CORE

A Life Transforming Experience

CORE Student Handbook

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Welcome!

First of all we just want to thank you for taking an interest in the CORE program, and we're excited that God could be leading you to join us here in Pennsylvania. We believe CORE has the potential to radically change your life, and to draw you even closer to Christ. Know that we are praying for you as you seek to know God's will, and where He's leading you in the coming months.

What is CORE?

CORE is a 13-week discipleship and evangelism training program of the Pennsylvania Conference of Seventh-day Adventists designed for all adults (18+), to empower them to own their faith, find their calling, and to live it out. Whether you decide to take a gap year after graduating from high school, or decide to take a mission focus break while in college, as you're changing professions, CORE is a great way to revitalize your faith, and to root you in the Adventist message.

Overview

CORE mainly consists of two components; in-class instruction, and hands-on ministry experience. In the classroom portion you will receive instruction on the core beliefs of Adventism, different principles of ministry, practical Christianity, health & lifestyle, and many more areas. The hands-on ministry portion will include giving personal & small group Bible studies, literature evangelism, health evangelism, preaching, public evangelistic meetings, and cross-cultural missions. Yeah, as you can see you'll get a lot of experience in ministry. Because of the rigorous nature of the program we encourage our students to avoid unnecessary distractions, and maintain a balanced and healthy lifestyle. We also do not allow students to be employed while enrolled in the CORE program, as there won't be time for additional commitments.

The CORE program begins August 19, 2024 and ends November 17, 2024. Students should plan on arriving August 18, 2024.

Other Important Details

Morning Worships
Each class day there will be a 30-minute morning worship service. Each student will be sharing worship messages at different times during the program, and students with musical background will take turns leading out in song service.

CORE Book Club
There are some books that are just too good not to read, and for those we have the students divide into groups, discuss what they've learned, and how it's touched their lives. This will take place at different points throughout the program.

Daily Schedule (This is a general schedule, some times may vary)
Sunday
Brunch 10:30am
Dinner 4:30pm
Outreach (Sack dinner) 12:00pm-6:30pm

Monday-Thursday
Breakfast 7:00am
Morning Worship 8:00am-8:30am
Class 8:30am-12:00pm
Lunch 12:00pm
Class (Mon, Tue, Thur) 2:30pm-5:00pm
Outreach (Wed) (Sack dinner) 1:30pm-6:30pm
Dinner 5:00pm

Friday (Off day for students to do laundry, shop, etc.)
Breakfast 7:00am
Lunch 12:00pm
Dinner 5:00pm (Will vary with sunset changes)
Vespers at 6:30pm

Sabbath
Attend local church/Bible studies/Enjoy nature!

Location

CORE is located on the campus of Blue Mountain Academy in Hamburg, Pennsylvania. It's gorgeous here! The Appalachian Trail is literally across the street, and you've got a beautiful mountain view with lots of opportunities for biking, hiking, etc. It's a peaceful and quiet location with beautiful scenery all around. The dorms have been newly renovated as well. On campus there's a beach volleyball court, a tennis court, a soccer field, a large gym for indoor basketball or volleyball. Blue Mountain Academy also runs a health food store on the campus where you can stock up on all of your Adventist favorites.

Within 5 minutes of the campus are a Red Robin, Burger King, Subway, Taco Bell, Verizon, AT&T, Lowe's, Walmart, and Aldi. Within 35 minutes you have Allentown and Reading with even more of the necessities of life, Target, Costco, Whole Foods, etc. There's also a Planet Fitness within 25 minutes of the campus.

CORE Culture

We expect all CORE students to live by Biblical principles and the standards and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist church. https://www.adventist.org/en/beliefs/ Below are the standards that we have chosen to adopt for the CORE program. Students are not expected to immediately agree with all the rules and requirements in our student manual, but are expected to fully comply with them, and are encouraged to investigate the reasoning and rationale behind them. We try to keep the "requirements" to a practical minimum. There are things we may do here that wouldn't necessarily take place in your home or workplace just because of the nature of a program like this, in an environment like this.

Personal Devotions

Jesus prayed in John 17:3 that, "…this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." We believe the best way for someone to truly get to know God is to develop an experience with Him in His Word. So for this reason we strongly encourage students to develop a consistent and meaningful devotional and prayer life. It will only make your ministry and personal experience even more effective.

