



Tacoma  
Intermediate  
Alpine  
Climbing  
Handbook



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### Introduction

Welcome to the Tacoma Intermediate Alpine Climbing Program!

The Tacoma Intermediate Alpine Climbing Program consists of a series of modules, which allow students to progressively develop and solidify the skills necessary for leading routes at the Intermediate level (trad rock routes at 5.6/5.7, and/or ~55-degree snow/alpine ice). In addition to technical skills, students will develop leadership, self-assessment, and safety awareness skills, which will enable them to lead basic-level climbs and participate on intermediate-level climbs.

Intermediate skills can be used on thousands of routes in the Cascades, Sierras, Tetons, Canadian Rockies, and other ranges around the world. The course provides a good foundation for continuing education to more advanced skills such as leading long multi-pitch alpine rock routes, waterfall ice, mixed, and aid climbing. It is our hopes that the program not only helps to enrich the lives of its students, but also of the community around them.

### Tacoma Intermediate Program

In 2019 for the first time, it is possible to take the Intermediate Program as standalone course modules. Taking individual modules allows students more time and flexibility to complete the whole program (if desired), or to focus on specializing into either rock or snow related activities. All students will need to apply and be accepted into the Tacoma Intermediate Program in order to take any Tacoma Intermediate modules.

### Application Process and Sign-Up

The application process, to get into the Tacoma Intermediate Program, starts in the fall with filling out an application on the course website and gaining initial acceptance. To gain initial acceptance applicants are expected to have the following badges and experience:

- Must be at least 18 years old.
- Have graduated from the Basic Climbing Course or gained Basic equivalency.
- Have met a minimum experience requirement (2 successful climbs with one being a basic rock or basic glacier climb, and have at least attempted a third climb or have extensive rock leading experience). Scrambles and alpine climbs do count towards experience, the more experience the better.
- Be very comfortable scrambling on 3<sup>rd</sup> class, 4<sup>th</sup> class, and steep-snow terrain.
- Have a current navigation or equivalent badge.
- Have a current WFA or equivalent badge.
- Have a low-impact recreation badge
- Have participated in volunteer activities with The Mountaineers or other non-profit organizations.

Once granted initial acceptance, applicants will be required to pay the \$50 (non-refundable) Qualifier Fee and will be given the opportunity to participate in the Tacoma Intermediate Program Qualifier.

### Tacoma Intermediate Program Qualifier

The Tacoma Intermediate Program Qualifier is a 2 day test of an applicant's physical fitness and knowledge of the Tacoma Basic Climbing skills. During the test applicants must show complete comprehension of the Critical and Essential skills learned in the Tacoma Basic Climbing Course, and show adequate physical conditioning by completing a hike of Mount Si, to the bottom of the haystack, in under 2 hours with a 35lb pack. If you pass the Qualifier, you will gain Tacoma Intermediate Student status and acceptance into the Tacoma Intermediate Program.

### **Intermediate Student Status**

Tacoma Intermediate Student status means that you have been given an Intermediate Student Badge on your Mountaineers profile. This badge allows students to take any of the Tacoma Intermediate Program modules, to sign-up as an instructor at any of the Tacoma Basic field trips (assuming there is capacity), to sign-up for Intermediate-level climbs, and access to both basic and advanced climbing seminars. Please make sure to read the Intermediate Student Status policy to understand badge expiration dates and continuation requirements.

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### The Modules

The Tacoma Intermediate Program consists of five modules, which can be taken individually, but only by Tacoma Intermediate Students at this time. Each module has its own cost, prerequisites, pass criteria (including a technical and written exam), and graduation requirements. A student does not have to take every module this year, however they will potentially have to retest into the Program every two years to maintain their Intermediate student status. It is also important to note that some modules are prerequisites to other modules, and students will be required to meet the prerequisites of each module before they will be allowed to sign-up and participate.

#### Intermediate Snow Skills Module (Soft Snow)

The Intermediate Snow Skills module builds on a student's knowledge of Basic Climbing Course skills, and teaches them to be competent rope leads on Basic Glacier climbs. It also provides the foundation for the Intermediate Glacier Travel Module. Topics covered include: camping in emergency snow shelters, snow/glacier travel, snow anchors, snow belays, basic hauling systems, and introduces 2-person glacier travel and 6:1 hauling systems.

##### Required Reading:

Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills, 9th Edition, Chapter 3, 16, 17, 18, and 27  
Handouts and the Manual

##### Recommended Reading:

Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Bruce Tremper, ISBN 1594850844  
Snow Sense, J. Fredston and D. Fester, ISBN 0964399407

##### Prerequisites:

1. Tacoma Intermediate Program Student
2. If new to the program, you must be signed up and teach at one of the following basic field trips: FT1 Prep, FT1 or FT2. If you are not new to the program: you must be caught up with all other module teaching requirements and/or ahead by 1 credit, or signed up to teach at one of the above field trips.

#### Intermediate Anchors and Self-Rescue

The Intermediate Anchors & Self-Rescue module teaches the basics of anchor building and equalization (not including placing protection), rescuing a follower (counterweight rappels), various other techniques (saddle bags and tandem rappels), and a refresher on crag lead-climbing with bolted protection. It prepares students for the Intermediate Rock, Glacier Travel, and Alpine Ice modules.

##### Required Reading:

Self-Rescue, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, David Fasulo, ISBN 0762755334  
Climbing Anchors, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, John Long and Bob Gaines, ISBN 0762723262  
Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills, 9<sup>th</sup> edition  
Part II Climbing Fundamentals  
Part V. Leadership, Safety, and Rescue  
Handouts and the Manual

##### Recommended Reading:

High Angle Rescue Techniques. Tom Vines and Steve Hudson, ISBN 0323019145  
Accidents in North American Mountaineering, any edition

##### Prerequisites:

1. Tacoma Intermediate Program Student
2. If new to the program, you must be signed up and teach at one of the following Basic field trips: FT1 Prep, FT1 or FT2. If you are not new to the program: you must be caught up with all other module teaching requirements and/or ahead by 1 credit or signed up to teach at one of the above field trips.
3. Supply a lead-belay card from a climbing gym or have passed the sport climbing course.

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### Intermediate Rock – Traditional Single and Multi-Pitch Climbing

The Intermediate Rock module teaches fundamental trad climbing skills. It starts in a single pitch setting where students practice placing protection and leading on gear, and then progresses to building gear anchors and swinging leads in a multi-pitch setting. This module prepares students to be rope leaders on Basic-level rock climbs and partners on Intermediate-level rock climbs.

Required Reading:

Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, Part III. Rock Climbing  
Rock Climbing: Mastering Basic Skills, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Craig Luebben, ISBN 978-1-59485-862-8  
Handouts and the Manual

Recommended Reading:

How to Rock Climb, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, John Long, ISBN 0762755342  
Rock Climbing Anchors: A Comprehensive Guide, Craig Leubben, ISBN 1594850062

Single-Pitch Prerequisites:

1. Tacoma Intermediate Program Student
2. Lead on sport at 5.7/5.8 or harder routes
3. Have accumulated a minimum of 3 teaching credits and be in good standing with the Intermediate Committee
4. Have attended an Avalanche Awareness Seminar or have an AIARE 1 certificate

Multi-Pitch Prerequisites:

1. Tacoma Intermediate Program Student
2. Pass Single-Pitch

### Intermediate Glacier Travel Module

Intermediate Glacier Travel module teaches the fundamentals of climbing on 40-70 degree hard snow and alpine ice. Topics include ascending and descending hard-snow routes, building and equalizing snow anchors, and two-person glacier travel and rescue techniques. This module prepares students to be Basic Glacier climb leaders and provides a foundation for the Intermediate Alpine Ice module.

Required Reading:

Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills, 9<sup>th</sup> edition, Part IV. Snow, Ice, and Alpine Climbing

Prerequisites:

1. Tacoma Intermediate Program Student
2. Lead on sport at 5.6/5.7 or harder routes
3. Have accumulated a minimum of 4 unique teaching credits (be in good standing with the Intermediate Committee).

