



WHAT TO BRING INFORMATION

A SPECIAL NOTE TO TEACHERS, CHAPERONES, and PARENTS

UGA MECA STAFF depend on teachers and other group leaders to provide a copy of this document to every student and adult visiting Skidaway Island. We depend on chaperones/parents to be sure that each student has packed thoroughly for the trip and is able to dress appropriately once here. Please be aware that for safety, individuals and/or groups not adequately attired or prepared as described here may be denied participation in field activities.

INTRODUCTION

Please read this document thoroughly. A safe, enjoyable and educational visit to Georgia's coast requires forethought and preparation for all individuals participating in UGA MECA activities. The first responsibility of UGA MECA staff is to make your visit a safe one. We depend on you to help us do that successfully. We will provide your group with complete and concise pre-trip information as well as seasoned leadership while you are here. Your part is simple - pack the items we outline here and come to Skidaway prepared to explore and learn!

GENERAL WEATHER INFORMATION

Although Georgia's coastal climate is subtropical, the weather here is highly changeable. Be prepared for a range of air temperatures throughout the school year. Plan to dress in layers that trap body heat during cooler months or that can be removed to avoid excess heat in the warmer months. The coast is generally windy, so the air will often feel cooler than it actually is. Hypothermia is a real concern during the colder months on the coast, but can occur any time during the year. Students and adults should plan clothing and footwear for the season and any possible weather conditions that might be encountered during your trip to the coast. Call MECA for a more detailed forecast of weather during your scheduled visit. Or log on to www.wsav.com and click on "weather" for a local forecast. General seasonal conditions are as follows:

September – October: air temperature - 50-80 degrees F, possible rain, thunderstorms, high humidity and wind.

November – February: air temperature - 25-75 degrees F, possible cold rain and wind.

March – May: air temperature - 40-90 degrees F, possible rain, thunderstorms, high humidity and wind.

SAFETY FIRST

UGA MECA staff are concerned for group safety above all else. Participants must be prepared for field conditions. Individuals and/or groups not adequately attired/prepared as described here may be denied participation in UGA activities.

DO NOT BRING (ZERO TOLERANCE)

Do not bring flip flops, radios or pets to Skidaway Island. Do not bring personal electronics (cell phones, walkmen, iPods, MP3 players, Gameboys, etc.), souvenirs, toys, candy, or gum, to any UGA MECA led activity.

CELL PHONE POLICY

Students may not bring cell phones to any UGA MECA activity. Any student phones finding their way to UGA MECA activities will be collected by UGA MECA staff and stored for the duration of the day's work. Teachers and adult chaperones may bring phones, but are expected to set them to vibrate for incoming emergency calls. All UGA MECA instructors carry cell phones and VHF radios for emergency use. The MECA main office can contact any personnel or group on field trips and can be reached from the outside at 912-598-2496.

FIELD JOURNALS

We highly encourage students to record their experiences during and after each field trip. If you would like more information about journaling prior to your trip, please contact UGA MECA or go to our website for recommendations.

INSECTS

Insects are our friends and neighbors on the coast. Their presence is inevitable. Yes, they can be a nuisance. Bring insect repellent if you use it and be prepared to apply it outside, downwind and away from others. You will not be allowed to apply insect repellent in UGA MECA buildings, including your dorm room, or on any UGA boats. Most folks who live and work along the coast find that long sleeves and a hat offer enough protection in most buggy situations.

REQUIRED CLOTHING AND GEAR FOR ALL UGA MECA ACTIVITIES (indoor and outdoor)

No matter what the season or weather forecast, everyone should dress in layers to protect from water, wind, insects, cold and sun. Bulky gear/clothing that impedes field activities should be avoided. Specifically, you must bring the following:

- comfortable, old clothes that can get wet, muddy, and sandy
- 2 pairs shoes that cover all parts of your foot (sneakers, boots, sport sandals or other sturdy footwear with good traction). All footwear must have a solid back or secure heel strap.
- DO NOT WEAR FLIP-FLOPS OR FLIMSY SANDALS OF ANY KIND FOR ANY REASON FOR ANY UGA MECA ACTIVITY. IN FACT, DON'T EVEN BRING THEM TO SKIDAWAY ISLAND.
- water proof rain gear (jackets and pants are best, ponchos are less desirable).
- sweatshirt or sweater for an extra layer outside or in air conditioning
- jacket for warmth and wind protection and for use as outer layer if you visit during the colder months.
- full 16 ounce water bottle

ADDITIONAL ITEMS REQUIRED FOR SALT MARSH STUDIES

Each individual must have the following items in addition to those required for all UGA MECA programs. Individuals who are not prepared for the field will not be allowed to enter the salt marsh and participate in the day's activities.

- APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR: A sturdy pair of OLD SNEAKERS that securely tie/fasten or BOOTS (rubber, vinyl or leather). NO flip flops, sports sandal or soft-sided "water shoes" are allowed in the salt marsh. Your feet must be completely covered and protected from sharp oyster shells and from removal by thick mud.
- A plastic garbage bag to hold muddy shoes/clothing

REQUIRED FOR BOAT TRIPS

To board the R/V Sea Dawg or UGA skiffs, each individual must have the following. Individuals who are not prepared for the field will not be allowed to board any UGA vessels or participate in the day's activities.

