

Cortland Outdoor Opportunities Program (Co-op) and Outdoor Courses Report 2008-09

Dr. Amy Shellman

Under the leadership of Dr. Amy Shellman, with assistance from graduate assistants Dan Sullivan and Garrett Weaver, a number of outdoor opportunities continued to be available to students at Cortland. Students could again take many different one-credit outdoor recreation courses. This year, the department offered: backpacking, canoeing, windsurfing, mountain biking and bike maintenance, kayaking, rock climbing, downhill skiing, snowboarding, adaptive skiing and snowboarding, and cross-country skiing. Snowboarding and downhill skiing were offered in collaboration with Greek Peak Mountain Resorts, and adaptive skiing and snowboarding the Greek Peak Adaptive Snowsports. A new course offered this year was Snowsports Instructor Training. Students in the course, working with Greek Peak, learned the skills and knowledge needed to be professional snowsports instructors.

Numerous other activities were available through the COOP. A theme of COOP this year was to try to keep trips as local as possible, and reduce our carbon footprint. We continued to provide the highly successful "Kayak in the Pool" series, and offered many trips out on the local lakes and rivers. Windsurfing was also a popular activity. Wilderness First Responder was held over winter break at Raquette Lake. The first ever Gear Swap was held on Earth Day, with high participation and lots of great gear to buy, sell or trade.

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Dale Anderson, Director

Introduction:

The Cortland Outdoor Opportunities Program began operation in the spring of 2001 and just completed its seventh year of continuous operation. The purpose of the Co-op Program was to facilitate a mechanism which provided outdoor activities and experiences for students which were not necessarily course or credit related. There were none regularly available anywhere else on campus. Furthermore, other departments do not offer service courses of an outdoor nature which are open to non-majors. The RPLS Department now offers several courses and sections of outdoor activities and through the Co-op Program and the Recreational Sports Office, provides outdoor experiences open to anyone.

A few assumptions: Nature is in trouble, and we're getting fatter! There is a need to provide experiences which engage students in healthy leisure activities which directly involve a stewardship relationship to nature. Someone needs to offer those types of opportunities. Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies should provide this service to the campus community. Funding and marketing outdoor opportunities requires administrative and financial support, which is sorely lacking.

Highlights this year: "Extravaganza" in the fall was supported with food and beverages from Rec. Sports. Participation was very good. Several Sports Clubs, Emergency Medical Services, and Community Bike Project were successful in recruiting many new participants. Scheduled trips were advertised and mailing lists were started for those interested in particular activities.

Summary of scheduled events for 07-08 school year:

Event	location	Schedule	Comments
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Bouldering in D305, Friday nights, 8 to 10 pm all year long – excellent learning opportunity for small group practice

Climbing in D305, Saturdays, noon to 3 all year long – excellent opportunities for classes & students in general.

Kayaking in the pool, Mon 8 to 10pm fall, Wed. 7:30-9:30 spring – crowded conditions, roll practice for some.

Trail service work, 6 days scheduled, fall & spring, - great class assignment, service hours, stewardship experience

Cross-country skiing & snowshoeing workshops & daytrips all cancelled because of lack of snow & lots of rain.

Kayaking trips, Sun. am, 4 scheduled, 2 fall, 2 spring, - filled with class participants, very good experiences.

Windsurfing Workshops, Sun. am, 3 scheduled early fall, filled each time, 1 stormed-out, great response.

Fly Fishing Seminar – cancelled, sponsor/host decided not to do it (busy season).

Special Thanks:

Faithful volunteers, as programming staff, create a wonderful experience for others. Thanks to Kevin Todd, Lynn Anderson, and Corey Ryun for their kayaking instruction and assistance in the pool. Thanks to Garrett Weaver and Dan Sullivan for the extra climbing trips to Little Falls and the “Gunks”. Thanks to the many students and sports club members who spent their own free time helping someone else learn a new outdoor activity.

Difficulties:

Atypical weather reduced snow activities. Snowshoeing and cross-country skiing seasons were next to non-existent. (Have you ever tried skiing through the leaves while holding an umbrella?) The viral infection in Bats eliminated our usual caving trips as an attempt to reduce negative impact on the Bat population. Staffing certain activities was difficult – qualified people not available or unwilling to volunteer anymore (it’s called burn-out).

