



## Overview

This backpacking expedition will take students along the crest of the Cascade Mountains of Central Oregon. While exploring diverse and beautiful mountain habitats, you will learn basic backpacking and camp craft skills. The course also includes an emphasis on leadership, character development, and an ethic of service. From getting up early, packing your bags and cooking breakfast to hiking up a mountain, wilderness travel is demanding. You do not need to have any previous experience but arriving physically fit and excited for the opportunity for personal development will enhance your experience and allow you to take full advantage of the expedition.

## Outcomes

This course provides an opportunity for students to learn and practice the ideas of leadership, character development, and service that are integral to Outward Bound. Students will develop and apply these skills in an expedition setting so that they can continue to grow once they return home. As a team, each group will work together to complete difficult tasks necessary for backcountry travel and expedition living. Instructors will work to challenge each student to try new things and step outside their comfort zones, as well as provide feedback that can be acted upon before course end.



## Course Area

**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. The Central Cascade Range is home to the Three Sisters, Broken Top, Mt. Washington, Three Fingered Jack, and Mt. Jefferson. Active glaciers, traces of avalanches, and the volcanoes themselves are the perfect setting for learning the more technical aspects of mountaineering and backpacking.

## Course Activities

**BACKPACKING** – Our backpacking courses focus on wilderness skills such as navigation, natural history and living in the remote and beautiful backcountry. Activities include: leadership and communication skill seminars, peak ascents and traveling through mountainous terrain both on and off trail. Leave No Trace camping techniques, navigation and first aid are additional skills students will learn. You will travel over terrain that may reach up to 9,000 feet.

**SOLO** – In order for profound learning to take place, students spend time reflecting 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 course length, 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 a top priority.

**SERVICE** – Service to others and to our environment is a core value of Outward Bound and is integrated into each course. Groups follow Leave No Trace ethics as they engage in acts of service while leading and supporting fellow participants. Students see the impact of their actions firsthand, and may develop a desire to continue service in their home communities.



**FINAL EXPEDITION** – Outward Bound believes that an appropriate amount of independence is a powerful educational tool. During the travel sections of this 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 the group has demonstrated the necessary leadership, team problem solving and wilderness living skills—students may have the opportunity to travel without 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.

**PERSONAL CHALLENGE** – We typically end our courses with a Challenge Event—an individual final physical push. This typically takes the form of an endurance run or triathlon-style challenge.



### Sample Itinerary

*Please note that this is an example of activities that might occur on course, not a specific schedule or guarantee. All itineraries will vary depending on student groups, instructor teams, and environmental factors.*

- Day 1** Course Start, welcome and introductions, gear check, course overview
- Day 2** Travel to mountain trailhead, learn how to pack a pack, treat water and trail etiquette.
- Day 3-4** Camp breakdown, lessons on how to travel in mountain environment, navigation and map reading, camp craft skills, cooking and hygiene. Lessons on group dynamics, leadership, and communication.
- Day 5-6** SOLO
- Day 7** Depending on group cohesion and interest there is an opportunity to climb one of the mountains in the course area.
- Day 8** Final Expedition
- Day 9** Personal challenge event, de-issue gear, de-brief, course end celebration and graduation
- Day 10** Travel Home