- DAYPACK - A small book-bag type bag to wear on your back as we hike on barrier islands . Don't bring your good airport luggage with wheels into the field. You will use your daypack to carry your lunch, water and extra gear. Place your belongings inside a plastic garbage bag before placing it in the pack to water proof them.
- APPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR - Sneakers, boots, sport sandals or other appropriate footwear with good traction. All shoes must cover the foot or have a solid back or secure heel strap. NO FLIP-FLOPS OR FLIMSY SANDALS. Skiff trips to barrier islands may require you to wade in knee-deep water. Wet feet are always a possibility on boat trips.
- OUTER LAYER - Rain jacket (with rain pants if during cool weather) or medium to heavy weight poncho (disposable ponchos are too light) as a protective outer layer for not only rain but wind, cold and spray.
- APPROPRIATE CLOTHING - Seasonally appropriate clothing that provides protection from sun, rain, cold, wind and salt spray. Think layered, NOT bulky. Head/hand coverings (hat, hood, and gloves). In cold weather your body can lose > 30% of it's warmth through your uncovered head. For skiff trips, assume you will catch salt water spray on the trip out and wade through knee-deep water. Similarly, wet clothing is always a possibility on any boat trip.
- WATER - Full screw top water bottle (at least 16oz / can be a recycled plastic soda bottle)
- SUN PROTECTION – sunscreen (even in winter), sunglasses, and brimmed hat
- INSECT PROTECTION – long-sleeved shirt and pants, hat, and/or insect repellent
- PERSONAL GEAR - medications, personal hygiene products, snacks that you will need throughout the day. If you have a history of motion sickness, appropriate medication should be taken PRIOR to any boat trips (i.e. the night before or during breakfast)
- SCIENTIFIC GEAR - collecting bag (ziploc) or small plastic bin with a lid for beachcombing. (OPTIONAL– Camera in water proof container / Ziploc, extra batteries/charger/film/cards, binoculars)
- Field journal/notebook/sketchbook, with appropriate pens or pencils, stored in a Ziploc bag.

REQUIRED FOR DORM LIFE

If you are staying in UGA MECA dorms, you will find only the following in each room: 2-4 twin beds (bunk bed style), 2 small chests of drawers, one open closet and storage shelf, 1-2 small writing desks with lamps, and a bathroom with shower, sink, mirror, toilet, and toilet paper. You must bring the following:

- pillow (if needed)
- twin bed linens (sheets, blankets, pillow cases) or sleeping bag
- bath towels / washcloths / bath mat
- personal toiletries (shampoo, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.)
- medications

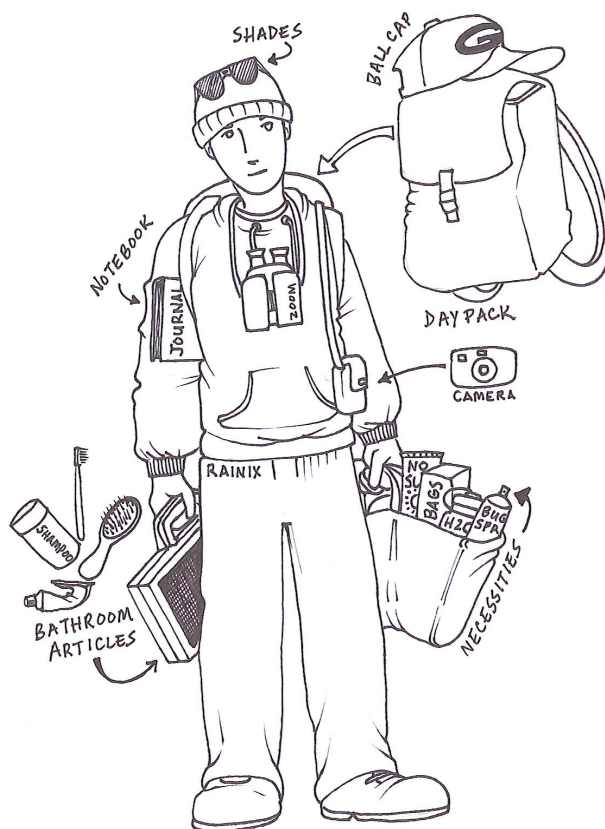
REQUIRED PACKING LIST for Skidaway Island

For educational activities:

- For your body - comfortable, old clothes that can get wet, muddy, and sandy.
- For your feet – sneakers, boots, or sports sandals with heel straps for indoor activities
- For your feet in the field - a second pair of sneakers or boots with good traction.
- For dryness - water proof rain jacket and pants
- For warmth - hooded sweatshirt or sweater, warm hat , warm gloves
- Also for warmth and wind protection – weather appropriate jacket for layering
- For sun protection – sunscreen, brimmed hat, long sleeves, sunglasses
- For hydration – 16 ounce water bottle with a screw cap
- For messy stuff – plastic garbage bag
- For insects – long sleeved shirt, long pants, hat and/or insect repellent
- For beachcombing - Ziploc bags, small lidded plastic bins, or small buckets
- For scientific documentation – camera, field journal/notebook/sketchbook, pens, pencils.
- For personal use – medications (including those for motion sickness), hygiene products, snacks.
- To carry your gear in the field – small day pack or book bag

For dorm life:

- pillow (if needed)
- twin bed linens (sheets, blankets, pillow cases) or sleeping bag
- bath towels / washcloths / bath mat
- personal toiletries (shampoo, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.)
- medications



Reminders:

- You are a UGA student while at MECA
- Be prepared – have required gear
- Be on time
- Stay with the group
- Avoid dehydration - drink water
- Use sun protection
- Dress in layers
- Wear a hat
- Bring a day pack
- Bring your rain gear
- Ziploc bags are good
- No cell phones during the day
- Bring your sense of wonder and exploration