

WVU Tech Outdoor Orientation Program Essential Eligibility Criteria

The West Virginia University Institute of Technology's Tech Adventures program offers the Tech Outdoor Orientation (TOO) program to new students as a unique way to learn about the university, make friends and increase self-confidence by challenging themselves to outdoor adventures. Many of the sites and venues for the activities included in the TOO program are challenging, remote and exposed to nature's elements.

The health and safety of our students and staff are a top priority, along with the educative quality of the program experience for all participants. To achieve essential group goals, the individuals on each program must be fully capable of and committed to learning and using outdoor skills, meeting physical and social challenges, and taking care of themselves and each other.

The Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC) are applied to all students on Tech Outdoor Orientation (TOO) programs. A qualified person meets the general EEC for Tech Adventures and the EEC for the specific TOO program activities and program areas. If an applicant does not meet specific criteria, Tech Adventures might be able to accommodate an applicant, but will not do so if it significantly alters the fundamental nature of the program activity, jeopardizes the health and safety of program participants or staff, or places an undue administrative or financial burden on WVU Tech or Tech Adventures.

General Eligibility Criteria for ALL Tech Outdoor Orientation program participants and activities:

- Able to live and function in an outdoor camp setting without access to electricity for 6 days.
- Able to understand verbal and visual instructions individually and in a group setting, and follow such instructions whether supervised or not.
- Able to comprehend hazards and safety concerns when explained, and to adhere to safety policies and procedures even when staff and contracted guides are not present.
- Learn and practice Leave No Trace (LNT) outdoor ethics and techniques.
- Able to identify and recognize hazards posed by the environment (e.g., steep or uneven terrain, moving water, sun, wind, cold, etc.) and other participants (e.g., fatigue, state of mind and other influencers of judgment and decision making).
- Able to effectively communicate to others personal distress, injury or need for assistance, and communicate to others any hazards and dangers that they perceive.
- Able to stay properly hydrated and nourished, by day or night, and learn skills for self-care, including proper hygiene and use of clothing and equipment.
- Able to refrain from the use of alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances, and any misuse of prescription or OTC drugs. If using prescription drugs, able to follow correct dosage and usage and keep them in good condition between resupplies (up to eight days) with or without instructor assistance.
- Able to contribute to a safe social and learning environment and maintain appropriate relationships with other group members and instructors, refrain from sexual activity, harassment and bullying, and all other behavior that disrupts the learning of others or the cohesion of the group.

Hiking Activities

- Able to move continuously over 1 mile of uneven terrain at a moderate pace unassisted, or with minor assistance, while carrying a small daypack weighing 10 – 15 lbs.

Challenge Course Activities

- Able to wear all safety equipment as instructed.

Rock Climbing Activities

- Able to wear a climbing harness and helmet correctly.
- Able to participate in belaying and climbing activities independently or with minimal assistance.

Whitewater Rafting Activities

- Wear all protective equipment recommended/required by rafting outfitter and/or state law.
- Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water
- Be able to swim or be comfortable in the water, including fast moving water while wearing a personal floatation device.
- Independently maintain a seated body position with limited back support while paddling raft in turbulent whitewater. Adaptive equipment may be used, if needed this equipment cannot impede nor lessen the effectiveness of safety procedures or equipment. No participant may be strapped or belted into a raft or adaptive equipment while on water.
- Get in and out of raft from shore independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
- If in water, independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face-up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket
- Reenter the raft on water independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
- In the event of a capsize, independently get out from under capsized raft, remain face up in water with personal floatation device, and identify, make progress to and ascend shoreline with or without instruction.

Please Note: Tech Adventures values diversity and a positive learning environment for all. Currently, our program does not specialize in experiences for people with disabilities or with significant mental, emotional or behavioral challenges. Because Tech Adventures is not a therapeutic program, and our staff are not specifically trained in adaptive outdoor recreation, individual, disability-related accommodations must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with the assistance of the Office of Accessibility Services, to ensure the Essential Eligibility Criteria is met.

If you have any questions on these Essential Eligibility Criteria or on your ability to meet one or more criteria please contact the Tech Adventures staff at 304-929-0327 or TechAdventures@mail.wvu.edu.