



2023 SPRING GAP SEMESTER

PROGRAM INFORMATION

At Wilderness Adventures, we believe that summer should never end. We love the learning, growing and adventuring that comes with a summer season in the outdoors. In the spring and fall of each year, we are proud to offer more exciting adventures with the Wilderness Adventures Leadership Institute (WALI). Designed for college aged students yearning for an impactful learning opportunity, our (WALI) Gap semester programs will challenge you in new and exciting ways. Spend your semester learning and improving your outdoor skills, expanding your leadership capabilities, exploring some of the most beautiful wilderness areas in our country, and gaining certifications that you will use for the rest of your life. Join like-minded students in an adventure that takes you away from the virtual, and into the real world.

Trip Details

Start: February 13, 2023

End: April 23, 2023

Start Location: San Antonio, TX

End Location: Salt Lake City, UT

Length: 70 days

Price: \$15,325

Age: 17-22 years old (must have completed high school)

States Visited: Texas, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico

Activities: Backpacking, Canoeing, Whitewater Rafting, Leadership Education

Certifications Earned on Program: Wilderness First Responder (WFR) and CPR/First Aid, Leave No Trace (LNT) Trainer Certification

Lodging: Camping, students will have the opportunity to shower and do laundry after each course section

What's Included?

- ✔ All activities, lodging and travel upon arrival
- ✔ All food throughout the duration of the trip
- ✔ A Wilderness Adventures t-shirt
- ✔ Reading materials and supplies for course study

Examples of Past Teaching Resources from WALI Programs

- ✔ Outdoor Leadership: Theory and Practice - Martin, Cashel, Wasgstaff, Bruenig
- ✔ A Message to Garcia - Hubbard
- ✔ The 5 Dysfunctions of a Team - Lencioni
- ✔ The Leader Who is Hardly Known
- ✔ The Rheti Test: The Enneagram Institute
- ✔ The Earth Speaks - Van Matre
- ✔ Desert Solitaire: A Season in the Wilderness - Abbey

Activities

Canoe Big Bend National Park

Your course will begin with orientation in one of our nation's most pristine and least visited National Parks: Big Bend. Day hikes and group activities will abound as you acclimate to your surroundings and your fellow teammates, and you learn critical outdoor skills necessary for the adventure ahead. Following this multi-day orientation, you will then set off on a canoeing adventure through the national park. With the Rio Grande guiding your way, you will have an extended backcountry adventure as you experience the very best of the Chihuahuan Desert.

Backpack Arizona

From the canoeing and hiking adventures of Big Bend in Texas, we will head north to test our backcountry skills on foot. Backpacking is a springtime activity in Arizona, where the desert will be coming to life. Spend 8 days exploring national forests, marveling at the desert landscape and becoming proficient in the outdoor practice of backpacking.

Walk Where They Walked - Understanding the Ancient Peoples of the Southwest

A critical learning objective of this course will be to understand the ancient peoples that lived in this region. Through exploration, hiking, visiting national monuments and historical parks, we will study the ancient Anasazi people and those that came after them.

Canoe Southern Utah's Canyon Country

As we learn about the ancient people of the Southwest, we will also take our knowledge on an extended backcountry adventure down the Green River in Utah to explore Labyrinth Canyon. The whispers of the ancient people will draw you in this 7 day backcountry adventure. There you might see ancient dwellings and petroglyphs from times long gone. Towering canyon walls and this unique desert ecosystem will excite your senses as you paddle from one river camp to the next.

Attain Your Wilderness First Responder (WFR) Certification

This 74-hour course will be conducted by Wilderness Medicine of Utah, a long-time partner of WA. The course will cover a wide range of topics relating to medical emergencies in the wilderness and decision making, as well as practical simulations. Students will earn their WFR and CPR certification, both valid for 2 years.

Backpack in Grand Staircase Escalante

One of our national treasures is the Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument. Here we will have an opportunity to do a classic backpacking route through the monument. This ecosystem will provide an amazing opportunity to learn about the flora and the fauna of the region.

Explore Canyonlands and Arches National Park

Southern Utah provides amazing opportunities for learning and personal discovery. Canyonlands and Arches National Park will become our playground for a portion of the trip, when we will be seeing the awe-inspiring sites of the region. This ecosystem will stun the senses and leave an indelible impression on each of us. As Edward Abbey says:

"The beauty of Delicate Arch explains nothing, for each thing in its way, when true to its own character, is equally beautiful. If Delicate Arch has any significance it lies, I will venture, in the power of the odd and unexpected to startle the senses and surprise the mind out of their ruts of habit, to compel us into a reawakened awareness of the wonderful-that which is full of wonder."

Whitewater Raft Cataract Canyon

Put an exclamation mark on your 70 day adventure with a multi-day whitewater rafting trip through the fast water of Cataract Canyon. Having mastered the flatwater of Big Bend and Labyrinth Canyon, now you will have the opportunity to learn the skill of whitewater rafting. Spring water flows will make for an exciting 5 days of fun and exhilaration as we conquer well known class III-V rapids.

Participate in a Place/Activity-based Leadership Curriculum

Our program will provide an amazing education in outdoor leadership. Students, through their activities and the skills they learn and practice along the way, will become masters of outdoor skills. Still, outdoor education is not our only goal. Our students receive texts and readings that will become the themes of their course. It is our hope that they will grow through group work, challenging discussion, personal reflection and a capstone project that demonstrates the growth they have achieved during their semester with us.

Application Process

1. Submit an online application.

Note: A deposit is due with upon submission of the online application.

2. Send the following to will@wildernessadventures.com:

1. Email Subject Line: "Full Name: Spring Gap Semester"

2. Two letters of recommendation. These will be waived for WA alumni.

3. Statement of Interest: Why are you interested in joining this group? What do you bring to the group? What do you hope to gain out of the experience?

3. Admissions Interview: Schedule a 45 minute video interview online with our Gap Program Coordinator.

Criteria for Acceptance

- ✔ The want and desire to be on the trip
- ✔ A track record of being a great teammate
- ✔ An interest in connecting with others and learning more about yourself
- ✔ A commitment to being a positive and productive member of the community

Questions?

We are here for you! Please do not hesitate to give us a call at 307-733-2122 or send an email to will@ to address any questions or concerns!