



North Carolina Outward Bound

NCOB INDEPENDENT STUDY GUIDE

North Carolina Outward Bound (NCOB) is not a credit awarding institution. However, many secondary schools, colleges and universities offer direct credit for Outward Bound based on Independent Studies. If you cannot receive direct credit from your school, you should be able to arrange credit transfer from another institution.

NCOB has agreements with: Warren Wilson College (WWC) and Western State College of Colorado (WSC)

- WWC grants twelve (12) semester credit hours of undergraduate credit - courses 50 days or longer
- WSC grants three (3) and twelve (12) semester credit hours- courses 14 to 72 days in length.

For further information on academic credit through ASU, WWC and WSC call the Student Services Department of NCOB 1-800-878-5258. Any arrangements for credit are the student's responsibility. The costs to obtain these credits vary with each institution.

If you are attending a college that does not accept transferred credits or if you are a high school student or a teacher obtaining recertification, another option to receive academic credit for an NCOB course is through developing a program of Independent Study.

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I. Definition of Independent Study

An Independent Study is an opportunity for students to receive academic credit while pursuing personal interests outside the traditional classroom setting. Under faculty supervision, the student develops a course of study and culminating project – in this case, the study would relate to your Outward Bound course. An Independent Study is challenging and requires self-motivation and personal commitment.

Candidates

- Students grades 8 through 12, undergraduate and graduate students, and teachers fulfilling recertification requirements may want to supplement their regular academic study with an Outward Bound course. **Only students who are willing to add to the already rigorous nature of an Outward Bound course should consider applying for Independent Study.** Be assured, Independent Study requires additional study before, during and after the course and only students willing to exhibit considerable commitment should consider undertaking a project.
- Students who want to earn credit towards the completion of their formal education while simultaneously experiencing Outward Bound.
- Students looking to take a break from the classroom and are ready to become thoroughly involved with "experiential" education.

How to Begin

Prior to attending your Outward Bound course, make arrangements for fulfilling requirements and receiving credit with the school of your choice.

Step One - Confirm with a teacher, advisor, department head, counselor, registrar, that credit is available through your school or is transferable from an outside institution.

Step Two - Clearly establish exactly what type of credit(s) will be awarded/accepted and exactly what the credit will be used to fulfill.

Step Three - Enroll on a North Carolina Outward Bound course; insure that steps one and two are complete BEFORE course start.

Find Your Sponsor

Your sponsor will play an important role in the success of your study. The sponsor can be a teacher, counselor, advisor, a department head, anyone at your school who will monitor the quality and completion of your study/project.

It is their responsibility, in cooperation with you, the student, to insure that the study achieves the required criteria of the credit awarding institution. It is your responsibility to insure that your sponsor is familiar with Outward Bound, understands your reasons for undertaking Independent Study, and how you plan to receive credit.

The sponsor also plays an important role in helping to frame both the expectations of the institution and the outcomes of the study/project. You and your sponsor will need to discuss your study/project plans to determine that you are in agreement as to the value and scope of your undertaking. Your sponsor is expected to act as an objective liaison between the institution and the student to insure objectivity and quality.

NOTE: Only sponsors willing to work closely with you and the school(s) involved should be considered for this important responsibility.

II. How to Arrange an Independent Study Project

- Thoroughly read your Outward Bound catalog and investigate our website (www.ncoutwardbound.org). Once enrolled, you will receive your Applicant Information booklet. All these materials help you understand your course components, course geographic area, and North Carolina Outward Bound's mission. The information will give you a solid foundation in the educational pedagogy of Outward Bound, our goals and objectives. (see Appendix A) NOTE: Our courses rely on a flexible, responsive curriculum that meets the needs of each group and student.

Solicit your school's support. You will need to make a decision about who at your school is to monitor the quality and complete of your project: Your SPONSOR (see Find Your Sponsor). It is essential that you understand and follow your school's particular requirements for independent study and the awarding of credit. If you are not able to receive credit from the school you are attending and are seeking transferable academic credit from an outside institution, follow our school's standard policy.

Choose a subject that interests you and captures your imagination. Discuss your study/project with your sponsor to confirm that you both agreed on the project.

When appropriate, involve you parent(s) or guardian.

Establish a contract with your school. It is important to thoroughly establish this contract before attending your course. Your contract should contain measurable milestones and allow both you and your sponsor to understand exactly what your project is and how you plan to achieve your goals.

While establishing your contract keep the following in mind:

1. How does your Independent Study complement your current field of study?
2. What reading will you undertake to support your study?

