

Overview

The Oregon Cascades & Idaho Salmon River Leadership Semester is the longest course that the Northwest Outward Bound School offers, providing the greatest depth of personal and group leadership, and technical and interpersonal skills of any course we offer. In 65 days, you will learn to paddle, mountaineer, rock climb and whitewater raft in the wildest and most scenic course areas of Outward Bound.

Your course will begin the moment you are picked up at the airport in Redmond, Oregon (RDM). Over this 65-day course you will raft two different rivers in Oregon and Idaho, you will mountaineer in the stunning Central Cascade Mountains and rock climb at Smith Rock State Park. Your course will finish with a Service Project and then a 10-day Final Expedition in the mountains. Although there will be times for rest and reflection during your course, it is still a very intense experience: 10 weeks of skill development, backcountry living, and physical and mental challenge.

Experienced wilderness educators know that backcountry travel is highly demanding. From getting up early, packing your bags and cooking breakfast to paddling a kayak or hiking up a mountain, the wilderness is unpredictable and necessitates total focus for success. It can take every waking moment to get from point A to point B. Course alumni and instructors all agree that arriving physically fit will not only enhance your experience and ability to do well on the course but ultimately allow you to take full advantage of the expedition.

Educator Courses vs Semester Courses

Northwest Outward Bound School offers two distinct types of long-format (50 days +) courses: Semester courses and Outdoor Educator courses. Educator courses are specifically designed for students that want to explore a career in outdoor education, whereas Semester courses are designed for students looking for a long Outward Bound course that maximizes the depth of the experience. While both course types teach numerous technical and human skills, the Outdoor Educator courses add a layer of experiential education theory and are required to utilize their learning in a formal practicum where they design and implement an outdoor education experience for middle school students.

Semester courses spend more time in the field on expeditions and focus on technical travel and leadership skills. Students will come away from this course with foundational technical skills as well as an increase in self-confidence, communication, teamwork and group leadership. This course also includes a 3-day Wilderness First Aid course and certification. If you have any questions, or are having difficulty choosing between a Semester and Educator course, please call your course advisor.



Course Areas

DESCHUTES RIVER, OREGON – the Deschutes River is part of the national Wild & Scenic Rivers System. The river flows north from the Oregon Cascades to the Columbia River and then on to the Pacific Ocean. The Lower Deschutes is a popular river for both whitewater rafting and fly fishing. The river is spring-fed, which results in an unusually constant water flow and cold water. Excellent geologic evidence is present all around this area. This course will travel the entire 96-mile stretch of the Lower Deschutes. The rapids on the Deschutes are rated to Class IV, mostly Class II-III, and are excellent for learning paddle skills, hydrology and teamwork. The group camps each night along the banks of the river. The Deschutes River Canyon has a colorful human history boarding the reservation of the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs for the first 60 miles, and follows a railroad for much of the length of the Lower Deschutes.

CENTRAL CASCADES, OREGON – Volcanoes dot the spine of the Cascade Mountains, rising over 10,000 feet above the forests, lakes, and rivers of the surrounding region. These glaciated peaks run north and south and create perfect mountaineering objectives for you and your team. The Central Cascade range is home to the Three Sisters, Broken Top, Mt. Washington, Three Fingered Jack, and Mt. Jefferson. Four 10,000 foot glaciated volcanoes are present in this course area, with a total of nine major volcanoes. You'll find a unique blend of dry eastside and moist west side weather conditions which allow diverse types of vegetation to flourish, when they are not covered by the Cascades deep snowpack. The area has a complex geologic history that continues today. You can find active glaciers methodically carving away the mountain and the dramatic traces of avalanches that altered the landscape. It is these features of the volcanoes that create a challenging playground from which you and your team will learn the more technical aspects of mountaineering and backpacking.