Relationships

As listed above, we expect all CORE students to live by Biblical principles, and the standards and practices of the Seventh-day Adventist church. So any appearance of evil or impure relations with the opposite sex are prohibited, and are grounds for dismissal, without a refund. Some ex-

amples of inappropriate relations between sexes would be back-rubs/massages, hand holding, going off together alone outside of the group, prolonged unnecessary physical contact, etc. For the sake of maintaining the proper appearance with the opposite sex we discourage any off-site trips that do not have at least 3 people if two genders are involved. We believe godly relationships and marriage are <u>a beautiful blessing</u>, but because of the rigorous nature of the CORE program we don't allow for dating relationships amongst fellow students during the length of the program (Assuming they weren't in a relationship upon arrival). Also, being located on the same campus as an academy, with minors present, we have a zero tolerance policy regarding any relationships with students at the academy. If a CORE student is found out to be dating or courting the romantic interests of any of the academy students it will be grounds for immediate dismissal with no refund.

Punctuality
It is expected of every student to be on time and ready to participate for worship, class, church, and outreach. This means that all of the needed attire, supplies, outerwear, etc. need to be on your person at the time of the event or function. Punctuality will be one of the primary metrics used in determining the level of reference that students receive upon graduation.

Dress
Students are encouraged to dress in a clean and modest fashion that would be reflective of followers of Christ. So we ask that students not wear anything that would be offensive, revealing, or distracting. All brands and messaging worn on clothing should be uplifting and respectful in nature. Examples of revealing and distracting attire would be cleavage, midriff dresses, short shorts/skirts (length of skirts/dresses should go to the knee or below), yoga pants/tights without something covering hips, tank tops/spaghetti straps, sleeveless shirts, anything that is see through, or two-piece swimwear for females. Classroom attire can be clean casual (jeans without holes, t-shirt, hoodies, khakis, polos, button up shirts, etc). But no shorts, pajamas, track or sweatpants, are allowed in the classroom. Hats are permitted in the classroom, but not in church or on outreach. Hoods are not to be worn in the classroom, on outreach, or at church. Sleepwear is not to be worn outside of the student's respective dorms. Outreach attire is khakis and a tucked in collared shirt for the men, and khakis or skirts that reach to the knee and a collared shirt or blouse for the girls. For the outreach tops no big logos or brands are allowed. Comfortable shoes will make your life much easier in door to door work.

Respect

As a Christian institution it should be clear that we are expecting all students and staff to treat each other, and the communities we engage with with the utmost respect and courtesy. As guests on another school's campus, and the Pennsylvania Conference Office it is also expected that the faculty and students of the academy and conference office be treated with respect as well. We are guests on their campus, and want to be an appropriate witness to all present. Because we are a school, with staff who have leadership responsibilities, we also expect all staff to be respected and listened to regardless of age differences. There are directives, and instructions that they have to give as part of the nature of their position, and disrespect shown in the thick of activities, outreach, class, etc. is an unnecessary and unhelpful response. A student's level of respect for leadership and others is also a large determining metric used in deciding the level of reference that students receive upon graduation. And will also determine whether they could qualify for the post graduate internship program.

Overall Atmosphere

Having a positive and affirming spirit goes a long way when you have a group of people with different backgrounds, all coming together in an intensive based environment. We strive to focus on the positives and why God brought us here, which is to serve Him and others.

Academics & Grades

Students will receive grades on their Bible memorization quizzes, book readings, attendance & punctuality, dorm room checks, outreach effort, and overall attitude. The level of effort put in determines the level of reference you will receive after graduation and whether you would be accepted into the post graduate internship program. We have three tiers of recognition in our program; Certificate of Excellence, Certificate of Completion, and Certificate of Attendance. The Certificate of Excellence recognizes a student's excellent effort and would lead to a positive reference upon completion. A Certificate of Completion recognizes that a student attended, but multiple areas of growth are seen and they would receive a reference with some reservations. The Certificate of Attendance will only recognize that a student attended the program but no reference can be given.

