



Winterline Global Skills Gap Year Curriculum

Our signature program, the Winterline Global Skills Program, is a nine-month, post-secondary educational experience designed for young people ages 18– 22 from all over the world. The program introduces participants to different regions of the world and expands their knowledge of global cultures, issues and contexts, while equipping them with specific real-world life, college and career skills.

Our mission is to help individuals gain competencies and confidence through skills-acquisition combined with exposure to many geographic and physical environments. Our alumni have a broader awareness of potential future career and life paths they might take that combine their strengths and interests effectively. Besides many practical life and job skills, they also gain leadership, communication, critical thinking, and cross-cultural skills.

Location

Our nine-month program Global Skills Program follows an academic year schedule and consists of three trimesters. Over the course of the year, the participants travel and live in wilderness, rural and urban settings in Latin America, Asia, Europe and North America, including countries in the less developed world and emerging markets.

Program Overview

The primary focus of our nine-month program is to expose participants to a wide variety of practical skills that they can use throughout their work and personal lives. The program is experiential, with over 90% of the teaching happening outside of a classroom environment. Winterline has partnered with leading providers of experiential learning, many of which provide accredited certifications. Our partners include institutions such as NOLS, BMW Driving School, Monteverde Institute, Startup Institute, United World College, and many others.

Each trimester, participants travel to a new region in a cohort of 15 – 18 young people. Each cohort is accompanied by two adult facilitators who provide direction and support, especially in the first trimester and when traveling to a new region. Most training is done in smaller teams. As the year progresses, participants take on increasing responsibility for organizing their free time and learning. There are opportunities to apply skills that they have learned in different contexts and to develop and execute independent projects at the end of each trimester.



Winterline Global Skills Gap Year Curriculum

Participants earn certifications as they complete trainings, including: PADI Scuba certification, Wilderness First Aid (WFA), and certificates of completion from various partners.

Schedule of Year

The program begins with an orientation in the Fall, followed by three trimesters, each in a different region of the world. Each trimester is divided into weeklong segments, concluding with a week for debriefing and preparation for the next trimester.

Locations of Programming

First Trimester	Living in Our World	US, Costa Rica, and Belize
Second Trimester	Connecting Across Cultures	Thailand, Cambodia, and India
Third Trimester	Building Your Future	Italy, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic and US

Curriculum Content

The Winterline Global Skills Program curriculum focuses on exposing our participants to a wide variety of practical and age-appropriate skills. These skills are organized into nine categories.

The program takes a comparative approach to skill building and participants learn to adapt to living and working in a variety of settings, organizations, and physical and cultural environments. The range of skills has been selected to equip them for living independently while also giving them the confidence to try out new roles and pursue their interests.

Learning these skills in a global context also increases their creativity, confidence, resourcefulness and resilience.



Winterline Global Skills Gap Year Curriculum

Real-world Skills

1. Problem-Solving & Critical Thinking

Being able to think logically about a problem, evaluate pros and cons of different solutions, test hypotheses, and evaluate the results are all key skills for success in all aspects of a person’s life, socially, professionally, and academically. Participants practice these skills daily as they negotiate the broad range of challenges they face. The program also incorporates independent and group problem-solving throughout the year. Increasingly difficult challenges are presented that require participants to learn how to work both individually and as a team to solve the problem.

<i>Examples of Specific Skills:</i>	<i>Examples of how these skills are taught:</i>
Experimental Methods and Data Analysis	Assisting in scientific research
Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving	Basic challenges and games, increasing in difficulty Robotics challenge: basic programming, project design Independent project: from concept through research, planning, execution, evaluation

2. Leadership & Team Dynamics

Through practice, reflection and on-going assessment, participants become versatile in using different styles of leadership and taking on various roles in a group. They identify their own strengths and weaknesses and work to become stronger leaders and team members. Participants will also be able to organize others towards a specific goal and plan a project.