### Intermediate Alpine Ice Module

The Intermediate Alpine Ice Module teaches the fundamentals of alpine ice climbing. Topics include building ice anchors, ascending descending ice route, and swapping leads on 40-70 degree alpine ice. This module prepares students to be partners on Intermediate alpine ice climbs.

Required Reading:

Alpine Ice: Jeff Lowe's Climbing Techniques Video, Jeff Lowe  
Ice and Mixed Climbing: Modern Technique, Will Gladd, ISBN 089886769X

Prerequisites:

1. Pass the Intermediate Glacier Travel Module
2. Be in good standing with the Intermediate Committee

NOTE: The Intermediate Committee has final ruling on all Prerequisites, pass requirements and graduation requirements, these requirements can be updated by the Committee at any time.

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### Module Prerequisites

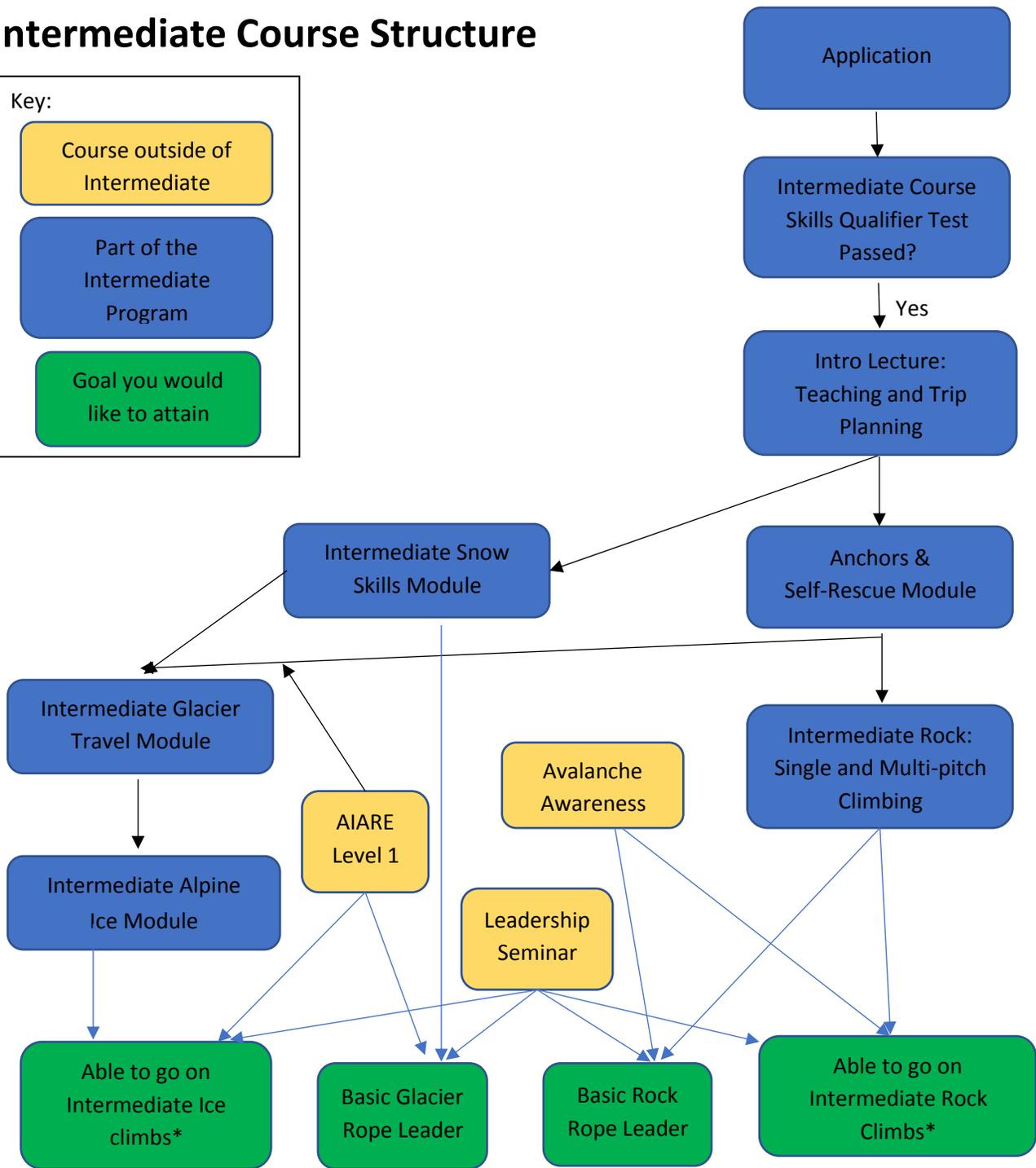
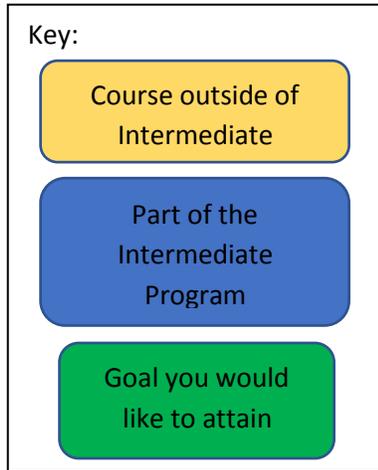
Successful completion of specific Intermediate modules is a prerequisite for participation in subsequent modules, participation in Basic Climbs, and participation in Intermediate Climbs. The order in which the modules need to be taken is not random. The following matrix depicts the Intermediate modules that must be completed prior to participation in these other activities.

<b>X = Required (X) = Recommended</b>	<b>Current WFA</b>	<b>Avy Awareness</b>	<b>AIARE 1</b>	<b>Leadership Seminar</b>	<b>Snow Skills Module</b>	<b>Sport Climbing Course</b>	<b>Anchors &amp; S. Rescue Module</b>	<b>Rock Module</b>	<b>Glacier Travel Module</b>	<b>Alpine Ice Module</b>
<b>Snow Track</b>										
Int. Snow Skills (Soft Snow) Module	X	X								
Rope Lead Basic Glacier	X		X	(X)	X		X		(X)	(X)
<b>Rock Track</b>										
Anchors & Self-Rescue Module	X					(X)				
Rock Module	X						X			
Rope Lead Basic Rock	X	(X)		(X)	(X)		X	X		
Basic Rock Climb Leader	X	X		X	(X)		X	X	(X)	
Participate in Int. Rock Climbs	X	X		(X)	(X)		X	X	(X)	
<b>Alpine Track</b>										
Basic Rope Lead Alpine	X		X	(X)	X		X	(X)	(X)	(X)
Participate in Int. Mountaineering	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X
<b>Ice Track</b>										
Anchors & Self-Rescue Module	X					(X)				
Int. Glacier Travel (Hard Snow) Module	X		X		X		X			
Alpine Ice Module	X		X		X		X		X	
Basic Glacier Climb Leader	X		X	(X)	X		X	(X)	X	
Participate in Alpine Ice Climbs	X		X	X	X		X	(X)	X	X

## Course Flow

The following diagram is a different representation of the same information under Module Prerequisites.

### Intermediate Course Structure



\* Even though you are able to sign-up for Intermediate climbs, you are expected to only choose routes and climbs that are safely within your abilities.

## **Mentors and Mentor Nights**

Students are encouraged to seek out mentors. This is a great way for students to not only solidify their skills, but to have a more experienced member of the community show them various other tips and tricks (which are typically only learned through necessity or experience). If a student is unsure of whom might be able to be a mentor, they should first attend a mentor night, and then reach out to the Intermediate Committee.

Intermediate mentor nights have been set up for each module to provide students with a dedicated evening to work with instructors and practice skills. The evenings are not meant to be structured; it is up to the student to utilize the time as they see fit. For example, mentor nights could be utilized as a one-on-one mentoring opportunity by some students, or as a more open-forum practice space for those more confident in their skills.

