How to Use This Text

The Adirondack Semester program is unique, and is therefore sure to be different from anything you have experienced thus far in your educational career. This text is meant to prepare you for surprises you would otherwise not anticipate, such as co-ed living arrangements. *The Adirondack Semester staff ask and expect you to read this handbook thoroughly prior to your arrival at Expedition Briefing.*
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**Weekly Schedule**

**Calendar Key**
- Blue writing refers to Capstone Internship Activities.
- Orange writing refers to activities that are just for fun.
- Green writing refers to Community Activities.
- Black writing refers to integral programming.
- Red writing refers to important logistical reminders.

**N.B.:** Our program is dynamic, and all printed schedules should be considered tentative.

**Discretionary Time**
- Sunday: Discretionary Time
- Monday: Woodworking
- Tuesday: Woodworking

**Community Activities**
- Wednesday: Natural History & Ecology of Adks
- Thursday: MORE/Symposium
- Friday: Conservation in Protected Areas
- Saturday: Adirondack Outings

**Natural History & Ecology Cont.**
- Wednesday: Natural History & Ecology Cont.
- Thursday: Town Run every other week
- Friday: Conservation Cont.
- Saturday: And Skills Development

**Creative Expressions of Nature**
- Tuesday: Creative Expressions of Nature
- Thursday: Community Meeting
- Friday: Occasional Entertainers
- Saturday: Occasional Entertainers
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Mission Statement & Defining Principles

The mission of the Adirondack Semester is to enable students to study nature and human relationships with nature through academic classes enriched by direct experience.

The Mission statement is supported by eight Defining Principles. These Principles inform the Semester’s programming, academics, operations and lifestyle. They are to:

- Encourage deeper engagement with the natural world through immersion in a location with wilderness qualities, relevant coursework and extracurricular activities.
- Cultivate a positive living and learning community comprised of students and staff based upon shared labor, curiosity, and experiences.
- Commit to engaging in a materially simple lifestyle.
- Promote and work towards best Sustainable Practices by minimizing environmental impacts.
- Foster a critical review and use of technologies that do not distract from immersion within wild nature and the Arcadian community.
- Explore and understand critical environmental issues.
- Introduce the basic outdoor skills necessary to recreate in wild nature.
- Critically and creatively reflect upon ADK Semester practices and values.

The Expedition

Each Adirondack Semester begins with a 12 day canoeing expedition led by the Assistant Directors in the Adirondack wilderness. The expedition tends to be a highlight of the Semester. We start our semester long journey together with a literal journey for a variety of reasons. An extended backcountry trip provides us with the perfect backdrop to get to know one another and allows us to work as a team right from the outset. It also offers us an ideal classroom to begin the academic course taught by the Assistant Directors, Modern Outdoor Recreational Ethics (MORE). This trip also serves as an introduction to the deep woods of Northern New York for many of our students who previously may have only explored the Park on day trips. Our route will take us along rivers inhabited by otters and eagles, through Adirondack towns, past abandoned log-
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ging camps and into lakes used for many types of recreation. Many of the topics introduced will set the stage for further learning and community building at Arcadia, and your professors will tie in your observations of the wilderness with their curricula.

If you’ve never been on an extended camping trip before, don’t be intimidated. We will start with the basics, teaching classes on everything from how to properly put on your PFD (personal flotation device, AKA “life preserver”) to how to light a Whisperlight stove. The best things you can do to prepare for the expedition are to start an exercise routine now (see Staying Healthy, below) and be proactive about gathering and testing out your personal gear, especially your hiking boots, which can often take a month or more of wear to break in.

A second expedition will take place in mid September. This 6-day backpacking trip will serve as the culmination of the Modern Outdoor Recreation Ethics class. Students will be very involved in the planning and execution of the second expedition.

Community
When we refer to the “Arcadian Community” we are speaking of the 15 people who live at Arcadia each fall. This includes the 12 students of each Adirondack Semester, the two Assistant Directors, and the Director. Aside from breaks and field trips, ADK students spend every night at Arcadia from late August until just before Thanksgiving. Given the extended amount of time that these 15 individuals spend living in close quarters, it is imperative that the students buy into the community and act as “team players.” There will be times at Arcadia where you will have to put aside your personal preferences in favor of greater good for the entire group. Debriefs, conflict resolution sessions, and facilitated decision making processes are common occurrences in our village. Remember that these things take time that on campus you might otherwise have spent on homework, sports, recreation or a part-time job.

