**Trailblazing the National Parks 3.0**

**UTSA HON 3253**

**Program Handbook Part 1 of 2 (Part 2: Appendix)**

**Summer 2024**

**(Last updated 09-22-2023)**

The 2024 UTSA Honors College Trailblazing the National Parks Trip 3.0 investigates landscape, history, and cultures of seven national parks in a 15-day course (Apr 20-21 and May 11-23, 2024). This trip offers a life-changing learning experience in dramatic landscapes from the Texas Hill Country to deep canyons of Utah and Arizona and arches and mountains of Colorado. Students with a range of majors will join two instructors with natural sciences and experiential education backgrounds to investigate how humans impact, manage, interact with, and value the natural world. On outdoor activities, in park exhibits and historic places, around campfires, discussions with national park staff, we confront key environmental and social challenges in diverse natural and cultural landscapes. Using interdisciplinary and experiential approaches, students will explore the significance of aesthetic, ecological, historical, social, and even spiritual forces of our parks and why we need environmental stewardship leaders to protect them for the future.

In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks. ----- John Muir

Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, CO

Arches National Park, UT

Canyonlands National Park, UT

Capitol Reef National Park, UT

Bryce Canyon National Park, UT

Zion National Park, UT

Antelope Canyon, Page, AZ

Mesa Verde National Park, CO

# Contact Information

Dr. Karen Engates. UTSA Honors College Senior Lecturer & AIS Professor of Instruction [Karen.engates@utsa.edu](mailto:Karen.engates@utsa.edu)

UTSA HC Costa Rica Trip Instructor 2018, Trailblazing National Parks 2019/2022/2024

Senior Lecturer in UTSA Environmental Science Program (2010-2018)

(Ph.D. Environmental Science & Engineering, UTSA; B.S., M.S. Environmental Science, Texas Christian University)

Instructor #2 (TBD)

IMPORTANT: Instructor(s) reserve the right to make changes to this handbook to adapt to dynamic trip conditions. Every attempt will be made to visit all locations with considerations for timing, traffic, construction, wait times, and safety (e.g., wildfires). Any changes will be communicated to students and the Honors College. Thank you for your understanding.

**Emergency Contact Information**

In case of an emergency during the program, Dr. Engates can be reached on her personal cell phone when reception is present (XXX-XXX-XXXX). This phone numbers should be used in emergencies only by students, unless otherwise indicated by program directors. Do not pass on program directors’ personal phone numbers to friends.

In case of an emergency, individuals can also call UTSA Education Abroad Services at 210-458-7203during working hours, Monday-Friday. After-hours or on weekends, call the UTSA Police Department at 210-458-4242, and they will relay the message to Education Abroad personnel**.** If you have a mental health emergency, call UTSA Counseling Services 24/7 hotline at 210-458-4140.

# Student Goals and Learning Outcomes

This program experience satisfies requirements for HON 3253 (see UTSA course catalog for full description) and can satisfy either the interdisciplinary seminar experience or the cultural exploration experience. This course directly contributes to UTSA Honors College curriculum that emphasizes experiential learning. Specifically, this course reflects the study away/abroad experience which marries academic rigor with real-time application and analysis of concepts in situ.

HERBS: We want students to be self-conscious about their own ethical development and expect students to:

* Foster benevolence and kindness toward humans, animals, and the environment
* Support each other and those whom their own actions impact
* Practice adaptability and Resilience

SPICES: We want students to achieve, a product or experience they call their own: Engaged/Intentional Living, Skill Development

Milestone Accomplishment: Guiding Ideals

Engagement (embodied pursuit of knowledge), Wonder (embrace new questions), Discovery (invention resulting from engagement)

Learning Outcomes

* Awareness and self-reflection (ability to clearly demonstrate awareness of multitude of effects that learning has had upon you and ways in which your engagement and discoveries have impacted others) **[journal entries, confluences]**
* Collaborative decision making (ability to effectively work as a group to solve a multi-layered problem that has multiple possible approaches and solutions) **[challenges of shared nomadic living/travel/personal space]**
* Creative Courage (ability to use knowledge, skills, and materials at hand to produce a self/team designed product, solution, or presentation to an outside agency) **[post-trip video]**
* Effective Communication (ability to effectively present ideas, information, and materials to diverse groups and beyond classroom) **[post-trip video content]**
* NOLS (National Outdoor Leadership School) Wilderness First Aid certification

Participants will have the opportunity to:

* Identify diversity of environments found in national parks
* Communicate function and purpose of national parks
* Consider issues, problems, challenges, and successes at national parks
* Demonstrate observation and critical thinking skills through writing and speaking

## Who can apply?

Applicants must be UTSA Honors College students in good standing who are at least 18 years old by start date of program (for purposes of adult signatures required for participation in activities, medical situations, and tent arrangements). Applicants must be part of UTSA Honors College during the Spring 2024 semester ***and*** have at least one additional semester beyond trip dates before graduating. If a student falls out of good standing, they may be removed from the program pending discussion with Honors College administration.

