



Camp Odyssey

An experiential journey transforming youth into emerging leaders. What's Your Piece?



SUMMER 2011 CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

This one-week residential camp consists of 60 youth, ages 14–18, selected from applicants across Oregon and Southwest Washington. The group is carefully chosen for a balanced representation across cultures, ethnicities, genders & orientations, geographic & national origins, classes, religions, and both visible and invisible abilities. The resulting diversity helps break down stereotypes that divide our communities, and all participants are recruited from collaborative networks and alumni, ensuring long-term sustainability.

Day	Topics	Activities
Sunday	Arrival & Orientation Introductions & Community Building	Community Meeting Sharing Circles Cabin Meetings/Journals
Monday	Trust & Team Building Community Building & Inclusion Introduction to Stereotypes & Systems of Oppression Class, National Origin, & Religion	Outdoor Challenge Activities Cultural Sharing Targeting, Media Literacy, & Bullying Exercises Power Exercises Community Meeting Sharing Circles Cabin Meetings/Journal
Tuesday	Race & Culture	Racial/Cultural Sharing Groups Racism Exercises Community Meeting Sharing Circles Cabin Meetings/Journal
Wednesday	Gender	Gender Sharing Groups Sexism Exercises Community Meeting Sharing Circles Cabin Meetings/Journal
Thursday	Sexual Identity, Minority, & Orientation Physical & Invisible Differences	Homophobia & Heterosexism Exercises Ableism Exercises Community Meeting Sharing Circles Cabin Meetings/Journal
Friday	Making Connections Taking It Home & Taking Action Sharing Circles Closure Celebration	Role Play/Discussion Regional Network Meetings Sharing Circles & Silent Solo Cultural Sharing/Talent Show
Saturday	Community Closure Departure	Final Clean-up Community Farewells & Ceremony

Cost: Camp Odyssey is free to all Campers, including transportation to and from. We work with participants to reduce any possible barriers, whether material or accessibility considerations.

Location:
University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

A Project of Janus Youth Programs

www.NWCampOdyssey.org





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CURRICULUM METHODOLOGY

Camp activities are structured through a series of tools and methods, which, when used repetitively throughout the week, result in the following outcomes: an improved ability to live and interact with groups different than one's own; an increased level of engagement in school or community activities; an increased ability and desire to address topics around privilege, oppression and difference; and an expanded support network of allies and partnerships. The tools and methods detailed below are often referred to as "The Process," and collectively form the foundation and framework that is applied to all programming, both during a Camp week, and in our Year-Round Program (YRP).

Cyclical Learning: These five steps work in an ongoing manner, layered throughout individual exercises, an overall topic, and the week. This cyclical structure naturally builds opportunities for Campers to learn and make discoveries at their own pace. Instead of teaching or telling participants what to think or feel, we prefer meeting Campers "where they are."

- **Experience.** Activities involve role-play, live-action, visioning, etc., and are designed to expose thoughts, feelings and behaviors toward specific or targeted groups. Our Campers share that they find their own voices in this step, through honesty and the honesty of others.
- **Feel.** Structured, facilitated dialogues in large and small groups as well as pairs encourage participants to reflect upon experiences through listening, compassion, accountability and understanding. These dialogues foster acceptance and empathy, instead of just tolerance or sympathy.
- **Learn.** Facilitators, targeted groups and individuals further share information, statistics and examples of oppression, bridging emotional learning with the more cognitive aspects of differences. When awareness of social issues are first personalized and then expanded through concepts, language and knowledge, Campers easily move towards a celebration of differences.
- **Heal.** Emotions revealed during activities can sometimes be tied to pain or hurt, so targeted groups are supported in identifying and asking for what they need. More connections and links develop as Campers extend conversations into recurring forums such as Sharing Circles and cabin groups, and as alliances form, deep levels of bonding are commonly experienced.
- **Act.** The learning and understanding gained within the Odyssey community is carried into participants' daily lives through a commitment to action. After Odyssey preps Campers with skills, networks and resources, they are widely known for advancing the common good, having gained a deep and personal understanding of what that means to them.

Inclusion: Diversity programs minus diversity are inherently flawed. It is from this understanding that we recruit and select participants, relative to the group and needed representation. These methods result in a unique community environment, allowing exposure to people and interactions beyond normal comfort zones.

Guidelines: Touchstones to Camp's success, Odyssey Guidelines are agreed upon, practiced and modeled, and require the community to *Be Honest, Take Risks, Respect Others, Take Responsibility for Self, and Honor Confidentiality*. These simplistic, easy-to-interpret and –internalize principles are a true *practice*, where humanity is respected, knowing that good intentions and continued effort are the goals, not perfection.

Facilitation: To promote youth leadership and challenge traditional power structures, most activities employ a co-facilitation model, where teams are chosen with experience, demographics and age in mind. Although subtle at first glance this establishes an atmosphere honoring equity, inclusivity and community building.

Immersion: To get youth and (possibly rigid) adults to trust The Process, we also ask them to "stay in the boat." Community members, from the Campers, facilitators & operations staff to the youth leaders, counselors & medical staff, are all expected to participate alongside each other to the fullest of their ability at all times. We ensure this occurs by limiting external distractions or visitors, which in turn, allows participants a safe space.

Celebration: Experience, science and history teach us that humans are programmed to relate and connect through rituals, art, music, stories, humor and companionship, and within the Odyssey community, we respect this knowledge. Whether through campfire songs or cultural sharing, this tool is valued highly, serving to nurture and reinforce the deep bonds formed at Camp.