Welcome to the inaugural semester of Hamilton’s Academic Program in the Adirondacks!

I’m thrilled to be able to offer you all this incredible opportunity to live, study, work, and play in one of the world’s most unique landscapes—and during one of the most breathtaking seasons of the year! Set within six million acres of patchworked human settlements and true wilderness, the rigorous curriculum of this program is augmented by significant career-preparation opportunities, place-based community building, and limitless recreational resources. So, again, welcome to your experiential, interdisciplinary semester of study, taught by our very own and very talented Hamilton faculty accompanied by a long, distinguished list of experts both in and of the Adirondack Park.

What follows in this packet is indeed “important information.” Its many pages covers such things as the actual address of where you’ll be living (we all like receiving mail, right?!), what to pack, your course load and a warm spotlight on the faculty-in-residence, potential guest speakers and excursions, food and meals, housing and standards of conduct, ATM availability, medical information, etc. As specified in the pages to follow, there are deadlines that must be met and information that I need to gather from you prior to your participation in the program.

Please read and reread the enclosed information, share it with friends and family, and keep it handy as a reference. If you haven’t already, I encourage you to familiarize yourself with our program website, and to share this website with friends and family, as it contains the most up-to-date information about the program: [www.hamilton.edu/adk](http://www.hamilton.edu/adk).

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to email or call me anytime.

I can’t wait to kick off this amazing new program with all of you!

Sincerely,

Dr. Janelle A. Schwartz
General Director
jschwart@hamilton.edu
608 347 7886 (cell)
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PROGRAM ADDRESSES AND STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

For all letter and package mail to students, as well as land-line phone or fax correspondence, please use the following:

[name of recipient]
Hamilton College Academic Program in the Adirondacks
837 Hurricane Road / PO Box 230
Keene, NY 12942

Phone: 518-576-4704
Fax: 518-576-9524
Program website: http://www.hamilton.edu/adk

For all business and/or confidential correspondence with the program, please use the following:

Dr. Janelle A. Schwartz, General Director
Academic Program in the Adirondacks
7 O'Toole Lane / PO Box 132
Keene, NY 12942

Phone (cell): 608-347-7886
Fax: (pending)
Email: jschwart@hamilton.edu

Dr. Onno Oerlemans, Professor of Literature and Creative Writing
Faculty-in-Residence
Hamilton College Academic Program in the Adirondacks
837 Hurricane Road / PO Box 230
Keene, NY 12912

Email: ooerlema@hamilton.edu

If you wish to contact the Office of Off-Campus Study on Hamilton’s campus, in Clinton, NY:

Dr. Carolyn North, Assistant Dean of Off-Campus Study
Office of Off-Campus Study
Hamilton College
198 College Hill Road
Clinton, NY 13323

Phone: 315-859-4022
Fax: 315-859-4222
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Except under extenuating circumstances*, students travel independently to and from the program site in Keene, NY. We strongly believe that this experience fosters each student’s independence. Students are welcome to maintain a personal vehicle at the site, for the duration of the semester. When possible, please choose an arrival time at the program site that is neither too early in the morning nor too late in the evening, as a courtesy to your peers, your faculty-in-residence, your general director, and your community neighbors.

*Given the relative lack of public transportation to and from the area, extenuating circumstances could include those students without a driver’s license or vehicle of their own, or if they are unable to secure a ride with a fellow program participant or a friend or family member. In these cases, or in another unforeseen circumstance in which the student does not wish to or cannot travel independently to and from the program site, arrangements will be made to pick the student up from an agreed-upon location. Any student wanting such an arrangement must communicate directly and in a timely manner with the general director.

Once you have determined your date and approximate time of arrival, please send the general director confirmation via email: jschwart@hamilton.edu. This confirmation needs to be received no later than August 3, 2015.

For those who are not participating in a pre-orientation leadership role back on Hamilton’s campus, please plan to arrive on Sunday, August 23 or Monday, August 24, 2015.

For those who are participating in a pre-orientation leadership role back on Hamilton’s campus, you are expected to arrive on Tuesday, August 25, 2015, no later than 3:00pm.

If any last minute travel changes occur, contact Janelle immediately.

Our first meeting as a full group will be on Tuesday, August 25, 2015 for dinner!

PASSPORT

If you do not have a passport, you may want to apply for one. You will have the opportunity to travel into Canada (Montreal is a only a two-hour drive north). The cost for a new passport is approximately $110.00, and can be applied for through www.travel.state.gov. Please follow carefully the instructions contained in the passport application.

There is also the option of obtaining an Enhanced Driver’s License (EDL), through New York State. More information, including how to apply, can be found here: http://dmv.ny.gov/driver-license/get-enhanced-driver-license-edl.

