Tahoe Semester
Student Handbook
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Director’s Welcome

Greetings from the shores of Lake Tahoe! It is my privilege to welcome you to this iconic place in the American West situated in the very heart of the Sierra. We will be exploring with our minds, bodies, and spirits what it means to be a 21st century person charged with caring for the environment and for each other while attempting to understand how we fit into the natural order. The forests and peaks surrounding us offer an ideal setting in which to take up our task.

As a professor of philosophy and director of the Tahoe Semester, I have been helping students integrate the exploration of wilderness and academic pursuits for the past 20 years. I started in much the same way that you are starting right now, by participating in an undergraduate program in the mountains that combined rigorous academics with wilderness exploration in a small, tightly knit community. The experience of connecting wilderness with academic inquiry in a close community left an indelible mark on me and I arranged for my graduate work to be done in a place where I could ski, climb, and mountain bike as I pursued my doctorate.

I wrote my dissertation on Aristotle (someone who knows a great deal about the integration of the natural world and the mind) and have been leading students through both the wilderness of the history of ideas and the great mountain ranges of the West since 1999, experiencing first-hand the kind of community that can be formed when we study and travel in wild places together. The experiences in front of you this semester will produce a more intrepid mind and heart in the classroom, and it is very likely that you will make life-long friends not just with the people you encounter here, but also with the ideas we discuss and debate.

Contemporary philosophers and historians of note agree that the dominant feature of postmodern life is fragmentation. Sadly, university life is no exception and one’s spiritual, academic, and social life can exist in almost entirely separate spheres of experience. My earnest hope is that during the Tahoe Semester you will become a more highly integrated person in mind, body, and spirit and become a more effective agent of change in a world that is in dire need of greater wholeness.

David Williams, Ph.D.
Director, Tahoe Semester
& Professor of Philosophy
Centre College
Program Overview

The Tahoe Semester is a study away program administered by Centre College and the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities (APCU). The program is based at the Zephyr Point Presbyterian Conference Center on the southeastern shore of Lake Tahoe. Living in a learning community, students investigate the many aspects of the environment through the application of science and humanities courses in conjunction with co-curricular activities that allow students to explore the natural world. Academic credits may be earned in subjects such as Biology, Environmental Science, Religious Studies, and Philosophy. In addition, an interdisciplinary seminar combines concepts from all of these subject areas with insight into the Tahoe Basin and surrounding areas.

The academic experience is enhanced through speakers who address regional environmental issues and through site visits within and around the Lake Tahoe and Sacramento communities in order to create a deeper connection to the goals of the program.

Environment

Students are immersed in stunning surroundings on the shores of Lake Tahoe in an environment that allows them to explore nature by way of the humanities, science, and communal living. This is enhanced through structured experiences in backpacking and extracurricular opportunities such as mountain biking, skiing, kayaking, hiking, rock climbing, stand-up paddle boarding, and trail running. These opportunities, as well as the rich curriculum, provide a chance to experience, investigate, and apply academic coursework through experiential learning.
The Sciences

Students engage in hands-on experiences with the physical and natural sciences to gain an understanding of the Tahoe Basin and the surrounding region.

The Humanities

Students utilize and engage in humanities to examine the rise of science as it pertains to the order of modern life. Students establish an understanding of their place and how the nature of science has transformed the natural world.

The Community

Students are exposed to, and discover, what it means to be a part of a community through three distinct developmental stages. The first fosters spiritual and social development through an introductory backpacking experience, the second emphasizes the academic journey and how it applies to living in community, and the third synthesizes the spiritual, social, and academic components of the semester during a weeklong integrative trip.
Diversity

Through the integration of the sciences, the humanities, and the community, students develop a richer appreciation of diversity as a necessary component of culture and the natural world.

Leadership

Students cultivate a stronger sense of leadership and self-confidence through elements of communal support in the physical, academic, and spiritual arenas.

Additional Program Opportunities

Program activities during the semester include opportunities to build community by dining together, worshipping together, and hanging out at the coffee shop, in town, on the lake, or in the mountains.

