

UGA OUTDOOR RECREATION – CHALLENGE COURSE – RESCUE PROCEDURES

Purpose: The purpose of this document is to outline the standard rescue procedure(s) for the outdoor challenge course.

Scope: High course rescue techniques range from verbal encouragement/instruction to the removal of a participant's static belay system so that they can be transferred to a facilitator- operated dynamic belay system. Each step on the continuum increases the complexity and risk of the rescue, making it imperative that facilitators exhaust each option before moving on to a more complicated technique.

Challenge Course Rescues:

- I. LEVEL 1 RESCUE: SELF RESCUE
 - a. A level one rescue allows the participant to “rescue” themselves by regaining the element on their own. The facilitator’s role in a level one rescue is to encourage the participant and provide instruction; this could include lanyard manipulation, body positioning, potential hand or foot holds, etc. A variation of the level one rescue could include assistance by a fellow participant. A level one rescue should always be attempted on a responsive participant; it poses the least risk, is least embarrassing for the participant and is least disruptive to the program.

- II. LEVEL 2 RESCUE: ASSISTED SELF RESCUE
 - a. A level two rescue assumes that a level one rescue was unsuccessful. Level two rescues introduce an etrier, or webbing ladder, in an effort to aid the participant in regaining the element. The etrier should be clipped onto the belay cable and sent out to the participant using a locking carabiner; it may be necessary to lengthen to the etrier by adding one of the prussik loops from the rescue bag. The facilitator should then instruct the participant in ascending the etrier and regaining the element.

- III. LEVEL 3 RESCUE: FACILITATOR –ASSISTED RESCUE
 - a. A level three rescue assumes that a level two rescue was unsuccessful. The facilitator should make their way to the participant and physically assist them in regaining the element. Options vary based on the situation, but include hoisting the participant by the harness, assisting them in climbing the etrier or offering a hand up to the element. Other group members may also assist in a level three rescue.

- IV. LEVEL 4 RESCUE: PICK-OFF RESCUE
 - a. A level four rescue assumes that a level three rescue was unsuccessful; it is used only when a participant is unable to complete the element and must be lowered to the ground. A level four rescue involves taking the participant off of their static belay system and subsequently introduces considerable risk to the operation. The rescuing facilitator should clip the belay rope and figure eight device to the belay cable above the participant with a locking carabiner. The working end of the rope should be clipped to the participant with a locking carabiner. The belay end of the rope should be dropped to a facilitator on the ground, who should pull all slack out of the system and set up a “butt belay.” The rescuing facilitator should then create slack in the lanyard of the participant, either by instructing the participant to step up into the etrier or by sliding the lanyard prussiks. The rescuing facilitator should then initiate a belay transfer with the facilitator on the ground and clip the both clips of the participant’s tether to the belay rope. The participant should then be lowered carefully to the ground. If the rescuing facilitator is

not able to create slack in the static belay system, they should engage in a “cut-away” rescue and cut the participant’s lanyard once they have been transferred to the dynamic belay system. Extreme caution should be used during cut-away rescues, and the rescuing facilitator should receive permission from the ground facilitator before each action.

All questions or concerns pertaining to challenge course rescue procedures should be directed to the Coordinator or Assistant Director for Outdoor Recreation.