



First Year Outdoor Adventures | September 2026

Frequently Asked Questions

What are First Year Outdoor Adventures (FYOA)?

FYOA at UC Santa Barbara is designed to bring first year students together, create friendships, and to give new Gauchos a taste of the spectacular outdoor opportunities that the region has to offer. We offer three different FYOA programs for first year and transfer students: Multi-Sport Adventure, Backpacking Adventure, and Colorado River Canoe Adventure. Each of these trips last approximately 4-7 days and are held prior to residence hall move in, the Week of Welcome, and the start of classes.

Multi-Sport Adventures

September 5 – 11, 2026

September 12 – 18, 2026

- Camp on Santa Cruz Island in the Channel Island National Park
- Kayak through Santa Cruz Island sea caves and along the Santa Barbara coastline
- Climb in the Adventure Climbing Center
- Climb at premium sites in the Santa Barbara Mountains
- Build friendships at the Adventure Ropes Course
- Hike local canyons and trails

[Multi-Sport Adventure Online Registration](#)

Colorado River Canoe Adventures

September 5 – 11, 2026

September 12 – 15, 2026

September 14 – 18, 2026

- Canoe the Colorado River in Black Canyon below the Hoover Dam
- Soak in natural hot springs and the sauna cave
- Explore the unique geology and ecology of the region
- Discover canyons, trails, and natural springs on day hikes
- Spend nights camping along the river

[Colorado River Canoe Adventure Online Registration](#)



Backpacking Adventures

September 6 – 11, 2026

September 13 – 18, 2026

- Spend six days in the Sierra backcountry
- Explore flora, fauna, and intrinsic beauty of the alpine wilderness
- Bond with your peers
- Develop survival skills for the outdoors and college

[Backpacking Adventure Online Registration](#)

Why participate in First Year Outdoor Adventures?

These trips combine some of the most popular outdoor activities in the local area and are a great way to get to know your surroundings and community. Most importantly, you will create friendships that will last throughout your UCSB career and into the future. Our main goals for each participant are to:

- Smooth the transition into college
- Forge lasting relationships with others who share similar interests
- Enjoy an incredible adventure
- Become a part of the UCSB community
- Develop a sense of environmental responsibility

What is included? For all programs, where applicable:

- Camping and all group equipment
- Three meals per day (while camping) and all necessary group cooking equipment
- Professionally trained trip leaders, rope facilitators, and kayak/rock/canoe/backpack guides
- All kayaking, canoeing, backpacking, and climbing equipment
- Transportation to and from UCSB and campgrounds for all activities
- Group guidance and team building activities
- All permits, reservations, and entrance fees
- Leaders with Wilderness First Aid and CPR training

How much does it cost?

- Multi-Sport Adventure: \$945
- 4-Day Colorado Canoe Adventure: \$395
- 5-Day Colorado Canoe Adventure: \$495
- 7-Day Colorado Canoe Adventure: \$795
- Backpacking Adventure: \$645



How do I register?

Once you choose your adventure, you **must complete all 3 steps**:

1. Complete the Online Registration:
 - a. [Multi-Sport Adventure Online Registration](#)
 - b. [Colorado River Canoe Adventure Online Registration](#)
 - c. [Backpacking Adventure Online Registration](#)
2. Complete the [Pre-Trip Health and General Information Google Form](#)
3. Complete the [Participant and Program Agreement Docusign](#)

Important: As you are an incoming student, you will need to create a new account ("Sign Up") in our registration system with your personal email address prior to September 1. However, after September 1, use your UCSB NET ID email for any student Recreation pricing throughout the school year. If you have any questions, issues or concerns, please email Wren Brown: wren@recreation.ucsb.edu.

What if I have never been camping before?

All you need is a good attitude! No experience necessary! On the trip, your leaders will teach you the basic skills you will need to be comfortable while camping, hiking, kayaking, canoeing, canyoneering, or rock climbing. For those who are unsure about conditioning for the trail, hesitant about heights, or concerned about an open water kayak experience, a First Year Outdoor Adventure is a wonderful opportunity to challenge yourself while under professional guidance. The only prerequisite is a desire to participate.

What kind of shape do I need to be in?

The FYOA programs are designed for beginner to intermediate skill levels. We encourage everyone to engage in some type of regular physical activity in preparation for the trip in order to maximize comfort. However, most activities are "challenge by choice." Therefore, each participant has the opportunity to choose the level they participate in during their trip. Of course, you will need to participate in canoeing or backpacking on those specific trips.

Do I need any special equipment?

Adventure Programs provides all the group camping equipment. You will need to carefully review the "Personal Equipment List" for each trip. If you have any questions about gear, don't hesitate to contact us.



Is it safe?