Reflections:

Snow sports at Greek Peak or other resorts are more functional for winter activities than counting on natural snow. Seasonal activities have a seasonally limited appeal (biking, kayaking, snow sports). Kayaking, Windsurfing, and Rock-climbing have a strong appeal for participation. The Outdoor Adventure Club can be a close ally to the program for highly organized outdoor activities like rafting, paintball, etc. where numbers may be large.

Plans and recommendations for next year:

Line-up specific assignments for grad assistants to facilitate for the year. Invite and support faculty who could facilitate or participate in (and advertise) some elements of their choice. Plan some fun focused competitions like climbing, paddling, cycling contests. Brandon’s climbing contest in April was popular. Limit kayak in the pool sessions or reschedule to optimal times/days if crowding continues. The “Extrav” special event does work to recruit for clubs, trips, etc. if it can be set-up early in the semester, in a good location. The best one we did was 9/18/07 with lots of Rec. Sports help and food funding, held in the court yard in front of the Fieldhouse, between the Butler Building and Baseball field. The weather was great, a big plus. RPLS equipment and OAC equipment are sometimes pooled or shared for large group organized activities. Equipment should not be provided for individual activities which are not associated with an official function. An equipment rental operation should be investigated with ASC, again.

Questions to consider:

New leadership & staffing?

New methods & format?

New home?

Funding for basic operations (from someone)?

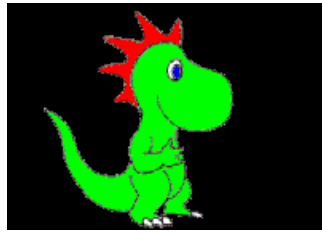
Regular (scheduled) program staff and instructors should be paid?

Fare thee well !

Dale Anderson, retired

Go EGOR!

Extreme Green Outdoor Recreation



“EGOR” the Green Dragon

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Dale Anderson, Director

This year completes the sixth year of Co-op activities offered through the volunteer efforts of faculty and students of the Recreation & Leisure Studies Department with the assistance of the Recreational Sports Office.

The Co-op was started in order to provide additional outdoor opportunities for all students and others, beyond the RLS Department, graded credit bearing courses, and the numerous sports available. The Co-op experiences are focused on environmentally friendly activities and encourage stewardship toward natural resource use.

A highlight of this years activities were the open-house events in the fall (Extravaganza in early September) and spring semester (Extreme Green Outdoor Recreation) which gathered many of the outdoor-interested students into the Corey Union for free food and to discuss ideas and options for outdoor experiences. EGOR was very successfully tied to the many Earth Week activities in April. The outdoor related clubs had a chance to mix, mingle, and recruit. Represented were the Outdoor Adventure Club, Cycling Club, Ski & Snowboard Club, and the newly formed Running Club. Many new friends were made and many unique meetings, trips, sessions, and events took place as a result. A high point of the trip ideas (pun intended) were Jason Erdman’s High Peaks trips (the Summit Series), four planned-out for each semester in conjunction with Jason’s thesis research on mountaineering self-efficacy perceptions.

Summary of Scheduled Events:

- Bouldering in D305, Friday nights, 8 to 10pm, all school year.
- Climbing the rock wall, D305, Saturdays, noon to 3pm, all school year.
- Rock climbing day trips, to Little Falls, NY, as scheduled.
- Windsurfing day trips, to Cayuga Lake, NY as scheduled, 5 events held.
- Kayaking in the pool, Mondays, Wednesdays, 8 to 10 pm, 19 sessions scheduled.
- Kayaking day trips, as arranged, 3 trips on the Tioughnioga.
- Hikes, numerous local hikes to surrounding State lands, parks, and forests nearby.
- Backpacking, several weekend trips to the Adirondacks, Catskills, PA.
- Trail service projects, Lime Hollow Center for Environment & Culture, Cortland County Le High trail, and the Ti river trail.
- Caving trips, Clarksville, led by Pat Mercer, November (spring trip cancelled - snow).
- Snowshoeing & Cross-country skiing day trips, local parks & forests, as scheduled.
- Cycling & mountain biking trips as scheduled or with the Cycling Club or Action Sports.
- Summit Series, High Peaks weekend trips, guided by Jason Erdman, as scheduled, 8 total.
- Wilderness First Responder Certification Course, open to anyone, January, at Huntington.
- Rafting day trips & overnights referred to the Outdoor Adventure Club, Black River.

