

MOST PEOPLE NEVER GET TO EXPERIENCE CAMPING DOZENS OF MILES INTO THE BACKCOUNTRY UNDER THE STARS NEAR THE GLOW OF A CAMPFIRE LISTENING TO FELLOW STUDENTS SING. THOUGH IT IS AN ARDUOUS ADVENTURE, THERE IS A PART OF YOU THAT NEVER WANTS TO LEAVE IT BEHIND WHEN YOU FINISH.



—Joseph Fredriksson, '17
Director of Student Life

21 DAYS IN THE WILD

Every student at Wyoming Catholic begins in the same way: a 21-day wilderness expedition in the Rocky Mountains. This intense experience helps students grow in wonder, grow in virtue as they push themselves out of their comfort zone, and grow as a community as they overcome challenges together. Their stint in the wilderness gives students the satisfaction of summiting 13,000-ft. peaks and hiking over 100 miles with all their equipment and food on their own backs. In addition to establishing the foundation of the leadership portion of the program, this expedition also serves as one of the most innovative college orientation programs in the country. Students learn more about themselves in three weeks than many others learn in four years. Perhaps even more tantalizing is the notion that this is only the beginning: students will go into the wilderness for at least two other weeks each subsequent year. For the 21-day trip, students are divided into small, separate male and female groups led by instructors from Wyoming Catholic's own COR (Catholic Outdoor Renewal) Program. A priest also accompanies each group to offer the sacraments.



“ IN MY EXPERIENCE THE GOAL OF THE OUTDOOR PROGRAM IS TO TEACH YOU HOW TO BE HUMAN, FROM THE OUTSIDE IN. ALL OF US NEED TO BE TAUGHT HOW TO BE HUMAN. SOME OF US NEED TEACHING FROM THE OUTSIDE IN, SOME FROM THE INSIDE OUT. WITH THE COMBINATION OF OUTDOOR PROGRAM AND ACADEMICS, WYOMING CATHOLIC GIVES US BOTH. ”

—Marietta Mortensen, '25



Wyoming
Catholic College

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OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP *at*



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WHY THE OUTDOORS?

There is something more prior to books that forms our imagination. The wilderness, or “God’s First Book,” is the first subject of our students’ study; they immerse themselves in it and learn its lessons both through hard knocks and through silent contemplation of its beauty. The wilderness is both unforgiving and untamed, which forms

prudence and courage, and it is the vessel

that contains, undiluted, God’s created beauty. It is, therefore, the perfect

first teacher for those who seek virtue, wisdom, and God. Freshmen begin their college experience with a three-week backpacking trip before classes begin; their second semester



starts with a week of winter camping where they ski, build ice chapels, sleep in quinzees, and learn to love the snow. Each subsequent year, every student spends at least two weeks in the wilderness, on the water, on ropes, in sun and rain and snow, discovering their strengths and weaknesses, as well as taking a horsemanship course. In the course of all these physical activities, students develop hand-eye coordination, physical awareness, and risk-management skills.

This unique outdoor education has five key goals: (1) spiritual transformation through encounter with reality, (2) character formation of students in the adversity of the wilderness, (3) leadership development through learning to lead trips, (4) authentic friendship as they minister to each other, and (5) skill acquisition by mastering technical skills like map and compass navigation. Students also learn leadership theory, concepts, and models in the classroom, matching them with hands-on experience in the challenging backcountry environment.

**A DOZEN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES
ARE OFFERED EACH SEMESTER
IN FIVE STATES, INCLUDING...**



KAYAKING



**MOUNTAIN
BIKING**



BACKPACKING



SKIING



ROCK CLIMBING



CANYONEERING