

New class includes national parks trip

ALEX CARLSON
Staff Reporter

Whether it's encountering sky-touching vistas atop a colossal mountain peak or witnessing the serenity of a forested lake on a calm day, nature has endless beauty to offer. For more than a century, America has harnessed and preserved the majestic power of nature in a government-supported development dubbed the national park.

Exercise science professor Jennifer Hurst knows the elegance of nature, having visited a number of national parks throughout her life. She hopes to pass on her knowledge through a new special topics summer course: ES 465, Physical Activity in National Parks.

The course takes place during the second block of summer courses, from July 5 to Aug. 5. Students will be in the classroom until July 16, learning skills necessary for exploring and experiencing the outdoors. Students will develop skills such as pitching a tent, map and navigation techniques, leave-no-trace hiking principles and more biological aspects like high-altitude

exercise practices. The main event begins July 16, when students will hit the road to visit the natural wonders of Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park. Students' techniques will be tested in physical and mental challenges, two aspects that Hurst hopes will be combatted in the course.

"Two of the very prominent social issues that we have going on right now are the obesity crisis as well as environmental issues," Hurst said. "And in many ways the national parks address both. They provide an opportunity for us to go and be physically active and to go and enjoy

the environment." But nature's beauty isn't limited to the body or environment. It can strike a creative and inspirational nerve. Students who participate in the class will be encouraged to photograph,

journal, video record or poetically write about their adventures in Yellowstone and Grand Teton. As a final project for the trip, students will compile their experiences in a chronicle, showing their individual creativity.

"You're going to learn skills that you can take with you for a lifetime," Hurst said. "So it's not just something that you're going to learn and 'OK there it

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Jennifer Hurst
ES 465 professor

is.' You're going to be able to take those experiences and be able to extend them, hopefully to explore them, throughout your lifetime. If I'm not mistaken, I think that's the object of being a liberal learner."

Exercise science professor Michael Bird said he supports the creation of the course, especially after going on an excursion to Moab, Utah, with students during summers 2009 and 2010.

"[The class] provides the opportunity for students to experience the outdoors as well as learning about the outdoors and to do that in an environment that they couldn't do here," Bird said.

Senior Katie Martin explored Moab, Utah, alongside Bird and other students in May 2010 and supports the idea of students learning in such an environment.

"It's an experience beyond the classroom," Martin said. "It feels like you're studying abroad, but locally in America, and it compiles the outdoor-learning aspects in a unique setting."

Student participation is essential to the class' long-term success, but Hurst has more ideas and higher hopes

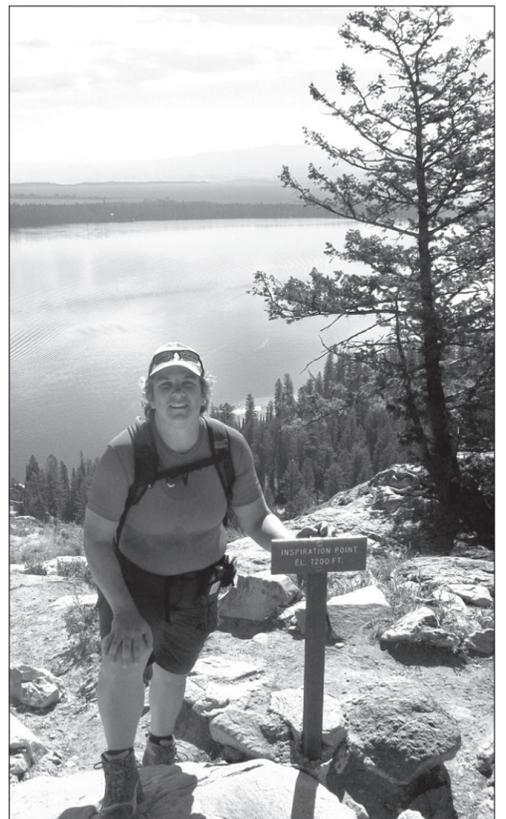


Photo submitted by Jennifer Hurst
Exercise science professor Jennifer Hurst stands at Inspiration Point, 7200 ft. above sea level, at Grand Teton National Park during her trip there in 2007. Students who take ES 465 will also make this hike.

for the course's future. "Ultimately, one of the things that I think we'd like to try to do is to get it passed as a JINS course," Hurst said. "And that it may be some-

thing that we could potentially offer during the regular semester as well as during the summer semester." ES 465 begins Summer 2011. Pack your bags.

Next Monday's forecast: gloomy

Jan. 24 named "Blue Monday," most depressing day of year

BY AMANDA HERZBERG
Staff Reporter

As temperatures near the single digits, the rapidly falling mercury might illustrate a similar turn in some students' mood. The good times and glitter of the holiday season have passed. With the new year have come snow storms, flu viruses and debts. These bleak factors merely add to the cold grayness of the winter months, and their harsh tendencies will peak on the appropriately named "Blue Monday," the hypothesized most depressing day of the year.

Although not an official title, the day did not earn its name without first undergoing careful study. Based on the research of Chris Arnall, a scholar associated with Cardiff University in England, a mathematical formula was developed to calculate the exact date of the most depressing day of the year — Blue Monday. The formula took into consideration the weather, debt, time

since Christmas, failing New Year's resolutions, low motivation levels and the need to take action. Its accuracy has since been called into question, particularly by noted psychiatrist Ben Goldacre but Blue Monday continues to be recognized. Since its supposed discovery in 2007, the most depressing day of the year

has fallen on the fourth Monday in January. This year, Blue Monday will be Jan. 24.

While never absolutely confirmed or denied, the factors said to contribute to the day's existence are certainly present this time of year and might also be associated with Seasonal Affective Disorder.

