OSU College of Forestry Guard School
Non-credit version
Spring 2026, Revised

Course Coordinator:

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Description:

This mixed mode (online and in-person) "Guard School" utilizes National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) online curricula coupled with an in-person skills field session and work capacity test. Students work independently to complete NWCG and FEMA online modules prior to the field session. Successful completion results in FFT2 or RXCM qualification.

Students: Open to all OSU students at any grade level in any college or program, any member of the OSU faculty or staff, and agency partners/cooperators.

Prerequisites: None. Medical history form required for fitness test.

Time commitment: Approximately 48 hours (including online and in-person components)

Fee: waived

Required text: Incident Response Pocket Guide (most current is 2025). Available [here](#) and possibly through the OSU bookstore.

Assignments:

- Obtain FEMA and NWCG login credentials (see Accessing Online Curricula, below)
  - ==START this early.== It can take a couple days to obtain the credentials and you need them to access the curricula.
  - Note that the FEMA website may be inactive due to the federal government's lack of a budget for the Department of Homeland Security. I've provided alternative ICS courses you can take if the FEMA site isn't functioning.
- Start physical preparations for Work Capacity Test
- Complete the online course material listed below and send me one email with all five course certificates, in PDF format
- Review the [shelter deployment video](#)
- Attend and fully participate in the required field session (see below)

Coursework (complete in this order):

- **S-190** Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior (7 hours with NWCG, 2023 v4.)
- **IS-100.c** Introduction to ICS (Incident Command System (3 hours with FEMA – or Safety Unlimited ICS-100)
- **IS-700.b** NIMS an Introduction (3 hours with FEMA - or Safety Unlimited ICS-700)
- **S-130** Firefighter Training (22 hours with NWCG, 2025 Blended, v2)
- **L-180** Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service (4 hours with NWCG, 2014 v3.)

    Guidance on how to access these courses appears later in this document.

Required Field Session (two dates available – choose one)

WCFT, Shelters, Firelines and Hoselays (April 26 **or** May 31, 2026, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

- Meet at Hatfield Courtyard (west side of Richardson Hall)
- Shelter Deployment
    - Practice and then test on shelter deployment considerations and techniques, in or near Hatfield Courtyard
- Work Capacity Fitness Test
    - Provide your own pack with the appropriate weight
    - 45 pounds for arduous rating (required for FFT2 qualification)
    - 25 pounds for moderate rating (required for RXCM qualification)
    - We'll conduct this physical test on campus, on a relatively flat, paved route
- Firelines and Hoselays
    - Carpool to McDonald Dunn Research Forests
    - Wear sturdy boots with gripping lug sole
    - Bring lunch, snacks, water

Optional (recommended) Zoom session

Zoom sessions with additional content, discussion and question opportunities are available Tuesday evenings, March 31 through June 2, 6:00 to 7:20 p.m. You'll get the Zoom link when registering for the course. I highly recommend you participate – you'll get much more from the course by doing so.

Certification

Successful completion of this class results in the participant being certified as a Firefighter Type 2 (FFT2). This is the entry level certification for persons working as wildland firefighters. For those unable to pass the arduous work capacity fitness test, RXCM is an option. All coursework is the same – RCXM just has a less strenuous fitness requirement.

About FFT2

The Firefighter Type 2 (FFT2) participates in wildland and/or prescribed fire crewmember operations, including ignition, control, mop-up, suppression, and monitoring. A Firefighter Type 2 is responsible for maintaining awarded training certificates, fitness test documentation, and a log or record of their

wildland fire experience. A typical fire experience log will contain specific dates and locations of fire assignments; fire name, size, type and fuels; and assignment(s) held (e.g., holding crew, ignition crew, engine patrol, fire weather). Your record is your responsibility.

After obtaining FFT2 you must participate in an annual refresher (RT-130) course to maintain that qualification. (You don't lose FFT2 if you miss a refresher, but you aren't considered qualified until you complete the refresher.)

FFT2 requires the arduous work capacity fitness test.

