Adventure Tourism & Trekking  
Mt. Everest Region of Himalaya, Nepal

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Class Meetings: 3 classroom expedition planning sessions Spring 2019:

Expedition Details: May 23rd-June 6th, 2018 (Summer Session I)  
Maximum student enrollment number is 14.

Pre-requisite: Beginner to Intermediate, 3-season backcountry travel & hiking experience.

Office Hours: by appointment

I. Course Description:

Trekking in big mountain in environments at elevations of up to 14,000 ft requires disciplined personal preparation, group expedition planning, fitness preparation, and efficient travel skills. This travel study course will focus on assessment & research of the economic & public health benefits of the burgeoning adventure travel industry in the mountain regions of Nepal. In parallel, students will also have opportunity to research the cultural & environmental impacts in the areas where the adventure trekking and mountaineering industry thrives like no other...Mt. Everest. We will also attend to hiking and backcountry travel skill development requirements for students entering a high mountain ecosystems for the first time: proper clothing & equipment, multi terrain hiking skills, proactive acclimatization, altitude sickness prevention and risk management skills.

The overarching learning objective is to prepare students to safely & successfully travel in big mountain environments as a team while gaining a deeper understanding of the adventure tourism economy and collateral impacts. Instructors & guides will provide an experiential teaching structure, technical skill & mountain wellness support and emergency wilderness medical support. Students will be required to choose both a skill and research topics to present and explore while on expedition:

Suggested Student Research Topics:

- The Role of Women in Mountain Region Communities & Economies  
- Adventure Tourism & Contribution to Local & National Economy  
- Environmental Impacts of Western Tourism in the Himalaya  
- Cultural Impacts of Western Tourism in the Himalaya  
- Issues of Safety & Exposure for Sherpa Porters
II. Course Location:

This 14-day expedition will take place in the rugged Himalayan Range, home to the most 8,000m peaks in the world including the highest peak on the planet. Known to Tibetans as Chomolungma, “Goddess Mother of Mountains” and to most others as Mt. Everest (8,848 m or 29,029 ft), this majestic and iconic peak captures the imagination of all. More than 800 climbers arrived in basecamp this season (2018) to climb Everest, employing thousands of support staff, porters, cooks and guides.

The Everest Region is considered by most to the ultimate trekking adventure destination in the world. Our travel to Everest basecamp will take us into beautiful Sherpa villages and incredible landscapes such as Namche Bazaar (the trading capital of the region), Khumjung (home of the largest village in the region with only secondary school & the home of late Sir Edmund Hillary’s school) and the 1st Health Post for medical care in the region). We will also visit Thame Village, one of the last permanent settlements on the salt trading route that existed between Tibet, Nepal and India, then on to Phortse a farming village located away from the main trekking route. Students will experience breathtaking views of a number of famous 8,000m peaks including: Mount Everest, Lhotse, Pumori, Ama Dablam, Nuptse, Kwangde, Thamserku and Cho Oyu.
Rhododendron and pine forests with blossoming, colorful flowers come alive in the spring. Our trek will follow the Dudh Koshi River (milk river) through Khunde/Pheriche Health Posts and arrive at stops at The Sherpa Museum and viewing locations for exotic wildlife such as: Nepal’s national bird (Impeyan pheasant) & other raptors, musk deer, mountain goats & abundant yak. Each day, students will dine on traditional, hand prepared Nepalese delicacies like momos (steam dumpling) rekur (potato bread) dal bhat & rice, (spicy lentil soup) meat or vegetable spice curries.

Our classroom will be based in the high mountain villages, tea houses and trailsides…beginning upon arrival in Kathmandu our initial acclimatization locale, where we will begin skill instruction and complete expedition food & transportation planning. Upon arrival in Lukla, we will complete a two-day mountain travel skill intensive while simultaneously progressing our acclimatization schedule. Finally, we will move on to our objective trekking days moving from village to village and observing the travellers around us related to expeditions & support in the Everest region. Few countries in the world rival Nepal in the way landscape, history, and ancient Tibetan culture merge. With multiple summits over 8000 meters (24,000 ft.) and relatively easy access, mountaineering and trekking objectives of all difficulties abound.

