equipment is maintained by designated equipment managers. Rope use is documented in a log as needed. External inspections of these facilities are conducted by an outside resource on an annual basis. Procedures for use of the Challenge Course are in the Challenge Course Instructor Manual.

Canoe Rental

1. Students may rent a canoe for flat-water use after they have passed a competency test.
2. Students renting canoes fill out a trip plan form with the rental waiver. The Canoe Manager checks that the plan is appropriate for the weather conditions and the abilities of the students.
3. Rentals are only available May through October. The instructor may decide that the weather conditions are too risky for the ability of the paddlers, and not allow the rental.

Ski and Snowshoe Rental

Students may rent Sterling College Ski and Snowshoeing Equipment. The student signs a waiver, receives brief instructions on operation of the bindings and pole straps, and instructions to take off the skis when crossing roads.

Fuel Storage

All fuel is stored within a fire-resistant container. Any fuel transfers between bottles must be done outside all buildings.

2.10 LIGHTNING

Procedures

1. When available, staff and students should take shelter in a vehicle or building during a lightning storm.
2. If the time between lightning and thunder is less than 60 seconds (<12 miles away), groups should actively seek to remove themselves from exposed terrain (ridges, peaks, climbing structures, lone trees, open water).
3. If the time between lightning and thunder is less than 30 seconds (<6 miles away), groups should spread out and assume lightning position until the time between lightning and thunder is greater than 30 seconds.
4. Travel and/or activity in exposed terrain can resume when at least 30 minutes have passed since the last signs of lightning/thunder.
5. Staff should attempt to separate individuals from metal equipment while in lightning position (ice axe, trekking poles)

Guidelines

1. Generally, it's best to prioritize staying dry and warm during a lightning storm. If participants are in camp and camp is in a low-risk area for lightning, have students take shelter and/ or assume lightning position in their tents.
2. If students seek shelter in tents during a lightning storm, staff should know the whereabouts of all students and tents, and check up on tent groups to ensure that individuals are uninjured, warm, and dry.
3. If staff and participants are moving to actively seek less exposed terrain during a lightning storm, they should continue to move until it is the staff members' judgement that the imminent threat of terrain exposure is minimized.

2.11 CRAFTSBURY CAMPUS SATELLITE COMMUNICATION DEVICE POLICY

The judgment of the individual following these policies will supersede these policies in the event the individual deems following the policy will increase the risk for the individual.

Note: These policies and procedures only apply to the Craftsbury Campus courses and operations, not the Wendell Berry Farming Program or the Southwest Wilderness Field Program.

Policies:

- Individuals using satellite communication devices will follow all federal, state and local laws.
- A copy of this section of policy should accompany any satellite communication device.
- The emergency response plan should be followed in any emergency. This policy and procedure is to support that plan with regards to satellite communication.
- Individuals will use the satellite communication device to notify the on-call system of the college.
- All Sterling College sanctioned programs, that are more than 20 minutes travel from a phone, must carry a reliable form of communication. A cell phone can meet this need IF cell service is reliably available in the operating area. If not, a satellite communication device, such as an InReach or Satellite Phone must be carried.
- Individuals will use the Satellite communication device to notify the on-call system if there is a significant change of plans or an emergency if cell service is not available.

Storage and Maintenance:

- One satellite phone will be reserved for GFS programming and kept by the director of Global Field Studies.
- One satellite phone will remain with the Dean of Community when not in the field to be used for emergency situations in which regular cell phone and landline communication is not possible.
- The remaining InReach devices will be stored and maintained by the OE Gear Room Manager, and available for sign out by college employees throughout the year.

- Written instructions for use will be stored with each device.

3. ACTIVITY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES & POLICIES

3.1 AXE AND SAW USE ON TRIPS

1. Description and Purpose: Axes are used in *Expedition II* and other Outdoor Education contexts only for contact splitting firewood. Fires are used in *Expedition II* to increase student awareness of the nature of the forest around them, educate about different kinds of wood and their characteristics, promote craftsmanship, and improve confidence. Gathering and cutting firewood to length is done with handsaws. Trips for other Sterling College classes that wish to use fires must adhere to these axe and saw use policies. Some trips may forbid the possession or use of axes and saws.
2. Requirements for conducting the activity:
    a. Techniques taught in the relevant class sessions must be followed.
    b. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate safe axe and saw use, and has experience teaching these techniques. Instructors need to be knowledgeable about safe sharpening techniques and ensure that axes and saws are carried with sheaths in place.
    c. Instructors ensure that a first aid kit is brought into the field, and are trained to provide first aid to control bleeding.
    d. Gloves or mittens must be worn during axe, saw, and knife use, including during sharpening. These should be leather or another heavy shell material.
    e. Boots must be worn during axe use.
    f. Safe spacing between people must be maintained. With contact splitting, safe spacing is considered a radius of 5 feet.
    g. Axes must have sheaths on while being carried. Head attachment to handle must be monitored for security.
    h. The backside of the axe may be used for pounding in stakes.
3. Curriculum for Axe and Saw Use on Trips:
    a. Attention must be paid to students' prior experience in classes, work positions, or otherwise. All students must receive proper instruction prior to axe and saw use during trips. This includes briefing on the above guidelines, and instruction in safe technique.

b. Instructors must be prepared to supervise student use of axes and saws and to intervene to ensure safe technique and proper care of equipment.

3.2 CANOEING - FLATWATER

1. Description and Purpose: Flatwater canoeing refers to tandem or solo canoeing on lakes and slow moving rivers. Canoeing may be used as a means of accessing lake and riparian environments for research and other educational purposes, or for expedition travel on field programs.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:
   a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate all of the techniques to be used. In classes focused on canoe skill instruction, the instructor must have experience teaching these techniques, and must be knowledgeable about the safe use of canoeing and rescue equipment, the inspection and storage of this equipment, any basic repair/maintenance necessary, paddling in wind and in other reduced conditions, flatwater rescue techniques, and the recognition, prevention and treatment of hypothermia. In classes in which flatwater canoeing is used in mild conditions as a means of accessing remote locations, the instructor need not have a technically high skill level as long as they are competent in basic paddling and group management, capsize recovery, awareness of weather conditions, and able to accurately assess group skill level and adjust the activity accordingly.
   b. For cold air or water conditions, minimum dress code includes:
      - Splash resistant shell (top and bottom)
      - Non-cotton insulating layer
      - Warm boots, gloves, and hat
      - Set of spare clothes (waterproofed) for each person on the trip.
   c. PFDs are worn fully zipped at all times when on the water. PFD's should also be worn while walking near the edge of moving, such as when scouting rapids. Instructors teach the proper use and fit of PFDs.
   d. Instructors will not allow students on the water until they are able to supervise and rescue if there is a problem.
   e. The group must be kept close to shore in cold or windy conditions.
   f. Canoes must be properly secured to the trailer before driving. Plant Manager must be notified immediately of any problems with the trailer or vehicle.
   g. Staff to participant ratio will not exceed 1:12.