Mentor nights are not a mandatory requirement. However, students should keep in mind participation does provide an additional channel to meet more experienced peers and other climb leaders. In addition, it allows for people to solicit feedback on a student's progress and capabilities, which is invaluable when awarding climb leader status and when selecting rope leaders from the pool of students.

## Intermediate Program Volunteerism Requirements

Intermediate students are the life-blood of the Tacoma Climbing community. As so, the Intermediate Committee believes it is important to give back, not only to our courses, but to our communities and land as well. Therefore, we find it necessary for an Intermediate student to have additional volunteer service either with a non-profit organization doing trail work and/or to help other Tacoma activities be successful.

### Community Activity and Stewardship Requirements

Community activities are activities that benefit the Tacoma Mountaineers greater community. These activities typically include instructing at other activities (ex Scrambles, Navigation, Sport Climbing, etc.) field trips. Acceptable community activities vary by module, and can be identified using the table below.

Stewardship activities are conservation-related activities. The goal is to make a positive contribution in an area where there is great need, and to spark an awareness and interest in conservation. The types of work parties are pretty open-ended; trail maintenance, work in local, state, and national parks, wilderness areas, etc. are acceptable stewardship activities. One important point is that these activities are coordinated with the managers of the sites where the work parties will take place, and that there will be a site representative on hand to identify the tasks and provide any how-to instructions. Washington Trails Association holds trail maintenance activities year-round.

Guidelines for Community and Stewardship Activity Credit:

- Community activities must benefit the Tacoma Mountaineers climbing community.
- Students are responsible for being signed up for the activity on the Mountaineers website
- Students must provide documentation of participating in a stewardship activity if done outside of the Mountaineers.
- You can double-dip:
  - You can receive teaching credit for instructing at a field trip of another activity.
  - You can instruct at a winter camping field trip and satisfy a winter overnight experience (for the snow skills and ice modules).
  - You can use your community activity to help you gain leader status in another activity (ex – it is typically a requirement to help at a snowshoe or scrambles field trip to gain snowshoe or scrambles equivalency, which then only requires a mentored snowshoe or scrambles lead to get leader status and satisfy a leadership requirement too).
- In order to teach at another activity's (ex. Scrambles, snowshoe, navigation, etc) field trip, you must reach out to the leader to understand:
  - A. If they want/need your help.
  - B. Skills you are expected to know and teach, and any other actions expected of you. If you do not understand and/or cannot teach the material, let the leader know and choose a different activity.
  - C. If you are deemed unhelpful or disrespectful, you will not receive credit for the activity.

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Tacoma Community Activities by Module					
Activity	Snow Skills	Anchors & Rescue	Rock	Glacier	Ice
Stewardship activity through The Mountaineer's or another organization (ex WTA)	X	x	x	X	x
Instruct at a winter camping field trip	X			X	x
Instruct at a snowshoe field trip	X			X	x
Instruct at a sport climbing field trip		x	x		
Instruct at a scrambles field trip	X	x	x	X	x
Instruct at a navigation field trip	X	x	x	X	x
Leading additional Basic or Intermediate field trips can replace doing a community activity	X	x	x	X	x
Committee member of a non-climbing activity	X	x	x	X	x
Instruct at a non-climbing activity	X	x	x	X	x

The Intermediate Committee has final ruling on stewardship and community activity credit(s). For questions regarding receiving credit, please contact the Intermediate Climbing Committee.

### Teaching Requirements

The Mountaineers is a volunteer-driven organization, and all instruction is done by volunteers. Thus, in order to function as an educational organization we need to ask all our students to instruct, at least in proportion to the amount of education they receive. However, instruction should not be viewed as chore or a requirement. Most of our instructors do so because they love the outdoors and they are passionate about passing on their love to the next generation. Instructing is one of the main avenues for developing leadership skills and meeting new friends. Teaching enhances the grasp of concepts and techniques as well as the interpersonal skills in working with less-confident climbers.

Each Intermediate module has a specified number of instructional credits required to participate in, and graduate from, the module. Although Intermediate students are not expected to be experts, they should be comfortably familiar with the techniques they are teaching. No credit will be given if students show up unprepared for instructional activities.

Guidelines and number of credits received by an Intermediate student for instructing at activities related to the following courses and modules can be seen below. Intermediate students who have passed an Intermediate module may also instruct at the same module the following year for credit. Please note, students taking the modules who are specializing in either rock climbing or mountaineering should focus their volunteer activities in the subcategory in which they are specializing in. For example, a student specializing in glacier climbs should volunteer for the snow field trips of the Basic Alpine Climbing Course.

General guidelines for instructional activities include:

- The event must be an official **Tacoma Mountaineers** activity and listed on The Mountaineers' website.
- You must be registered for the event as an instructor and show up for the event.
- You will not receive credit for teaching at the same field trip twice in the same year (if applicable).
- You can double-dip and receive teaching credit while also fulfilling a community activity credit.

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The following activities do not count and will not receive credit for:

- Climbs
- Leading a basic field trip (that is a leadership activity).
- Activities not sponsored by the Tacoma Climbing Committee.
- Mountaineers activities that are not posted on the Mountaineers website

Teaching Credits					
Basic FT	Credit Earned	Intermediate FT	Credit Earned	Other Courses	Credit Earned
FT 1 P	0.5	FT1/2	2	Winter Camping	0.5
FT 1	1	FT3	1	Scrambles FT	0.5
FT 2	1	FT 4	1	Sport Climbing	0.5
FT 3	2	FT 5	1	Snowshoe FT	0.5
FT 4 P	0.5	FT 6	1	Navigation	0.5
FT 4	1	FT 7	1		
FT 5	1	FT 8	1		
FT 6 P	0.5	FT 9/10	2		
FT 6	1	FT 11/12	2		
FT 7	1	Int. Lecture	0.5		

The Intermediate Committee has final ruling on teaching credits. For questions regarding receiving credit for volunteer activities, please contact the Intermediate Climbing Committee.

## Climb Leadership Development Requirements

Leadership development is a major focus of the Intermediate Program, and a requirement for graduation. Leadership is essential for being self-sufficient and safe in the mountains. Leadership skills are comprised of technical competence, interpersonal skills, and the ability to make sound decisions. Among those, technical competence is usually the most easily acquired skill, since this is what is explicitly taught in the Intermediate modules.

Interpersonal skills include self-awareness, self-leadership, clear, open and honest communication with the climbing party, being patient and considerate, the ability to gain the trust and followership of the climbing party, as well as humility and a sense of humor. Students need to be self-directed and interested in becoming better leaders in order to improve their interpersonal skills. Teaching at beginner-level field trips and acting as a rope lead on Basic climbs are activities that foster the development of these skills.

Good judgement comes with experience, and experience takes time. Going into the mountains frequently, for extended periods of time, and with different groups of people helps with gaining this experience. Often it is close-calls or near-misses that provide the learning environment. It is also possible to learn from the bad experiences of other climbers. "Accidents in North American Climbing" is a yearly publication by the American Alpine Club depicting actual climbing accidents that is intended exactly for this purpose.

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### Leadership Activity Requirements

As noted above, and worth repeating, a major focus of the Intermediate Program is on leadership development. Leadership activities are club-related activities that benefit the Tacoma Mountaineers climbing community via a direct leadership role. Below is a list of activities that you can use to gain leadership credit. These activities can include leading field trips, becoming a climb leader, or assisting on a committee. Acceptable leadership activities vary by module, and can be identified using the table below:

<b>Leadership Activities by Module</b>					
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Snow Skills</b>	<b>Anchors &amp; Rescue</b>	<b>Rock</b>	<b>Glacier</b>	<b>Ice</b>
Lead a Basic FT	X	X	X	X	X
Lead an Intermediate FT			X	X	X
Climbing Program Committee Member	X	X	X	X	X
Become a snowshoe leader	X			X	
Become a scrambles leader		X	X	X	
Become a Basic Rock Climb Leader			X		
Become a Basic Glacier Climb Leader				X	X

The Intermediate Committee has final ruling on leadership credits. For questions regarding receiving credit for leadership activities, please contact the Intermediate Climbing Committee.