Zephyr Point is a beautiful place, but you will need to get away occasionally for a change of scenery. Students are encouraged to organize group outings for coffee, hikes, snowshoeing and exploring the Tahoe area. To get off campus you can 1) utilize Uber or Lyft or 2) organize a group and use one of the Zephyr vehicles for your trip. If you would like to make such an excursion with a Zephyr vehicle, schedule it with the RD and he/she will arrange transportation for you. You are free to head into town on your own, simply let a student life staff member know your intentions before you leave.

Other program opportunities include:

- Employment/Jobs: students will have the opportunity to apply to work on site.
- Sacramento Exchange/Visit: students will hear from local groups and organizations focused on environmental justice in the capitol of California!
- Introductory Backpacking Trips: whether you have backpacked before or not, take advantage of the learning that happens both in and out of the classroom!
- Extracurricular Opportunities (optional skiing, hiking, mountain biking, etc.). Since Lake Tahoe is close to incredible water and mountain activities, students have many opportunities to explore!
- Zephyr Point Conference Center is close to a wide range of shopping, recreation, and dining opportunities in and around South Lake Tahoe
Community Charter

Upon arrival at Zephyr Point, and at their first community meeting, students will create a community charter that specifies the goals and expectations that they will impose upon themselves for the semester. This charter cannot go beyond student life expectations established by the Lake Tahoe Semester, but it allows each semester to discuss and ultimately agree to the values and community goods they wish to seek in the development of their community.

Community Life Coordinators will help guide the community according to the residence life expectations of the Lake Tahoe Semester and the charter that they create amongst themselves.

Program Location

The Tahoe Semester is based at the Zephyr Point Presbyterian Conference Center on the southeastern shore of Lake Tahoe. The program location offers students unique and exciting structured experiences in backpacking and extracurricular opportunities such as mountain biking, skiing, kayaking, hiking, rock climbing, stand-up paddle boarding, and trail running.

These opportunities, as well as the rich curriculum, provide a chance to experience, investigate, and apply academic coursework through experiential learning in Lake Tahoe, Sacramento, and the surrounding area.

Zephyr Point Presbyterian Conference Center

660 US-50 Box 906
Zephyr Cove, NV 89448
(775) 588-6759 x 100

Zephyr Point Website
View the Zephyr Point Presbyterian Conference Center on a map by clicking here.
Personal Health and Wellness

During the program, it is important to monitor your health and that of others, especially if you have a unique medical history or chronic illness. Be “on top” of your own health when something goes wrong and do not let things worsen or wait for someone to notice. Ask for help and offer help.

For the sake of your health:

- Aim for a balanced diet and three meals per day
- Drink lots of water; stay hydrated!
- Wash your hands often
- Stay rested: try to sleep at least eight hours per night
- Walk, jog, run, do yoga; stay active and exercise
- Take care of yourself emotionally; invest in relationships

Altitude Sickness

Participants are always encouraged to drink plenty of water and keep exercise at a minimum on the first day, as Lake Tahoe is at a higher elevation than most are used to.

Mental Health

If you have a history of emotional or psychological problems, please consult with a mental health professional before leaving for study away to discuss the potential stresses of study abroad life. You will have some access to a professional mental health counselor while participating in your study away program.

Counseling Centers in close proximity to Zephyr Point:

- El Dorado County Health & Human Services Agency
  https://www.edcgov.us/Government/MentalHealth
- Carson Tahoe Health
  https://www.carsontahoe.com/behavioral-health-services.html

Cultural Transition Resources

Transitioning into another environment can be both exciting and stressful. Developing coping strategies in advance of this transition is an important way to manage the unknown situations you could encounter during your Study Away program.
Zephyr Point Services

Housing

Students will be housed in Lakeview Lodge. All the rooms are doubles with shared bathroom facilities. There is a large, shared kitchen on the ground floor. Rules governing visitation hours for the opposite gender will follow those governing the residence halls on Centre College’s main campus.

Housekeeping and Laundry

Living in residence requires maintenance of a clean, safe, and sanitary living area (inside the bedroom, bathroom, and surrounding areas) with cooperation between the roommates assigned to that housing area. Students are expected to leave their housing area in a clean and orderly condition at checkout. Extra cleaning and additional check out fees may be assessed for failure to comply with proper procedures.

