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APU's California Class B Drivers:  
Responsibilities and Expectations

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## APU's California Class B Drivers: Responsibilities and Expectations

### Audience

This discussion is designed and required for all High Sierra students wishing to be employed as van drivers while participating in Azusa Pacific University's High Sierra Semester. The meeting will be led by the High Sierra Graduate Assistant, who is responsible for all transportation matters, and the High Sierra Program Director, when available. Depending on the semester this group may range in size from three to seven participants. Because student Class B drivers are paid to drive for High Sierra this discussion will also be considered part of their employee training; any student who fails to attend this workshop will not be permitted to drive an Azusa Pacific University vehicle. This meeting is designed to provide student drivers with an accurate picture of the risks involved in driving a fifteen passenger van and present valuable tools that will enable student drivers to minimize stated risk.

### Purpose

#### *Workshop Mission Statement*

The purpose of this workshop is to inform student employees of their unique responsibilities as drivers, convey safety expectations, review the risks of driving a fifteen passenger vehicle and train drivers to utilize mountain driving techniques.

#### *Learning Outcomes*

At the end of this workshop students will:

- Demonstrate how to properly complete required log books (pre-trip logs and driving logs)
- Be able to inform other students of the High Sierra van use policy
- Be able to identify the primary risk involved with driving fifteen passenger vehicles
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of downshifting

### *Teaching Strategies*

A number of activities and strategies will be utilized in order to achieve the above mentioned learning goals. Everything from times of question and answer, to behind the wheel practice will be utilized to help student drivers develop and display competence in a variety of areas. Because of the risks involved in driving fifteen passenger vans it is imperative that each student demonstrates competence in each of the desired learning outcomes to transporting their peers. In properly training each student driver High Sierra, and APU, take necessary steps towards risk management.

### Background Information

The origin for the creation of this workshop is simply need based. The High Sierra program recognized that one of the greatest risks within the program was not the required outdoor adventures but rather the risk associated with the more common activity of driving. Driving and transportation are essential to everything the High Sierra program offers; however, it is unfair to expect faculty and staff to be the sole providers of the needed transportation. In an effort to avoid placing unfair and unreasonable expectations on faculty and staff to provide transportation, High Sierra has opted to hire students as drivers. However, it is unfair to students and the program to expect them to drive their peers on mountains roads without offering training that will help to manage the risk involved in transportation; particularly transportation in fifteen passenger vehicles.

The Office of Risk Management at the University of Virginia (<http://www.virginia.edu/riskmanagement/vans.html>) provided valuable legal insight into the risks that an institution assumes when they resolve to drive fifteen passenger vehicles, even

converted fifteen passenger vehicles. It was necessary to understand the risks involved in utilizing these vehicles in order to determine the necessary components of the workshop. The University of Virginia makes recommendations on the types of people that should be considered as drivers and further explicitly lists their policy on fifteen passenger van use. Interestingly, the University of Virginia has determined the risk involved in the use of fifteen passenger vans to be so high that it warranted a decision to phase out use of fifteen passenger vehicles entirely. This is not yet an option for APU hence the need for APU, and more specifically High Sierra, to minimize the risk through appropriate training of drivers.

One of the most valuable resources in creating this workshop was a rough outline of what the High Sierra Program Director desired to see in a van driving meeting prior to letting students take the wheel. This outline included covering; the High Sierra van use policy, cell phone use, discussing the risks involved in driving a fifteen passenger vehicle, and reviewing the importance and necessity of pre-trip inspections. Adding to this rough outline formed the backbone of this workshop. In developing the current workshop outline (Appendix I) it was also important to keep in mind the training that drivers on APU's main campus are required to sit through. When possible High Sierra student drivers are expected to meet with APU's transportation director and cover important legal and safety topics. These topics include driving logs, pre-trip inspections and safety equipment in the vans. Because some of the drivers are not able to meet with APU's transportation director it was important that they receive the same information in this workshop. APU's transportation director has a good relationship with High Sierra and trusts that High Sierra is fully training and equipping their drivers before putting them behind the wheel in an APU vehicle. So in an effort meet the expectation of the transportation office some additional safety details were added to the outline.

