

Course Overview

The Oregon Outdoor Educator course is a comprehensive expedition program that combines the beauty and challenging environments of the Oregon wilderness with intensive educational curriculum and activities, giving priority to the skills needed to work in the fields of outdoor and adventure education. Students are immersed in the history, tradition, and teaching methods of an



organization that has long been a pioneer of wilderness and experiential education throughout the world. Designed specifically for all individuals interested in pursuing instructional, guiding, or outdoor teaching positions, this course offers 50 days of in-depth learning in mountaineering, snow camping, rock climbing, whitewater rafting, and first aid, while simultaneously exploring group dynamics, experiential education theory and methods, and wilderness activity management. Within a supportive community of like-minded adventurers, you will be provided with opportunities to act as both a student and an

educator, drawing references from your experiences to affirm the wilderness educational concepts being explored. Previous course participants are out working in all facets of our industry — as guides, instructors, and classroom teachers — and have, along with course instructors, expressed that this course delivers invaluable experience, relevant skills and the knowledge needed to help students become better educators.

Your course will begin the moment you are picked up at the airport. Although there will be times for rest and reflection during your course, it is still a very intense experience: seven 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.

Outdoor Educator Courses Vs. Semester Leadership Courses

Northwest Outward Bound School offers two distinct types of long-format (50 days +) courses: Semester courses and Outdoor Educator courses. Outdoor Educator courses are specifically designed for participants who want to explore a career in outdoor education, whereas semester courses are designed for participants looking for a long Outward Bound course that maximizes the depth of the Outward Bound experience. While both course types teach numerous technical and human skills, the Outdoor Educator course adds a rich layer of educational skills. Outdoor Educator course participants spend significant time learning experiential education theory and

are required to utilize their educational learning in a formal educational practicum where they design and implement a multi-day outdoor education experience for local students. Outdoor Educator courses also include a 9-day Wilderness First Responder (WFR) certification course. If you have any questions, or are having difficulty choosing between a semester and instructor course, please call your course advisor.

Course Areas

SMITH ROCK STATE PARK, OREGON – Smith Rock State Park 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.

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 and teamwork. The group camps each night along the banks of the river. The Deschutes region has a colorful human history, and a railroad borders much of the length of the Lower Deschutes.



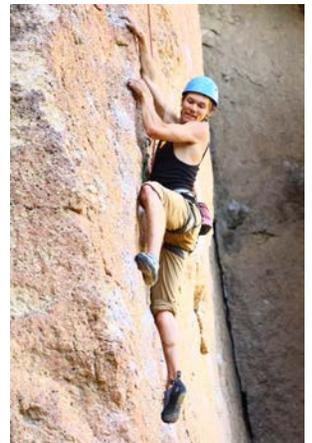
CENTRAL CASCADES, OREGON – Volcanoes dot the spine of the Cascade Mountains, rising over 10,000 feet above the forests, lakes, and rivers of the surrounding region. These glaciated peaks run north and south and create perfect mountaineering objectives for you and your team. The Central Cascade range 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 snow camping. Depending upon the peak, your summit attempt

may necessitate glacier and roped-team travel. Snow travel will be mandatory the entire portion of this section of the course.

ODIN FALLS BASE CAMP, REDMOND, OREGON – This facility is our office and support site for all wilderness courses conducted in Oregon. The 48-acre property is located on the Deschutes River in the high desert, north of Bend. From the base camp, Smith Rock State Park is visible to the east and the Central Cascades rise in the distance to the west. Students may spend time at this location in order to utilize the lodge classroom setting for the Wilderness First Responder (WFR) portion of the course. Students will stay in our campground or a rustic bunkhouse on the property.

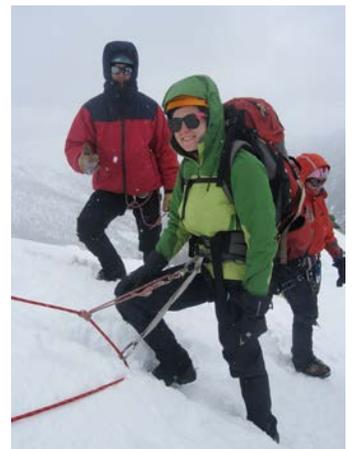
Course Activities

ROCK CLIMBING – 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 or in a backcountry location near the Central Cascades. Students will learn about basic climbing equipment, rope management, wearing harnesses, tying knots, belaying and rappelling techniques, top rope site assessment and management, facilitating the climbing experience, and movement on rock.



