



FIRE Week

Igniting Your Passion

Wittenberg University

March 2 - 6, 2026

WITTENBERG
UNIVERSITY





FIRE WEEK 2026



Let's Explore

Welcome to FIRE Week 2026!

FIRE Week (Focused, Integrative, Reflective Experience) programs are fun, unique, and impactful experiences that are designed to give students a chance to engage in-depth with faculty, staff, and other students on a wide range of topics outside of the traditional classroom. Check out all of the opportunities for the coming year and then make plans to join us for one of these unforgettable experiences! The costs, program dates, and application deadlines are listed on each page, and in the table at the back of this booklet.

All FIRE Week programs count toward the experiential learning requirements in LO1 of the Connections Curriculum. A select few of the 2026 offerings may be counted toward the civic engagement requirement in LO1 or, for students who already have met that requirement, it may be counted as one of the experiential learning requirements. Programs that have been approved for civic engagement are designated as such in this booklet.

Regardless of which program you choose, FIRE Week will give you memorable hands-on experiences and a whole new perspective on your education!

Applications open on Monday, September 8, 2025

Please note that program dates, costs, and application deadlines differ by program. All applications can be accessed at: www.wittenberg.edu/connections/fireweek



Student Reflections from FIRE Week 2025

"The highlights were being able to unplug fully and connect with nature, as well as thinking deeply about my life and future."

"I really valued being able to work with others that I would not normally get the chance to work with. I think this experience had a really good sense of community. The whole experience was really well planned and executed, and they really seemed to value the students' input and ideas."

"I was able to immerse myself into a new culture and learn so much about life, and I made so many connections with amazing people, both from the locals there and with people from Witt I hadn't met before! It was one of the best trips of my whole life! Thank you."

"The trip was incredible and I desperately want to go back to Scotland. The tours we did were very interesting and allowed us to see some very beautiful sights and historic places. Our director was excellent at leading the trip."

"The highlights of my FIRE Week experience included visiting cultural places and artwork in different cities and being able to personally create a mural of my own in Thomas Library."

"Working with children in the after-school program really opened my eyes for my future career. I also loved seeing the different cultures and making connections with my peers."

"The highlights were learning about New Orleans culture from NOLA natives. It was an experience that I would not have been able to get if I had visited on my own. The most impactful parts of the experience were the Voodoo Tour, the Whitney Plantation, the Black History Tour, and the Hurricane Katrina Tour."





Adolescent STEM and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park – Institute at Tremont

Do you enjoy a hike, either around a national park or between thrill rides? Have you considered mentoring the next generation as part of your professional and civic identity? If so, join us for this FIRE Week experience at the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Institute at Tremont where you will learn how teachers from across the country implement experiential learning opportunities. Step outside and have your curiosity and creativity stimulated by this biodiverse environment while learning how classrooms without walls provide endless opportunities. Hike off the beaten path to the Spruce Flat Falls waterfall tucked in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and reconsider how to teach STEM concepts and reflect on your professional mindfulness. Then, consider how you might incorporate thrill rides as experiential learning opportunities to implement exposure therapy techniques. As a sequel to the Moonshine Mountain Coaster and the Lost Mine Mountain Coaster, 2026 participants will ride the longest coaster in Tennessee (Rocky Top Mountain Coaster) and implement exposure therapy methods designed to treat specific phobias. Other new activities will take place in 2026 as well for students who want to return to GSMIT. Students interested in a STEM field, education, therapy, or fun are all encouraged to apply! Program fee includes transportation, lodging, all meals on site, and all activities. **Cost: \$295**



Program Directors: Mike Daiga (EDUCATION) & Layla Besson (EDUCATION)

Program Dates: Monday, March 2 – Friday, March 6, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2025



