



OUTWARD | costa
BOUND | rica



LEADERSHIP 2012 OBTAINING CREDIT

Salutations



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www.CostaRicaOutwardBound.org





SALUTATIONS

Costa Rica Outward Bound School is an approved, registered academic institution in Costa Rica with over ten years of experience educating students around the world.

Through our program, students are offered credit in Spanish Language, Cultural Anthropology, Natural History, and Recreational Leadership. In addition, students have earned credit in Art, Biology, Economics, Environmental Studies, Folklore, Geography, History, Literature, Philosophy, Medicine, Nutrition, Physical Education, Political Science and Recreational Management and Leadership via independent study through their respective universities.

In order to obtain these credits, students read from various texts in anthropology, natural history, sustainable development, and Spanish language. Moreover, they are exposed to native Costa Rican cultures through village homestays and service projects. Students receive leadership training, as well as certifications required for professionals in the outdoor industry. Ultimately, this experiential learning process teaches students through direct exposure—an exposure that cannot be experienced in a traditional classroom. As a result, Costa Rica Outward Bound credit has been endorsed through a number of academic Universities throughout the United States, Canada, and Costa Rica.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss any aspect of the curriculum at our school.

Sincerely,



Jim Rowe, PhD
Executive Director



Jeff Friend
Communications Director



Meag Tessmann
Admissions





YOUR OPTIONS

Independent Study

If you choose this option, start early! Not all institutions accept this option.

This option is open to everybody. If you are currently enrolled, we highly suggest to ensure credits will transfer before arriving on course. If you're not currently enrolled, you may request a transcript and written review of your performance if you notify your instructor at the beginning of course.

This option is attractive to students who want to define the courses they receive credit for. Usually students work with their adviser to create a project or decide the parameters of a paper to be completed after course in exchange for credit. This is an opportunity that you need to show initiative for and work with your university advisor. We can help you by providing guidance and course information, but you are responsible for arranging the necessities for your credit.

Use the information contained in this packet to help plan your independent study with your academic advisor.

Western State Colorado University (WSCU)

Our partnership with Western State Colorado University is recommended to high school graduates and enrolled college students. It provides students whose educational institute won't accept an independent study a chance to obtain transfer credits.

This option provides schools an official transcript from a US accredited university. The transcript is on a 4.0 grade scale, and credit is earned for Recreation and Outdoor Education 397 (ROE), Outward Bound School.

This option is attractive for students whose insurance requires them to be enrolled in a University full time. WSCU accepts financial aid through the FAFSA.

We want to help you along the way!
Let us know which option you choose.





OUR COURSE

The Costa Rica Outward Bound Leadership Semester Course is specifically designed for students who wish to become outdoor adventure instructors. You will learn to set up belay systems, organize rescues, provide wilderness medical care, guide rafts down world-class rivers, lead groups through the Costa Rican rainforest, and Scuba dive in Bocas del Toro. You will engage with the locals and learn first-hand how to survive in the Costa Rican jungle. Certifications, work experience, and leadership training are integrated into the program to make you a desirable instructor/guide for various organizations throughout the world.

The 65-day course is divided into seven distinct phases: Costa Rica Multi-Element Leadership training, Wilderness First Responder medical course, surf instructor training, whitewater river guide training, waterfront lifeguarding, technical ropes rescue, and Scuba instruction in Panama. Please note that the itinerary may change in sequence, content, or duration for all activities depending on group dynamics, staffing, current weather conditions, and other factors.

Possible Certifications

- Wilderness First Responder (American Red Cross, US DOT, and CROB)
- CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer (American Red Cross)
- Whitewater Rescue Technician (WRT) (Rescue 3 International)
- Technical Rope Rescue: Operations Level (TRRO) (Rescue 3 International)
- Whitewater Raft Guide License Class I-II or III (International Rafting Federation)
- Scuba Diver Certification (NAUI)
- Instructor Judgment Training (Costa Rica Outward Bound)
- Land Instructor Training (Costa Rica Outward Bound)
- Waterfront Lifeguarding (American Red Cross)





PHASES

MULTI-ELEMENT LEADERSHIP TRAINING (10-14 DAYS)

Objective

Successfully lead multiple day backpacking expeditions using hard and soft skills learned.

Topics

- Backpack guiding with camp craft leadership
- Expedition planning and execution
- Instructor judgment training
- Working with adolescents training
- Village homestays and facilitating intercultural exchange
- Costa Rican natural & cultural history for guides
- Soft skills training/group dynamics

During their hike, students have the unique opportunity to experience three types of rainforest first hand as they hike through low, medium, and high elevation rain and cloud forests. Students learn how to identify first, second, and third generation growth rainforests, as well as the stark realities of deforestation.