Reflections:

It was a good year for equipment donations – we were given 2 whitewater kayaks, 3 windsurfing outfits, and some cross country skis, all of which were put to work promptly.

It was a bad year for snow activities – we didn't have any snow until we no longer wanted it. Oh well, that's part of the adventure.

Next Year:

More student led trips – those with particular interests and expertise will lead the opportunities.

More local, short, cheap, less intense, options for anyone, balanced with - More longer, more advanced, more challenging options for those who are more seriously up for it.

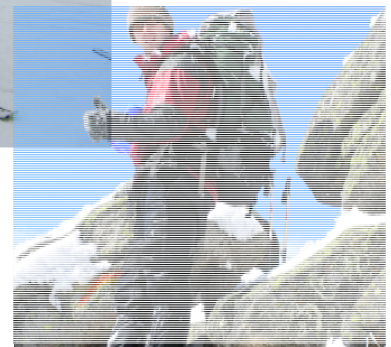
Go EGOR!

Extreme Green Outdoor Recreation



“EGOR” the Green Dragon

Let's make Earth Day Everyday!



Cortland Outdoor Opportunities Program (Co-op) and Outdoor Courses Report 2005-2006

Dale Anderson, Director

The Recreation & Leisure Studies Department offered a variety of **credit** course options for outdoor experiences. The RLS Department has an extensive outdoor concentration in the recreation major with four different emphasis options, which encourage students to broaden their outdoor experiences. The following one credit outdoor activity courses were offered: Fall semester – backpacking, windsurfing, kayaking, bike maintenance, and rock climbing. Spring semester – winter camping, downhill skiing, snowboarding, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, rock climbing, backpacking, and kayaking.

The Cortland Outdoor Opportunities Program (Co-op) provides **non-credit** experiences available to the entire campus community as well as the general public. The Co-op is a joint effort by volunteers from RLS, Recreational Sports, and other department faculty and students. The Co-op provides hundreds of hours of trips, practice sessions, seminars, videos, camps, and inexpensive outfitting to the individual participants and student organizations. Refer to Table 1 for an overview estimate of Co-op participation for this school year.

A major focus this year was to assist student organizations and clubs to pursue outdoor adventures of their own design. A sorority was outfitted for a camping experience on their lawn. The Outdoor Adventure Club was outfitted for several, climbing, backpacking, snowshoeing, rafting, and other trips. The Cortland College Recreation Association was outfitted for a trip to Raquette Lake and a series of rappelling and hiking adventures at Tinker's Falls. The Community Bike Project became an interesting project for many of us when other things were slow. Other departments and instructors have utilized Co-op resources, borrowed gear, occasionally.

A major problem this year was the unseasonable weather we had. We scheduled snow activities which were cancelled for lack of snow. We scheduled other activities which were cancelled because of cold weather. We need to requisition the right "stuff"!

Improving the quality and quantity of outdoor program options continues to be a goal. Squeezing into over-scheduled facilities as well as lack of qualified supervision has been problematic. Classrooms, storage areas, gym space, and work spaces are crowded. More volunteers are needed to facilitate outdoor opportunities for others. A limited number of students have been very helpful in assuming leadership roles. We need more. That however, demands additional supervision from a limited number of faculty available or capable of qualified technical assistance.