Bronzeville, Blues, and Architectural History: Cultural Exploration in Chicago

Chicago is more than just a city—it's a living, breathing story of cultural convergence and deep heritage. As one of the largest cities in the United States, Chicago embodies the story of French settlers, Indigenous peoples, African American migration, and Hispanic American immigration. This immersive trip will give college students the chance to explore its deep-rooted history firsthand. Walk through Bronzeville and Hyde Park, and see iconic residences like those of President Barack Obama and Al Capone. Discover groundbreaking architecture like the Frank Lloyd Wright House. Experience the powerful narratives of African American history at the DuSable Museum, scientific wonders at the Griffin Museum, and global stories of resilience at the Illinois Holocaust Museum. Engage with Chicago's artistic heartbeat through the Atrium Project, blues music, Mexican art, and a food scene that tells its own tale. This adventure promises insight, inspiration, and a deeper appreciation of a city shaped by its people. Program fee includes transportation, lodging, tickets, and all meals. **Cost: \$1,200**



Program Director: Chad Sloss (SOCIOLOGY)

Program Dates: Monday, March 2 – Saturday, March 7, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2025



The Business of Craft Beer

There are more than 400 craft breweries in Ohio, and Ohio ranks 7th in terms of overall economic impact and 4th in total barrel production nationwide. The business of craft beer continues to grow in Ohio. How does one get into this industry? During this FIRE Week experience, students start with homebrewing, then work at a local brewery, and finally see a large production facility. Along the way they will meet people who brew, market, and distribute craft beer. Yes, there will be an opportunity to sample and evaluate the product. The final project will be the evaluation and review of a beer and brewery selected for each student. This experience can be tailored to the participants; if there is an aspect of craft beer that the class wishes to learn about, the schedule will be adjusted. Students will be housed on campus and will be responsible for their breakfast and dinner. Students will have to be 21 or older. **Cost: \$20**



Program Director: Ray Dudek (CHEMISTRY)

Program Dates: Monday, March 2 – Friday, March 6, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2025



Chasing Gold: Exploring the Olympic Spirit Through Sport, Science, and Culture

This FIRE Week experience immerses Wittenberg University students in the world of elite international sport through an Olympic-themed journey across two iconic locations: Los Angeles and Chula Vista, California. You'll first explore the legacy and future of the Olympic games at the L.A. Memorial Coliseum, host of the 1932, 1984, and 2028 Games, where you'll have opportunities to reflect on the history of the Olympic games and the connections between amateur, professional, and international athletics. Then you'll live and learn at the Chula Vista Elite Athlete Training Center, a municipal-owned Olympic training site, allowing you to explore the state-of-the-art facilities dedicated to athletics, sports psychology, exercise science, and performance nutrition. Through behind-the-scenes access and expert-led experiences, students will gain insight into the intersection of athletic excellence, innovation, and human potential. There are options for athletic workouts of various skill levels, including running and archery, as well as beach time and surfing (additional cost). The program cost includes airfare, lodging, tickets to all program sites, and all meals except while traveling. **Cost: \$2,355**



Program Directors: Jessie Johnson (NURSING) & Jen Parsons (HEALTH & SPORT STUDIES)

Program Dates: Sunday, March 1 – Friday, March 6, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2025



Clark County Criminal Justice Experience

Are you interested in the criminal justice field? If so, the Clark County Criminal Justice Experience is for you. Students will have the opportunity to work with a police agency, tour the municipal court, and tour the Clark County Jail, learning about various aspects of criminal justice along the way. You'll go on a ride along with a law enforcement agency of your choice and see different areas within a police department—each of which can offer a different perspective on crime and justice. Students will have time in the classroom learning about crime scenes and traffic investigations. There will also be an opportunity to tour the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) building and gain an insider's view of the investigative work done there. So, if you are curious about a career in law or law enforcement, or if you're just interested in learning more about it, sign up for the Clark County Criminal Justice Experience. Transportation and lunch are provided each day. **Cost: \$20**



Program Director: Katelyn Hammond (POLICE DEPARTMENT)