The Director Team: Assistant Directors and Director
The Assistant Directors (ADs) are the university’s representatives at Arcadia, and they live on site five days and nights each week. Their broad range of responsibilities include administration, class instruction, logistics, facilitating outdoor activities, risk management, community development, and site maintenance. It is the ADs who assign chores, facilitate community meeting each week, organize food deliveries, repair broken equipment, etc. It is important to realize that due to our remote backcountry setting you will be supervised more closely than you have been accustomed to on campus. During the ADs’ time off, the Director of the Outdoor Studies Department and Adirondack Semester, who is a University Professor, lives on site. Among other things, the Director teaches a class and oversees the academic aspects of the program.
Isolationist vs. Inclusionary
Arcadia is neither the Ivory Tower nor a mountaintop monastery. While the program does provide time for quiet reflection in nature, students are hardly cut off from society. Indeed, there are frequent program-sponsored visitors. These begin with the three professors who, in addition to the Director Team, round out the academic line-up. These professors, from the departments of Environmental Studies, Biology, and English, each commute to Arcadia once a week to teach class. Students also have the opportunity to learn from Everett Smith and Michael Frenette, renowned Adirondack woodworkers, as well as guest lecturers from other departments, and visiting speakers. Another frequent guest at Arcadia is Ben Geiger, the Boy Scout Ranger who oversees the Massawepie Conservation Easement where Arcadia is located. An important part of the team, Ben keeps us supplied with firewood, propane, and sailboats. On some Friday Nights musicians, Adirondack story tellers, and other entertainers make the journey to Arcadia. These performances, along with academic and recreational field trips out into the “outside world” help us cultivate our Adirondack “sense of place.” All of our professors and guests, along with the St. Lawrence Valley farm families that provide us with the bulk of our food constitute a larger “Adirondack Semester Community.”

Personal Guests
Because our Arcadian Community becomes very close-knit, hosting guests at times other than Family Weekend has proven to be disruptive. For this reason we ask that you plan to spend your time at Arcadia with our group and program-sponsored visitors, and not personal friends or family members.

An Intentional Community
One of the most important aspects of the Adirondack Semester is the deep emphasis on building a close-knit community. Most Intentional Community members consciously practice a holistic approach to health, based on a wholesome diet, adequate housing, relatively pristine environments, sensible safety norms, and attention to preventive health care. This aspect of the semester will be both challenging and invigorating for each member. Our community will offer a variety of opportunities to discover one’s self and unlock the potential of the group.

Community Rules
Experience has taught us that fifteen people cannot live together in isolation harmoniously for four months without some baseline rules. That being said, we actively try to minimize the number of rules we have. While the Adirondack Semester is in session, you will be required to abide by the following:

No drugs or alcohol. The Adirondack Semester is about immersion in nature. Mind altering substances would distract us from reaching this goal.

No harassment. We do not harm or threaten one another. We refrain from using profanity or sexually suggestive language.

No self-endangerment. This includes not climbing trees.
Living at Arcadia

No exclusive relationships. The classic example of an exclusive relationship is a boyfriend and girlfriend who spend an excessive amount of time with each other to the exclusion of other members of the community. It is worth noting that a relationship doesn't have to be between members of the opposite sex, or even romantic in order to be exclusive.

Whereabouts. When leaving Arcadia for personal reasons students are expected to sign out on a whiteboard and provide their destination, route, and expected time of return. Students may not go beyond the 5,000 acre Massawepie Scout Reservation property, or use a vehicle for a non-program activity without first consulting a member of the Director Team. We live in the middle of the largest wilderness in the continental United States, and members of our community do get hurt. The purpose of this rule is to make a prompt search and rescue a possibility.

Limited Electronics. The only electronic devices we use at Arcadia are personal listening devices with headphones, digital watches, and the occasional digital thermometer.

Consequences. Failure to abide by these rules may lead to dismissal, without refund, at the sole discretion of the Director team.

Creating Community While Immersed in Place

The semester is defined by its location; it is rooted in place. At the heart of the Semester lies the principle of immersion, both in nature and in the Arcadian Community. Similar to a study-abroad program, participants of the Adirondack Semester are asked to step out of their comfort zones and embrace a lifestyle that they may find completely novel. The Adirondack Semester differs from other immersion programs in that Arcadia has no pre-existing culture. Arcadian culture is created anew by each year’s student group. To achieve such a feat requires a commitment on your part as individuals and as a group to creating a Positive Living and Learning Environment (PLE). Past outcomes have shown that the more effort you invest, the more healthy and vibrant the community becomes.