You must be in Good Academic Standing with the Honors College (i.e., having maintained a cumulative (overall) and current (Fall 2023)) minimum of a 3.0 GPA throughout the application process and show good faith toward remaining in this manner as the spring semester completes. Students whose current GPA falls below 3.0 after spring midterms may be removed from consideration pending discussion with Honors College.

Students are held to the Student Code of Conduct that is critical in demonstrating appropriate behavior. Violations and alleged violations under investigation during the spring 2024 semester will be discussed with the UTSA Behavior Intervention Team for assessing whether a prospective participant should remove themself from consideration of the course.

## What is the process?

It is HIGHLY suggested that Honors students view opportunities for supplemental financial awards ***prior to submitting their applications*** as it may be possible to further reduce your cost. The committees that decide these awards meet infrequently, and it is possible and *highly* encouraged for a student to apply for aid ahead of time in case they are granted a spot in the course.

<https://honors.utsa.edu/scholarships/honors-experiential-learning-award.html> Contact [Stacie Garza](mailto:stacie.garza@utsa.edu) re: Honors awards or the Honors Scholarship [in-box](mailto:honors.scholarships@utsa.edu).

Prospective students will fill out an application, obtain an unofficial transcript, and send them together in one PDF document to Dr. Engates [karen.engates@utsa.edu] for consideration no later than the date on the application. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Students will then sign up for a Zoom interview-- a short (15 minute) interview with instructors. Instructors need to make decisions quickly to further secure trip preparations.

Applications will be accepted, and 15-minute Zoom interviews will be given on a rolling basis until slots have been filled. The earlier you submit your complete application + transcript, the better your odds. If you apply earlier than the deadline, you may be contacted earlier for a Zoom interview.

Decisions will be made for a maximum of 12 students for this experience, and a waiting list will be generated. All students will be notified of their status. Students selected for the trip must email Dr. Engates of their acceptance/refusal of the invitation to attend or they will be dropped from the list and the next person will be notified. Additionally, the acceptance email will have the mandatory pre-trip meeting dates/times.

Once an individual has accepted the invitation, they must make a *nonrefundable* payment of $500 in ASAP once posted by Honors College. If this payment is not made by the deadline, the individual will be removed from the acceptance list and the next person on the waiting list will be contacted. If you are on the waiting list and contacted later, you will need to respond and make payment with smaller timeframes to secure your spot. ***Please see the application for all dates and deadlines.***

## Student refund/cancellation policies

Due to need for advanced reservations of lodging, excursions, etc. scheduled up to one year in advance, a nonrefundable payment is required to hold your spot. UTSA Honors College will automatically supplement a substantial part of the total trip cost. This amount varies yearly. ***It is not permissible to refund an individual participant’s payment if he/she chooses not to go on the trip*** and/or not participate in activities where additional costs have been incurred due to group rates charged for activities. Non-used nonrefundable payments will be put toward Honors College scholarship and activity funds. Additionally, students will need to pay applicable tuition and fees for this (3) hour course.

# Program Activities

We will have park programming, outdoor and indoor activities, and sleeping in small group tents. Days will be filled with make your own (MYO) meals, hiking, touring, reflection, driving, and confluence evening events. We anticipate hiking, a whitewater raft trip, horseback riding, and more.

Your grade for this course is based on several components. Your full, willing, and positive participation and respect in all planned activities with other students, instructors, tourists, and park personnel, and your participation in reflection discussions about your experiences are part of it. There are pre-trip mandatory meetings and a post-trip assignment to complete. You will participate in a 16-hour NOLS Wilderness First Aid course and receive a 2-year certification in Wilderness First Aid upon successful completion. You will also keep a daily journal of information acquired, reflections, and feedback that will be turned in throughout the trip and once the trip has completed. Finally, you will create a critical analysis of your project in a 5-minute video. Associated rubric(s) will be provided.

# Schedule

While we will do our best to keep to an organized schedule, unforeseen events (e.g., weather, traffic, construction, medical emergency, park scheduling) may cause changes. Instructors will communicate changes as they arise. Thank you in advance for your flexibility.

# Preparation before Leaving San Antonio

## Pre-trip Mandatory Meetings

Once applications and interviews have occurred and selections of participants made, there will be several mandatory meetings lasting 1.5-2.0 hours for students and instructors. Meeting times will occur on an agreeable day/time for all participants. These meetings serve several purposes: introductions and increase comfort of group, discuss packing and planning preparations, Q&A sessions, financial obligations, and deadline reminders, clarify expectations for grading. Only in extreme cases with supporting documentation (e.g., emergency, contagious illness) will students be excused.