## Graduation

### Graduating from Individual Intermediate Modules

Graduation from individual Tacoma Intermediate modules means that you keep the skills badges earned after successfully passing a module. These badges will expire in 3 years if you have not graduated from the module.

NOTE: Pass requirements and graduation requirements will be updated by the Intermediate Committee as needed.

### Intermediate Snow Skills Module (Soft Snow) Pass and Graduation Requirements

Intermediate Snow Skills Module Pass Requirements:

1. Complete AIARE level 1
2. Pass the field trip skills test
  - a. Spend the night in an emergency snow shelter
  - b. Show proficiency in the 6:1 drop loop haul system
3. Pass the written exam

Intermediate Snow Skills Module Graduation Requirements (you have 3 years to finish requirements 3-7):

1. Pass the module (meet all the pass requirements).
2. Two years to accumulate 3.5 unique teaching credits – 2.5 credits should be Basic FTs  
Recommended activities: FT1 Prep, FT1, FT2, FT3, FT6 prep, FT6, FT7, Int. lecture, and IFT1/2
3. Rope lead on a total of 2 Basic glacier climbs
4. Complete one winter overnight camping trip
5. Complete one leadership activity
6. Complete one community activity or stewardship activity.
7. Submit a graduation application (found on the course website in the course materials tab) to the Intermediate Climbing Committee Records Chair and Chair.

### Intermediate Anchors and Self-Rescue Pass and Graduation Requirements

Module Pass Requirements:

1. Pass the field trip skills test
  - a. Safely lead and clean a route by lowering - on a 5.6 or harder single-pitch sport route.
  - b. Safely lead, clean, and rappel a 5.6 or harder single-pitch sport route.
  - c. Safely belay a leader on two sport routes.
  - d. Show proficiency and knowledge of skills in the self-rescue field trip.
2. Pass the written exam

Anchors and Self-Rescue Module Graduation Requirements (3 years to finish steps 3-5):

1. Pass the module (meet all the module pass requirements)
2. You have 2 years to accumulate 3.5 unique teaching credits – at least 2.5 credits should be Basic FTs  
Recommended activities: FT1 Prep, FT1, FT2, FT4 prep, FT4, Int lecture, IFT3, and IFT4
3. Complete one leadership activity
4. Complete one community or stewardship activity
5. Submit a graduation application (found on the course website in the course materials tab) to the Intermediate Climbing Committee Records Chair and Chair.

### Intermediate Rock Module Pass and Graduation Requirements

Single-Pitch Pass Requirements:

1. Safely lead 2 single pitch routes (approved by the Intermediate Climbing Committee) on traditional gear at a grade of 5.6 or harder at Single Pitch Field Trip 6.
2. Show good judgement of lead climbing ability at Single Pitch Field Trip 6.

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### Multi-Pitch Pass Requirements:

1. Safely and efficiently swing leads on one approved multi-pitch route graded 5.6 or harder
2. Pass the Intermediate Rock Module exam

### Rock Module Graduation Requirements (3 years to finish steps 3-7):

1. Pass the module (meet all single and multi-pitch pass requirements)
2. You have 2 years to accumulate 6.5 unique teaching credits - 1.5 credits must be Basic FTs  
Recommended activities: BFT 2, BFT 4P, BFT 4, BFT 5, Int. lecture, IFT3, IFT4, IFT5, IFT6, IFT 7 and IFT 8
3. Complete one leadership activity
4. Complete one community or stewardship activity
5. Be a rope leader on 2 listed Basic rock climbs
6. Complete 2 listed Intermediate rock climbs
7. Submit a graduation application (found on the course website in the course materials tab) to the Intermediate Climbing Committee Records Chair and Chair

## Intermediate Glacier Travel Module Pass and Graduation Requirements

### Module Pass Requirements:

1. Pass the module skills test
  - a. Swing leads on 40-70 degree hard snow
  - b. Show complete competence in the 6:1 haul system
  - c. Show complete competence in building and equalizing snow anchors
  - d. Show proficiency in ascending out of a “crevasse”
2. Pass the Intermediate Glacier Travel written exam

### Module Graduation Requirements (3 years to finish steps 3-6):

1. Pass the module
2. You have 2 years to accumulate 3.5 unique teaching credits -1.5 credits should be Basic FTs  
Recommended activities: BFT 2, BFT 3, BFT 6 Prep, BFT 6, BFT 7, Int. lectures, IFT1/2, and IFT9/10
3. Complete one leadership activity
4. Complete one community or stewardship activity
5. Complete one mentored rope leader of a listed Basic Glacier climb that you have not done before.
6. Submit a graduation application (found on the course website in the course materials tab) to the Intermediate Climbing Committee Records Chair and Chair.

## Intermediate Alpine Ice Module Pass and Graduation Requirements

### Module Pass Requirements:

1. Swing leads on 40-70 degree alpine ice
2. Show complete competence in building and equalizing ice anchors
3. Pass the Intermediate Alpine Ice written exam

### Module Graduation Requirements (3 years to finish steps 3-6):

1. Pass the module
2. You have 2 years to accumulate 3.5 unique teaching credits – 1.5 credits should be Basic FTs  
Recommended activities: BFT 2, BFT 3, BFT 6 Prep, BFT 6, BFT 7, Int. lectures, IFT1/2, IFT9/10, and IFT11/12
3. Complete one leadership activity
4. Complete one community or stewardship activity
5. Complete 2 listed Intermediate Ice climbs
6. Submit a graduation application (found on the course website in the course materials tab) to the Intermediate Climbing Committee Records Chair and Chair.

## Tacoma Intermediate Alpine Climbing Handbook

### Graduating from the Intermediate Program

Graduation from the whole Intermediate Program is a major accomplishment. Many students starting the program find the level of commitment required to graduate exceeds the amount of time and effort they can or want to invest. Gaining the Intermediate Badge is an indicator of technical competence on rock, snow and ice, as well as leadership.

The following requirements must be met to graduate from the whole Intermediate Alpine Climbing Program:

1. Attend the Teaching and Trip Planning Lecture
2. Graduate from all modules
3. Participate in the Mountaineers Outdoor Leadership Seminar
4. Complete at least six (6) basic climbs as a rope leader or mentored leader in a safe and competent manner, including at least two (2) rock and two (2) glacier climbs. Each climb must be of a separate and distinct route. This is the total number of climbs required for graduation from the Tacoma Intermediate program; some of these climbs will be completed as part of various modules.
5. Complete seven (7) intermediate climbs, including at least two (2) alpine ice and two (2) alpine rock climbs. Four (4) of these climbs must be posted on the Mountaineers website before the event takes place. The student must have been registered for the climb, and each climb must be a separate and distinct route. This is the total number of climbs required for graduation from the Tacoma Intermediate program; some of these climbs will be completed as part of various modules.
6. Maintain Wilderness First Aid certification or equivalent during while in the Intermediate Course.
7. Submit graduation application (found on the course website in the course materials tab) to the Intermediate Climbing Committee Records Chair and Chair.

## Climbs

Basic and Intermediate-level climbs are the Intermediate student's opportunity to apply a wide range of skills. The following is the Mountaineers Club-wide Activity Standard's definition of these types of climbs and trips.

Class refers to a rating for rock climbing difficulty using the Yosemite Decimal System as described in the most recent edition of *Mountaineering: Freedom of the Hills*. The class of a climb indicates the difficulty of the hardest move on the hardest pitch of a climb. The class descriptions are as follows:

- 2..... Simple scrambling, with possible occasional use of the hands - such as on a talus slope
- 3..... Steep scrambling, some exposure, hands are used for balance; a rope might be carried
- 4..... Simple climbing, often with more exposure. A rope is often used. A fall could be fatal. Typically natural protections can be found.
- 5..... Technical rock climbing, involving a rope, belaying, and protection (natural or artificial) to protect the leader from a long fall
- 5.0 - 5.4..... There are two hand and two foot holds that become smaller as the class increases.
- 5.5 - 5.6..... Two hand and two footholds are there, obvious to the experienced, but not necessarily to the beginner.
- 5.7..... The move is missing one hand or foothold, strenuous.