Campus Life

Housing

All students will be housed in the dormitories of Blue Mountain Academy. Generally our students will be in a different wing or floor than the academy students, but will be rooming to-

gether with fellow CORE students. Nearly all of our dorm rooms have been recently renovated which is a blessing. Each room will have two twin beds, two desks and two closets. Students are expected to bring their own bedding, towels, etc. There are common bathrooms with shower stalls in each hallway. It's expected that students will keep their own rooms neat and organized, as well as the bathroom that they share. Deans will have freedom to inspect rooms to ensure that they are kept in good condition, and that we are being good stewards of the academy's space. Student's rooms will be checked weekly by CORE staff and a slip of paper will be left after the check stating the grade and what needs improvement if it is unsatisfactory. There are washers and dryers available for use that are shared with the academy, and we can only use them one day per week, so please refrain from leaving things unattended for long periods of time. Unfortunately we are unable to provide accommodation for any married couples as students at this time.

Off-Campus Housing
Should students have family in the area, or a place to stay within a reasonably commutable distance of Blue Mountain Academy they can receive a discounted tuition rate. It is expected that all off-campus students attend all classes and outreach events if they are to receive full credit for the program.

Food
CORE students will eat in the academy cafeteria three meals a day, Monday through Friday, and two meals a day on Sabbath and Sunday. The local church will be supplying our lunches on Sabbath. The cafeteria has a new professional company running it's operations and serves delicious vegetarian and vegan dishes with a nice salad bar.

Responsibilities
Students will all share in cleaning and organizing responsibilities around the dorm, and the CORE classroom. We will divide up the students into groups who rotate on these different duties. Learning responsibility, and working as a group, are invaluable for the growth and development of the students, and are also a token of our appreciation to the academy and conference office for allowing us to use their property.

Needed Items
All students will be provided with a binder and some notebook paper, but they would do well to bring either a laptop/tablet for note taking and research, or a notebook and pencil/pen/paper. There will be classes where having a computer would be very helpful, but it is not "required".

Prohibited Items

Toasters, microwaves, candles, incense burners or coffee makers are not allowed in the dorm rooms. No caffeinated beverages are to be brought onto campus (e.g. coffee, tea, energy drinks, etc.) Illicit drugs, tobacco, lighters/matches, alcoholic beverages, pornography, occult paraphernalia, weapons, guns of any kind, gang symbols, are not tolerated on campus. Discovery of the presence of any of these items is grounds for immediate dismissal, without a refund. CORE also prohibits the bringing of any gaming systems and televisions on campus as students can't afford to have distractions that pull them away from an already intense program that requires their focus.

Dismissal of Students

CORE reserves the right to dismiss any student, without a refund, who consistently fails to abide by the policies and guidelines described in this handbook.

Application Process

CORE is a program for all adults (18+) who are committed to God, and to the teachings of His Word, and so the application process is our means of determining who will best appreciate and contribute to the vision and mission of the program. We can only accept applications that are fully completed.

The application process is as follows:

1. CORE receives completed application form, application fee, and references.
2. An interview is then scheduled and completed with our staff over zoom.
2. After CORE staff and board reviews the application, references, and discuss the interview you will receive notification of acceptance or denial by email. Upon acceptance, included in the acceptance email will be an invoice with the tuition payment process. And then you will begin the background check process as well. Background check information can be found here https://pa-conference.org/backgroundchecks/
3. A $500 deposit is required within 30 days of acceptance letter being received. This deposit is refundable if students drop out by June 1, 2024. And an additional $3,000 is required by move in date August 18, 2024.
4. Final payment of tuition is due by November 17, 2024.

Steps For Application Form Completion

1. A completed online application form, or a completed physical application.

2. A non-refundable application fee of $35
3. A recent photo of yourself, email or digital preferred.

For the safety of our program, and the campus as a whole all applicants will go through a background check. The information on what is required for the background check, and how to go about it can be found here https://paconference.org/backgroundchecks/. Background checks take no more than a couple weeks to process, and then we can give any confirmation or changes in acceptance status if needed. The cost of the fingerprinting for the student upon arrival is the responsibility of the student.

All applications are processed in the order in which they are received. Students will receive a response to their applications in a timely fashion upon completion of the application process. We have a limit on how many students we can receive, so applying sooner rather than later is a good idea.

