



Itinerary Overview

Yosemite, Joshua Tree & San Francisco Outdoor Educator 65 Days (Fall)

In General - Wilderness travel is difficult and rewarding. Arriving physically fit will enhance your experience and ability to do well on the course and ultimately allow you to take full advantage of the expedition. You don't need to have previous backpacking, rock climbing or mountaineering experience. We will teach you skills for wilderness travel—how to pack appropriately, load a backpack, set up tarps, belay, rock climb and navigate using a map and compass.

For those looking to explore careers in the outdoors, a large part of your course will focus on Experiential Education. You'll learn from some of the best in the industry and apply your skills as an educator throughout course. We offer a Wilderness First Responder course, which is necessary to move forward in your outdoor education career.

Course Area

Sierra Nevada Range, California – This mountain range is 400 miles from north to south – a greater length than the Swiss, Italian and French Alps combined! It is filled with granite domes, jagged peaks, alpine lakes and lush meadows. Atop the domes one can view the jagged profiles of the LeConte Divide, the Ritter Range and the Great Western Divide, all containing mountain peaks and passes up to 14,000 feet in elevation. In the sun and moonlight, these peaks glisten and sparkle in such a beautiful way John Muir referred to them as the “Range of Light.”

The stable weather of the summer months continues well into September and makes for warm, sunny days to explore the mountains without mosquitoes or crowds. Fall is the Sierra's secret. Nights are cool and crisp as the first of winter creeps in. Expect daytime temperatures to be in the 60s Fahrenheit with nights in the 30s. Clothing layers are recommended as the first snow can appear at any point in the fall. Quick winter storms may pass through and last a few days before the warm rays of sun return. Due to the Sierra's very low humidity and high elevation, the effects of the sun are extreme. Proper sun protection is extremely important.

During this course, you'll travel on and off-trail through forest and alpine terrain. The trails are high quality. The off-trail routes can be especially challenging as these routes traverse snowfields, scree slopes, boulder fields and alpine passes. The landscape can be demanding, steep and exposed - but for backpacking, climbing and camping there are few places in the world that compare.

We currently use three main course areas in the High Sierra for our Instructor Development Course:: Yosemite National Park, John Muir Wilderness and the Ansel Adams Wilderness.

Joshua Tree, California: This is the High Desert moonscape, the land of granite domes and the namesake of the wild looking Joshua Tree. Rugged granite mountains that have been sculpted by wind and rain have



climbers and hikers visiting from all around the world. Like the Sierra, Joshua Tree in the Fall is the prime time to be there. Temperatures range from 70 degrees during the day, and could drop to 20 or 30 degrees at night. It's difficult to backpack in Joshua Tree because of the lack of freshwater, our Logistics staff make it possible by placing water and food caches around the park to enable extended backcountry travel through this unique wilderness.

San Francisco Bay Area, California: The Bay Area is a mix of city, culture and nature. The urban section of this course provides the opportunity to explore the different neighborhoods and cultures of San Francisco. During the day you'll participate in service projects such as serving food to homeless individuals and maintaining trails in the city's parks. A new challenge will be to navigate the city using the skills learned during the wilderness portion of your course. This is also an opportunity to further develop your skills working with youth as you transition from student to educator yourself. The diverse and rich San Francisco culture offers great opportunities for your Practicum—a chance to use the leadership skills you have learned to facilitate a group of students in their own team-building process.

Training, Main & Final

Fundamental to Outward Bound's educational outcomes is the concept of Training, Main and Final. Our hope is to transfer leadership and decision-making skills over to students through a carefully crafted and intentional progression. Instructors will start off the course by training and teaching you everything you need to know about wilderness travel, risk management and effective teamwork. As the course progresses, instructors will take on more of a 'coaching' role. The intent is to provide a safety net to work through decision-making. If participants demonstrate proficiency in all course elements, participants will have a Final Challenge. Here instructors will give the group autonomy and ownership of their course. Pertinent to an Instructor Development course, it to experience the 'What' of experiential education and to understand the 'Why' behind it.

