

Seek a balance



We who live year-round at Lincoln are citizens of this world as much as our students. We realize that we are asking students temporarily to relinquish items that seem necessary to life itself. Experience has taught us that, in the end, our students will wholeheartedly endorse these restrictions as essential to the quality of their experience—intellectual, social and spiritual—at the Oregon Extension. But we also make certain of these technologies available in measured and communally enriching ways. Students can listen to digital audio and CDs on the music system installed in the Cookhouse common room. Even better: we encourage students to bring their musical instruments. A projector and DVD player take up a corner of the same room, for weekend viewing. Weekend shuttles take students down the mountain to Ashland for theater, coffee shops and restaurants, recreation, shopping and church. We transport students for medical appointments and other necessary business. We provide transportation to and from airports and bus or train stations, and on adventures to San Francisco, the Oregon Coast and backpacking trailheads. For those without computers, we have some laptops to loan. Our home in the Cascades provides numerous opportunities for outdoor individual and group activities, and a playing field and gym are nearby.

Read some good books, chop some wood

While many off-campus programs offer a passport to international travel and exposure to centers of world culture, the Oregon Extension invites you to find your place in a mountain hamlet out of the busy currents in which most of us spend our lives. It is not a better program than the rest, but one that meets different needs. Join us if you want to stay put for a while, warm yourself by the woodstove, take part in the ongoing human conversation about the meaning of it all, and engage with others like yourself in the struggle to know, to care and to believe. In this four month break from the frenetic pace of the twenty-first century, perhaps you will see your life, your relationships, your faith, and the life of the world just a bit more clearly.



Information and online applications:

www.oregonextension.org

or call:

1 800 801 OREX

or mail:

**The Oregon Extension
15097 Hwy 66 Ashland,
OR 97520**

or email:

inquiries@oregonextension.org

*The Oregon Extension is accredited
through Eastern Mennonite University*

For one semester



Move Out of the Current

In the forested mountains of southern Oregon, serious students can join others like themselves, from campuses around the country, who wish to slow their pace in order to live, to study and to relate to one another more deliberately, with their energies fully engaged.

Move out of the current



Hidden in the wilderness, the Oregon Extension invites students to move out of the fractured routines of simultaneous courses, campus activities, and part-time jobs for a semester, and to step away from nearly constant activity in the electronically-mediated world of texting, social networking, cell phones, television and the Internet. In exchange, students are given the rare opportunity to come with fewer distractions into the presence of a more basic rhythm of life and to ponder with academic seriousness good books and sources of meaning that sustain people over the long haul.

The village of Lincoln, a lumber town built in 1929, is a rustic setting in which students can ask their deepest questions, read thought-provoking books, wrestle with big ideas in writing, and converse honestly and animatedly with others who share their excitement for learning. About twenty-five students and four faculty members approach learning one subject at a time, shifting every few weeks from discussion of common reading to individual study and writing guided by daily tutorials with a faculty advisor. Students participate with faculty in the daily work of running the place. With their cabinmates, students share meals and strive to create home environments that feel safe and nurture honesty and mutual concern. At the heart of this communal academic activity is our ongoing search for intellectual insights and traditions to nurture us in a global, consumerist world.

Turn down the volume

The place lends itself to giving students an experience of living closer to the basic conditions of life, making them more aware for a period of time of the basic necessities of life—food, shelter, warmth, ideas to engage their minds, friendship, faith—and what treasures these are. With our lives as mediated by technology and driven by consumerist compulsions as they are, simplifying one's life, even for a season, can be an invaluable reset of one's priorities and a clarifying point of reference as we grow older.



These are profound aspirations. The permanent residents of the Oregon Extension, who have hosted more than a thousand college students over the past 38 years, want to create a setting that contributes to achieving them. To disrupt our dependency on our “gear,” we ask (as many of our former students have recommended) that our students leave certain items behind. These include TVs and DVD players, and music systems without earphones. We seek students who are committed to learning what it means to “stay put” for these sixteen weeks, so we ask them to leave their automobiles home as well. We welcome personal computers, but request that students not use them for DVDs or publicly audible music except on weekends.

Digital Detoxification

At the suggestion of our students, we have also in recent years placed limitations on the use of mobile phones. Students are welcome to bring their phones, but we ask them to stow away their phones when they arrive. We store the phones safely, and students collect them for use every weekend and on our excursions. Public phones and email through a shared computer are available at all times on campus, and wireless zones in the Library and Cookhouse are opened up for web access on students' own computers on weekends and for research during the independent study phases of the semester. Students are welcome to take their laptops into Ashland on weekends, where they'll find free access to high-speed Internet connections.

We know that the mobile phone has become a virtual appendage, so it may be difficult to imagine living without it. We can report that at the end of each semester, our students—even those who at first hesitated to apply to the OE because they couldn't imagine being without a mobile phone—endorse this policy enthusiastically. They say it is the single most important factor in bringing a quieter spirit and a more satisfying academic focus to their lives. As they prepare to leave, at semester's end, some express regret that they must return to a world where unlimited mobile phone use is virtually unavoidable.

