

Outdoor Leadership Institute Program Policies

Individual Fitness Evaluation

In order to ensure that each individual is prepared for the rigors of backpacking, participants must complete a pre-trip fitness assessment and application. The unique dynamics of backcountry exploration are such that minimum fitness criteria must be established to ensure group safety and efficacy. OLI trip leaders reserve the right to make a final decision regarding a student's preparedness for the experience. The fitness assessment must be passed at least two months prior to trip departure.

Group Size and Dynamics

Groups will be limited to 10 total students, and 2-4 instructors, although certain locations and itineraries may require the group size to be less. All groups, unless specifically designated otherwise, will be co-educational. The ideal gender ratio would be 1:1, however in the case this is not possible, at least two students of each gender are needed to maintain the co-educational nature of the trip. Simply put, a trip with only one male or one female student is not advised, regardless of the individual's ability or willingness to participate. The unique experiences involved in backcountry living are best facilitated for teens when they have at least one same gender peer to learn with. Sharing the responsibility for a tent and the challenge of living together in it is just one example of how this dynamic is experienced.

Advanced Trips

At times, Providence may offer invitations to students for advanced level experiences. Due to the extreme demands of those trips, it is up to the discretion of the trip leader(s) to determine appropriate participants and encourage their participation accordingly. At a minimum, these students must be OLI Alumni AND have received a grade of B or higher on their OLI student evaluation. Previous completion of an OLI trip or other backpacking experiences does not entitle a student to participation on advanced trips.

Knives/Weapons

Students may get approval from the trip leader to bring a small pocketknife or multi-tool for camping related tasks, although a knife is not necessary or even advised. No weapons of any kind are permitted on the trip.

Portable Electronic Devices

Students may not bring personal portable electronic devices into the backcountry. All cell phones will be locked in the vehicle while the group is backpacking.