

Adventure Learning Guided Project

Project Guidelines

All projects must be approved by the [Adventure Learning program coordinator](#), typically via e-mail. A copy of this approval must accompany the project when submitted. If you wish to change the topic, scope, timeline, or any other aspect of the project after approval, you must discuss this change with the instructor before submitting the project.

Projects are intended to increase your understanding of the workshop topic beyond that gained from attendance and the initial reflection. The focus of the project must be connected to the content of a specific workshop in a clear and meaningful way. A two-credit guided project is intended to represent approximately 30 hours of individual work beyond the time spent attending the workshop or writing the reflection paper. All projects, regardless of type, must include a brief (1-2 page) cover summary that connects the project to the workshop content. Because the adventure learning program is founded on an experiential pedagogy, all practical projects must include a reflective component as well. Guided projects must accurately represent adventure learning concepts and terminology.

One textbook in particular is likely to be helpful for nearly all projects: Priest, S. & Gass, M. (2018). *Effective Leadership in Adventure Programming, 3rd ed.* Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Submitting your work for grading:

Registration, payment and submission of work are managed as separate processes. Please follow these steps to submit your work for grading:

1. Register for the course or courses with the PSU Registrar's Office as outlined above.
2. Email your work to [Dr. Jamie Hannon](#). Use your last name as the first word in the file name (not the email subject line).
3. Include "Adventure Learning Course Work" in your email subject line.
4. At the top of your reflection paper and project, below your name, write the term in which you have registered.
5. Include with your email a scan or photo of your Certificate of Completion.

Specific Project Types

Below are some *suggestions* for possible projects, with guidelines for developing your proposal in each area. After you read through the following suggestions, if you have an idea not represented there, discuss it with your Plymouth State instructor.

Lesson Units

Incorporating adventure learning practices into your teaching is a great way to further your understanding of workshop material, as long as this teaching is combined with careful planning and reflection.

Lesson units must account for about 10 hours of instructional time. The level of detail in a unit plan should be sufficient for any trained colleague to implement the plan in your absence. Individual situations will dictate the complete format and content of lessons. However, each lesson plan must include the following:

- A description of the student population, which may be provided once for the entire unit
- Unique learning objectives specific to the lesson
- A categorized list of chosen activities with time estimates for each
- Simple instructions for each activity, with recommendations for adapting the challenge level, and a resource reference for further instructions
- Age and group appropriate framing and debriefing recommendations that connect each activity with the specific learning objectives
- Strategy for assessment of learning

Curricula

For curricular frameworks, please include the following components:

- Introductory statements of philosophy, goals, and rationale
- Specific connections to national and applicable state standards
- Discussion of thematic development through adventure programming
- Discussion of the role of processing (i.e., debriefing) in the educational process
- Specific strategies for assessment of student learning
- Resource list for the development of lessons from the curriculum

Informational or Promotional Media Presentations

Usually presentations are incorporated into other types of projects, such as in-service training sessions, facilitator training, or Web sites. However, students occasionally develop informative multimedia presentations (e.g., PowerPoint) about adventure learning for school administrators, school boards, parent groups, student groups, or colleagues. For these types of projects, please apply the following guidelines:

- Define the audience clearly.
- Most presentations will include information about the following categories:
 - Experiential learning methods
 - Risk management and safety practices
 - Safe learning environment and full value contracts
 - Site-specific information
- Incorporate interactive experiences that engage members of the audience during the presentation (e.g., conduct an icebreaker or simple initiative, or teach a simple knot used on your course).
- The presentation must do more than restate the workshop content. Additional information and research beyond that gained from your workshop must be included.
- Presentations must accurately represent adventure learning principles and terminology.
- Incorporate into your executive summary a brief reflection on the presentation and its reception by the audience.
- Please submit your presentation on a CD, rather than in printed slide format.
- For students enrolled in the adventure learning graduate programs, only one guided project included in the program of study can be a media presentation.

In-Service Trainings for Colleagues, Peers, or Conference Attendees

Sharing your new knowledge and skills with colleagues and peers is a great way to grow your program, increase the capacity of your staff and increase the impact of adventure learning practices. After approval, this type of project will have three phases. First, you'll submit a complete presentation plan to the PSU instructor for critique and suggestions. Second, you'll implement the presentation. Finally, you'll submit a brief (2-3 pages) summary and reflection on the experience of the presentation, the response of the participants, and if known, any impacts observed from the training.

- A fully developed presentation plan, similar to a lesson plan
- Clearly defined, specific objectives for the session
- A blend of theory and practice appropriate to adult professionals
- Accurate representation of adventure learning concepts and terminology is paramount
- The presentation must do more than restate the workshop content. Additional information and research beyond that gained from your workshop must be included

Facilitator Training Manuals and Processing Resources

Developing text resources and other tools for program facilitators or staff is an excellent way to share the knowledge that you gained in a workshop, and multiply the benefits for your program. The best training or resource manuals will:

- Be accurate
- Present a mix of foundational theory and practical methods and activities
- Use illustrations, photographs, and other non-text methods where appropriate
- Suggest references for further reading and research

In addition to manuals or written guides, developing processing tools for yourself or your facilitators is a good way to put into practice your understanding of the role of processing in the adventure learning process. If you wish to propose a project that involves the development of processing tools, please keep in mind the following guidelines:

- The tool kit must be accompanied by a paper that explains the use of each tool, with reference to the theoretical model(s) (e.g., Generations of Facilitation, Processing Continuum) that underlie their use.
- Represent a range of processing methods, from facilitator-centered to student-centered approaches
- Be constructed in a professional and physically durable way
- Newly developed tools may not simply mimic those that are already commercially available. It's usually an acceptable project, however, to assemble a complete kit from commercial products if you develop an accompanying resource manual, as described above.