About RXCM

The Prescribed Fire Crew Member qualification carries the same training requirements as FFT2 but has a moderate fitness requirement. This qualification is accepted by the Deschutes National Forest and the Oregon Military Department for persons working exclusively in support of prescribed fire. Note that persons qualified at RXCM will not be utilized in suppression fire roles, and that the qualification may not be accepted outside of the two entities noted above. I recommend you do the arduous fitness test and get FFT2 qualified if possible.

About the Work Capacity Fitness Test

The Work Capacity Fitness Test (WCFT) is a physical, job-related, field test administered to determine a worker's capacity to meet NWCG position standards. Not all positions require the same level of fitness. It is a _walking test_ (no running). There are three test options:

1. Arduous: walk 3 miles, carrying a 45-pound pack, in 45 minutes or less. Intended for prolonged, arduous jobs like working on the fireline while carrying tools, packs, and other equipment and wearing full PPE. _This is the requirement for FFT2 qualification._

2. Moderate: walk 2 miles, carrying a 25-pound pack, in less than 30 minutes. For moderately strenuous position assignments, considerable walking over uneven terrain. _This is the requirement for RXCM qualification._

3. Light: walk 1 mile, with no pack, in 16 minutes or less. For positions of light duty and some camp positions. _Does NOT meet requirements for suppression or prescribed fire operations._

- I recommend attempting the arduous rating – without it I cannot qualify you as a FFT2. That said, do not exceed your known physical limitations.
- See this guide for advice on the Work Capacity Fitness Test that may help you prepare for your work capacity test.
- Start training now – the arduous and moderate tests work out to a pace of 4 miles per hour, which is challenging for most individuals. It's a walking test and even fit runners may find it challenging. Start early and work up to the required pace and pack weight.
- I'll allow you to use any pack you desire, any footwear, and any clothing appropriate for the weather conditions. You do NOT need to wear heavy boots or PPE.

Accessing Online Curricula (required for course)

1. **You need to set up two accounts to complete the online courses and obtain your certificates of completion. Do this <u>immediately</u> to avoid delayed access to curriculum.**

    1. Create an account with the Wildland Fire Learning Portal to access NWCG curricula.
    2. FEMA has recently converted to the login.gov system. Click the link and follow the instructions under the "create an account" link.

    - NOTE1: If you have an older FEMA SID, FEMA recommends you use the same email address and personal information in both accounts.
    - *NOTE2: The FEMA training website is currently offline – it's part of the Department of Homeland Security which has yet to have its federal budget approved. If you cannot access the site, see the alternatives listed below.*

2. **Links to Curriculum**

    1. FEMA IS-100.C ICS class: Look for the "Take This Course" box and select the "Interactive Web Base Course." Once complete, take the Final Exam (this will require to log in using your login.gov account) and obtain the pdf version of your certificate of completion. A copy of the IS-100 student guide is available on the Guard School website, resources tab – you'll find it very helpful when taking the test. *The alternative to the FEMA IS-100 is this course from Safety Unlimited:* ICS-100 Introduction to the Incident Command System
    2. FEMA IS-700.B. Introduction to the National Incident Management System. Same process as described for IS-100. The student guide is on the Guard School website, resources tab. *The alternative to the FEMA IS-100 is this course from Safety Unlimited:* ICS-700 National Incident Management System
    3. NWCG Fire Classes. Sign-in to the Wildland Fire Learning Portal. In the upper right corner click the "On Demand Courses" button. You need to take the following:

        a) S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior (Online) 2023 v4
        b) S-130 Firefighter Training (Blended Online Component) 2025 v2
        c) L-180 Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service (Online) 2014 v3

        - NOTE: NWCG is updating curriculum, so if newer versions appear, complete that newer version
        - Complete and pass the quizzes embedded in each course and obtain pdf certificates.

3. **Proof of Completion**
    - Send your PDF certificates of completion (not photos of them) in ONE email to John Punches.

NOTE – you must successfully complete all of the online training prior to the field exercise.

