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Frank Buske, interviewee

Steve Lay, host

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Steve Lay said more than 40,000 men and women climbed the Chilkoot Pass in the winters of 1897-1898. They left behind a legacy of determination and effort. The legacy of those men and women is surprisingly documented in journals, diaries, newspaper articles and even fiction. This summer a class in the summer session will explore that legacy using the words of those who actually made the trip. Like many of the summer session classes the course will be much more than learning in a classroom. Dr. Frank Buske will be teaching the class. He said the title of his course will be North to the Klondike. They will be reading about the gold rush and looking at the films. Then they will drive down to Skagway and then he and the class will be walking over the Chilkoot Trail just like the miners did back in 1897 and 98. Lay said the readings for the class will be varied and reflect the variety of written materials available. Buske said the class will be reading Klondike fever. They will also read poems by several authors. They will not just be covering the trail, but they will also study the gold rush period from 1897 through 1899. They will also look at journals from that time period. One miner named Thompson wrote in his journal about Jack London who was with their group.

Lay said the highlight of the course will be the hike across the Chilkoot Trail. Buske said they will be four or five days on the trail. Each person will be carrying their own food and sleeping bag. He wasn't sure about how many miles they would be able to walk each day. At milepost 12 the trail gets more difficult. Buske is looking forward to teaching the course and hiking the trail. Buske said there will be a variety of literature in the course and it is also for the people who like the outdoors. He said this is also a course for those type of people who like to write journals.