

A group of five hikers is seen from behind, walking along a wide, flat, reddish-brown rock trail. The hiker in the foreground is wearing a green cap, a red backpack, and pink shorts. The second hiker is wearing a white t-shirt and a tan hat. The third hiker is wearing a grey t-shirt, dark shorts, and a black backpack. The fourth hiker is wearing a blue t-shirt, khaki shorts, and a red backpack. The fifth hiker is wearing a dark t-shirt and khaki pants. The trail is surrounded by a dense forest of tall evergreen trees. In the distance, a valley with a small town and rolling hills is visible under a bright sky. The top of the image features a green mountain silhouette graphic.

LAVIDA

AT GORDON COLLEGE

EXPEDITIONS / DISCOVERY



LA VIDA CENTER FOR OUTDOOR EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP

La Vida's mission is to catalyze character formation, cultivate community and develop servant-leadership skills in individuals, groups and organizations through outdoor experiential education.



ADVENTURE WITH PURPOSE

At Gordon, we believe that physical challenge and experiential learning—combined with academic and spiritual growth—are all important elements of preparing you for a greater purpose. We've expanded our classrooms to include the natural environment, offering two distinctive outdoor education opportunities: La Vida Expeditions and Discovery. Through the La Vida Center, and as part of the First-year Experience, each student will complete either a 12-day La Vida Expedition or a seven-week Discovery course during his or her first year. An additional option, available for those with a medical limitation, is offered by petition only.

LA VIDA EXPEDITIONS

Each 12-day expedition takes place in New York's Adirondack Mountains. This six-million-acre wilderness preserve creates the perfect classroom for adventure, self-discovery and spiritual growth. Transportation from Gordon is provided to the La Vida base camp where you are outfitted with equipment before setting off on a backpacking or canoeing itinerary. Our instructors lead groups of 6 to 10 students through this wilderness discipleship experience.

These expeditions are appropriate for anyone who has passed a school physical or a physical conducted by your primary physician. Most participants have little or no camping experience prior to their La Vida Expedition. We recommend participating in La Vida before you start at Gordon.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT



COMMUNITY

Going to college is a huge transition. La Vida builds connectedness and a sense

of belonging that sets a foundation of support for your first year at Gordon. On the expedition, you'll leave technology behind and step into an environment where true community and friendships are developed.



CHALLENGE

We believe that true growth happens when you push past the comforts of everyday life.

La Vida gives you this opportunity at the ropes course and outdoor rock climb as a way of developing perseverance and resiliency. These experiences prepare you to handle future challenges.



SOLITUDE

Spending time alone with God prepares

us to be a valuable asset to our communities. Each day you'll have time to explore God's Word. Toward the end of the expedition you'll have two full days to pray, fast, reflect and journal.



CREATION CARE

La Vida follows Leave No Trace ethics to ensure that you are a

good steward of the wilderness. We teach skills that enable our students to cook outside, filter water, set up camp and travel in the wilderness.

DISCOVERY

Discovery is a class that meets twice a week for seven weeks on Gordon College's Wenham campus. Through adventure games, group problem-solving activities and the ropes courses, you are encouraged to explore your potential, overcome challenges and conquer fears.

Discovery is offered during the first, second and fourth quads. We recommend taking Discovery during the first and second quad so you can meet other students at the beginning of your Gordon experience.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Discovery instructors create a fun, safe environment to encourage personal growth and active learning. Group challenges enable you to gain communication skills while working together toward a common goal. Instructors share a devotional each class to encourage you in your relationship with God.



EMBRACING CHALLENGES

Discovery is a supportive community where you and your classmates can spur one another on to tackle challenges outside your comfort zone. The low and high ropes course experiences give you confidence to overcome life's challenges while relying on God and your community.



WEEKEND CAMPING TRIP

Students come together for a weekend camping trip to the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Community is developed as you hike, enjoy meals together and share life stories around a campfire.



CELEBRATION AND REFLECTION

The class ends with a time of celebration and looking back on lessons learned. Students are given the opportunity to reflect on their time together and share specific feedback and encouragement with their classmates.



STUDENT STORIES

La Vida pushed me to reflect Christ's character. It taught me to step out of my comfort zone and take risks to test limits created by my fear. I found the type of leader I want to be, the kind of higher standard I am called to, and that this is all attainable only through God's grace and strength in my humble surrender.

-Praisye Yeo '21

Discovery was an amazing experience. I learned so much about myself and God. I made some of the best friendships, which allowed me to be confident in starting out my first year of college. I learned the importance of unplugging from the distractions around me and to really focus my attention on God and what he wants for my life.

-Cara Petersen '22