## Identification Documents

You need to carry some form of official government photo identification with your official name (e.g., passport, driver’s license).

## Health Information

Consult with your health care professional(s) as well as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel). Bring a copy or photo of your medical insurance card (front and back). Have photo documentation of your last tetanus shot date. If you do not have medical insurance, you need to be prepared to pay out of pocket for any medical experiences incurred or use UTSA’s student insurance for $5/day. Explore this option through the appropriate UTSA office to sign up at least one month before the trip. Bring any required medications in their original containers.

## Food and Money

Lodging, transportation, park entrance fees, and activity fees are included in the trip cost. Food is not included in the trip cost, so make plans on how you will feed yourself. Most of the time we will be eating meals at campgrounds while some places and travel stops have options for purchasing meals. Because dietary preferences and requirements exist, and some individuals may not eat every meal of the day while others may eat hearty meals and snacks, it is up to you to properly plan for your eating requirements. Ask your instructors if you need ideas for camping meals. We will discuss food preparation and availability of food storage space. We will also make short supply stops every few days to purchase what you need. Assuming three meals/day, you need to plan for approximately 43 meals. A ballpark estimate for budgeting meals is $4-5+/meal. Use this opportunity to learn some campfire cooking skills!

Become more aware of your eating and drinking habits and needs for active trips. Prior to the trip, keep some sort of food diary of what you eat/when/how much it costs to get an idea of how much you might spend. We will try to visit regular grocery stores (e.g., Walmart) but there may be times where costs are increased due to location especially if you choose to eat from restaurants (when available). You need protein in some form to fuel you especially on days of lengthy exertion. Carbohydrates and energy drinks won’t do your body any good for stamina. Electrolyte tablets help replace salt lost due to sweating. If you just drink water and don’t replace salt levels, you may become disoriented, confused, dizzy, etc. Listen to your body and be proactive in taking care of it.

Students need to budget for the following: ~$10 cash for laundry, ~$20 for showers (in a few places), and optional shopping for personal and non-related items. We recommend you bring a debit card for personal expenses and to get out cash from an ATM when available. Do not bring Traveler’s checks. Credit cards are accepted in some shops and restaurants. Cash will sometimes be the only form of payment in some areas. Contact your credit card provider and bank and inform them you will be travelling to multiple states within the trip period so they will not doubt validity of charges.

## Phone & Technology Use

You may bring your mobile phone for emergency situations and communication at specific times but consider alternative ways to capture photos as we will practice being “tech-nically free” for much of the trip. Cell reception and Wifi is highly varied in places, so anticipate little/no reception in some places. Part of this experience is to get away from social media and into nature, so you will be asked to electronically disconnect to bring back your social awareness. Instructors will always have their phones on in case of emergency; you are encouraged to share Dr. Engates’s cell phone number with your emergency contact in case they need to reach you since your phone will be off most of the trip.

**We are not using our phones to communicate with others outside the trip except during emergencies**. This is for two primary reasons: 1) one course goal is to allow our minds to explore what is in front of us, and 2) your phone may get wet, damaged, or lost. The best thing to do is keep your phone in a Ziploc bag, waterproof case, or dry sack. No phone calls in the vehicles unless it is an emergency. Check with your mobile phone provider about the costs associated with using your phone. To keep phone charges at a minimum, you will need to adjust your settings on your phone, including data roaming. Keeping your phone on airplane mode and turning off roaming/cellular data are two ways to drastically reduce costs associated with using a phone in places where reception is little to none.

# What to bring

## Identification

* Government issued photo identification – e.g., driver’s license, state issued photo ID, or passport. Take a picture of your photo identification; send it to Dr. Engates (karen.engates@utsa.edu) and Mr. Howard (eliot.howard@utsa.edu) and to a family member or friend. In the case of an emergency, this picture will be shown to the proper authorities to assist in whatever situation arises.

Remember:

* ***You only have a duffle bag (provided by Honors College) and a small day backpack (yours) for all of your things***. Storage in vehicles is limited, so if your items do not fit in the bag, you cannot bring them.
* Pack minimally and wisely for a range of climates. Some stops have laundry options. Have 3-4 days of clothing that can be worn more than once before washing.
* Dr. Engates will provide small group tents. UTSA Outdoor Resource Center has equipment (sleeping bags, sleeping pads) to rent if you do not have your own. Honors College may be able to provide what you need; please listen for those announcements and rules. We cannot do individual tents due to some campsite restrictions.
* Minimize waste and use of fragrance/scented products to cut down on insect- and animal- attractants.
* Keep this question in mind for each item you want to take: Do I really need this?  Ask us if you have any doubts.