Expectations while living on the Zephyr Point campus:

- No ski or snowboard boots may be worn inside any of the Zephyr Point facilities inside any of the Zephyr Point facilities
- No food or drink except water in guest rooms.
- A walkthrough with Zephyr Point staff will be arranged to inspect your facilities before departure. If any rooms are found excessively dirty, you will be asked to return to clean these rooms before leaving.
- Damages to facilities are chargeable to all residents of the housing unit. Minimum restoration fee for graffiti is $100.
- All residents of the housing units will have charges applied to their Student Account (at their respective Colleges/Universities) for any missing items including linens & keys.
- You may contact the Cabin Office to locate lost items. If shipment is required, the item(s) will be shipped at the owner’s expense. Items left on site by guests are kept for 30 days.

Please note that there are laundry facilities in the Lakeview Lodge that are available to all Tahoe Semester participants.
Dining and Meals

Eating together is a central component of community. You are not required to attend any meals, but attendance at lunch and dinner is strongly encouraged. We will gather before every evening meal and cover announcements and other important information at evening meals.

Classes will be scheduled so that meals follow immediately after class sessions in order to allow for the continuation of conversation over a meal. Information on dietary restrictions will be collected prior to the semester. The dining facilities at Zephyr will strive to accommodate student requests with regard to dietary preferences.

- Shoes and shirts are required in the dining area.
- No cups, plates or utensils are to be taken from the dining hall.
- Please be sure to bus and clean your tables.

Hosting Visitors

Zephyr Point is a large conference center that will most likely be able to accommodate your visiting family and friends. Visitors are not allowed to stay in student housing. If you plan to have visitors, simply provide the Zephyr staff advance notice and it is very likely that accommodations on sight can be arranged. There is also additional lodging in the surrounding area of South Lake Tahoe and beyond. Meals for visitors can also be arranged. Again, simply inform Zephyr staff in advance of your visitors’ needs and they can make the requisite arrangements. Charges and payment for accommodations and meals will be arranged through Zephyr Point.
Communication Guidance

We live in a world of interconnectedness aided by amazing technology. For the most part this is good as it allows us to close distances with family and friends. At its worst technology can keep us from being present to the places and people immediately surrounding us. There are no rules on technology use at the Lake Tahoe Semester, but you are encouraged to regulate your use of technology in order to maximize the good things that some distance can bring about: perspective, time to reflect, time to converse and to think and pray deeply. If you are simply recreating through texting, Facetime, Skype and the rest the world you inhabit every day, then what is the point of studying away? If bandwidth becomes a problem at Zephyr Point, stricter rules may be enforced. Please limit downloading photos, movies, streaming services, etc.

There is a courtesy phone in the lobby of the Tallac Center. This phone allows calls to the office, local numbers, or 911. You may make credit card calls using toll-free access. There are no payphones on-site.

Travel for Breaks and Holidays

Shuttle service from the Zephyr Point Conference Center to Reno Airport is available for a fee.
Centre College Policies

All students participating in the Tahoe Semester will be governed by the policies of Centre College. Students should familiarize themselves with these policies before arriving at the Zephyr Point Conference Center. They apply to all individuals associated with the Tahoe Semester.

Sexual Misconduct Policy:
https://centrenet.centre.edu/ICS/New_Campus_Life/Sexual_Wellbeing/Sexual_Misconduct_Policy.jnz

Academic Dishonesty Policy:

Two Required Forms

Centre College requires that each student studying off-campus fill out a hard copy of our liability release/alcohol form and our medical form. Students who will be 21 by the first day of their program can read and fill out both forms themselves in just a few minutes; students who will not be 21 by the first day of the program must also get a parent’s signature on the liability release/alcohol form. Non-Centre students participating in the program must also complete these forms.

To receive these forms, contact Dr. Lori Hartmann, director of the Center for Global Citizenship at lori.hartmann@centre.edu.

Alcohol and Late-Night Policy

When problems have occurred for students who are off campus, there have almost always been two elements involved: 1) alcohol and 2) students being out alone (without another student) late at night.
The following policy is in effect for all Centre College off-campus programs:

1. If a student uses alcohol irresponsibly, as determined by the program director and director of the Center for Global Citizenship, the minimum fine will be $100. The director may also require that the student sign a statement saying that the student will not have alcohol during the duration of the program, and both the student’s parents and the Centre Dean of Students will be informed.