**Daily Travel Itinerary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5/23</td>
<td>Arrive in Kathmandu (4385ft), welcome from Ongyel’s family and transfer to lodge, short sightseeing opportunity…rest day</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>5/24</td>
<td>Sightseeing around Kathmandu</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5/25</td>
<td>Early morning flight to Lukla (9388ft), meet other US Sherpa staff and begin trek to Monjo (9317ft)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5/26</td>
<td>Trek from Monjo to Namche (11,286ft)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5/27</td>
<td>Rest day in Namche, explore local villages nearby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5/28</td>
<td>Namche to Khumjung (12,300ft), short hike day, visits to school, health post, monastery and Everest View Hotel</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5/29</td>
<td>Khumjung to Thame (12,431ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5/30</td>
<td>Thame to Khumjung (12,300ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5/31</td>
<td>Khumjung to Phortse (12,959ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6/1</td>
<td>Phortse to Pangboche (13,074ft)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>6/2</td>
<td>Pangboche to Namche (11,286ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>6/3</td>
<td>Namche to Lukla (9,388ft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>6/4</td>
<td>Lukla flight to Kathmandu, sightseeing upon arrival</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>6/5</td>
<td>Last day in Kathmandu, sightseeing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>6/6</td>
<td>International flight back to US or continue travels!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Reading References for Expedition Skill Development:

1. NOLS Wilderness Mountaineering  R  Phil Powers
2. Glacier Mountaineering: An Illustrated Guide  R  Tyson & Clelland
to Glacier Travel & Crevasse Rescue

R= required for course.

III. Learning Objectives:

- Students will develop an in depth understanding of Nepali & Sherpa mountain people, traditions, agriculture, music, crafts, religion & economics. We will also explore the economic, environmental & cultural impacts on the areas we trek and stay.
- Students will develop a big picture understanding of high mountain expedition planning, expedition behavior & safe hiking protocols.
- Students will consider differing styles of teaching and leadership in high altitude trekking environments.
- Students will consider historical and personal perspectives on the evolution of mountain travel, skill development and glacier travel technique.
- Students will consider Leave No Trace® ethics in regard to environmental impact in alpine areas, wilderness preservation and effective impact interventions.
- Students will debrief daily experiences via journal including: impressions of tourism driven economies, terrain assessment & group safety, backcountry travel skill development, team travel efficiency & time management.

Students will demonstrate proficiency in the following areas:

1. Planning and participating as an expedition team member while traveling at altitude and while in consequential terrain & dynamic weather.
2. Exercising sound judgment and decision-making relative to group travel in avalanche terrain. Demonstrate sound expedition behavior.
3. Understanding personal leadership & teaching style and areas of needed development within an expedition context.
4. Students will understand “systems-based” strategies for addressing environmental challenge: appropriate clothing systems, shelter system, sun protection, sleeping system, hydration system and a functional food preparation & nutrition plans.
5. Students will develop the ability to teach individually and function as part of a cooperative, big mountain trekking team.

III. Methods of Evaluation:

Students will evaluate learning and development in a manner consistent with principles of experiential education. Qualitative assessment based on personal insight and reflection will be emphasized. Learning modalities will include group expedition planning, skill development presentations, structured reflection/journaling and ski expedition trip experiences. In addition, students will be evaluated on participation and engagement in all class activities. Assessment of student skill development and contribution to team learning process will be weighed as follows:

Expedition Planning & Personal Preparation  20%
Journal, Self-Reflection & Climbing Skill Inventory  20%
Expedition Teamwork & Personal EB  40%
Individual Skill Topic Presentation  20%

**Expedition Planning & Personal Preparation:**
Evaluation will reflect current wilderness education models of living in and contributing to a team oriented climbing expedition. Presence, involvement, communication and contribution to all team activities are integral to personal leadership development. Students are expected to be actively engaged in all aspects of climbing team expedition planning, daily travel and group work. Students should come to class prepared for active discussion & planning.

**Expedition Behavior (EB) & Teamwork:**
Students will be evaluated for both personal & team expedition behavior including: time management, organization of gear & clothing, communication, engagement, cooperation, conflict resolution, performance of daily group roles and proactive leadership engagement.

**Mountaineering Skill Inventory & Journaling:**

1. Create a personal **expedition skill competency inventory** to direct future learning and skill development based on your understanding of effective personal and group travel skills acquired while on expedition.

2. **Daily journal** presents students with the opportunity to capture reflections on group travel, activity, decision-making and safety. Final journal entries will be forwarded via e-mail and a compiled hard copy will be collected for evaluation and due on the final class.

**Individual Topic Presentation:**
Students will develop an interactive lesson on a mountaineering skill topic of personal interest. Topics should be focused and specific to the demands of mountain travel & expedition preparation. Presentations are expected be well researched, engaging, succinct and clear. You will want to consider appealing to multiple learning styles. The presentation should mirror a "teachable moment" as it might manifest itself in a big mountain setting. Student presenters will benefit from feedback on style and content from the group. (See rubric on Bb page for teaching suggestions!)