

Frequently Asked Questions

How does Explore run?

The Explore program is uniquely balanced to provide learning and growth opportunities in all areas of your life. The nature of it challenges you to be committed 100% spiritually, relationally, academically, and physically. We accept up to 32 Explore students. These students are divided into 3 or 4 mixed gender teams facilitated by a male and female intern (students who have been through Explore previously and are continuing towards the completion of their BAM OL degree). These teams essentially are your small group for the year, providing opportunities to learn to interact, function, minister and lead alongside very different individuals as you go through team building activities, wilderness skills training, and meet together every Wednesday night for Bible study, prayer, fellowship and fun at your host family's house. While at Camp Bighorn a staff couple opens their lives and home to your team, and similarly at Prairie.

In other traditional college experiences, you have a set amount of classes scheduled, and then can use the rest of your time how you wish and with whomever you want. Within the Explore cohort you are enrolled in 30 college credits, which you will take alongside the Discover and Sport students. Most courses will be taught in modular format (as opposed to over a whole semester) sometimes segmented, requiring completion of pre and post readings, assignments and major projects that overlap in our times between Montana and Three Hills. We will spend just over half of the school year in Montana, and approximately 2/3 of that time is spent in the outdoors or classroom training related to the outdoors.

What is a typical day like at Prairie?

7:30am—Breakfast

8:00—Class

9:25-10:20—Chapel

10:30-11:45—Class

11:45-12:40—Lunch

12:45-2:00—Class

2:15-3:15pm—Class

Overall your time on PBC campus will be more academically focused, since that is where our Bible/Theology professors are located. This also provides us with opportunities to be involved in the larger Prairie community. Your days will be more routine with specific unscheduled blocks of time for homework, extra curricular activities, rest and the ability to be involved in local ministries.

What is a typical day like at Camp Bighorn?

(Specifically during skills focused times)

7:30am—Breakfast

8:30—Chapel

9:00-12:30—Skills training (on rock, river, mountain...)

1:00-2:00—Lunch

2:00-5:30—Skills training

5:30pm—Supper

Time at Camp Bighorn will involve skills training, experiential education, and classroom instruction. Evenings will usually be available for free time, required reading, further study, group activities, and camp duties. There will also be unscheduled time throughout the week. It is the responsibility of the student to manage time appropriately, deciding when rest, solitude and play are needed.

Frequently Asked Questions Continued

What is life like at Camp Bighorn?

Prairie Bible College is partnered with Camp Bighorn to provide quality biblical training and wilderness ministry training. Camp Bighorn and its staff are invested and involved in the Explore program and the lives of each of the students. Because of this we also have the opportunity to be intricately involved in all that happens at the camp and in the surrounding community and churches (the town of Plains where the churches are is a 15 minute drive away). This involvement encourages a whole-life learning process as you live, study and minister in a small community and are expected to support other students, help with work around the camp, and be involved in serving groups that visit Camp Bighorn. For example, every month each student team rotates through a different ministry area at camp: *office/promotion* (helping keep Explore functioning, newsletters/updates, etc), *chapel* (planning and leading time each week day morning), *facilities* (cleaning washrooms, etc), and *kitchen* (setting tables, washing dishes on a daily basis, etc). Also, sharing a dorm room with your intern and the 3 other guys/ girls on your team provides further opportunity to engage in deep relationships (on PBC campus you will share a dorm room with one other member of your team).

What is available at Camp Bighorn?

Camp Bighorn is in a beautiful wilderness area, a 20-minute drive from Plains, MT (a small country town of about 2000 people), a 1 ½ hour drive from Missoula, and a 2 ½ hour drive from Spokane, WA. There are local ski hills and hot springs near by. Being a part of the Explore program, students will have access to Camp Bighorn's facilities and recreational equipment such as kayaks, canoes, river rafts, mountain bikes, baseball diamond, soccer field, and challenge course. At Camp Bighorn, there is a small computer lab set up with a few computers and Internet access. Wireless connection is available for personal laptops at Camp Bighorn.

What is available at PBC?

PBC campus is located in Three Hills, AB (a small country town of about 3500 people), about a 1 ¼ hour drive from Calgary and 3 hours from the Rocky Mountains. Students have opportunities to be involved with Prairie's athletic teams; however, due to the nature of the Explore schedule, Explore students have not commonly been able to participate with the Pilots, although each student is considered on an individual basis. There are other opportunities in Intramural activities such as ultimate Frisbee, or indoor soccer, volleyball, basketball, hockey, or the climbing club. PBC campus offers two computer labs with Internet access for all students to use. Wireless connection is available for personal laptops at PBC.

How does travel work?

All travel to and from Prairie's campus and Camp Bighorn is provided for the student at no extra charge. Travel to Camp Bighorn will take around 8 1/2 hours. Students are permitted to bring their own vehicle to Prairie for personal use during free time and on weekends, and may wish to drive their cars down to the camp.

Can I get a job?

Due to immigration policies and program demands which will not allow time for regular outside work, we advise students not to rely on an outside job for their finances.

Frequently Asked Questions Continued

What does the wilderness training involve?

The wilderness training time includes development of personal character, team formation, an understanding of experiential education, and technical and ministry skills. Students obtain a broad overview of instruction in each of the wilderness activities, gaining about 18 hours of basic instruction in each skill. Students receive additional experience, instruction and training (30 hours) in two specialized wilderness skill areas of their choice (In fall: challenge course, kayaking, rafting, rock climbing, and in winter: backcountry/telemark skiing, intro to mountaineering, winter camping).

Since the focus of the Explore wilderness training is on training and equipping students to use the wilderness as a tool for ministry, this training benefits any person concerned with servant leadership and/or Christian character development, whether they wish to continue in missionary work or a secular vocation. It may open career opportunities in areas such as working in camps, mission organizations, public and private outdoor/adventure/environmental education programs, and church-related youth organizations. Many different ministry organizations, camps and wilderness companies have expressed interest in employing Explore graduates. In the past we have had students continue at PBC for further education (ie. in the Bachelor of Arts in Ministry with Outdoor Leadership major) or at other colleges, or become employed as camp directors, wilderness guides, youth/church leaders, missionaries, educators, etc.

How much time is actually spent outdoors?

As noted in the Schedule Outline, time is spent each semester both on Prairie's campus and at Camp Bighorn. A larger chunk of time is spent at Prairie during the fall semester, while the larger chunk of second semester is spent down at Camp Bighorn. While at Prairie the bulk of your time will be focused in the classroom, as you will be taking theology and Bible courses, seminars and exams. While at Camp Bighorn, some time will still be spent in the "formal classroom" as you will be taking more classes and seminars, however, a large amount of your time at Camp will be spent focusing on the wilderness and outdoor aspects of the course. During the fall semester this includes the fall skills training, and during the winter semester this includes the winter skills training as well as other outdoor training and overnight out trips.