Neither the passport nor the EDL is currently required for the Adirondack semester program. These are merely suggestions should you wish to travel, on your own time, into Canada or other sites abroad.
WHAT TO PACK

“I said: take only. What you need. To Survive.” —Lone Starr, Spaceballs
“That’s my industrial strength hair dryer... and I can’t live without it! —Princess Vespa, Spaceballs

Ideally, you will bring only what you can pack in and out in your personal vehicle and/or bring with you on a plane. Please avoid sending luggage or trunks up separately to the program site. However, larger items, such as a kayak or bike, may be shipped to the program site if necessary. Please contact Janelle to arrange for delivery.

Students are urged to bring plenty of warm clothing, but also warm weather attire. The fall climate in the High Peaks of the Adirondacks enjoys comfortable days and cool nights, through early October or so. August and September are relatively mild, but daytime temperatures can be drastically different than nighttime temps. Temperatures begin to cool down noticeably in mid October, and we’ll most likely be in winter-temperature conditions by mid-November, if not before. It will come as no surprise if we encounter our first snowfall in October. And there will of course be the occasional rain- and thunderstorms. Please pack accordingly, from head to toe!

For example, pack wool socks, moisture-wicking pants and shorts (such as those made for hiking or sports), long underwear (top and bottom), a heavy sweater, sturdy shoes (including hiking boots—preferably water resistant or even waterproof—that rise above the ankle and a pair of waterproof breakup boots, wellies, or mudboots), rain gear (including pants and a jacket with a hood), hats (for sun, rain, and cold), and comfy pajamas (of course!). This is not an exhaustive list; it is only meant to give you an idea of what to bring. The best thing to do is layer; be aware of the climate and avoid only dressing in cotton, as this fosters the potential for hypothermia.

Please note: Hamilton’s Glen House for Outdoor Leadership is willing outfit you with any gear you desire, from hiking packs to boots, sleeping bags and tents. Contact Andrew Jillings to arrange for fitting and pick up.

We recommend bringing the following additional items* (in no particular order):

- Surge protector and/or a multi-strip with a circuit breaker
- School supplies: folders, notebooks, pens, pencils, etc.
- Cell phone and cell phone charger (plus a car charger, if you have/need it)
- Laundry basket/bag
- Bed linens, pillow, blanket, etc. (bed size will be determined at room assignments)
- Slippers!
- Necessary medications
- Towels, wash cloths
- Laundry detergent/fabric softener
- Alarm clock (or use your phone)
- Desk lamp and small fan
- Toiletries
- Clothes hangers
- Laptop computer, iPad or tablet, etc. (there is wifi on the premises)
- Sewing kit
• First aid kit
• Music (stereo or phone docking unit or USB external speakers)
• Key chain
• Leatherman or other pocket multi-tool
• Flashlight and batteries (preferably a headlamp)
• Tissues
• Personal pictures
• Puzzles and boardgames
• Bug repellant (DEET works best) and/or bug nets
• Sunscreen lotion
• Camping gear
• Climbing gear
• Hiking gear
• Fishing gear
• Boat, kayak, and/or SUP
• Yoga mat
• Sports equipment (racquet, hockey skates, skis, etc.)
• Bike and bike lock (there will be 2 – 4 “program bikes” made available)

*You may of course also purchase such items in town, once you’ve settled in and determined what you need/want at the program site.

_Do not_ bring the following (as they are provided for you on site, in our professional-grade communal kitchen!) and are prohibited in individual rooms:

• Refrigerator
• Microwave
• Coffeemaker

The following items are _strictly prohibited_ at the program site:

• Any tacks or tacky material or nails, with which to hang posters or pictures. (IOW: you cannot make any holes or in any other way mark up the walls of the program site, including in your own room.)
• Halogen lamps (due to the fire hazard)
• Candles
• Toaster oven, hotplate, waffle iron, or items with exposed heating units (you may bring camping stoves, such as those that run on white gas or propane—more on this during our pre-departure meeting!)
• Pets (there will be plenty of dogs to love on at the program site already!)
• AC unit
• Electric/kerosene heater
• BB guns/air soft guns
• Dartboard
VISITORS TO THE PROGRAM SITE

Personal visitors to the program site are frowned upon, except during designated and/or approved times. Family and Friends Weekend, for example, will be held Friday, October 16 – Monday, October 19, 2015. In short, this program cannot be used as a regular vacation stop for friends and family, as it will distract us from our commitment to experiential learning.

Program visitors, however, will be frequent. Such visitors include those on our roster of expert guest speakers to our own visiting Hamilton faculty and even students from organized classes back on Hamilton’s campus in Clinton. These visitors will often stay overnight at our program site, residing in the apartment that makes up the first floor of The Alpine Lodge. We may also have visits from trustees and alumni/alumnae who live in, work for, or otherwise support the Adirondack Park and are very enthusiastic about this new program.

Any visitor to the program is welcome to share a meal with our students.

If you have questions about visitors to the program site, please don’t hesitate to contact Janelle.

TRAVEL IN, AROUND, AND OUTSIDE THE PARK

Travels plans for the students’ internship opportunities will be organized via the students and the general director. In addition to personal vehicles*, students have the option of using the program’s 12-passenger van for such travel.** Likewise, any excursions, field trips, or other extracurricular activities sponsored by the program (such as the weekly food pickup or home visits of alumni/alumnae in the Park) will be able to utilize this van.