Also in developing the workshop it was helpful to study and review how other schools trained their fifteen passenger van drivers. The most helpful institution was California State University, San Bernardino ([http://policies.csusb.edu/vehicle\\_use\\_policy.htm](http://policies.csusb.edu/vehicle_use_policy.htm)). CSUSB requires all drivers to complete a Defensive Drivers Training before they are permitted to drive any university vehicle. It was valuable to recognize that some institutions require training above and beyond that which is expected by the state of California. CSUSB's high standards and additional required training formed the basis and rationale for requiring student drivers to participate in a mountain driving training.

Finally, student driver feedback from previous semesters helped to impact the creation of the workshop. In the past student drivers have expressed that it would be beneficial to review the correct format for completing all of the required paperwork. Interestingly even students that had covered this topic with APU's director of transportation suggested that it would be beneficial to review and practice again. Students also recommended that there be some form of mountain driving lesson as many of our student drivers have never been expected to drive on mountain roads before. The combination of all of these resources; University of Virginia, APU's transportation department, the High Sierra Program Director, CSUSB and student input, resulted in the current design of this workshop which aims to help minimize risk and train drivers.

### Learning Activities

As previously mentioned a variety of activities and strategies will be employed to help facilitate learning and understanding throughout the workshop. The following is a detailed description of how major points will be expressed. The first portion of the workshop will be slightly more informal, a conversation between the Graduate Assistant and students. This portion of the workshop is designed to help students understand what is expected of them as a student

employee and a driver. Topics to be covered during this time include; expectations (see Appendix II), the right to say no, gas cards, and High Sierra van use policy (see Appendix III). After reviewing the van use policy student drivers will be expected to sign one copy stating that they have read them and understand them; a second copy will be given to drivers for future reference. Further the High Sierra Administrative Assistant will be invited to join the beginning portion of this workshop to ensure that all student drivers have completed all necessary hiring paperwork.

The next portion of the workshop will cover essential paperwork. This section will be a mix of lecture and hands-on practice. The Graduate Assistant will show sample logs of how the actual driving log should be filled out; the facilitator will use enlarged driving log forms. Each student will be given a written driving schedule from one day that they will be expected to translate onto a practice driving log form (see Appendix IV). Students who cannot successfully fill out the form at this time will be required to meet later with the facilitator to review the procedure of the driving logs. Students will then become acquainted with the pre-trip inspection log. At this time the facilitator will also briefly review the expectations of drivers as it relates to completing pre-trip inspections. A full review of the pre-trip inspection is not necessary because all drivers must prove competence in pre-trip inspections at the Department of Motor Vehicles prior to receiving their Class B license. However students that are uneasy about their pre-trip inspection may make an appointment with the Graduate Assistant or Program Director to review the pre-trip inspection.

Third, students will be given two articles (see appendix V) to read regarding the high roll-over risk of fifteen passenger vehicles. These articles are not designed to intimidate drivers out of driving but rather to make them aware of the real risks that exist while driving. Students will be

given an opportunity during the workshop to read the articles. After students have completed their reading a brief discussion of the articles will follow, this discussion to be facilitated by the Graduate Assistant. Prior to the final stage of the workshop time will be allotted for question and answer regarding any of the topics previously covered.

Finally, participants will learn the basics of downshifting and why it is an important skill to have and understand while driving in the mountains. Other basic mountain driving skills will also be taught during this time. While this could be taught in lecture format it is much easier for students to practice these skills from behind the wheel and each student will need to demonstrate understanding. At this point in the workshop all participants will get into a van and will be driven by a facilitator who will begin explaining the principles of downshifting and discuss unique mountain safety concerns. After the facilitator has demonstrated the techniques each workshop participant will have an opportunity to practice behind the wheel. All student drivers will be required to prove competence in down shifting before they will be permitted to transport passengers. Any student unable to satisfy the Graduate Assistant and/or the Program Director during the workshop will be required to schedule additional practice time with the Graduate Assistant. All students must be signed off on their mountain driving (see Appendix VI) a copy of this form will be placed in the driver's file which is kept in the High Sierra office.