## Clothing and Related Items

There are several variables to think about for clothing: activity, weather, and storage space. We will be outside in a variety of climates. Avoid revealing clothing (see through, low/high cut). No short-shorts, visible undergarments, suggestive/offensive clothes. You will be asked to change if clothing is deemed inappropriate for an activity. At all times, you are a UTSA and United States ambassador. It is better to err on the side of less revealing and to protect your skin from the elements.

* Sleeping bag and mat (both must fit into designated bag)
* composition notebook and pen/pencil(s)
* Headlamp with ***red*** light and extra batteries (red is more eye-friendly at night and does not cause disorientation like white light)
* Large black, thick trash bag – to protect your bag and items if it rains; can also be used as a poncho, surface to sit on ground, etc.
* Toiletries & personal hygiene items – ***unscented*** to avoid attracting insects and larger animals (limited to only what you need)
* Medical/dental insurance cards; medication in original containers w/ labels; Band-Aids
* Undergarments, swimsuit
* Clothes detergent (pods or powder, no liquid)
* Towel (thin, preferably microfiber quick dry gym towel)
* Reusable water bottle/hydration system – have **always at least 3L of water on you** while hiking
* Items to make meals (reusable utensils, bowl/plate/cup)
* Cold weather jacket, hat, gloves, warm weather hat, sunglasses
* Sunscreen, bug repellant, anti-itch lotion, lip moisturizer, pain reliever (e.g., Tylenol)
* 2 quick dry hiking pants and 1 quick dry shorts (Leggings not acceptable for snow/rain days; cotton/denim won’t easily dry.)
* 2 quick dry short sleeve shirts and 1 quick dry long sleeve shirt for layering (Avoid cotton as it takes too long to dry.)
* 2 pairs quick dry or wicking socks. Consider wool.
* Items to clean up meals (dish soap, sponge/scrubber, Ziploc bags or storage container)
* Some duct tape wrapped on your water bottle (for miscellaneous uses, no need to bring an entire roll)
* Flannel or fleece long sleeve shirt
* Waterproof shoes for showers and river trips.
* **Mandatory**: Sturdy, closed toed, good tread hiking boots. Ankle support is crucial, and preferably water resistant/proof. Athletic shoes/sneakers are not acceptable for hiking.
* Sweatshirt (for layering and when we are in colder temps, especially at night)

## Optional Items

* Earplugs for sleeping and an eye mask if you are sensitive to light.
* HotHands hand warmers if you easily get cold
* Multitool (to open cans, poke holes, cut rope, etc.) – do not place in your carry-on as it will be confiscated.

## What to leave at home

* Valuable or unnecessary jewelry, irreplaceable family objects, all unnecessary credit cards, music speakers
* Any item that is not essential to the course purpose and activities (e.g., hair dryer, curling iron, iron)
* Copies of travel itinerary and your photo identification card with family or friends for emergency contact only

# Transportation and Van Rotations

We will have two 12-passenger rental vans. Each instructor will drive a van with 5-6 students. All your items must travel with you neatly stored. Students will rotate between the vans according to a list to assist with navigation and build a greater sense of community. Individuals must keep vans clean daily (throw out trash, wipe spills, contain personal items). ***No food will be consumed in vehicles.*** Only drinks with screw-on lids will be allowed. Students will rotate through riding in the front passenger seat as Navigator to stay awake and assist with navigation and communication to other van. They are responsible for checking the cooler water and ice levels and notifying instructors when more are needed.

# Requirements during Trip

## Journal Entries

Each participant will keep a composition notebook of legible daily course entries. Entries should include information from lectures, confluences, locations, and reflection. You will also be collecting observations for your project. Journals may be collected throughout the trip and turned in at the end of the trip for grading purposes. More details will be discussed to promote writing and observation skills. The journal is worth 25% of the final grade.

## Confluences

Participants will gather nightly to discuss the day’s events, have students co-lead a short activity, and review the next day’s expectations. Students need their journals to take notes, write reflections, and share observations. Everyone is expected to take an active role in contributing to discussions as part of their grade. ***Participants are expected to arrive (2) minutes before the start time***.

