

LECTURE #4

Decision Making, Group Dynamics, and GAR

| Lecture 4 Readings and Topics | |
|---|------------|
| Decision Making & Group Dynamics | |
| Climb Classification | |
| Basic Climbs | |
| Assigned Reading (complete prior to Lecture #4) | |
| <i>The Freedom of the Hills, 9th edition</i> Leadership | Chapter 22 |
| <i>Basic Rock & Glacier Climbing Course Manual</i> All Lecture #4 Material | |
| Additional Resources | |
| <u>See handouts</u> | |

CLIMBING CLASSIFICATION SYSTEMS

It is important to understand how climbs are classified so you can better assess the climbs you are interested in, and your preparedness before requesting permission. Remember, your climb leaders are not guides, it is not their job to make sure you accomplish the climb. They are expecting you to know your skills and to be physically and psychologically prepared for the goal.

THE NATIONAL CLIMBING CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM (NCCS)

The NCCS assigns grades to describe the overall difficulty of a route in terms of time and technical route difficulty, taking the following factors in to account: length of the climb, number of pitches, average pitch difficulty, difficulty of the hardest pitch, commitment, route-finding problems, and ascent time. It should be emphasized that with the increasing grade, the increasing level of psychological preparation and commitment is necessary. This grading assumes the party is competent, psychologically and physically, and ready for the expected level of climbing.

Grade I: Normally requires several hours, can be of any technical difficulty

Grade II: Typically half a day, any technical difficulty

Grade III: Requires a day to do the technical portion; any technical difficulty

Grade IV: Requires a full day for the technical portion; the hardest pitch is no less than a 5.7

Grade V: Requires a day and a half; the hardest pitch is at least 5.8

Grade VI: A multiday excursion with difficult free climbing and/or aid climbing

Grade VII: Requires at least 10 days of suffering on a huge wall, in a remote area. Climbing grades are at least as difficult as VI, but other factors are increasing in intensity

YOSEMITE DECIMAL SYSTEM

This system categorizes terrain according to the techniques and physical difficulties encountered during a climb.

Class 1: Hiking on a trail.

Class 2: Simple scrambling, with the possible occasional use of hands.

Class 3: Scrambling; hands are used for balance and a rope might be carried.

Class 4: Simple climbing, often with exposure. A rope is often used, and a fall could be fatal. Natural protection can typically be found.

Class 5: Rock climbing, involves exposure. A rope is used, belaying and protection (natural or artificial) is used to protect the leader from a long fall. Class 5 climbs are rated 5.0-5.15.

THE MOUNTAINEERS RATINGS

The Mountaineers use the above rating systems to classify all activities into categories: hiking, scrambling, climbing, etc.

- Hike – Grade I, Class 1
- Scramble – Typically Grade I, can be Grade II, Class 2-4
- Basic Alpine – Typically Grade I, can be Grade II, Class 3-5
- Intermediate Alpine – Typically Grade II or higher, Class 3-5.

DIFFICULTY RATINGS

Activities are further broken down into difficulty ratings, for purposes of the Basic Climbing Course, you are interested in difficulty ratings of: Basic Alpine, Basic Glacier, and Basic Rock. The difficulty rating will often also include a strenuousness and technical rating. The technical difficulty and strenuousness is determined by comparison of the particular climb to other basic climbs. The scale is from 1 to 5, with 1 being the easiest and 5 hardest.

- Technical rating : refers to difficulty of the climbing moves and exposure
- Strenuousness rating: refers to the level of conditioning required, both aerobic and strength.
- Difficulty type (rock, glacier, or alpine) is what you get credit for by completing the climb.

LEADER RATINGS

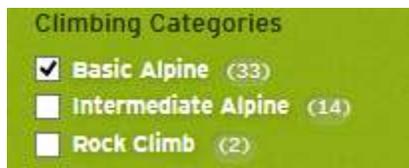
New to the website is the leader rating. For a leader to list a climb, they have to put in a rating. There is not currently a standard set as to how a leader should rate a climb, but it is assumed they rate it based off of the overall difficulty of the climb and pace they want to keep. We suggest, that you take the leader rating lightly, and if you are concerned with the rating and your abilities, email the leader.

