

### Overview

The Northwest Leadership Semester course is the longest course (65 days) that the Northwest Outward Bound School offers and provides in-depth technical instruction while focusing on the interpersonal skills that support strong leadership. You will have the opportunity to escape your usual routine, explore stunning wilderness areas, and enjoy yourself to the fullest. In addition to interpersonal skills like communication, feedback, decision making, and goal setting, you will also learn sea kayaking, mountaineering, rock climbing and whitewater rafting in some of the wildest and most scenic areas in the United States. Sea kayaking will take you through the San Juan Islands. Mountaineering will occur in the North Cascades of Washington, and practice those skills on summit attempts of local peaks. You will learn rock climbing skills in the Central Cascades range of Oregon. A 3-day introduction to wilderness medicine with the opportunity to earn your Wilderness First Aid (WFA) certification is also included. Finally, you will whitewater raft on some of the best rivers in the West. Although there is time for rest and reflection during the course, it is a very intense experience: ten weeks of skill development, backcountry living and physical and mental challenges in the most spectacular of outdoor learning environments. Wilderness travel can be challenging, but with appropriate pre-course preparation, using tools we provide, adults of various ages and body types can be successful. Arriving as physically fit as possible and excited for the opportunity for personal development will enhance your experience and allow you to take full advantage of the expedition.

### Outcomes

Outward Bound courses vary in length from 4 to 85 days. On shorter courses, participants will receive an introduction 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.

### 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

**SAN JUAN ISLANDS, WASHINGTON** – Nestled between Vancouver Island and the North Cascades, the San Juan Islands are a unique coastal cruising ground with large expanses of sparkling water and mountain scenery. During their journey, students will encounter coastlines with a combination of sandy and rocky beaches, shallow and deep harbors, placid and reef-studded bays. Knotty, twisted Madrona trees grow along much of the shorelines while evergreen fir and pine forests cover large inland areas. Sightings of harbor seals, porpoise and eagles are common as well as the rare glimpse of an Orca whale. The islands get less average rainfall than the surrounding area due to the rain-shadow effect of the Olympic Mountains. Summertime high temperatures are around 70 degrees Fahrenheit while lows could be in the 40s.



**THE NORTH CASCADES, WASHINGTON** – The North Cascades are called the “American Alps” for their rugged beauty and glaciated peaks; they remain some of the wildest and least traveled wilderness in the United States. The North Cascades host the greatest concentration of glaciers in the “Lower 48” and are full of high mountain meadows peppered with wild flowers. The mountain sections of our programs operate in the Sawtooth, Pasayten, and Glacier Peak Wilderness areas, as well as North Cascades National Park. All lie on the east side of the North Cascades and receive significantly less rainfall than the western coast of Washington. Temperatures typically range from freezing to 80 degrees

Fahrenheit.

**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.



**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

**SEA KAYAKING [10 DAYS]** – The course starts with sea kayaking in the San Juan Islands, exploring Washington’s inner coastal waters that make this area a renowned cruising ground for United States paddlers. Students traverse the waterways in single and double kayaks, seeking out island beach campsites to sleep under the stars, and getting acquainted with the fascinating natural and cultural history of the Pacific Northwest coast. Becoming a competent sea kayaker involves learning how to read a chart, perform self and assisted rescues, paddle efficiently, and assess sea conditions appropriate to each student and the group’s abilities. Students gain skills in reading currents and tides, kayak rescue techniques, marine navigation and assessing the weather. Team building and learning about marine environments will be emphasized during this section.

**MOUNTAINEERING/ CLIMBING SECTION (~18 DAYS)** – During the portion of the course focused on mountaineering and alpine climbing, students will learn skills such as knots and hitches, fixed-lines, climbing techniques and anchor building. Wilderness skills such as navigation, natural history and living in the backcountry are also taught. Mountaineering courses spend time both on- and off-trail, traveling to remote and beautiful places that are ideal Outward Bound classrooms. Each day presents a different set of activities, 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 ~9-DAY EXPEDITIONS)**– 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.

**ROCK CLIMBING (~7 DAYS)** – Students will receive individual instruction and test their skills against vertical cracks, steep faces and boulders. Students will learn about basic climbing equipment, rope management, 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 that combines classroom time with practical sessions. This section provides students with basic instruction and wilderness first aid skills. Students leave this 3-day section with a certification in Wilderness First Aid and 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.

**SERVICE** – Service to others and to the environment is a core value of Outward Bound and is integrated into each course. Groups follow Leave No Trace ethics as part of their service to the environment and engage in acts of service while leading and supporting fellow participants. Seeing the impact of their actions firsthand, students develop an ingrained appreciation of service and transfer this desire to serve their communities back home.

**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.

**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 Final Challenge Event—an individual final physical push. This might take the form of a run or a triathlon-style challenge.

## 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.

<b>Day 1</b>	Course Start, welcome and introductions, duffle shuffle, course overview
<b>Day 2-11</b>	Sea Kayak Section
<b>Day 12-15</b>	Wilderness First Aid Course
<b>Day 16-32</b>	Mountaineering Section
<b>Day 33-35</b>	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
<b>Day 36-37</b>	Service Project
<b>Day 38</b>	Transition to Oregon
<b>Day 39-46</b>	Rock Climbing
<b>Day 47-63</b>	Whitewater Rafting Section
<b>Day 64</b>	Personal challenge event, de-issue gear, de-brief, course end celebration and graduation
<b>Day 65</b>	Travel home