Ratings for specific routes may be found in *Cascade Alpine Guide, Volumes I, II, and III* and other climbing guidebooks.

Grade refers to a rating of a climb's overall difficulty using the National Climbing Classification System. Difficulty of the entire climb and is represented by Roman numerals I through VI. The factors in a grade assignment include: length and difficulty of the approach, ease of escape from the route, availability of protection, objective hazards, amount and difficulty of technical climbing, and the time and degree of "commitment" required for the climb. Generally, a competent party can complete the technical portions of a:

- Grade I .....Climb in several hours,
- Grade II .....In half a day,
- Grade III .....In most of a day,
- Grade IV .....In a very long day (possible bivouac and if rock at least 5.7),
- Grade V .....In more than one day (bivouac and if rock at least 5.8),
- Grade VI .....Several days with major technical difficulties.

Ratings for specific routes may be found in *Cascade Alpine Guide, Volumes I, II, and III* and other climbing guidebooks.

Climbing trips will be rated with these categories, and the rating must be available to participants when they sign up. Ratings are documented on The Mountaineers' website's route description, and participant prerequisite badges are assigned accordingly. Participants must have the prerequisite skills as defined by the prerequisite badges, and are responsible for signing up only for trips that are within their physical and technical capabilities, wearing suitable clothing, and carrying appropriate equipment.

## Tacoma Intermediate Alpine Climbing Handbook

### Basic Climbs

Basic climbs are summit routes with a difficulty rating of Grade I and occasionally Grade II that involve:

- Class 3, 4, or low 5<sup>th</sup> class rock; and/or
- Steep and possibly hard snow with hazards that may require crampons & ice ax; and/or
- Glacier travel

**Basic Rock Trips:** The route will include one or more pitches of class 4 to low 5<sup>th</sup> class rock.

**Basic Alpine Trips:** The route will include at least one of these challenges; steep or hard snow, Class 3-4 rock (usually with no more than one roped pitch) and/or glacier travel (less than one hour during the ascent).

**Basic Glacier Trips:** The route will include one hour or more of glacier travel during the ascent.

### Crag Climbs

Crag climbs are 5<sup>th</sup> class rock climbs on routes located within a short distance from a parking area.

### Intermediate Climbs

Students wanting to graduate from the modules, or whole Intermediate Program, are required to participate in Intermediate level climbs. Intermediate Climbs are routes with a difficulty rating of Grade II or higher, generally with a summit as the destination. Some Grade II routes may be considered Basic Climbs. *It is strongly encouraged that students successfully serve as a rope lead on at least one Basic climb before they participate in Intermediate level climbs.* Intermediate climbs are of varying difficulty and students should make sure they only sign up for climbs that match their current level of ability and confidence.

### Prerequisites for Participation, Summits, and Credit for Intermediate Climbs

Although the mental focus of students is often on the technical rock and ice climbing involved, the whole spectrum of mountaineering challenges may be encountered during the journey from trailhead to summit and back. For many students, the best lessons on climbs have occurred on “epics” that never got close to the summit. While these are valuable experiences, they are not climbs of the mountain.

All intermediate climbs require the attainment of the summit, even if it is technically easy. On many routes the technical difficulties are way below the summit but completing the climb is part of the total mountaineering experience. Almost all intermediate climbs require reaching the main summit. There are a limited number of routes which naturally culminate at a subsidiary summit. For example, the climb of Mount Index, North Peak, North Face route ends at the North Peak and does not require attaining the main summit of Index for credit.

Prerequisites to participating in Intermediate Climbs and receiving climb credit are:

- Students need to meet the prerequisites listed in the prerequisite matrix in order to sign up.
- Students are expected to lead at least half of the pitches, and may need to lead the crux. ***Students should not sign up for a climb in hopes of leading only the easy pitches.***
- All climbs must be conducted in a manner consistent with the Climbing Code. Climbers must carry a helmet, the Ten Essentials, as well as food, clothing and equipment appropriate to the climb.
- ***Students must complete the entire trip in a safe and competent manner in order to receive credit. The climb leader has the option of denying credit for the climb if the student did not meet these requirements, even if the summit was reached.***

Intermediate students are required to act as rope leads on Basic-level climbs and as partners on Intermediate-level climbs prior to gaining climb leader status. On these climbs, rope leaders and partners are expected to:

- Demonstrate technical competence, interpersonal skills and good judgement.

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- Show up prepared *as if they were leading the climb*. This includes having all the gear needed for the climb, detailed knowledge of the climbing route as well as the descent, ability to navigate on and off trail, knowledge of potential hazards and how to mitigate them, and more.
- Be courteous, patient, humble, and generally display good expedition behavior.
- Assist the climb leader in organizing and managing the climbing party, route finding, setting up rappels, accounting for whereabouts of students and each other, resolving conflicts, etc.
- ***Students must complete the entire trip in a safe and competent manner in order to receive credit. The climb leader has the option of denying credit for the climb if the student did not meet these requirements, even if the summit was reached.***

### Intermediate Mountaineering Climbs

Activity Standards Definition of an IM Trips: The route may include rock, snow, or ice; but not enough to be rated IR or II; some Basic climbs may be considered IM-rated climbs in winter conditions.

### Intermediate Rock Climbs

Activity Standards Definition of IR Trips: The route will include multiple pitches of 5<sup>th</sup> class rock.

Intermediate Rock climbs are typically rated Grade II or III, 5.6 to 5.8, with a few climbs being longer or harder. These climbs often include un-roped pitches of 3rd and 4th class scrambling. Intermediate Rock climbs vary from very short (three pitches), to very long (twenty plus pitches). Third and fourth class sections that may require un-roped climbing are often encountered. Many climbs involve long cross-country approaches (often with brush and hard snow), that while not technical are certainly demanding. In the face of deteriorating weather, many climbs are difficult to retreat from after a certain position has been reached.

On the other hand, the longer and more difficult the climb, the greater the potential for a satisfying alpine experience. To be able to rapidly negotiate trail, brush, scree, snow, and 4th and 5th class climbing can be very exhilarating. A bivouac on route under the stars can be savored for years. Certain practices have proved their worth for Intermediate level climbers. Most Intermediate rock climbs are strenuous and require being in excellent shape. Being well rested and used to carrying loads, having done several moderate climbs (such as Basic leads and scrambles), having invested time in rock practice (especially in Leavenworth during the off-season), and being organized and mentally prepared can all contribute substantially to your success and enjoyment.

A few special circumstances should be borne in mind. Many rock climbs, especially in the Cashmere Crags and Washington Pass areas, can be done throughout the season (often when west side conditions are soggy). Other climbs are more time and condition dependent. For example, many North Cascade climbs require long days, adequate snow cover (over brush, gullies, loose rock, crevasses and ice), reasonable weather, temperatures that allow for a light load (and still a bearable bivouac), and hard snow and stable ice conditions. Early in the season (especially during high snow years and late springs) there may be snow masses and cornices perched on rock surfaces that melt out from underneath and can suddenly discharge. Also in early and mid-season, rainy weather and warm daytime temperatures can trigger wet snow avalanches. Hanging glaciers can be hazardous throughout the season.

Much of the Cascades are composed of mediocre rock with loose debris and poor opportunities for protection. Rain or rapid warming often triggers rock fall. Even the good granite of the Mt. Stuart region has much loose rock in places. Finally, it is hard to overemphasize the importance of an early start (such as moving by first light) and rapid progress, even on short climbs. Having thought through the climb and the time involved, you can assess whether you are making it or not.