Time Management

Year after year, Adirondack Semester students have found time management to be among their biggest challenges. Students take four and a half academic credits, which is more than they normally would on campus,
while also participating in extracurricular woodworking classes and Saturday field trips. Just as significantly, as members of a living and learning community, the students will share responsibility with the ADs for the collective upkeep of Arcadia’s facilities. Community tasks include cooking rotation, chores, town run, community meeting and Symposium. **Students should expect to spend a minimum of 10 hours each week fulfilling these responsibilities.** While students are not graded for their effectiveness in completing community tasks, hard work, a positive attitude, and the ability to receive and act upon growth-oriented feedback are all essential attributes for the successful Adirondack Semester student.

**Cooking Rotation**

At Arcadia, a good chunk of your time and energy will be spent feeding your fellow Arcadians. Once a week, you will be part of a two-member cook crew that will prepare the day’s three meals. Through these responsibilities, you will learn basic cooking and baking skills, and master the art of preparing balanced meals for a variety of diets. Students often find our emphasis on whole foods and basic ingredients rather than pre-made dishes or a microwave to be a challenge. Dietary needs and ethical eating preferences often require additional time and effort. For instance, in 2010, almost every meal had an omnivore, vegetarian, vegan, and gluten-free component. However, showing your appreciation for fellow Arcadians by providing a well-cooked meal is a gift to the community and source of pleasure and satisfaction for the cooks.

**Chores**

Every Thursday morning the students will be broken up into teams of two to tackle some of the maintenance required to keep Arcadia running smoothly. Chores include: deep cleans of the kitchen, community spaces, and sauna; moving, splitting and stacking firewood; trail work; and maintaining the composting toilet. On occasion, students may need to help out with labor intensive projects outside of chore time. These instances may
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include moving firewood into the village and village takedown. In our experience, assisting in the upkeep of the community’s physical assets gives students a feeling of belonging to and ownership of the community. These chores offer our students an opportunity to develop a strong work ethic that compliments the academic aspect of their education.

Town Run
Bi-weekly town runs provide students with the opportunity to do laundry and visit the town of Tupper Lake. Detergent, dryer sheets, and quarters will be provided. Each town run three students will be assigned to do the auxiliary food shopping and kitchen laundry. Otherwise, town run is optional. Students will occasionally have the opportunity to spend money on toiletries, letter writing supplies, or optional food purchases. ATMs are available in Tupper Lake.

Community Meeting
Once a week the students and ADs will have a one to two hour sit down session to discuss the community they are actively creating. This meeting serves 2 main purposes. It is an opportunity for ADs to share the schedule for the upcoming week and also offers all members a space to reflect on how the community is serving them and the group. Fifteen people living in such close quarters for three months will inevitably have issues. This meeting is one of the opportunities to discuss and potentially adjust the culture of our community. We find that open and honest feedback is essential to the development of a healthy and happy living and learning environment. These meetings may also serve as the forum for a community development mini-class, such as Decision Making Styles, or Conflict Resolution.

Symposium

symposium (əmˈprɔʊzəm) — n, pl -siums, -sia
a conference or meeting for the discussion of some subject, especially an academic topic or social problem (Collins English Dictionary - Complete & Unabridged 10th Edition.)
Living at Arcadia

Arcadia is an intellectual community as well as a physical one, and we have created a weekly discussion period in order to address foundational aspects of the Adirondack Semester that fall outside of the scope of your academic coursework. Starting after Fall Break, we’ll meet in a new place each Thursday morning for about an hour, and one member of the Director Team will facilitate a discussion based on a brief reading assigned the week before. Examples of topics that have been covered in the past include: appropriate technologies, self-fulfillment, and food systems. Like chores and community meeting, participation in the weekly Symposium is considered an integral part of the Arcadian experience.

Staying Healthy
Successful living in nature requires conscious dedication to personal hygiene and to clean shared living areas. Because simple injuries and illnesses can lead to much more serious consequences when definitive medical care is not easily obtained, students should be prepared to take self-care and personal safety more seriously than they do on campus. We will be proactive about staying hydrated, cleaning common spaces thoroughly without being asked, being active, getting plenty of rest, and understanding that each of our actions will directly affect the rest of our group.

