

# OUTDOOR AND ADVENTURE LEADERSHIP, M.A.

Director, Associate Professor Rob Ribbe

The purpose of the Master of Arts degree program in Outdoor and Adventure Leadership (OAL) is to build Christ's church and benefit society worldwide by fostering the development of spiritually maturing, thoughtfully grounded, and practically skilled outdoor ministry professionals.

This degree is offered through HoneyRock, the Center for Leadership Development of Wheaton College, located in the Northwoods of Wisconsin. Since 1951, HoneyRock has operated as an experiential leadership development laboratory that integrates leadership of camp programs with liberal arts training and coursework to develop leaders for Christ's church worldwide. HoneyRock operates as a fully functioning camp year-round, providing a variety of youth focused camp and undergraduate programs as the context for graduate student learning. Our faculty are fully engaged practitioner-scholars, simultaneously leading a camp while they study and teach in the field.

A Masters degree in Outdoor and Adventure Leadership seeks to apply the biblically grounded, historic principles of whole person development and formation to leadership in the Christian camp, outdoor, and adventure ministry movement worldwide. Throughout human history, God has used temporary community experiences and engagement with creation to equip leaders for His mission of calling people to Himself, building Christ's church, and benefiting society worldwide. This program is designed for current ministry professionals, as well as those looking for excellent training to launch them into related fields. Students pursuing a degree in Outdoor and Adventure Leadership will pursue development of the following competencies for effectiveness in the field of outdoor and adventure ministries. This degree is applicable to those in the fields of Christian camping, outdoor education, challenge course facilitation, wilderness ministry, and outdoor related programming in college, church, or other organizational settings.

We hope that our graduates will be characterized as academically grounded, spiritually maturing and practically skilled leaders who humbly, compassionately, and wisely minister the Gospel and build up God's people in a constantly changing world.

By the end of their program, OAL students will have

## **Academically grounded (Effective People)**

- Articulated biblical, theological, historical and philosophical foundations of formation and ministry.
- Identified and applied established frameworks for context analysis, effective ministry planning, organizational effectiveness and leadership development.
- Formulated a philosophy of ministry that utilizes experiential education, temporary community and experiences in creation as a context and process of transformation.

## **Spiritually Maturing (Whole People)**

- Demonstrated ownership of their personal faith formation and holistic growth within Christian community, embracing creation as a context for transformation.

- Discerned their strengths, calling, limits, and passions for serving the needs of the church and the world.
- Demonstrated an understanding and affinity to the ministry of biblical hospitality, reconciliation, and solidarity with those from diverse cultures, backgrounds and traditions.

## **Practically skilled (Transformation Outdoor Experiences)**

- Designed and facilitated effective programs that foster personal and group development.
- Exercised leadership by effectively collaborating within an organization to accomplish shared goals, foster organizational health and facilitate leadership development.
- Demonstrated the necessary curiosity and skills of a practitioner/scholar: critical analysis, oral and written communication, and program evaluation.

## **Delivery Options**

It is expected that all OAL students have an active role in an outdoor related ministry while completing the degree so that coursework is immediately integrated with ministry practice. As a result, students have two options for completing the degree.

First, students can apply to live, work and study full-time as employees with HoneyRock. Students complete all courses as a cohort by taking linear or modular intensive courses with faculty at HoneyRock. An occasional online or hybrid course may be necessary based on a student's schedule. All students at HoneyRock may apply for a role as a graduate assistant or graduate program specialist, coordinating some aspect of HoneyRock's programs as the hands-on laboratory for ministry practice and collaboration. An employment application process is required in addition to the graduate school application. Residential students take 8-12 hours per semester and can complete the program in 2 years.

The second option is for students to participate from a distance while maintaining their role as an employee or graduate assistant in another camp or outdoor ministry related organization. In this model, students take courses in an online, hybrid format, or modular intensive format. This may require 1-2 weeks of residency at HoneyRock, the main Wheaton campus or an OAL partner organizations site once per semester during the program. The non-residential students typically take 4-8 hours per semester and can complete the program in 3 years.