Program Dates: Monday, March 2 – Friday, March 6, 2026

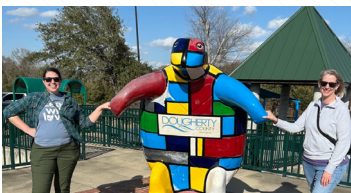
Applications Due: Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2025



Constructing Community in Koinonia

Taking on the challenge of building a home is one thing, but what about the challenge of building a community? This FIRE Week experience will do both—with the objective of completing service work and learning about the importance of cultivating community while doing it. Join the Hagen Center in traveling to Georgia to participate in renovation, repair, or building projects through the partnership housing program of the Fuller Center for Housing while experiencing the intentional living community of Koinonia Farm. Students will have the opportunity to serve during the day while living simply and learning about the incredible history of partnership housing from the location Millard Fuller launched his efforts to provide housing to all. The week will also include good Southern food, reflection, and an excursion to Chattanooga, TN. Why not join the community? Transportation, lodging, all activities, and meals (except travel days) are included. **Cost: \$20**

This FIRE Week program has been approved to count toward the civic engagement requirement in LO1. Students must enroll in CCUE 100-FIRE for the spring semester and fulfill all the requirements of the CCUE 100 course during that semester. For students who have already completed that requirement, this program will count toward the experiential learning requirement in LO1.



Program Directors: Rachel Scherzer (HAGEN CENTER) & Kristen Collier (HAGEN CENTER)

Program Dates: Saturday, Feb. 28 – Saturday, March 7, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2025



Photo by Nils Huenerfuerst on Unsplash

FIRE Week in Denver: Discovering Identity Through Culture, Community, and the Colorado Landscape

Step into the vibrant heart of Colorado for a week that blends cultural immersion, outdoor adventure, career exploration, and meaningful community engagement. From exploring Red Rocks Amphitheatre to touring the Olympic Training Center, hiking in the Garden of the Gods in Colorado Springs, or walking the halls of the Colorado State Capitol, this Denver FIRE Week experience offers something for every curious mind. Meet local Witt alumni, tour world-class museums, taste authentic regional cuisine, and volunteer at a homeless resources center - all while exploring how the intersections of identity, place, and purpose shape both individuals and communities. Whether you're taking in an optional professional sports game (NBA, NHL, MLB) or immersing yourself in marine life at the Denver Aquarium, this is your chance to grow, connect, and discover what drives you. With every day offering a balance of reflection, exploration, and real-world insight, you'll leave Denver not just with amazing memories, but with a stronger sense of who you are and what kind of light you want to pass on to the world. Are you ready to take the leap? Discover Denver. Discover yourself. Program fee includes airfare, lodging, group activities and transportation, and all meals (a combination of groceries at the house and meals out). Students should budget \$100-\$200 for optional expenses if they plan to participate in any non-program activities such as the aquarium, a professional sports game, transportation during free time, and/or meals they choose to eat at a restaurant instead of using groceries at the house. **Cost: \$1,070**



Program Directors: Drew Sawyer (COMPASS) & Mercedes Singleton (COMPASS)

Program Dates: Monday, March 2 – Saturday, March 7, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2025



From Sassenach to Snape: Experience Scotland Through Literary and Media Series

Discover the enchanting landscapes that breathed life into two beloved franchises on this immersive Scottish adventure. Walk in J.K. Rowling's footsteps through Edinburgh's atmospheric closes and wynds, exploring the real-world inspirations behind the Harry Potter universe. Stroll down Victoria Street—the inspiration for Diagon Alley—and uncover the graves in Greyfriars Kirkyard that sparked character names. Our private Potter tour reveals the locations that shaped Rowling's imagination, from the café where she penned early chapters to the school that inspired Hogwarts. Journey deeper into Scotland's mystical heart through Outlander's lens. Stand within ancient stone circles like those Claire encountered, explore the dramatic Highlands that served as backdrops for epic scenes, and visit castles doubling as Lallybroch and Fort William. Experience the haunting beauty of Loch Ness and discover prehistoric monuments that predate written history. Our Edinburgh finale includes underground city tours and additional Outlander filming locations, plus free time for personal exploration. From Portree's picturesque harbor to the rugged Highland wilderness, this trip seamlessly weaves together literary pilgrimage with cultural immersion. The program fee includes airfare, ground transportation, lodging, all guided tours, and some group meals; other meals are independent to encourage local culinary discovery and facilitate choice, so students should budget about \$200 for food. **Cost: \$2,210**