Any travel plans outside the purview of the program are entirely up to the students, but should be arranged in consultation with the semester calendar (as it differs from Hamilton’s official calendar). Our program site, The Mountain House, will remain open and available to students for the full duration of the semester, including holiday recesses.

The general director is the first contact for students’ comfort and security, and thus needs to be made aware of any and all travel plans in, around, and outside the Park. A kind of “trail register” will be set up in The Main House. When students go on a day hike, an overnight camping trip, a longer expedition, or even leave for a holiday recess (i.e. any trip that is not sponsored directly by the program and participated in by the program’s enrollees as a full group), they must enter in the date and time of their departure, their expected return, etc.

When business necessitates that the general director must leave the premises and/or the Park, the faculty-in-residence will remain available to the students in her stead.

*Please be sure your license and registration and insurance are all up to date and valid for the duration of the program. And please keep in mind that you will be living in a mountainous environment; all-wheel or four-wheel (capable) drive vehicles are the most appropriate and safe.
**In order to drive the 12-passenger van (or, jitney), students must be a certified jitney driver via Hamilton’s internal certification process.
PROGRAM COSTS AND FINANCIAL AID

Participants pay current Hamilton tuition, as well as room and board fees. The standard charge for a residence hall room on campus will be assessed for housing at The Mountain House, in Keene, NY. Likewise, a standard charge for the 21-meal plan on campus will be assessed for board at our program site. All students will be expected to prepare their meals in a communal kitchen (on site and stocked weekly), with dinner as the common meal and breakfast and lunch up to the individual student.

Financial aid does apply, the same as if you were studying on campus for the semester. Work study opportunities are also available, though spots are limited. Please contact Janelle as soon as possible to discuss such an option.

If you have any questions regarding the costs associated with the program and the application of financial aid, please contact Hamilton’s Business Office: 315-859-4947.

CURRICULUM

You are enrolled in—and are expected to attend regularly—4 courses for the duration of the semester. These courses are all at the 300-level, unless otherwise specified:

- Intensive Seminar
- Common Experience Seminar
- Field Component (Internship)
- Independent Capstone Project

Any credit adjustments (i.e. counting up to two of the above courses toward your particular major or minor area of concentration) must be discussed with the general director (and in consultation with your primary academic advisor or department chair), so that she may submit the necessary information to the Registrar. This can be done before, during, or after you complete the coursework. Regardless, approval must be gained from the student’s home department or program, as well as from the Adirondack semester, prior to submission.

All courses are graded on the A – F scale; no courses are pass/fail (credit/no credit), and the honor code you signed upon matriculation remains in full effect. Please keep in mind that if you decide to drop a course during your residency in the Adirondack semester, you should do so in consultation with the general director, as it will most likely negatively impact the mission of the program (both for you and your peers) and potentially add undue strain on your prospects for graduation. Any student with concerns should speak with the general director immediately.

We currently have over 50 Local Partners interested in mentoring our students for their Field Component (Internship). From healthcare to government to conservation, farming, the arts, journalism, entrepreneurism, and more. See www.hamilton.edu/adk/resources for details.

Also visit our program website for more details on the above-listed courses:
www.hamilton.edu/adk/current-program
PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Janelle A. Schwartz, Founder & General Director

Janelle earned her PhD in literature and the history of science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is also an alumna of Hamilton (class of 1997), where she majored in comparative literature. She taught English literature and environmental studies at Loyola University New Orleans, before happily returning to Hamilton to teach comparative literature, English literature, and environmental studies. Janelle has published articles, essays, and blogs on literature and ecology, cabinets of curiosity, pedagogy, and more. She is also the author of Worm Work: Recasting Romanticism (2012, University of Minnesota Press), which focuses on the intersection of invertebrate zoology during the 18th and 19th centuries with the poetry and prose of Romanticism. She is currently at work on her first travel narrative, Land and Sky and Chocolate Milk, which focuses on the relationship between land use, the contemplative moment, and her solitary running Alaska, New Orleans, and the Adirondack Park—three of America’s most unique, fragile, and dynamic environments. Janelle is in the planning stages of ghostwriting the memoir of Don Wynn, an award-winning Adirondack painter and one of our program’s guest speakers.

Janelle is CPR/AED and Wilderness First Aid (WFA) certified.

Onno Oerlemans, Professor of Literature and Creative Writing
Faculty-in-Residence (Fall 2015)

Onno earned his PhD from Yale University. He has published articles on the form and function of lyric in Whitman, Milton, and Wordsworth, on literary theory and Henry James, and on animal rights and taxonomy in Romanticism. Onno’s book, Romanticism and the Materiality of Nature (2002, University of Toronto Press) examines the many ways in which Romantic-period authors explore and represent the physical presence of the natural world. He has recently published articles on the representation of animals in Coetzee and Gowdy, the romantic origins of environmentalism, and architecture in Romantic period writing. And Onno has just finished work on his new book about the presentation of animals in the history of poetry.

