

# Sea|mester Student Essential Eligibility Criteria

The mission of Sea|mester is to deliver outstanding experience-based educational adventures for young adults. Through supportive yet challenging course design we create environments that promote self-discovery as well as social, emotional and intellectual growth.

Sea|mester voyages are non-competitive, adventure-based and run full-time aboard sailing vessels. This is a core component because living and learning aboard a yacht offers a perfect environment to develop leadership and communication skills. While most trips are only moderately physically challenging, all trips are designed to provide an intense emotional and interpersonal experience. Students are sometimes asked to do things they may not believe they are capable of doing. Part of our risk management process is to develop confidence that these activities can be accomplished. This confidence is based on our 40-year record of safety and the skills of our instructors along with the measured expectation that the student applicant is fully committed to and capable of working hard, taking responsibility for him or her self to work effectively in the group to achieve the goals of the program.

While the environment we create is appropriate for most, it is not appropriate for all. Successful Sea|mester students are in good physical and emotional health and have an interest in immersing themselves fully in our community. Sea|mester students are excited to learn new skills, experience new places and are capable of working positively within a close-knit team even when tired. They are enthusiastic, well mannered and have a healthy dose of curiosity. While it's natural for new students to be a little nervous before joining our team, Sea|mester is not appropriate for anyone dealing with behavioral, motivational, or rehabilitation issues.

The Essential Eligibility Criteria are applicable for all Sea|mester students and a qualified person is one who can meet the EEC for participation.

## Physical Requirements

- Be in good general health and physical condition.
- Tolerate being up to several days away from medical facilities.
- Accept changes in diet
- Accept changes in living conditions and routine, which is likely to be very different from home

## Attitude

- Come with an open mind and willingness to try new things.
- Maintain a positive attitude, even when challenged academically, physically, mentally, or emotionally.
- Display tolerance, respect and compassion towards other.
- Participate in tasks that supports the group living environment aboard a sailing vessel

## **Safety and Judgment**

- Be able to independently identify and recognize hazards, including, but are not limited to rough water, reefs, collision, falling, capsizing and other risks associated with the marine environment.
- Recognize and understand the hazards and risks posed by other crewmembers, which include, but are not limited to, fatigue, state of mind, and actions that may influence judgment and decision-making.
- Recall and understand hazards and risks previously explained by instructors.
- Be able to effectively alert and warn others of potential or impending dangers such as broken equipment, shifting wind or sea states, falling objects or other environmental hazards.
- Be able to effectively signal or notify instructors or other student crewmembers of personal distress, injury, or need for assistance.
- Be able to do the preceding warnings and notifications up to a distance of 70 feet and in conditions with limited visibility such as in darkness or inclement weather or with loud background noise, such as high winds or waves.
- Act reliably around above stated hazards to minimize risk even when not directly supervised.
- Independently perceive, understand, and follow directions and instructions given by others to be able to successfully execute appropriate and perhaps unfamiliar, techniques to avoid hazards and /or manage risks.
- Be able to stay alert and to focus attention for up to several hours at a time while on watch, attending classes, or receiving instructions.
- If taking prescription medications, be able to maintain proper dosage by self-medicating without assistance from instructors or others (except possibly in emergency situations).

## **Leadership and Expedition Behavior**

- Work effectively as a member of a team despite potentially stressful and difficult conditions. This may require problem solving on an interpersonal or group level as well as a willingness to accept differences.
- Contribute to a safe learning environment—no verbal or physical inappropriate behavior of others is tolerated for any reason.
- Be able to willingly and equally share responsibility with crewmates in daily group chores. Each student may not do an equal share each day, but over a period of several days each student should do a proportionate share. All students are learning the skills and being challenged by the conditions and activities; there can be no expectation that any other student will be able to continually assume a greater share of the work or that an instructor can continually focus a greater share of his/her energy and time on one student.
- Effectively communicate ideas and concerns on an individual and group level.
- Have the cognitive ability to learn necessary skills given normal time limitations of a Sea|mester experience.

## Criteria for specific Activities

### Sailing

- Be able to move around the vessel as necessary to perform tasks such as sail setting and striking and /or avoid hazards on board such as avoiding the boom during a change in tack.
- Be able to secure self to the appropriate hardpoints on deck if necessary so as not to fall overboard.
- Be able to observe and assess sail trim, the surrounding navigational environment, and the hazards that are inherent in the operation of a vessel at sea.
- Be able to exit a capsized boat, fend for self while in the water away from the boat, attain and maintain correct body position if out of a boat in rough seas, exit out of the water to shore, grab onto another boat or line as necessary for rescue purposes, and perform self rescue and/or cooperate with assisted rescue.
- Have the ability to have a third point of contact for balance purposes, such as with hand(s) or to hold a walking stick.

### Scuba Diving / Snorkeling

- Meet any eligibility and medical requirements as specified by PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors).
- Demonstrate basic water skills, which includes swimming 200 meters unaided and without stopping followed by floating or treading water for 10 minutes.
- Be able to exit a capsized boat, fend for self while in the water away from the boat, attain and maintain correct body position if out of a boat in rough seas, exit out of the water to shore, grab onto another boat or line as necessary for rescue purposes, and perform self rescue and/or cooperate with assisted rescue.

### Hiking

- At minimum, be able to travel over and negotiate through varied terrain with a daypack.
- Be able to hike in conditions that may include, but are not limited to, rough, rugged, uneven steep and sloping terrain; human made and animal made trails; rocky terrain; ascending, descending or traversing slopes covered in rocks or vegetation. Any and all travel can occur during periods of inclement weather.
- Be able to travel distances that can range from less than one mile to more than five miles in one day.
- Be able to hike for durations that can range from less than one hour to more than 4 hours in one day.
- Have average strength and endurance and basic balance and agility to safely travel through such terrain with a daypack.
- Be able to stay alert and to focus for several hours at a time while traveling.

## **Community Service Projects**

- Be open and willing to interact with new and unfamiliar cultures.
- Engage in service learning projects (for example: building, digging, lifting, painting, construction and clean-up), for 6-8 hours per day with tools such as shovels, rakes and axes.
- Possess the strength, fitness, balance and agility to accomplish the above tasks.