2. If a student is out at a bar or club after midnight alone—that is, without another student—the program director and director of the Center for Global Citizenship will together decide on an appropriate punishment, including the most serious one of separating the student from the program without any academic or financial credit.

3. Students who purchase, sell, possess, distribute, and/or use narcotics or other drugs while participating in the Tahoe Semester programs will be subject to disciplinary process as determined by Centre College’s Department of Public Safety and Center for Global Citizenship.

Zephyr Point Campus Rules

THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ALLOWED:

- Cars, motorcycles, or other personal motor vehicles
- Pets of any kind (Service animals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis)
- Firearms, pellet guns, fireworks, etc.
- Alcoholic beverages (on the grounds or in conference facilities)
- Skateboarding, roller blading, using scooters, snowmobiles, dirt bikes, etc.
- Camping (tent or no tent) or living in RV’s is prohibited by local zoning regulations.

Conference facilities are for those renting the facility and not for public use. Attendees should not enter facilities rented by other group(s) without an invitation from the other group(s) using them. Tallac and Tahoe Center lobbies are common areas that may be used by all of our guests.

TO PREVENT FIRES:

- Smoking is not permitted inside any of the Zephyr Point facilities. Smoking is allowed only in designated outside areas (containers are provided in designated locations). There is a significant fee for non-compliance to the smoking policy to cover the cost of restoring to a smoke-free condition. Smoking is restricted to outside designated areas where smoke containers are supplied and cabin decks.
• No outdoor campfires or rubbish fires. (Fireplace fires are limited to moisture seasons only.)
• Charcoal grills provided by Zephyr Point may be used if: 1) they are watched at all times, and 2) coals are disposed of properly in the fireproof buckets provided at each cabin. No wood fires. Lake Tahoe is a high fire danger area.

BEACH RULES:
• Swimming is at one’s own risk; there is no lifeguard on duty.
• No food or drink on the pier.
• Beach and pier close nightly at 10:00 p.m. They do not open on Sunday morning until 11:00 am.
• No jumping or diving off the pier.
• Beach paraphernalia must be cleared off the beach each time you leave the beach area. (Store against wall or remove)

BOATING:
• Kayaks and canoes are permitted only outside of the pier/swimming area and must be removed when not in use.
• Motorboats and other boats are prohibited on Zephyr Point shoreline and pier area.
• Inflatable rafts are permitted in the swimming/pier area.
• Mooring, docking, launching and parking of boats are not permitted.
• Embarking and disembarking of passengers from the pier or beach is prohibited.

TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT:
• Walk on designated trails only. Existing trails are not to be altered nor new trails made.
• Garbage must be placed in bear-proof dumpsters placed around the center. Please latch them securely.

FOR PEACEFUL ENJOYMENT:
• Quiet must be observed between 10:30 p.m. and 7:30 a.m.
• Be considerate by moderating their voices and sounds of activities at all times. (Sound carries here!)
• Foul or offensive language is not acceptable at Zephyr Point.
Important Safety Information

GENERAL SAFETY MEASURES

- Be informed about the city and safety issues.
- Give your information to others: Home, On-site administration, and carry phone numbers of faculty with you.
- Keep a tight hold of your belongings in public areas.
- Travel in groups.
- Inform the Zephyr Point Tahoe staff where you will be if you leave the campus.
- Inform Zephyr Point Tahoe staff immediately of any situation or person that causes you to feel in any way uncomfortable or threatened.