Life in the great outdoors requires a constant exertion of energy and a reciprocal level of physical fitness. Expect that daily activities and field trips will demand significantly more physical activity from you than a typical college semester. Maintaining a consistent exercise routine during the Semester will not only allow you to meet physical challenges, but can also be a great outlet when work loads get heavy or the confines of our little world start to feel a bit tight. Get excited for Arcadia’s extensive system of running and biking trails, plethora of water for canoeing and swimming, Adirondack Guide Boat for rowing, and prime Ultimate Frisbee field. If you don’t currently exercise regularly, you should start now in order to prepare your body for the Arcadian experience. Running, hiking, biking, swimming, and calisthenics are all appropriate ways to prepare for the semester.

Yurts
We will be living in yurts, modern adaptations of the shelters used by Central Asian nomads for centuries. Our village consists of eight of these round semi-permanent “tents;” a classroom yurt, four student yurts, a community yurt, and two faculty yurts. The classroom and community yurts, as well as the kitchen, are all heated by woodstoves. Each of the residential yurts contains a propane heater, carpet, solar powered electric lights, and a skylight. The yurts do not contain any furniture. There are no beds, book shelves, or dressers.

Simplicity
One of the Semester’s Defining Principles is that we “commit to engaging in a materially simple lifestyle.” This affects everything from the amount of personal possessions each of us brings on the Semester (hint: less
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is more) to the size, type, and number of buildings we have chosen to build, or not to build, at Arcadia. We are often asked why simplicity plays such a significant role in our culture from year to year. The answers to this question are manifold, and range from the mundane to the metaphysical. We will cite just a few here. To begin with, simple living helps us keep our logistical situation under control. Everything you wear, use, eat, and throw out during the Semester must be carried in and out of Arcadia. We also find that doing with a little less is worth doing simply because it is an idea that is, at least in practice, so alien to our mainstream American culture. As Mark Twain wrote, “when you find yourself in the majority, it is time to reform.” Simplifying sets us apart, and also takes us out of our comfort zones. Furthermore, since everything we own, and everything we consume, has an environmental impact both because of the resources each item is made from and the distance it has been transported, making do with a little less helps us honor our Principle of promoting and working towards best Sustainable Practices by minimizing environmental impacts. Last but hardly least, we find that minimizing material objects minimizes distractions, and leaves us freer to devote our energy to the once in a lifetime experience of living at Arcadia.

Facilities

The ADK semester operates on the shores of Lake Massawepie. Lake Massawepie is on state Route 3, ten minutes west of the town of Tupper Lake. Arcadia, our program site, is accessed via a half-mile hike followed by a half-mile canoe.

Co-Ed Living

Living accommodations at Arcadia and on the Expedition will be co-ed. Although this may be a new experience for some of you, it is an effective way to promote community growth and prevent gender barriers from forming. With this in mind, please be prepared to respect your yurt-mates’ needs for privacy and to follow whatever guidelines are set forth by the Arcadian Community to ensure each individual’s comfort level is respected.

Kitchen

Much of your time at Arcadia will be spent in our timber-frame kitchen building which also serves as a dining room, study hall, meeting space, and common area. Although we don’t have running water, we do have a four burner gas stove and oven, as well as a half-size solar refrigerator.

Auxiliary Structures: the Clive, the Sauna, and the Solar Array

The Clivus Multrum, also referred to as “Clive,” is our composting toilet. A wood-fired giant barrel shaped sauna gives Arcadians the opportunity to keep themselves clean. Generally one will ‘take a sauna’ and warm sponge bath, then follow up with a refreshing jump into the lake. Arcadia is off the grid and powered by a moderate size solar array. While we do have a battery bank that gives us the ability to store energy, we still need to use power sparingly to make sure we don’t run out during longer rainy spells.

Vehicles

Transport to and from all program destinations will be provided by the university. As use of personal veh-
Living at Arcadia

cles would detract from the communal immersion experience that we are all committed to, we ask that stu-
dents be dropped off at orientation or agree to leave their vehicles parked at the St. Lawrence University cam-
bus throughout the semester.

Medical Facilities
Arcadia is located 30 minutes from the Adirondack Medical Center in Saranac Lake (518-891-4141, www.amccares.org) where students can be treated in the event of illness of injury. The Assistant Directors will have 24-hours access to a satellite phone at Arcadia which can be used to contact medical services in the event of an emergency.

Computers
In our attempts to minimize external distractions, simplify our lifestyles, and not exceed our solar electricity production, we do not bring computers to Arcadia. Time for social Internet use (Facebook, E-mail, etc.) will not be facilitated during the semester.

Communication: Telephone vs. Going Postal
Arcadia provides an excellent opportunity to leave instant gratification behind and engage in handwritten correspondence. Students will be able to communicate via post and campus mail and will have the opportunity to send mail out with faculty at least once per week.