3. Flatwater Canoe Curriculum:
    a. Canoeing skills are taught in a progression from basic to more advanced.
    b. Students are instructed and assessed in self-rescue, and canoe over canoe rescue during their first canoe session. In subsequent canoeing classes, the instructor must assess the need for further training or demonstration of competency in self-rescue and/or swimming ability.
    c. Strokes, braces, and leans are taught, assessed, and reviewed based upon their applicability to the canoeing activity.
    d. Canoe travel is prefaced by appropriate discussion and/or review of hazards and risk management. Topics may include wind, waves, darkness, cold water, distance from shore, drowning, hypothermia, and appropriate prevention measures.

3.3 CANOEING - WHITEWATER

1. Description and Purpose: Whitewater canoeing refers to tandem canoeing on faster moving rivers; class I, II and III usually during spring run-off. For the most part, whitewater canoeing takes place in the course of that name. Whitewater canoeing may also take place in other classes as a vehicle for exploring facilitation skills and leadership styles, for improving technical paddling skills, and as part of a canoe expedition on a field program.
2. Requirements for conducting the activity:
    a. Instruction and supervision are provided by at least one instructor who understands and can demonstrate all of the techniques to be used, including a range of whitewater strokes and braces, paddling strategies, river reading, rescue, and group management. The instructor must have experience teaching these techniques, and must be knowledgeable about the safe use of canoeing and rescue equipment, the inspection and storage of this equipment, any basic repair/maintenance necessary, paddling in wind and in other reduced conditions, and the recognition, prevention and treatment of hypothermia. The instructor must also be knowledgeable about general river safety and accident prevention on moving water. The instructor must be skilled in paddling and conducting rescues in water of one level of difficulty above the level to be paddled in the class. In general, it is our goal to staff whitewater canoeing activities with two instructors. Exceptions may be made based upon water level and difficulty, group skill level, and remoteness of the river.
    b. All the requirements for conducting flatwater canoeing apply to whitewater canoeing, except that whitewater canoeing only takes place under the

supervision of instructors who are skilled at teaching and managing groups in whitewater.

c. On moving water, a group will carry a First Aid Kit in a waterproof bag, two throw ropes, Z-drag equipment, and several extra paddles.

d. Prior to conducting whitewater canoeing with students, instructors will paddle or scout from the shore any sections of river to be used, and determine suitability of river condition/level to readiness of the students.

e. Staff to participant ratio will not exceed 1:6.

f. Approved white water helmets are used for Class II or harder rapids. On occasion, helmets are worn when playing in rapids if deemed necessary by the instructor. For example, surfing in shallow or rocky waters.

3. Whitewater Canoe Curriculum:

a. The curriculum for Flatwater Canoeing applies here as well.

b. Students must be fully briefed on river hazards (including strainers, foot entrapment, and cold temperatures), self rescue and group management procedures, basic hydrology, and river reading, prior to their first whitewater experience.

c. Students are trained and assessed in self rescue skills prior to whitewater canoe travel.

d. Students are briefed on safe entry and exit from boats on shore, and on how to safely stop and "grab shore".

e. Paddle signals are taught as needed.

f. Instruction in strokes, leans, braces, river hydrology, river running strategies, and rescue skills will proceed in a progressive fashion, allowing students to build upon existing skills to cultivate more advanced skills.

3.4 CAVING

1. Description and Purpose: Caving takes place only on the Tropical Ecosystems: Bahamas Course (Lighthouse Cave and Altar Cave). The purpose is to expose students to cave formation and ecology . Only open caves with large cavities are explored, no narrow passages are explored nor are any areas with danger of rock falls.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:

a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate safe movement into, within, and exiting the specific cave

b. Students must be dressed in suitable layers for activity in a cave, and each student must be equipped with a working headlamp, or, if it is a cave in the water, with an underwater flashlight. The group will carry a minimum of two extra light sources.

c. A first aid kit will be carried.

d. The staff to participant ratio will not exceed 1:6. There will always be two instructors present for caving activities.

3. Curriculum for Caving

a. The instructor will brief the group on pacing, staying together, how to protect the cave ecosystem and the nature and hazards of the terrain.

b. Difficulty of terrain will be progressive, allowing students to achieve comfort and competency before moving into more challenging areas.

c. If exploring in tidal caves, instructors check the tide schedule in advance of the trip. The activity is conducted only at appropriate tidal conditions. Students are instructed in how to read a tide table and are made aware of tide markings in the cave. Students are taught to use a buddy system while in the cave. Students are instructed to only swim on the surface and not to dive.

3.5 CLIMBING WALL

1. Description and Purpose: The climbing wall is used for climbing instruction in technical skills courses as well as for the instruction of site management, belay supervision, activity design, and other aspects of facilitation and instruction, in OE classes. As part of these classes, Sterling College students may conduct climbing wall sessions for non-Sterling participants (for example, middle or high school students), while under the supervision of a Sterling College faculty member. Additionally, approved Sterling College students supervise recreational climbing at the Climbing Wall by members of the Sterling College community.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity: In general, procedures for using the climbing wall are the same as outlined in rock climbing. Student leaders who wish to supervise the Climbing Wall may request training to become approved as leaders. Once trained and approved, these student leaders may open the wall for student use without the presence of a faculty instructor. Student leaders keep track of any incidents which they will review with their faculty supervisor. Use of the Climbing Wall by non-Sterling groups without Sterling Faculty supervision is not an option.

3. Curriculum: See section on Rock Climbing and rappelling.

3.6 CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

1. Description and Purpose: Cross Country Skiing takes place primarily in the Nordic Skiing class. The purposes include: giving students outdoor travel skills, letting them observe nature and people's influence on it, providing opportunities for student leadership, decision making, and navigation. Other classes may use cross country skiing as a winter travel technique in order to teach more advanced skills, further develop leadership skills, and access pristine areas.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:
    a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate all relevant techniques, has experience teaching these techniques, and has experience and skill in preventing, recognizing, and treating cold-related injuries. Instructors need to be knowledgeable about the safe use of ski equipment, and able to perform basic repairs.
    b. Students must be dressed in suitable layers for outdoor activity, with adequate protection from the cold, as well as drinking water and food if a longer ski is anticipated.
    c. A first aid kit will be carried.
    d. For backcountry skiing activities, a repair kit will be carried, including a spare ski tip, duct tape, spare binding parts, screwdrivers, and pliers.
    e. The staff to participant ratio will not exceed 1:12 on groomed trails and 1:8 in backcountry situations.
3. Curriculum for Cross Country Skiing:
    a. The instructor will brief group on pacing, route, navigational concerns, and any hazards associated with the terrain. The instructor will help the group decide on a system for staying together.
    b. Instruction of skills will be progressive, allowing students to achieve competency in basic skills and then build on them with more advanced skills.
    c. Students will be taught the techniques needed to successfully negotiate the terrain on their route. These will differ depending upon whether the activity is taking place on groomed trails or in the backcountry.

3.7 GROUP BICYCLING

1. Description and Purpose: Bicycle (road) touring skills are taught in Bicycle Touring. The purpose of the course includes: providing students with an opportunity to develop bicycle (road touring) travel skills, become familiar with bicycle anatomy and maintenance, navigation, group decision making, allows opportunities for student leadership, and enhances existing camping skills.