The Academic Program in the Adirondacks is also very fortunate to have a long list of committed faculty and staff from Hamilton’s campus in Clinton. We have representatives from almost every discipline extant on campus, as well as devoted staff members to work with students on such integrative program elements as career preparation and outdoor leadership, and the availability of support staff through the offices of residential life, the counseling center, the print shop, auxiliary services, and physical plant.

For more information on all of the above, please visit: www.hamilton.edu/adk/faculty-and-administration
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

We encourage you to explore the Park on your own, and thus not only from within the structure of the semester program. To this end, ample open/free time has been built in to the semester schedule for you to organize as you’d like (inclusive of holiday recesses).

There will also be opportunities for outdoor leadership skills building, led by Andrew Jillings, Hamilton’s Director of Outdoor Leadership. And some of you may participate in—or wish to support—the annual Adirondack Canoe Classic, or “90-miler,” a three-day canoe race from Old Forge to Saranac Lake.

For those interested in any other extracurricular activities, such as private lessons, group lessons, joining a fitness center, volunteering and community service opportunities, etc., please contact Janelle. The Park offers a wealth of such resources, and she would be happy to help you make these connections.

Please note: any costs accompanying extracurricular activities not sponsored by the program are the student’s responsibility.

If students wish to take on employment while in the Park, that is their choice. However, such work cannot conflict or cause undue hardship toward the satisfaction of the semester’s demanding course load. Students cannot be paid for their internship work, which is credit-bearing for the program as its Field Component.

UNDERSTANDING THE ADIRONDACKS

More often than not, the faculty-in-residence for your semester program will assign a text for you to read over the summer, prior to your attendance in the program. This is to help introduce you to the Adirondack Park, likely through a particular contextual lens that coincides with the faculty-in-residence’s own focus for the Intensive Seminar. We also strongly encourage you to pick up a guide book (or two or three) on the Park, as well as research some of its history, prior to your arrival on site. It’s always nice to have some sense of where you are going... given that you will be living intimately within the Park for 3.5 months!

The Mountain House will also have a small (growing) reference library, that includes guide books, history books, fiction, poetry, cookbooks, topological maps of the region, local food guides, etc.

And this is to say nothing of the fact that you will gain boundless experiential knowledge throughout the course of the semester—knowledge we trust you will apply to wherever your future takes you!
ORIENTATION

We have been generously invited for a delicious “welcome dinner” to the home of Susan Bacot Davis, Hamilton class of 1988 and a year-round resident of Essex, just 25 miles or so north of our program site and set on the shores of Lake Champlain (looking out at the mountains of Vermont). This dinner will most likely take place on Friday, August 28, 2015. Prior to the dinner, we plan to do a kind of “farm crawl,” in order to introduce you to the farms from which much of our food stocks will be coming and on which several of you will be working as part of your Field Component (Internship) credit.

We have also organized a day hike with Ed Kanze, an Adirondack guide and naturalist, writer and photographer. His book, *Adirondack: Life and Wildlife in the Wild, Wild East* has been assigned for your summer reading! This hike is scheduled for Saturday, August 29, 2015. On the following weekend, September 5 – 6, 2015, we will join John and Pat Thaxton of Adirondack Birding Tours, Inc. for a lecture on birds of the Adirondacks and an early morning bird-siting/bird-watching tour through a few disparate locations in the Park. These two trips are meant to provide you with a quick, yet rich introduction to the marked collision between the wilderness spaces and human settlements in the Park.

For more information on Ed Kanze, John and Pat Thaxton, and many more of our fantastic guest speakers contributing to the program, please visit: [www.hamilton.edu/adk/guest-speakers](http://www.hamilton.edu/adk/guest-speakers).

Additional program excursions and field trips will occur throughout the semester, such as a visit to the Adirondack Park Agency and Department of Environmental Conservation offices in Ray Brook, NY; geology field visit with Professor Dave Bailey; history workshop with alumnus Mike Mortimer (’07); and a joint visit to alumnus Jim Schoff’s (’68) Great Camp Wenonah with the students from Hamilton’s Adirondack Seminar taught on campus—this will be a lively discussion of current legal debates in the Park with attorney and Glens Falls resident Dennis Phillips.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Each student must fill out and return all forms associated with the “health report” included in the students’ pre-departure folder. These forms include the *Hamilton Off-Campus Study Health Screening Form*, the *Confidential Physician’s Report*, a *Medical Release and Permission for Medical Treatment*, a *Certification of Medical Insurance Coverage and Responsibility*, and, where necessary, a *Counselor’s Report*. *Please be sure to keep a copy for your records, and then send the originals to the general director, Janelle A. Schwartz.*

All students are required to get a physical prior to participation in the Adirondack semester.