## Student Conduct

You will be participating in an experiential learning course. We have explicit rules and expectations of student conduct to maximize student learning and safety, improve quality of the experience for everyone, and preserve the reputation of UTSA. At all times, you are an UTSA ambassador; people will remember your university and your behavior. Behavioral expectations and rules are posted at the end of this handbook; violations are taken very seriously, and these can result in being sent home from the program and failing the course. Unfortunately, Americans have developed a worldwide reputation of being loud, rude, and inappropriately dressed tourists who tend to overdrink. One of our goals is to change the image to a respectful, courteous, and culturally sensitive visitor. Some basic etiquette rules go a long way in demonstrating respect and professionalism. These include:

* Use titles for anyone new, older, or more trained in a given area than you are (unless they state otherwise).
* Verbally greet someone when you enter a room and use eye contact.
* Say “please”, “thank you”, “no, thank you”, and/or “excuse me” when you approach a stranger to ask something.
* Respect the volume of your surroundings: do not speak too loudly.
* **Be on time.** Be two minutes early and be prepared to start on time. Particularly in academic and business settings, punctuality is a sign of professionalism and respect. Be advised that your participation grade will be reduced for tardiness and you may not be able to participate in certain activities if you are late.
* Take safety seriously. Violations will result in sanctions outlined in Conditions of Participation at the end of this document.
* **You are required to always use the buddy system. We need to be able to find you if you need assistance.**

## No Drama Policy

We have a strict “No Drama” policy. If you have a “High Maintenance” type of personality, consider your choice to apply and/or others who will be participating that may or may not conflict with your personality. We are in this experience together, and your instructors have put in an enormous amount of time planning. Be kind and understanding as we work through any issues that will arise. Treat all participants with respect. If you are verbally or physically abusive to instructors, participants, or the public, or are a danger to yourself or others, we reserve the right to have you removed from the experience. National and state park employees may also ask individuals/groups to leave if park policies (esp. campground noise) are not followed. We want people to remember UTSA Honors College in a positive light, not ‘that’ group that kept them up all night making noise after hours, etc.

## Social Media Etiquette

* No pictures or comments on social media that are negative.
* No posting pictures of individuals without permission. Ask before taking one; do not assume it is permissible.
* No pictures or comments on social media about anything that happens ‘behind the scenes’.
* If a crisis for any participant occurs, we go on “social media lockdown.” Social media lockdown means no information whatsoever goes out on social media. We do not want incomplete information getting to family and friends. There is a specific protocol to make sure family stays fully up to date; UTSA is responsible for these actions.
  + Check in with family through social media if there is an emergency (e.g., natural disaster) is expected and encouraged.
* When posting, use a level of professional judgment, cultural sensitivity, and respect for yourself, peers, UTSA, and the country.

# Housing and Meals

Students will be assigned to ~4 person tents for the trip duration. Instructors have individual tents due to university policy. ***Do not go into a tent that is not assigned to you***. Instructors are not allowed into students’ tents unless there is an emergency where medical assistance is required. We will be staying at park campgrounds where restrooms and shower stalls exist in shared spaces.

Teaching and managing for appropriate self-care is an important part of outdoor education. This applies to eating, hygiene, attire, and with all it’s about being proactive as it’s easier to avoid problems than to fix them. Budget for more than you think you will need as heavy activity and change in temperatures and elevations alter how we eat and drink. Maximize water consumption and reduce caffeine to allow your body to function at its best in constantly changing situations.

Meals are the responsibility of the individual. Most meals will be in a campground setting, so bring what you need (and can fit) like utensils, plate/cup/bowl, etc. You and a partner will be given a 10-gallon storage bin for any cooking items, dry goods, etc. to minimize on equipment needed, to keep food out of tents, and to help minimize space for your clothing bag. Food preferences, allergies, meals/snacks, and dietary conditions vary so plan for what and when you want to eat. Some locations may have options for food and drink purchases; these must be completed within the time scheduled. Students will be given a size limitation that limits their space in coolers and dry goods. There will be 1 large cooler with ice per van for 7 people to share for items that need to stay cool. We will discuss more about appropriate amount of space for each person’s items in the cooler but think about the size of a small shoebox. There will be two large 5-gallon water coolers to refill water bottles but use all opportunities to refill your bottle at the parks. Firewood will be provided when permissible, but plan on not having fires due to fire bans.

# Tobacco products, Vaping, Recreational Drugs, & Alcohol

We want this experience to be positive for everyone, and we are doing a fair amount of exercise at different elevations. These conditions may negatively impact the body’s response to alcohol. Most (if not all) campgrounds do not allow alcohol. No forms of tobacco, vaping products, alcohol, or recreational drugs may be brought, purchased, or consumed on this trip. Individuals found with these items will be promptly removed from the trip, pay for their immediate return trip home, and given a failing grade of ‘F’ for the course. Furthermore, any unprofessional or illegal behavior can result in immediate expulsion. Should any student have changes in behavior that negatively affect the group or interfere with any national/state park or UTSA activities, the individual will pay for their immediate return trip home (via nearest transportation outlet like airport, bus, etc.), and given a failing grade of ‘F’ for the course.