Students will not be allowed to have their cell phones while the semester is in session. Students can either leave them at home or hand them in upon arrival. A landline will be provided in Gannett Lodge across the lake from the yurt village if a student needs to make a call. A satellite phone is available at Arcadia for emergency use.

Music
Feel free to bring a portable musical device with headphones. However, out of respect for each person’s wilderness experience, we ask that you do not bring speakers. If you are a musician, virtuoso or otherwise, please bring your instrument.

Weather
The first month of the semester will be hot. During August daily highs will likely be in the 80s with high humidity. That being said, Adirondack nights can be cold year round. Remember that Arcadia is at a significantly higher elevation than Canton. Early in the Semester evening lows will be in the 50s. Adirondack weather changes quickly, and rain is always a possibility. October days are generally cool and crisp, and we will probably experience a few dustings of snow. November at Arcadia will be relatively cold with daytime highs in the low 40s and nighttime lows in the 20s. In order to be prepared, please adhere as closely as possible to the equipment lists.

Backcountry Mentality
Our home and many of our “classrooms,” are in a backcountry setting. This means that you will have the incredible opportunity to focus on the natural world and your relationship to it without the distraction of computers, cars, or cell phones. This also means that response to medical emergencies requires additional time and resources. To optimize the positive aspects of our experience, the Adirondack Semester’s trained staff have adopted a strategy of preemptively recognizing and managing risks. This means that you will be subject to certain prohibitions that are common in wilderness settings, but that you may not have experienced before. Swimming is a prime example. At Arcadia we bathe (stand) in the lake solo, but if we want to swim, we always go with a buddy. To assist us in our goal of zero serious injuries, we ask you to be judicious in your actions throughout the semester and respect rules during both supervised and unsupervised periods. Thank you!

The Evolution of the Adirondack Semester
St. Lawrence University ran its first Adirondack Semester program in the Autumn of 2000. From the outset it was intended to be a unique learning experience within the realm of higher education: a highly rigorous academic program in an outdoor setting, as opposed to an outdoor education program that happens to be college accredited. That first year the students and staff lived in Gannett Lodge, a boy scout building on Lake Massawepie. In 2001 the program moved across the lake to “Arcadia,” our current site, where the first yurts were put up. The Adirondack Semester has become one of the University’s most dynamic programs. While some aspects of the program have remained constant, others have evolved. For instance, the primary focus continues to be on academics, while in more recent years the secondary focus has broadened from solely outdoor skills and recreation to a more place based approach. During earlier versions of the Semester, the initial expedition was to Canada and the semester concluded with a trip to the Southwest. More recently, our expeditions have traversed the Adirondacks and we’ve spent December engaged in Adirondack Work Placements and Homestays (the Capstone Internship). The course that the Assistant Directors teach has varied in the past as well, from a course focused on the Ethics of Arcadia and Voluntary Simplicity to what is currently taught—Modern Outdoor Recreational Ethics. Students and staff alike...

“...This semester has done more to focus me in for post college life than the last three years combined. Past experiences and teachings have come together and made themselves clear due in part to my time at Arcadia. Living life as simply as we did on the Adirondack Semester is a goal we can all realistically attempt to keep.”

- Jon Williams, 2011 Adirondack Semester Student
Faculty and Staff Biographies

Cathy Shrdy—Director / Instructor
Cathy is an Associate Professor and recent Chair of the Geology Department. She received her BA, MS, and PhD in geology from Colgate University, Syracuse University, and U Mass. Amherst respectively. A member of the group of faculty who founded the Outdoor Studies/Outdoor Program, she expresses her enthusiasm for the outdoors through her academic pursuits and recreation. She particularly enjoys kayaking, hiking and cross country skiing. A student of the martial arts and Buddhism, she is co-creator of the North Country Japanese Garden on the SLU campus. Cathy lives outside of Canton with her husband (also a geologist) and her daughter (equine enthusiast).

cshrdy@stlawu.edu, (office) 315-229-5015, (cell) 315-244-5105

Emma Mabel Carlson—Assistant Director / Instructor
Emma is an alumna of Colby College, where she wrote an independent major entitled Environmental Education. In order to fully engage in this course of study Emma sought many opportunities outside of the traditional classroom. Her interest in organic farming and permaculture led her to New Zealand and Mexico. It was during a semester at Prescott College in Arizona where Emma was formally introduced to experiential education. Following that was her participation in the Adirondack Semester, which was a very profound educational experience. Emma strongly believes that cultivating a sense of place, intentional living and community building foster transformational education. Before returning to the Adirondack Semester, Emma worked as a wilderness trip leader and program administrator at the Chewonki Foundation in Maine.

