Foothills Mountaineers
Scramble Leadership Requirements

Approved June 2023

Definitions

The *Leadership Chair* refers to the Foothills Alpine Scrambling Leadership Sub-Committee Chair, if that role is filled. Otherwise, it refers to the Foothills Alpine Scrambling Committee Chair.

The *Committee Chair* always refers to the Foothills Alpine Scrambling Committee Chair.

Regular Season refers to the spring, summer, or fall timeframe, where snow is either unlikely to be encountered or is consolidated. Trips during the *regular season* are posted using the Alpine Scramble template, as opposed to the Winter Scramble template.

The terms *leader-in-training* and *mentee* are used interchangeably.

Scramble Leader – Regular Season

Prerequisites:
To apply to become a regular-season Scramble Leader for the Foothills Branch of the Mountaineers, a candidate must meet all of these prerequisites:

- ❒ **Mountaineers Membership** – must be a current member of the Mountaineers, at least 18 years old, with a signed Release and Indemnity Agreement on file with the Club.
- ❒ **Scrambling or Basic Climbing Graduate** – must have graduated from a Mountaineers Scrambling course or Mountaineers Basic Climbing course or earned equivalency in either.
- ❒ **Rock and Snow Scramble Experience** – must have successfully completed numerous Mountaineers scrambles with several different scramble leaders. Assistant leader experience on scrambles is highly recommended.
- ❒ **Rope and Anchors skills** – must know how to set and use ropes to help scramblers uncomfortable on scramble terrain. These skills are taught in the Ropes and Anchors workshop offered periodically by the Scramble Committee.
- ❒ **Group Leadership** – must have completed the Mountaineers Foundations of Leadership eLearning course and a scrambling-specific, scenarios-based seminar offered by the Foothills branch.
- ❒ **Navigation** – must have a current Mountaineers Basic Navigation Course badge.
- ❒ **First Aid** – must have a current Wilderness First Aid (WFA), Mountaineering-Oriented First Aid (MOFA), or Wilderness First Responder (WFR) badge, or a Wilderness EMT (WEMT) card.
- ❒ **Avalanche Safety** – must have a Mountaineers Avalanche Awareness, Avalanche Level 1, or Avalanche Level 2 badge.
- ❒ **Familiarity with the Scramble Curriculum** – must have instructed at a number of scramble field trips including two out of three of the following: Snow, Rock, Experience Field Trip.

Process:

Application Review

Once a candidate meets ALL of the above prerequisites, they may apply to become a Scramble Leader by filling out the Scramble Leader Application. The Leadership Chair will verify that all prerequisites have been met.

The Leadership Chair has the authority to unilaterally reject applications that do not meet one or more of the prerequisites. Alternatively, for exceptionally well-qualified individuals, the Leadership Chair may recommend the waiver of one or more prerequisites by forwarding the application to an impartial three-person panel chosen by the Committee Chair which shall not include the Leadership Chair. If the panel concurs with the Leadership Chair's recommendation the relevant prerequisite(s) shall be waived; otherwise, the application shall be rejected.

Applicant Feedback Review

Once the application is approved, the Leadership Chair will solicit feedback in order to approve the applicant to lead *mentored scrambles*. Feedback shall be gathered from the following sources:

- comments from leaders identified on the application regarding the applicant's judgment and people skills
- the applicant's feedback history in any committees for which the applicant is already an activity leader
- the applicant's participation notes
- statements from anyone in the Committee

Upon review of the feedback, the Leadership Chair may approve the applicant as a "leader-in-training" and approve them to lead *mentored scrambles*. If, based on review of the feedback, the Leadership Chair believes the applicant should be rejected, the approved application and all accumulated feedback shall be forwarded to the Committee Chair who shall assemble an impartial three-person panel for review. The panel shall not include the Leadership Chair. The panel shall review the application and all accumulated feedback, as well as the Leadership Chair's rationale for recommending the applicant be rejected. No leadership applicant shall be rejected except by majority vote of the review panel. If rejected, the Leadership Chair shall summarize the rationale of the panel to the applicant but shall preserve the anonymity of the source of any feedback.

Mentored Scrambles

New leaders-in-training must lead at least two (2) mentored scrambles with different mentors. Mentees should lead at least one snow and one rock scramble. Current climb leaders need at least one mentored scramble. Destinations and mentors are subject to the approval of the Leadership Chair.