References
People who are filling out reference forms should have at least 6 months worth of experience and interactions with the applicant. We will not accept reference forms from family members or personal friends of any sort. Because our program has a spiritual emphasis it is preferred that your references can speak to your spiritual and/or academic experience. Some examples are a pastor, elder, deacon, pathfinder leader, Sabbath school or Bible teacher, etc. We will also accept professional references from work supervisors as well. Reference forms can be filled out on our website, and are to be kept confidential from the prospective student.

Health & Medical Information
It's very important for the sake of the health and wellbeing of the applicant, and the campus, that students give accurate information regarding their health, and mental health history that require, or have required professional treatment. This includes past, recent, or current substance abuse/addictions. We also need to be aware of any allergies that you have so we can report them to the cafeteria.

International Students
CORE is not an accredited educational institution, so for this reason we cannot issue any visas to international students. They will need to secure a visitors visa with the U.S. State Department and an embassy near you. CORE will issue students an acceptance letter stating that you will be here doing missionary projects for a set length of time and that your food and lodging will be

provided during your stay for the length of the program an no longer than that. We also will require students to buy a roundtrip ticket for their travel, or separate tickets for arrival and departure. This ensures that immigration knows that you are not planning to stay in the country long-term. Visitor visas are usually good for a 6-month stay in the U.S. It's understandable that a student will want to do some sight seeing or traveling while in the U.S. and so we are fine with students coming early or leaving later than the length of the program, but we still will require a roundtrip ticket, or an incoming ticket, and a separate outgoing ticket to permit you into the program. Students will have to do the research themselves regarding what the requirements are to secure a visitors visa to enter the U.S. and talk with their own embassy to get all of their paperwork in order before arrival. You can find more information at *https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/tourism-visit/visitor.html*.

Finances

Tuition
The total cost of the CORE program is $7,000. This covers lodging, meals (3 meals a day Mon-Fri, and 2 meals a day Sat & Sun), and instruction through the entire 13-week long program. Cost breakdown is below.

Cost Breakdown
$3,200 Room & Board
+ $3,800 Instruction Fees
= $7,000 Total Tuition
+ $400 Fuel Fee (For Non-Driving Students)
+ $35 Application Fee
+ $25 Background Check Fee (Student pays this when fingerprinted)

Transportation
Students who are bringing vehicles must be willing to provide transportation to other students without vehicles for outreach, church and CORE activities. All vehicles must be licensed and insured, and a copy of insurance will need to be submitted to the CORE office before arrival. Non-driving students will be asked to pay a fuel fee of $400, in addition to their tuition, to go towards fuel expenses for those with cars, and their use of them for CORE activities. These funds do not go towards non-CORE activities, so if students are seeking a ride for non-CORE activities from those with cars, they are encouraged to contribute to the fuel costs.

We will be offering airport transportation to and from the Lehigh Valley International Airport in Allentown, Pennsylvania for students who need it upon arrival in August for move-in, and in November after graduation. Airport trips are $25 each way. If a student arrives at any other airport it is their personal responsibility to get to the CORE campus.

Payment Schedule
We require a $500 deposit within 30 days of acceptance, which can be refunded by June 1, 2024 if a student needs to drop out before the program begins. No refunds will be issued after June 1, 2024. Then an additional minimum $3,000 payment by the August 18, 2024 move in date. From there we will work with each student to arrange a payment schedule to ensure they are able to completely cover their tuition by their graduation November 17, 2024. Every student will be provided a fundraising letter upon acceptance that we have written on their behalf with our letterhead and an explanation of what they will be doing in their time here. One of our staff will be in regular contact with an accepted student to map out their payment plan.

Another Tuition Assistance Option For Young Adults
Young adults students who want to reduce their tuition costs can do so through summer canvassing programs if they so choose. Pennsylvania Conference has a summer canvassing program and they can explore this more by emailing the Publishing Director Johnathan Ryan at jryan@pa-conference.org

Refunds
All cancellations would need to be done by June 1, 2024 to receive a refund of the deposit and any additional tuition payments made up to that point. No further refunds will be given after June 1, 2024.

Any further questions regarding the CORE program can be communicated via:
Email: info@coreevangelism.com
Phone: 484-232-9239