ecarlson@stlawu.edu, (office) 315-229-5027, (cell) 207-491-9032

Doug Soholt—Assistant Director / Instructor
Doug Soholt graduated with a BA in Geology from Colorado College, where he also completed the coursework for an elementary teacher’s certificate. Doug cut his teeth as a trip leader in northern Maine with the Chewonki Foundation, leading extended backpacking, canoeing and kayaking trips. Doug advocates for applied, personal education that is based on both philosophy and practice, believing that each is hollow without the other. Though he is a hiker through and through, canoeing and skiing have been making serious inroads to his heart. He feels the compulsive need to be near a television whenever the U.S. Men’s National Soccer Team has a match.

dsoholt@stlawu.edu, (office) 315-229-5024, (cell) 719-200-9971
Jessica Rogers—Instructor

Jess was raised in Potsdam, NY and has the North Country in her blood. She left to explore the world, getting her bachelor’s degree in Ecology and Evolution at Princeton University, and a masters degree and PhD at Columbia University. She has spent time studying tropical biology in Panama, zebra behavior in Kenya, and deforestation in Gabon. Happily, she has returned to her beloved North Country and wants to incorporate everything she’s learned abroad with how she now looks at the environment she grew up in. Her future research will focus on the changing wetland around the North Country and looking at opportunities for conservation. When she’s not falling in love with teaching, she kayaks on the St. Lawrence River, goes to the movies and carries on her grandmother’s tradition of quilting.

Brad Baldwin—Instructor

An Associate Professor in the St. Lawrence University Biology Department, Brad teaches field ecology and biodiversity classes and conducts research with students on exotic species, environmental contaminants, and coral reef ecology. He received a BS in Zoology from Southern Illinois University and Ph.D. in Marine Ecology from the University of Maryland. He loves sports and travel, tries to play guitar, makes his own maple syrup, loves his 4 dogs, and is a lifelong hiker, paddler, diver, and outdoor enthusiast. He lives in Canton with his musical daughter and enjoys watching his son launch his own career in marine biology.

Natalia Rachel Singer—Instructor

Natalia teaches courses on creative writing, literature, and the environment at St. Lawrence University. A long-time advocate of hands-on experiential learning, she has been known to take students outside of the classroom, whether it be to Lampson Falls or Azure Mountain to complete a nature-writing assignment, to a local farm to write about sustainable agriculture, or to Quebec, Rouen, Senegal, Paris, or India, where her recent students have completed projects in travel writing and environmental journalism. Singer is the author of the memoir Scrapping by in the Big Eighties, is co-editor of Living North Country: Essays on Life and Landscapes in Northern New York, has just completed a novel set in France, The Inventions of Love, and is currently working on a collection of travel essays set in France, India, and the North Country. She loves to hike with her dog, Zoe.
Faculty and Staff Biographies

Everett Smith—Wood Working Instructor; Capstone Internship Work Placement Partner

Michael Frenette—Wood Working Instructor; Capstone Internship Work Placement Partner

Michael has been with the Adirondack Semester since 2001 and enjoys the challenge of working out ideas and the reality of helping students create their project. When asked if he has lived in the Adirondacks his whole life, he replies "not yet." Michael calls Tupper Lake home, but has traveled to many states and countries in pursuit of mountain climbing, skiing, artist residencies and the study of traditionally built wooden structures. As a former backcountry ranger, ski instructor, assistant backcountry ski guide and homesteader, he enjoys seeing the students learn to connect with the outdoor world. His words of wisdom: take saunas, enjoy the company of friends, breathe deep your semester and remember that "procrastination is a destination."

Ben Geiger—Massawepie Scout Camp Ranger; Capstone Internship Work Placement Partner
Course Descriptions

Natural History and Ecology of the Adirondacks ODST 201

The Adirondack mountains, among the oldest in the world, are home to complex and beautiful ecosystems teeming with biodiversity. When and how did these mountains form? Who lives there? What are the basic ecological relationships that keep this region's ecosystems functioning? What environmental factors shape these ecosystems and how are they changing as a result of human activities in the region and across the globe? In this course we will begin to answer these and other questions, with a focus on learning about the different communities of organisms in the Adirondacks as well as how they are shaped by geology, weather, seasons, and human impacts. Through field trips, detailed observations, readings, and discussions, we will piece together an understanding of the ecological forces that have shaped this landscape's past and which will determine its future. Student will be expected to master the biodiversity of the region, to understand the function of its ecosystems, to make careful field observations, and to help others learn about and appreciate the Adirondacks.