#### Evaluation Plan

Evaluation has been woven throughout the entire workshop. Students will display knowledge and understanding through hands-on activities throughout the workshop; including properly filling out driving logs and displaying proper mountain driving techniques. Also students will be engaged in dialogue throughout the workshop which is designed to help the facilitator gauge understanding. The ultimate evaluation will be the performance of each driver

throughout the course of the semester. Because drivers report to the Graduate Assistant, the facilitator of this workshop, future concerns and questions will be individually addressed between the driver and the Graduate Assistant.

## Appendix I

### Van Driver Training Meeting

- **Driving Expectations**
  - Safety and approach towards driving
  - Seatbelts
  - Cell Phone Usage
  - Pre Trip Inspections (arrive 15 minutes before we leave)
  - Cleaning the van
  
- **Van Logs**
  - How to fill them out
  - Staying on top of them
  - When they are due (15<sup>th</sup>, last day of month)
  
- **How to count hours**
  - You only count actual time behind the wheel not time eating, etc (see examples of exceptions below)
  - Record time in 1 hour and ½ hour increments
  - Fresno trips count as 1 hour each way
    - Exceptions
      - Waiting at the airport/train station
  - A trip to Oakhurst counts as 30 minutes each way (you're only driving 15 minutes each way)
    - You do not count hours spent while in town for church, Starbucks, movie, art store, etc
    - Exceptions
      - Student doctor's appointments
  
- **Van Usage Policies**
  - Review van usage policies
  
- **Honking/Leave times**
  
- **Gasoline**
  - 2 Cards-Shell & Chevron
  - Receipts in silver box & make sure to write the van # on receipt
  
- **Mountain Driving Test**
  
- **Other Details**
  - Food stops

## Appendix II

### Expectations of High Sierra Student Drivers

#### **Eligible Drivers**

- ◇ Drivers over 21 who have less than two points on their record and pass all necessary tests
- ◇ Drivers under 21 who have no points on their record and pass all necessary tests
- ◇ In both cases the license must be a California Class B license

#### **Driving is a Student Employment Opportunity**

- ◇ Student Drivers report to the Graduate Assistant
- ◇ Must uphold the emailed driving schedule
  - Notify Graduate Assistant ASAP if there is a conflict with driving schedule
  - Choosing not to drive last minute because you do not want to simply not an option; people are counting on you.
- ◇ Keep accurate pre-trip log books in the vans
- ◇ Student drivers always reserve the right to say no to spontaneous driving trips
- ◇ Because this is a job students need to be aware of state driving restrictions
- ◇ The High Sierra Program Director reserves the right to revoke driving privileges if student driver is endangering the lives of fellow students

#### **Obtaining Permission to Drive for High Sierra:**

- ◇ Pass all necessary California Class B tests (physical, written and behind the wheel)
  - See “How to get a Class B Drivers License” handout
- ◇ Acquire copy of Driving Record from DMV
- ◇ Present copy of Class B Driver’s License, Health Card and driving record to High Sierra Graduate Assistant and/or APU’s Transportation Coordinator \*
  - Students should also turn in receipts at this time for reimbursement
- ◇ Schedule time to practice mountain driving with High Sierra Program Director, Resident Director or Graduate Assistant
- ◇ Pass Mountain Driving Road Test
  - Student must obtain signature from High Sierra Program Director or Graduate Assistant
- ◇ Student Drivers will review High Sierra Van Use Policy and Log Keeping with Graduate Assistant and/or Program Director

#### **Once Cleared to Drive:**

- ◇ A student will be added to the driving schedule which is prepared by the Graduate Assistant (to be dispersed approximately every two weeks)
- ◇ Students will be assigned to a van for the semester
- ◇ Students are expected to submit their time cards and driving logs to the Graduate Assistants mailbox on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the last day of each month
- ◇ In order to receive a new log book students must turn in completed log book to the High Sierra office