As they hike, students will spend several nights in the Costa Rica Outward Bound homestay region with families in the rural community of Piedras Blancas. The community is very remote – it can only be reached on foot or horseback. Students are encouraged to participate in the families' daily activities, such as milking cows, making cheese, harvesting corn, rice, beans, sugarcane or pineapples, or helping with whatever activity is taking place at the time.

In addition to the many cultural experiences, students engage in exciting adventure activities. These activities require newly acquired technical skills, attention to safety and teamwork. For example, they will rappel down a 60ft waterfall and learn how to safely set up each belay system. These activities are designed to teach students the value of teamwork, overcoming life challenges, and trust.

The rainforest is an incredible resource for learning about the natural environment. Our local guides explain about the various medicinal and edible plants that the rainforest has to offer. On all of our courses, we try to give more than we take from the rainforest and the communities that we stay with. The semester course contains several days of environmental and community service projects as a way to contribute to the local communities.





WILDERNESS FIRST RESPONDER (7-10 DAYS)

Objective

Recognize and deal with medical and traumatic injuries in a wilderness setting.
Apply skills learned in Costa Rica to any wilderness setting.

Topics

- American Red Cross/US DOT standard curriculum for First Responders
- Additional curriculum focusing on wilderness settings with varied scenarios
- ARC CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer with oxygen administration

Students take an intensive Wilderness First Responder course at the Costa Rica Outward Bound base located in the rainforest, geographically southeast of San Jose.

SURF INSTRUCTOR TRAINING (3-5 DAYS)

Objective

Teach the basics of surfing, regardless of previous experience, to a student.

Topics

- Focus on safety information including managing currents, avoiding rips, etc.
- Curriculum on surfing basics including reading waves, techniques, types of boards and equipment, etiquette, etc.
- Additional information about beach activities and ways to keep students safe, active and engaged when not surfing

WHITewater RAFT GUIDE TRAINING (13-18 DAYS)

Objective

Guide a 14-15 foot raft with paddling clients on class II or III whitewater rivers in Costa Rica or abroad.

Topics

- 3-4 day Whitewater Rescue Technician certification (Rescue 3 International.)
- 9-15 day river guide training with chance to certify with the International Rafting Federation.

River reading, paddle navigation, safety training, hours on the river, and quality instruction from veteran river guides equip students to captain a six person raft through class I, II, & III rapids.





WATERFRONT LIFEGUARD TRAINING (3-5 DAYS)

Objective

Safely assess swimming areas and oversee aquatic activities for groups on lakes, oceans and rivers.

Topics

- Full certification course with the American Red Cross
- Rescues using surf equipment in open ocean setting

Students spend time in both an enclosed pool and the open ocean to ensure all safety skills and techniques are clearly demonstrated and tested in real world conditions.

TECHNICAL ROPES RESCUE (4-6 DAYS)

Objective

Manage various activities including rappels, climbing walls, rock climbing, and rescues involving ropes systems.

Topics

- 4-5 day Rescue 3 International Technical Rope Rescue Operations level course
- Safety systems for expeditioning, rappelling, canyoning, climbing and rescue

NAUI SCUBA DIVER TRAINING (7-10 DAYS)

Objective

Understand basic skills and information necessary to participate in scuba activities with the guidance of a dive master.

Topics

- NAUI Scuba Diver certification course
- Focus on technical theory, oceanography as well as meditative and holistic approaches to the underwater world

Students travel overland from Sixaola to Almirante and then by boat to Bocas del Toro, Panama. Perched on the tip of Isla Colón, Bocas has a population of 3,500 and claims to be the only “wooden town” in Panama, constructed almost exclusively of lumber, with a distinctive colonial architectural style.





OUR PHILOSOPHY

Guiding Educational Philosophies

Costa Rica Outward Bound courses are based on the educational pedagogy of over 50 years of Outward Bound experience and use many principles of Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound, developed at Harvard University. All students participate in group discussions, readings, and activities. Outward Bound courses create an environment for students to learn through personal experience. The pedagogical foundation is one that demands personal reflection, group communication, cultural sensitivity, mental expansion and physical commitment.

Rationale for Academic Credit

This Outward Bound semester course gives the student a safe, supportive environment in which to study the lands and cultures of Central America. Students participating in the course have unique access to the people and places which global debates have focused on for the last four hundred years.

As students spend time in Costa Rica and Panama, their experiences in the wilderness and in local villages push them toward developing not only cognitive skills but also psychomotor and affective skills. For example, as students see direct consequences for their choices while rafting, they strengthen their decision-making process. They learn the importance of addressing local community needs through service projects, the value of effective communication while assisting fellow students rappel down a cliff, and develop an understanding of ecology through hiking through the rainforest. Furthermore, students see first-hand the ramifications international economics have on small village communities and the effects of deforestation.

