

ACADEMIC PROFILE

The Outdoor Academy is an accredited, academic semester school for 10th and select 11th graders. Accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) certifies that the school meets curricular and institutional standards of excellence, and that credits earned at The Outdoor Academy are honored at secondary schools and colleges throughout the country. This unique, semester-long program offers the opportunity for academic enrichment and personal growth within an intellectually rigorous and nurturing small community.

The Outdoor Academy distinguishes students for college and lifelong learning. Students who have attended the program have later enrolled at prestigious colleges and universities, including Bates, Bowdoin, Brown, Cal Tech, Cambridge, Colorado College, Dartmouth, Davidson, Duke, Middlebury, Oberlin, Reed, Smith, Stanford, Swarthmore, UNC, Wellesley, and Wesleyan, among others.

Arising from a long tradition of experiential education at Eagle's Nest Foundation, we combine a college preparatory curriculum with environmental education, regional studies, arts programming, and outdoor leadership training. The Outdoor Academy accepts up to 35 students to attend for one semester – fall or spring. In a close-knit community, students and faculty develop a sense of responsibility and generosity. Here everyone pitches in to make hard work rewarding, studies challenging and friendships real.

The Outdoor Academy takes advantage of its setting in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of Western North Carolina. Classes in English, mathematics, science, history, environmental studies, foreign language, visual and performing arts, and music are taught both in the classroom and in the forest. Our outdoor program teaches hiking, backpacking, canoeing, rock climbing, and caving as time permits.

School Calendar and Classroom Time: One semester is generally sixteen weeks in length. All classes meet the equivalent of five hours per week. Regular classes meet Monday through Friday in 45, 60, or 90-minute time blocks, depending on the subject. Saturdays provide time to work in the arts, developing independent hands-on projects. The number of class days per semester is approximately 90.

Admissions Information: Over the past decade, The Outdoor Academy has enrolled over 500 high school sophomores, along with a smaller number of juniors. We have worked with students from over 200 public and private schools, as well as some who are normally home-schooled. Admissions decisions are based on an applicant's motivation, intellectual curiosity, academic record, and commitment to hard work. Students who attend The Outdoor Academy are highly motivated and are eager to be challenged academically. We seek students who have demonstrated self-determination in their academic work. Those who apply generally express a desire to live and learn in a close, caring community, set in the rich natural world of the Appalachian Mountains.

Curriculum: All students take the following academic courses:

English: Writing the Landscape

Natural Science: Field Biology of the Southern Appalachians

*Mathematics: Algebra II, Geometry, Pre-Calculus, Trigonometry,
Advanced Math, Integrated Math, or other*

French (levels I-IV) or Spanish (levels I-IV)

(Other languages may be available through private arrangement.)

Environmental Seminar or World History

Physical Education and Outdoor Leadership

Art, Music, and Appalachian Craft (students select among half and full semester offerings)

In addition, students participate in *Work Crew, Community Service, and Wilderness Leadership Activities*. Students receive community service hours for their volunteer work on campus and in the larger community.

Second Languages and Mathematics: Since students come to The Outdoor Academy from a variety of academic backgrounds; they are carefully screened for appropriate placement. Each applicant's regular Math or second language teacher completes a detailed assessment form during the enrollment process. These forms ensure that comparable material will be covered while at The Outdoor Academy. This is essential to preparing a healthy transition back home for each student. Our small class sizes and regular student-teacher contact outside of class enable us to challenge each student at his/her level of aptitude and prior knowledge.

Honors: For most courses, honors credit is available to applicants who are normally enrolled in honors or advanced placement classes at their home school, though we do not offer advanced placement credits. Students seeking honors credit should indicate this during the enrollment process.

Physical Education, Work Crew, and Wilderness Activities: Students earn a Physical Education credit through regular participation in sports activities and our wilderness leadership program. Specific activities include rock climbing, whitewater paddling, backpacking, Ultimate Frisbee, soccer, basketball, volleyball, and swimming. In addition, all students participate in Work Crew for up to five hours each week. During Work Crew, students and faculty work side-by-side on service activities and important community jobs such as gardening, trail maintenance, and splitting firewood. Student transcripts reflect the number of hours they have devoted to work crew and other forms of community service.

Standardized Tests: The PSAT and SAT are available to students upon request and are administered at our local high school. Those requiring special accommodations in taking the test must present documentation during the enrollment process or on opening day. Documentation must be obtained through the College Board.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all classes. Occasional exceptions are made for illness or family commitments. Family plans that interfere with class attendance should be arranged with the school administration well in advance. Any student who is unable to meet his or her academic commitments at The Outdoor Academy will be asked to leave the program.

Grading: The Outdoor Academy uses the following grade scale:

A+ = 97, 98, 99, 100

A = 93, 94, 95, 96

A- = 90, 91, 92

B+ = 87, 88, 89

B = 83, 84, 85, 86

B- = 80, 81, 82

C+ = 77, 78, 79

C = 73, 74, 75, 76

C- = 70, 71, 72

D+ = 67, 68, 69

D = 63, 64, 65, 66

D- = 60, 61, 62

F = 0 - 59

This information is provided to each sending school along with student transcripts at the conclusion of the semester.