2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:

a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate relevant road cycling techniques. Instructor must be knowledgeable in basic repair/maintenance of bicycles. Instructor must be trained in first aid and be able to deal with emergencies in an outdoor or remote setting.

b. Instructor is familiar with the route, either through first hand experience or maps, and ensures that adequate equipment, supplies and training are provided and offered. Involving students in the planning is encouraged, but the instructor is responsible for checking all preparations.

c. A first aid kit is carried on day and extended trips.

d. A patch/repair kit/tools will be carried on each trip. Extended trips will require a more extensive repair/maintenance kit and will reflect group needs and distance from bicycle repair shops.

e. Participants are required to carry adequate amounts of water & food. A water filtration system will be carried on extended trips.

f. An electronic communication device must be brought on every trip.

g. Helmets are worn at all times when participants are on bicycles.

h. Participants will always wear bright/reflective clothing. During times when vision is poor due to weather or darkness, all participants will wear fluorescent safety vests and appropriate front and rear lighting. Nighttime riding is a last choice option and will be intentionally avoided.

i. Participants will be advised of state bicycle regulations and the rules of the road. Participants will proceed single file and maintain a safe and adequate distance between riders. Participants will always be in visual contact with a rider in front and a rider in the rear. Each participant will be in possession of a whistle. Instructor will be the sweep rider.

j. Participants are instructed to stop at all turns to ensure accuracy of navigation choice.

k. Each participant will be issued and in possession of route maps. Routes will be reviewed in the morning and at lunch and potential hazards examined as well as terrain challenges.

l. Bicycles will be examined (by participants) at least every day using the Daily Bicycle CheckList – Appendix E

m. Staff to participant ratios will not exceed 1:8.

3. Curriculum for Group (Road) Bicycling :

a. At the beginning of class students will review and agree to follow the protocols of Bicycle Touring and the Risk Management Protocol (found in Appendix F).

b. Instructor will brief group on pacing, route, navigational concerns and any hazards associated with terrain. The Instructor will help the group decide on a system for staying together.

c. Students are briefed on bicycle safety: when and how to correctly apply brakes, gears, turning signals, approaching stops and navigational procedures.

d. Instructor will ensure that all students are properly fitted to their bicycle. Instructor is also responsible for educating the group in bicycle maintenance/repair, this has a direct relation with bicycle safety.

f. Students are briefed on proper clothing and equipment.

3.8 HIKING, BACKPACKING, AND CAMPING

1. Description and Purpose: Students are introduced to this activity in *ASOP: Expedition I*, in which students learn safe practices for traveling and camping. Hiking, backpacking and camping may take place in other classes as a means of refining backcountry travel skills, exploring leadership skills, becoming more acquainted with the region, and accessing remote areas for a variety of other educational purposes.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:
    a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate all of the necessary skills for hiking, backpacking and/or camping, and has experience teaching these skills. Instructors need to be knowledgeable about safe use of all equipment used for the activity, the inspection and storage of this equipment, and any basic repair/maintenance necessary.
    b. Instructor is familiar with the route, either through firsthand experience or maps/guides, and ensures that adequate equipment, food and water, clothing, and training are provided. Involving students in the planning is encouraged, but the instructor is responsible for checking all preparation. Appropriate guidelines should be set beforehand regarding group responsibilities, environmental protection (LNT), etc.

i. If adequate information about the route is not available, the route must be changed, or a scouting trip must be arranged prior to conducting the trip.

ii. For equipment consider: water purification, cooking, sleeping shelters, navigation, waste disposal, first aid, lights, communication, wild animal concerns (including bugs).

iii. While hiking students and instructors will need at least 2 litres of water during the day, and more in camp and during hot weather.

iv. When considering clothing all possible weather conditions must be considered, from cold precipitation to hot sun. Full rain gear, sturdy footwear, and non-cotton insulating layers are required at minimum, even with a warm and clear weather forecast. For winter hikes or high mountain travel year-round much more attention to clothing is required. For Expedition II, waterproof boots with thick removable liners are required.

v. Participants must be trained in the use of equipment such as stoves, specialized tools such as crampons, or specialized travel skills like canoeing.

c. Group condition and weather will be monitored while traveling, and turning back or otherwise modifying plans will be considered when appropriate. Sterling students have widely varying levels of fitness and experience. Groups will be kept together in easy communication range unless splitting the group serves a specific educational goal. In instances in which splitting the group occurs, route parameters, communication, rendezvous points, and leadership roles will be established. The group will travel at the pace of the slowest hiker and stop before anyone is totally exhausted. Students will only be allowed to use technical skills that the instructor is competent to supervise.

d. In camp, the instructor(s) will continue monitoring group behavior and weather conditions. Students must tell the instructor or at least one other student if they are leaving camp (to go for a walk, look for firewood, etc). Students need to know where the instructor is at all times. An evening check-in is recommended, as an opportunity to deal with issues of the day and make sure all participants are in good condition. Instructors must be mentally prepared for 24-hour responsibility for the group.

e. If hiking takes place at night, additional safety precautions are taken, including the use of headlamps, slower pace, and traveling closer together. Night hiking should only take place in terrain that the instructor knows is appropriate for the ability of the group and the reduced visibility.

f. The staff to participant ratio will not exceed 1:8 unless the group is camping close to an instructor's house (as often happens on *Expedition II* overnight), in which case the staff to participant ratio will not exceed 1:12.

3. Curriculum for Hiking, Backpacking, and Camping.
    a. Instruction is provided on how to load, adjust, put on, take off, and carry a pack.
    b. Students are briefed on proper clothing and personal equipment.
    c. Students are briefed on the route, evacuation points, and relevant navigational skills.
    d. Progressive instruction is provided in travel skills (ie navigation, use of snowshoes or skis, etc.) prior to traveling with a loaded pack.
    e. Instructors teach and supervise the use of camp skills (stove use, fire building and safety, shelter construction, etc.)

3.9 ICE CLIMBING

1. Description and Purpose: this takes place in *Introduction to Ice Climbing* and the purpose is to teach basic ice climbing skills.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity
    a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate all of the techniques outlined in the course syllabus, and has practice teaching these techniques. Instructors need to be knowledgeable about safe use of all equipment used for the course, the inspection and storage of this equipment, and any basic repair/maintenance necessary. Instructor must be trained in first aid and able to deal with emergencies in an outdoor or remote setting.
    b. The group will carry a first aid kit.
    c. Students must be dressed properly for conditions and activities and must carry adequate water and food. This means adequate protection from the elements (cold, water, snow, sun) with particular emphasis on layering and adequate footwear.
    d. Instructors must be familiar with the climbing sites and choose sites appropriate to class level, class size, weather, and while avoiding avalanche prone terrain.
    e. Instructors should practice and emphasize LNT techniques for climbing activities.
    f. At climbing sites, everyone wears helmets and must be made aware of scene safety, appropriate protocol for approaching edges, out of line of fall for ice and debris, etc.
    g. Instructor must check all anchors before use by students.

h. All rappels by students must be backed up. This may include a separate belay line or proficient use of a friction knot.

i. Staff to participant ratio will not exceed 1:6.

