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Press Release / Media Alert

The National Center for Outdoor & Adventure Education (NCOAE) and the University of North Carolina Wilmington Form Academic Relationship

UNCW Dept. of Environmental Sciences offers academic credit for NCOAE's backcountry training

Wilmington, N.C., April 3, 2018 – The National Center for Outdoor & Adventure Education (NCOAE) — a Wilmington-based organization that promotes critical thinking, environmental stewardship, and the acquisition of technical outdoor skills through accredited outdoor and adventure-based experiential education courses — today announced an academic relationship with the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW). Beginning summer of 2018, UNCW students will have the opportunity to earn up to six academic credit hours by participating in and successfully completing one of three NCOAE Outdoor Educator courses in Alaska, Patagonia, or Chile.

As a result of the newly approved academic relationship, skiing and snowboarding in Chile's Andes Mountains, whitewater paddling and mountaineering through Patagonia, and backpacking in central Alaska are among approved academic activities for UNCW's Department of Environmental Sciences (EVS) students. The 24-32-day courses, which are timed to coincide with scheduled breaks during the university's 2018-19 academic year, provide far more than just thrilling outdoor adventures. With certifications offered for completion of Wilderness Medicine training, Avalanche Mitigation and Snow Science training, and training in Leave No Trace's outdoor ethics, students who complete a course's extensive requirements will have learned more about outdoor education in extreme environments than their counterparts who rely solely on classroom study.

“Today's job market demands students graduate with as many skills and certifications as possible,” said UNCW Dept. of Environmental Sciences Chair Dr. Jeffery Hill. “NCOAE's wilderness training adds depth to our program and value to the degree. We are delighted to add NCOAE's expertise to our program and are eager for students to take advantage of these field-oriented opportunities.”

In addition to multiple certificates being offered for successful course completion, each of the courses offers training in remote expedition planning, wilderness risk management, backcountry navigation, instructor-level use of NCOAE's accredited curriculum, and more.

UNCW students interested in enrolling in NCOAE's courses may do so through its [website](#). They may also obtain required experiential learning in corresponding university courses by registering starting in early April 2018 when SeaNet, the University's online registration platform, opens for spring and summer 2018 class and course enrollment. The three NCOAE courses approved for UNCW academic experiential learning and their corresponding university courses are:

- Summer '18: UNCW's EVS 485/592 (NCOAE's Alaska backcountry and glacier travel)
- Summer '18: UNCW's EVS 485/592 (NCOAE's Chile backcountry skiing and snowboarding)
- Winter Break 2018-'19: UNCW's EVS 485/592 (NCOAE's Patagonia whitewater paddling and mountaineering).

About The National Center for Outdoor & Adventure Education

The National Center for Outdoor & Adventure Education (NCOAE) is a Wilmington, N.C.-based organization that helps individuals improve their critical thinking, interpersonal relationships, and civic and environmental responsibility through outdoor and experiential educational experiences that emphasize a productive academic community and the acquisition of technical outdoor skills. Accredited by the Association for Experiential Education, NCOAE believes people create positive and profoundly empowering experiences when they intentionally engage with themselves and others in unique educational settings. For more information, visit <http://www.NCOAE.org>.

About UNCW's Department of Environmental Sciences

The Department of Environmental Sciences focuses on the relationship between humans, other organisms, and the physical, chemical, and biological aspects that influence both natural and built environments. It is an interdisciplinary curriculum, drawing upon the resources of many related fields to provide the rigorous analysis necessary to understand environmental problems and formulate environmentally-sound solutions. Research within the department focuses upon applying emerging concepts, technologies, and techniques to better understand and conserve the environment. The study of natural environmental processes and their effects on society and, likewise, the effects society has upon natural processes works to improve the quality of life for all citizens. Experiential education further assures the curriculum inspires students to become active and engaged environmental stewards.

About University of North Carolina Wilmington

The University of North Carolina Wilmington, the state's coastal university, is dedicated to learning through the integration of teaching and mentoring with research and service. Guided by our [Strategic Plan](#), the university is committed to nurturing a campus culture that reflects its values of diversity and globalization, ethics and integrity, and excellence and innovation. A public institution with nearly 17,000 students, the university is focused on supporting and enhancing the student-centered learning experience that has been a hallmark since its founding in 1947. UNCW offers an array of programs at the baccalaureate and master's levels, and doctoral programs in marine biology, educational leadership, psychology and nursing practice. UNCW is one of the 17 institutions that make up the UNC System.

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