Overview

Day 1 – You will have a 2 to 3-hour drive from the airport to the High Sierra basecamp. The first day you'll gear up and get to know the team. Group gear like climbing equipment, food, tarps, kitchen equipment and first aid supplies will be divided up amongst group members. With proper planning and packing, your backpack should weigh between 30-40% of your body weight. Pack weight will vary from person to person based on size, stature and physical ability, and generally weighs between 40 to 55 pounds. You'll learn backcountry skills such as how to sleep warm in your sleeping bag and how to cook your group meals over backcountry stoves. All group members will do camp chores like cooking, washing pots, and setting up tarps. The following morning, we'll head to Yosemite National Park first thing!

Alpine Backpacking – The course starts with a backpacking expedition and the basics of wilderness travel. Topics include group travel, gear selection and usage, navigation using map & compass, cooking, weather and hazard assessment, camp craft, communication skills and learning how to work together as a team. During this portion of the course you will travel on established trails and also have the opportunity to travel "cross-country," making your own route where there is no trail. Backpacking does not require the use of technical equipment such as ropes. Your instructors will have a very hands-on approach at this point in



course to train you thoroughly in the skills you will need later on in your expedition. Depending on the itinerary determined by your instructors you may hike anywhere from 3 to 10 miles in a day.

Peak Attempt – Peak attempts are daylong and entail pre-dawn starts. You could wake up as early as 4am. Peak attempts help with terrain management, hazard assessment and weather considerations. For all the effort they require, successful peak attempts are often the most rewarding experiences of course.

Mountaineering - Mountaineering expeditions move through high mountain terrain, typically above tree line. The Sierras are not known for heavy snow in summer but if conditions indicate, you will carry and receive training in snow travel and the use of ice axes. The mountaineering section will build off of the skills acquired during the off-trail travel from the backpacking section and offers more extensive skills training while participants become more competent in order to explore more rugged and challenging terrain. Depending on the skill level of the group, the weather, and other factors, your team may attempt a peak that requires ropes, technical equipment and rock climbing. This will likely be the most physically demanding sections of your semester, with the reward of seeing places few people have seen.

Wilderness First Responder & CPR – During this section of the expedition participants will focus on first aid in a backcountry setting.

Wilderness First Responder (WFR) certification is recognized as the outdoor industry standard for backcountry medicine. At the end of the course, your WFR instructor, not Outward Bound, will make the decision as to whether your skills are sufficient for certification.

The WFR instructors will cover the following topics during your course: patient assessment, basic knowledge of body systems, basic life support, equipment improvisation, environmental medicine, trauma management, evacuation and wilderness rescue. This portion takes place at the Outward Bound base camp in Midpines.

Rock Climbing – Climb with learning various technique including bouldering, face climbs, cracks and potentially multi-pitch climbing in Joshua Tree National Park. Topics covered will include movement over rock, top roping, belaying, knots and anchor building. Your instructors will also teach you about the use of harnesses, helmets and other climbing equipment as well as site assessment and management. This section of course will implement the fundamental skills that will be necessary for the Final Expedition and potentially facilitating a climbing day for participants during the Practicum section.

Urban Expedition - San Francisco is a bustling city of streetlights and people. This city exposes participants to the juxtaposition of wealth and poverty – back alleys and striking bay views, sprinkled with tourist destinations. Continuing expedition style, participants will carry their gear and travel like locals, taking the bus, walking and ferrying to their nightly homes. With the city as the classroom, participants will develop cultural competency and ability to work with diverse populations through discussions and service learning opportunities. As an educator this can be just as challenging as climbing high in the mountains, though necessary to prepare for the practicum and future work in the field of outdoor education.



Service – We encourage service to the environment in the form of leaving campsites cleaner than we find them and practicing Leave No Trace® ethics throughout the course. We coordinate service projects with land managers (US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, local land trusts, etc.) as well as with select social service agencies (nursing homes, hospitals, organic farms, etc.). Expect several days set aside to work directly with one of these organizations. Apart from designated service, one of the most important acts of service is helping your fellow participants.

