



Essential Eligibility Criteria

The Traveling School seeks participants who are excited to try new things and see new places, want to further a healthy sense of self-confidence and learn more about who they are and what they are capable of achieving. We look for participants who are in good health, physically and emotionally, and have an interest in being a part of a supportive community.

The Traveling School (“TTS”) is not a therapeutic program; while a little nervousness or apprehension is natural, we are not an appropriate choice for individuals dealing with behavioral, motivational or rehabilitation issues. The following list of essential eligibility criteria (“EEC”) are not intended to be exclusionary, but to honestly identify the basic and fundamental elements of participation which are integrally tied to safety and risk management considerations. Effective education, overall health and well-being of our students and staff are the school’s top priorities.

Traveling School students live in and travel through are remote, dynamic, physically and emotionally challenging environments. These environments along with the educational activities conducted require each student to be fully committed to and capable of working hard, taking personal responsibility, and working effectively in the group to achieve the goals of the semester. The Essential Eligibility Criteria are applicable for all students. A qualified person is one who can meet the EEC for participation in the program. These EEC are intended to give an overall ‘snapshot’ of EEC for TTS activities and do not encompass every criteria or function of the various activities one may encounter on a given program.

As detailed in our Terms of Agreement, an applicant’s final enrollment and participation in a Traveling School semester is conditioned on, among other things, the Traveling Schools’ receipt and review of all completed and signed forms. If you have any questions or concerns about meeting the criteria, please call The Traveling School Office. We are happy to answer questions and share more details about the demands of a Traveling School semester.

The following Essential Eligibility Criteria apply to all participants on a Traveling School semester.

EXPEDITION BEHAVIOR: ATTITUDE, ACTIONS & BEHAVIORS

Each student must...

- Come with an open mind and willingness to try new things.
- Maintain a positive attitude, even when challenged physically, mentally or emotionally.
- Display inclusion, respect and compassion towards peers, teachers and members of the communities with which we interact.
- Work effectively as a member of an expedition team. This includes taking personal responsibility for your belongings and behavior, effectively communicating ideas and concerns on an individual and group level, accepting differences and possessing a willingness to put the needs of the group before those of the individual.
- Be willing and able to follow rules and respect the decisions, leadership and discretion of Traveling School faculty, administrators and guides/contractors.

- Independently perceive, understand and follow instructions given, including directives, to successfully execute appropriate and possibly unfamiliar techniques regarding hazards/risks.
- Act reliably and responsibly around hazards/risks even when not directly supervised.
- Consistently perform necessary self-care including personal hygiene, adequate hydration, appropriately dressing for weather conditions and responsibility for and organization of personal gear.
- Interact responsibly in a group and support a team approach, understanding that every participant shares in the responsibility for their own well-being and the well-being of the group.
- Respond appropriately in the face of unexpected challenges such as bugs, inclement weather, changes in itinerary, unfamiliar surroundings and homesickness.
- Contribute to a safe learning environment.
- Practice effective communication and conflict resolution to address personal, educational and group needs.
- Have the cognitive ability to learn necessary skills given normal time limitations of a fifteen-week semester.

SAFETY & JUDGEMENT

Each student must...

- Effectively communicate with or to other participants or leaders regarding potential hazards/risks, personal distress, injury, or need for assistance.
- Independently identify and recognize cultural and travel hazards. These hazards may include, but are not limited to, other travelers or people outside our program, food safety and preparation, quality of transportation, lodging status and different country norms/laws.
- Independently identify and recognize environmental hazards. These hazards may include, but are not limited to, falling objects/rocks, loose rock and unstable surfaces, rugged steep and uneven terrain, cliff edges, crevasses, moving water (fast or slow) such as rivers, creeks, surf, or tides; and potentially hazardous animals and insects.
- Recognize and understand the hazards and risks posed by other course members, which include, but are not limited to, fatigue, state of mind, and actions that may influence judgment and decision-making.
- Recognize and understand the hazards and risks posed by people met while traveling, which include, but are not limited to, fatigue, state of mind, and actions that may influence judgment and decision-making.
- Recall and understand hazards and risks previously explained by teachers and contracted guides.
- Be able to effectively alert and warn others of potential or impending dangers such as other people, travel conditions, falling rocks, aggressive people/animals, or other environmental and cultural hazards.
- Be able and willing to follow Traveling School Covid-19 policies and protocols
- Be able to effectively signal or notify teachers or other course members of personal distress, injury, or need for assistance.
- Be able to maintain proper dosage of prescription medications by self-medicating without assistance from teachers or others (except possibly in emergency situations).