It would be nice to be funded outright, rather than counting on volunteers for professional services "out of their hide". Our best helpers help too much! We need to be more accountable. We need to be more responsible. We need autonomy of place and agency identity for any of that to happen effectively. (We need a Student Life Center)

**Table 1. Co-op Participation Estimates
Fall Semester 2005 through Spring Semester 2006**

Activity	Number of Events or Sessions	Number of Participants	Approx. Participation Hours	Comments
Kayaking Pool	15	134	268	+ experiences Still need more kayaks
Windsurfing	3	39	156	+ unique, fun, weather dependent
Kayak Course (paddling gates)	6	8	120	+ experience Excellent skills options
Hike/Climb/Trips	6	N/A	N/A	Need more qualified volunteer leaders
Challenge Course	1	N/A	N/A	+ experience Great group function
Snowshoe X-C Ski	0	N/A	N/A	Several cancelled – no snow
Caving Day – Trip	1	14	140+	+ experience Need more
Bouldering & Climbing Wall	64	N/A	N/A	# not monitored Improve wall options
Cycling Mtn Biking	6	N/A	N/A	+ Provide more opportunities & bikes
Mountaineering Trip	1	10	500	+ develop expedition options (break?)
Trail Service Project	2	10	30	+ could be a course on trail design & maint.
Trip Planning Meetings	12	45	50	- not popular, but essential for trips
Windsurf & Kayak Camp at Raquette Lake	2.5 days	10	500	+ excellent & fun More of this type of service would be great
Outfitting groups	10+	N/A	N/A	Need fee or deposit for replacement cost
TOTALS	129.5	270+	1764+	*Repeat participants were frequent in some activities

The most popular areas used for outdoor programs continue to be the Adirondacks, Camps at Raquette Lake, Hoxie Gorge, State Forest lands near campus (Tuller Hill, Hammond Hill, Bear Swamp), Lansing Park at Myers on Cayuga Lake, Cortland City Parks, and Lime Hollow Center for Environment and Culture. Co-op groups often travel to a variety of places to introduce students to the most appropriate and convenient places to pursue the outdoor activities we introduce them to.

Table 2 indicates feedback about Co-op successes and challenges gathered this year from program participants & assessment forms.

Table 2. Co-op Participant Feedback 2005-6

Success – summarized comments	Challenges – summarized comments
Excellent experiences provided	Coordinate facilities/groups better
Motivated instructors	Do some skating activities
High level of physical challenge was provided	Need to advertise opportunities where students will find it conveniently.
Informal groups, meetings, instruction works well.	Ice climbing? Mountaineering? Fishing? Kites & Boomerangs?
Good growth and skill levels in some activities (climbing & kayaking)	Activities with commercial agencies – parachuting, hang-gliding, rafting, flying
Great activities!	Keep fees minimal, cheaper
Enthusiastic staff & participants	Recruit good student assistants
Coordinate activities for class assignments	Accommodate larger groups
School breaks – expeditions and courses	Schedule activities at better/more times
Great group accommodations and fun	More gear for check-out or rent
Great for beginners as well as experienced	Inclusion, diversity issues – progress
Thanks for letting us use all the gear	Fix the climbing wall (routes, holds)
Nice bikes – need more	Improve gear storage & use arrangements
Thanks for providing the transportation & good food for the trip	Need big vans with trailer hitch

Wish List: Summarized thoughts for a more successful next year

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| Replace climbing ropes in D305 | Rig belay anchors in corner of D305 |
| Equipment & staging area near van access | More gear for check-out/rental |
| Permanent staffing positions or GA's | Certification Courses |
| Access to snow at G. Peak for workshops | Action Sports – sponsor activities |
| Adventure races that are FUN | Outdoor Open-House |
| Trail Maintenance class | Volunteers from other departments |
| Grad assistants to help | Class projects (camp-out, etc.) |

See you, in the outdoors!
Dale A. Anderson, Co-op Coordinator



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Recently a principle focus of the Co-op was to develop specific ways of qualifying students for hard skills leadership positions. For example, the Wilderness First Responder course has been offered to students as a three-credit recreation course, and open to the general public as a Co-op opportunity, for three years now. Co-op also hosted an American Canoe Association certification course for Introduction to Kayaking Instructors last fall. Co-op plans to offer several different ACA canoe and kayak instructor courses in the future. The RLS department has an outstanding history of providing canoe and kayak instruction, but Co-op would like to help students to become recognized paddling leaders through ACA certification.