Program Director: Kelly Dillon (COMMUNICATION & DIGITAL MEDIA)

Program Dates: Saturday, Feb. 28 – Saturday, March 7, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025



Harnessing Old Man River: Nature Meets Culture in Mississippi

Mississippi. Many have heard of it; few have been there. Journey into this “most southern place on earth” with two professors/native Mississippians to explore how land, water, and wildlife have coalesced into a culture of “place.” We’ll chat with environmentalists, hunters, farmers, artists, politicians, and residents to understand the controversy of what to do with rivers that flood: let them flow naturally, potentially ruining peoples’ homes and livelihoods? Or control them with levees and floodgates and risk destroying wildlife? We’ll take vans from the hill country down into the Delta, staying overnight at cabins near Oxford, the Tara Wildlife Lodge near Vicksburg, and the infamous Shack Up Inn in Clarksdale. We’ll dig our fingers into the richest soil on earth, paddle canoes on the Mississippi River, walk the roads where Martin Luther King Jr. did some civil rights work, tap our toes to the Blues, and indulge in catfish and BBQ. Program price includes transportation, lodging, all meals, and all activities. **Cost: \$300**



Program Directors: Richard Phillips (BIOLOGICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES) & Catherine Waggoner (COMMUNICATION & DIGITAL MEDIA)

Program Dates: Saturday, Feb. 28 – Friday, March 6, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2025



MurALL: Public Art and Community

From neolithic cave paintings to modern murals and sculpture, art in public spaces has tremendous power to tell a story, evoke emotions, and to create a sense of shared belonging. For this FIRE Week experience, we'll take tours of public art in Springfield, Cincinnati, and Yellow Springs, speak to artists and community leaders, and design and create a mural in Thomas Library to contribute to the shared sense of community and belonging in the space. We'll explore how art in public spaces is tied to community and reflective of not just our past but our shared future, and we will collaborate with Project Jericho and the Heritage Center to assist on a community project in the city as part of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. No prior painting experience is required, but be prepared to get your hands dirty. Lunch in Cincinnati and Yellow Springs, as well as all materials and tickets, are included. **Cost: \$20**

This FIRE Week program has been approved to count toward the civic engagement requirement in LO1. Students must enroll in CCUE 100-FIRE for the spring semester and fulfill all the requirements of the CCUE 100 course during that semester. For students who have already completed that requirement, this program will count toward the experiential learning requirement in LO1.



Program Directors: Amanda McLellan (THOMAS LIBRARY) & Kelley Booze (ART)

Program Dates: Monday, March 2 – Friday, March 6, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2025



Photo by ian kelsall on Unsplash

Schnitzel, Steins, & Stone: A Cultural Exploration in Southern Germany

Immerse yourself in the rich culture of Southeast Germany on a journey through Bavaria. From world-famous landmarks to tucked-away local gems, this trip offers a vibrant mix of history, heritage, and hands-on discovery. We'll begin with Munich's must-see sights—royal palaces, iconic churches, bustling squares, and scenic parks. As the week unfolds, we'll dive deeper into what life is really like in the Bavarian capital of Munich by exploring its gardens, museums, shops, and neighborhoods. You'll even have the chance to enjoy a Maß (a liter of beer) while chatting with locals and soaking up Munich's brewery culture. The itinerary also includes powerful excursions beyond the city, such as a former concentration camp, palace of King Ludwig II Herrenchiemsee, and day travel to Salzburg, Austria. By the end of the week, you'll have a deeper understanding of Munich's unique blend of tradition and modern life, a few German phrases in your back pocket, and a serious craving for another warm Brezn. Program fee includes airfare, lodging and breakfast, local transportation, excursion tickets, and some other meals. Students should budget about \$250 for meals plus personal spending money. **Cost: \$1,720**



