



University of San Diego

Guide Development Program & Guide Program

Welcome! This information is designed to give you valuable knowledge about becoming a guide. It should answer many of your questions and contains important information – be sure to read it thoroughly. If this is a program you feel you would like to benefit from and you think you can become an active member, please complete the application (located at Outdoor Adventures) and get started!!!

About Outdoor Adventures

Outdoor Adventures (OA) is a service of the University Center, the hub of student life at USD. Since 1986, we've offered a variety of wilderness outings designed for beginners, provided extensive equipment rentals and facilitated teambuilding and orientation programs. Our services are available to USD students; faculty, staff, administrators, alumnus and immediate family members at prices about half what you might find off-campus. Non-community members pay an additional 20 percent.

Becoming an Outing Guide

Our trips are facilitated almost exclusively by volunteer outing guides who prepare components of the trip including the itinerary, equipment, menu and other logistics as well as help their participants prepare for the trip. Due to the nature of the program, all outing guides are required to have health insurance.

Philosophies

While the people and programs have changed over the years, Outdoor Adventures remains committed to four fundamental principles:

- **Inclusively** – This means more than simply being open and available to everyone. We strive to be a welcoming place for everyone. Whether you're signing up for an outing or just hanging out in the office, Outdoor Adventures wants to be a place where you feel comfortable being yourself, meeting new people and trying new things.
- **Challenge By Choice** – Everyone is challenged by different things. For some, just tying into a climbing rope is a success, but for others, just signing up for a trip by themselves is something new. We strive to create an environment in which people feel supported and encouraged to try new things, but also feels safe saying "no" when they feel they need to.
- **Minimum Impact** – We have a special responsibility to minimize our environmental and social impact on our outings and in the office. OA endorses and uses the Leave No Trace model of environmental ethics in which we tailor our actions to the particular environments and situations we're in. We also strive to reduce our impact on other users by being aware of regulations and simply being courteous.
- **Student Leadership** – The personal development and enrichment of students is at the core of what we do at OA and we infuse this philosophy into our outings, our guide development and our student staff training. Without student leadership, the program wouldn't exist, and we strive to provide academic and co-curricular leadership development opportunities.

Benefits of Being An Outing Guide

- Go to amazing places with amazing people
- Gain Leadership skills and experience
- Develop outdoor skills
- Develop job & life skills (group management, judgment, etc.)
- Retail discounts and pro-deal opportunities (at the Guide Level)
- Free equipment rentals (varies for different levels of program)
- Internship credits
- Certifications for reduced rates

Guide Development Program

No previous experience is required. Our guide development program is designed to provide you with the training you need to lead safe, fun and educational outings. As you might imagine, however, developing these skills requires a significant commitment of time and energy on your part. Completing the in-house training and earning your certifications takes about one year. Each person develops the maturity and trip experience necessary in his or her own time.

The program includes training in:

- Leadership & Group Facilitation
- Safety & Emergency Procedures
- Logistics/Trip Planning
- Technical Skills (e.g. climbing, biking, backpacking, canoeing, etc.)
- Field Skills (e.g. map & compass, minimum impact, cooking, etc.)

We take advantage of various methods for training:

- In-house "classroom" sessions (mostly during dead-hours or on the weekends)
- Training in the field
- Mentoring/shadowing experienced outing guides
- Joining trips as a participant
- Guide meetings (twice a month)
- Conferences and other opportunities

To apply for Guide status with the program two of the following certifications must be met:

- Wilderness First Responder level first aid/CPR
- California Class B driver's license with passenger endorsement
- Leave No Trace certification

LEVELS of ACHIEVEMENT

Students may move through the program at different stages and we encourage all students to work toward becoming qualified for and applying for the "Guide" status within the program.

Guide Development Program: This program is open to all students interested in learning the skills of becoming a Guide with our program. The trainings and meetings include basic certifications and general orientation to the Outdoor Adventure Trip Program as well as introductions to Leadership, Outdoor Theory, Skills training and a solid understanding of equipment. Based upon evaluation students will receive discounts for some of our trips. Those who show enthusiasm and commitment to the Guide Development Program may receive a recommendation to serve as a "Guide in Training" on a trip, greatly reducing or completely waiving the trip cost. Expectations for the Guide Development Program are listed in more details on an additional handout but a basic overview of the program includes the following: come to guide meetings & trainings, learn as much as you can from other outing guides and take advantage of the discounted trainings and trips.

Guide Program: Once students have completed the Guide Development program they are eligible to apply for the Guide Program. Based on evaluation and recommendation from their peers, the Assistant Director and Director of the OP students will be selected to become part of the Guide Program. Guides will be recognized for their achievements, commitment and attitude and be recognized as either an Assistant Trip Guide or a Lead Trip Guide. Continued training includes leadership, safety, field & technical skill training. Additional training may be suggested before trip assignments are made. At this level you may start earning guide credits for trip programming.

Expectations for the Guide Development Program: Students who have been selected as Guides for the program must make a commitment to themselves and the other leaders they are dedicated to the programs success. This includes attending trainings/meetings, staying current with certification levels, and furthering the programs outreach efforts. For further details on the certifications needed for this level, please see the Guide Program application or checklist above for details.

The Lead position is reserved for those students who have been recognized for their commitment to specified hard skills in an area, leadership within the program or commitment to the field in general. This may be achieved

in a variety of ways which may include attending National/Local certification courses, attending specified trainings or working with the Assistant Director or Director to achieve skill levels, attending National/Local Leadership workshops or conferences, or based on recommendation from the Director or Assistant Director.

Internships – includes self-evaluation and administrative-oriented training. Becoming an Instructor is optional and reserved for a select few outing guides with the experience and skill needed to assume partial responsibility for training Level I and II guides. Internships are reserved for students dedicated to specified goals/objectives. Each internship varies and must be confirmed with the Director of Outdoor Programs the semester prior to the desired internship. Students are responsible for understanding and coordinating the Academic Departments needs.

Adventure Activities

Outing Guides should plan on spending as much time in the field as possible learning a variety of adventure activities. Outdoor Adventures seeks to develop generalists who have a diverse background rather than “experts” who focus solely on one discipline. Some of the adventure activities include:

- Rock Climbing
- Canoeing (flat-water)
- Mountain Biking
- Backpacking
- Hiking
- Snorkeling
- Horseback Riding
- Sea Kayaking
- Whitewater boating (rafting/canoeing)

Maturity

Outing Guides exercise a great deal of responsibility and must represent Outdoor Adventures and USD with a professional attitude and a level of maturity commensurate with the task of leading novices in the outdoors. This standard will be evaluated by the Director/Assistant Director and others based on a variety of observable phenomena (i.e. the Outing Guides decisions, actions, attitudes, comments, participant evaluations and supervisor evaluations).

Commitment

Due to the level of responsibility and scope of training, Outing Guides must be committed to the program and their own development within the Guide Development Program. Attendance at guide meetings, assistance with social and promotional events and active participation in all aspects of the training is expected.

Trainings

Outdoor Programs does not receive money to pay for trainings, trips, etc. therefore there is a small fee associated with most trainings. Whenever possible this fee is subsidized by an estimated 50%. Additionally to assist guides in their training efforts, a guide credit program has been created to allow guides to earn credits to pay for their training, certification, equipment, and development costs as well as a Student Organization, Outing Guide Club. See the Guide credit sheet to learn specifics about credits.

For More Information:

Stop by University Center Room 136 or contact Brett Faulknor, Assistant Director of Outdoor Programs at bfaulknor@sandiego.edu or 619.260.4709. I'll have you complete a guide application form before you start the guide development program.