

To: Incoming Student Diver
From: Christopher Rigaud, Diving Operations Manager/ Diving Safety Officer
Re: Basic Scuba Course (Spring 2020)

Greetings from the UMaine Scientific Diving Program! You have successfully registered and been accepted into the 2020 SMS Basic Scuba Course. This is a non-credit bearing recreational dive course, sponsored by the UMaine Scientific Diving Program. You should have already received the course description/syllabus, which describes the course and its various special requirements. Please review the syllabus, complete the additional documentation described in this message, and submit them to me at: crigaud@maine.edu. All class documents are posted on the web at: www.umaine.edu/scientificdiving, under the Basic Scuba tab.

Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have. I look forward to diving with you!

-Chris

Required Forms/Documents/Fees- **All forms must be completed and submitted on or before, Feb. 4, 2020.** Incomplete documentation may result in an inability to participate in the course. The course fee must also be paid before this day. Course fees must be submitted by check to the SMS Office, in Aubert Hall.

1. **PADI Medical Form-** this form must be completed for admission to the course. Please read all instructions and answer all questions truthfully. Use full words for "YES" and "NO" answers; do not use letters "Y" or "N", check-marks, etc. as these are not acceptable. As indicated in the instructions, any "YES" answers require that you be evaluated by a physician before participating. This requirement is FOR YOUR SAFETY!
2. **PADI Liability Release**
3. **UMaine Equipment Liability Form**
4. **Photo-** head and shoulders, passport-style photo. No dark glasses, no hats, no complex backgrounds.

First Day of Class- We will meet at the Wallace Pool (Athletic Field House, not Rec. Ctr.) at **6:00 pm on Tue., March 10.** We will begin with a review and discussion of the course schedule and requirements. Afterwards we will be swimming and snorkeling so **all students must bring a swimsuit and towel;** you may also wish to bring swimming goggles. Students are encouraged to bring mask, snorkel, fins, booties, exposure suit, and/or any other personal equipment. If you do not yet have this personal equipment, we will have some equipment available to borrow. **You must have all required personal equipment as listed in the course syllabus by Tue., March 24.**

Equipment- Diving is an equipment intensive activity, especially in Maine; please review the course syllabus for a summary of equipment requirements. All equipment must fit properly and be suitable for diving in cold water; lightweight tropical gear will likely be insufficient. Any reputable scuba dealer will be able to provide information and recommendations on a range of equipment choices and pricing options. To ensure properly fitting equipment and adequate customer service it is recommended that equipment be purchased through a local scuba shop, not through mail-order or internet vendors.

The UMaine DSO is also available to assist with equipment questions. Scuba class is a great place to discuss equipment options and try out different gear. Even if you plan to purchase your own scuba gear, you may use UMaine gear until you get some experience, better understand equipment options, and develop personal preferences.

Exposure suits- Spring/summer water temperatures in Maine range from 40-60°F (4-15°C), with air temperatures from 60-80°F (15-26°C). Cooler temperatures occur during days of inclement weather. Divers must prepare accordingly and insure they possess adequate exposure protection both in and out of the water. A **two-piece 7mm wetsuit** (with 7mm booties/hood/gloves) is generally considered the minimum level of exposure protection; single piece suits are acceptable, but most divers find them to be inadequate and report being cold. Even in the pool, some level of exposure protection is required to prevent getting cold during 2-3 hour class sessions; do not plan to dive in only your swimsuit.