Cognitive Foci

- Reading of required texts on anthropology, natural history, and sustainable development
- Discussion of tropical ecology, zoology, botany, agriculture, and environmental issues from both scientific and metaphysical perspectives
- Understanding of native Costa Rican cultures through homestays and interviews
- Communication in Spanish

Psychomotor Foci

- Rainforest navigation, travel, and survival
- Whitewater raft captaining and rescue
- Minimal impact camping
- Scuba diving
- Rainforest canopy climbing
- Farming in tropical landscapes
- Rappelling and backpacking

Affective Development (Personal Growth)

- Completing seemingly insurmountable tasks
- Contributing personal skills to group efforts
- Developing leadership skills
- Communicating effectively





COURSE READINGS

Culture/Ecology Books

- Culture Smart! Costa Rica, Jane Koutnik
- Travellers Wildlife Guide, Les Beletsky
- In Focus Costa Rica, Tjabel Daling

Water Phases

- The Complete Whitewater Rafter, Jeff Bennett
- Whitewater Rafting, Graeme Addison
- Whitewater Rescue Technician, Rescue 3 International
- Whitewater Rescue Manual, Walbridge & Sundmacher
- Turtles in Costa Rica – Costa Rica Handbook, Christopher Baker
- “Red Tide and Harmful Algal Blooms,” www.whoi.edu
- NAUI Scuba Diver, NAUI
- NAUI Scuba Diver Workbook, NAUI
- “Introduction to the Hydrosphere,” www.physicalgeography.com
- A Deadly Force, Daniel Pendick
- Open Water Lifesaving, The United States Lifesaving Association
- Lifeguarding, The American Red Cross

Land Phases

- Leadership the Outward Bound Way, Outward Bound USA
- AERIE Wilderness Medicine, AERIE, 9th Edition
- Wilderness First Responder, 3rd Edition, Buck Tilton
- The Field Guide of Wilderness & Rescue Medicine, Jim Morrissey with David Johnson
- Technical Rope Rescue: Operations Level, Rescue 3 International
- Risk Management for Outdoor Leaders, Drew Leemon & Tod Schimelpfenig
- OB Instructor’s Guide to Managing Adolescents, Outward Bound, 3rd edition
- CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer, American Red Cross
- “Costa Rica and Coffee,” www.missiongrounds.com
- “Tropical Rainforest,” www.blueplanetbiomes.org
- “In the Rainforest,” Barbara Taylor
- “The Socio-Environmental Problems of Banana Plantations in Costa Rica,” Gerardo Vargas
- “Some Costa Rican Ranchers are Thinking Green,” www.pbs.org
- “Does Fair Trade Coffee Lift Growers out of Poverty or Simply Ease our Guilty Conscience?,” Jill Richardson
- “Facts about Beef,” www.ran.org
- “Rates of Rainforest Loss,” www.ran.org





Many US schools do not accept transfer credits from non-US institutions. This option provides these schools with an official transcript from a US accredited university. The transcript will show up to 10 credits on a 4.0 grade scale under course Recreation and Outdoor Education 397 (ROE), Outward Bound School. It is not guaranteed that your school will accept these credits. Please confirm in writing with your academic advisor before registering with WSCU that credits will transfer.

Additional Costs

WSCU charges \$125 per credit. WSCU accepts financial aid through the FAFSA. For any school information questions, please contact WSCU Extended Studies at 970.943.2885 or email extendedstudies@western.edu.

This option is attractive for students whose insurance requires them to be enrolled in a University full time.

Applying

Once you have enrolled in an Outward Bound course you can register for credits through Extended Studies at Western State Colorado University by filling out their registration packet available at:

www.western.edu/academics/extended-studies/files/obpacket%20Sep%201-%202009.pdf

Mail the completed paperwork to:

Extended Studies
600 N. Adams, Taylor Hall 303
Western State Colorado University
Gunnison, CO 81231

Fax: (970) 943-7068





INDEPEDENT STUDY

Work with your academic advisor to design a project to learn more about topics that are intriguing to you and that are relevant during your Outward Bound course. We encourage students to be creative and original in choosing a topic, research methods, and final presentation.

At the end of course, we will provide a pass/fail transcript for 12 credits in Spanish Language, Cultural Anthropology, Natural History, and Recreational Leadership, as well as a written review of your performance on course.

The receipt and transfer of all academic credit is at the discretion of the school, college or university you attend (or plan to attend). Making arrangements for academic credit is your responsibility and should be arranged prior to course. We highly recommend that you document all visits to the your academic advisor, registrar or head of school and secure any agreements that are made regarding credit transfer in writing.

