



UNIVERSITY OF
NORTHERN COLORADO

Department of
Student Affairs

Graduate Assistant for Outdoor Pursuits

2026-2027 Position Description

Program Summary

The Outdoor Pursuits program encompasses six different program areas: Climbing Wall, Teambuilding, Workshops and Special Events, Gear Shop, Bike Shop, and Adventure Trips.

Program Goals

- Outdoor Pursuits seeks to create an inclusive environment that ensures a positive and successful experience for all participants.
- Outdoor Pursuits seeks to educate and increase awareness of positive health behaviors.
- Outdoor Pursuits seeks to provide appropriate activities and services based on participant assessments.
- Outdoor Pursuits seeks to offer programs and services that reflect current outdoor recreation trends.
- Outdoor Pursuits provides professional development opportunities that will extend beyond their undergraduate experience as well as provide the highest quality of service possible.

Graduate Assistant Expectations

Duties and Responsibilities

This position is vital to the success and reputation of the Outdoor Pursuits program. This position requires previous experience in outdoor recreation, excellent time management skills, ability to multitask, prioritize responsibilities, work independently and as part of a team and be able to make sound judgement calls when resources are limited.

In collaboration with the Assistant Director of Outdoor Pursuits, the Graduate Assistant (GA) will assist with the development, delivery, and management of the six program areas. The GA will oversee three program areas during their first year and transition to managing the remaining three areas in their second year. Throughout their appointment, the GA is responsible for fostering a positive, inclusive, and safety-focused environment that supports the development of both staff and participants. Accomplishing these responsibilities is done in the following ways:

Program Management – (40%)

- Assist with the overall management of all outdoor pursuits program areas including Trips, Bike Shop, Gear Shop, Climbing Wall, Workshops and Teambuilding Program.
- Assist in the planning, coordination, and facilitation of weekend and extended outdoor trips, including activities such as backpacking, rock climbing, hiking, canoeing, biking, and skiing.
- Contribute to the development and execution of Climbing Wall programs, services, and special events to enhance participant engagement and safety.
- Supervise and mentor student staff in the delivery of monthly educational workshops for the UNC community, ensuring high-quality instruction and participant experience.
- Support program assessment efforts through the development of surveys, data collection, and analysis; assist in preparing monthly reports and contributing to strategic planning initiatives.



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- Assist in managing equipment inventory, including maintenance, repair, and lifecycle replacement planning to ensure safety and operational readiness.
- Oversee daily operations of the Gear Shop and Climbing Wall, ensuring efficient service delivery, risk management, and a positive user experience.

Student Staff Management and Development - (25%)

- Assist in the recruitment, hiring, training, scheduling, motivation, and evaluation of student staff, with an emphasis on professional development and performance management.
- Assist the supervisor with payroll and time sheet management and approvals for student employees and assist with scheduling staff for all program areas and program assistants.
- Support the development and delivery of training programs and clinics for student staff on topics of risk management, outdoor-scenario sessions, and diversity, equity and inclusion principles.

Risk Management – (20%)

- Support program development through the creation, revision, and implementation of internal documentation, policies, and operational manuals.
- Design and deliver regular technical training for student staff to ensure competency, and consistency.
- Assess and provide feedback on student staff performance, with a focus on compliance with safety standards at the climbing wall and ropes course.
- Maintain accurate and detailed records of incidents, accidents, and near misses; utilize data to inform training improvements and promote a culture of safety.

Administration and Department Collaboration – (15%)

- Maintain weekly office hours and assist in daily operations of Outdoor Pursuits programs and services, including assisting with the management of all related software programs.
- Obtain CPR-1st Aid-AED Instructor Certification in the first year to help instruct certification classes.
- Assist with On-Call responsibilities, especially in the evenings and on weekends.
- Serve on committees within Campus Recreation and across campus to develop and foster relationships with other campus departments, student organizations, and community partners.
- Participate in departmental responsibilities for marketing, outreach, events and staff development, such as, but not limited to: event planning and management (RecFest), New Student Orientation presentations, promotional events, and student employee trainings and recognition.
- Assist with department effort to promote a welcoming environment with equitable approaches to policy and practice for the campus community through inclusive programs, services, facilities and staff.
- Other duties as assigned and outlined in the department 'Graduate Assistant Expectations' Agreement.

Professionalism & Role Modeling

- Campus Recreation Staff are expected to uphold policies outlined in Housing & Residential Education Handbook, Student Rights and Responsibilities Code of Conduct, and/or Federal and State laws.



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- All staff members should carry themselves in a professional manner when interacting with supervisors, peers, campus partners, community members and students.
- Model leadership, training, and supervision of staff, as well as create programming, with tenets of Inclusion and Equity at the core.
- Maintain an effective working relationship with others within the department and across campus.
- Demonstrate good written, listening, and oral communication skills.
- Demonstrate quality decision making and evaluation skills.

Hours & Availability:

The Graduate Assistant is expected to spend their 18 work hours in person. This position requires flexibility in the scheduling of hours, often involving early morning, evening, or weekend work, leading trips, facilitating workshops, hiring and on-boarding new staff, as well as, attending and/or leading staff meetings and trainings.

Physical Demands:

This position requires the Graduate Assistant to possess the physical strength and endurance required to conduct the following activities: leading groups in the indoor climbing wall, working extended periods of time at the ropes course, moving heavy equipment (forty-five pounds or more) and sustaining high levels of activity over long periods of time.

Additional expectations related to academic course load and outside employment are outlined in the [Graduate Assistant Handbook](#).

