

HardPoints 2018 #1

Welcome!



Welcome to the OSAT GCC Class of 2018! Get ready for an incredible season of fun and fellowship. Over the course of six months you will learn safe glacier travel and the necessary basic skills that will become the foundation for your future mountain endeavors. For 2018 we have more volunteer instructors than students, and are on track to be the most-supported class ever!

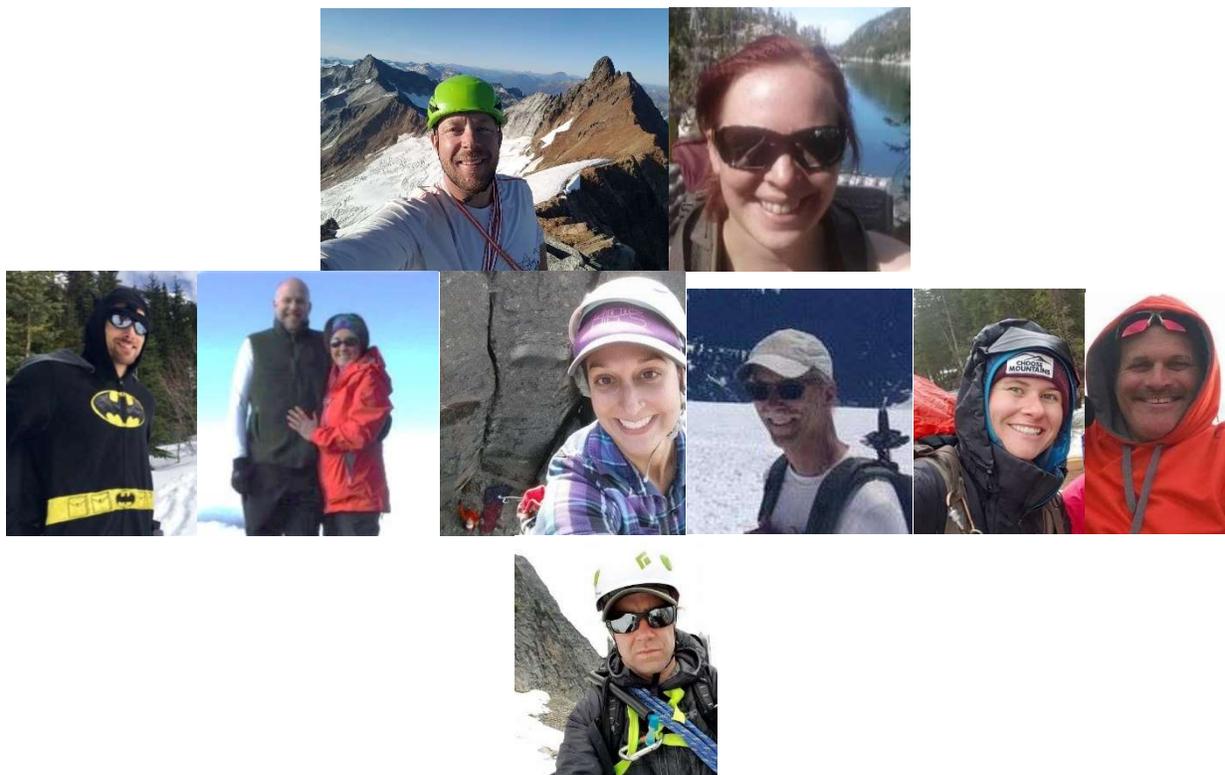
In the following months this bulletin will provide you with tips provided by current GCC instructors to help you prepare. Let's get started!

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The GCC Committee

The Glacier Climbing Course committee chairs are at your service - in addition to more than eighty volunteer instructors.



Chair: Ben Robert. Vice Chair: Kristi Goetz.
Field Trips: Naomi Park. Climbs: Mat Kasper. Seminars: Rob & Nancy Bodkin. Conditioners: Jenebi Lacey.
Syllabus and Newsletter: Rob Cranfill. Registrar: Emily Courtright. Safety Adviser: TomTom Hardiman. Stewardship and Porters: Ben Podawiltz.

Objectives and Key Factors

The Glacier Climbing Course is intended to provide a safe and comprehensive basic mountaineering course for members and friends of 12-step recovery, concluding with the opportunity to summit one of Washington's glaciated peaks. Students of the 2018 GCC will acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to successfully participate in climbing glaciated mountains.

