

UO Field Camp FAQs

The UO Field Camp is three sections, each approximately two weeks long, that make up a broad-based field experience. Topics and instructors vary from year to year. In order to increase the breadth of subject matter, some sections are split into two separate offerings where you study either A or B, while other sections have two offerings where you spend time on both projects. If the section is split, you will have an opportunity to choose the subject matter. Two of the sections are camping sections, and in one section students will be housed in the University of Montana Western dormitories in Dillon, Montana. Break days and field trips are interspersed in each section. Field trips may be overnights, so be aware that some camping equipment will be needed even for the dormitory section.

This FAQ is long, so is divided into four parts:

[General questions](#)

[Logistics](#)

[Equipment](#)

[Non-UO student-specific](#), for students from other schools taking our field course

You can click on any topic to go to that part of the FAQ.

General questions:

- What can the weather be like where we will be staying/working?

Since the sites vary (and weather is fickle) it is hard to be specific. In Oregon, east of the Cascade Range, summer rain is usually infrequent, but can happen. Temperatures can get down to freezing at night, even in July. Daytime temperatures can get up into the 90s. You can expect about the same from Dillon, only without sleeping outside. The Equipment List (see link on the Field Camp website) is pretty comprehensive as to what would be helpful for clothing and gear for expected conditions.

- Can we bring our personal cars to field camp?

The short answer is "No" but if there is an especially good reason, we may approve it on a case-by-case basis.

- Can we have visitors?

Friends, family, etc. can only visit on days off. Again, if there is a special circumstance or need, ask and we will allow it if it makes sense.

- What is the alcohol/drug use policy?

The possession and/or use of illegal drugs are strictly prohibited anywhere during Field Camp (note – by University of Oregon policy, this includes marijuana). Alcohol and drugs are prohibited in State vehicles.

For the section in Montana - Alcohol and drugs are strictly prohibited on the UMW campus in Dillon, MT. This means that students are not allowed to store or consume alcohol in their dorm rooms or elsewhere

on campus. There are bars and other places where alcohol may be consumed, but students are expected to do so moderately and to be fully functional in all Field Camp-related activities.

During the camping sections, hard liquor and drugs are prohibited. Beer and wine are permitted for adults (legal age) outside working hours (i.e. evenings and days off). However, since they cannot be transported in State vehicles, they must be transported by personal cars (there will be a few in camp, and stores will be visited every few days during the camping sections). Again, students (and instructors!) are expected to partake responsibly and be fully functional for all instruction-related activities.

- What about smoking?

There will be no smoking in the field due to fire hazard (it is a requirement for access to much of the public and private land we'll be on that we have no open fires, which includes cigarettes). There is also no smoking in the vans or dorm rooms of the Dillon section. However, there are places to smoke in Dillon and we will designate sites away from any combustibles, outside of work hours, during the camping sections.

- What is going to be our proximity to towns for each section?

Since locations change year to year, this is hard to predict. Except for the section that is staying in Dillon, anticipate (and plan for) any kind of civilization to be at least an hour or more away by vehicle. In Dillon, a good-sized grocery store is about a mile and a half away from the dorms (pretty much on the opposite side of town, to give you an idea of the size of Dillon).

- Since we are traveling as a group, will there be activities on off days?

Off days will be basically self-organized by the students with the vans made available for short trips. Typically, 1 or 2 vans go to local sites of interest.

Logistics:

- Are we going to be backpacking with our camping gear or just hiking with daypacks?

You'll only need day packs. In fact, frame packs will be difficult to pack in the vans, so we recommend duffle bags or the like. You'll be taking day trips to field locations from wherever you're staying for the night, whether that be the dorms or the "tent cities".

- Are all meals provided, or will we be responsible for some?

All food is provided for the camping sections; for the section in the dormitories in Montana you'll have to make/buy your own lunches. There will be van trips to the grocery store to shop for those in Dillon.

- Will we have cooler space/refrigeration for personal foods?

In Dillon, there will be small refrigerators in every dorm room. While camping, there will be coolers.

- Is there a wake-up call in the mornings?

No. We are treating you as responsible adults.

- When camping, will there be a flushable toilet and showers available?

Camping sites vary by year to year, but portable toilets and stream-fed showers in camp would be the most primitive set up, and a full-service campground with flush toilets and hot showers would be the most luxurious. For the more primitive camps, vans are sent to town every 2-3 days or so - we rotate students to go get fresh food and take showers. There will also be a trip to a larger town for laundry, misc. shopping etc. about halfway thru the session – oftentimes this includes a trip to the town pool for swimming/showers.

- What is the laundry situation? Should we pack for clothes for 30 days?!

In the dormitories you'll have everyday access to laundry facilities. For the camping sections you'll need clothes for at least a week (two weeks if you don't want to go to town to do laundry).

Equipment:

- What camping equipment is provided, if any? Chairs? Shade tent(s) at base camp? Will there be power available for charging laptops, phones, etc.? Should I bring my own?

We'll set up a pretty complete camp, with large work tents (also a place to retreat if your personal tent leaks in rare rainstorms!), awnings to cook under, tables, chairs, lights, generators, etc. Solar chargers could be useful in camp, if you have one.

- Laptops—how are they kept during the work day? I'm concerned about leaving them in (a) an unsecured tent or (b) a very hot vehicle.

We lock the sensitive equipment like laptops into the trailer or cargo van (parked in shade) when away.

- Should we get our Brunton Compass from our school or will they be provided?

We provide Bruntons, but please bring your own if you have one.

- If we have other heat-sensitive things (i.e. medication) will there be a good place for things like this?

We'll have coolers for things that need to be kept cool in camp, and you will have a mini-fridge in the dorms. Ziploc bags recommended, so you can clearly label your items.

Non-UO student-specific:

- Do I pay out-of-state tuition?

If you are an Oregon resident, you will pay the in-state tuition, even if you attend college somewhere other than Oregon. Non-residents will pay the non-resident rate, even if they are students in Oregon currently. For the full policy: <https://admissions.uoregon.edu/residency/rules>

- What is the difference between quarter and semester credits?

Generally, 1 semester credit = 1.5 quarter credits. So one section of our field camp would be worth 2.66 semester credits, and all three sections would be 8 semester credits. You should confirm this equivalency with your college. An additional project could be added to your course if these totals will

not meet your school's field course requirements. Please discuss this option with our field camp director and your instructor before registering.

- How do I register?

As an "external" student, you will have a two-step process. Step one is to enroll in the UO, and step two is the actual course registration. Detailed information on how to complete these steps will be sent to you if you are admitted to our field course. There are no additional fees to enroll in the UO.

- What is the best way to get to Eugene?

Eugene has an airport with regular flights to Seattle, San Francisco, Denver, Chicago and other major hubs. It may be possible for camp staff to pick up students from the Eugene airport and bring them to campus. Portland is about two hours north of Eugene, and has a much larger airport and possibly cheaper flights. Several shuttles run from the Portland airport to the UO campus. You should plan on arriving the day before camp departure, as camp starts early on day 1.

- What about all my gear?

Camping gear could be mailed to the Earth Sciences Department office if you have concerns about additional baggage fees. It will be kept safely until you arrive.

- If I drive to Eugene, where will I be able to leave my car for six weeks?

We usually arrange for any field camp student vehicles to be parked at current graduate student houses. Please inform us if you will need this arrangement.