

Outdoor Leadership Professional
Associate of Applied Science | 60 credits

Campus: Vermilion

First Year

FALL SEMESTER 2026 – 16 credits	Prerequisites	Credits	Hr Lc/Lb
BIOL(NRT) 1255 – Dendrology and Plant Ecology (MnTC Goal 3)	(CLR, CLW)	3	(2/2)
ENGL 1231 – College Composition 1 (MnTC Goal 1)	(CLW)	4	
OUTL 1230 – Canoe Expedition		2	(0.5/3)
OUTL 1251 – Outdoor Pursuits 1	(CLR, CLW)	3	(1.5/3)
PHED(OUTL) 1146 – Rock Climbing		1	(0.2/1.6)
PREC 1241 – Introduction to Recreation, Parks, and Tourism	(CLR, CLW)	3	

SPRING SEMESTER 2027 – 15 credits	Prerequisites	Credits	Hr Lc/Lb
EMSV 1275 – Wilderness First Responder	(CLR)	3	(1/4)
NSCI 1220 – Environmental Science (MnTC Goals 3 & 10)	(CLR)	3	
OUTL 1252 – Outdoor Pursuits 2	(OUTL 1251)	3	(1.5/3)
PREC 1252 – Environmental Interpretation/Education	(ENGL 1231 or concurrent; PREC 1241 or WILD 1265;)	3	(3/4)
PREC 2256 – Recreation Programming	(PREC 1241 or WILD 1265; OUTL 1251)	3	

SUMMER TERM 2027 – 2 credits	Prerequisites	Credits	Hr Lc/Lb
OUTL 2220 – Outdoor Leadership Internship	(OUTL 1251; any OUTL expedition course; 2.0 GPA)	2	
OR OUTL 2225 – International Internship	(2.0 GPA; instructor approval)		

Second Year

FALL SEMESTER 2027 – 13 credits	Prerequisites	Credits	Hr Lc/Lb
COMM 1220 – Interpersonal Communication (MnTC Goal 1)		3	
EMSV 1761 – Technical Rescue 1		2	(0.5/3)
OUTL 1255 – Introduction to Outdoor Recreation Therapy	(PREC 1241; OUTL 1251)	3	
OUTL 2210 – Theory and Practice of Teaching Paddlesports	(OUTL 1230; OUTL 1251, or instructor approval)	3	(1/4)
PREC 1435 – Wilderness Survival	(CLR)	2	(1/2)

SPRING SEMESTER 2028 – 14 credits	Prerequisites	Credits	Hr Lc/Lb
ART 1346 – Digital Photography (MnTC Goal 6)		3	
EMSV 1762 – Technical Rescue 2		2	(0.5/3)
OUTL 1210 – Backpack Expedition		2	(0.5/3)
OUTL 1245 – Leave No Trace Trainer Certification	(CLR, CLW)	1	(0.2/1.6)
OUTL 2250 – Outdoor Leadership Capstone	(OUTL 1251; PREC 1241)	3	
OUTL 2255 – Adaptive Techniques for Outdoor Pursuits	(OUTL 1255)	3	(2/2)

Additional Recommended Courses: Other natural history courses, such as BIOL(NRT) 1465 Intro to Wolf and Deer Ecology, BIOL(NRT) 1466 Black Bear Ecology, BIOL(NRT) 1445 Mammal Tracking (1-2 credits each), and/or PHED(OUTL) 1134 Dogsledding.

Program Description

The AAS degree in Outdoor Leadership gives students a solid and broad foundation in the field. Outdoor Leadership Professionals need a strong technical outdoor skill-set and broad understanding of a wide range of potential participants in their programs. This degree option delivers both. Students spend purposeful time developing and honing outdoor skills such as paddling, rock climbing, winter camping, backpacking, wilderness medicine, backcountry travel, and Leave No Trace ethics. Additionally, the program offers experiential and classroom instruction in leadership, adventure education, risk management and decision making all aimed at serving diverse populations of participants.

Graduates will be prepared to lead groups including youth, at-risk populations, people with disabilities, and adults in a wide range of outdoor pursuits. Professional certifications and assessments that are embedded in the curriculum and awarded through Wilderness Medical Associates, The American Canoe Association, The American Red Cross, and Center for Outdoor Ethics are of particular interest to employers and what makes this degree program stand out.

Occupational Titles

Students who complete this degree successfully will be prepared to seek employment at organizations such as Outward Bound, NOLS, Wilderness Inquiry, Boy and Girl Scouts of America, National and State Parks and myriad other outdoor adventure schools and guiding companies.

Program Learning Outcomes

Graduates of this program will:

Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills

1. Assess their strengths and challenges, how they make decisions, and how they cope with adversity in the field.
2. Demonstrate the willingness to be responsible for themselves and others by understanding and practicing expedition behavior.
3. Understand how to work with and reach out to various types of learners and populations which they may encounter in professional settings.

Environmental Awareness and Ethical Land Stewardship

4. Study natural systems.
5. Develop their own environmental ethic.
6. Understand the principle of Leave No Trace (LNT) backcountry ethics for a variety of course areas and seasons.

Outdoor Leadership and Education Program Delivery

7. Define and implement concepts of outdoor education and the experiential learning model.
8. Develop and deliver lesson plans for a variety of outdoor technical skills.
9. Assess risk and develop risk management plans for the wilderness setting including various methods of human powered travel, seasons, and course areas.

Outdoor Technical Skills

10. Develop proficiency in a variety of human powered outdoor activities (canoeing, kayaking, snowshoeing, hiking, rock climbing, skiing, dogsledding, etc.).
11. Demonstrate proficiency in navigation (maps, compass, GPS).
12. Gain professional certification in Leave No Trace (LNT) backcountry ethics.
13. Gain American Canoe Association assessment and/or certification.
14. Manage and maintain their own and student health and hygiene in the field by staying warm and dry, cooking, personal hygiene, and energy control.

Transfer and Articulation Agreements

This Associate in Applied Science degree program has been designed to prepare students for direct entry into a career as an Outdoor Leader. Should a student instead choose to transfer to a four-year college or university, many of these courses will be accepted in transfer as equivalents, substitutions, or electives, depending on the program and the institution.

Program Faculty Contact

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