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### Intermediate Ice Climbs

Activity Standards Definition of II Trips: The route will include multiple pitches of alpine or waterfall ice.

The technical sections of Intermediate Ice climbs generally consist of hard snow or glacial ice at angles of 40 to 70 degrees for 500' to several thousand feet in length. It has been said that the charm of ice lies in its changeability, it differs from hour to hour, day to day and month to month. Unlike rock pitches which are relatively unchanged from year to year, ice climbs constantly evolve and may be "in condition" at only certain times of the year or often only for certain hours of the day. As more experience on steep hard snow and ice is acquired, a sense of what will work develops. A smooth relationship among tools, techniques and self-knowledge will enable the ice climber to safely succeed when conditions are right. An understanding of mountains, the cycle of snow and ice, and of weather and timing will enable you to sense when conditions are right.

Most Intermediate "Ice" climbs are a mix of snowfields and glaciers, hard snow and glacial ice, usually in the 35-60 degree range. Unlike the great ice faces of the Canadian Rockies and Alaska, the Cascades offer more moderate but nonetheless challenging climbs, mainly on the slopes of the volcanoes and the hanging glaciers of the North Cascades. Technical sections are mainly at angles of 40 to 55 degrees for five hundred to several thousand feet. Often it is necessary to begin ice climbs very early (in the dark) to allow the party to get above certain hazards before the first sunlight hits the slope. Many climbs on the volcanoes are best done in early season (June through mid-July) before lots of rock and icefall develops. High freezing levels following rapid warming trends can render many routes hazardous and they should not, as Beckey emphasized, be attempted. Conversely, other alpine ice climbs bloom when the winter snow cover is reduced and hardened in late season. For this reason, a number of ice climbs can only be done for ice credit after August 1st.

When planning for ice climbs keep in mind the snow pack that year, trends in spring melt, the recent weather history (such as heavy snowstorm last week followed by hot weather), change in icefall and crevasse pattern and the immediate weather conditions. The diversity of even summer weather is such that cold and severe storms can arrive quickly and prompt a hasty retreat. As Beckey puts it "A number of tragedies have occurred because a party underestimated the severity of such storms and 'dug in' or kept climbing with inadequate equipment."

Practice and development of skills for ice climbing are somewhat harder to come by than for rock. The Nisqually Glacier on Mt. Rainier and the lower Coleman Glacier on Mt. Baker are two common areas. Much practice can be gained by actually doing modest climbs (such as Basic level and Mountaineering climbs) so that snow and ice techniques come naturally and automatically when needed.

## Climb Leader Pathways

Becoming a Climb Leader is not a necessary step (or requirement) in order to graduate from the Intermediate Course. While we encourage students to consider this as a great option to practice leadership skills and give back to The Mountaineers, it is a personal choice. Taking less experienced climbers into the mountains is a great responsibility and we want our leaders to make a deliberate decision to do so.

### Basic Rope Leader Status Clubwide Standard

- Graduation, Equivalency, or Student-status in the Intermediate Climbing Course with satisfactory completion of the Self-Rescue field trip.
- Graduation or Equivalency from both a Trad Rock Climbing Course and the Basic Climbing Course for a Basic Rock-rated climb.
- Demonstrated ability to travel 3 miles in 2 hours, gaining an average of 800'/mile, carrying at least 30 lbs.

Exception: With leader permission a Basic Graduate or Basic Equivalent can be a rope leader.

### Tacoma Intermediate Committee Interpretation and Recommendations for Basic Rope Leaders

Successfully passed and have current badges for the following courses:

- Outdoor Leadership Seminar
- Navigation
- WFA or equivalent

### Basic Glacier Rope Leader Requirements and Recommendations

Required:

- Passed the Intermediate Anchors and Self-Rescue module

Recommended:

- Pass the Intermediate Snow Skills Module
- Successfully instruct at Tacoma Basic Field Trip(s): FT 3 (Basic Winter Overnight) and/or FT6/7 (Crevasse Rescue and Ice Axe Arresting Testing)

### Basic Rock Rope Lead Requirements and Recommendations

Required:

- Passed the Intermediate Anchors and Self-Rescue module
- Pass the Intermediate Rock Module
- Successfully instruct at Tacoma Basic Field Trip(s): FT4 (Rock 1) and/or FT5 (Rock 2)

Recommended:

- Have attended an Avalanche Awareness Seminar in the past 18 months
- Passed the Intermediate Snow Skills module

### Basic Alpine Rope Lead Requirements and Recommendations

Required:

- Passed the Intermediate Anchors and Self-Rescue module
- Gain Climb Leader approval, which may mean having passed Rock, Glacier, or both Modules depending on the technicality of the climb.

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### Becoming a Climb Leader and Maintaining Climb Leader Status

Leaders are expected to lead climbs within their ability, to maintain their leadership and technical skills through regular practice and training, and to be up to date in current climbing skills & techniques taught by The Mountaineers. If you have questions on maintaining your Climb Leaders status, please see the climb leader policy.

The Tacoma Branch is testing a new model for granting Climb leadership which allows you to pursue a specialty in rock or glacier. However, nothing prevents you from pursuing both disciplines concurrently. In order to pursue these statuses you must have successfully passed and have current badges for the following courses, and meet the specific requirements set by the Intermediate and/or Basic Committee as can be seen below. Please reach out to the Tacoma Basic Climbing Committee with any questions regarding Basic Climb Leader statuses.

- Outdoor Leadership Seminar
- Navigation
- WFA or equivalent

### Basic Glacier Climb Leader Requirements

- Successfully pass the Intermediate Anchors & Self-Rescue Module
- Successfully pass the Intermediate Glacier Travel Module
- Attend hard snow clinic or intermediate glacier field trip
- AIARE Level 1
- Instruct at Tacoma Basic FTs: 1, 2, 3 and FT 6/7
- Successfully complete 2 Basic Glacier Rope Leads prior to mentored climb
- Successfully complete 1 Mentored Basic Glacier Climb
- Gain Tacoma Basic Climbing Committee Approval

### Basic Rock Climb Leader Requirements

- Successfully pass the Intermediate Anchors & Self-Rescue Module
- Successfully pass the Intermediate Rock Module
- Instruct at Basic FT 1, 2, 4 and 5, and gain an additional 1.5 teaching credits (recommended FTs: FT 1 prep, FT4 prep, FT 6 prep)
- Successfully complete 2 Basic Rock Rope Leads prior to mentored climb
- Successfully complete 1 Mentored Basic Rock Climb
- Gain Tacoma Basic Climbing Committee Approval

### Basic Alpine Climb Leader Requirements

- Gain Basic Glacier Leader Status
- Gain Basic Rock Leader Status

### Applying for Basic Climb Leader

Applications for Basic Climb Leader status must be emailed to the Tacoma Basic Committee Records Chair, cc the Basic Chair and Intermediate Chair. Be sure to include "Application for Basic Climb Leader" in the subject heading. Applicants need to submit their mentored climb evaluation form(s) which must be completed by climb leaders in good standing with The Mountaineers along with their application. The Basic Committee has final authority on granting Basic Climb Leaders Status.

## Tacoma Intermediate Alpine Climbing Handbook

### Mentored Lead Climbs

A minimum of two (2) mentored leads is a prerequisite for applying to become a full climb leader. Mentored leads are done on Basic climbs, as one important aspect is the mentored leader's ability to lead and take care of less-experienced climbers in the mountains. Students should act as assistant leader on a few climbs before acting as mentored leader. Any active climb leader in good standing can act as mentor. Climbs done as assistant or mentored leader can also count toward the requirements for graduation from the Intermediate Program.