Attaining these objectives will require persistence and dedication. Many graduates of the glacier climbing course began with no mountaineering experience, yet they were able to successfully summit a glaciated peak at the culmination of the course. Our previous years' success can be attributed to the following key factors:

- Safety
- Mastery of Technique
- Physical Conditioning
- Personal Responsibility
- Teamwork
- Clear and Constructive Communication
- Proficiency Using Glacier Climbing Equipment
- Good Judgement and Positive Attitude
- Cooperative Weather

Core Values

- **Trust** your mentors and volunteers to provide a safe environment.
- **Respect** yourself, your team, your mentors, volunteers and the program.
- **Courage** to embrace new adventure and overcome personal fears.
- **Commitment** to take ownership of your experience.
- **Integrity** in words and actions - be your best self.

What's Next?

SEMINAR 2: Navigation and Climbing

Monday, February 26 - 6:00-8:30 PM

Highlands Community Center - [14224 Bel-Red Rd, Bellevue](#)

All about navigation, and the start of basic climbing skills. Please refer to Syllabus page 26 for required equipment and preview the itinerary. Be sure you have your compass.

Now that you've made it through your first seminar and field trip, it's time to fine tune new skills. Keep practicing knots and become familiar with proper harness set up. Conditioners have started and it's the middle of winter. Begin experimenting with clothing systems and start acquiring the gear you will need in the following months. If you haven't already, start looking at mountaineering boot options. Continue experimenting with clothing systems. Be thinking about temperature management, clothing weight, and layers. Continue improving your Ten Essentials, and experiment with trail food.

Conditioners

You are required to participate in one conditioner between each seminar. If you would like to participate in more than one, you can sign up for a second conditioner no less than two days prior. Registration for conditioners can be found on the OSAT calendar under the heading "GCC Conditioner" with a description and leader contact information (OSAT.org -> Members Section -> Calendar).

Start at your comfort level and as you condition make sure you are increasing the level of difficulty that you are doing (Tiger Mountain, Mount Si, Mailbox). You also want to slowly increase the amount of weight that you'll be carrying over the next five months. It's a good idea to start from 10-15 lbs and work your way up to 35-40 lbs by the time you do your graduating climbs.

Naturally over the next 4-5 months your speed will increase as you go. It's a great idea to practice timing yourself; when keeping track on repeated routes, try to increase

your speed each time by 5-10 minutes or so. Though we don't emphasize speed, we do emphasize improvement and consistency.

For now, get signed up for a conditioner and get comfortable on the Tiger Mountain routes, new Mount Si and old Mount Si trails. Instructors will provide you with feedback and generally love sharing their experience. This is a great time to socialize with your peers and alert instructors to any questions and concerns you may have. If you're interested in carpooling, look at the registration list where you can click on registrant profiles for contact information.

Don't forget your Ten Essentials! (For more on that, see the article below.)

Dirt Alerts

or, a note from your Stewardship Chair

Great job with stewardship thus far students! Our team at Discovery Park helped plant 160 items, with species ranging from vine maples and lady-ferns to oxalis, salmonberry, and red flowering current.

Out of respect for the organizations that help us set up our events, we'd like to clarify that the attendance policy will follow the same guidelines as conditioners:

It is the student's responsibility to sign up for events on the calendar - conditioners and stewardship - and to be on time and prepared for each outing per the description on the event's calendar page. If for any reason you need to cancel your registration, it is the student's responsibility to contact the primary leader of the event. Late night and 'morning of' cancellations should be for emergencies only. If a student no-calls/no-shows to three combined conditioner or stewardship events, they may be removed from the course.

- Ben P.

What's In Your Pack? - The Ten Essentials



If you're just getting into hiking, everyone is going to recommend that you pack the Ten Essentials when you go for a hike. Then they list about 30 pieces of gear that you should bring with you, but they never actually tell you what to buy. If you find this frustrating or confusing, or worse, you're going for hikes without the Ten Essentials, we've put together a few examples that we hope you find helpful.

The goal here is to help you understand exactly what you need to buy, beg, borrow or steal, so we can get you outdoors and on the trail.