Creative Expressions of Nature ODST 247B

All the courses you'll take this semester examine humans' relationship to the natural world from various perspectives. This class, Creative Expressions of Nature, looks at our interaction with the natural world with a more artistic eye. We'll consider the purpose of art in general through a look at the genre of nature writing and through forms of creative representation. Through a series of focused reading and creative writing assignments, students will be encouraged to slow down, observe, and reflect on the personal relationship they have with the natural world as it evolves and changes as a result of the rich experiences you will be having this fall.

Conservation in Protected Areas: A Case Study in the Adirondack State Park

**This course will likely change for 2013**

This course will examine the roots of the environmental movement and ultimately how that aided the conservation of the Adirondack Mountains. Beginning with George Perkins Marsh and Henry David Thoreau in the mid-1800s, the preservation of natural areas became a priority for some states. With the creation of Yellowstone National Park, the world was given a model to follow for state sponsored environmental protection. We will look at the debates in conservation and the methods that are most often employed to achieve conservation goals, both globally and locally. The Adirondack State Park will be our case study for the multitude of successfully evolving conservation strategies.

Knowing Nature ODST 247A SPTP

In this class we will examine and practice a variety of methods and techniques by which humans know nature. In particular, we will engage the western scientific and the shamanic (as practiced by indigenous cultures) paradigms. And we will ask how our perception of nature affects how we relate to and treat it. The class will explore the concept of nature as knowing and intelligent through the lenses of recent scientific research and traditional knowledge.
M.O.R.E. and The Capstone Internship

Modern Outdoor Recreation Ethics ODST 101
This course is a revolving door of ethics on all levels including leadership development and technical skills. Over the semester, these themes will continuously intertwine and overlap through a combined experiential and academic focus to provide another lens for exploring your relationship with the natural world. The topics of this course will be introduced through extended field expeditions, weekend field trips, assigned coursework, and guest lecturers. However, as the practical applications of these materials will make appearances daily, the true test of these skills will be to transform them into tools for success in day-to-day living.

Capstone Internship— not for credit
The Adirondack Semester concludes with the Capstone Internship (CI). The CI is a culminating experience that provides an opportunity for students to personalize their learning and expand upon ideas introduced during the semester, deepening their Adirondack sense of place. The CI consists of two distinct components: a Work Placement and Homestay. With the guidance of an Assistant Director, each student is responsible for organizing the details of their individualized Work Placement and Homestay. These details will be summarized in a Proposal. At the conclusion of the Capstone Internship each student will share what they leaned by giving a Final Presentation. The 4 objectives of the Capstone Internship are:

Direct Experience
Students seek first-hand experiences with individuals and organizations whose work is connected with the Adirondacks or nature. Students seek experiences that build upon their coursework from the semester.

Focused Reflection
Students engage in daily reflection about their Capstone Internship experiences and the relationship of these to the semester. Students take the time to reflect critically upon the semester as a whole.

An Adirondack Semester student working on a micro-hydro project with Andy Wekin, a Capstone Internship partner.

Students in the High Peaks during the MORE backpacking expedition.
Outdoor Gear List

The following is a list of clothing and gear that you will need for the expedition, our time at Arcadia, and weekend trips.

**Footwear**
- **Wool Socks**: 4-5 pairs, no cotton
- **Hiking Boots**: 1 pair of medium weight, off-trail, ankle-high leather boots. Make sure that your boots are **well broken-in** prior to arrival. This can take up to a month!
- **Camp shoes**: old tennis shoes work well
- **Sandals**: with straps. Chaco/Teva style. Flip-flops are inadequate

**Backpack(s)**
- **Internal frame backpack** of 60-80 liters. This size pack is versatile enough to be used for weekend trips and our backpacking expedition.
- **Stuff sacks**: 2 or more, waterproof models are available, 5, 10, & 20 liter sizes are useful.
- **An small/compressible daypack** can be nice for day hikes and use around Arcadia. An example of this would be the Patagonia Lightweight Travel Pack.

**Sleeping/Shelter**
- **Sleeping Bag**: zero to 5 degree. This must be a backpacking quality product. Meaning it needs to compress down to a small size.
- **Closed-cell foam or air pad**: don’t forget the patch kit. Thermarest is a great brand. Ultralight models are best for the expedition.