3. Curriculum for Ice Climbing.

a. Students must become familiar with fitting harnesses, helmets, crampons, and boots. Before any actual climbing, helmets, harnesses, and crampons are properly secured.

b. Knots will be taught in a progressive fashion.

c. Anchor construction is demonstrated using natural features and ice screws.

d. Belaying for ice climbing will be consistent with belaying for rock climbing.

e. A variety of techniques for moving on ice will be taught.

3.10 ICE SKATING

Description and Purpose: Ice skating takes place only as a recreational activity led by student Adventure Coordinators, or self organized by a group of peers. The purposes include: healthy outdoor recreation in the winter, cultivating appreciation of Vermont's winter landscape, and providing opportunities for student leadership and decision making.

2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:

Note: if skating on ponds or lakes, the following policies apply. If skating on a human made skating rink on the ground, only section b. applies.

a. If there is an Instructor (Student Adventure Coordinator), they must ascertain that the ice is a minimum of 4" thick, and must ensure that participants stay away from potential hazards such as moving water or rough ice. Instructors must have knowledge in preventing, recognizing, and treating cold-related injuries. A trekking pole or piece of rope 20' long should be on site.

b. Students must be dressed in suitable layers for outdoor activity, with adequate protection from the cold, as well as drinking water and food if a longer outing is anticipated.

c. If students are skating unsupervised with peers, they must designate one person to be in charge of the outing. This person must be familiar with preventing, recognizing, and treating cold-related injuries and should ascertain from a reliable source that the ice is thick enough to be safe. This person should also ensure that either a trekking pole or a 20' section of rope is on site. No solo skating is allowed.

3.11 INITIATIVES AND CHALLENGE COURSE ACTIVITIES

For policies and procedures on the conducting of initiatives and Challenge Course activities, see the Sterling College Challenge Course Instructor Manual.

3.12 MOUNTAINEERING

1. Description and Purpose: Mountaineering is taught when appropriate and by instructors that have the correct level of training..
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity
    a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate all of the techniques that will be needed, and has practice teaching these techniques. Instructors need to be knowledgeable about safe use of all equipment to be used, the inspection and storage of this equipment, and any basic repair/maintenance necessary. Instructors must be trained in first aid and able to deal with emergencies in an outdoor or remote setting.
    b. Students must have proper clothing and cold weather equipment.
    c. Dangerous avalanche conditions must be avoided. If travel in avalanche terrain is anticipated, the group will be trained in avalanche safety, and carry a beacon, avalanche probes, and shovels.
    d. Going to altitude must be preceded by adequate acclimatization.
    e. Staff to participant ratio will not exceed 1:6.
3. Curriculum for Mountaineering.
    a. Instruction will be provided regarding appropriate clothing and equipment for the mountain environment.
    b. Instruction will be provided regarding terrain evaluation and map reading.
    c. Instruction will be provided regarding avalanche conditions, snow condition assessment, high altitude safety and acclimatization, cold weather and winter camping techniques (as needed), travel on snow and ice, crampon use and basic ice climbing, and use of the mountaineering ice axe.
    d. Students will receive any necessary training in planning and cooking meals in the mountain environment.

3.13 ORIENTEERING

1. Description and Purpose: Orienteering is introduced to students during *A Sense of Place: Expedition 1* and is further developed in *Expedition II*. The purpose of the map and compass curriculum is to orient students to map and compass navigation which will be useful to most of them in work experiences at Sterling and in future employment, expose students to a fun, non-mechanized, outdoor sport, and provide a venue for teamwork and decision-making. Students may participate in further orienteering activities throughout the curriculum for the same purposes described above and to further hone skills.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:
    a. Instructors will brief students on the scale of the course in regards to distance and time, what the markers look like, what to do if lost, and where to check in when they return.
    b. Instructors will inform students what clothing and equipment they will need for self care during the course, based on the scale of the course, terrain, and weather.
    c. Decisions regarding whether to conduct the activity as a solo, paired, or group activity, or whether students should be accompanied by Instructor, should be made based on educational goals and student ability level.
    d. Instructors will ensure that all participants return, and be ready to initiate a search.
    e. When conducting night orienteering students are required to wear protective goggles. Students are also briefed on walking cautiously, testing their footing, providing adequate spacing between hikers to avoid whipping branches, using headlamps when terrain is uncertain, and having a system for staying together.
    f. Staff to participant ratios will not exceed 1:12.
3. Curriculum for Orienteering:
    a. Instructors will assess student ability level and provide additional instruction or coaching as needed to meet the educational goals of the activity.
    b. Skills instruction should always be sequential, ideally allowing students to apply and internalize one set of skills before building upon those skills with more advanced ones.

3.14 RIVER CROSSING

1. Description and Purpose: River crossings may take place during any Sterling College trip that involves back-country travel. The purpose is to provide students with information and experience that they can use to travel safely across rivers in the future.
2. Requirements for conducting the Activity:
    a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate and teach safe river crossing techniques.
    b. Whether or not to do the river crossing should be decided based upon:
        i. Condition of group: if one or more people are tired and/or in poor physical or mental condition, the group as a whole can't handle a difficult crossing.
        ii. Depth and velocity of water: in general, river crossing should not be attempted in water over knee deep if the water is moving rapidly.
        iii. Condition of the bottom of the river: sandy or gravelly bottoms are easier and safer to walk on than rocky or boulder-strewn bottoms.
        iv. Time of day: in general people are less alert and more susceptible to accidents late in the day.
        v. Air and water temperature: high air temperatures in regions where snowmelt is a direct cause of river depth could lead to rising water. Low air temperatures may lead to hypothermia. Low water temperatures can be problematic when a river crossing is time consuming and people lose sensation in their legs and feet.
        vi. Proximity to evacuation points: the more remote the location, the more conservative the decision should be.
        vii. Availability of other options such bridges.
    c. Safe river crossing techniques should be used.
        i. Hip belts should be unbuckled so that if a person falls in they can easily get rid of their pack and not be held under by it.
        ii. Always cross rivers facing upstream, so the pressure of the current is less likely to buckle knees.
        iii. Depending on depth and velocity of water, consider team crossings; two or three people together, holding onto each others' shoulders; tripod formations, or simply walk in a line facing upstream. Strong walking sticks can be used for balance.
3. Curriculum: Instructors should anticipate the possible need for river crossings and be prepared to instruct the group in safe crossing technique on the spot.

Instructors should also pay attention to group assessment when considering a river crossing.