BASIC CLIMBS

NAVIGATING THE WEBSITE - FINDING BASIC CLIMBS

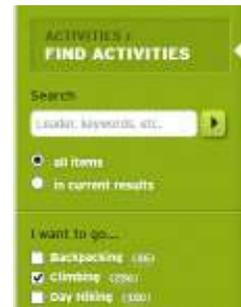
Step 1: Click the Climbing box under the Find Activities Page (see picture to the right)

Step 2: Scroll to the bottom of the Find Activities bar to the “Climbing Categories”



heading. Click Basic Alpine Climb – this will pull up all basic glacier, rock and alpine climbs. ALL listing will pull up to the right of the activities bar (Ex. Listing, see image below). Listing will show: the name of the peak, the route, number of available spots for leaders and

participants, the name of the leader, the branch the leader is from, and the date(s) of the climb. Most listing will show the difficulty rating (type of climb you get credit for, strenuousness and technical rating). Some of the listing will have a short “description” of the climb, which is input by the leader, so will change from climb to climb. Ex. “Olympus and Tom, oh yeah!”



Basic Alpine Climb - Mount Olympus/Blue Glacier

CLIMBING TRIP

Olympus and Tom, oh yeah!

Difficulty: Technical 3, Strenuous 4, Basic Glacier Climb

Fri, Jul 20, 2018 - Mon, Jul 23, 2018

Prerequisites, Leader's Permission Required

AVAILABILITY:

3 participants on waitlist
1 leader on waitlist

Registration opens May 8

Tacoma Branch

LEADER: Jill Uthoff



To look for a particular type of climb (basic rock, alpine, or glacier) go to the Advanced Search Options button and click what you are looking for.

To look for a climb by Branch find the “With this branch...” heading and click the branch you are looking for. The listings to the left will be all the climbs being led by leaders from the specified branch.

NOTE: It is important to mention that the same climb can be listed different ways (ex. Mount Olympus can be listed as a glacier climb or basic alpine climb- either way you get credit for a glacier climb). The listing is based off the way the leader chooses to list it, and this is beyond what you need to worry about. Either way, the climb will still show up in the listings even if you search for basic glacier climbs and it is on the website as a glacier climb.

IMPORTANT INFO FOUND ON THE CLIMB PAGE

Here is an example of the information that you can find on the website about basic climbs. Make sure you are paying attention to the following information:

- **Date(s) of the climb**
- **Difficulty** - tells you the type of climb you get credit for, and its strenuousness/technical difficulty compared to other basic climbs. Remember however, that strenuousness and technical difficulty can be subjective qualities. They can also change with season (spring, summer, fall), but will remain the same on the website.
- **Mileage**
- **Elevation Gain**
- **Leader's Notes:** ALWAYS read all the leader's notes prior to signing up for a climb. They will put any information that they think you need to know about the climb and/or signing up in here. Follow the leader's notes.
- **Trip Reports:** Can give you good beta on the climb, and will typically discuss route conditions and concerns.
- **Roster:** Look to see who else is signed up for the climb.
- **Required Equipment:** This list is a recommendation, the leader should send out an email with the required gear.
- **Links to full route/place details:** ALWAYS look at this information. This page has A TON of useful information:
 - It typically has a good description of the climb
 - Driving directions
 - Approach
 - Ascent Route
 - Descent Route
 - Trip Profile
 - Equipment
 - Important Notes about the climb
 - Weather
 - Location of the climb
 - Red Tape – parking passes needed or park entrance fees
 - Maximum Party Size

Basic Alpine Climb - Mount Olympus/Blue Glacier

Olympus and Tom, oh yeah!

▶ Fri, Jul 20, 2018 – Mon, Jul 23, 2018
 ▶ Committee: Tacoma Basic Alpine Climbing
 ▶ Activity Type: Climbing
 ▶ Climbing Category: Basic Alpine
 ▶ Audience: Adults

▶ Difficulty: Technical 3, Strenuous 4, Basic Glacier Climb
 ▶ Leader Rating: Challenging
 ▶ Mileage: 44.0 mi
 ▶ Elevation Gain: 7,400 ft

▶ Cancellation & Refund Policy
 ▶ Availability: FULL, 4 on waitlist (8 capacity)
 ▶ Assistant Leader Availability: FULL, 1 on waitlist (4 capacity)