The Ten Essentials

First-Aid When you go hiking, it's important to bring a few first aid supplies along for yourself or for the other people you're hiking with. The easiest thing to do is to buy a pre-made small personal first aid kit; both Adventure Medical and NOLS, among others, have these for under \$20. You can also assemble your own personal kit, probably for less cost.

Illumination You should always carry a headlamp or a flashlight and some extra batteries. You want enough light that you can walk with after dark if you've been delayed, or that you can camp with if you decide to stop and wait until daylight.

Navigation You need to carry a map of the area where you're hiking and learn how to find your location based on the landmarks and trail junctions marked. It's good to practice this, even if you're just hiking in an urban park. Learning how to use a compass at a basic level soon follows. GPS receivers and cell phones are not part of the Ten Essentials; you can bring them if you want, but nothing is more reliable than a map or compass.

Emergency Shelter It's useful to carry an emergency shelter like an emergency blanket, emergency bivy, or regular bivy or sleeping bag cover if you get cold and wet or need to camp out unexpectedly. If this happens, it's important that you avoid lying directly on cold ground all night because it will suck the heat out of your body. It's best to bring a foam torso-length sleeping pad or sit pad that you can lie on to remain warm. The pad doesn't have to be full length, just long enough to fit from your hips to your collarbone.

Repair Kit You don't need a big knife when you go hiking. In fact, scissors are more of a necessity than a knife, so it's best to bring along some kind of Swiss Army knife or Leatherman-style multi-tool. A small hand-roll of duct tape can be used for almost anything, and a few safety pins and tenacious tape, are all you really need to patch up broken or torn gear.

Fire If you unexpectedly have to spend a night out because you misjudged the distance you needed to hike, you got lost, hurt, or someone in your group is hurt, you want to have the option to make a fire. This means you should practice making a fire and have the means to reliably light one if necessary, using a lighter, emergency matches, fire steel, etc.

Insulation The amount of extra clothing and insulation you bring on a hike really depends on whether you're hiking near a city or in the back-country, the average day and night temperature, and whether there's a chance you might get stuck outdoors at night. For example, if you're doing an all-day spring hike in the mountains, it probably makes sense to bring an insulated sit pad, an insulated jacket, hat and gloves along just in case you're out after sunset.

Sun Protection It's always a good idea to carry a hat, lip balm, and some sunscreen to prevent sunburn when you're out in the open. Sunglasses can also be very helpful, particularly in winter, to prevent snow blindness (even though it's only temporary). If you're very sensitive to sun, you should also consider wearing special sun-proof clothing.

Hydration When you go hiking it's important to bring water with you and to drink it liberally. You'll feel better if you stay hydrated, particularly if it's very hot or very cold, the water will help you digest snacks or meals and eliminate waste. If you go for an all day hike, it's often good to carry a water filter or chlorine dioxide tablets so you can purify water from a lake or stream when you run out. A hydration bladder with 2 liters of water is a good place to start, adjusting volume as necessary as you gain experience out.

Nutrition Hiking is exercise, and you need to eat to keep your body going if you're hiking for more than a few hours. It's good to bring along healthy snacks with a good balance of carbohydrate, protein and fat. Bring a bit more than you need for a day trip.

In summary, it's imperative that you always carry your Ten Essentials. But what else should we bring? Fine tuning your layering preference - you will want base, mid, and insulating layers to adjust accordingly as you travel. Along with weather, staying fed and hydrated are key to a good day out. Additional needs according to your trip - poles, traction devices, etc. Stay tuned for more seminars, field trips, articles, and opinions on what what-all you need to pack!

Monthly WFA Tip

Proper layer management is key: wear light base layers, medium weight mid-layers, warm insulating layers, and have good rain gear to work with. Layers can always be shed and stowed in your pack, so best to be prepared. Many climbers bring extra base layers and socks to change at the top of a hike when they become drenched with sweat. Particularly in the colder months, synthetic fabrics are paramount for wicking sweat. Remember: wool is cool, cotton is rotten! (OK, it doesn't entirely rhyme, but you get the idea...)

Below we list the different types of layers, which can be used in combination with each other to reach the ideal effect for the season, environment, and activity you are pursuing. These layers work together to achieve the four goals of wicking moisture, trapping in heat, insulating from cold, and blocking wind and weather.