Please see the enclosed “health report (inc. forms)” for all requisite information and materials. The general director must have all forms on file prior to the student’s arrival at the program site. **All forms are due no later than June 23, 2015.**

Should a student refuse to fill out these forms, a signed note by the student and the parent/legal guardian indicating that this occurs “against strict medical advice” must be on file
with the general director no later than June 23, 2015. (We cannot stress enough how important the “health report” is to help ensure the physical and mental well-being of the student while on the program.* Please fill out the forms with as much detail as possible. These forms are subject to review by the general director, and, only where necessary, health professionals in the Park that are treating the student, the faculty-in-residence, the medical director and counseling center at Hamilton College, and the assistant dean of off-campus study.)

Should a student be or become a danger to themselves and/or others, the general director reserves the right to dismiss the student from the program.

*The Academic Program in the Adirondacks seeks students who demonstrate motivation, maturity, and a willingness to work and live both independently and communally in a wilderness environment peppered with human settlement and industry.

DIVERSITY

This program welcomes all students, and will adapt and adjust to any needs of those students wishing to attend the semester program or stay for a temporary visit to pursue an applicable project. We encourage students in need of any accommodation (due to religious affiliation or accessibility/disability issues or severe allergies, as just three examples among many), to contact both the general director of the program and the Associate Dean of Students for Multicultural Affairs (315.859.4021, aharriso@hamilton.edu). Please do so well in advance of your attendance at the program site, as this will enhance our ability to provide successfully for needed accommodations.

GENERAL DIRECTOR AVAILABILITY

The general director (Dr. Janelle A. Schwartz) will make every effort to be available at all times, especially in the case of an emergency. However, she is not responsible for your welfare to the extent that she must remain by your side or with a phone 24/7. This program is in large part meant to augment your independence, your self-sufficiency as an individual and within a close-knit community. As mentioned above, when business necessitates that the general director must leave the program site and/or the Park, the faculty-in-residence will remain available to the students in her stead. In short, the students will never be without the availability of a program administrator; but the program itself is meant to foster communication, conflict resolution, and accountability between the students themselves.

The general director lives directly across the street from the program site, and the faculty-in-residence lives on the site itself in a private cabin.

Students will be given emergency information and procedures—and these will be discussed in depth—upon arrival at the program site in August.
FOOD AND MEALS

One of the goals of this Adirondack semester program is to introduce you, by way of place-based education, to issues of sustainability and stewardship. To this end, the program’s food sources are thoughtfully vetted. We are members in a few community supported agriculture (CSA) systems, such as Essex Farm, Fledging Crow Vegetables, and Mace Chasm Farm. We are fortunate to have a multitude of farms within a close radius of our program site, and which effectively cover all major food groups. We also have local creameries for processed dairy products, as well as maple sugaring operations, grain mills, and permanent-structure farm markets nearby. If that weren’t enough, the Keene Valley Farmer’s Market is less than 4 miles from our program site and runs through mid-October. Then, the Snowy Grocery picks up in Jay, NY and runs until the farmers run out of product (oftentimes straight through until April)! Students will be provided the opportunity to shop individually for food stocks for the program as a whole, with the intent that the students will enter into direct, informative conversations with the very people producing their food. (And, through some of the students’ chosen internships, they themselves will participate in this production as well!) You also have the opportunity to grow your own vegetables on site. We will discuss this and other such husbandry opportunities (e.g. bees and chickens) when you arrive in August. Composting and trash pick up are on site, too. By the close of the semester, students will have gained a solid understanding of their own ethics behind their food choices and how these choices affect their small community of peers at the program site, the larger communities out in the Park, and how this all can be extended into a keen sensibility of the sustainability of global food sources. And, should you want/need a commercial grocery store, there are 2 just down the road in Lake Placid (Hannaford’s and Price Chopper, both about 12 miles from our program site). In other words, we’ve got you covered!*

Meal preparation is another aspect of this program’s experiential structure. Students are expected to share dinner chores (preparation through clean up) each week, Monday – Friday. As a group, we will distribute such chores weekly, so that 2 – 3 students will be responsible for the preparation and cooking of the dinner meal in full, and another 2 – 3 students will be responsible for the meal’s clean up and putting the kitchen “to bed” every evening. Breakfast and lunch everyday, as well as all meals on weekends, are largely up to the students to determine for themselves. As stated above, we will have the occasional program visitors joining us for a meal; we will orchestrate these as they come up. Students are of course also welcome to enjoy meals at the many restaurants and eateries in the Park, at their own cost.

To help keep our pantries, refrigerators, and freezers stocked, one student will be elected Kitchen Manager, and will be aided by two Kitchen Assistants. Details to follow in August.

With this inaugural semester, we will begin to develop our very own “Hamilton/Mountain House Cookbook” (and I know we can come up with a better title than that!). For every successful, enjoyable recipe, a page will be added. And we might even want to make a “catastrophes” appendix, for a good laugh. Making a mess is fun; eating great food with amazing company is even better! We will learn together how to work well together.