3. What will you do before and after your course to complete your study? An Outward Bound day is full beginning to end. We do not provide free time for academic study.
4. Past students have found their journal (supplied by NCOB on course) and a camera to be an essential element of their study.
5. How is the success and completion of your study and project to be measured?
6. How will your project be presented – written or oral report, slide show, set of sketches, demonstration of newly-found skills?

Notify your STUDENT SERVICES REPRESENTATIVE of your plan to do an Independent Student project. Make sure you bring a copy of your contract to the course start to discuss your project with your instructors.

While on your course, keep notes, make sketches in your journal, take pictures, but **keep in mind that your course will demand your primary focus.**

Upon course completion, continue your course of study as outlined in your contract. The outcomes of Outward Bound are unpredictable and many students radically alter their interests and pursuits during their course. You may find that your interests change dramatically and; therefore, the focus of your project. Be sure to communicate these changes directly to your sponsor immediately upon course completion.

Submit a final copy of your completed project to your sponsor for approval. Once approved, together with your sponsor submit your final project to the credit awarding institution.

III. Sample Strategy for Developing a Project

Establish a Goal

Projects have been developed around a wide variety of disciplines: Geography, History; Political Science, Physical Education, Psychology, Sociology, English, Safety, Environment, Nutrition, First Aid, etc. (see Appendix B.)

The following example is a successful model used by many students:

"I will develop an independent study on the subject: Teamwork, Leadership and Maturity."

Define Specific Learning Activities and Outcomes

Before the course I will:

1. Read "The Secrets of Dynamic Communication"; "Zap, the Power of Empowerment"; "Leaders, the four keys of effective Leadership"; "Leadership is an Art".
2. Define qualities common to a successful team.
3. Define qualities of a leader.
4. Define maturity.

During the course I will:

1. Document in a journal specific examples of teamwork, leadership and maturity. What are the visible clues? Who are the leaders? When do they lead? When do they follow?
2. Document how styles of leadership change. Is the same person always in charge? Who is in charge when the going gets tough? Who is in charge when its time to pitch camp? Who does the dirty work? Who always seems to be absent when it's time to clean up?
3. Document examples of your crew working as a team and failing to work as a team.
4. What is the role of your instructor in developing trust?
5. Document those examples of behavior you would define as mature and immature.
6. Discuss what aspects of leadership, teamwork and maturity you would like to take away from you course.
7. Interview an Outward Bound staff member, discussing your current observations and findings.
8. Lead a forum for crew members on Teamwork, Leadership and Maturity.

After the course I will:

1. Interview a local community leader, discussing their observations related to teamwork, leadership, and maturity to the community.

Measure Outcomes

How is the success and completion of your project to be measured? How is its quality to be evaluated? Cooperatively evaluate your project with your sponsor, submitting relevant photographs, sketches, journals, etc. and present your sponsor with a copy of your Course Completion Certificate (presented to you at course end). Following the above example, complete your project by submitting a paper to your sponsor defining teamwork, leadership and maturity and how they manifest themselves on an Outward Bound course. Discuss how what you learned is practical to every-day existence. Submit the completed project to the appropriate institution for evaluation, acceptance and credit.

IV. Appendix A: NCOB Objectives

Mission

To inspire people to discover and develop their potential to care for themselves, others and the world around them through challenging experiences in unfamiliar settings.

Objectives

North Carolina Outward Bound key course objectives are to broaden enthusiasm for and understanding of self, others and the environment as well as enhance interpersonal communication and cooperation.

- **Personal Development:** to extend the student's self-awareness by indentifying personal limits, clarifying needs and goals. To acknowledge a responsibility to self and others. TO HAVE FUN!
- **Interpersonal Effectiveness:** to expand the student's capacity of responding to others, to encourage open and effective communications and to construct cooperative relationships around common projects and commitments.
- **Environmental Awareness:** to enhance the student's understanding of the fragile nature of our world and to increase a sense of responsibility for its care and preservation.
- **Learning:** to create and maintain an environment and an attitude in which the emphasis is on experimentation and participant in experiential learning.
- **Philosophy and Values:** to provide situations and experiences in which the students can test and refine their personal values and which will stimulate them to examine and articulate their beliefs.

Assumptions

1. Philosophical:

- One reveres life for having experienced it in real terms
- From experience, one learns to respect self
- From respect of self, flows compassion for others
- Compassion for others is best expressed in service

2. Operational:

- Persons have more resources and are more capable than they think they are
- A small heterogeneous group has the resources within it to successfully cope with significant physical and mental challenges
- Individual are capable of critical decision making and responsibility
- More can be learned by presenting problems rather than solution or methods
- A time for reflection on experience contributes to the formulation of personal goals and a philosophy of life
- Stress and shared challenge are important catalysts in the self-discovery process
- The most important determination of a person's future is self-perception

- Significant, long-lasting learning can be achieved through intense, short-term experiences.

