

Westminster Outdoor Program Student Trip Leader Training Process

Objectives

- To provide students with the opportunity to identify and reach their individual outdoor leadership goals within the Student-Led Outdoor Trips (SLOT) program
- To promote student leadership of outdoor trips which aligns with Westminster's College-wide Learning Goals
- To further facilitate the mission of the college, which seeks to "emphasize practical experience as well as theoretical knowledge."

Process

The following steps are required for students to lead Westminster Outdoor Program trips. At each step, program directors may make other recommendations based on students' individual situations, skills, and experience. Students will also reflect upon and document their process and will be guided by the directors.

1. **Attend** at least three extended (3-day or more) trip as a participant. Program directors may recommend that you participate more trips depending on previous experience and competencies.
2. Set up a **meeting** with an outdoor program director to discuss your goals.
3. Initiate outdoor leadership **portfolio** which includes:
 - Leadership goals and steps toward achievement (skill types, roles, etc.)
 - Leadership Development Log - including previous relevant experience (resume), trainings, feedback & evaluations, and reflection journal addressing progress & growth.
4. **Volunteer** – Our program couldn't run without people (staff and students alike) putting in a little extra time at tables, on trips, and in the office. It shows commitment and looks great on your portfolio or resume.
5. **Shadow** – Communicate with program directors which trips you're interested in shadowing – they'll let you know which trips might work for you. Register for the trip as a participant and be a part of the pre- and post-trip discussions and preparations. During the trip, take on minimal leadership responsibilities but observe and absorb as much as possible.
6. **Apprentice** – Participate as an apprentice (see roles & responsibilities below.) The number of times one might apprentice depends on each individual's growth and will vary.

7. **Assist** – Assist the trip leader & mentor apprentices and shadows (see roles & responsibilities below). A program director must observe in the field to provide further recommendations. The number of times one might assist depends on each individual's growth and will vary.
8. **Lead** – Fully lead a trip (see roles & responsibilities below). Directors may be present as "shadows."
9. At any time during the process, aspiring leaders are encouraged to acquire the following minimum training. **Trip Leaders are required to have the following** by the time they lead their first trip:
 - **Trip Leader Training Course** (for-credit course geared toward training students to lead Westminster trips). Students may also participate in this program without credit –**OR**-- Equivalent leadership training with an approved outdoor program.
 - **Wilderness First Responder & CPR** (80 hour certification - WFR Certifications are considered invalid if CPR certification has lapsed)
 - **Van driving certification**
 - **Skills-based certification may be required** such as Single Pitch Instructor, Avalanche Safety, or Swift Water Rescue.

SLOT Leader Roles & Responsibilities

*Leading trips for the Outdoor Program is not a job. Sometimes you get paid, but it couldn't be considered a dependable source of income! People who get involved with leading trips need to be willing to volunteer, work hard, and learn. It may take some people a couple years before they're ready to lead trips and it may take others their entire college career or longer. While we do have a trip leader process in place with objective steps, gaining leadership, experience, and judgment is an inherently subjective process.

Leaders: \$65/day

Assistant Leaders: \$50/day

Apprentice: no pay, no trip cost

- *Incentives*: Leaders and Assistant Leaders can receive the above amounts as pay for trips –**OR**- use the daily rate above plus \$10 per day toward approved certifications and trainings! This means the total amount will go towards a certification or training.
- There will also be opportunity to earn more money with extended number of days working in the field.
- You may be at different levels of leadership for different trip types
- Leadership teams are very dynamic. Even if you have been a trip leader in the past, you may be asked to assist, apprentice, or shadow under a different circumstance.
- **All Trip Leaders and Assistant Leaders are required to:**
 - Know and uphold college wide policies
 - Know and implement emergency and incident procedures
 - Be familiar with first aid kit contents and their use