*Please alert the general director to any and all dietary restrictions, including those dictated by food allergies, religious affiliation, personal ethics or preference, etc. Also, please communicate what food stuffs you would like available on site upon your arrival, to cover your first few days.
ATMs AND MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

As already explained above, room and board is covered as part of your tuition package. However, opportunities will arise when you may wish to spend your own monies. Many, many establishments throughout the Park accept credit/debit cards. Many do not. Please be sure that you can access cash funds, when needed. There is an ATM located in the Stewart’s Shop just down the road from the program site, but you will most likely have to pay an additional access fee when withdrawing funds. There are also ATMs sponsored by NBT Bank in Wilmington, Lake Placid, and Saranac Lake. This is the same bank that Hamilton recommends to students on campus for their checking and savings needs. If you plan to use your home bank while studying in the Adirondacks, please alert this bank of your “address change,” as this can help avoid any future hassles—such as your account being frozen under suspicion of fraudulent charges, etc.

We recommend that students always have some cash on hand, and not rely solely on credit card usage. Even making sure you have $20 in your pocket at any given time is a good idea.

Also, there are laundry facilities on site that require quarters to operate.

CELL PHONE AND WIFI ACCESS

Definitely bring a cell phone with you for the duration of the semester. Many areas in the Park enjoy good cell phone coverage; Verizon Wireless is the most workable service provider in the area. In fact, they are the only current service provider based directly in the Park region. Other service provider’s plans do work, but coverage is less reliable. If possible, you may want to think about getting a pay-as-you-go or other such plan on the Verizon Network for the semester.

Also, please be aware that cell phone coverage up at our program site is spotty at best. But we do have a dependable land line running to the Main House: 518-576-4704.

We also have fantastic wifi access at the program site. The Digital Integration Services Team from Hamilton upgraded the entire property for fast and dependable wifi. Personal computers and tablets will be able to link into a shared printer, when needed, and students can utilize Skype or other internet chat programs to connect with those outside the program. Likewise, students may stream Netflix or other platforms; though, ideally, this is done as a shared experience—because if every individual streams their own programs all the time, this could overload our bandwidth. (Of course, you’ll be so busy and stimulated with the goings-on and chores at the program site, your coursework, your internship, and your independent project… who has time but to catch a quick sleep!)

Worth noting: Keene, NY, where our program is located, boasts one of, if not the only broadband network currently in the Park!

WIFI PASSWORD: keene-marcy-dix
HOUSING

Students live on a 35-acre program site, The Mountain House, which is composed of abundant green space, three student-resident buildings, ample parking for personal vehicles, and the private cabin of the faculty-in-residence. No doubt you are already well informed about your picturesque housing situation—enjoying as it does an unobstructed panorama of the High Peaks (with Mount Marcy crowned in the middle!), as well as many amenities. But just in case you need a reminder or another opportunity to fantasize about your new lodgings (complete with pictures), please visit: www.hamilton.edu/adk/housing-and-facilities

Students will elect House Managers, one per building, as point persons to help navigate any issues that may come up while living in such a close community. These House Managers are the students’ first contact for negotiating personal and group preferences, frustrations, etc. The general director is the second contact, and will be kept informed of all such issues by the House Managers. Details to be discussed in August.

The Mountain House offers students a true home in the Adirondacks, and the opportunity to create a strong and indelible sense of place that they can carry with them into their post-Hamilton lives.

HOUSING REGULATIONS AND PROGRAM STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The Mountain House is not owned by Hamilton College. In the true spirit of community and sustainability, we are leasing the program site from its owner, Bob Biesemeyer, whose family has run The Mountain House as a vacation destination for decades. It is also the home in which Bob was born and grew up. Therefore, you will treat this home with as much (if not more!) respect and consideration than you give to your own. That said, Bob is super excited to be transitioning his home/vacation rental into an academic institute. He is extremely welcoming and immensely helpful. It might not be a bad idea to demonstrate our gratitude for his generosity through a thoughtful gift at the close of the semester, perhaps one of the t-shirts or sweatshirts you design for the program! You can then present this gift to him as a group. We’ll of course figure this all out during the semester. Prior to this, think about bringing Bob something unique from your hometown, such as a local food product or handicraft, with which to present him on your arrival. This is, of course, optional. Your awesome neighborliness and the excellent care you will take of his property can be gift enough—as this in itself will allow for the continued use of the program site by all those Hamiltonians to follow you!

Please keep in mind, too, that our program site, while in a definitive wilderness setting, does share this setting with several private neighbors. In the interest of being both good tenants and great neighbors, the following terms have been signed into our lease:

• Cleaning service, weekly. This will include the cleaning of all common areas (bathrooms, kitchens, living and dining areas). This does not include laundry service for clothes or bed linens and towels. Students are expected to maintain all facets of the property in good condition, and are tasked with keeping their personal rooms clean and ordered.
Although this cleaning service will occur once-per-week, students are nevertheless expected to maintain a clean kitchen and bathrooms—for health and safety purposes.