RAFTING SECTION – Students will travel on the river 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.

MOUNTAINEERING – Mountaineering courses move through high mountain terrain and focus on preparation for a peak attempt that may require the use of ropes, technical equipment, and snow camping. During this section of the course, students will start by learning snow travel skills including off trail travel, map and compass navigation, and campsite selection. In progression, you will learn basic mountaineering skills like route finding, snow and glacier travel, ice axe use, and rope team travel. Please note that peak attempts are dependent upon variables such as weather and group dynamic.



WILDERNESS FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING – Nine days of this course will be spent fulfilling the seventy two hours of classroom and hands on learning required to obtain your

Wilderness First Responder (WFR) certification. During this portion of your trip, you will learn advanced backcountry first aid and evacuation techniques. Each day, time will be devoted to lectures and exams as well as practical hands-on sessions and rescue simulations. Evenings are reserved for study and assignments. Full participation is required. Upon successfully completing and passing the course, you will receive WFR, Anaphylaxis, and Basic Life Support-CPR certification cards from Wilderness Medical Training Center. These are the industry-standard medical certifications that are required for professionals working in the outdoors.

SOLO – The Solo Experience provides the opportunity to reflect, rest and practice the campcraft skills you have been learning throughout the course. Solo length is based on length of course, weather, student condition, age and instructor preference. You will not travel during this time and your instructors will check on you occasionally, but you will be mostly alone for the duration of your solo. Instructors will choose your solo site to offer as much solitude as possible, within a safe distance for emergency contact with them, and you will be provided with sufficient water, food, and equipment. 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.

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. Designated service projects are coordinated with land managers like the US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service to collaborate on land restoration projects. Additionally, student may have the opportunity to work alongside select social service agencies like nursing homes and hospitals. With a broader context for needs-based career opportunities, participants develop a value of service, seeing the impact of their actions firsthand and transfer this desire to serve their communities back home.

PRACTICUM – A culminating part of the Outdoor Educator course is an opportunity to put your skills to the test. You will spend time preparing for and then delivering a 2-day climbing or hiking experience for a group of local middle school students. For many on this course, this is one of the highlights - an opportunity to truly test what you have learned!

FINAL EXPEDITION (3-5 Days) – Outward Bound believes that an appropriate amount of independence is a powerful educational tool. During the travel sections of course, Outward Bound instructors purposefully and gradually transfer certain leadership responsibilities to the students culminating with our “Final Expedition.” Near the end of course—if you and your group have demonstrated the necessary leadership, team problem solving and wilderness living skills—you may have the opportunity to travel without your instructors immediately present. Many of our students feel this phase of the course is the most rewarding, as the group learns to work as a team, problem solve, and accomplish a goal independently, while utilizing all the skills they have acquired.

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 – Outdoor Educator Course students will receive in-depth training in technical, interpersonal, and educational skills that apply to being an outdoor educator. With a progression of teaching and leadership skills where instructors and peers provide feedback in an organized setting, students will gain a strong foundation to begin or continue working as an outdoor educator. Much like other courses, students will be challenged to try new things, step outside their comfort zones, and do things they never before thought they could do. As a team, each group will work together to complete difficult tasks necessary for backcountry travel, expedition living, and outdoor leadership.

Sample Itinerary

The following is an example of what your itinerary may 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, course overview
Day 2-6	Whitewater Rafting Section
Day 7-16	Rock Climbing Section
Day 17-25	Wilderness First Responder
Day 26-39	Mountaineering Section
Day 40-45	Practicum prep
Day 45-48	Final expedition
Day 49	Final challenge event
Day 50	Course End & Travel Home

REFLECTIONS FROM A NW OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL OUTDOOR EDUCATOR COURSE GRADUATE:

“My passion for outdoor education and recreation led to my enrollment in a 50-day Outward Bound Instructor Development course. This extraordinary expedition in the Pacific Northwest combined challenging environments with an intensive educational curriculum advancing my educational, technical and medical skills. Upon reflection, my favorite part was the education practicum because the opportunities to teach the skills I learned as a student and see my campers comprehend and practice those skills. This fully immersive course I am incredibly thankful for because it has furthered my passion to teach in the outdoors and taught me to pursue what I love.”

– Eric Dorata, 2015