This policy applies to all faculty and students who participate in University field courses and to department heads who oversee such courses in their respective areas.

Definitions:

**Field Course**: A course where learning takes place in a remote natural environment under the supervision of a field course leader where access to emergency services is limited or out of reach. Field courses provide students with an opportunity to gain supervised, practical experience by applying the classroom knowledge, theory, and skills of their discipline in the field. It does not include field trips of limited duration that are only a small component of classroom activities.

**Field Course Leaders**: Faculty members with specialized knowledge, skill, experience, and expertise that have supervisory and educational responsibility for students during a field course.

**Department Heads**: Academic department chairs and deans, directors of academic and non-academic units, and others who have direct oversight responsibility for field courses within their respective areas.

1. **Field Course Leaders and Students Make Health, Safety, and Stewardship a Priority**

   Faculty and students shall not abuse University or personal property, jeopardize the health or safety of themselves and other people, or harass or harm wildlife or other elements of the natural environment.

2. **College Deans Identify Field Courses for the Purposes of this Policy**

   With input from the field course leader and department head, the college dean determines whether a course is a field course as defined by this policy.
3. **All University Policies Apply**

All University policies apply to students and faculty while in the field regardless of location or time or day. Such policies include but are not limited to policies on discrimination, animals, health, safety, transportation, and alcohol and other drugs. Additionally, all state ethics laws, the Student Conduct Code, and the Code of Faculty Ethics also apply. Students must comply with field course requirements and field course leader instructions. Students are also responsible for pre-arranging for their own transportation back home in the case that they are unable or disqualified from further participation in the field course.

All alcohol consumption and recreational drug use, including marijuana, as well as the possession/transportation of alcohol and recreational drugs, are prohibited while in the field.

All drivers must complete the University’s Basic Driver Safety Program and the Large Passenger Van Safety Training, if applicable. When possible, public transportation or university-owned or rented vehicles should be used.

4. **Non-Registered Individuals Shall Not Participate**

Individuals who are not registered for a field course shall not engage in course activities, unless they are a volunteer approved by the department head. An individual identified as a volunteer must register with Human Resources in order to perform assigned or authorized volunteer duties as determined by the department head and field course leader. Volunteers may be required to provide food, lodging, and/or transportation for themselves.

5. **Field Course Leaders Manage Field Course Risks and Plan and Prepare for Emergencies**

Field course leaders shall develop a risk management plan, arrange transportation, and conduct mandatory pre-departure orientations for students. A copy of the risk management plan must be left with the department head for University use/reference in the case of an emergency. Field course leaders may consult WWU’s Risk Management for assistance.

Field course leaders should also develop a student registration process whereby students are presented with these documents:
- Acknowledgement of Risk/Hold Harmless (AOR/HH) form
- Conditions of Participation (including Code of Conduct) form
- Health and Safety Report form

All field course leaders must plan and prepare for emergencies related to the field course. As part of the process:
- All field course leaders are expected to possess the technical aptitudes required for the course or obtain the necessary training beforehand.
• All field course leaders are expected to carry an emergency field communication device and a first aid kit while in the field.
• Wilderness First Responder (WFR) training is suggested for field course leaders teaching field courses located in remote wilderness locations, far away from emergency responders, with a likely need for the leader to treat or care for the injured or ill until help arrives or they are able to transport the individual out. Wilderness First Aid (WFA) training is suggested for field course leaders teaching field courses in wilderness locations, where emergency responders are available, but perhaps slow to respond. Both trainings are provided by Western’s Outdoor Center.

6. Field Course Leaders Supervise Students

Field course leaders are responsible for ensuring that a field course is well organized and that the itinerary and requirements are conveyed to students. Field course leaders should also provide students with contact information for the responsible department head, in order that students can report concerns with a field course leader should they arise.

7. Accidents and Incidents Are Reported As Soon As Practicable

In the event of an emergency, leaders should first attend to the immediate needs of the affected participant(s). Once such needs are addressed, field course leaders should immediately contact the department head to notify them of the emergency and request available assistance if needed. The department head, or the field course leader (in case the department head is unavailable), must also immediately inform the Vice President of Enrollment and Student Services, their college dean, the Director of the Student Health Center, and the Director of Risk, Compliance, and Policy Services. Field course leaders must complete a University accident report upon returning home.

Students must report injuries and illnesses to field course leaders or the responsible department head, as soon as possible. Field course leaders must respond to such reports in accordance with the expectations outlined in University policies.