- **Smoking is prohibited** anywhere on the property (inside or out). If, however, you believe you will suffer undue mental/physical anguish without being able to smoke, and you cannot mitigate this through nicotine gum or a patch, please speak with the general director as soon as possible.
- **Recreational drugs are prohibited.** Enough said.
- **Alcohol, if you are 21 years of age or older, must be used in moderation.** Kegs and/or their attendant parties are prohibited, as is any consumption of alcohol in large quantities. This includes beer, wine, distilled spirits, and mixed drinks—and any combination thereof. Public intoxication will not be tolerated.
- **Candles or other incendiary devices are prohibited.** Note: this prohibition does not include the outdoor testing of fuel gas for camping stoves.
- **Noise curfew** is no later than 10:00pm every night. You must cease any loud music or other disruptive noise by this time.
- **Pets** are prohibited. As mentioned earlier, we’ve got you covered with dogs!
- **Fireplace use** is restricted to the indoor and outdoor fireplaces on the first floor of The Main House. Any wood stoves in student rooms will be locked from use.
- **Classroom/dining room use** allows for the reconfiguration of its tables and chairs. Common sense dictates that whatever we do on the property, we need to be able to undo upon the close of the semester. “Leave no trace” figures strongly here!
- **Water use.** The Mountain House draws from three wells of delicious water. But because we are on well water, we must be very conscious of our water use from day to day, as we don’t want to run the wells dry at any time. This means, for example, no crazy long showers and working to make laundry as efficient a process as possible (i.e. don’t wash a shirt by itself simply because you spilled some milk on it or got splashed with mud; wait until you have a full load to include with said shirt!).
- **Sanitary products.** The Mountain House has its own septic/leach field; there is no city sewer system in Keene. So please, DO NOT flush any sanitary products (e.g. pads or tampons) down the toilet. Whenever possible, please use toilet paper sparingly. And only toilet paper should be flushed. In addition, because we are in an area that sees bears on occasion, all sanitary products must be sealed in plastic bags prior to throwing them in the trash.

Failure to comply with these terms can result in dismissal from the program. Moreover, any student who is physically and/or emotionally aggressive towards themself or others; is intentionally destructive of property; violates the dignity or rights of others; disrupts the educational function of the program; or is otherwise detrimental to its operation, or who demonstrates an inability to participate constructively will be removed from the program. The final decision is made by the general director of the Adirondack semester in consultation with the faculty-in-residence, and the assistant dean of off-campus study, with the support of the administration of Hamilton College.

The general director is responsible for any disciplinary action taken. She may issue a warning (verbal and/or written) or place a student on probation if she judges that the circumstance does not warrant immediate dismissal. Should expulsion from the program occur, notification to the student’s parents will be made.
All questions or concerns with any of the above, or anything else that comes up, should be brought into the open immediately and/or communicated directly to the general director. A few of you may find that your daily habits have to be adjusted or become more flexible, in order not to create unnecessary conflict. To the extent possible, you should be considerate of each other’s personal habits and group interactions, as well as maintain respect of personal property. This is an “open campus,” a shared space in which everyone should feel at home.

Communal living requires compromise and understanding, as well as self-motivation and a strong sense of cooperation.

It should be understood that all interactions off-site and within the greater regions of the Adirondack Park must be executed with courtesy, thoughtfulness, maturity, and a sense of safety. You represent Hamilton… so be your usual awesome selves! We trust you will maintain the utmost respect for those with whom you work as part of your internship and independent capstone project, as well as for those with whom you come in contact as part of your explorations throughout the Park. This respect extends onto the land itself, its fragility and its varied “nonhuman” inhabitants. Also, do not forget: the Adirondacks are a patchwork of public and private lands. Make sure to avoid trespassing on private lands, unless you have been given express permission by the owners and/or caretakers. You are responsible for keeping an eye out for “POSTED: NO TRESPASSING” or other indicative signs.

A soft guideline to remain within “the Blue Line,” a term used in New York state to indicate the boundaries of the Adirondack Park, is in effect for the duration of the program. This does not mean you must remain confined inside this line at all times. Instead, it is meant to persuade you to treat the Adirondacks as home for the semester, to become intimately connected to the Park, its land and its inhabitants… and even entice you to return after the close of your semester! All of our local partners, guest speakers, food resources, etc. are excited for the arrival of Hamilton students in the Park. They very much look forward to making you a part of their community, and to working with you on important ongoing projects. You are wanted for your potential to make significant contributions to the Park, just as the Park will contribute to your education and personal growth! (If you are thinking of this semester as “camp” or “vacation,” you do not belong in the program. There is far too much work to be done—academically and communally.)

