



Merit Badge Group Instruction Policy

Greater St. Louis Area Council

Per topic 7.0.3.2 of the *Guide to Advancement*, it is acceptable to provide group instruction for merit badges, but “group instruction should be focused on those scenarios where the benefits are compelling.” The term “group” is left open-ended in the *Guide to Advancement*, as merit badges, resources, circumstances, and counselor experience can lend themselves to a wide range of instructional scenarios. In some cases, a group may be as small as three or four Scouts, while in other cases, groups may be larger. Regardless of group size, each Scout must “actually and personally” fulfill each requirement. This guidance makes clear that the focus must be on the quality of each Scout’s counseling experience, and not on the number of Scouts who can take a class or complete a badge.

To support the delivery and maintain the integrity of the merit badge program, the Advancement Committee of the Greater St. Louis Area Council, Boy Scouts of America has adopted the following policy for Merit Badge Opportunities.

1. A proposal for any merit badge fair, clinic, university or similar event must be presented to the Council Advancement Committee at least three months prior to the date of the event. Proposals can be submitted through your District Advancement Chair, or the Council Training & Advancement Director. The proposal form is provided on page two of this document. Additional information may be requested by the district or council.
2. All fees associated with participating in a merit badge fair, clinic, university or similar event “should be limited to recovering the costs related to presenting the opportunity” (Guide to Advancement topic 7.0.4.10). Such events cannot be used as fundraisers. The Greater St. Louis Area Council will not approve any merit badge opportunity that serves as a fundraiser. Similarly, fees charged by outside organizations and businesses should only exist to cover the cost of conducting the event.
3. Instruction for all merit badges must be conducted under the supervision of an approved merit badge counselor for each badge. Only currently registered counselors may approve work completed towards a merit badge.
4. Promotional material for the event must include the following:
 - a. Merit badges being offered
 - b. Required prerequisites to be completed before attending in order for the scout to earn the badge at the event, and any post-requirements that must be completed after the workshop.
 - c. Participant fee
 - d. Contact information for the event organizer
5. Counselors must be committed to providing a quality experience for all scouts participating in the event. Merit badges cannot be earned by simply attending an event. Completion of the badge is a determination of the counselor, based on the scout’s satisfactory completion of the requirements and participation with the group. Action contrary to this should be reported to the Council Advancement Committee using Form 11.1.0.0 – “Reporting Merit Badge Counseling Concerns.”
6. Scouts must arrive at the merit badge event with a merit badge card signed by their scoutmaster (Guide to Advancement topic 7.0.0.3). This indicates that the scout has had a conversation with their Scoutmaster regarding the merit badge on which they intend to work.



Merit Badge Opportunity Proposal

Name _____ District _____

Phone Number _____ E-Mail _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Name of Organization, Group, or Unit hosting event _____

Date of Event _____ # of Scouts expected _____ Location _____

Merit Badges being offered and Counselor (use additional pages if necessary):

Merit Badge	Counselor

Required Prerequisites

Merit Badge	Prerequisite(s)	Length of Instruction

Participant Fee \$ _____

What does the fee cover? _____

Signature _____

Advancement Committee Use Only

Reviewed by: _____

District Advancement Chair

Vice Chair, Merit Badges

Advancement Staff Adviser

Approved: Yes No