Program Directors: Stephen Mathews (COMPASS) & Kristina Bryant Reed (STUDENT DEVELOPMENT)

Program Dates: Saturday, Feb. 28 – Friday, March 6, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025



Service in Sunny Costa Rica

Spend FIRE Week in sunny Costa Rica, one of the most beautiful and biodiverse places in the world! While staying in a beach town on the Pacific Coast of Guanacaste province, you'll engage in impactful local community service projects (e.g., children's programming, animal rescue, nature conservation, etc.) and learn about Costa Rican culture and people. You'll enjoy authentic Tico food, have plenty of time to explore area towns and beaches, and set sail on a fun sunset catamaran excursion. Pack your shorts and sunglasses, escape the gray Ohio winter, and immerse yourself in the friendly and laid-back *pura vida* culture as you broaden your worldview and fulfill part of your LO1 requirement (civic engagement or experiential learning). The program fee includes airfare, ground transportation, hotel room, breakfast and dinner daily, and the catamaran tour. Students should budget \$150 for lunches plus personal spending money.

Cost: \$2,300

This FIRE Week program has been approved to count toward the civic engagement requirement in LO1. Students must enroll in CCUE 100-FIRE for the spring semester and fulfill all the requirements of the CCUE 100 course during that semester. For students who have already completed that requirement, this program will count toward the experiential learning requirement in LO1.



Program Director: Stefne Broz (PROVOST'S OFFICE and COMMUNICATION & DIGITAL MEDIA)

Program Dates: Saturday, Feb. 28 – Saturday, March 7, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025

FIRE WEEK 2026



Witt Camp: Adulthood

Witt Camp: Adulthood is your crash course in real-world survival — no textbooks, just life skills you'll actually use. Join us for a fun, hands-on week designed for Witt students who want to level up their independence without the stress. Learn how to budget smart, file taxes, understand insurance, fix your own flat tire, and whip up meals that don't come from the CDR or Post 95. You'll also build confidence navigating things like health care, credit cards, media literacy, first aid, social etiquette, and even what to do if your toilet floods at 2 a.m. Each day features interactive workshops, alumni panels, and real-life scenarios where you'll practice instead of just listen. From jumpstarting a car to jumpstarting your future, this isn't a boring lecture series — it's an empowering, judgment-free zone to ask questions and try things out. You'll leave with a personal Adulthood Starter Pack, new friends, and a sense of "I've got this." Plus, the week ends with a celebration dinner to put your skills into action. Whether you're living off ramen or getting ready to start your first job, this is the week you didn't know you needed. Adulthood's hard — we'll help you make it make sense. Students will be housed on campus. Snacks and lunches plus dinner on Friday are included. **Cost: \$20**



Program Directors: Madison Green (COMPASS), Mary Britton (CAREER DEVELOPMENT), & Adam Parker (MATHEMATICS)