SMITH ROCK STATE PARK, OREGON – Smith Rock is a world-renowned climbing destination that attracts climbers of every ability level. It is widely considered to be one of the top sport climbing areas in the country. Smith rock is a uniquely beautiful area that commonly graces postcards and calendars. The Crooked River lazily winds its way through the canyon, cutting a path through the cliffs and spires. To the west, the snow-capped volcanoes of the Cascade Range rise on the horizon, above the flat checkerboard of irrigated plains. One of the most striking features is a prominent spire, Monkey Face. Given the dry and temperate climate, rock climbing is feasible most of the year.



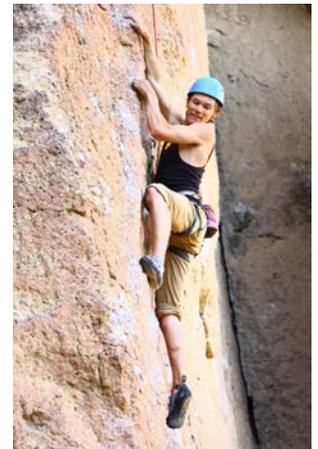
LOWER SALMON RIVER, IDAHO – Starting in Whitebird, Idaho, the Salmon River has created the second deepest river gorge in North America (deeper than the Grand Canyon!) and is also the last free flowing river in the United States. Because there are no dams, sand is carried downstream from high creeks and tributaries and deposited in the form of beautiful white sand beaches providing idyllic camping conditions. The river meanders through the second largest protected wilderness area in the contiguous United States, The Frank Church Wilderness. The entire trip includes seventy three miles of river travel and many rapids up to Class IV. The river journey ends on the lower end of the Snake River in Hell's Canyon, the deepest canyon in the country. Our seven day trips allow you to

explore the many historical and cultural sites that the Lower Salmon has to offer, from houses lived in by Chinese miners to Native American pictographs.

WEATHER – Temperatures typically range from freezing to 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Our course area is on the eastern side of the Cascades, and thus tends to be drier; however, rain and thunderstorms are not unusual. Fall weather varies and students could experience snow and wet conditions especially in the mountains.

Course Activities

MOUNTAINEERING/ CLIMBING SECTION (~18 DAYS) – The mountain section focuses on mountaineering with an emphasis on backpacking, campcraft, on and off-trail navigation and technical mountain climbing. You will learn skills such as knots and hitches, fixed-lines, climbing technique, map and compass use, alpine travel and Leave No Trace ethics. Each day presents a different focus, with ample time for experiential learning. The instructor-to-student ratio is never more than 1:5 during this section, allowing for personal coaching on the physical techniques of climbing and mountaineering, as well as catering the curriculum to the specific interests and aptitudes of individual course participants.



WHITEWATER RAFTING (TWO ~8-DAY EXPEDITIONS)– Students will travel on the Deschutes and Salmon Rivers in four to six person paddle rafts, and learn to “captain” (maneuver) their paddle raft team through Class II to IV rapids. After lessons in basic river travel and safety, students will progress into learning to read currents, anticipate obstacles, scout rapids, and negotiate technical portions of the river. Students will also learn river hydrology, swimming in currents, paddle techniques,

and expeditionary travel. While on the rafting expedition, there may also be an opportunity for short day hikes.

ROCK CLIMBING (~7 DAYS) – Students will receive individual instruction and test their skills against vertical cracks, steep faces and boulders. Camping will be in a front country site at Smith Rock State Park among the multicolored cliffs and spires. Students will learn about basic climbing equipment, rope management, wearing harnesses, tying knots, belaying and rappelling techniques, and movement on rock.

WILDERNESS FIRST AID – The Wilderness First Aid (WFA) course is a 3-day introduction to wilderness medicine. Combining classroom time with practical sessions, this course provides outdoor enthusiasts with basic instruction and skills. Students will leave this 3-day WFA certification in Wilderness First Aid with the knowledge to manage simple injuries/illnesses in the backcountry. It is a

great stepping stone into wilderness medicine and may lead to a desire to take longer, more complex courses in the future.