Rationale for Academic Credit

North Carolina Outward Bound stimulates growth by concentrating on cognitive, psychomotor and affective development.

A. Cognitive Development – intellect, mental strength and the ability to organize; knowledge involves logic, problem-solving, memorization and decision making.

B. Psychomotor Development – aside from the issues of good health and wellbeing, development of the physical self impacts mental and spiritual well being.

C. Affective Development – congruent feelings, values and attitudes are fundamental components of the well-rounded individual truly augmenting personal growth.

The differences between traditional education and Outward Bound's "experiential" model lie largely in two areas: the setting (traditional classroom vs. the wilderness classroom) and the proportionate emphasis placed on the three objectives listed above. An Outward Bound course, regardless of duration, emphasizes equal cognitive, psychomotor and affective development. Since traditional education focuses most heavily on cognitive learning, the balance of an Outward Bound course positively affects most students by improving confidence, motivation, commitment, trust, communication, honesty. For many, a course provides a high-impact and long-lasting milestone.

Learning Objectives Defined

Cognitive: (35%) Map and compass work, expedition, lectures, reading and problem planning/solving, first aid and emergency, preparedness, geology, natural history, ecology, field sanitation, etc.

Psychomotor: (35%) Skill development in activity: backpacking, mountaineering, climbing, rappelling, canoeing, camping/camp craft, sea kayaking, etc.

Affective: (30%) Group process, curiosity, self-discovery, structured and unstructured self and group reliance, development of spirit, tenacity, socialization with others, compassion.

V. Appendix B: Sample of Independent Study Projects

The following topics are only samples. Feel free to submit any and all ideas for consideration – be creative! Every student will be issued a journal; you may want to bring a special notebook. Notebook/laptop computers are not permitted on course.

Art

While on your course create a notebook of sketches, watercolors, poems, reflections, aphorisms, photographs and sounds that develop a personal theme.

Astronomy

1. Outward Bound courses are typically great opportunities for studying the stars. Assume you can only travel by night using the stars as your guide; describe step-by-step directions for retracing your route. This will include a map of the sky with star key. Identify constellations. Describe how other cultures have identified the same stars and constellations and the mythologies behind them.
2. Using the oldest rock you are able to identify, discuss that rocks relation to the furthest star you are able to see through binoculars on a clear night.

English

1. Read the journals of those who traveled the routes before you (John Wesley Powell's *The Exploration of the Colorado River*; Harvey and Cohn Fletcher in the Grand Canyon; Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire* in the canyon lands.) Keep a detailed journal of your course including art and poetry. Publish sections in a local or school newspaper.
2. Adventure literature – both fiction and non-fiction – is an important genre. Read a number of books on adventure (Krakauer, *Into Thin Air*, Admiral Byrd's *Alone*; Shackleton's *Endurance*; *Huckleberry Finn*; *Moby Dick*; *Treasure Island*; *The Way West*; *Exodus* (the original); *Little House on the Prairie*.) What parallels can you draw between these literary adventures and your own?

Environmental Studies

1. Observe, record and document natural versus human impact on your course area. What are the signs of flooding, erosion, deforestation, overuse. Managing public campsites and wilderness access are areas of great environmental concern. Write a paper describing the future of your course area as you see it, including observations of both good and bad management.
2. There are numerous state and federal agencies charged with a wide variety of environmental goals and objectives. Which agencies manage your course area? Describe their mission. How is it being realized? Describe the future of land management in America. What are the primary issues? Who are the big stake holders? How should the complexity of the environmental discussion be successfully resolved? Who wins? Who loses?

First Aid/Safety/Sanitation

1. During your course strict safety policies must be followed. Identify and review these policies. Choose a policy used in rock climbing, first aid or sanitation and describe the origin of the policy, its application, its effect, its outcomes. Were the policies well thought out? Are they open to inspection or written in stone? How do the safety policies used on course apply to the management and welfare of all people?
2. One of the fundamental Outward Bound elements is preparing students to serve in an emergency. In the history of the school, students have been called upon repeatedly to facilitate a search and rescue or handle some other pressing emergency. Safety in the wilderness hinges on one's ability to sense another when the chips are down. What are the fundamental search, rescue and evacuation skills? How are these skills best taught.
3. Obtain American Red Cross First Aid Certification before your course, read three books on wilderness medicine and first aid. What first aid skills and equipment are critical for safe expeditions into the backcountry? Read *Accidents in North American Mountaineering*, published annually by the American Alpine Club, and debrief one or two accidents in light of your personal philosophy, background and experience. Discuss the single biggest cause of injury in the backcountry.