#### **Student Drivers are expected to ....**

- ◇ Perform necessary pre-trips prior to driving
- ◇ Maintain their individual log books
- ◇ Keep accurate pre-trip log books in the vans
- ◇ Periodically check their email for driving schedule and additional driving opportunities
- ◇ Report any mechanical problems to the Graduate Assistant
- ◇ Refrain from use of their cell phone while driving a university vehicle
- ◇ Be mindful of the safety of all passengers within their vehicle
- ◇ Label their gas receipts and place them in the silver clip board in the van
- ◇ Be familiar with and ensure that Van Use Policies are followed
  - Includes obtaining appropriate permission to leave campus with an APU vehicle
    - A High Sierra faculty member does not count as appropriate permission
  - Leaving necessary documentation when leaving on spontaneous events
  - Collect appropriate fees for Fresno Runs (or inform Graduate Assistant of outstanding fees)
- ◇ Keep their van clean on the inside; if vans are found to be dirty it will be the sole responsibility of the driver to clean it
- ◇ Make sure the van is locked when everyone is leaving the vehicle unless on Emerald Cove Property
- ◇ Leave van keys in the cup holder of the van

#### **State Driving Restrictions**

- ◇ After 8 straight hours of being off duty you can drive for 10 hours
- ◇ Once you have hit ten hours you cannot drive again until after you have been off for another 8 hours
- ◇ You cannot drive if you have been on duty for 15 hours (only 10 of which can be driving hours)
- ◇ You are not allowed to drive more than 70 hours in an 8 day period
- ◇ Students do NOT count class time as on duty time

\* Copies of the driver's license, health card, driving record, and mountain test will be kept in the High Sierra office.

## High Sierra Semester Van Use Policy

The Azusa Pacific University vans are not student, faculty or staff personal property but property of the university's High Sierra Semester program and as such, all government laws and Azusa Pacific University policies must be adhered to while vans are in use.

### **Spontaneous Use of the Vans in the High Sierra Program**

It is recognized that the vans may be used for spontaneous events. Therefore the following policies are to be used in decision-making as it relates to the said use of university vehicles.

1. Use of Azusa Pacific University vehicles must have administrative approval (preferably 24 hours advance notice). Meredith Devey, Katie Burns or Rob Simpson shall be the designated administrators for approval (**NOT** faculty). In case of their absence, anyone on the Student Leadership team may serve as their proxy.
2. A **minimum of 5 students** is required for a local spontaneous event, i.e. Oakhurst Run. The event must not conflict with participating student's scheduled events, i.e. classes, field trips, church, etc.
3. A **minimum of 10 students** is required for spontaneous trips to Fresno or Yosemite. These trips are limited to Thursday night (except Yosemite), Friday, Saturday or Sundays.
4. When using a van, the designated driver shall sign out on the appropriate forms. The forms shall include:
  1. Date
  2. The names of all personnel attending the event
  3. Destination of the trip
  4. Time leaving on the trip
  5. Time returning from the trip

If the party realizes that they will be returning later than posted time, the designated driver shall call the office, the Director, Resident Director, or Graduate Assistant's home. Phone numbers are available in all vans in case of an emergency.

5. Trips to the Fresno airport, train station, etc for travel must be paid for in advance by the student (s). The cost is \$30 per pickup or drop-off. If multiple students are being taken the cost should be divided equally between the students.
6. It is the driver's choice whether or not to drive for a "student initiated" spontaneous event.
7. APU vans are not to be used for transportation to bars, saloons or dance clubs.
8. One van must always remain on the campus for emergency use.

**By signing here I agree to uphold these policies:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Sample Driving Log

After being off all evening you arrive at work in Los Angeles at 8:00am and head straight to the office. After half an hour in the office you make your way to the vehicle and begin your pre-trip inspection. By 9:00am all your passengers are aboard and you are ready to depart for your trip to Bass Lake. After driving for two and half hours you stop in Bakersfield for lunch and announce to your passengers that you will be departing again in 30 minutes. Lunch has ended and you get back on the road for another two and half hours before reaching your final destination of Bass Lake. When you arrive you spend half an hour cleaning your van and wrapping up paperwork before you head home for the evening,

In the past eight days you have worked: three 6 hour days, had two days off, worked one 3 hour day and two 5 hour days.