LOCAL POLICE/FIRE INFORMATION:

- **Call 911 for emergencies**
- South Lake Tahoe Police Department  
  1352 Johnson Blvd, South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150  
  Phone: (530) 542-6100

EMERGENCY SERVICE INFORMATION:

- Barton Hospital  
  2170 South Ave, SLT, CA 96150  
  (530) 541-3420
- Barton Urgent Care  
  155 Hwy 50, Stateline, NV 89449  
  (775) 589-8900

ON-SITE PROGRAM STAFF INFORMATION

- David Williams  
  (626) 513-1887  
  dcwilliams@apu.edu
- Ryan McKenzie  
  (775) 588-6759 ext. 106  
  rmckenzie@zephyrpoint.org
- For after-hours emergencies call (775) 588-6759 x 8
Pre-Departure Training

The semester prior to Zephyr Point Tahoe you will be meeting with your cohort over Zoom. These meetings are mandatory and a huge help in preparation of logistics, academics, and support to learn about the Zephyr Point Tahoe semester program. Also, the Community Life Coordinators who host these meetings are there to be a resource and guide through each of these meetings. Below is the breakdown for the amount of preparation you will receive before you depart:

- Academic Advising with a Community Life Coordinator
- Pre-departure meeting: Program overview, team building with cohort, logistical prep
- Study Away pre-departure emails: Logistical preparation
- On-site Program Orientation

Provided for you in addition to meetings are also pre-departure email communications and program information folders which have information about travel and transportation, health and safety, google slides from meetings, and more. Be sure to check your email and read through the program information folders.

Transportation

Note that Zephyr Point is located approximately 22 miles from Carson City, Nevada and approximately 53 miles from Reno, Nevada. Travel time between Zephyr Point and the Reno-Tahoe International Airport is about one hour, weather permitting.
Students should plan to travel to the region through the Reno Tahoe International Airport.

- Airport Shuttle
  Shuttle service will be provided upon your initial arrival between the Reno Airport and the Zephyr Point Conference Center.

- Flight Luggage Requirements
  Students are required to provide their own luggage in compliance with Airline policies. Check the airline carrier for specific luggage details.

**Area Dining/Shopping Options**

The Zephyr Point campus includes a coffee shop called Cabin 28. It is a sweet spot to get coffee and hang out with your peers.

The resort town of South Lake Tahoe is located only three miles from Zephyr Point. It has shopping, restaurants, coffee shops and grocery stores. While all of your meals will be provided, it would be good to budget for a meal out per week (if you choose) and a couple of trips to coffee shops.

As you plan and budget for your semester in Zephyr, there are some additional costs that will be at your own expense such as books, coffee, meals, laundry, and other personal costs.

**What to Bring**

Pack layers of clothing, including a sweater and thermal underwear, gloves, and a warm hat for the cold. Remember that the secret to staying warm is in layering, not in wearing thick, bulky coats.

**Personal items to bring:**

- General study supplies
- Laptop
- Power strip/surge protector
- Required Textbooks
- Required class supplies
- Personal Hygiene items
- Linens (regular size twin beds)
- Towels
- Backpack/Daypack
- Alarm clock
- One dressy outfit for functions like the opening and closing banquets

**Outerwear:**

The elevation at Zephyr Point is 6,400 ft. The first months of the semester will be cold to cool but warmer as the semester progresses. You’ll want plenty of warm clothing and good quality snow/rain gear. The following is a list of some good outdoor equipment retailers:

- REI [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com)
- Sierra Trading Post [www.sierratradingpost.com](http://www.sierratradingpost.com)
- Campmor [www.campmor.com](http://www.campmor.com)
Optional Items:

• Pillows/Blankets (personal preference)
• Camera
• Sleeping Bag (we will provide 0 degree sleeping bags, but if bringing your own, see specific info on Trek Equipment list)
• Musical Instruments
• Lightweight Crazy Creek style chair
• Broad games, cards, etc.

Do Not Bring:

• Car
• TV or Dvd player
• Small Fridge
• Xbox, Playstation, etc
• Pets
• It’s best to leave jewelry and other expensive personal items at home

Backpacking List:

• Light Fleece Jacket (1)
• Insulated Jacket/Parka (synthetic is preferred)
• Long Underwear-top (NO Cotton)
• Long Underwear-bottom (NO Cotton)
• Wool/Fleece pants
• Wool/Fleece Gloves (1pr)
• Waterproof Insulated Gloves or Mittens (mittens are warmer) (1 pr)
• Wool/Fleece Hat (2)
• Waterproof Shell Jacket
• Waterproof Shell Pants
• T-Shirts (2-3) (Cotton is fine)
• Shorts (1 pair)
• Wool socks (3 pair)
• Waterproof Hiking boots (Broken In)
• Down/synthetic booties

