Questions:
Q: Who participates?
A: Last year incoming Honors College students participated in three different trips. This included students from 15 different states and varying economic backgrounds.

Q: What if I have never been camping before?
A: Do not worry! Most of the participants have never been camping before and students discover that they really enjoy the independence of hiking and camping as a group. On the trip, your leaders will teach you all the basic skills you will need to be self-sufficient.

Q: What about Financial Aid?
A: The First-Year Trip is open to all students. Financial aid may be requested by any student who is receiving aid from the University. If you wish to apply for aid, please check the box on the application form. You will be notified later about the amount of your award. The amount of aid is based on the amount of aid you receive from the University.

Q: Do I need any special equipment?
A: OA provides all the group camping equipment and can provide backpacks and sleeping bags on a limited basis to those who need them. You will need to bring personal clothing and lightweight hiking boots.

Q: What kind of shape do I need to be in?
A: The FYT offers a variety of trip for different levels of fitness. We will place you in the most appropriate trip for based on the information in your application form. We encourage everyone to engage in some type of regular physical activity in preparation for the trip.

Q: What is the Special Needs?
A: Outdoor Adventure is for everyone! We will make every effort to accommodate a variety of dietary needs such as vegetarian or kosher students. If you have any questions about special needs please email us at

Lao Tzu
A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.
Outdoor Adventure

OA often becomes a lasting part of the Sooner experience. For many students, friendships made on the First-Year Trip last all four years. As Jeff Carlen-Landy put it, “Going on my First-Year Trip was a really unique experience for me in so many ways. Not only did I have a great time backpacking (for my first time ever!), but I met a lot of cool people who have become good friends.” Another goal of the First-Year Trip experience is to teach outdoor skills focusing on safety and an understanding of the natural world.

The beauty of the outdoors and the small group size of 8-10 participants and 3 upper-class leaders provide an atmosphere for developing close friendships and group cooperation. The First-Year Trip introduces you to being a part of a supportive community. It is your first opportunity to interact closely with your new classmates from a wide variety of backgrounds while hiking anywhere from 6-10 miles a day (~5-6 hours) in some of the most gorgeous landscape on earth, the mountains of the Sangre de Cristo Range in the Pecos Wilderness of northern New Mexico.

A Day on FYT

Rolling out of your sleeping bag into the crisp morning air, you leave the tent that kept you warm and dry last night. After a quick breakfast you pack up and head out. Each day brings new vistas along the trail. Lunch might be a chance to talk about how you spent your summer so far, or learning about what life at OU is like.

Several miles and a few rest stops later, you get to your next campsite. After setting up camp, you can practice your culinary skills cooking dinner (from chicken fajitas to spaghetti) and maybe end with cheesecake for dessert. You can learn an incredible amount about a group of people, and yourself, by living and working with them everyday.

You never really know someone until you have sweated and laughed with them while striving for a mutual goal. After a relaxed evening discussion as the stars shine overhead, you crawl into your sleeping bag for a good night’s rest so you can repeat it all the next day. If only all of college could be so care free.

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First-Year Trip Participant

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First-Year Trip Participant

The Outdoor Adventure Program

History

Since 2004, the First-Year Trip has been the first Sooner experience for many energetic incoming Honors College students at the University of Oklahoma. During the year students continue to participate in a range of different activities that OA offers and interact with a vast array of people in the university environment.

Guide Training

All our guides are drawn from the pool of interested OA members that come from a variety of backgrounds and interests. A highly selective application process is used to select our guides. Those chosen must compete a rigorous training program that includes backpacking skills, wilderness first aid, leadership, and safety management. Only those that are found totally competent are allowed to become First-Year Trip Guides. All guides selected are well versed in wilderness skills and qualities that ensure success in the college environment.

Special Needs

Outdoor Adventure is for everyone who wants to participate. We can accommodate a variety of special needs. We can also accommodate special dietary needs such as vegetarian or kosher students. If you have any questions about special needs please email us at oa@ou.edu.

Outdoor Adventure would love to have you join for this wonderful experience. Come begin your journey into college with us!