**Clothing**
- **Rain jacket & pants** (durable and large enough to fit over layers)
- **Quick dry t-shirt** (polypro or capilene)
- **Quick dry shorts** (nylon, mesh, etc.)
- **Mid-weight wool, polypro or capilene long sleeved top and bottom**
- **Expedition weight wool, polypro, capilene or fleece top and bottom**
- **Mid-weight down jacket.**
- **Underwear**: 2-3 pairs non cotton
- **Swimsuit**
- **Wool hat**
- **Sun hat**
- **Lightweight gloves**

**Miscellaneous**
- **Toiletries**: toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.
- **Sunglasses**
- **Lip balm w/UV protection**
- **Digital watch w/alarm**
- **LED headlamp with extra batteries**
- **Bandana.** More for women
- **Insulated mug**
- **Water bottle**: 2 Nalgene style 1 liter bottles or a camelback system

**Optional**
- **Prescription meds**
- **Glasses/contacts**: bring extra pair
- **Camera**

The night sky over the front dock.
Supplements for Arcadia

Less is More

Part of the Adirondack Semester experience is simplifying one’s life by learning to rely on fewer things. While we encourage students to minimize ‘stuff’, you should not do so at the cost of comfort. No one should be cold due to lack of clothing. However, we do encourage you to distinguish between what you need and what you want. It is prudent to pack clothes that can be layered for warmth as summer turns into early winter. Choose comfortable clothing that you are willing to wear daily and allow to get dirty and ripped during chores. There will not be any need to “dress up” during the Semester.

Packing

Packing appropriately for the Semester is an art form. Experience has shown that it is best to come with your expedition gear in your 45-55 liter pack, your toiletries, school supplies, and other incidentals for the Expedition Briefing in your daypack and your non-expedition clothing and Arcadia extras in a single duffel bag.

Non-expedition clothing. *Cotton is ok!*  
- 2 pairs of durable pants.  
- 4 T-shirts  
- Extra socks & underwear  

Items Most Students Have Found Worthwhile  
- School supplies  
- Pillow  
- Extra sleeping bag to layer with for colder months  
- Stationary, envelopes and stamps  
- Extra headlamp batteries  
- Winter-weight down jacket  
- Cotton towel  
- Slippers or down booties to wear in the yurts  
- Recreational reading (We have a small library)  
- 1-2 wool sweaters or shirts  
- Pajamas. Many students use heavy long underwear  

Optional Items  
- Mountain bike and helmet  
- Fishing equipment  
- Musical instrument  
- 1-2 creative, goofy costumes  
- Optional thicker mattress. This can be “egg crate” style.

You’ll become an excellent canoeist over the course of the Semester. Here two students skillfully come home.
Handbook Quiz & Acknowledgement

This worksheet is designed to help you engage with the student handbook and assure that we all start the program on the same page. These questions address key points and possible misconceptions about the Adirondack Semester.

*After reading the handbook thoroughly, please answer the following questions.*

What is the yurt village called?

The semester begins with a ____ day canoe trip.
In mid-September there is a ____ day backpacking trip.

What’s the best way to prepare for the expedition?

Who makes up the “Arcadian Community”?

Who makes up the “Adirondack Semester Community”?

Who is Ben Geiger?

There are many ungraded tasks that are vital to keeping Arcadia running well. What are the community tasks?

How often do chores happen?

How often does town run happen? Is it optional?

Imagine your living situation. How many students to a yurt? Co-ed?

How will you communicate with friends and family?

What’s the range of weather you will experience at Arcadia?

When thinking about packing, ______ is more!
Handbook Quiz & Acknowledgement

Bonus Questions:

Emma is proud to be from Farmington Maine, where ______ were invented in 1873:

A) Galoshes
B) Meatballs
C) Earmuffs
D) Nutella

Doug has a strong aversion to:

A) Maine
B) Facebook
C) Anything Orange
D) Dinosaurs

Cathy has all of the following on her farm except:

A) Raccoons
B) Chickens
C) Horses
D) 3 Dogs

Life at Arcadia is different from life on campus. Here are two final things to remember:

You will be supervised more closely due to our backcountry setting.

You are expected to be very diligent about self-care and personal safety.

Please sign below indicating that you have read, understand and acknowledge all the information presented in this handbook. The Assistant Directors will collect this form when you arrive at the Director's farm for our Expedition Briefing.

______________________________  ____________
Name                        Date