Meeting place and time
TBD

Leader's notes
Priority for Tacoma Basic Students

| Route/Place | Roster | Required Equipment | Trip Reports |
|-------------------------------------|--------|--------------------|--------------|
| MOUNT OLYMPUS/BLUE GLACIER | | | |
| ▶ Recommended Maps: USGS Mt Olympus | | | |
| ▶ See full route/place details. | | | |

TRIP PROFILE

| SEGMENT | TIME (HOURS) | ELEVATION GAIN (FEET) |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Seattle to Trailhead | 5-6 | |
| Trailhead to Camp | 1 day (10-13) | 3,622' |
| Camp to Summit | 6-8 | 3,765' |
| Summit to Camp | 3-4 | |
| Camp to Trailhead | 1 day | |

SIGNING UP FOR BASIC CLIMBS

- Watch the website, climbs are listed all year long. Don't wait until the last minute/end of the season to try to get on/schedule your climbs. Leaders don't like to go out when weather is crappy, they don't care that you might need the climb to graduate.
 - Basic Alpine Climbs – typically March/April to Sept/Oct
 - Basic Rock Climbs – typically May to Early September, or as long as it stays dry
 - Basic Glacier Climbs – typically May to Mid-September, depends on the amount of snow that year
- Sign up for the waitlist, there is a good chance you will get on the climb. People's schedule change with work or family emergencies, they get hurt and can't go, they get sick, etc. Often you can get on a climb last minute by being on the waitlist. If you don't want to get on a climb last minute, cancel yourself from the waitlist.
- Many climb leaders require leader's permission, to sign up for their climb so be sure to obtain the climb leader's permission or you will likely be dropped from the climb.

NOTE: In the email to the leader (especially a leader that you do not know), it is helpful to include:

- Mount Si or other conditioner time with “x” amount of weight.
 - Let them know you are a Basic Student from the Tacoma Branch (or Grad after you complete the course).
 - Other climbs you have successfully completed, including personal climbs.
 - Why you want to do the climb.
- Climb leaders may have additional restrictions which they will typically explain in the leader’s notes section of the climb. Make sure to read all the leaders notes before you request permission for a climb.
 - If there is a Mentored Leader, email them as well asking permission.
 - Make sure you understand what you are signing up for. Look at the difficulty rating, mileage, elevation gain, read trip reports. A lot of times the leader will let you know if they plan on moving quickly and/or if the climb is more challenging because they are doing it in a day or shorter time period than the climb is typically done. Make sure you can accurately assess whether your conditioning/physical ailments will allow you to do a climb of the nature.
 - You can request permission for climbs prior to passing required field trips, however participation on the climb is always contingent on you passing the required field trips.

GENERAL INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

- Climbs for course credit must be done with different approved climb leaders and be officially listed on the Mountaineers’ website. This helps expose students to a variety of climbing styles and allows for them to be assessed by various leaders.
- Students should be aware that some leaders may be leading routes with which they are unfamiliar and have never attempted. Leaders will typically inform students prior to the climb when such routes are to be taken. During climbs, students should be prepared to assist in route finding and other tasks as requested by the leader.
- Climb leaders will hold pre-climb meetings by phone, email, or in person. Failure to attend or respond quickly to a pre-climb meeting may result in being dropped from the climb.
- Successful completion of a Basic Climb for the Tacoma Mountaineers, requires that the students summit. The leader’s analysis of successful completion will include the safety, skills, conditioning, and attitude of the student.
- Students are typically expected to carry ropes and other group gear as assigned by the leader. Refusal to carry such group gear may result in the student not receiving credit for the climb or not being allowed to go at all.
- **Keep In Mind That All Of Your Trips Are Led By Volunteers** - Without their help, we could not offer you the chance to go on these climbs. You may not always agree with the leader, but on a climb, the leader(s) decisions are final.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY PRIOR TO AND ON CLIMBS

Be Knowledgeable

- AGAIN the leaders are not guides. You should be looking at weather, finding your own climb beta, have route information, maps, and GPS tracks. Be a responsible member in the climbing party.
- Have a general understanding of the rigorousness and exposure on the climb (you will find this while looking for route beta).
- Have a good self-assessment of your (psychological preparedness) risk tolerance compared to the exposure on the climb. If you are unsure, have a discussion with the leader.
- Make sure you remember your skills (ie how to tie into a rope, how to set up a rappel/belay, how to coil the rope, etc.), and if you don’t remember, read about it or look it up prior to the climb. Ask the leader if on a climb.