Case Studies and Program Profiles

Exploring other programs and their practices with an inquisitive and critical eye is a great way to develop ideas about your own program, and to understand the diversity in the field of adventure programming. These informal case studies or comparative analyses can also help you develop support for your own program or clarify ideas for your capstone project.

- Before you start, develop a question or set of questions that will guide your inquiry, perhaps focusing on philosophy, cost, curriculum, physical plant design, or some combination of these topics.
- Include three or more programs that are well-established models in your region or your field of practice.
- Include interviews with program directors or other senior staff from each program.
- Include an analysis of resources such as staff manuals, Web sites, program promotional information, and other literature.
- When a program is local to you include a site visit.

Literature Reviews

Often students are intrigued by a topic or concept included in the workshop, or they're left with some unanswered questions. Other students want to find the most current work that provides evidence-based support for adventure programming and its outcomes. For these situations, a literature review is an excellent choice for a project. Here are some guidelines for literature reviews.

- It is important to define a question of narrow enough scope so that you are able to accomplish a thorough review.
- There are no numerical requirements for numbers of sources, however there should be enough of a convergence of quantity and quality so that you have achieved a genuine mastery of the topic.
- Most of the sources should be from professional journals, recent major texts and other authoritative sources. If you include Web sites in your resources, they should be a small percentage of the total number, and you should explain why you think they are trustworthy.
- Your paper should synthesize the resources that you find, organizing them, discussing connections between them, and putting them in context of the workshop material. It can't be simply a summary of what you have found.
- Use APA formatting for your paper. A number of [style guides](#) are available on the Lamson Library Web site.
- Journal articles in the adventure education field are somewhat decentralized. The primary journal in the U.S. is the Journal of Experiential Education though there are several others. You can [access these journals](#), free and online, through Lamson Library.

Facility Design and Construction Projects

Developing the physical infrastructure on which your program depends can be an excellent way to enhance your organization's programming effectiveness. Keep in mind that a complete high and low element course design is often a more extensive project than required for a two-credit guided project. Please be sure to include these components in your project:

- Discussion of primary uses and audience for this facility
- Specific references for element design choices
- Complete list of materials with costs
- Labor plan, with either a discussion of choice of vendors, or, for self-built facilities, discussion of builder qualifications
- Discussion of possible or intended funding costs
- Time frame to implementation

Risk and Safety-Related Projects

This category of guided project includes the development of Local Operating Procedure (LOP) manuals, Emergency Action Plans and other similar safety-related resources. All documents of this sort have the potential to be used in litigation. Therefore, a key concept in this type of project is to base your own program's choices on the practices of other highly respected organizations, and on the practices recommended by accrediting bodies such as the [Association for Experiential Education \(AEE\)](#) and the [Association for Challenge Course Technology \(ACCT\)](#). A true LOP manual will include at least the following:

- Required, recommended, and optional practices for each initiative, low element, and high element in your program repertoire, including any site-specific practices unique to your program
- Set-up, take-down, and storage instructions for elements and other equipment
- A single photo or drawing of the element to ensure that facilitators correctly connect the LOP with the element—names are often confusing
- Instructions on what to do if an element is suspected of being unsafe
- Required qualifications, trainings, and proficiency assessments for facilitators
- Instructions for any ongoing safety practices, such as rope usage logs and near miss reports
- Diverse references (e.g., standards promulgated by accrediting bodies, practices, and policies manuals from well-established or accredited organizations) that support your organization's practices

Grant Proposals

Grant proposals are an excellent way to support your program's infrastructure development or staff capacity. Grant proposals are often a much larger project than that intended for a two-credit guided project (e.g., Carol White PEP grant). However, if that is the case, your guided project may be used to develop contributing materials that will support the grant. The grant or the supporting materials should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Must be targeted toward the development of adventure learning programming
- Must contain specific content about rationale, benefits, or outcomes of adventure learning

Exploratory Research Projects

In some cases students choose to develop on-site research projects, such as comparing outcomes between adventure-based and traditional classes. These projects are a great way to integrate the learning from your research design class with the learning from your workshops. They also provide opportunities to develop some supportive evidence for your program. In addition to the general guidelines for all projects, please apply the following guidelines to these research projects:

- When working with numbers, look for opportunities to apply simple useful statistical analyses to your results
- A discussion of your findings or results should include some citations about comparable topics

Web sites

Web site projects are usually a combination of other types of projects. The content of the intended Web site can be defined in discussion with your PSU instructor. Web sites are expected to be available on the Web before the project is considered complete.