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Iowa State students take to the air

By Keaton Lane, keaton.lane@iowastatedaily.com Updated 12 hrs ago



Emily Blobaum/Iowa State Daily

Braden Christensen, treasurer of the Flying Cyclones and senior in industrial design performs a pre-flight check on a Cessna 185 at Ames Municipal Airport.

Iowa State students are taking “Enjoy Your Adventure” to a whole new level with The Flying Cyclones.

The Flying Cyclones is a student organization aimed at anyone with an interest in aviation. The group is made up of students, faculty and community members. The students involved in the group come from many different majors but all have a common interest in aviation.

The members also come from a wide variety of exposure to aviation. While some of the members have their pilot’s license, others have never flown in a plane.



Braden Christensen, treasurer of the Flying Cyclones and senior in industrial design performs a pre-flight check on a Cessna 172 at the Ames Municipal Airport.

Emily Blobaum/Iowa State Daily

The process of getting a pilot's license can be somewhat challenging as it requires attaining a certain number of classroom and flight training hours.

"Our goal is to expose as many different people to aviation as possible," said Mike Feitel, junior in mechanical engineering and The Flying Cyclones' president.

The club has about 150 active members, however, only 12 to 15 of them actually have their pilot's license. Each member pays \$30 in annual fees, which allows them a wide range of flight-related opportunities.

The group tries to have its licensed pilots fly as often as possible. After paying their club dues, members of the group can fly with licensed pilots as often as they like.

A few examples of the trips the club has taken include air shows, looking at military aircraft and touring Rockwell Collins.

"It's as much about the experiences as it is about community," said Sam Neff, senior in electrical engineering and the club's safety officer.

Weather permitting, the club tries to have someone fly every day. This is where the job of the safety officer comes in.

As safety officer, Neff has a variety of different duties.

"Assuming that nothing goes wrong, my job is really simple," Neff said. "Basically approving flights, making sure that flights are within limits. I have the safety committee and we approve flights together.

"I also keep track of records of all of our pilot agreement."

The group meets once every other week and tries to have one social event each month.

"We've had past club members get jobs at kind of all of the major players in the aviation industry," Feitel said. "A lot of schools have flight clubs, but I don't think they do what we do. We're one of the few clubs that takes non-pilots flying and does other things."

Keaton Lane