Qualifications and Additional Requirements:

Minimum Qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree and full-time enrollment in a University of Northern Colorado Master's program.
- This position has a minimum GPA requirement of 3.0.
- 1-3 years' experience in outdoor programming.
- The individual occupying this role must maintain good standing, both academically and conduct-wise, with their respective graduate program and the university overall.
- Demonstrate a professional commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice.
- Demonstrate ability to be attentive and provide detailed descriptions.
- Ability to work independently, as well as in a team environment.
- Ability to create and maintain professional, creative, and flexible work environments
- Ability to effectively manage multiple, competing priorities

Preferred Qualifications:

- Bachelor's Degree in Recreation, Physical Education, Sports Management, or related field preferred.
- Availability to start work in the summer of 2026
- CPR, First Aid, AED Certifications. Must obtain certification within 1 month of employment.
- Certifications and/or experience in any of the following:
 - Wilderness First Responder Certification (must obtain within three months of employment)
 - Certification through the PCIA, AMGA, or relevant climbing experience
 - Knowledge of ski and snowboard maintenance and tuning
 - Swift Water Rescue experience/certification



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- ACCT Level 1 or higher Certification or Ropes Course Facilitator experience
- Bike maintenance experience
- High degree of organization and strong administrative & communication skills
- Experience with Microsoft Office, Outlook, and Qualtrics
- Prior leadership experience related to supervising students and/or a student organization.
- Prior experience with event planning.

Training Commitments:

- Attend the annual Division of Student Affairs graduate assistant training day, or equivalent.
- Complete annual training in Title IX (harassment identification/prevention), resources to assist distressed students, FERPA, and other training offered by the supervisor.
- Additional on the job training will be outlined by supervisor upon start of position, such as, All Staff Training and monthly staff meetings.

Compensation:

Master's Degree Graduate Assistants will receive a stipend of \$12,913 over a 10-month period in addition to in-state tuition and fees. Graduate students classified as out-of-state will be responsible for covering the difference in tuition and fees. The tuition waiver covers up to 9 graduate-level credits per semester.

Contract Period for Position:

This Graduate Assistantship is a full-time, Master's level, academic year contract. The contracted period is August 16, 2026 – May 15, 2027. This assistantship is appointed for 18 hours per week during the contracted period. The contract period includes all pre-service and in-service training. The schedule of a student in academic year contract follows the UNC calendar, which includes the expectation to work during fall, winter and spring breaks. Graduate Assistants receive sick leave, as outlined in the [Paid Sick Leave Policy](#). By applying, applicants consent to a conduct check completed by Student Conduct & Accountability.

Employment Outcomes:

In this position you gain a wide range of career readiness skills recognized by *the National Association of Colleges and Employers* (NACE). As a result, of performing the job responsibilities of the Outdoor Pursuits Graduate Assistant position students will increase their knowledge, skills and abilities in the following highly employable areas:

- **Critically Think/ Problem Solving** – Executing sound reasoning while analyzing issues, making decisions and overcoming obstacles.
- **Oral/Written Communication** – Expressing thoughts/ideas in a clear and effective manner both in-person and in written form.
- **Teamwork/ Collaboration** – Building strong collaborative relationships with peers and university/community partners; while demonstrating working through healthy conflict management.
- **Leadership** – Leveraging the strengths of others to achieve a common goal, managing emotions, using empathy to guide and motivate others while organizing, prioritizing and delegating workloads.
- **Professionalism/ Work Ethic** – Demonstrating personal accountability, effective work habits, integrity/ethical behavior, acting with the interests of the larger community in mind and can learn from mistakes.
- **Equity and Inclusion** – Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual



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orientations, abilities and religions. Demonstrating, inclusiveness and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and gain an appreciation of individuals' differences.

- **Digital Technology** – Integrating existing technologies ethically/effectively to problem solve, complete tasks and accomplish goals while demonstrating adaptability to new and emerging technologies.
- **Career Management** – Identifying and communicating one's skills, strength, knowledge, experiences and areas of professional growth relevant to desired career goals. Able to navigate and explore job options, career next step opportunities and self-advocate for those opportunities in the workplace.

Student Affairs Mission

Student Affairs is dedicated to fostering the holistic development, belonging, and success of every student. We create and sustain inclusive and supportive co-curricular learning and engagement experiences – rooted in self-awareness, interpersonal skills, equity, well-being, leadership and career readiness – that complement and enhance academic growth. Through intentional partnership, continuous assessment, and advocacy, we eliminate barriers, honor diverse identities, teach life skills, advance upward mobility, and equip students to thrive personally, professionally, and as civic leaders.

Campus Recreation Mission

Campus Recreation is a student fee funded department that provides an inclusive environment for students to develop healthy behaviors and personal skills. We provide various active experiential learning opportunities within the department programs of Competitive Sports, Fitness & Wellness, Aquatics, Outdoor Pursuits, and Informal Recreation. Through Campus Recreation programs and employment, students will experience personal growth through critical thought and ethical principles; teamwork and civil engagement; diverse cultural perspectives; development of transferable skills; and the cultivation of healthy practices. Our values of inclusivity, collaboration, equity, diversity, well-being, and personal growth are at the core of our programming and staff development. We proudly strive to build a community and culture that is centered on these values.

To Apply

Please submit a résumé or curriculum vitae (including three professional references – name, title, relationship description and length, phone number, and email address), cover letter, outdoor experience log, ACCT challenge course practitioners portfolio (if applicable) and copy of any current certifications to Wilson Obenhaus, Assistant Director for Outdoor Pursuits, at robert.obenhaus@unco.edu.

Application Deadline

The Priority Deadline for this application is Friday, May 1, 2026 at 5:00 pm. The application will remain open until filled.

For More Information, Please Contact

Wilson Obenhaus
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