DEPARTMENT OF RECREATIONAL SPORTS
UGA OUTDOOR RECREATION – TEN ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS FOR TRIP LEADERS

Purpose: The purpose of this document is to outline the Ten Essential Systems as they pertain to Outdoor Recreation Trip Leaders.

Scope: The original “Ten Essentials” list was created in the 1930’s by a Seattle-based mountaineering group. It contained ten pieces of outdoor equipment that are particularly useful in the event of a backcountry emergency. The list has since been updated numerous times and has evolved into the “Ten Essential Systems,” which groups additional, related gear into a specific category. Note that the best TE items are multi-use: an industrial-sized trash bag, for instance, can serve as an insulation layer, water collection/storage system, or emergency shelter.

Policy or Procedure: Ten Essential Systems:

I. APPLICATION
   a. For the purposes of UGA Outdoor Recreation trips, it is expected that each trip leader carry the Ten Essentials on every trip.
   b. It is also the responsibility of the trip leader to familiarize themselves with the equipment and seek further instruction when necessary.
   c. Trip leaders should encourage participants to bring their own kits and look for opportunities to instruct participants when appropriate.

II. THE TEN ESSENTIAL SYSTEMS
   a. Navigation
      i. A topographic map and compass are invaluable in the backcountry. Even if navigation is mostly done with a GPS unit, a map and compass should be carried as a backup.
      ii. Outdoor Recreation can supply trip leaders with compasses and topographic maps; maps should be requested as part of the trip-planning process.
   b. Sun protection
      i. A TE kit should include some means of sun protection.
      ii. These can include a hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen, or a multi-use item like a bandanna.
      iii. UGA Outdoor Recreation does not provide sun protection for trip leaders or participants.
   c. Insulation
      i. Extra insulation guards against unexpected changes in weather, submersion incidents, etc.
      ii. It can include extra clothing layers or a multipurpose item such as a trash bag or space blanket.
      iii. The UGA Outdoor Recreation program provides tarps and can provide sleeping bags to trip leaders and participants (who pay) through the ORC.
   d. Illumination
i. Headlamps are indispensable should be kept accessible (along with spare batteries).
ii. Trip leaders should consider carrying a back-up light source.
iii. The UGA Outdoor Recreation program provides headlamps on caving trips but NOT on other trips.

e. First-aid supplies

i. In addition to the program FAK, trip leaders should consider carrying a compact first aid kit to be used if the program kit is lost or damaged.
ii. The kit should contain essential items such gauze, pain reliever, alcohol wipes, antibiotic ointment, antihistamine, etc. UGA Outdoor Recreation will provide these items.

f. Fire

i. Lighters or matches will suffice; ensure that they are waterproof and carry AT LEAST one backup fire source. UGA will provide lighters.

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i. Repair kit and tools

i. A basic repair kit should include versatile tools and materials that can be used to address a wide range of repairs. It should include, at minimum:
   1. Pocket knife
   2. Cordage
   3. Duct tape.
   4. Multitools and activity-specific repair materials can also be considered.

ii. A UGA-specific addition to this section is a watch. Trip leaders are expected to wear a watch in order to effectively coordinate their trips and document accidents and incidents. Trip leaders must provide their own timepiece.

h. Nutrition

i. The trip leader should ensure that the group has additional food in case of a delay in the backcountry.
ii. Granola or energy bars, trail mix, etc. will suffice.
iii. On overnight trips, UGA will provide one dinner but all other meals are not provided. Trips do not provide meals unless specified.

i. Hydration

i. A hydration system should include some means of purifying water in the backcountry.
ii. Examples include purification tablets, iodine drops, a water filter, or the means to boil water.
iii. UGA will provide ceramic filters for water filtration but does not provide water bottles. Trip leaders are encouraged to bring a back-up water purifying system.
j. Emergency shelter

i. Emergency shelter is a critical component of the Ten Essentials. It should be simple, lightweight and could include a tarp, large trash bags, or a piece of plastic sheeting.

ii. UGA will provide these items.