What Paperwork Needs To Be Done?
You must complete and return the enclosed forms postmarked by the date indicated in your cover letter. The balance of the program fee is also due at that time (checks payable to Colgate University). Please note that the enclosed Medical History Form is different than the form sent by the Office of Admissions and must be returned in order to participate in Wilderness Adventure.

Where Do The Trips Start & End?
Session I  Trips start August 7th.  Participants meet at Base Camp between 2:00 and 2:15 pm.  Trips end August 14th.  Participants will be ready to leave Base Camp by 9am.
Session II  Trips start August 19th. Participants meet at Base Camp between 2:00 and 2:15 pm.  Trips end August 26th. Participants will be ready to leave Base Camp by 9am.

Wilderness Adventure introductory activities officially begin at 2:30 pm at Base Camp. At this time, there will be a short “welcome” to students and parents. We ask that students and parents please say their good-byes beforehand, as you will immediately break into your trip group to meet the leaders and other participants. After organizing personal and provided group gear, your group will have dinner before driving to the Beattie Reserve (located three miles from campus). You will camp there for the night and have a hearty breakfast the next morning before driving north to the mountains, lakes and rivers of the central New York wilderness for the next five nights.

Upon returning from your trip, all groups will meet at the Beattie Reserve for dinner, a closing campfire, and a final night of camping. The next morning groups will return to Base Camp to clean and check-in gear. We recommend bringing a change of clean “street” clothes and a few shower items so you can clean up prior to traveling home after Session I or to meeting your roommates on orientation day. Participants will be ready for pick-up on departure day (Session I: August 14; Session II: August 26) by 9am. Parents are encouraged to come to campus on August 26th to bring their daughter or son’s belongings and to participate in the University’s Orientation activities planned for parents.

What if I Need To Arrive In Hamilton A Day Early?
We can accommodate Early Arrivals for both sessions. If you cannot make it to campus by 2:15 the day your trip begins, then PLEASE arrange to arrive here the previous day and we will provide you with lodging and food. If you need to arrive early, please contact the Wilderness Adventure staff to make arrangements.

How Do I Get To Colgate From The Airport Or Train Station?
Call Birnie Bus at 315-824-1260 ext. 221 or 222 Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. A one-way fee to or from the Syracuse airport, train or bus station is $98 (gratuity included). A one-way fee to or from the Utica train or bus station is $88 (gratuity included). An additional fee of $10 per person for the second and third passenger is applied; no additional charge for passengers four, five or six. Other contact numbers are as follows: After-hours, weekends, or emergencies: 315.335.5527 or 315.269.1318; Shuttle driver: 315.335.5546

If you are receiving FULL Financial aid for a WA trip, we will also pay your shuttle fare from Utica or Syracuse. Students who are driving to campus may register their vehicle with the University and park it in the Colgate lot behind the Community Memorial Hospital for the duration of the trip.

Where Do I Put All My Stuff For School While On The Trip?
You may not move into (or store belongings in) your dorm room prior to August 26th. We can provide VERY LIMITED storage (for Session II WA participants only) in a secured classroom in West Hall. There is room for individuals to store 2-3 boxes or bags. We cannot accommodate car loads of belongings. You will receive luggage labels from the Office of Residential Life that you must complete and adhere to your boxes at the time of drop off. These boxes will be moved to your dorm room for you on August 26th. Items can also be shipped to your CU box mailing address and will be held in the mailroom for pick-up on August 26th.
What If I Have Dietary Restrictions?

Please be specific about any dietary restrictions, preferences or allergies on your medical form and application. We will call you in early July if we have any questions about how to meet your dietary needs and if we need you to provide any specific food items that we cannot purchase locally.

How Do I Prepare For My Trip?

Backcountry travel by foot, boat or bike can be strenuous. We recommend that you exercise at least 3 times/week to build endurance and strength (choose an activity that you enjoy, such as running, walking, hiking, biking, or swimming). If on a canoe, kayak or mountain bike trip, we recommend that you also incorporate some upper body strengthening (push ups, sit-ups, weights) into your exercise routine. While physical stamina is important, please remember that your attitude is just as important. Backcountry living is challenging but rewarding – you will be living for a week with a group of 6 to 15 people – and thus it requires respect for others as well as patience with the unexpected.

Who Will Be Leading My Trip and What Will I Learn?

Two or three upper-class students who are Outdoor Education staff members lead each Wilderness Adventure trip. All staff have completed an extensive seven-month training program that focuses on risk management, leadership, teaching, and technical outdoor skills. Staff members are certified in CPR and Wilderness First Responder, a 72-hour backcountry medicine course. Wilderness Adventure trips are a unique introduction to both the Colgate community and backcountry travel. Bring an open mind and come ready to learn! Over the course of the trip, your leaders will teach you a progression of basic skills (map reading, campsite set-up, cooking, etc.) so that your group may become self-sufficient. Emphasis is placed on safety awareness and self-responsibility. You will also learn and practice Leave No Trace techniques in order to reduce impact on the land and the history of the natural environment.

What Gear Do I Need?

All Gear lists and gear rental forms are posted on the Wilderness Adventure web page. You are expected to bring all of the “mandatory items” on the gear list for your own comfort and safety. Items on the Gear List with an “*” may be rented from the Outdoor Equipment Rental Center. Please note that clothing cannot be rented through the Rental Center due to state health codes. There is a limited amount of rental equipment available so if you have adequate personal gear, please bring it. Foam sleeping pads are available for rent except for the kayak trips, which will be provided with inflatable sleeping pads. If you need to purchase any gear/clothing, the following stores are recommended as starting points in your search for competitive prices: Army/Navy surplus stores, Sierra Trading Post, Campmor, L.L. Bean, Gander Mountain, Wal-Mart, Bass Pro Shop, Eastern Mountain Sports, or REI. All group equipment such as tents, cook stoves, pots, etc. will be provided. See the gear list for information on eco-friendly options.

A note to Canoeists and Backpackers: Your boots are your most important piece of gear!

It is essential that your boots fit properly and that they are well worn before the trip – we cannot overemphasize the importance of “breaking in” your boots. In the past, students have been evacuated from trips due to blisters caused by ill-fitting and/or new boots. Start wearing your boots now – preferably for 2-4 hours at a time while carrying a weighted book bag.

Kayakers do not need to bring hiking boots or frame backpacks. Sneakers and a book bag will suffice.

You can find more information and downloadable forms on the Wilderness Adventure page at www.colgate.edu/outdoored