3.15 ROCK CLIMBING AND RAPPELLING

1. Description and Purpose: Students are introduced to climbing in *Introduction to Rock Climbing and Advanced Rock Climbing.* Goals in these classes include confronting personal challenges and cultivating mutual support within a group, developing specific technical skills needed for safe climbing and rappelling, and developing instructional skills for top roping settings. Top roped climbing activities may also occur elsewhere in the curriculum as a vehicle for exploring group process, adventure learning, curriculum design, or group management. In these classes, Sterling College students may conduct top roped climbing activities with non- Sterling participants (for example middle school or high school students). Further rock climbing instruction occurs in advanced climbing courses such as *Backcountry Climbing* and aims to increase student climbing autonomy in the development of advanced skills such as anchor building, trad gear placement, and, when appropriate to student skill, leading.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity
    a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate all of the skills to be taught, has experience teaching these techniques. Instructors need to be knowledgeable about safe use of all equipment used for the activity, the inspection and storage of this equipment, and any basic repair/maintenance necessary. Instructors must be trained in first aid and able to deal with emergencies in an outdoor or remote setting.
    b. A first aid kit will always be with the group.
    c. Students must be dressed properly for conditions and activities and must carry adequate water and food. This means adequate protection from the elements (cold, water, snow, sun).
    d. Instructors must be familiar with the climbing sites and choose sites appropriate to class level, class size, and weather.
    e. Instructors should practice and emphasize LNT techniques for climbing activities.
    f. At climbing sites, all participants must wear helmets and must be made aware of scene safety, including the need to use appropriate protocols for approaching edges (e.g. using personal tethers), stay out of line of fall for rocks and debris, etc.

g. In general, the instructor will check all anchors before use by students. In the case of advanced rock climbing courses, after demonstrating sufficient and repeated competency, students may independently build anchors.

h. In general, belayers must be anchored and have a backup. As students demonstrate competency and when belays are located in stable environments, students may forgo ground anchors & backup belayers at the instructor's discretion. For non-Sterling participants, backup belayers & anchors are always used.

i. All rappels by students must be backed up. This may include a separate belay line or proficient use of a friction knot.

j. Instructor to participant ratio will not exceed 1:8 in a top rope environment or 1:3 in a multi-pitch environment.

3. Curriculum for Rock Climbing and Rappelling:

a. Proper instruction must be provided regarding the fitting and use of harnesses and helmets, as well as shoes if climbing shoes are to be used.

b. The instructor must provide a site tour and safety briefing prior to conducting the activity, including safe zones, how to respond to rockfall, safe walk-up/walk-down routes if applicable, and protocol for approaching edges.

c. Before any climbing occurs, helmets and harnesses are properly secured.

d. Knots will be taught in a progressive fashion, reinforcing the basic knots and introducing more advanced knots depending on the educational goals. Rock climbing skills courses will emphasize learning a range of knots; for a one-day climbing session, participants may simply be taught a figure-eight follow-through for tying in.

e. In rock climbing skills courses the construction of anchors may be taught, with an emphasis on redundancy & equalization.

f. Lead climbing may be introduced/practiced, at the discretion of the instructor, based on student experience and competence. Lead climbing is an advanced skill generally taught as part of an Independent Study or in advanced climbing courses. Lead climbing is taught in a progressive fashion.

g. A standard belaying technique is taught and used throughout the Sterling Climbing curriculum. This includes the use of a belay device and the technique that maximizes the use of the brake position (Pull, Brake, Under, Slide). Once Sterling students are familiar with this basic protocol, instructors may also teach different techniques, including hip belay, to achieve different educational goals.

h. Sterling College climbing classes follow American Mountain Guides Association recommended belay commands.. Additional commands are similar to or the same as those used outside of Sterling. Instruction in the use of commands is provided at the beginning of any climbing activity.

3.16 Running

1. Description and Purpose: Running happens mainly in the context of the Trail Running team, and training for the Nordic Ski Team. A trail running class was last offered in Fall Semester 2019. Some running happens in the Orienteering Sports class.These guidelines are designed promote the physical, social, and emotional health benefits of exercise and competition, while reducing the risk to participants of:

- Becoming injured
- Suffering illness, including hyper or hypothermia.
- Getting lost
- Over training
- Too much required time negatively affecting schoolwork.

2. Requirements for conducting the activity:

A. Any course or competition team involving running or should start with a conversation between the leader (instructor or coach) and the participants that includes:

- How much each student has been running in the recent past and general fitness.
- Any underlying health issues (can also be requested from the Director of Wellness).
- How their personal fitness goals match with the class or team expectations.
- Proper equipment and clothing for the activity and the range of possible conditions.
- Clear requirements of being “on the team”
    - A running team will require no more than 4 practice and race sessions per week (including weekends). The total of required time during the school week should not exceed 4 hrs. Weekend commitments should be limited to only part of a single day of the weekend.

- A training schedule matched to each participant, which:
    - Includes adequate recovery (a low intensity or rest day after races and hard training, and at least 2 rest days per week)
    - Limits increases in single day training mileage to no more than 2 miles every 2 weeks. Longer training sessions are possible if the running is augmented by walking sections.
    - Adequately prepares for any races planned.

- Participant has run at least 70% of race distance in training before attempting it in a race.
- Education about hydration and nutrition strategies.

B. During training and racing sessions the instructor, coach, or student team leader ensures that there is:

- A briefing on route, return time, and what to do if disoriented.
- An assessment of the remoteness of the route and whether a first aid kit, communication and navigation equipment, water and food, lights, or spare clothes should be carried.
- Warm-up exercises before running are encouraged.
- Warm-up running before hard training effort or racing is required.
- A plan is communicated for staying in contact with the whole group, and a meet-up point at the end is designated.
- If a participant can't complete a workout or race, they are allowed to drop-out.
- Hydration is provided if training or racing exceeds 1 hour.
- Caloric nutrition is provided if training or racing exceeds 2 hours.
- The whole group has returned.
- Cool-down running, walking, stretching, and recovery hydration and nutrition is encouraged.
- The staff to participant ratio will not exceed 1:12 on trails and roads.

C. Unsupervised running may be encouraged as part of a student's individual training plan.

- If the instructor or coach plans a run for the group on which they will not accompany them, and the route is new to all members of the group, then:
  - The instructor or coach must have recently scouted the route in order to provide directions, time estimate, and warning of any hazards.
  - A student leader is appointed.
  - Providing a map is also recommended in this situation.
  - The coach or instructor sets up a system to check that all students return.

3. Instructor or Coach Qualifications:

-Have a minimum of 4 yrs running experience and at least 2 yrs or 3 seasons experience in a structured running program such as a team or coached training program.

- Racing experience in the distances raced by the team is required for the instructor or running team coach.
- At a minimum, is currently certified in Wilderness First Aid (16 hr class) and CPR, or higher level, or has similar medical training. See general instructor first aid qualifications for backcountry and wilderness situations.

3.17 SERVICE LEARNING

1. Description and Purpose: Service learning is built into many aspects of the curriculum. The inclusion of service learning in courses is intended to integrate students into the surrounding community, emphasize interdependence as a component of a systems approach to the world, teach good work habits, cultivate course-specific skills, and promote environmental stewardship.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:
    a. The needs of the service recipient should be of primary concern.
    b. Students should be briefed as to the purpose of the service work and when possible should have a role in choosing the work to be done. The context of the work should be emphasized, and the experience should be debriefed with an eye toward promoting the learning goals of the course.
    c. All risk management policies apply; this is especially important to keep in mind when conducting international programs in cultures and setting where norms regarding safety are different from ours.
    d. First aid kits should be carried when conducting service projects in the field.
3. Curriculum for conducting service learning:
    a. Instructors will do their best to ensure that students receive a thorough briefing as to the nature of the work to be done, the purpose of the work, and as much background information as possible about the service learning partner.
    b. Instructors will assess the nature of the work and the skills within their group and provide appropriate skill instruction and supervision.
    c. Instructors will ensure that processing takes place following the activity.