A base layer is the layer closest to your skin, meaning it collects the most sweat. The purpose of this layer is to keep you dry by pulling moisture away from your skin and spreading it throughout the fabric. At the same time this fabric should fit snugly and retain some insulating properties. Never wear cotton as a base layer, which does wick moisture away, but then retains that moisture as the cotton loses its resiliency, loses its warmth, and causes too much evaporative cooling. Synthetic and wool blends are best!

The purpose of the mid-layer is to capture warmth through trapped air. Typically a mid-layer is a fleece or a thick wool layer. Certain brands label their mid-layers with different weights, such as the Patagonia fleece system of R1-R4, or Icebreaker Merino wool layers that come in a 260 mid-layer weight. A mid-layer usually has some loft to it to help trap the warm air, but is also breathable so it is not suffocating and sweat-causing underneath a shell or outer layer. Sometimes, particularly in the three-piece layering system, a mid-layer can also be an insulating layer such as a thin synthetic or down puffy.

An insulation layer, whether synthetic or down, provides extra loft and warmth, essentially doing what a thick mid-layer does, but multiplied, and with a much higher warmth-to-weight ratio. Size your insulated layer jacket to fit comfortably over a light fleece and underneath an outer technical shell.

A technical outer shell is like your father's rain jacket on steroids. Built of materials that offer both breathability and water-resistance, a technical outer shell understands that your outdoor lifestyle will cycle between sweating like a pig and hunkering down from the storm. The primary function of a shell is to protect you from the elements when conditions take a turn for the worst.

Interview - Nik J: Deals on Gear

By Nik J.

Hey students! I hope you're all excited for a fun and challenging course. Now let's talk buying gear. I'm sure we all love to shop for gear, but looking over the list of what you need can be overwhelming! Don't fret though; I don't think anyone has ever had to quit the GCC due to not having the gear. There are many ways to accomplish this task. If you prefer not to buy, or can't afford to, you can always borrow equipment. There are over 500 members in OSAT and many are happy to lend equipment they no longer use. You can reach out to them by creating a post in the OSAT Facebook group (ask a member to add you - it's a secret group), or, of course, asking around in person during course seminars, conditioners, and field trips.

Some items you need for the course can be rented for a fraction of the price, such as crampons and tents. Call around to your local outdoor retailers to see what is available and to check pricing. Check REI, Feathered Friends, Ascent Outdoors (formerly Second Ascent), and others.

The next best thing is buying used gear that is still in good condition. Personally, I have purchased a majority of my gear at REI garage sales. You likely won't get all of your gear at one so I suggest going to all the ones you can, and show up early. Often times I will organize hitting a specific garage sale just to help students get and select appropriate gear.

I also created a Facebook group specifically for OSAT members to buy and sell gear called OSAT Marketplace (also secret, so ask a member to add you). There are a couple other marketplace groups on Facebook you'll want to check such as Mountaineers Marketplace and Washington Hikers and Climbers Gear Swap.

Also don't rule out thrift stores! At places like Goodwill and Value Village you can find cheap clothing suitable for the outdoors such as polyester athletic short and long sleeve shirts, fleece mid layers, and a lot more.

Now if you're going to buy new, at least get your items at a discount. Stay tuned for the best deals like clearance and sample sales. Every year companies like Outdoor Research, Yukon Trading (Marmot, etc.), Cascade Designs (MSR, Therm-a-Rest, etc.), and Icebreaker have sales where they blow out all of their sampled and overstocked items at prices you won't want to miss.

Next, check online! Websites like Backcountry, Sierra Trading Post, Backcountry Gear, Mountain Gear, and others have below retail pricing on tons of items. If you can't find it there, check Google shopping and you can usually find it! With online purchasing you

will definitely want to check the return policy of the website. Also, if you can try on the items in a local shop before buying you will save yourself some hassle. The one item I recommend buying in person is boots. Those have to fit well!

In closing, don't be afraid to ask questions before making any purchase. Talk with your mentor, your instructors, your conditioner leaders, committee members, sales associates, and if you still have questions you can always contact me. Remember, having the right gear can make the difference between having a great experience or an uncomfortable experience.

Good luck, and Keep Climbing Mountains And Don't Slip!

- Nik J

Keep Climbing Mountains... And Don't Slip!



Photographs courtesy of Andy O, Dave T., and Clarence E.