As with many things in life, adventures can be dangerous. To minimize this risk, all staff members undergo specialized training that emphasizes risk management, first aid, and the importance of continuous education and development. All Adventure Programs staff are at least Standard First Aid & CPR for the Professional Rescuer Certified (American Red Cross). Our outdoor leaders are certified at the Wilderness First Aid or Wilderness First Responder levels (Wilderness Medical Associates, wildmed.com). Our greatest consideration is risk management and safety.

What about drugs or alcohol?

No drugs or alcohol! University regulations and program policies do not allow alcohol or recreational drugs on these trips. Anyone violating this no-tolerance policy will be immediately invited to leave the trip and responsible for their own transportation home. Thank you for your cooperation. Any prescription medications must be noted on the health form at time of registration.

How do you choose who gets a spot?

All registrations completed with enthusiasm will be placed on the trip of their choice on a first come, first served basis. A total of 20 participants will be accepted on Canoe and Multi-Sport trips; 10 participants on Backpacking. If your preferred trip is full, you may place your name on our waitlist by contacting wren@recreation.ucsb.edu.

How do I coordinate my Res Hall move-in?

This depends on your situation, family plans, the trip you attend, and Residence Hall assignment. All programs will be finished no later than the Friday of move-in weekend. We will return to the UCSB Recreation Center where students and families can reconnect. Students should plan accordingly to begin moving in then (i.e. have friends or family meet you with your things).

Where can I store all my stuff for my Res Hall while I'm on the trip?

We DO NOT have any on-campus storage available for personal belongings while on FYOA. Please plan accordingly to have your move-in belongings meet you at the end of the trip.

What if my move-in date & time is before we return?

Our partners at Housing & Residential Services do a really great job distributing the demand and rush for moving in. Although they really try to have folks move in within your allotted 2-hour window, a late move-in is fine. However, you may not move in prior to your scheduled time as no one will be available for check-in.



What if my move-in date is on Sunday?

Please make arrangements for lodging on your own until your move-in day.

What if I am scheduled to arrive earlier than the start date?

Unfortunately because of the very busy schedules of our leaders, we are unable to guarantee pick up outside of program dates. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns on this topic. We encourage participants in this position to make accommodation arrangements near their program's starting location.

How do I communicate with friends and family while we're away?

Contact will not always be easy or even immediately possible due to the very busy schedule and outdoor nature of our program. An Adventure Programs leader will ensure that an emergency cell phone will always be present, but not always in service range. In cases of family emergency, UCSB Department of Recreation, Adventure Programs can be contacted at (805) 893-3737 or adventure@recreation.ucsb.edu.

What about spending money on the trip?

A small amount of spending money will easily get you through the week. There will likely be opportunities to purchase food, drinks, or other special treats during longer periods of travel time.

I have specific food or health requirements, can this be accommodated?

Please note any food or health requirements when filling out the Adventure Programs confidential health form. Our staff will take into consideration all food and health requirements for each participant during meal preparation.

Who or what is Adventure Programs?

UCSB Adventure Programs is a non-profit program and the official University Outdoor Program in the UCSB Department of Recreation. Adventure Programs exists to enrich campus and community life by providing educational and recreational experiences through wilderness trips, outdoor recreation classes, and group programs. UCSB Adventure Programs is committed to offering programs that:

- Provide opportunities for self-discovery and leadership
- Offer exceptional customer service and professionalism
- Foster cooperative behavior by respecting individual differences
- Experience isn't necessary; only the desire to participate
- Allow continual learning and growth



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Department of Recreation

- Teach essential outdoor skills
- Encourage challenge within an acceptable level of emotional and physical risk
- Are accessible to a wide range of ages and ability levels
- Strive to be inclusive to everyone
- Promote wilderness ethics and stewardship, utilizing "Leave No Trace" principles
- Support our student staff in attaining professional experience and growth

What is the Refund Policy?

If the offering is FULL:

- You will be offered a refund based on the timeline below, minus a \$20 service charge. This is only if someone pays for your spot.

If the offering is NOT FULL:

- **30 or more days before the trip date:** Full refund, minus \$20 processing fee.
- **Between 29 and 8 days before the trip date:** 50% refund, minus \$20 processing fee.
- **Less than 8 days before the trip date:** No refunds available.

UCSB Adventure Programs is a non-profit organization. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. More information and the refund request form can be found on our website:

recreation.ucsb.edu/home/policies

How do I get more information?

Our offices are located in the UCSB Recreation Center. Please feel free to contact us at your convenience:

Wren Brown, Outdoor Program Coordinator

UCSB Adventure Programs

(805) 893-4114

wren@recreation.ucsb.edu

recreation.ucsb.edu