3.18 SNORKELING

1. Description and Purpose: this takes place on the *Belize & Bahamas Global Field Studies* courses and the purpose is to experience the underwater ocean ecosystem.

2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:
    a. Instruction is provided by an instructor that is familiar with the techniques of snorkeling and has lifesaving skills.
    b. An instructor must supervise the student snorkelers in the water at all times.
    c. The student to instructor ratio in the water is not to exceed 1:8.
    d. One instructor will be on shore, as the spotter for the whole group to have an overview of the whole group and in case of an emergency rescue. This instructor must know the location of the first aid kit, be familiar with the emergency procedures and the nearest local landline.
    e. Each instructor will have whistles and students are required to return to the nearest instructor if the whistles are blown.
    f. In the case of snorkeling from a boat, in rough water (as deemed by the instructor) or in any case that the instructor deems necessary the students will be required to wear snorkeling vests.
    g. The buddy system is required at all times. Students are required to stay within five meters of their buddy. Snorkeling alone is not permitted.
    h. A dive flag will be posted at all times in the water near the snorkelers to avoid accidents with boats and water skiers, and students are instructed to stay within the identified limits.
    i. Requirement for all night snorkeling is as follows: An instructor needs to be supervising from shore. Each student is to have a primary light. The instructor to student ratio is 1:4. All requirements for snorkeling in daylight described above apply to the night snorkeling.
3. Curriculum for Snorkeling:
    a. General swimming abilities will be assessed.
    b. Students will be briefed on proper use of equipment, the buddy system and help signals.
    c. Each student will practice the snorkeling skills in a pool setting and each student's skill level will be approved for open water snorkeling by the instructor.
    d. Students that do not meet the satisfactory skill level will be required to wear a snorkeling vest for open water snorkeling.

3.19 SNOWSHOEING

1. Description and Purpose: Exposure to snowshoeing may occur in classes in order to cultivate skills in winter backcountry travel and safe snowshoe use in mountainous terrain.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:
    a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate all of the techniques applicable for the activity, and has experience teaching these techniques. Instructors need to be knowledgeable about the safe use of snowshoes and be able to mend and improvise bindings. Instructor is also competent in recognizing, preventing, and treating hypothermia and frostbite, and in assessing the adequacy of student clothing and footwear for the conditions.
    b. A first aid kit will be carried. Snowshoe repair materials such as cord as recommended.
    c. Students must wear warm winter boots and be dressed in layers suitable for winter travel.
    d. Adequate amounts of water and food should be carried.
    e. Snowshoe games should be preceded by proper warm-up activities and briefing on potential hazards.
    f. Staff to participant ratios will not exceed 1:12.
3. Curriculum for Snowshoeing:
    a. Students should be provided with background information on the origins of snowshoes, and the applicability of different designs for different types of terrain.
    b. Instructors should ensure that students are wearing appropriate types of snowshoes for the terrain to be traveled. For example, many modern snowshoes are too small for backcountry travel in deep snow with a pack. If steep terrain is anticipated, snowshoes with built in “crampons” should be considered.
    c. Instructors should provide sufficient instruction on technique to allow students to negotiate the terrain successfully.

3.20 SOLOS

1. Description and Purpose: Solos may be used in courses for purposes of promoting reflection, introspection, and self-reliance, and allowing students the opportunity to fully experience the natural world. The solo in this context is also

used to help students explore the role of solos in educational programs; models for structuring, briefing, and debriefing a solo, managing risks of a solo experience, and curricular topics that can be explored in the context of a solo.

2. Requirements for conducting the activity.
    a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can effectively facilitate a solo experience.
    b. The solo area and solo sites must be chosen with consideration given to ensuring the terrain is safe, there is adequate water, and conducting a solo there is compatible with Leave No Trace practices.
    c. Solos are to be relatively stationary; students are required to remain within an area established between the instructor and student.
    d. Instructors must be well enough acquainted with the students' capabilities to accurately assess student readiness for a solo experience.
    e. No swimming is allowed during solo unless an instructor is present.
    f. Students must be equipped with adequate food, clothing and water, and raingear.
    g. Students are typically spaced to allow a call or whistle for help to be heard by another person.
    h. Any students who may need special attention for health reasons during the solo should be placed close to the instructor camp and a plan should be made to ensure the safety and well-being of the student during solo.
    i. Any fires used will be built according to LNT principles, including the use of a fire pan.
3. Curriculum for Solo.
    a. Initial conversations about solo should start long enough ahead of time to allow students to give the solo some thought and develop some goals for how they want to experience solo. Instructors will provide some ideas and resources to support students having a successful solo experience.
    b. Students must be briefed as to emergency procedures, adequate food and water intake, staying warm, any local hazards, duration of solo, a system for daily checks with the instructor, location of instructor camp, boundaries of the solo site, shelter construction, and proper use of equipment during solo.
    c. Instructors must make sure that students have adequate skills to keep themselves safe and relatively comfortable on solo.

3.21 STUDENT UNACCOMPANIED TRAVEL

1. Description and Purpose: Student Unaccompanied Travel takes place during the Southwest semester and Sierra Nevada courses, and may take place on other courses where appropriate. Student Unaccompanied Travel gives students an opportunity to take on full responsibility for travel, leadership, decision-making, and camping, in order to strengthen skills, cultivate judgment, and build a culture of accountability.
2. Requirements for conducting the activity.
    a. No Unaccompanied Travel will take place unless the instructor has assessed that the group has the skills (both technical and in terms of decision-making), judgment, and maturity to complete the activity safely. Instructors and students understand that participation in unaccompanied travel is a privilege, not a right. Modifications to the activity such as the instructor traveling silently with the group or trailing the group within sight should be considered.
    b. Student Unaccompanied Travel will travel only in terrain that is one class lower than what was travelled with the instructor(s).
    c. A system will be established for daily check-ins, to include either face to face, radio or via notes left at agreed upon locations.
    d. Minimum group size for Unaccompanied Travel is three.
3. Curriculum for Student Unaccompanied Travel
    a. Students will be briefed on evacuation routes, contingency plans (ie in the event of failure to make a rendezvous), and emergency procedures.
    b. Students will have adequate time and preparation beforehand to discuss and decide upon both group and individual goals for Unaccompanied Travel.
    c. A student leader will be designated to take charge in the event of an emergency.
    d. A Chief First Aid Officer will be designated to manage first aid if there is an injury. This person will be responsible for carrying the Student first aid kit.
    e. An instructor who has unexpectedly lost contact with a group on Unaccompanied Travel will contact Sterling College within 24 hours.
    f. Students will be involved in the planning of their Unaccompanied Travel.
    g. Before beginning Unaccompanied Travel, students will clearly understand the following:
        - behavioral guidelines
        - their exact route;
        - location of checkpoints and alternative checkpoints;

- where and how to contact Instructor if they need help;
- location and management of potential hazards;
- campsite locations and alternatives.

