

Dear Challenge Course Participant,

Welcome to the Oregon State University Challenge Course. We're excited that you'll be joining us! We would like to take this opportunity to share a little information with you about your upcoming program.

What exactly does the Challenge Course entail?

The Challenge Course consists of a graduated series of group-oriented activities. The day begins with warm-up activities and games designed to help group members get to know each other and build the foundation for working together. As the day progresses, you and your group will be presented with more difficult and complex challenges. Group members work together to set goals and develop strategies for solving each challenge. Activities range from 'simple' ball tossing activities to more complex challenges involving larger props such as ropes, boards and cables. Most activities take place at ground level; however, several solutions may require some group members to be anywhere from 2 to 12 feet off of the ground. Your program may also include an opportunity to participate in the high ropes course. At heights of 25 to 35 feet, these ropes and cable elements are specifically designed to provide a variety of ways to challenge yourself and support others, whether or not you choose to climb. Whatever the activity, it is important to remember that the real focus of the day is on working together as a team.

Will participants be required to do the activities?

The OSU Challenge Course abides by a *Challenge by Choice* philosophy, which enables you to determine the type and level of participation that is most appropriate for *you*. While we encourage each group member to challenge themselves, we recognize that not everyone will want to and/or be able to participate in every activity in the same manner. Individuals may choose to contribute to the planning and strategizing and not necessarily the physical action of any given activity. Utilizing the *Challenge by Choice* philosophy allows everyone to be involved and to challenge themselves, but at their own pace and in their own way. We will make every effort to design your program with the specific goals, needs, interests and concerns of *your* group members in mind.

We are serious about safety.

Our staff are professionally trained instructors who are competent in technical safety and group dynamic facilitation skills. Because your participation in the OSU Challenge Course includes certain inherent risks, we expect you to follow the instructions of your facilitators. Everyone's safety will be enhanced if you are attentive throughout the day, communicate your needs to the facilitators and/or your group and support the choices of others in your group. Please read, complete and return to us the Assumption of Risk and Liability Waiver form included in this packet.

What are your responsibilities?

During your participation in the OSU Challenge Course, we ask that you work toward a set of goals, which includes having fun, working together, taking care of yourself and others, and being safe. In order to create the best experience for everyone, we ask that you also agree to uphold certain program standards. These include following all safety guidelines by instructors, using equipment only with proper supervision, supporting each other within the *Challenge by Choice* philosophy and letting instructors know your concerns and needs. Please dress appropriately for the weather and come prepared for your program. Enclosed you will find a recommended clothing list with additional helpful hints.

We are glad that you are participating in the OSU Challenge Course, and thank you in advance for the effort that you'll put into making your program a rewarding experience.

Sincerely,

Mark Belson, Experiential Education Coordinator
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Helpful Hints and Recommended Clothing

Please come well prepared for your day at the OSU Challenge Course.

Recommended Clothing:

Wear comfortable clothing that does not restrict your ability to be active.

- Sneakers or comfortable closed toe shoes
- Extra socks (recommended for morning dew or rain)
- Walking shorts, long pants or sweats
- T-shirt or long sleeved shirt
- Glasses/sunglasses with a strap
- Hat and sunscreen, as needed

Wet / Cold Weather Layers:

Wearing layers allows you to remove and add clothing as needed. Minimize cotton clothing as it absorbs water and does not keep you warm if it gets wet.

- Wool, Pile or Fleece Sweater
- Warm hat
- Gloves
- Wool socks (we suggest bringing an extra pair also)
- Waterproof boots
- Raincoat, shell, or windbreaker

Please leave the following items at home or in your vehicle:

We are not responsible for the items you bring on to the course property.

- Jewelry (particularly rings, dangly earrings and necklaces)
- Belts with large buckles
- Wrist Watches
- Wallets and Purses

Having Energy and Fun:

- Eat prior to your program; it's an activity that requires energy!
- You may want to bring snacks and/or lunch
- Cameras are optional, but welcome (a great way to remember your day!)

The Challenge Course staff goes to great lengths to provide you with a safe, exciting and rewarding experience. By bringing the recommended clothing and other items to your program, you will be well prepared to have a comfortable and enjoyable day.