Please fill out your sample driving log (don't forget the right hand column)

## Fifteen Passenger Van Articles

### *Article 1:*

*May 26, 2005*

A new research report finds that 74 percent of 15-passenger vans have significantly mis-inflated tires, increasing the risk of a rollover crash. The vans are popular with schools, churches, community groups and shuttle services but pose a serious rollover risk when heavily loaded.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration ([NHTSA](#)) said the new research reinforces its existing concerns about 15-passenger vans. As a result, the agency reissued its consumer advisory for users of 15-passenger vans for the third time in the past four years.

In a new research report related to improper tire maintenance on 15-passenger vans, the NHTSA study found that 74 percent of all 15-passenger vans had significantly mis-inflated tires. By contrast, 39 percent of passenger cars were found with significant inflation problems. NHTSA research has consistently shown that improperly inflated tires can change handling characteristics, increasing the prospect of a rollover crash in 15-passenger vans.

"The vans are convenient, but drivers and passengers have to use extra caution. The risks associated with 15-passenger vans can be minimized if users take some basic safety precautions", said Jeffrey Runge, M.D, NHTSA administrator. "Routinely checking the condition of the tires, including the tire pressure, should be at the top of the list".

To reduce the risks associated with 15-passenger vans, NHTSA's safety advisory recommends that:

- drivers insist all occupants wear safety belts at all times;
- drivers are trained and experienced;
- tires are checked at least once a week, using the manufacturer's recommended pressure levels;
- no loads are placed on the roof of the vehicle.

Prior NHTSA research has shown that 15-passenger vans have a rollover risk that increases dramatically as the number of occupants increases from fewer than five to more than ten. In fact, 15-passenger vans with 10 or more occupants had a rollover rate in single vehicle crashes that is nearly three times the rate of those that were lightly loaded, with fewer than five occupants.

Nearly 80 percent of those who died in 15-passenger van rollovers nationwide between 1990 and 2003 were not buckled up. Wearing safety belts dramatically increases the chances of survival during a rollover crash. In fatal, single-vehicle rollovers involving 15-passenger vans over the past decade, 91 percent of belted occupants survived.

NHTSA said the public is responding to safety information about 15-passenger vans. Fatalities from 15-passenger van rollover van crashes have declined 35 percent since advisories began in 2001.

While Federal law prohibits the sale of 15-passenger vans for the school-related transport of high school age and younger students, no such prohibition exists for vehicles to transport college students or other passengers.

NHTSA is reissuing this advisory to specifically alert summertime users of 15-passenger vans. The agency also has prepared a flyer on 15-passenger van safety that is available on the web at [www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/studies/15PassVans/Index.htm](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/studies/15PassVans/Index.htm).

Article from: [http://www.consumeraffairs.com/news04/2005/nhtsa\\_vans.html](http://www.consumeraffairs.com/news04/2005/nhtsa_vans.html)

*Article 2:*

Fifteen-passenger vans typically have seating positions for a driver and 14 passengers. They are widely used by community organizations to take members on short trips and outings.

Colleges use them to drive sports teams to intercollegiate games and vanpools use them for commuters.

What increases the risk of rollover crashes?

Recent research conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has found that the risk of a rollover crash is greatly increased when 10 or more people ride in a 15-passenger van. This increased risk occurs because the passenger weight raises the vehicle's center of gravity and causes it to shift rearward. As a result, the van has less resistance to rollover and handles differently from other commonly driven passenger vehicles, making it more difficult to control in an emergency situation. Placing any load on the roof also raises the center of gravity and increases the likelihood of a rollover.

What situations can cause a rollover?