Course Policies

Class Attendance and Participation

Non-credit students must successfully complete, and submit certificates for, all online curriculum components. ***Participation in the in-person field session is required.***

Student Conduct:

Students in this course will be expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. You will be expected to treat other students, instructors, and guest lecturers with dignity and respect, and follow university guidelines regarding academic honesty, student conduct, and civility. Behaviors that are disruptive to teaching and learning will not be tolerated and will be referred for disciplinary action. Behaviors that create a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment based on gender, race, ethnicity, color, religion, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation will be referred to the Affirmative Action Office. The student code of conduct can be reviewed here: https://beav.es/codeofconduct. The Office of Student Life, https://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/, provides extensive resources and support for navigating your time as a student at Oregon State University.

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at http://ds.oregonstate.edu. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.

Attachment A: Curriculum Descriptions and Typical Time Commitments

IS-100.C Introduction to ICS (Incident Command System (3 hours with FEMA)

Introduces the Incident Command System (ICS) and provides the foundation for higher level ICS training. This course describes the history, features and principles, and organizational structure of the Incident Command System. It also explains the relationship between ICS and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

- Explain the principles and basic structure of the Incident Command System (ICS).
- Describe the NIMS management characteristics that are the foundation of the ICS.
- Describe the ICS functional areas and the roles of the Incident Commander and Command Staff.
- Describe the General Staff roles within ICS.
- Identify how NIMS management characteristics apply to ICS for a variety of roles and discipline areas.

IS-700.B NIMS an Introduction (3 hours FEMA)

This course introduces and overviews the National Incident Management System (NIMS). NIMS provides a consistent nationwide template to enable all government, private-sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work together during domestic incidents.

- Describe and identify the key concepts, principles, scope, and applicability underlying NIMS.
- Describe activities and methods for managing resources.
- Describe the NIMS Management Characteristics.
- Identify and describe Incident Command System (ICS) organizational structures.
- Explain Emergency Operations Center (EOC) functions, common models for staff organization, and activation levels.
- Explain the interconnectivity within the NIMS Management and Coordination structures: ICS, EOC, Joint Information System (JIS), and Multiagency Coordination Groups (MAC Groups).
- Identify and describe the characteristics of communications and information systems, effective communication, incident information, and communication standards and formats.

S-190 Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior (7 hours with NWCG)

This course provides instruction in the primary factors affecting the start and spread of wildfire and recognition of potentially hazardous situations. This course is typically taught in conjunction with or prior to "NWCG S-130, Firefighter Training." The material is broken into three online modules (one to three hours each).

- Describe the basic terminology used in wildland fire.
- Identify and discuss the fire triangle.
- Identify and discuss key characteristics of the primary wildland fire environment components - fuels, weather, and topography.
- Identify critical fire weather factors that, combined with receptive fuels, may result in extreme fire behavior.

- Recognize how alignment of fuels, weather, and topography can increase the potential for extreme fire behavior.

S-130 Firefighter Training (22 hours with NWCG)

This course addresses the foundational skills universal to all wildland firefighters. The material is broken into 12 online modules (one to three hours each) and a mandatory, instructor-led field day exercise. Each online module explains the concepts and skills that will be performed and evaluated on the field day exercise. Module 12 contains optional knowledge areas (pump operations, map and compass, fire investigation, and cultural resources) that are very useful concepts but not required due to time constraints.

- Describe the purpose of the Standard Firefighting Orders and Watch Out Situations.
- Describe what the Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes, and Safety Zones (LCES) system is and how it relates to the Standard Firefighting Orders.
- Describe the various communication methods and tools used for collecting, producing, and distributing information.
- Describe the standards, tools and equipment, and various methods used in fireline construction.
- Describe the methods for extinguishing a fire with or without the use of water.
- Demonstrate the ability to construct fireline to required standards using various methods, tools and equipment, and techniques.

L-180 Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service (4 hours with NWCG)

This online course exposes students to human performance concepts as part of basic wildland firefighter training. The course is designed for entry-level operational personnel; however, this course also applies to all wildland fire service personnel, including non-operational personnel.

- Introduce human performance factors in high-risk work environments and add this knowledge to student's skill set. [Measurable objective: describe human performance factors that play critical roles in high-risk work environments.]
- Provide opportunities to explore human performance concepts and the related vocabulary. [Measurable objective: appropriately apply human performance concepts to firefighting scenarios.]
- Reinforce professional responsibility to address human performance issues while on the job. [Measurable objective: identify and describe professional responsibilities to address on-the-job human performance issues.]