# Health

Bring a personal supply of aspirin/Ibuprofen, allergy medicine, Band-aids, antibiotic cream, etc. If you are allergic to bee stings, foods, or plants, ask your doctor about an ‘Epi-pen’ in case of an allergic reaction. If you wear glasses or contacts, bring a spare pair and contact solution. Please consider we are driving ~1600 miles, so if you easily get motion sickness, think about whether you can eliminate/minimize effects or if this amount of time in a vehicle will be too much discomfort for you.

Your medical insurance should cover health emergencies but bring a full supply of over-the-counter medications and prescription medications and supplements you need in original pharmacy containers, bearing the pharmacy label with ***your*** name. Consider anti-diarrheal and motion sickness tablets, just in case. It is not permissible for a student to give another student ***any*** type of medication.

# Weather

Day- and night-time weather varies on location. Relative humidity and precipitation (rain, snow) varies. Look up average monthly temperatures and precipitation levels for locations to get an idea of what to expect but know weather can change at any time. Cotton is not going to keep you as warm or as dry as synthetic quick-dry clothing. Layering is best for temperature changes. It is not impossible to pack only what you need to be comfortable; it just takes planning to be prepared while camping.

# Concerns

If you have any problems, concerns, or questions, from health to roommates to expectations, talk to Dr. Engates ASAP. Do not let negativity breed; everyone would like to have a great time. We are here to help you and ensure a positive learning experience. We are experienced travelers and teachers, and we have additional resources that can help you navigate your time. We will have daily check-ins and be together for most meals, at minimum, but be sure to contact us if you need something.

# In Case of Emergency

In an emergency (e.g., natural disaster, downed circuits), head to our nearest emergency meeting place: national/state park reception office if safe to do so (or TBD). In the event of an emergency and you can use your phone, follow these steps:

1. Get to the safest place possible.
2. Contact your instructor. She will contact UTSA Honors College and engage resources to help you and coordinate a response.
3. Contact your family.

# Requirements for Class Completion After Travel

Students will be asked to reflect upon their experience and make connections in a five-minute project video presentation by an assigned date within one week of returning from the trip. More details will be given. This video counts 10% of the final grade.

# Itinerary

## Day 1: Sat, April 20, 2024: UTSA Mesquite Living Laboratory (main campus) San Antonio, TX

* NOLS Wilderness First Aid Training Day 1 (8 hours of class + 2-hour confluence)
* Bring lunch, water bottle, notebook.

**Day 2: Sun, April 21, 2024: UTSA Mesquite Living Laboratory**

* NOLS Wilderness First Aid Training Day 2 (8 hours + 1-hr confluence)

**\*\* DAYS 1,2 are separated from DAYS 3-15 to allow additional preparation for trip. \*\***

## Day 3: Sat, May 11, 2024: San Antonio International Airport (SAT) to Montrose, CO

* SWA flight information TBD
* Pick up vans @ airport, drive to Walmart Supercenter for supplies
* Check in at [Montrose KOA](https://koa.com/campgrounds/montrose-black-canyon-natl-park/): showers (Y), laundry (Y)
* Dinner & confluence
* We are staying in Montrose to acclimate to higher elevations for two nights to minimize/avoid ‘mountain altitude sickness’.

**Day 4*: Sun, May 12, 2024: Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, CO***

* Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park
* Hiking, exploration, confluence
* Montrose KOA

**Day 5*: Mon, May 13, 2024: Montrose, CO to Canyonlands National Park, UT to Arches National Park, UT***

* Canyonlands NP: Island in the Sky section
* Sunset hike: Delicate Arch; Petroglyph Trail
* [Devil’s Garden Canyon Wren Campground](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/234059) **No showers**
* Confluence

**Day *6: Tues, May 14, 2024: Arches National Park, UT***

* Hike: Devils Garden (7.9 mi, loop, elevation gain 1085’, est. 3:10 min); confluence

## Day 7: Wed, May 15, 2024: Arches National Park, UT, to Capitol Reef National Park, UT

* [Singletree Campground](https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/fishlake/recarea/?recid=12246) (National Forest)
* TBD; confluence

## Day 8: Thurs. May 16, 2024: Capitol Reef National Park, UT

* Hiking TBD; confluence
* Singletree Campground

## Day 9: Fri, May 17, 2024: Capitol Reef National Park, UT, to Zion National Park, UT

* White water rafting
* [Watchman Campground](https://www.recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/232445?gclid=Cj0KCQjw9rSoBhCiARIsAFOiplnMl-HWvk8xhtymDCdne7xJhG0VaVY9J3PNZcIZLk7O5yr9a5-8CPMaAmzuEALw_wcB), Zion NP
* TBD; confluence

***Day 10: Sat, May 18, 2024: Zion National Park, UT***

* Hike the Narrows trail (if CFS is permissible)
* TBD; confluence
* Watchman Campground