Personal Equipment:

• Sunscreen/Lip balm
• Sunglasses
• Baseball Cap & Bandana
• Personal Hygiene kit
• Headlamp
• Journal/Pen
• Cup/Bowl and spoon
• Water bottle (2)
• Camera
• Clean clothes for ride home

Backpacking Notes

• We will provide all backpacking equipment for those who need it. If you plan on bringing your own equipment please take note of specific info about each piece of gear.
• Backpack (needs to be at least 5,000 cubic inches or 80 Liters)
• Sleeping Bag (synthetic Bag rated to 0-degrees) NO Down Sleeping Bags!
• Sleeping Pad (full length closed cell foam or Thermarest style pads work great)
• Bivy Sack (fully waterproof)
About Lake Tahoe

It is important to learn about the historical and cultural context of where you will be studying in order to limit generalizations about a location, to verify assumptions, and to be informed accurately through knowledge and insights from “the locals”. Deeper analysis of historical context allows for deeper learning and for posing critical questions about equity, privilege, and power. The following information is relative to the location where you will be studying.

History

For 400 generations, members of the Washoe, Maidu and Paiute tribes foraged, fished and hunted the basin’s natural bounty. These Indigenous people took advantage of mild summer weather in the Sierra to collect edible and medicinal roots, seeds, and plants. The town of Truckee, California is built on a traditional Indian campground and there is ample archeological evidence of Washoe villages dating back about 9,000 years. The Washoe named the Truckee River “a’wakhu wa’t’a,” and they call Lake Tahoe “da’aw.”

Learn more about some of these historical events that have shaped Lake Tahoe:

- [https://thetahoeweekly.com/2015/06/the-discovery-of-lake-tahoe/](https://thetahoeweekly.com/2015/06/the-discovery-of-lake-tahoe/)
- [https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/ltbmu/learning/history-culture/?cid=fsm9_046620](https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/ltbmu/learning/history-culture/?cid=fsm9_046620)

General information

- Population: 22,036
- Demographics:
  - White: 82%
  - Another race: 9.49%
  - Asian: 3.57%
  - Two or more races: 2.85%
  - Black or African American: 1.48%
  - Native American: 0.42%
  - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0.23%
- [https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/southlaketahoeicitycalifornia?](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/southlaketahoeicitycalifornia?)
General Contact Information

TAHOE SEMESTER OFFICIALS

General Landline: 775-588-6759 (office hours)
General Faxline: 775-588-1095
Program Director: Dave Williams, : 559-676-3240
dcwilliams@apu.edu
Operations Manager: Michele Williams, : 559-676-1669
mwilliams@zephyrpoint.org
Email: Zephyr Point Conference Center: zephyr@zephyrpoint.org

THE CENTER FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP (CGC) AT CENTRE COLLEGE

Mailing Address: Lori Hartmann (Director)
Center for Global Citizenship
Centre College
600 West Walnut Street
Danville, KY 40422
Telephone: Lori Hartmann, Director, 859-238-5371
Email: lori.hartmann@centre.edu
Telephone: Karen Ryan, Assistant Director, 859-238-5285
Email: karen.ryan@centre.edu
Website: https://www.tahoesemester.org/

ASSOCIATION OF PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (APCU)

Mailing Address: Jeff Arnold, Executive Director
C/o Agnes Scott College, Box 1102
141 E. College Avenue
Decatur, Georgia 30030
Telephone: Jeff Arnold, Executive Director, 470.443.1924
Email: jeff.arnold@presbyteriancolleges.org
Telephone: Janna Wofford, Operations Manager, 470.443.1948
Email: jannawofford@presbyteriancolleges.org
Program Dates: Spring 2022

Tuesday, Feb. 1 .................. Arrive and get settled
Wednesday, Feb. 2 ............... Welcome and Orientation
Thursday, Feb. 3 ................. Classes Begin
Sat.-Sun. (March 19-27) .......... Spring Break
Tuesday, May 10 ................. Last day of class
Thurs.-Fri. May 12, 13 .......... Final Exams
Saturday, May 14 ............... Departure
I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.

-- Henry David Thoreau