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Each student must...

- Have average strength and endurance plus basic balance and agility to travel through uneven terrain with a backpack/duffle weighing up to 60 lbs.
 - For backpacking and expeditions, backpack weight may range from 40-60 lbs daily, or 40-45% of body weight for duration of trek.
- Lift and carry weight, including personal or group belongings, gear or provisions.
- Navigate travel distances that range from less than one mile to more than ten miles in one day, potentially carrying a loaded backpack for hiking, backpacking, or other activities.
- Travel conditions may include, but are not limited to, rough, rugged, uneven steep and sloping terrain; human made and animal made trails; rocky terrain that may range from smooth bedrock to extensive areas of large rock boulders (boulder fields); needing to cross rivers and creeks without the aid of bridges up to three feet in depth; ascending, descending or traversing slopes covered in snow, rocks or vegetation; bushwhacking off trail through thick standing and/or downed vegetation. Any and all travel can occur during periods of inclement weather or nighttime hours.
- Be able to move about the campsite/hostel/facility in order to attend classes, attend to toilet needs, and contribute to group living tasks as necessary.
- Live in a physically demanding, remote or backcountry environments for the uninterrupted period of the course length. Conditions of this environment may vary from cold (below 0° F) to hot (above 90° F) depending on course location and season and may include, but is not limited to, rain, snow or hail, uninterrupted sun and/or wind, or the absence thereof. The remoteness is such that it may require at minimum 1-day's travel to reach the nearest advanced medical care.
- Maintain a healthy diet in a variety of environments with different, often limited food choices.
- Be prepared with necessary medical contingencies including inhalers and epinephrine if prone to asthma/allergic reactions.

Criteria for Specific Activities:

In addition to The Traveling School's General EEC, a student must meet specific criteria for specific activities.

Teachers, with contracted guides, will teach students appropriate safety measures for each activity. A student's ability to meet Specific Activity EEC may be determined at the time of the activity.

WHITEWATER RAFTING, CANOEING AND KAYAKING

In addition to the General EEC, each student must...

- Be able to swim or be comfortable in the water, including fast moving water, while wearing a personal flotation device (PFD).
- Wear all protective gear recommended or required.
- Be able to respond to verbal and/or visual signals.
- Enter and exit a wet or dry watercraft independently.
- In the event of a capsize or fall out of the watercraft, one must be able to remain calm, follow instructions and independently: get out from under the watercraft, remain face up in the water, endeavor to make progress to the shoreline or another boat and be able to perform self-rescue or cooperate with assisted rescue.

ROCK CLIMBING, ABSEILING/RAPPELLING

In addition to the General EEC, each student must...

- Wear all recommended/required gear.
- Be able to respond to verbal and/or visual signals.
- Grip a rope firmly, grasp the rock face, and negotiate upwards on a climb.

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

In addition to the General EEC, each student must...

- Be open and willing to interact with new and unfamiliar cultures.
- Engage in service learning projects (for example: building, digging, lifting, painting, construction and clean-up), for 6-8 hours per day with tools such as shovels, axes and hoes.

BIKING

In addition to the General EEC, each student must...

- Pedal, steer, stop and negotiate a pedal bike.
- Wear all recommended/required gear.
- Be able to respond to verbal and/or visual signals.
- Travel competently and independently on a bicycle over a variety of uneven and challenging outdoor/wilderness terrain, with travel distances ranging from 1 – 10 miles per day.