***Day 11: Sun, May 19, 2024: Zion National Park, UT, to Bryce Canyon National Park, UT***

* TBD; confluence
* [Sunset Campground](https://www.nps.gov/brca/planyourvisit/sunsetcampground.htm), Bryce Canyon NP

## Day 12: Mon, May 20, 2024: Bryce Canyon National Park, UT

* 3-hr horseback ride into canyons
* TBD; confluence
* Sunset Campground

## Day 13 Tues, May 21, 2024: Bryce Canyon National Park, UT, to Mesa Verde National Park, CO

* Antelope Canyon, AZ tour
* [Morefield Campground](https://www.visitmesaverde.com/lodging-camping/morefield-campground/) showers, laundry
* Tours: Cliff Palace, Balcony House; confluence

## Day 14 Wed, May 22, 2024: Mesa Verde National Park, CO

* TBD; confluence
* Morefield Campground

## Day 15: Thurs, May 23, 2024: Mesa Verde National Park, CO to Montrose International Airport, CO

* Check in for SWA Flight; Estimated arrival in SAT is XX:XX CT

## Grading

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 3 Mandatory Pre-Trip Spring Meetings | 5% |
| NOLS WFA Camping Weekend: NOLS certification (April 20-21, 2024) | 15% |
| Journal Entries | 25% |
| Active Participation during Meetings, Activities & Trips | 45% |
| Post-Trip Video Presentation (5 min) | 10% |

Ask questions if you need feedback or clarification on how grades are being determined to best fit you for success. Please do not simply expect an ‘A’ +/- because you are an honors student. You will receive what you earn. Final grades will be determined using UTSA’s +/- system. Grades will be posted in ASAP by June 1, 2024. Any discussion regarding grades must be in person by appointment the week before the fall semester begins as faculty may not be available to meet during summer.

## Mandatory Pre-Trip Meetings

It is mandatory for students to attend each pre-trip meeting or points will be deducted from the grade for the course:

* To be on time (arriving no later than (2) minutes before the start time so you can be seated and ready to start on time)
* To stay the entire time
* To be prepared: e.g., bringing necessary documents, notebook, and pen
* To actively participate in discussion: e.g., trying to get to know participants, be proactive about getting involved in the activity, stay focused on tasks, ask questions, offer input, put away electronics unless used for an activity.
* Note: Absences will **only** be excused in emergency situations. Meeting dates/times/locations will be given well in advance so plan accordingly. In the event of an emergency, proper documentation as per UTSA regulations is required, and an alternative assignment will need to be completed to receive credit for the missed portion of the grade.

## Journal Entries Information & Rubric

Journal entries are worth 25% of the course grade. Journals will be checked during the NOLS-WFA weekend, at midpoint during the long trip, and again when students turn in their journals at the end of the trip. Journals will be reviewed by Honors College faculty and released for pick up later in the summer. Since each student must complete a post-trip video presentation, it is highly advised you take pictures of journal entries to help prepare since you will not have your journal to do so.

Each student will bring a composition notebook (~70 pages) to record information daily throughout the trip and pre-trip meetings. General information should include travel times and descriptions of landscapes, weather conditions, who you are traveling with that day, knowledge learned from lectures/apps/exhibits/speakers/etc., questions and/or comments to bring up during confluences, descriptions of surroundings and events, etc. Comment on any challenges incurred and what was done to work through those challenges. Include thoughts on how actions of the day will relate to your post-trip video content (e.g., emerging themes, areas of significance). Instructors may give a confluence prompt and request a response. Finally, a self-reflection (1+ page(s)) about the student’s progress and development of learning objectives in addition to planning thoughts about his/her final video presentation should close out the daily entry. It is expected that each day’s entry will be at least 2+ filled pages (front side only) due to amount of information requested. The more information recorded, the easier it will be to put together the post-trip video because attention to detail will aid your recall memory on such a fast-paced, packed trip.

Ask for clarification if needed. You are welcome to show your journal to the instructor(s) to see if you are making entries as expected.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | 4 (76-100%) | 3 (51-75%) | 2 (26-50%) | 1 (0-25%) |
| Daily entries | All days accounted for in collection period. Entries go well above minimum page requirement | All days accounted for in collection period with entries meet minimum page requirement OR 1-2 days missing/do not meet minimum requirement | All days accounted for but entries lacking OR variations exist (some days meet requirement, others missing/don’t meet requirement) | Lack of effort to record daily information is evident as shown by few entries and little requested information overall. |
| Content | Detailed and complete information is included above and beyond what is expected in terms of quality, advanced thought, critique/comments, etc.  Must be legible. | Detailed and complete information included satisfies requirement at a minimum expectation (no additional effort shown). Information presented could be developed more to show critical thought has been attempted. Legible. | Information may be sometimes detailed but is inconsistent in completion, frequently missing requested information, may not be legible at times. | Lack of effort to no effort shown regarding content requested. |

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## Post-Trip 5 Minute Video Presentation Information

The final assignment upon return is to create a five-minute video presentation regarding various components of the trip as well as reflection and feedback. This video will be viewed by the instructors and other UTSA Honors College faculty and administration. Your pictures and journal entries will be of greatest importance to help put the video together. UTSA Office of Digital Learning can assist with video creation using the Adobe Creative Cloud Suite (free and available to all students) if you do not have something of your own. More details will be given with a rubric. Students are encouraged to ask questions to clarify as time gets closer to the trip.