As a mentored leader, students are expected to:

- Organize and plan the activity. This does not include setting up the activity on The Mountaineers' website since most students do not have the necessary permissions to do so. However, the mentor should list the mentored leader as such and make them the point of contact for the activity.
- Make all the pre-climb arrangements, such as informing the climbing party about gear requirements, providing directions to the trailhead, checking the weather and trail conditions, checking with the ranger station to see if permits are needed, etc.
- Conduct the trailhead briefing and assign roles such as the first aid leader.
- Make trail/route decisions, set the pace and lead the climbing party.
- Ensure the well-being of the climbing party, including making sure that everybody is eating and drinking, is dressed appropriately, gets sufficient rest, etc.

Barring an emergency, the mentor acts like any other climber during the climb, although the mentor is still ultimately responsible for the climb. Students are encouraged to consult with the mentor if they have questions, and the mentor may provide input or feedback at any time, or resume the full leadership role if necessary. After the climb, the mentor will provide feedback to the student.

### Applying for Intermediate Climb Leader

Applications for Intermediate Climb Leader status must be emailed to the Intermediate Committee Records Chair and cc the Chair. Be sure to include "Application for Intermediate Climb Leader" in the subject heading to ensure the email gets reviewed quickly. Please be patient and give the Intermediate Committee at least 2 weeks to respond.

In addition to the below specifics for each type of Intermediate Leader status, all Intermediate Leader statuses are contingent on the following:

- Requirements must have been completed within 36 months immediately prior to submitting the application or have shown skills maintenance by attending and/or instructing at Intermediate field trips.
- The climb(s) must have been done within the last 12 months.
- Demonstration of group leadership skills and good judgment.
- Intermediate Committee Approval

### Intermediate Climb Leaders Status Review and Approval Process

1. The Records Chair announces the application via email to the members of the Intermediate Committee.
2. The application is validated against club records and reviewed by the Committee.
3. The Committee contacts the references/mentors named in the application.
4. If all of the feedback for the candidate is in support of granting them climb leader status, they will be added to the list and announce its decision to the applicant in an email. If the application is controversial or is not meeting the outlined requirements, the Intermediate Committee will recommend what steps the applicant should take in order for their application to be accepted.

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### Intermediate Rock Leader

- (Recommended) Pass the Intermediate Snow Skills Module
- Successfully pass the Intermediate Anchors/Self-Rescue Module
- Successfully pass the Intermediate Rock Module
- Accrual of 5 Instruction Credits if this is the 1st leader status, 10.5 if the second
- Successfully complete and earn Intermediate credit for 1 or more Intermediate Rock Climbs

### Intermediate Ice Leader

- Successfully pass the Intermediate Snow Skills Module
- Successfully pass the Intermediate Anchors/Self-Rescue Module
- Successfully pass the Intermediate Glacier Travel Module
- Successfully pass the Intermediate Ice Module
- Accrual of 6 Instruction Credits if this is the 1st leader status, 10.5 if the second
- Successfully complete and earn Intermediate credit for 1 or more Intermediate Ice Climbs

### Intermediate Mountaineering Leader

- Gain Both Intermediate Ice and Intermediate Rock Leader Status

## Tacoma Intermediate Program Policies

The Intermediate Committee has the right to update any Program Requirement or Policy as necessary.

### Climb Leader Status Policy

Leaders must be approved to lead climbs by the sponsoring committee.

Leaders are expected to lead climbs within their ability, to maintain their leadership and technical skills through regular practice and training, and to be up to date in current climbing skills & techniques taught by The Mountaineers.

With just cause, the Intermediate Committee has the right to revoke a person's Intermediate Climb Leader status. In order to keep Intermediate Climb Leader status a person must continue to be "active" with The Mountaineers. In order to be considered an "active" Intermediate Climb Leader, a person must participate in at least three (3) activities per year, sponsored by either a Basic or Intermediate climbing committee, and at least one of which needs to be an instructional activity to ensure the person is keeping up-to-date with their skills. Activities include participating in climbs, instructing at field trips, attending a climbing related seminar, or attending a course as a student. Intermediate Climb Leaders who do not maintain their active status will be put on probation and their climb leader status will be revoked until they refresh on their skills. In addition, all Intermediate climb leaders need to remain current with regards to their Wilderness First Aid requirement. Please reach out to the Intermediate Climbing Committee if you have any questions.

### Course Tracking Policy

A student's progress will be tracked by the Committee on the website via activities (as participants in Intermediate lectures and field trips, or as leaders or instructors in basic, intermediate or other activities, and as partners or rope leaders on climbs) and skills badges. For each activity, it is the student's responsibility to make sure they were signed up for the activity, the correct status granted (successful, needs improvement, failed/unsafe, no show, or cancelled), and skills badge received after completion.

If a student feels they were given an incorrect status, please reach out the leader of that activity first. If the leader does not respond contact the Intermediate Committee. If you experience difficulties signing up for activities please first contact the activity leader and then the Intermediate Climbing Chair.

***In addition, it is a good idea for students to keep detailed personal records of their activities.*** Certificates for courses taken outside of the Mountaineers should be submitted to Mountaineers staff at [info@mountaineers.org](mailto:info@mountaineers.org) with a request that the corresponding badge be granted as this makes tracking of activities and requirements easier.

### Equivalency Policy

Students who already have experience and skills in a particular area can try to receive equivalency by petition the appropriate committee. In most cases this means students will have to provide a certificate or demonstrate their skills in a test, and may be required to instruct for the respective course or module for which they would like to receive Equivalency. For example, students wanting to receive equivalency for their trad climbing skills will be asked to instruct at the Intermediate Rock Module.

### Failure Policy

It is important that a student show competency and understanding of the skills taught in each module before going on to the next, as each module builds on the skills learned in the basic course or previous module.

Therefore if a student fails:

**A critical skills test** during a field trip, they must notify the Intermediate Committee immediately. The Committee will discuss the reason with the student's examiner and field trip leader to determine why the student was failed, and if they should be allowed to retest. If a student is allowed to retest they must retest in the same year the module was taken, and will not be allowed to participate in subsequent modules until the retest is completed and the student is passed.

**The written exam** at the end of a module, there will be no retest until the next year. This may mean that the student cannot continue on with additional modules until the next year as well.

### Intermediate Student Status Policy

Let it be known that Intermediate students may take as long as they like to graduate from the whole Intermediate program, however, they must remain "active", both as climbers and instructors with The Mountaineers. An Intermediate student's badge will expire every **three years**. In addition, a student may be required to retest into the Intermediate program every **two years**, to ensure their skills are up-to-date and that they have maintained adequate conditioning, if they would like to continue to take modules.

If an Intermediate student's badge does expire, and they would like to continue to receive the benefits of having the student badge, they must show that they have remained "active" and petition the Intermediate Committee to extend their status, for another 3 years.

In order to be considered an "active" Intermediate student, the student needs to participate in at least three (3) activities per year, sponsored by either a Basic or Intermediate climbing committee, and at least one of which needs to be an instructional activity. Activities include participating in climbs, instructing at field trips, attending a climbing related seminar, or attending a course as a student. Students who do not maintain an active status will potentially have to retake some or all of the modules at full cost depending on how long they were inactive. In addition, all students need to remain current with regards to the Wilderness First Aid requirement. Students who let their WFA certification lapse will be put on probation (they won't be able to participate in any club climbs or instructional activity) until they have renewed their certification.

### Make-Up Policy

Students must attend all required lectures and field trips for each module in the same year they signed up for the module. If a student misses a lecture or field trip, without prior approval, the student will have to wait until the next time the same module is offered, which will be the following year. Since the modules build on each other this will likely mean that there are other modules that will also need to wait until the next year. **Please block the dates and attend each lecture and field trip on-time and in-person.**

Students who know that they may need to miss a lecture should petition the Intermediate Committee in advance for a "make up assignment." Please provide a reason for the expected absence. The Committee will determine if the reason is valid and if the lecture can or cannot be made up. If it is deemed that the lecture can be missed and "made up," an assignment will be provided to the student. The student will be required to complete and hand in the assignment before they can continue in the module. **A student, with prior approval, may only miss one lecture per year.**

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Students must attend the required field trip(s) for each module in the year they signed up for the module. They cannot be made up in any way. If you miss a field trip you will fail the module, and will need to take the module again, including all field trips and lectures, the next year (if still desired).

