



Boeing Employees Alpine Society **Basic Mountaineering Class (BMC) Syllabus**

Course Description

This course covers the introduction to and fundamentals of Basic Mountaineering. Through classroom instruction and weekend outings, both clinics and experience climbs, students learn essential alpine skills. By the end of the class students are comfortable planning their own trips into the Cascades to climb a glaciated peak.

Instructor

Head Instructor: Sara Campbell Vegter – e-mail: bmc@boealps.org

Times / Schedule

- Lectures: Wednesday nights 7–10 PM
- Outings: Saturdays and/or Sundays 7 AM–6 PM (not including travel time)

Location

- Lectures: Boeing 2-22 building 2nd floor auditorium
7755 E Marginal Way S, Seattle 98108
- Outings: Throughout Washington (typically 1–3 hours drive from Seattle)

Prerequisites

Although there are no specific prerequisites, it is assumed that the average student taking the class will have a basic familiarity with the outdoors, basic hiking, backpacking, and camping. Additionally, a reasonable fitness level is expected.

Learning Objectives

Students will acquire a basic understanding of rock climbing, snow travel, glacier travel, snow camping, and wilderness navigation.

Curriculum

Having successfully completed the course, students will have a good working knowledge of mountaineering upon which to build in the future. Specific topics covered include: clothing, gear, belay, rappel, navigation, basic rock climbing, food, water, ice axe arrest, avalanche, mountain weather, snow climbing, environmental awareness, first aid, mountain environment, natural anchors, glacier travel, crevasse rescue, trail maintenance, and trip planning.



Boeing Employees Alpine Society **Basic Mountaineering Class (BMC) Syllabus**

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory for all scheduled orientations, classes, and outings. Missing the orientation, a lecture, and/or an outing will likely lead to dismissal from the course. Orientation will cover class expectations, as well as covering gear required for the class. Class lectures cover topics needed for the weekend outings and go into details on the specific outings and requirements, including planning.

Outings are designed to build on each other, therefore missing one will result in a lack of the required material for the next outing. Outings use the skills and knowledge learned in the previous class. Additionally, this course is about learning to deal with the elements, therefore lectures and outings will not be canceled for inclement weather. For traveling on state roads you must adhere to state advisories. When advised, you must carry chains, have traction tires, or arrange to travel with someone who does.

The Course

- **Classroom Sessions:**

Each Wednesday night class will begin promptly at 7:00 PM. Students are expected to sign in before each class to track attendance. Attendance at every class is mandatory and students will not be allowed to attend the following outing if they miss the weeknight lectures.

Each class consists of an introduction by the head instructor followed by one or two lectures. Most lectures are presented by BMC instructors and will last approximately 15 minutes with time for questions. Some lectures are presented by outside experts and will last 30-60 minutes.

Following the lecture(s), the class will split into smaller groups to learn and practice skills. During this “team time” students will have further opportunity to discuss the lecture topics and ask questions. Team time will also be used to learn and practice skills and techniques prior to using them on outings. Additionally, students will work together under guidance by their instructors to plan the upcoming outing. This may include determining a climbing route, team and personal gear needs, and a timeline. From the third outing onward, it is the responsibility of the students to collaborate to create a trip plan document for each climb. This document will include information needed in case of emergency and must be shared with the BMC Head Instructor prior to beginning the climb.



Boeing Employees Alpine Society

Basic Mountaineering Class (BMC) Syllabus

- **Preparing for classes:**

Students will be invited to join the “BMC Student Calendar”. This is a shared Google calendar and contains links to documents on Google drive. The calendar is a major information source for BMC. It holds links to homework and reading assignments, handouts and videos, as well as outing guides for the weekend outings.

Students are expected to check the calendar and complete the assigned reading. Students will then need to complete one or more online quiz modules to test understanding of the topic. Before each class, students will need to access the homework linked on the calendar. This is a worksheet designed to help guide students through the process of trip planning for their upcoming outing. This document will be checked for completion by the team lead and used in the team’s collaborative climb planning. If the homework has not been completed prior to class or if the student does not participate in the planning of the outing, the student will not be allowed to attend the outing and may be dismissed from the course.

- **Quizzes:**

The quiz login information will be provided to students via email at the start of the course. Each week after completing the reading, students will take quiz(zes) to assess understanding of the material. Quizzes open two weeks before the due date and will close (become unavailable) at 7:00 PM on the due date. Each quiz requires a score of 70% or higher to pass. In the event a lower score is earned, the student should contact the quiz administrator at bmc-quizzes@boealps.org to arrange a re-take. Retaking a quiz or completing a quiz after the due date will result in a penalty of 10% deducted from the score. This can affect the cumulative quiz score (a cumulative 70% is required for graduation) so be mindful.

- **Student Evaluation:**

The team lead will evaluate students on six factors throughout the class culminating with the graduation climb. These include participation, teamwork, safety, operating in the alpine, state of mind, and physical abilities; and will be assessed on a scale of “excellent” through “poor”. In order to successfully graduate the course, students must demonstrate an overall performance of “meets expectations” or better with no individual factor determined to be “poor”.

Dismissal

At the Head Instructor’s or team lead’s discretion, a student may be asked to drop out of the class at any time if not advancing fast enough results in a safety concern for the team. Additionally, students may be dismissed from the course if they are not maintaining a level of fitness sufficient to complete the climbs in a safe and timely manner.



Boeing Employees Alpine Society **Basic Mountaineering Class (BMC) Syllabus**

Grading

BMC is comprised of the following elements, each of which requires a passing score in order to successfully graduate and earn the Basic Mountaineering Competency Certificate.

- Final written exam score of 70% or higher
- Final practical exam score of 70% or higher
- Cumulative quiz score average of 70% or higher
- Overall student evaluation “meets expectations” or better
- Attendance 100%

Textbooks

- “Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills, 9th Edition, ISBN: 978-1680510041 paperback, or ISBN: 978-1680510034 hardcover
- “Accidents in North American Climbing 2022”, ISBN: 978-1-7356956-9-3