A rollover crash is a complex event, heavily influenced by driver and road characteristics as well as the design of the vehicle. In studies of single-vehicle crashes, NHTSA has found that more than 90 percent of rollovers occur after a driver has lost control of the vehicle and has run off the road. Three major situations can lead to a rollover in a 15-passenger van.

- The van goes off a rural road. If this occurs, the van is likely to overturn when it strikes a ditch or embankment or when it is tripped by an object or runs onto soft soil.
- The driver is fatigued or driving too fast for conditions. A tired driver can doze off and lose control. The driver can also lose control when traveling at a high speed causing the van to slide sideways off the road. The grassy or dirt medians that line highways can often cause the van to overturn when the tires dig into the dirt.
- The driver overcorrects the steering as a panic reaction to an emergency or to a wheel dropping off the pavement. Especially at freeway speeds, this situation can cause the driver to lose control, resulting in the van sliding sideways and rolling over.

What can organizations do to protect their passengers?

Over the past decade, 80 percent of people killed in rollover crashes in 15-passenger vans were unbelted. Passengers can dramatically reduce their risk of being killed or seriously injured in a rollover crash by simply using their seat belts. Organizations that own 15-passenger vans should have a written seat belt use policy. Drivers should be responsible for enforcing the policy.

Seat belt use is especially critical because large numbers of people die in rollover crashes when they are partially or completely thrown from the vehicle. NHTSA estimates that people who wear their seat belts are about 75 percent less likely to be killed in a rollover crash than people who don't.

Does an experienced driver make a difference?

Significant differences in the design and handling characteristics of a 15-passenger van make it drive differently from other passenger vehicles. Therefore, an organization that owns a 15-passenger van should select one or two experienced drivers to drive the van on a regular basis. These drivers will gain valuable experience handling the van. This experience will help make each trip a safe one.

How can rollover crashes be prevented?

Because most rollover crashes don't involve other vehicles, they are often preventable. Here are some tips for drivers to minimize the risk of a rollover crash and serious injury:

- Avoid conditions that lead to a loss of control. Never drive while under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Make sure you are well rested and attentive, and always slow down if the roads are wet or icy.
- Drive cautiously on rural roads. Be particularly cautious on *curved* rural roads and maintain a safe speed to avoid running off the road.
- Know what to do if your wheels drop off the roadway. If your wheels drop off the roadway, or pavement, *gradually* reduce speed and steer back onto the roadway when it is safe to do so.
- Properly maintain your tires. Make sure your tires are properly inflated and the tread is not worn down. Worn tires can cause your van to slide sideways on wet or slippery pavement. Improper inflation can cause handling problems and can lead to catastrophic tire failures, such as blowouts. Therefore, check tire pressure and treadwear once a month.

What are other considerations for safe driving?

When a 15-passenger van is not full, passengers should sit in seats that are in front of the rear axle.

More than 15 people should never be allowed to ride in a 15-passenger van.

Because a 15-passenger van is substantially longer and wider than a car, it:

- Requires more space and additional reliance on the side-view mirrors for changing lanes
- Does not respond as well to abrupt steering maneuvers
- Requires additional braking time.

Article from: <http://www.nhtsa.gov/cars/problems/studies/15PassVans/index.htm>

Appendix VI

Mountain Driving Test

391.33(2)(C) A motor carrier may require any person who presents a license or certificate as equivalent to the road test to take a road test or any other test of his driving skill as a condition to his employment as a driver.

Driver's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of Operation	Pass or Fail
Pre-trip inspection of entire unit	
Downshifting	
Up shifting	
Use of seatbelts	
Space management	
Distance scanning (following/ gap judgment)	
Use of mirrors in traffic	
Observance of posted speed limits	
Maneuvering through curves	
Use of turn signals during lane change	
Use of mirrors during lane change	
Canceling turn signal after lane change	
Braking	
Slowing vehicle by means other than braking	
Recognition and following of road signs	
Lighting the road with use of high/low beams	
Post trip inspection/ documentation	
Knowledge and overall use of safety equipment	
Snow chains	

Comments:

Circle one:            Pass                            Fail

Examiner Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_