### Physical Fitness Policy

All Intermediate students are expected to maintain a minimum level of physical fitness. Being fast and efficient in the alpine is matter of safety. As a guideline, students should strive to be able to hike Mount Si (to the bottom of the haystack) with a 35lbs pack in under 2 hours. Students will be tested on this requirement as a part of the qualifier. ***Intermediate students who repeatedly hold a climbing party back due to lack of physical fitness will be put on probation (i.e. they won't be able to go on club climbs) until they have proven that they meet the above requirement.***

### Refund Policy

In order to receive a refund for a module, students must cancel from the module or notify the Intermediate Committee Chair prior to the first session of that module, if they cannot cancel. No refunds will be given after that time. No refunds will be given for failing a module. No refunds will be given at any time for the Qualifier.

## Additional Information

### AIARE Level 1 and Avalanche Awareness Seminar

*Level 1 Avalanche Training* certified by the American Institute for Avalanche Research and Education (AIARE) is required for all snow related activities and ice related modules. This course and training is done independent from the Intermediate Program. AIARE-certified training is offered at least once per year by the Tacoma Mountaineers. Students may take their AIARE-certified training from other organizations as well. AIARE Level I equivalent certification such as from the Canadian Avalanche Association (CAA) or National Ski Patrol (NSP) may be accepted. To gain equivalency please contact the Tacoma Avalanche Committee.

Rock related modules do not require AIARE 1, but do require an Avalanche Awareness Seminar. The seminar is typically sponsored by all branches and put on in the winter and spring months.

### Mandatory Lecture: Teaching and Trip Planning

Prerequisites: Tacoma Intermediate Program Student

Required Reading:

Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills, 9th Edition

Part I. Outdoor Fundamentals

Part V. Leadership, Safety and Rescue

Part VI. The Mountain Environment

Recommended Reading:

AMC Guide to Outdoor Leadership: Trip Planning, Group Dynamics, and Decision Making, Alex Kosseff

### Outdoor Leadership Seminar

The Leadership Seminar must be attended by all students in order to be rope leads on Basic Climbs and/or participate in Intermediate Climbs. Leadership development and team work is a strong focus of the Intermediate Course. In order for students to be effective teachers and good role models for less experienced climbers it is essential that they learn about teaching and leadership. The seminar is a graduation requirement and should be taken as early as possible by all Intermediate students so they become better teachers, leaders and team members. Contact the Leadership Seminar leaders if you feel you can gain equivalency.

The Mountaineers offer a one-day Outdoor Leadership Seminar at least once per year. Participation in the seminar is a requirement for those applying to become a climb leader. ***The seminar is highly recommended for developing outdoor leadership skills for all Intermediate Students.*** Please see The Mountaineers' website for current course offerings.

### Private Climbs

Students sufficiently experienced are encouraged to organize and lead basic or intermediate level climbs with their friends or fellow students. It is expected that a number of private climbs are listed on any application for graduation as they provide invaluable opportunities for learning and honing leadership skills. However, private climbs do not count towards the required number of club climbs.

### Wilderness First Aid

A current Wilderness First Aid certification is required for participation in all field trips and climbs as well as graduation from the Intermediate Climbing Program. *All students need to maintain their Wilderness First Aid certification throughout the course in order to be considered active.* There are multiple ways to meet this

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requirement: Wilderness First Aid (WFA) and Mountaineering-Oriented First Aid (MOFA) are offered through the Mountaineers; Wilderness First Responder (WFR), Wilderness EMT (WEMT) and Remote Medicine for Advanced Practitioners (RMAP) are nationally recognized certifications available from independent training organizations that go above and beyond basic first aid training for those who want it. The Climbing Committee accepts these five certifications (WFA, MOFA, WFR, WEMT, RMAP) to fulfill the first aid requirement. Other backcountry or remote medicine certifications may be accepted as equivalency for WFA certification; contact Tacoma WFA leadership for more information.

## Winter Camping Definition and Requirements

Winter Camping is an important skill that should be practiced by students pursuing an alpine mountaineering status. In order for the overnight to be counted for credit it should meet the following requirements:

- The destination does not have to be a peak.
- The climb must be in challenging winter conditions as to gain snow experience, which often means between Dec 1 and March 31.
- The leader does not have to be an approved climb leader.
- The overnight does not have to be a listed climb on The Mountaineers website.
- You need a minimum of three Mountaineers to count for credit.
- You can double dip: Gain a community activity credit if you teach at a winter camping field trip.

## Appendix

### Required and Recommended Readings

Assigned readings (depending on the module) will be drawn from:

- *Mountaineering: The Freedom of the Hills, 9<sup>th</sup> edition*, The Mountaineers
- *AMC Guide to Outdoor Leadership: Trip Planning, Group Dynamics, Decision Making*, Alex Kosseff
- *Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*, Bruce Tremper, ISBN 1594850844
- *Climbing Anchors, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*, John Long and Bob Gaines, ISBN 0762723262
- *Self-Rescue, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*, David Fasulo, ISBN 0762755334
- *Rock Climbing: Mastering Basic Skills, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*, Craig Luebben, ISBN 978-1-59485-862-8
- *Ice and Mixed Climbing: Modern Technique*, Will Gadd, ISBN 089886769X
- *Alpine Ice: Jeff Lowe's Climbing Techniques (video)*, Jeff Lowe

The following additional references are highly recommended:

- *Extreme Alpinism*, Mark Twight, ISBN 0898866545
- *Alpine Climbing: Techniques to Take You Higher*, Houston and Cosley, ISBN 0898867495
- *Accidents in North American Mountaineering, latest edition*
- *Snow Sense*, J. Fredston and D. Fester, ISBN 0964399407<sup>th</sup>
- *How to Rock Climb, 5<sup>th</sup> edition*, John Long, ISBN 0762755342
- *Rock Climbing Anchors: A Comprehensive Guide*, Craig Leubben, ISBN 1594850062
- *High Angle Rescue Techniques*, Tom Vines and Steve Hudson, ISBN 0323019145<sup>nd</sup>
- *The Mountain Guides Manual*, Marc Chauvin and Rob Coppolillo, ISBN 9781493025145
- *Ilgner: The Rock Warrior's Way: Mental Training for Climbers*

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### The Climbing Code

Participants on all Mountaineers sponsored climbs must adhere to the climbing code:

- A climbing party of three is the minimum, unless adequate prearranged support is available. On crevassed glaciers, two rope teams are recommended.
- Carry the necessary clothing, food, and equipment.
- Rope up on all exposed places and for all glacier travel. Anchor all belays.
- Keep the party together, and obey the leader or majority rule.
- Never climb beyond your ability and knowledge.
- Never let judgment be overruled by desire when choosing the route or turning back.
- Leave the trip schedule with a responsible person.
- Follow the precepts of sound mountaineering as set forth in textbooks of recognized merit.
- Behave at all times in a manner that will reflect favorably upon mountaineering and The Mountaineers.

### Emergency Procedures

On occasion, a party may be late returning home. The climbers may be forced to bivouac for an additional night and be unable to return on schedule. *This is not necessarily an indicator of an emergency situation.* It is imperative that students advise their relatives, close friends, co-workers or boss of their plans and the proper procedure for reporting an overdue climber. *Do not promise to return by a certain time of day;* people have been known to panic when a climber fails to return on time.

In the event of an emergency requiring rescue, the *first* call should be to rescue providers. Members of all branches/committees with a trip emergency should:

1. First call **911**, and ask to be transferred to the Sheriff of the county they are in (or National Park Service for Rainier, Olympics, & North Cascades) for a Search and Rescue (SAR).
2. Second notify the club by calling the Mountaineers Emergency Line: **206-521-6030**

If a climber has not returned or telephoned by *noon* of the day following a scheduled climb, family or friends should first call 911 and then contact *The Mountaineers Emergency Line above.*