The Leadership Chair shall maintain a list of approved mentor leaders for the Foothills Branch and shall establish criteria for the approval and maintenance of mentor leaders. The mentee should use approved mentors from the list; however, mentors not on the list may be approved on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of the Leadership Chair. Mentees should avoid choosing mentors from whom they may not receive an objective review, such as familiar, frequent climbing partners, close friends, or those for whom they've frequently been an assistant leader.

The mentored scramble is an end-to-end exercise in how the mentee plans, organizes and runs a safe, enjoyable trip. Mentees are encouraged to learn as much as possible from the mentor and to self-reflect afterwards what they did well and what they can improve on.

Additionally, the mentor must critically evaluate the mentee's abilities with regard to trip planning, group management, mountain safety, including identification of and actions to

minimize hazards such as exposure, rockfall, avalanches, and changing weather. These skills can only be evaluated in the field, and mentors may be the only individuals to observe these skills.

Final Review

Upon completion of the mentee's minimum number of mentored leads, the Leadership Chair shall review the formal feedback from the mentors as well as participant feedback from the trips, if provided. At this point the Leadership Chair has the sole discretion to grant the leader-in-training the Scramble Leader badge with full permission to post regular-season trips through the Foothills branch.

If the Leadership Chair identifies an area of concern in the mentee's mentored lead feedback, the Leadership Chair, with the concurrence of the Committee Chair, may require an additional mentored lead and/or additional training. The specific focus area to be addressed must be shared with the mentee and, if applicable, the mentor.

Scramble Leader – Winter Season

Prerequisites:

To apply to become a Winter Scramble Leader, a candidate must meet all of these prerequisites:

- ❒ **Scramble Leader** – must be an approved, current, and active regular-season Scramble Leader for the Foothills Scrambling Committee. However, an otherwise qualified applicant may apply to become a regular-season Scramble Leader and Winter Scramble Leader at the same time.
- ❒ **Trip Experience** – must have been the Primary Leader on at least five (5) Mountaineers trips of any kind with any committee.
- ❒ **Avalanche Training** – must have a Mountaineers Avalanche Level 1 or Avalanche Level 2 badge. *The Avalanche Awareness badge is not sufficient.*
- ❒ **Crampon and Snowshoe Experience** – must have documented experience using crampons and snowshoes on multiple occasions.
- ❒ **Emergency Winter Overnight Shelter Training** – must have completed a course, module, field trip or equivalency that covers building emergency shelters in winter conditions.
- ❒ **Winter Experience** – must have a breadth of winter experience demonstrated by participation in at least three (3) qualifying club-sponsored activities. Qualifying activities must have occurred in winter and can include winter scrambles, intermediate snowshoeing trips, backcountry ski trips, or alpine, ice or glacier climbs. Snow scrambles, beginner or basic snowshoeing trips, and cross-country ski trips are not considered sufficiently rigorous and do not count toward this prerequisite.

Process:

Once a candidate meets ALL of the above prerequisites, they may apply to become a Winter Scramble Leader by filling out the Winter Scramble Leader Application. The Leadership Chair will verify that all prerequisites have been met and shall unilaterally reject applications that do not meet one or more of the prerequisites; otherwise, the application shall be approved.

A key skill for Winter Scramble Leaders above and beyond the duty of a regular-season Scramble Leader is the ability to plan and safely execute trips that may travel through avalanche terrain. If the Leadership Chair feels the applicant has already demonstrated this skill as a leader (for example, as an intermediate snowshoe or backcountry ski leader), the Leadership Chair, with the concurrence of the Committee Chair, may grant the candidate the Winter Scramble Leader badge with no further requirements.

If the candidate does not have sufficient experience leading trips in winter and/or through avalanche terrain, the candidate shall be required to develop and demonstrate these skills. A mentored winter scramble would certainly satisfy this requirement, but the Leadership Chair may allow a more limited exercise such as planning a winter trip and simulating a winter trailhead briefing (with particular emphasis on the avalanche conditions, forecast, and plan).

The focus is to provide the candidate with a mentor who can provide advice on planning winter trips and feedback, not to evaluate whether a candidate is fit to lead. As such, once the mentor reports completion of the exercise to the Leadership Chair, the Leadership Chair shall grant the candidate the Winter Scramble Leader badge with full permission to post winter scrambles through the Foothills branch.