

Field Schools in ORTM

Experiential learning is an important component of the ORTM Program. Many ORTM courses have field trips, but students in both degrees are required to take the extended ORTM 333-3 (Field School) course. The ORTM Program also offers ORTM 332-3 (Outdoor Education and Leadership) and ORTM 433-1-6 (Field School II), which are optional experiential courses open to all students. The ORTM 333-3 course is designed to allow for skill building and development, critical thinking around how theory and practice relate, and simply getting out into the field for an extended period.

A few points about our field schools:

- 1) They are almost entirely run in the May-August semester, most often in spring (end of April beginning of May,) or end of summer (August), which links well to the regular classroom semesters.
- 2) The field location will generally change from year to year. If it's on Haida Gwaii one year, it may be in Jasper the next, and Mexico the year after that.
- 3) There is a course fee, above and beyond tuition, which covers associated costs such as transportation, accommodation, activities, etc. We try to keep this fee as low as possible, but the realities are that it is usually around \$1500. Fees are largely dependent on location and activities, so the field school fees also tend to change every year.
- 4) ORTM 333-3 is a 3 credit field school course, but at times may be offered in combination with other ORTM courses (e.g., ORTM 332, ORTM 433, ORTM 498) or others at UNBC outside the discipline (e.g., GEOG, ANTH, NORS).

Course Description (UNBC Calendar): This is an experiential course designed to enable ORTM students to focus on theoretical and practical skills involved in the field. Each field experience is designed to incorporate the theories, models and other concepts introduced in the classroom and bring them into greater clarity by examining them in real world settings. The course integrates outdoor recreation and tourism perspectives. This field course applies principles of integrated resource management.

We recognize that because of costs, location, or timing the ORTM 333-3 in any particular year may not suit the ability, interest, or desire of our students. We STRONGLY encourage students to take their ORTM 333-3 in the summer semester of their 2nd or 3rd year, but if neither year is feasible we have six simple substitution rules:

- 1) You as the student need to take responsibility for getting your substitution approved, and in plenty of time. At the very least you need to take care of this in the January

semester of the year you intend to graduate (e.g., January 2012 for a May 2012 graduation).

- 2) All discussions regarding substitution need to be initiated with the ORTM Program curriculum chair. The curriculum chair will then initiate any further discussion with other ORTM faculty, or other UNBC departments.
- 3) The substitute course must be taught in the field - almost completely, but some classroom time is acceptable in terms of preparation classes, a week in class before the extended field component, etc. A course with simply many field trips is not an appropriate substitution;
- 4) The substitute course must be at least 10 days in length, in the field. This is the standard length we operate with for ORTM 333 and that equates to 3 credits at UNBC.
- 5) The substitute course must be from an accredited academic institution - university or college - so that there is credit to be transferred to UNBC.
- 6) The substitute course must focus on one of the areas of ORTM, including areas such as: outdoor recreation, tourism, parks and conservation, outdoor education, etc. There is leeway here, but an appropriate case must be made by the student.

The following examples illustrate courses that could fulfill the substitution rules. These are simply examples and a student will need to make all arrangements with the desired substitution programs

From the Augustana campus of the University of Alberta:

<http://www.augustana.ualberta.ca/programs/lab/outdoor/dogsledding/>

http://www.augustana.ualberta.ca/programs/lab/outdoor/arctic_course/

From the Vancouver Island University Department of Recreation and Tourism

<http://www.trip-project.ca/reaching-out.php?id=et>

From Thompson Rivers University:

<http://www.tru.ca/tourism/adventurestudies/adventurestudiesinthebacheloroftourismmanagementdegree/btminternationalfieldtrip.html>

<http://www.tru.ca/fieldstudies/belize.html>