Town Day – During transition days between course area regions there will be some free time. The Town Day is used to do laundry, run errands, purchase additional items, check email and contact friends and family while simultaneously preparing for the next phase of your course.

Final Expedition – Instructors purposefully and gradually transfer leadership responsibilities culminating with the Final Expedition. If the group has demonstrated the necessary leadership, team problem-solving and wilderness living skills, you may be given the opportunity to travel without your instructors immediately present. Prepping for your Final Expedition will give you a “behind the scenes” perspective of what it takes to operate an organization like Outward Bound and meet the staff who support our programs. Students will be heavily involved in the planning process of their final section and help with packing food and gear for the last sections of the course. You will receive a two-way radio or satellite phone as a means to communicate with your instructors. This is your opportunity to demonstrate all of the skills you have acquired in the previous weeks. Final Expedition can last for one to five days. Many of our participants feel this phase of the course is the most rewarding, as the group learns to work together, problem solve and accomplish a goal independently.

Solo – The solo is an important break from the rigors of the expedition, and a chance to reflect on your experience of the course so far. With sufficient food and equipment you’ll spend time alone at an assigned campsite to rest, reflect and practice the camp craft skills. We choose your solo site to offer as much solitude as possible, but within earshot of other group members for safety. You will not travel during this time and your instructors will check on you periodically. Many participants are initially nervous about solo but most are ready for a break from the group when the time for solo arrives. For Semester programs solo is often progression into the course. For example, you may start with a solo lasting only a few hours and culminate with a full 3-day solo towards the end of your course. Many of our past participants express solo as one of the most powerful elements to their course. This activity may be abbreviated or eliminated if instructors determine the weather, terrain or other factors would not meet the planned outcomes of Solo.

Practicum – This is an opportunity to facilitate a day or overnight experience for a group of local students and test your skills as an Outdoor Educator. You will focus on lesson design and delivery, curriculum progressions and the logistics that go into delivering an impact experience for participants.

Personal Challenge Event – Outward Bound courses typically end with a Personal Challenge Event—a final, individual physical effort. This might take the form of a run or a triathlon-style challenge. Expect to participate in a 6 to 12-mile run.



Final Days – In preparation for your travel back home, the second-to-last afternoon of your course will be spent de-issuing and cleaning Outward Bound gear followed by a special meal and graduation ceremony. Showers will be available during the San Francisco portion on occasion.

Sample Itinerary – The following is an example of what your itinerary may look like. *Your actual course plan will vary according to permitting, weather, student skills and abilities, and instructor planning/assessment.*

Day 1	Arrive at Fresno Airport. Course Start
Day 2-12	Alpine Backpack Yosemite to the Ansel Adams Wilderness (Introductory lessons to backpacking, camp craft, and navigation).
Day 13	Resupply and Transition to Mountaineering Section
Day 14-22	Mountaineering Section in John Muir Wilderness, Technical Peak Attempts
Day 23	Resupply, Transition to High Sierra Basecamp
Day 24-32	Wilderness First Responder Class (WFR)
Day 33	Service & Town Day
Day 34	Transition to Joshua Tree
Day 35-42	Rock Climbing Section
Day 43	Service
Day 44	Preparation for Final Expedition
Day 45-51	Final Expedition & Solo: Desert Backpacking, Joshua Tree
Day 52-53	Transition to San Francisco Bay Area. Service enroute.
Day 54-59	Urban Immersion and Service
Days 60-61	Practicum Prep
Days 62-63	Practicum
Day 64	Personal Challenge Event, clean and de-issue gear, Graduation
Day 65	Transport home. Depart from San Francisco airport.

NOTE: Semester courses are demanding physically and socially. Students who lack motivation or exhibit inappropriate behaviors on course may be expelled. Students who are expelled are not eligible for a refund.

You and your family should be prepared to make a commitment to being in a challenging, formal educational setting for the entire length of the course.