3.22 SWIMMING

Description and Purpose: Swimming primarily occurs as an activity in the context of snorkeling during the Belize & Bahamas Global Field Studies courses. It also occurs incidentally during other courses such as the Southwest Field Semester, A Sense of Place, Sierra Nevada, and Whitewater Canoeing. Course descriptions should identify whether: 1) swimming is a required part of the class, 2) if canoeing or other boating (where capsize is possible) is required, and 3) if swimming ability is required. Courses like Whitewater Canoeing, in which swimming ability is required for self-rescue, must list swimming ability as a prerequisite. If swimming ability is a prerequisite for enrolling in the class, students who are non-swimmers will not be able to take the class. If swimming is only a recreational option during free time on the course, the rules below still need to be followed, but it doesn't need to be listed in the course description.

2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:

   A. The instructor will take into consideration swimming ability when determining parameters of swimming activities.

   B. If swimming will occur, the instructor will complete a swimming area assessment to include the following:

      i. Temperature of water.

      ii. Flow and movement of water.

      iii. Water depth and changes in depth.

      iv. Potential hazards above/below water. Hazards could include rocks, broken glass, floating debris and vegetation.

      v. Establishment of a secure area for swimming to include good visual boundaries for establishing parameters, boundaries that take into consideration ability levels, hazards, and entry points.

      d. If the instructor does not feel comfortable with the conditions, or the swimming ability of the students, then modifications to the activity must be made. This may include the use of flotation devices for individuals or the entire group or may preclude swimming entirely.

      e. If people are swimming there must be a designated person on shore watching; this person should be a competent swimmer.

   C. The instructor will also review the following guidelines with students prior to any swimming:

1. Shoes or other activity-specific footwear must be worn at all times if in a backcountry setting, or at instructor discretion.
2. No goal swimming
3. No jumping or diving

D. If a group swims in a designated swimming area, rules of that swimming area apply.

E. For courses in which boat capsize is a potential risk, see the canoeing section of the Handbook for Outdoor Recreation and Travel.

3.23 TREE FELLING

1. Description and Purpose: Students are occasionally allowed to cut small trees down in Expedition II and other courses in order to obtain dry firewood for campfires. The use of campfires on winter camping trips is an important part of the curriculum and provides opportunities to discuss impact (local and distant), LNT principles and practice, forest regeneration in the Northeast, and regionally specific and responsive approaches to low impact travel. Additionally, the use of fires promotes attention to forest type and tree identification, and a closer bond with the natural environment.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity:
   a. Instruction and supervision are provided by an instructor who understands and can demonstrate safe tree felling technique. Instructors need to be knowledgeable about the safe use of and care for bow saws.
   b. Students are encouraged to collect and use down wood as much as possible. If there isn't enough down wood, standing deadwood is harvested.
   c. Tree felling only takes place in areas in which forest regeneration can support cutting of trees and where some cutting is acceptable with the landowners.
   d. Bow saws are used for tree felling.
   e. The tree must be dead and four inches or less in diameter.
   f. Good planning and proper technique must be used in tree felling.
   g. A first aid kit must be available.
   h. Sturdy boots, leather gloves or mittens will be worn.
   i. Use only a bow saw to make front cuts and back cuts, leaving a thin uncut hinge. Make sure the stump is cut as low as possible.
   j. Yell "clear!" to alert nearby people of the imminently falling tree.

3. Curriculum for Tree Felling: For the full curriculum for tree felling: see lesson plans for tree felling classes in *Forestry Techniques.*
    a. Attention must be paid to whether or not students have completed *Forestry Techniques*. Transfer students may not have taken this class. Students who have not completed *Forestry Techniques* must receive proper instruction prior to tree felling. This includes briefing on the above guidelines, and instruction in safe technique.
    b. Instructors must be prepared to supervise student tree cutting and to intervene to ensure appropriate tree selection, safe technique and proper care of equipment.

3.24 WINTER EXPEDITION (EXPEDITION II)

1. Description and Purpose: The purpose of Winter Expedition is to further promote the course objectives for Expedition II: increase students' confidence and responsibility in facing challenge effectively; promote mutual support among students in a group setting; for students to observe, understand, and appreciate our relationship with the natural world. Winter Expedition is four days and three nights in duration and takes place in the middle of December. Students are organized in their Expedition II groups, in which they have been preparing for. There is at least one Instructor per Expedition II group who has been with that group throughout the semester. Within each group, students are organized into pairs and threesomes for camping and cooking. Since the entire class travels as a large group, there are student representatives from each group whose job it is to communicate with the other groups in order to facilitate efficient travel, as well as a designated group to be in the lead for each section of the expedition.
2. Requirements for Conducting the Activity
    a. All requirements for conducting hiking, backpacking, and camping apply.
        i. At least one working cell phone will be carried on Expedition.
        ii. The Adrian Owens formula for staff to participant ratio will be followed: 1 faculty to stay in on the trip with each Expedition group (of up to 12 students) + 1 extra first aider + 4 faculty or TA's to hike with students needing evacuation. With 3 groups that adds up to a staff of 8.
        iii. All student participants will have successfully completed the preparatory classes, sometimes with written make-up projects and individual conferences with Instructors.
        iv. Faculty/staff, board members, or alumni not directly involved in teaching Expedition II but who wish to participate in Winter Expedition in order to understand the program, are encouraged to participate in training

activities and will be fully briefed regarding expectations, including activities, clothing, equipment, nutrition, and safety. These participants are encouraged to participate for the full duration of Winter Expedition, in order to minimize the flow of visitors, people leaving early, arriving late, etc.

v. In general, it is not appropriate for employee children or guests to participate on Winter Expedition.

vi. Inclusion of all students on Winter Expedition is a high priority. For this reason, a framework for excluding students from expedition such as competency tests, etc., will not be used.

3. Curriculum for Winter Expedition:
   a. Map and Compass orienteering in Expedition II
   b. Contact splitting, axe care, and tree felling.
   c. Fire building, knot tying and shelter building with tarps, hiking with a loaded backpack, cooking over a fire, cold injuries and other first aid, proper clothing and its use, “Etiquette and Expectations”, practice “Overnight” campout.
   d. Students will be briefed on required camping equipment and clothing for expedition by early November so they have enough time to acquire needed items.
   e. Each day of winter expedition will end with a debrief/check-in to ensure the health and well being of the group and promote learning from the day’s experiences.
   f. See syllabus and lesson plans for Expedition II for details.

APPENDIX A: EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Sterling College:	1-800-648-3591	
	(802)-586-7711	
Main office	x100	
President's Office	x111	home ext 122
Laura Spence	x116	home 586-2092
Favor Ellis	x127	cell 802-473-8456
Kitchen	x155	
Maintenance Shop	x123	
Kelly Jones	x119	home 635-2007
		(c)696-9130
Steve Smith	x123	home 586-2859
Sterling College Emergency Pager:		(802)-290-9931
Hardwick Rescue, fire, police:	9-1-1	
Copley Hospital	888-4231	
State Police (Derby)	(802) 988-4315	

APPENDIX B: TRIP PLANNING CHECKLIST

1. Obtain land use permit or permission.
2. Schedule van use.
3. Submit an online food request form to the kitchen at least 7 days in advance.
4. Request copies of the medical forms for your students.
5. Review and discuss any medical situations that may be problematic with the student.
6. Ensure that students have sufficient prescription medication for the duration of the trip. For trips occurring in remote settings, the instructor may consider carrying a second set or splitting the student's prescription and carrying half.
7. Ensure to the best of your knowledge that all members of the trip are suitably briefed, trained, dressed, equipped, and in good health.
8. If you are not trained in first aid (e.g. non-backcountry trips), determine who in your group is and establish if that person is ok with being the designated first responder in the event of a medical emergency.
9. Sign out a First Aid Kit & check its contents. Add over-the-counter medication as appropriate.
10. File a trip plan with your supervisor or an available support employee.
11. If using canoes, schedule canoe use with current canoe manager
12. Ascertain that there is an administrator on call at Sterling for potential evacuation needs.
13. Sign out van & document mileage.
14. When you come back, return the van key and sign in the vehicle. Leave the vehicle clean and ready for use. Report any maintenance needs to the Maintenance Department.
15. Gas up the vehicle if your trip brings the tank to below one-half full.

