

Spring 2005

Dear Member of the Class of 2009,

Welcome to the Honors College at the University of Oklahoma! The Outdoor Adventure Program would like to help introduce you to the University by offering you the opportunity to participate in the Outdoor Adventure First-Year Trip. This six-day backpacking trip runs from Thursday, August 4 through Thursday, August 11. The purpose of the trip is for you to meet other members of your class before New Sooner Orientation, learn about OU, and start your four years at OU with some new friendships. We hope you can join us. Remember, the program is for all incoming honors freshmen. Even if you have no hiking or camping experience, we have a trip you will enjoy and a new group of friends to meet.

Trip Dates and Activities: This year the trips will run from **Thursday, August 4 through Thursday, August 11. Check-in for the First-Year Trip is from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Thursday** where you will meet your leaders and the other members of your group and prepare for your trip. Any students who will not be able to arrive by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday or who need transportation from the airport such as students flying in from out of state or country should contact us to make special arrival arrangements. This year our trip will travel to the Pecos Wilderness in New Mexico. Students travel from OU by bus. You will find out the specific group and location you have been assigned to when you arrive on campus. The trip will end on Thursday, August 11, and groups will typically return to campus in the morning. Ladies will return from the trip in time for the start of sorority rush.

No Previous Experience Required: The goal of the First-Year Trip is to help you settle in at OU by making new friends and learning about the University. You do **not** need to have any previous outdoor or camping experience in order to participate. Every crew is led by both male and female OA Leaders who are OU students and will be able to teach you all the skills you need to know to be comfortable in the outdoors for the week.

Physical Condition: All OA trips are active and fun. We offer trips at levels of physical activity so that we can provide an experience that is comfortable for everyone. To determine the level of physical activity for each trip we look at factors like how many miles a day of hiking and how flat or hilly the area is. Your answers about your physical condition on the application will help us place you in a trip that will be at the right level for you.

Cost and Financial Aid: The cost of the trip is \$325.00, which covers all trip expenses (food, equipment, and transportation). The Honors College is committed to making sure that the First-Year Trip is available to all members of the Class of 2009. Participants may make two payments. A nonrefundable deposit of \$125 must be sent with your application by May 31. The remaining \$200 is due June 30. Financial aid is also available. Any student who is receiving financial aid

from the University is eligible for financial aid for the First-Year Trip. To apply for financial aid, simply check the box on the application form and do **not** enclose any payment. We will review your request with the Financial Aid Office and let you know in early-July about your request. The amount of your aid award is based on the amount of aid you are receiving from the University.

International Students: Outdoor Adventure encourages students from abroad to participate in the First-Year Trip. Your presence adds to the diversity and the learning experience of the trip and is a wonderful opportunity to share your rich experiences with other OU students.

Students with Differing Abilities: Outdoor Adventure trips can often accommodate students with differing abilities such as hearing impairments, visual impairments, or mobility limitations. Please contact Dr. Julia Ehrhardt at juliae@ou.edu to discuss your particular needs and trip possibilities.

What You Need to Bring: There is very little equipment you will need other than personal clothing and lightweight hiking boots. You will also need a synthetic-fill sleeping bag with a nylon shell (no cotton sleeping bags) and an internal or external frame backpack. If possible, please borrow these items from a friend or relative. If you do not have either a sleeping bag or a backpack, Outdoor Adventure can provide them on a **very limited** basis. There is a space on the application form to indicate if you need either a backpack or a sleeping bag.

Application Forms: Download application forms at <http://www.ou.edu/oa/ft/fytapp.pdf>. Send the **Application**, signed by you and your parent along with your payment, to Outdoor Adventure. Unless you are requesting financial aid, be sure to enclose a check or money order for \$325.00 (or your first payment of \$125) payable to "OU Foundation". **Applications are due May 31, 2005.** Due to limited space, we suggest you return your application as soon as possible.

An informational packet is available on line, with specific information on what items to bring, where and when to arrive, and other important information. A second letter will be sent as a confirmation for your participation in the program. If you do not receive this second letter by July 1, please contact us to confirm that we received your application. You can also check on the web site around July 1 to see that you are on the list of participants (www.ou.edu/oa/ft/). If enrollment is filled, we will notify you, and place you on our waiting list.

Please return your application to:

**Outdoor Adventure Program
First-Year Trip
1300 Asp Ave.
Norman, OK 73019**

We hope that you will join us in August! If you have questions about the program, please feel free to contact us at oa@ou.edu or at one of the e-mails listed below. We look forward to seeing you in the fall. Have a great summer!

Sincerely,

Chelsea Baker
First-Year Trip Coordinator
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Dr. Julia Ehrhardt
Faculty Advisor
juliae@ou.edu