

Podcast Series: Exploring the West in Westminster

Episode one script

Introduction

Westminster's placement in the heart of the mountain West is central to its identity and part of what draws many to the college. Faculty, staff, students, and alum have experienced the inspiring mountain views and the spur of the moment hikes. The great outdoors are the soul of the West. The fall 2017 Westminster Expedition course and the Outdoor Education and Leadership program seek to explore the issues that are at the heart of the West—the place Westminster calls home. So join us as we explore the West in Westminster and learn from students and faculty who are working to ensure a better future for everyone.

For Exploring the West in Westminster I'm *first name, last name*. In today's episode of our series—our first—we will be learning more about Westminster Expedition from its founders and the students who are embarking on this journey. Joining me is my guest host, *first name, last name*.

Story

On August 23, while most of the campus is making their way to their first day of classes, Jeff Nichols, Brent Olson, 16 students, and a program coordinator will load their suitcases, books, extensive camping gear, and themselves into two vans and a trailer. Instead of finding a seat in a new classroom, they'll hit the road on a grand tour of the American West.

This semester-long trip serves as an experiential, hands-on way to explore the issues at the heart of the West. Participating in four interlinked courses, students will earn 16 credits in Environmental Studies and history. While they'll certainly be using those books they're bringing, students will also learn by immersing themselves in the landscapes.

As they move along their figure eight route—first heading northwest and then back down past the salty city, taking on the Southwest—students will gain knowledge directly from the land and ecosystems and the people who live, work, and study in those places.

Professors Brent Olsen and Jeff Nichols were the brains behind this journey and their mission is to equip students with a breadth and depth of experiential knowledge that allows them to create a better future for the West. I sat down with these innovative professors to learn more about how the Westminster Expedition will impact the learning landscape and help students make a difference.

[Insert interview w/ Brent Olsen and Jeff Nichols]

Both Brent and Jeff felt it was important for students to not only learn from, but also give back to the communities they interacted with. In addition to participating in service projects, students will be sharing their experiences and knowledge directly with the Westminster community through photo essays, interviews, research, and blogs. We caught up with a couple of the students to learn more

about why they're excited to embark on this expedition and their ideas to foster a better future for the West and the world.

[Insert interview w/ expedition students]

Closing

This course is one of the many ways the Westminster community is helping students combine their passions and skills to live a meaningful life and make a positive impact on the world around them. Join us in our next episode to learn more about students' unique approaches to tackling the issues of the West and the world.

We want to continue to support innovative student learning and exploration, so we're asking you to make a gift today. Your gift helps the Westminster community make a difference. Visit westminstercollege.edu/givetoexplore to make your gift today.

Sample Interview Questions: Brent Olsen and Jeff Nichols

****Make sure to get a recording of them stating their names (first and last) and titles (introduce themselves)***

1. How did you come up with Westminster Expedition?
2. What went into developing the course beyond the initial idea and making it a reality?
3. What do you hope students take away from this academic journey?
4. What is the importance of experiential, immersive, hands-on learning?
5. How will this course impact the future work of students?
6. How are you preparing students to tackle environmental issues?
7. Why is it important that students live a meaningful life and work to make a difference?
8. What would you like to see Westminster students do to work toward change?
9. What are some big/critical environmental issues facing the West and the world?
10. Where do you see this course going? What impact will it make?
11. Why should people give to support this course and the Outdoor Education and Leadership program?

Sample Interview Questions: expedition students

****Make sure to get a recording of them stating their names (first and last), year, and majors (introduce themselves)***

1. What drew you to Westminster and Westminster Expedition?
2. What are you hoping you take away from this journey?
3. What do you get from experiential, immersive, hands-on learning?
4. Have you faced any challenges while preparing for this course?
5. How are you living a meaningful life and working to make a difference?

6. What are some of the issues you're most passionate about?
7. How do you hope to make a positive impact on the West and the world?
8. How will this course help you achieve that?
9. Where do you see yourself after your time at Westminster?
10. Why should people give to support this course and the Outdoor Education and Leadership program? How would it impact you personally?