APPENDIX C: NOTES ON LOCAL RIVER LEVELS AND DIFFICULTY (Craftsbury Campus)

For website information on water level for the Black River at Coventry:

water.usgs.gov or follow links from usgs.gov looking for real-time streamflow and maps of Vermont.

Black River levels from 200 to 1400 c.f.s. seem okay for most students. Even at 230 cfs it is possible to pin a canoe.

The Lamoille along Route 15 west of the North Wolcott Road has a five foot per mile drop and is Class I.

The Black River from Irasburg to the covered bridge has a twenty foot per mile drop, with sharp bends but few rocks. Generally Class I but can have significant hazards from strainers.

The Black River from below the covered bridge to Coventry has a twenty foot per mile drop, with longer more complex rapids with boulders. This is a class II stretch.

In cold weather (20-25 F) and high water, introductory whitewater classes have occasionally been conducted on the Black River where it crosses the North Craftsbury Rd, where the drop is about one foot per mile.

APPENDIX D: STERLING COLLEGE TRIP PLAN

(For use with overnight or out-of-state trips)

Trip Leader(s) Name:

Students on the Trip:

Departure Date:

Return Date:

Drop-off and pick-up arrangements if applicable:

Evacuation Information for each segment/night of trip (attach copy of map):

Contact Information- cell phone number if you have one:

Sterling College Contact Person (optional)- who on campus has more detailed information about your trip?

APPENDIX E: DAILY BICYCLE CHECKLIST

To Be Completed Daily – Post Ride

1. How does my body feel? Are there any adjustments to the seat or handlebars.
2. Helmets should be intact and all straps functioning and not exhibiting wear.
3. Are all my bags fitting securely with adequate clearance between bags and tires.
4. Grab the front brake and rock the bike forward and backwards. Adjust if needed. Spin front tire to ensure brakes are not rubbing. Push rim from side to side to determine if there is any play in the hub.
5. Pinch the front wheel with knees and try to turn handlebars. Adjust if needed.
6. Check tire pressure and condition of tires.
7. Grab the rear brake and rock the bike forward and backwards. Adjust if needed. Spin rear tire to ensure brakes are not rubbing. Push rim from side to side to determine if there is any play in the hub.
8. Check front and rear quick release. It should be closed, tight and pointing upward.
9. Push and pull on forks.
10. Check water bottle cages for tightness.
11. Check rack(s) to make sure all points of contact are secure.
12. Check crank arms to ensure there is no play. Rotate slowly and feel for tightness or grinding.
13. Check pedals by holding them and trying to move left to right. Check pedal clips, bolts, and straps.
14. Grasp seat firmly and ensure there is no play.
15. Check alignment of rear derailleur.
16. Check for any other hazards through a good visual inspection.
17. Check panniers for loose or frayed material, worn straps, unsecure zippers, etc.

APPENDIX F: ESSENTIALS OF BIKE TOURING RISK MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL

1. During all class meeting times and throughout the touring portion I will remain alcohol and illegal substance free.
2. Whenever I am riding my bicycle I will wear my helmet.
3. I will ensure that I am properly fueled through good nutrition and hydration. If I feel I am not adequately fueled I will approach the Instructor with concerns.
4. I will bring any personal health concerns or observations of others to the Instructor.
5. I will not use any distractive electronic devices while on my bike and during the course of our touring time.
6. I will ride:
    1. Defensively – staying alert and using my mirror.
    2. Ride Predictably – Stay to the right, ride single file, obey all traffic laws, maintain at least 20 feet between bikes, and signal turns and stopping.
    3. I will be aware of trucks and their windy wakes. Trucks have the right of way.
    4. If approached by an aggressive dog I will yell and/or get off my bike, keeping it between me and the dog.
7. I will not pass a slower rider.
8. I will stop at all intersections and wait until the group is together before making my turn. All stops will occur safely off the road and out of the way of traffic.
9. Whenever riding my bike I will wear bright colors, and/or reflective clothing, and/or have a flag attached to my bike.
10. In case of an emergency I will remain calm, find the Instructor, and follow directions.
11. At the conclusion of each day of riding I will participate in a facilitated process session discussing highlights, challenges, safety threats, etc.
12. At the conclusion of each day of riding I will conduct a bike check following the Daily Bicycle Check Sheet.
13. I will adjust my riding to weather and road conditions.
14. I will always maintain visual contact with the bicycle in front of and behind me.
15. I will always have my daily map easily accessible and stored in a waterproof bag.
16. I will attend and participate in all class and trip meetings.
17. I will follow Sterling College swimming protocols and never swim unescorted.

I realize that failure to follow any, or all, of the above can result in dismissal from this class.

APPENDIX G: SUBCONTRACTOR ASSESSMENT FORM

General Considerations

Sterling College seldom employs curricular subcontractors, but occasionally students and faculty identify programs that complement our existing curriculum and have the potential to strengthen our offerings. Before endorsing such a program, the College requires evidence of compliance with the criteria listed below. In addition, students and/or faculty requesting endorsement must submit a plan for assessment of the program, including components listed below. **These materials must be submitted to the Dean of Academics at least two weeks before the end of the semester preceding the planned activity.**

Criteria

· The program's curriculum must be aligned with Sterling's mission and philosophy to the degree that is appropriate.

· The program and any credit bearing relationship to Sterling must be approved by the Academic Council.

· The program's risk management practices must meet or exceed the standards of the Association of Experiential Education.

· Three professional references verify integrity of the program—at least one of these references must be familiar with the specific curriculum/experience under consideration.

· Evidence of an annual report, board of directors, and history of operations—or an equivalent set of structures supporting financial stability.

· Written documentation of policies and procedures.

· Appropriate evidence of staff qualifications, including professional experience and certifications.

· Proof of appropriate level of insurance.

· Copies of necessary licenses and permits.

· Copy of the program's latest internal and/or external safety review.

· Evidence of any affiliation, accreditation status, or certification.

End of Program Assessment

· For semester-long programs, there will be a mid-session meeting facilitated by a Sterling College faculty member, administrator, or alumna/us who is not directly involved in the program.

· There will be a plan for adjusting curriculum according to input from students and instructors, e.g. committing to making mid-course corrections based on mid-session meeting.

· There will be an end of course evaluation including both standard Sterling College questions and program-specific questions