Conditioning:

- Have passed a conditioner hike, and maintained adequate conditioning to be prepared for the climb.
- Have a good self-assessment of whether or not a climb is in-line with your current fitness level and speed. If you are unsure if you have proper physical conditioning for a climb, ask the leader for their expectations.

Equipment: Bring the proper equipment.

- The equipment you need for a particular climb should be covered in a pre-climb discussion and/or it is listed on the website. If you are unsure, ask the leader and/or just bring it. Extra equipment can always be left in the car.
- When packing, place the equipment you will need first where it is accessible, not at the bottom of your pack.
- If you rent equipment, such as crampons or a tent, be sure to have them properly adjusted or practice setting it up **prior** to the climb.
- Let the leader know what you have for group gear (name the equipment, say jetboil and not just stove) in the pre-climb info gathering email. This will help the leader expedite the pre-climb discussion.

Be Courteous:

- **Be On Time or Early-** Nobody wants to wait around in an often dark parking lot, wondering if you slept in or are simply not coming! With some leaders, being five minutes late means you missed the climb.
- **Respect Others On The Climb** - Everyone is going to find out that at times they may be a little apprehensive about a part of the climb. Ridicule is not enjoyable and will not be tolerated. ALWAYS help and encourage others.
- **Do not hold the group up** - A vast majority of mountaineers bring cameras on trips; remember not to hold up the party just to take pictures. Put your camera away if a leader asks you to.
- **One Team:** You are responsible for each other – Take care and help each other out! Pay attention and make sure everyone is adequately eating and drinking. The climbing party will always stay together (unless there is a need to send for help).
- **If Possible, Car-Pool for Climbs** - Remember to reimburse the driver for gas. 14 cents/mile per person is recommended. It is common practice to stop on the return trip for a meal. If you drive and must return quickly after a climb, inform any potential riders that you do not intend to stop on the return trip.
- **If You Must Cancel A Trip** - Cancel at the earliest possible date. Your fellow climbers are counting on you. Timely notification also allows another climber to take your place on the climb and helps avoid the cancellation of climbs.

LECTURE 4 KEY POINTS, OBJECTIVES AND MENTOR MOMENT

Key points:

1. Understand the different rating system
 - What is the difference in class 3, class 4, and class 5 climbs.
 - What does exposure mean? Try to better understand your exposure and risk tolerance.
2. What are you responsible for prior to and on a climb? Why is it important that you know these things?

“Mentor Moment”

1. Technical skills:
 - Make sure you are practicing your Field Trip 5 skills. Lead belaying and rappelling are critical skills. You can fail at that this field trips, and likely will **NOT** be retested.
 - Also make sure you have started looking at the 3:1 (Z) pulley crevasse rescue handout and 2:1 (C) pulley system
2. If you haven't already, watch the [low-impact video](#) and take the Low Impact Recreation quiz, you will need to earn this badge for graduation.
3. Start looking for (wta.org or the mountaineers website) and completing your stewardship activities. It's always best get it done before the weather starts to get nice and you want to do other things.
4. When you are looking for route beta we suggest you use the following website, but keep in mind there are plenty of good books and blogs out there too.
 - The Moutaineers
 - Summitpost: <https://www.summitpost.org/>
 - Mountain Project: <https://www.mountainproject.com/>
5. Caltopo and Gaia are also great resources for GPS tracks and making/printing maps. Having the map printed or downloaded to your phone is super helpful. Pictures of the route from the above sources can also be super useful when looking for the route on climbs.
6. Go back to your mountain weather lecture for good website for weather on climbs.
7. If you are unsure of your exposure/risk tolerance a great way to figure this out is to go on scrambles, and get out in steep snow (hike to panorama point or up to alta vista, taking the steep open ridge) or on rock (Mount Si haystack). If you are concerned about doing these things. Ask a mentor to take you. The more exposure you get to these situations the easier they become.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Conditioners must be passed, prior to FT 5 or any climbs.
- Lead belay and Rappels skills test are done at FT 5, make sure you are working on those skills.
- Start thinking about getting those stewardship activities completed. Summer is upon us and there are ALWAYS more fun things to do than stewardship activities.
- Sign up for Nav or WFA, if you have not already, start looking for alternatives.