## **Accelerated Degree Option**

Wheaton undergraduate students have the option to take graduate classes in OAL during their junior and senior years as part of their block tuition. These courses cannot count towards both their bachelor's and master's degrees. If done wisely, students can complete the MA in one additional year. Contact the OAL faculty or Graduate Admissions for more information.

## **Requirements**

**Requirements for the Outdoor and Adventure Leadership MA**, students will complete 6 hours of credit in the MML Ethos Core, 24 hours of credit in OAL core courses and 6 hours of credit in approved elective courses.

| Code                  | Title                              | Credits  |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>MML ETHOS Core</b> |                                    | <b>6</b> |
| MML 503               | Cultural Engagement                |          |
| MML 512               | Leadership and Spiritual Formation |          |

| <b>OAL Core Courses</b>  |   |           |
|--|---|-----------|
| BITH 565   | Christian Theology (online or intensive format)                     | 4         |
| OAL 518  | Research Methods for Ministry                                       | 2         |
| OAL 534  | Care and Counsel in Ministry  | 2         |
| OAL 549  | Program Philosophy and Planning                                     | 4         |
| OAL 595  | Foundations of Experiential Education                               | 2         |
| OAL 662  | Theology and Practice of Outdoor Ministry                           | 4         |
| OAL 663  | Organizational Leadership and Staff Development in Outdoor Ministry | 4         |
| OAL 682  | Integrative Seminar   | 2         |
| <i>Elective Courses</i>  |   | 6         |
| <p>The elective options allow students to specialize in an area related to their context and calling in outdoor ministry. Students will propose their elective courses for approval as part of their candidacy application. They may choose from one of the OAL specializations or develop their own by selecting from available and accessible courses in the Wheaton College Graduate School or at another college (with approval of OAL faculty).</p> |   |           |
| <b>Total Credits</b>   |   | <b>36</b> |

|          |   |   |
|----------|---|---|
| HESD 614 | Diversity and Student Development: Building Communities of Shalom | 2 |
| HESD 636 | Leadership in Higher Education                                    | 2 |
| HESD 639 | Legal Issues in Higher Education                                  | 2 |

As part of this 36-credit program, all graduate students are required to complete a theological studies requirement of 6 semester hours. For OAL students, this consists of OAL 662 and BITH 565 (<https://catalog.wheaton.edu/search/?P=BITH%20565>) Christian Theology.

#### **Requirements for the Outdoor and Adventure Leadership - Higher Education Concentration M.A.**

To complete the HESD concentration, students must complete at least 12 hours of HESD courses. This can be accomplished by taking HESD 546 and HESD 608 in place of OAL 595 and OAL 534. Students can add an additional 2 hours of HESD coursework by taking their elective in HESD.

| <b>Code</b>   | <b>Title</b>                                | <b>Credits</b> |
|---|---|----------------|
| <b>Required Courses:</b>                              |   |                |
| MML 512   | Leadership and Spiritual Formation          | 4              |
| MML 503   | Cultural Engagement                         | 2              |
| BITH 565  | Christian Theology                          | 4              |
| or BITH 566   | Foundations for Biblical Interpretation     |                |
| or BITH 578   | Global Church History                       |                |
| OAL 518   | Research Methods for Ministry               | 2              |
| OAL 549   | Program Philosophy and Planning             | 4              |
| OAL 662   | Theology and Practice of Outdoor Ministry   | 4              |
| OAL 682   | Integrative Seminar                         | 2              |
| HESD 595  | Higher Education: Past, Present, and Future | 4              |
| HESD 641  | Emerging Adult Development                  | 4              |
| <i>Choose 4 hours from the following two options:</i> |   | 4              |
| OAL 595   | Foundations of Experiential Education       |                |
| or HESD 546   | Facilitating Collegiate Learning            |                |
| OAL 534   | Care and Counsel in Ministry                |                |
| or HESD 608   | Well-Being in Young Adults                  |                |
| <b>Electives:</b>                                     |   | <b>2</b>       |

*Choose 2 credits from OAL Electives list or HESD list below as needed to reach a minimum of 12 hours in HESD. HESD concentration students can take up to 14 hours in HESD if desired by choosing the HESD options above and a HESD course for their elective credits.*