The American Canoe Association is interested in developing an affiliation with colleges to provide quality paddling instruction programs. Cortland would like to be one of those colleges that offer ACA instruction and instructor courses regularly. If chosen to be an affiliate program, ACA courses would be offered year-round, for credit or for individual certification purposes.

A barrier to increasing the quality and quantity of outdoor program options is that physical resources, as well as our human resources, have been stretched to the “max.” Classrooms, storage areas, and work spaces are crowded. More volunteers are needed to facilitate outdoor opportunities for others. Students have been very helpful in assuming leadership roles. That, however, demands additional supervision from a limited number of faculty available or capable of technical assistance.

Table 1. Co-op Participation Estimates: Fall Semester 2004 through Spring Semester 2005

Activity	Number of Events or Sessions	Number of Participants	Approx. Participation Hours	Comments
Kayaking Pool	19	223	446	+ experiences Need more/better kayaks
Windsurfing	4	32	96	+ experience Weather flexibility opts
Kayak Course (paddling gates)	3	13	39	+ experience Offer again when feasible
Hike/Climb/Cave Trips	8	45	704	+ experiences Need more qualified volunteer leaders
Challenge Course	1	44	110	+ experience Could do more
Snowshoe X-C Ski	8	10	30	Several cancelled – no snow
Fly Fishing	1 (2 resched.)	10	20	+ Excellent practice fly-casting

Bouldering & Climbing Wall	64	640	1280	# not monitored Improve wall options
Cycling Mtn Biking	4	18	72	+ Provide more opportunities & bikes
Mountaineering Trip	2	16	768	+ develop expedition options
Trail Service	2	16	48	+ could be a course on trail design & maint.
Trip Planning Meetings	12	45	50	- not popular, but Essential for trips
Windsurf & Kayak Camp at Raquette Lake	1	17	500	+ excellent & fun More of this type of service would be great
TOTALS	129	1129*	4163	*Repeat participants were frequent in some activities

The most popular areas used for outdoor programs continue to be the Adirondacks, Camps at Raquette Lake, Hoxie Gorge, state forest lands near campus (Tuller Hill, Hammond Hill, Bear Swamp, and others), Lansing Park on Cayuga Lake, Cortland City Parks, and Lime Hollow Center for Environment and Culture. Co-op groups often travel to a variety of places to introduce students to the most appropriate and convenient places to participate in outdoor pursuits.

Commercial outdoor recreation related businesses are becoming increasingly important connections for student outdoor opportunities, and therefore the Co-op. For example, Greek Peak Mountain Resort is a classroom for snowboard, ski, and adapted classes as well as an intern site and a nearby place to apply winter skills. Whitewater Challengers is a rafting company based in Pennsylvania with outposts on several rivers in New York. Thanks to WC, Co-op has had several rafting trips and some raft guide training experiences for students. Outdoor retail stores like EMS, Action Sports, Nordic Sports, Mountainman, and others, not only provide needed gear and equipment, but also support a variety of job opportunities, internships, instruction, trips experiences, and consulting about gear.

A growing problem for the outdoor programs on campus is space for equipment storage. The tiny storage and activity spaces are “bulging at the seams” with kayaks, windsurfers, backpacks, sleeping bags, tents, bicycles, and so on. Please lend support to the concept of a Student Recreation /Student Life Center on campus, which could provide much better options.

Table 2 indicates feedback about Co-op successes and challenges gathered this year from program participants. This is a need we are beginning to address, to become more accountable.

Table 2. Co-op Participant Feedback 2004-05

Success – summarized comments	Challenges – summarized comments
“Cool” trips and instructors	Need to advertise opportunities better
Informal groups, gatherings, methods are working well.	Get other departments involved (Biology, Geol., Geog., P.E., etc.)
Good growth of participation and skill levels in some activities	More activities with commercial agencies – parachuting, hang-gliding, rafting
Great activities!	Keep fees minimal
Enthusiastic participants	Recruit responsible student leaders
Coordinated activity with class assignments	Schedule bigger, better facilities to accommodate larger numbers
Inexpensive trips and courses	Schedule activities at better/more times

All things considered, I guess our troubles indicate that the Co-op Program has grown considerably. That’s a good thing! We pledge ourselves to continue to grow and learn.