Program Dates: Monday, March 2 – Friday, March 6, 2026

Applications Due: Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2025

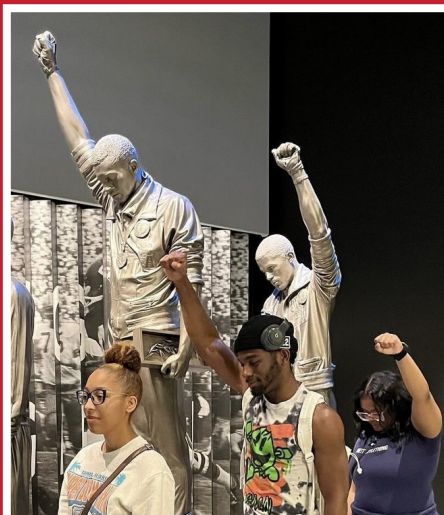
Program	Program Dates	Application Deadline	Cost
Adolescent STEM and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park – Institute at Tremont	March 2 - 6	Nov. 5	\$295
Bronzeville, Blues, and Architectural History: Cultural Exploration in Chicago	March 2 - 7	Oct. 15	\$1,200
The Business of Craft Beer	March 2 - 6	Nov. 5	\$20
Chasing Gold: Exploring the Olympic Spirit Through Sport, Science, and Culture	March 1 - 6	Oct. 15	\$2,355
Clark County Criminal Justice Experience	March 2 - 6	Nov. 5	\$20
Constructing Community in Koinonia	Feb. 28 - March 7	Nov. 5	\$20
FIRE Week in Denver: Discovering Identity Through Culture, Community, and the Colorado Landscape	March 2 - 7	Oct. 15	\$1,070
From Sassenach to Snape: Experience Scotland Through Literary and Media Series	Feb. 28 - March 7	Oct. 1*	\$2,210
Harnessing Old Man River: Nature Meets Culture in Mississippi	Feb. 28 - March 6	Nov. 5	\$300
MurALL: Public Art & Community	March 2 - 6	Nov. 5	\$20
Schnitzel, Steins, & Stone: A Cultural Exploration in Southern Germany	Feb. 28 - March 6	Oct. 1*	\$1,720
Service in Sunny Costa Rica	Feb. 28 - March 7	Oct. 1*	\$2,300
Witt Camp: Adulthood	March 2 - 6	Nov. 5	\$20

Payment plans are available. A deposit may be due prior to the final payment deadline.

**International travel requires a valid passport, typically with an expiration date that is at least six months after the end date of the program. The application deadlines are earlier for these programs to facilitate passport application/renewal if needed.*

FIRE Week

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Why should I participate?

The student testimonials in this booklet capture the very best aspects of FIRE Week programs – the sense of community, the new adventures, and the opportunities to see and try things they have never done before. FIRE Week programs are also an easy way to complete part of your experiential learning (or civic engagement) requirements – just pick the one that looks like the best fit for you, have a great time, and complete the required reflection at the end.

How do I apply?

Applications will open on Monday, September 8, 2025, and they will be available on the FIRE Week website. Please take your time and answer all of the application questions as completely and thoughtfully as possible. There are limited spots, and the directors carefully review the applications in making decisions about acceptance into their program. Please note that application deadlines differ by program. All of the program and application information are available at www.wittenberg.edu/connections/fireweek.

What if I want more information?

The directors for each program are listed on each page, so you can reach out and get your questions answered as you are deciding which program you'd like to apply for. If you have general FIRE Week questions or would like to know more about payment plans, please email fireweek@wittenberg.edu and we'll get back to you with the information you need.





"I would love to stay longer! It was an amazing experience!"

"The highlights of our FIRE Week program were the last night campfire and s'mores."

"It is an excellent opportunity and I absolutely loved having the chance to do this and meet other Witt students."

"Everybody was amazing and I appreciate everyone for making this possible."





"The highlights of my FIRE Week program were getting to experience and see the beauty of the part of Costa Rica where we were. Also, the service work we did was amazing. My favorite places were the animal rescue shelter and going on the catamaran sunset tour. Our directors were amazing and so great to be with on this trip."

"The two sporting events we attended were definitely the most entertaining and unique experiences for me, and all of the tours were put together very well. The directors did a great job and everything seemed to flow smoothly."

"Our directors were great and so easy to talk to. They made the trip very entertaining and created a space for me to learn and get to know my peers better."





The background of the page is a grayscale, halftone-style image. On the left side, there are silhouettes of trees and foliage. On the right side, a tall, slender lighthouse structure extends from the bottom towards the top of the frame. The overall texture is composed of fine, intersecting lines creating a dotted effect.

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