

# Winter Update for North House Instructors

## Dear Instructors,

A new year seems to already be 1/12 complete! Amazing how the days fly by. We are all keeping our fingers double-crossed for more snow up here at North House: though a thin blanket covers the ground, there is still quite a bit of grass visible in town, and we haven't had much of a strong dose of winter yet. There's still time! In the meantime, we are hard at work on the Spring/Summer catalog, and with a new catalog come several updates....here's a few...

## Early Bird Gets the Discount!

As I mentioned in my last update, the program committee has been considering how to adjust our course pricing to best inspire students to sign-up early and often. After reviewing what many other schools do and soliciting input from many of you, the board has decided to implement an **Early Bird price for students who register 6 weeks in advance**, in place of the existing peak and off peak pricing.

In many cases, the "off peak" price will now become the Early Bird price. The current "peak" price will become the "Regular Rate." There are several exceptions to this, and I'll be reviewing each course individually and adjusting the price based on the history of enrollment, which season it usually happens in and how early students have signed up in the past. Your input is, of course, invited. This has no effect on your base rate of compensation, and hopefully a negligible effect on the gross tuition. We are hopeful it will help more courses reach minimum enrollment earlier, and ultimately lead to more courses happening!

## Campus Welcome

As a staff, we've decided that we would like to be a bit more purposeful about how we welcome students to campus, and find an opportunity to tell the larger story of the school in the fabric of the weekend. We're still working out exactly what that means, but we planning to host a 15 minute **Welcome Session for all classes each Friday and Saturday morning at 9 am** in the student commons in the Blue Building and likely outdoors as the weather permits. One of us will chat a bit, we'll ask all of the instructors to introduce themselves and then we'll head off to class. **Please plan to attend the session that works best for your class:** we promise to keep things brief so that class can get underway quickly. If your class isn't happening on Friday or Saturday mornings, we'll make other arrangements with you when you get here.

## New Faces, Returning Friends

This time of year is full of anticipation for us, as we finalize plans for the upcoming summer and fall. Three big news items to report so far:

- **Lloyd Kahn**, author of popular books *Homework* and *Homework II*, is coming to North House! He'll be here for the **Northern Sustainability Symposium (May 3-6)** as our featured speaker and instructor. His latest book, *Tiny Homes*, has already been selling like hotcakes. We're excited to meet him and host him on campus.
- **Mountain Stage** returns! We had so much fun last year that with the support of the community in Grand Marais, we're going to do it all over again. Mountain Stage will be

recording two shows as part of **Unplugged XI**. The schedule will be the same as last year: radio shows with a variety of musicians on Thursday and Friday nights, and Unplugged Songwriters-in-the-round on Saturday night. Put it on your calendar; though we're still shaping the feel of Unplugged XI, we hope you can join us!

- **Norman Kennedy**, National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow, Scottish balladeer and weaver and spinner extraordinaire, will be our featured instructor during Unplugged this year. He'll be teaching a spinning class and offering public programming. We're honored to host him and excited to hear his ballads and stories.

### **Interns Incoming!**

On Feb 15, we welcome 3 new intern faces to campus: Beth Homa, Ian Barrett and Candace LaCosse. I've attached short biographies so you can feel like you know a bit about them when you see their smiling faces on campus.

### **New & Improved E\*News**

We've launched a new format for our email newsletter. We can now include pictures, links, and other nifty features that will hopefully improve our ability to communicate with our community. We're also experimenting with theme-specific newsletters that are offered a few times a year. This should give us a better way to reach out to students with a particular interest, whether to tell them about a new course, featured instructor, or service learning opportunity. See <http://www.northhouse.org/enewsletter.htm> to register for areas of interest to you, and stay tuned as we figure out how best to use them as a great outreach tool.

### **Instructor Directory**

As was requested at the last instructor gathering, we are working on a contact list of North House instructors that we would share with each of you, in order that you can better contact each other. If you would rather that your information not be included, please let me know and we won't include it. We'll share the list in the coming weeks.

There are many other projects underway around here in our continuing efforts to support the mission of North House (surprise, surprise). We are making progress fleshing out an assistant instructor model: further details and requests for your ideas this spring. We'll also be wrapping up construction on the Outdoor Student Commons: hopefully by June, the project will be mostly complete. We welcome your ideas about what else we should tackle soon; send them our way.

Thank you for sharing your time and talents with us; we look forward to seeing you on campus soon.

-Jessa and the rest of the clan at North House

