

AIARE Level Two Avalanche Education Course: Analyzing Snow Stability and Avalanche Hazard

Course Information

Please contact us weekdays 8am-5pm at (719) 630-3934 or anytime at info@pikespeakalpineschool.com with any questions regarding the AIARE Level Two course or other skiing-related topics.

This is a 40-hour course is designed for the advanced backcountry skier/snowboarder wishing to take his or her winter backcountry travel skills to the next level. Elaborating upon knowledge learned in the Level One course, this course adds more advanced data collection, analysis, and companion rescue skills for those that are recreational or professional team leaders.

Students can expect to learn an advance understanding of avalanche terrain and stability analysis; how the snowpack develops and metamorphoses over time and its spatial variability; standard observation and recording guidelines; avalanche release and triggering mechanisms; stability analysis and a basic forecasting framework; skills for complex companion rescue such as multiple burials. Application of skills is heavily emphasized.

Prerequisites:

1. Successful completion of AIARE Level One (or similar) course
2. Experience traveling in complex avalanche terrain

Day One Evening session 2:00-8:00pm, Room 213 Worner Center, Colorado College

- AIARE Level 1 review and student goals and expectations
- Energy balance, the mountain snowpack and metamorphism
- Human triggering: theory and observations

Day Two Evening session 2:00-8:00pm, Room 213 Worner Center

- Formation of surface hoar and persistent weak layers
- Faceting; near surface and near crust faceting
- International snow, weather, and avalanche observation and recording guidelines

Day Three Field session 7:00am-7:00pm, Pikes Peak

Please come prepared for a full day in the snow, outside on Pikes Peak

- Adding advanced considerations into our ski tour, like continuous assessment of the snowpack
- Stability checklist: reviewing critical factors
- Terrain selection and route finding, and complex considerations like large group travel
- Snow study plot data gathering and advanced column tests
- Human factor considerations

Day Four Field session 7:00am-7:00pm, Pikes Peak

Please come prepared for a full day in the snow, outside on Pikes Peak

- Trip planning and hazard forecasting for avalanche terrain
- Ski tour on Pikes Peak putting the “big picture” together, with emphasis for students being in front making the decisions
- Advanced companion rescue including multiple and deep burials

Please see attached gear list for this course.