SAD is a kind of depression occurring at the same time every year, according to mayoclinic.com. The condition commonly is referred to as seasonal depression. Symptoms generally start in the fall and continue through the winter months, some of which might include hopelessness, appetite changes and loss of energy.

Sophomore Dani Borja said she thinks she experiences symptoms of seasonal depression during Missouri's cold winter months. Born and raised just outside of Los Angeles, she's used to temperatures in January that tend to stay in the 70s and frequent sunshine. So Borja is relatively new to the full winter experience common to northeastern

Missouri. "I get sad, just kind of depressed when I don't see the sun for a few days," Borja said. "It just puts me in a bad mood."

Borja is not alone in her winter blues. Even native Missourians are susceptible to seasonal depression, as it can affect anyone. However, there are ways to combat feelings such as those experienced by Borja. Some seek local tanning salons, such as Rapture Salon on Baltimore Street in Kirksville. Employee Paula Van Rie said many Rapture customers note depression as their reason for tanning. She said doctors likely would disagree with this self-prescribed therapy method but notes its ability to fill the sunshine void.

"It's a little break from reality," Van Rie said. "Not that it's a healthy one, but it is one."

Light therapy is another method that has been used to keep sadness at bay. This treatment is frequently used to combat SAD by exposing a person to artificial light, which affects brain chemicals linked to mood, according to mayoclinic.com.

Some bypass the sunlight simulators altogether and opt instead to travel in search of actual sun-

light. Travel agencies tend to see an increase in beach vacation bookings around this time as people comfort themselves with the prospect of warmer temperatures, according to an msnbc.com article.

While a college schedule, not to mention budget, might not easily allow for a beach vacation, it does not rule out light therapy treatments, a safer alter-

native to tanning, and a resource which can be found for free on Truman's campus at the University Counseling Services.

Joe Hamilton, assistant director at Counseling Services said that while he has heard of Blue Monday, the demand for counseling at Counseling Services relates more closely to the academic calendar than to seasonal changes. But in the event of seasonal cases, the center offers a "Happy Light," should light therapy be determined a good treatment approach. Hamilton said the light simulates sunlight, the illusion of which is supposed to result in an elevated mood.

Borja said she has created her own means of coping with her seasonal depression. She said video chatting her family in California generally brightens her mood, as does visiting her grandma's house nearby, which reminds her of summertime visits there as a child. She has proven that even a California girl can survive in the frozen Missouri tundra.

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Dani Borja
sophomore

The Difference Between Cold and Flu

Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Fever	Rare	Characteristic
Headache	Rare	Prominent
General Aches	Slight	Usual; often severe
Fatigue	Quite mild	Can last up to three weeks
Exhaustion	Never	Early and prominent
Stuffy Nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore Throat	Common	Sometimes
Chest Discomfort	Mild to moderate	Common
Complications	Sinus congestion	Bronchitis, pneumonia
Prevention	Good hygiene	Annual flu shot

According to Webmd.com

Health center combats flu season

Vaccine, hand-washing are best preventative steps for cold and flu

KATHLEEN BARBOSA
Staff Reporter

Coughs echo as students wait for class to start. The person sitting next to the window has buried their desk in an assortment of new and used tissues. All of these are symptoms of the biological warfare known as cold and flu season that enters the Truman community every winter.

Each year, the Student Health Center gears up for cold and flu season by ordering flu vaccines for students, faculty and staff. This year, the health center ordered 300 vaccines for students and an additional 300 for faculty. So far, they have administered 180

vaccinations to students and 160 to staff and faculty. If someone already is ill, the health center takes appointments much like a regular doctor's office and has the ability to see 60 patients per day and 300 patients per week.

Brenda Higgins, director of the Student Health Center, said it is difficult persuading students they need the flu shot. The health

center has a few students who suffer from chronic illness who choose to get the vaccination every year, but the health center is taking steps to encourage as many students as possible to receive the vaccination.

"We try to keep the cost low, so students can afford the flu vaccine because as far as preventive measures go, that's probably the very best thing students can do," Higgins said.

This year, the vaccination costs \$15.

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Brenda Higgins
director of the Student Health Center

Small steps, like getting the flu shot and washing hands, can make the biggest difference in preventing illness.

"Wash your hands often," Higgins said. "The CDC [Center for Disease Control] tells us that that is the one thing that can prevent us from spreading diseases."

Higgins said students often have misconceptions about

what the flu is and mistakenly label stomach illnesses as the flu. "The true flu is a respiratory illness and kind of the standards that we qualify for the flu is fever above 100 degrees, cough or sore throat, and many times people have that extreme sore feeling," Higgins said.

Some people think the flu shot can cause someone to get the flu,

but Higgins said that is not possible. She said some shots are active shots that can cause the recipient a mild case of the illness, but the flu shot is different because it is not a live shot, so there is no way someone can get the flu from the shot.

To prevent catching the flu, Teri Tucker, women's nurse practitioner, said people should try to get their flu shot in October or November to make sure the shot has had one to two weeks to take full effect before cold and flu season begins.

Tucker said that because students live in close proximity in the residence halls, they often spread the flu to each other.

"We are starting to see signs of the flu-like illnesses," Tucker said.

"We have already seen suspected cases of [influenza like illness]," said Alice Davis, clinic supervisor and family nurse practitioner.

When people go to the health center at the first symptoms of the influenza, antiviral medication can be administered, but if they wait three to four days, then the medication does not work.

Davis recommends a lot of fluids, rest and good nutrition for those who are sick already.

Students can help the health center keep campus healthy in a number of ways. To prevent the flu from spreading, those who are sick should stay home from class. If they are experiencing a cough, cough into the elbow or a tissue, not hands. Using disinfectant on commonly touched surfaces such as doorknobs can help others remain healthy during cold and flu season.