# Conditions of Participation for UTSA Honors College Program: Trailblazing the National Parks 2024

You have chosen to take advantage of a study-away program opportunity provided by UTSA Honors College. This is an educational endeavor, with a series of curricular goals that you will need to achieve. This program **is not a vacation**. You will be engaged in experiential learning in minimal camping conditions and experiences at state and national parks. There is required, additional coursework at UTSA before leaving and upon return. It is expected you will actively participate in all official program activities and follow instructions and directions of instructors. To maximize your value added for this experience, it is necessary you behave respectfully and maturely and that you are collegial, respectful, and considerate to others for the entirety of the program. Any activity that interferes with the educational endeavor— your learning **or** learning of others—will not be tolerated. Any activity that potentially damages the relationship between UTSA, Dr. Karen Engates, Mr. Eliot Howard, the United States Government, national and state parks, and/or our host communities will not be tolerated and will be considered a sanctionable violation that may result in disciplinary action. Failure to comply with conditions listed in this document may have a negative impact on your course grade and could result in you being dismissed and returned home at your expense. Examples of non-tolerated behavior include, but are not limited to:

* Academic dishonesty
* Obstruction or disruption of teaching or other program activities
* Verbal negativity toward instructor(s), participants, program, Honors College, and/or UTSA
* Unauthorized absence from program activities
* Travel without at least one other student and without explicit approval from Dr. Engates or Mr. Howard
* Failure to attend daily check-ins evening reflection/confluence discussions
* Use/threats of physical violence, sexual misconduct, bullying, and/or sexual harassment
* Disrespect, unprofessional behavior toward instructors, students, and other individuals we interact with while on the trip
* Openly abusing the customs and mores of the community and/or violating state/national laws
* Damage or destruction of property of others, university (including lodging), or cultural sites that we visit
* Abuse or misuse of alcohol or prescription drugs if their use leads you to do any of the following:
  + Are underage (alcohol) or not the intended patient of prescription medication
  + Be unable to conduct coursework or miss a scheduled field trip, lecture, or other program event
  + Become ill
  + Be disrespectful, engage in inappropriate or destructive behaviors, disturb others, or disrupt program events
  + Engage in behavior that causes embarrassment to the other members of the group, the faculty member(s), or host(s)
  + Engage in risky activities or make decisions that endanger yourself or others
* Bringing alcohol to program sites to consume, distribute, or share with members of the group
* Using illegal substances, including marijuana
* Disturbing others at night (we will follow the quiet hours of campgrounds)
* Driving a personal vehicle, whether your own or that of somebody else
* Bringing unauthorized guests to program facilities, including lodging and clinic/hospital, or activities
  + Students’ family members and friends are not allowed, by UTSA policy, on program-related travel, event or activity.
* No smoking, vaping, or other tobacco-related products allowed on trip
* Being absent for any scheduled pick-up or departure, except in cases of emergencies
* Violating the UTSA Code of Student Conduct in other ways while on the program
* Engaging in another activity the instructor(s) consider to be a detriment to the overall program purpose

Your instructors have authority to take actions they deem appropriate to address issues. Any student or staff member caught using illegal drugs will be dismissed from the program and sent home. Breaking other rules may result in a verbal warning for the first offense or immediate sanctions depending on situation severity. Repeated offenses will bring other sanctions, up to and including program dismissal. Such actions may include, but not be limited to: verbal warnings, alterations of the individual’s involvement in activities and expectations, program dismissal, etc. Action by your instructors does not prevent or in any way preclude UTSA Student Conduct and Community Standards from also taking appropriate action upon your return to UTSA. Instructors will be unable to assist any student, whose actions violate or allegedly violate any local laws, regulations, etc., including any actions that lead to incarceration, or other criminal or civil penalties, nor is it their responsibility to do so. A dismissed student will not receive a refund for the program, tuition, fees, and other costs associated with enrollment; and the student shall bear additional costs of immediate transport home. A dismissed student will receive a grade of ‘F’ in the course.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read, understand and agree to the above paragraphs.

Student Printed Name & Signature Date

Parent/Guardian Printed Name & Signature [if Student is under 18 years of age\*] Date

\*Student **must** be 18 years old by first date of travel.