



Student Outdoor Leadership Experiences (SOLE) Application 2017-2018

Thank you for your interest in Student Outdoor Leadership Experiences (SOLE). The SOLE program is designed to allow students to develop leadership skills within the Outdoor Adventure Program (OAP), preparing them to be knowledgeable, highly skilled instructors. We seek motivated individuals with a variety of experiences and diverse backgrounds who are excited about learning new skills, working with others, and sharing their knowledge with OAP participants, the Virginia Commonwealth University community, and beyond. Those who take part in this course can expect professional training in group dynamics, teaching techniques, decision making, risk management, backcountry travel, technical mountain skills, and Leave No Trace principles. The training is both demanding and fun!

Applicants should be enthusiastic learners who are ready to develop as instructors. Successful SOLE candidates possess leadership experience, good physical ability, and fundamental outdoor skills. They are willing to make important commitments, not only to the program, but also to themselves. The time commitment associated with this program is significant, however, those who remain with the program will be rewarded with unforgettable experiences and a solid foundation for a future in the outdoors, the classroom, and life beyond college.

Selection Process:

- Attend one of the SOLE informational meetings: **6:00 p.m. in the Outing Rental Center (130 S. Linden St.), Wednesday, September 13th OR Tuesday, September 19th.**

- Participate in an OAP trip (or several!). This allows you to get to know the OAP staff and they also get to know you. Additionally, participating in a trip or activity will offer insight into our program philosophy as well as offer a first-hand taste of the inner workings of the program. See the OAP website or program guide for our current list of offerings.

- Complete an application. **Applications are due Friday, September 22nd and must include:**

- **Completed SOLE application form**
- **Professional resume, including references**
- **Outdoor experience log, including most recent relevant experiences**
- **Type-written answers to the supplemental application questions**

- Applicants who meet our basic requirements (including applications which are complete and legible), will be invited to an in-person interview. **Interviews will be conducted the week of September 25-29.**

- Candidates will be notified of their selection via phone or email no later than **Tuesday, October 3rd**, at which point **a deposit of \$200 will be due to hold a spot.**

This application process represents the expected level of commitment to the SOLE program and OAP. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of the return on your investment in yourself. Please contact Karl Schmidt, Outdoor Adventure Program Coordinator, at kmschmidt@vcu.edu or (804) 828-6004 with questions.

Please complete the following application. It must be legible to be considered.

Name: _____		
Phone Number: _____	Email: _____	
V#: _____	Expected Graduation: _____	
Major: _____	Shirt size: _____	Pants size: _____
Certifications & Coursework (WFR, NOLS, ACA, AMGA, etc.): _____		
Driver's License #: _____	State: _____	

Required Trainings and Commitments

One-Year Commitment

We expect that students participating in this program will commit to at least one full academic year (through Spring 2018). This program demands a significant amount of time in the form of leading trips, attending trainings and meetings, and preparing for trips. Ideally, we hope that student leaders will stay involved with the program for their remaining time at VCU.

_____ I am aware of this commitment (please initial)

2017/2018 SOLE Training Dates

SOLE is an intensive outdoor adventure leadership training experience which is required of all students wishing to lead trips for the OAP. Participants **MUST** be available for **ALL** dates listed below.

October 7-8, 2017

October 28-29, 2017

November 18-19, 2017

January 27-28, 2018

February 17-18, 2018

March 3-11, 2018 (Spring Break)

_____ I am able to attend these training dates (please initial)

Wilderness First Responder Training

All student leaders are required to possess and maintain wilderness medicine certifications. Wilderness First Responder (WFR) and CPR training is included as part of the SOLE curriculum. This year's wilderness medicine classes will be offered:

Wilderness First Responder – Recertification: December 2-3, 2017

Wilderness First Responder: January 6-14, 2018

_____ I am aware of the wilderness medicine and CPR requirement (please initial)

Van Driver Training

Offered as part of SOLE training, the VCU van driver course must be completed successfully to drive any vehicle owned or rented by the university. VCU will also contact the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles for a check of your Motor Vehicle Record (MVR).

_____ I am aware of this requirement (please initial)

Two OAP Trips per Semester

Student leaders are expected to lead or assist on a minimum of **four field days** per semester (typically two daytime trips, and one overnight trip). Trip responsibilities include planning, packing, and preparation before the trip, as well as clean-up after the trip. Student leaders are also strongly encouraged to lead or assist on longer trips during winter and spring breaks.

_____ I am aware of this requirement (please initial)

Monthly SOLE Meetings (3-4 per semester, typically 7-8 a.m.)

These *mandatory* meetings allow all SOLE leaders to stay up-to-date, discuss issues and concerns, as well as contribute to the broader program as a whole. Dates and times for these meetings are determined by the SOLE staff at the beginning of each semester.

_____ I am aware of this requirement (please initial)

Fall and Spring Clinics and Retreats

These *mandatory* continuing education trips are planned and facilitated by SOLE leaders and program staff. The retreats and clinics are designed to offer additional training in specific skills (e.g., climbing, facilitation, paddling, etc.). All student leaders are expected to attend these trainings.

_____ I am aware of this requirement (please initial)

Tuition: \$400

The \$400 course fee covers all food, travel, group equipment, and permits associated with SOLE training. Additionally, the tuition covers a Leave No Trace Trainer course and the Wilderness First Responder/CPR course. This fee is used only to help cover the expenses associated with the training. The OAP does not generate any revenue from this course. Your \$200 deposit will be applied to the course fee. (Scholarship opportunities may be available and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please inquire with the Outdoor Adventure Program Coordinator.)

_____ I am aware of this financial requirement (please initial)

A completed application includes the following:

- SOLE Application form
- Professional resume, including references.
- Outdoor experience log, including most recent relevant experiences
- Type-written answers to the supplemental application questions (see below)

Supplemental Application Questions (please type)

1. Why do you want to be a SOLE Leader?
2. Please explain why you are a good candidate for SOLE. What strengths do you bring to the program?
3. What do you believe will be your most difficult challenge when participating in SOLE?
4. How does participation in SOLE align with your future goals (i.e., school, career, personal, etc.)?
5. Please list any other experiences that may contribute to your application.

Please submit completed application materials to Karl Schmidt, Outdoor Adventure Program Coordinator, at kmschmidt@vcu.edu or deliver to the Outing Rental Center. Partial applications will not be considered.

**VCU Outdoor Adventure Program
130 S. Linden St.
Richmond, VA 23284
804-828-6004**

www.recsports.vcu.edu/programs/outdoor-adventure-program/