Geography/Geology

1. Map your course with four different types of map: latitude and longitude; topographic; land form; ecosystem; demographic... Create your own map, including a detailed scale and key. Compare and contrast the information each map provides. Make a geography notebook composed of photographs and drawings. Compare the geography to the geology and how the two impact one another. Identify key geologic events that have shaped the geography of your course area.
2. Describe how the geography of the land impacted the first native cultures in your course area. How does the geography impact other life?

History

1. The history of the Environmental Movement in America is rich lore and controversy, intrigue, political corruption, heroism, failure and magnificent success. How has this movement impacted your course area? What are the major environmental concerns influencing your course area today? Who are the agencies responsible for land use in your course area? Who are the major environmental players impacting your area?

Natural History

1. Study animal tracking before course start. Identify possible animals in the environment in which your course will be held. Document what you see and learn about animal habitat, eating patterns, life cycles, characteristics and behavior.
2. Wildflowers, forests, lichen, moss, grasses, rocks, rivers, eagles....

Nutrition

Make a list of all food available during your course. What is the nutritional composition of the food: percentage of friendly and unfriendly fat, carbohydrate, protein, vitamins, minerals, water? How many calories do you estimate you burn while at rest, for each mile covered on foot, on each day of your course? What is the source of these calories? How does nutrition contribute to optimal performance? Design a totally alternative menu.

Physical Education

Keep a record of the physical conditioning you did to get ready for your course. Describe your program and an ideal program. Document during your course a record of your physical activity. Record the number of miles traveled per day and the number of calories burned. Note body changes. Document which muscles are used and how. Note any changes caused by altitude. Describe what activity you will need to do to maintain fitness after the course. Define fitness and health. Discuss: motivation, fat, muscle, health, adaptation, exercise, specificity, training, rest, nutrition.

Political Science

With few exceptions, our courses are conducted within designated Wilderness Areas. The landmark Wilderness Act of 1964 was a piece of legislation significantly impacting the future of American wilderness. Trace the political development of this Act. What are its future political ramifications? What are the political interests competing for commerce, preservation and recreation in these wilderness areas? Which is more important, a person a job or the environment? How are these two conflicting interests balanced and managed?

Psychology/Sociology

1. The first American Expedition to Mount Everest involved a study of human behavior under stress. An Outward Bound course involves similar dynamics. Read Hans Selye's *The Stress of Life*. Define friendly and unfriendly stress. Keep a record of the stresses and adjustments you experience on your course. Identify and describe responses to stress.
2. The development of your crew into a working and functioning team is a major component of your course. Read Abraham Maslow's *Towards a Psychology of Being*. Identify Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* as one perspective on group dynamics and development. Consider how decisions are made in light of these needs. Discuss your instructors' roll on the course as the course progresses.
3. What is the Outward Bound Process? Define it. How is this process applicable on both micro and macro levels? How does process relate to personality?

Religion

Many students find God alive and well in the wilderness. He has played a significant roll in nurturing and transforming the spirit from the time of the aesthetic desert hermits to the walkabouts of native cultures to the early morning musings of Thomas Merton, Annie Dillard. Describe your personal relation with God and how the wilderness reflects this vision.

Service

Service is a fundamental element of every Outward Bound course. Define the word service and provide examples. Describe examples of service on your course. Reflect upon the school's motto, 'To Serve, To Strive, and Not To Yield'. What place does service play in your life? Read Hesse, *The Journey to the East*; Fox, *A Spirituality Named Compassion*; Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*.

VI. Appendix C: Independent Study Contract

Make sure your instructor has a copy of this contract at course start

Student Name _____
Mailing Address _____
School Attending _____
Name of school awarding credit _____ Grade _____
Number and type of credits to be earned _____
Sponsor _____ Phone _____
Title of Independent Study _____
Outward Bound Course Number _____ Start _____ End _____

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING ON SEPARATE PAPER

A. "I would like to pursue an independent study for the following reasons:"

B. Describe your plan, developed cooperatively with your sponsor:

- Goal
- Specific learning activities and outcomes before, during and after course
- Measurable outcomes
- Reading plan

Student Signature

Date

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

Sponsor(s) Signature

Date

Instructor Signature

Date

Instructor Signature

Date

Registrar Signature

Date

