

Our Curriculum

Messiah's Adventure Education curriculum is designed to provide a strong balance between theoretical and practical knowledge. In this major you will not only gain the competencies to safely lead others in adventure experiences; you will be well rooted in the theories and philosophies that shape the field of adventure education. Beyond just being an effective outdoor leader, you will be able to design educational and developmental experiences that move groups and individuals towards specific goals.



Adventure Education

is a form of experiential education that uses adventure activities as a catalyst for personal and interpersonal growth (Martin, 2006). Adventure Education focuses on learning and development of both individuals and groups utilizing adventure activities.

"There is more in us than we know. If we can be made to see it, perhaps, for the rest of our lives, we will be unwilling to settle for less."
Kurt Hahn

Classroom based courses like Leadership, Facilitation and Group Dynamics; Programming and Trip Design; Foundations of Adventure Education; Life Span Development; and Educational Psychology provide you with a strong theoretical foundation preparing you to design effective educational experiences. The Adventure Education major is strategically located in the Health and Human Performance department which focuses on health and functions of the human body. Human Biology, Principles of Exercise Physiology, Wilderness First Responder, and Concepts of Conditioning prepare our graduates to provide effective care for participants in wilderness settings. Another important aspect of our curriculum is the general education courses that provide our students with a robust education that prepares them to be agents of transformation in a complex world.

Our skill based courses follow an intentional sequence to prepare our students to effectively lead adventure activities. With these courses the emphasis is not only skill competency, but on the teaching and leading of these skills for participants.

Skill Courses



Wilderness Encounter

In their first or second year students will participate on this three week experience. The course is designed to encourage personal and interpersonal growth as students work through a curriculum that challenges them to pursue a deeper understanding of their relationship with God, with others, with creation, and with themselves. The context is an extended wilderness experience that caters to those entering the wilderness for the first time while containing experiences that

will challenge seasoned backpackers. This course serves as a model of the type of experience we expect our graduates to be able to design and lead at the end of our four year program. This course occurs during J-term and alternates between Big Bend National Park in Texas and Kauai in the Hawaiian Islands.

Course Fee: Texas \$1300-Hawaii \$3000

Wilderness Education Association Certification Course

This course follows the WEA's internationally recognized curriculum and prepares students to lead others in the outdoor setting. This is a 21 day field course experience that addresses the 6 core competencies identified by the WEA: outdoor living, planning and logistics, risk management, leadership, environmental integration, and education. Students hone their outdoor teaching skills as they prepare and deliver lessons to their peers, receiving valuable feedback on their effectiveness as educators. Leadership skills are also developed as students have numerous opportunities to lead others and reflect on their leadership experiences. This course occurs during the May term of students' sophomore or junior year and utilizes various wilderness areas in Pennsylvania.



Course Fee: \$700



Wilderness First Responder

The WFR course is designed to provide you with tools to make critical medical and evacuation decisions in remote locations. Classroom lectures and demonstrations are combined with realistic scenarios where mock patients will challenge you to apply your learning. Successful completion of this class results in a three year WFR certification through SOLO (www.soloschools.com)

Course Fee: \$145

Programming and Trip Design/ Trip Implementation and Evaluation

This pair of courses progresses through a 12 point programming process to teach students to design adventure experiences, implement them effectively, and conduct a formal evaluation of their program. During the fall semester, students are placed in teams of 3 and work through a systematic process to design a week long wilderness experience. Students conduct needs assessments, identify organizational goals, develop themes/goals, and craft a wilderness experience. By the end of this fall semester course, students begin to market their spring break wilderness trip to the general student population at Messiah College. In the spring semester, ADED students work in conjunction with the Outdoors Club to recruit students for their wilderness spring break trips. In their leadership team, ADED students are responsible for all aspects of leading this weeklong backpacking trip for college students with little or no backcountry experience. The trips are developmental by design, meaning they have a particular theme or curriculum developed by the ADED students. After spring break, students in this course conduct a formal evaluation process following the parameters followed by evaluative research projects.



Rock Climbing/ Caving

These courses are designed to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to safely lead groups on beginner caving experiences or top rope climbing experiences. These courses include a weekend or fall break trip to West Virginia to experience more extensive caves and broader climbing experiences. At the end of the semester, students are grouped into leadership teams that conduct a caving or rock climbing experience for local groups of high school aged students.

Course fee:

Rock Climbing \$150

Caving \$120



ATS

Advanced Technical Skills course provides an opportunity for Junior or Senior level students to specialize in a particular adventure activity and participate in more advanced adventure skills like winter camping, ice climbing, and river rescue. In this course, students develop a learning contract to create a specific course of study that prepares them for professional certification in one or more technical skills. Through this course students have earned certifications as ACCT Level 1 Challenge Course Facilitators, ACA Level 2 Canoe Instructors, PCIA Top Managed Climbing Instructors.

Course Fee: \$750