- Be familiar with curriculum and skills for your particular trip type
 - Understand that if it is necessary to evacuate a participant, you may need to escort that participant out of the field and not re-join the trip
 - Maintain frequent and effective communication with other leaders
 - Support a safe learning environment both physically and emotionally
 - Support the goals of the program, trip, students, and co-leaders
 - Implement group management skills including conflict resolution, group inclusiveness, etc.
 - Actively manage inherent risks
 - Role model outstanding outdoor skills, self-care, professionalism and respect
 - Drive vehicles with students as passengers (if over 21) when necessary and adhere to college van policies
 - Positively represent Westminster as an ambassador for the school
- **In addition, Trip leaders are required to:**
 - Create and maintain overall vision for the trip including necessary logistical planning, progression, basic itinerary, and curriculum with input from other trip leaders
 - Coordinate and facilitate pre-trip meetings
 - Delegate appropriate responsibilities to co-leaders
 - Facilitate conversations with co-leaders about roles specific to each leader's strengths and experience
 - Ensure that all paperwork is complete and returned to program directors (logs, incident reports, etc)
 - Ensure that all equipment is accounted for, operable (or repairs needed are reported), clean, dry, and returned to the appropriate place.
 - Have the "final say" on any risk management, emergency situations, or participant issues. The trip leader may rely heavily on co-leaders to make decisions. All leaders need to be a part of those decisions and should support each other in making them.
- **Apprentices are required to:**
 - Take initiative – see what needs to be done and do it
 - Accept tasks that the trip leader and assistant trip leader may delegate (should be appropriate for comfort and skill level)
 - Actively participate in group management
 - Take appropriate opportunities to practice leadership skills

Leader Team Composition

- All trip leaders and assistant leaders must have current CPR certifications (WFR Certifications are considered invalid if CPR certification has lapsed)
- On each trip traveling into the "wilderness context" (Wilderness Medicine Institute defines wilderness context as "time from the onset of the illness/injury to definitive care is more than 1 hour"), and on all overnight outdoor trips, there is at least 1 leader with a current Wilderness First Responder (WFR) certification

- Basic First Aid is the minimum First Aid requirement for any other leader, either as an assistant or on trips not traveling into the wilderness context
- On every overnight outdoor trip there is at least 1 leader and 1 assistant leader. There may also be an apprentice or other staff to help with specific aspects of the trip.
- A ratio of 1 leader to every 5 participants is maintained.

Other Certification & Training

Student leaders are encouraged to acquire additional training through both Westminster and outside certification programs.

Academic

- Participate in the Outdoor Leadership Class (HPW/ENV 300 – 30 hour course). This course is recommended but not required if students come to the outdoor program with significant outdoor leadership experience.
- Participate in the Trip Leader Training Class. This class is geared toward training students to lead trips for Westminster’s Outdoor Recreation Program.
- Participate in the Indoor Climbing Class (HPW – 30 hour course). This course provides climbing instruction and development of personal climbing skills.
- Participate in the Foundation for Experiential Education Class (spring 2012)
- Other relevant academic classes provided by Westminster or another institution. Please describe here:

Emergency Certifications

- CPR/AED
- Basic First Aid
- Wilderness First Aid
- Wilderness First Responder (80 hour course; all trips must have at least one certified WFR instructor)
- Other Certification: _____

Skill-specific Certifications

- American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA) Single Pitch Instructor Certification (20 hour course)
- American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA) Climbing Wall Instructor Certification (20 hour course)
- Swift Water Rescue
- Avalanche Awareness/Level 1 or 2 Certification (snow)
- Leave No Trace (minimum impact, environmental ethics)
- Other:

Personal & Professional Development

- Attend Conferences: Wilderness Risk Management (WRMC), Association for Outdoor Recreation and Education (AORE), Association for Experiential Education (AEE), etc.
 - Gain experience in the outdoor industry in some capacity during the school year or during summer (actual student examples include working at an indoor climbing wall, working at an outdoor summer camp, taking an outdoor course with the National Outdoor Leadership School or Outward Bound, working with at-risk youth in an outdoor program such as Second Nature, mountaineering training with the Alaska Mountain Guides, working for the National Forest Service on trail maintenance, ski patrol, avalanche certifications, etc.)
 - Continue to improve skills on personal trips.
 - Other:
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Student Leader Assessment

+ = good – exceeds expectations for level of leadership

√ = satisfactory – meets expectations for level of leadership

Δ = area for growth – needs improvement for level of leadership

N/A = not applicable for assessment or level of leadership

Level of Leadership _____ Trip & Date _____

ALL TRIPS:

Trip Planning & Preparation

This student can:

- Organize and implement the itinerary, permitting, reservations, food lists, gear lists, paperwork, and transportation for a trip.
- Communicate effectively with student participants before the trip to ensure correct preparation
- Communicate regularly with outdoor program directors regarding trip preparations
- Lead a pre-trip meeting

Outdoor Living

This student can:

- Teach students appropriate, safe, and low-impact camping
- Teach & facilitate cooking & nutrition
- Instruct students in Leave No Trace principles

- Manage a group campsite

Safety & Emergency

This student can:

- Demonstrate knowledge of accepted emergency procedures
- Evaluate, and manage potential hazards on a trip, prevent avoidable incidents
- Perform within the scope of their wilderness medicine training to the best of their ability

Leadership

This student can:

- Communicate clearly and effectively with group members and co-instructors
- Understand difference between institutional and personal settings and make decisions based on institutional standards
- Demonstrate excellent safety practices and sound judgment/decision making skills (e.g. acknowledges a lightning hazard and retreats from a peak ascent, scouts for the safest river crossing, acknowledges his/her own limitations on a rock climb and does not lead it)
- Role model outstanding outdoor skills, self care, professionalism, respect, and positivity
- Foster positive group dynamics and a positive, respectful learning environment
- Remain calm and focused in an emergency

Personal/Professional Development

This student:

- Continually develops outdoor, leadership, & technical skills on his/her own time
- Is Westminster College van certified (if 21)
- Has his/her own personal car insurance

SKILL-SPECIFICS:

Rock Climbing

This student can:

- Teach top rope belay certification
- Teach lead belay certification
- Meet industry standards for institutional top rope sport climbing anchor, including a lead climb
- Meet industry standards for institutional top rope traditional gear anchor, including a lead climb
- Manage a sport climbing top rope site
- Manage a traditional gear top rope site

Backpacking

This student can:

- Plan and prepare itinerary and equipment for a backcountry multi-day hiking trip
- Demonstrate topographic map reading skills and compass use

- Safely manage a group of students on a peak ascent
- Safely manage a group of students on a hiking trail

Whitewater

This student can:

- Lead a group of students on a short stretch of water such as the Weber River on rafts and kayaks.
- Plan and prepare an itinerary and equipment for a backcountry multi-day rafting and kayaking trip.
- Competently read and navigate Class 3 rapids.
- Safely manage a group of students on Class 3 rapids.

Director of Outdoor Programs

Date

Director of Fitness, Wellness, and Recreation

Date

Objectives Related to College-wide Learning Goals:

The educational goals of Westminster College are identified on page 6 of *2010-2011 Westminster College Course Catalog*:

- Critical, analytical, and integrative thinking: In participating in and leading outdoor trips, students must demonstrate excellent critical thinking skills. They will continually anticipate and evaluate potentially hazardous situations in the outdoors. In managing risk, students must assess several variables at once in order to make effective decisions with safe outcomes.
- Creative and reflective capacities: Good judgment is the cornerstone of effective outdoor leadership. It is developed through both verbal and written reflection, in group debriefs and on an individual basis. Reflecting on experiences gives students the ability to become better leaders when presented with similar challenges on future trips.
- Leadership, collaboration, and teamwork: Students learn a range of leadership and decision making styles and how to utilize the best method depending on the situation and group dynamics. Through experience in outdoor leadership, students build self awareness and their own leadership and teaching style. Any outdoor expedition involving a group requires collaboration and teamwork to ensure the group's safety and success. Student leaders need strong conflict resolution skills in order to foster the positive and respectful interactions essential to achieving the expedition goal.
- Writing and other communication skills: Students will learn how to communicate clearly with co-instructors and student participants on outdoor trips and keep written logs and reflections of their experience. Marketing trips will also be a key component to this course, and will require effective communication skills to reach the campus audience.

- Global consciousness, social responsibility and ethical awareness: With outdoor recreation comes the responsibility of protecting the natural environment and its limited resources. Students must practice Leave No Trace ethics when traveling and camping in the wilderness.