**LOCAL RESOURCES, EMERGENCY SERVICES, AND NEARBY AIRPORTS**

Within Keene and its neighboring Keene Valley (KV), you have access to myriad resources for scholarly research, recreation, and everyday living. Both Keene and KV have their own libraries, with KV boasting an excellent and immense Adirondack collection. There is also the Joan Weill Adirondack Library, at Paul Smith’s College, located just north of Saranac Lake. Keene Central School offers opportunities for students interested in secondary education or simply volunteering and/or tutoring. And several environmental advocacy groups have offices from KV to Lake Placid to Saranac Lake, including The Nature Conservancy, Adirondack Council, and the Adirondack Mountain Club (ADK). To name a few.
Throughout the Park, individual organizations and community groups hold all manner of events and activities year-round. In order to keep yourself aware of all of these goings-on, we strongly recommend that you subscribe to at least these two following news sources:

*Adirondack Almanack*: [www.adirondackalmanack.com](http://www.adirondackalmanack.com)
*Jay Community News*: [www.jaynews.org](http://www.jaynews.org)

There is a fitness center close by the program site, several boutique shops for food and sundries, a Stewart’s Shop for gas and ice cream (!), the Noonmark Diner (yay pie!), Valley Grocery and Valley Hardware in KV, The Mountaineer—“Purveyors of Fine Outdoor Equipment Since 1975,” Rock and River Guide Service, Cloudsplitter Guides, bike shops galore, restaurants sprinkled everywhere, the fancy shops on the mall of Lake Placid, etc.

There are 4 hospitals with emergency services nearby: Elizabethtown, Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, and Plattsburgh. Burlington (east, across Lake Champlain) is a Level 1 trauma center and has extensive hospital resources for all level of needs. North Country Life Flight is based out of Saranac Lake International Airport. Additional information, contact numbers, and driving directions to all hospital facilities will be available at the program site, contained within a binder articulating the program’s “emergency procedures.” This binder will be discussed in detail upon arrival in August. We are also in the service areas of the Keene and Keene Valley Fire Departments and Emergency Response Teams.

There are several airports/airstrips within the general vicinity of the program site. These include: Albany International Airport, Plattsburgh International Airport, Burlington International Airport, Saranac Lake International Airport, and the Marcy Field Airport in Keene Valley for public use by small planes. We urge you to do your research before scheduling any flight to and/or from these locations, for yourself or family members or friends.

Several private flightseeing companies also exist within the Park. The arrangement of and participation in these and other such sightseeing or guided tours are the full responsibility of the student. (This, of course, excludes any such tours organized by and for the program itself.)

Public transportation is by and large unavailable in the Park. There is a shuttle bus that runs around Lake Placid, and ready cab availability on the Vermont-side of Lake Champlain. Cab availability in the Park is sporadic at best, and prohibitively costly at worst. As previously mentioned, students are permitted to keep personal vehicles in the Park, and have access to the program’s 12-passenger van. In addition, both the general director and the faculty-in-residence have their own vehicles and can provide rides for students.

With all of the above in mind, please also keep in mind that we are located in a delicate, wilderness environment. Even with its modern amenities and abundant tourism opportunities, the Adirondacks demand careful stewardship—and you must demand this approach of yourself and your peers. Not all expected conveniences will be met, and (depending on your proclivity toward backcountry expeditioneering) you can find yourself without food or potable water sources or readily available emergency medical response. The program makes every effort to keep you safe and secure; but you must also take this responsibility on for yourself. Any risk you decide to undertake could adversely affect the whole group. This is not to dissuade you from
exploration and experimentation. This program is built on “challenge by choice.” Should an emergency situation occur, we must work together to avoid creating more potential victims.

SAFETY

The Adirondacks are considerably safer than most urban or suburban areas, domestically and abroad. But accidents can occur, as does criminal behavior. Unsafe situations and events can arise, due to environmental or human factors, or both. We urge you to work on maintaining positive situational awareness: know your surroundings, keep track of the weather like you keep track of your Facebook updates, think ahead, keep track of your belongings, and let people know where and when you are going and plan to return. Whenever possible, stick with a buddy or a group.

Keep in mind that we are a 4-hour drive from New York City and a 2-hour drive from Montreal. The Adirondacks thus form a kind of portal for goods and services, both legal and illicit. The Park is also a destination location for 7 – 10 million visitors per year, and is situated within a day’s drive for over 84 million people.

This topic cannot be exhausted. Discussions regarding safety are ever-present. This is merely presented here to provide you with some preliminary context and guidance.

Should concerns regarding your safety or the safety of others arise, be it during activities sponsored by the program, within the communal living situation, or during your chosen extracurriculars, do not hesitate to communicate these with the general director.

There is unparalleled generosity of spirit, intellectual acuity, and community engagement in the Adirondack Park. We are confident that you will have an incredible experience this semester— one filled with deep learning, exciting adventure, and inimitable career preparation. To make this happen, you must take responsibility for yourself and your actions, just as the program is responsible for you, your education, and your well-being.

CONCLUSION

It goes without saying by now (but I’ll say it again!): if you have any questions or concerns, no matter how trivial or how complex you believe they are, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach me anytime on my cell @ 608-347-7886 or via email: jschwart@hamilton.edu.

Do not forget to return the requisite “health report” forms to me, no later than June 23, 2015. And please respond to the individual queries throughout this packet, regarding arrival date, dietary restrictions, what food stuffs you want available upon arrival, etc.

Here’s to launching your wonder-full new adventure!

Sincerely (still),
Janelle