SOLO – In order for profound learning to take place, students need time to reflect on their experience, and Solo is that opportunity. The Solo experience provides an important break from the rigors of the expedition and gives students the opportunity to reflect on their Outward Bound experience. With sufficient food and equipment, students will set up camp at sites of their own, using the wilderness skills learned during the first portions of the course. The amount of time students spend on Solo is based on length of course, weather, student condition, age, and Instructor preference. Solo campsites are chosen to offer as much solitude as possible (yet be within emergency whistle-signaling distance of other group members). Most students spend their Solo time journaling, drawing, reflecting, thinking and resting as they process lessons of the course to focus on their goals for the future. Instructors check on each participant at regular intervals, as safety is always the top priority.

SERVICE – Service to others and the environment is a core value of Outward Bound and is integrated into each course. Participants follow Leave No Trace ethics as service to the environment and do acts of service while leading and supporting fellow participants. Students develop a value of service, seeing the impact of their actions firsthand, and transfer this desire to serve their communities back home. On longer courses, students have the opportunity to do a formal service project with a local agency. Common projects include working with the Pacific Crest Trail Association doing trail work, the local food pantry and other local non-profit organizations. Service projects can be a couple of hours up to a full day.

FINAL EXPEDITION – Outward Bound believes that an appropriate amount of independence is a powerful educational tool. To deliver that benefit, Outward Bound purposefully and gradually transfers certain leadership responsibilities to the students, culminating with our “Final Expedition.” Near the end of course, your group may be given the opportunity to travel without your instructor’s direct guidance. Instructors maintain overall risk-management by using check-ins, careful route planning and accurate assessment of group abilities. Many of our students feel this phase of the course is the most rewarding, as the group learns to work together, problem solve, and accomplish a goal independently, while utilizing all the skills they have acquired during the expedition.

FINAL CHALLENGE EVENT – We typically end our courses with a Final Challenge Event—an individual final physical push. This might take the form of a run or a triathlon-style challenge.

OUTCOMES – Outward Bound courses vary in length from 4 to 85 days. On shorter courses, participants will receive an intro to leadership skills, strength of character and a desire to serve. With longer courses, the same outcomes and benefits are achieved with the opportunity to reach a more profound level of mastery as there are more chances to develop technical skills, receive and implement feedback and further personal development. On the 65 Day Leadership Semester students should expect to come to a thorough understanding and demonstration of technical skills and be able to perform with little supplementary intervention during the final phase of course.

Sample Itinerary

The following is an example of what your course itinerary might look like. Your actual course plan will vary according to weather, student skills and abilities and instructor preferences.

Day 1	Course Start, welcome and introductions, duffle shuffle, course overview
Day 2-10	Backpacking Section: Lessons on how to pack a pack, travel in mountain environment, navigation and map reading, camp craft skills, cooking, water treatment, hygiene, travel and etiquette. There is also a focus on group dynamics, leadership and communication.
Day 11-13	Mountaineering: Travel in mountain environment, continue to practice technical and human skills, lessons on conflict resolution, teamwork, goal setting. Opportunity to climb one of the mountains in the course area.
Day 14-16	SOLO-Longer courses have the opportunity for a 3 day two night solo. Length of SOLO is up to the discretion of the instructors and will be no longer than a 72 hour period
Day 17-18	Mountaineering/Backpacking: Depending on group cohesion and interest there is an opportunity to climb one of the mountains in the course area.
Day 19-24	Whitewater Rafting: Travel up to 100 miles on the beautiful Upper and Lower Deschutes River.
Day 25	Travel to the Lower Salmon River in Idaho.
Day 26-29	Whitewater Rafting: Exploration of the Lower Salmon River and Snake River, including cultural and natural history lessons.
Day 31-33	Wilderness First Aid course
Day 34	Travel to Smith Rock state park.
Day 35-48	Rock Climbing: Develop knowledge of rock climbing technique and systems, including more technical elements including placement of artificial protection, anchor building and rescue. There may be an opportunity for a small SOLO experience during this section.
Day 48-50	Service project
Day 50-63	Final expedition. Students are responsible for planning and executing a multi-day expedition with little guidance from instructional staff.
Day 64	Personal challenge event, de-issue gear, de-brief, course end celebration and graduation.
Day 65	Travel Home