Suggested Steps

1. Consider subjects you will enjoy discovering more about while on the course.
2. Present these specific topics to professors from your home university, particularly professors who can give you feedback about those topics and who can help you get university credit for the course.
3. For university credit, you often need a sponsor (usually a professor or advisor). Discuss with the sponsor the basic principles of Outward Bound, the semester course, and the independent project that you want to pursue. Use this packet as a resource! It is best to have your ideas and plans well developed but flexible enough to accommodate suggestions and/or requirements from your sponsor.
4. Before starting the course, establish a contract containing the type and number of credits that will be awarded. The contract should include your sponsor's and institution's expectations regarding project presentation and evaluation.





Sample Topics

Anthropology

Personally observe and interview people from Costa Rican rainforest cultures, rural Nicaraguan cultures, and Panamanian Afro-Caribbean and indigenous culture.

Art

Study local arts and find the correlation between artistic expression and cultural beliefs.

Biology

Document ways that local people use traditional plants in the rainforest. Keep a journal of different species seen in course areas. Identify them in field or upon return.

Communication

Analyze communication styles within the group and their results. Explore how communication styles vary according to environment, stress, sense of urgency, time of day, or other factors and the impacts of the different communication styles. Track the four stages of group development.

Economics

Compare the advantages and disadvantages of a diverse local economy, such as Nicaragua's, versus a more export-based economy like that of Costa Rica.

Environmental Studies

Research local environmental conservation efforts.

Folklore

Record and compare the local folklore of Costa Rica, Panama, and Nicaragua.

Geography

Learn about El Nino and its climatological, societal and economic consequences. Discover the physical geography's effects on ecology or human geography.

History

Interview modern day indigenous persons and experts in the field of indigenous history.

Literature

Read and analyze literature by local writers from the three countries. Read the works of adventurers that came to these areas before you.

Medicine

Compare the concept of health and healing in indigenous cultures with Western medicine. Study medicinal values of the forest. Research Travel/ Mountaineering Medicine, First-Aid, or local tropical diseases.

Nutrition

Keep a journal of your daily food intake and how your body reacts to it. Compare the diets of the different cultures we visit.

Physical Education/Exercise Science

Keep a log of your training before the course and a log of activities and responses your body has to activities during the course.

Philosophy

Experience how the course's and modern Outward Bound philosophies correspond to principles in Plato's Republic. Discuss nature as an educator in its own right.

Political Science

Compare and contrast Costa Rican, Panamanian & Nicaraguan political systems. Consider government and community action regarding environmental laws or economic development.

Recreation Management and Safety

Discuss forms of risk management used in this course and benefits surrounding activities with perceived high risk and low actual risk such as rock climbing and rafting.





Obtaining & Recording Data

Artwork

Art is a powerful means of expression. Study local art or produce your own. Carry watercolors or other transportable art supplies with you to express your experiences.

Interviewing

Daily contact with local cultures will allow interviews in both English and Spanish. For non-Spanish speakers, an interpreter will generally be available. Bringing a small tape recorder may be helpful.

Journal writing

Record your thoughts, ideas, experiences, and perceptions in your journal. This documents what you're learning and gives you the opportunity to expand upon those ideas.

Photography

Pictures are an excellent way to capture and present people, places and events. If you choose to use photographs, please use consideration and sensitivity toward individuals you are taking pictures of, as taking photographs may sometimes be inappropriate. Also be aware that many of the areas we travel through are rainforests, so you will need a water-proof camera case. Insurance is also recommended for your valuables.

Reading

Find out about relevant print resources before and during the course.

Sample Semester Presentations

Indigenous peoples of the Rainforest

How do they live, what do they eat, unique threats to their communities, sustainable products in the rainforest

Communication and conflict resolution

Passive aggressive and assertive behaviors, conflict definition and why it happens, how to deal with conflict within a group, four stages of group development

History of Outward Bound

founder Kurt Hahn, Kurt Hahn's teaching philosophy, birth of Outward Bound, purpose of Outward Bound, Costa Rica Outward Bound history

Health and well-being

importance of good health in the field, sickness that occur in the jungle and how to prevent it, nutrition, stress, reality therapy

Navigation

map reading, compass parts and reading the compass, orienteering lesson, shooting and reading bearings, magnetic variation and measuring distances, living without a watch

Rainforest conservation and the environment

What is conservation, what part does Costa Rica Outward Bound play to protect the rainforest, rainforest destruction-natural, and human impact, how plantations affect the environment, endangered animals such as the titi monkey and leatherback turtle?

History of Costa Rica

economy, ethnicity and identity, environmental and ecotourism

Meteorology

climates in Costa Rica, high and low pressure fronts, cloud identification, forecasting, storms, lightning and danger in the jungle

Rainforest biology

plants, mammals, birds, rainforest layers