<i>Examples of Specific Skills:</i>	<i>Examples of how these skills are taught:</i>
Leadership styles and techniques	Wilderness Leadership Training
How to plan and execute a project	Independent projects
Team dynamics	Group Challenges
Cross-cultural and diversity issues	Student-led discussions on place-specific issues; power and privilege exercises

3. Communication Skills

Participants increase their ability to communicate well in a wide variety of settings. They learn to facilitate a group and advocate for themselves and others. They prepare and deliver formal presentations at the end of each trimester, including a short film and a business pitch. They become more confident interacting with people from different cultures and learn how to correctly assess a social or business environment and behave appropriately based on cultural and situational norms.



Winterline Global Skills Gap Year Curriculum

<i>Examples of Specific Skills:</i>	<i>Examples of how these skills are taught:</i>
Public Speaking	Project presentations to authentic audiences
Digital Media	Digital publishing and videography
Conflict Resolution	Conflict Resolution training
Social and Business Etiquette	Formal and informal etiquette training

4. Business & Work Skills

At the core of the program is a commitment to preparing young people to make informed life and career choices. Participants meet people from a wide range of vocations and avocations and learn about the many of career and life paths available to them. This exposure, combined with practicing numerous kinds of tasks during the year, gives them a realistic idea of the types of skills that are used in various careers, and which ones they most enjoy. Through a startup boot camp, they are also equipped with basic business skills such as budgeting, pitching a product or project, negotiation, and business communications. Customer service training rounds out this unit.

<i>Examples of Specific Skills:</i>	<i>Examples of how these skills are taught:</i>
Basic start-up skills – ideation, planning, and pitching	Start-up Boot Camp
Job searches and the application process	Resume writing and job interviewing workshop
Finances and handling money	Start-up Boot Camp and the Money Experience
Taking care of customers	Customer Service training

5. Global Society & Governance

An understanding of our world’s economic, political, and social systems and cultural competence are fundamental skills to become a global citizen. As we travel around the world, participants practice self-governance in their cohorts and learn to facilitate and organize a team using a wide variety of techniques. Negotiation skills from bargaining to mediation are learned. Participants have opportunities to learn about global issues in local contexts and how different societies function. The program places strong emphasis on being responsible and respectful guests, and in taking every opportunity to learn from and about the local culture, history, economy, and politics.

<i>Examples of Specific Skills:</i>	<i>Examples of how these skills are taught:</i>
Group facilitation & decision-making	Regular De-briefs and Leader of the Day
Negotiation and Mediation	Conflict Resolution Training
Cultural Literacy	Cross-cultural communication workshops
Increase understanding of global issues	Dialogue with local experts on a variety of issues



Winterline Global Skills Gap Year Curriculum

6. Independent Living Skills

Participants become independent and able to thrive in their adult lives. They learn basic life skills such as: managing money, self-care, cooking, driving defensively, maintaining a bike, staying fit, entertaining, managing money, growing food, etc. In addition, they plan and execute an independent study project that requires that they submit a proposal, set up travel and project logistics, budget for the project, and present formally on their experience. They also take on increasing levels of responsibility for self-care, managing risk, and decision-making.

<i>Examples of Specific Skills:</i>	<i>Examples of how these skills are taught:</i>
Survival Skills such as cooking, growing food, traveling, entertaining, driving, maintaining a car and bicycle	Cooking classes in different cultures, group cooking Swimming, scuba lessons, including PADI certification BMW Driving School, bike touring
Independent Study Project	Design and execute an independent project
First Aid and CPR	Wilderness First Aid (WFA) Certification
Stress reduction and fitness	Yoga and self-care classes
Money skills	Money skills activities and challenges
Risk Management	Developing Emergency Action Plans for independent travel

7. Our Physical World (Outdoors, Environment)

Learning to be comfortable and self-sufficient in the outdoors is both very satisfying and empowering. Participants learn a variety of skills that allow them to take care of themselves outside of urban environments and build an appreciation for the natural world. Basic physical needs such as food and shelter and dealing with medical issues and emergencies are addressed. Additionally, units on the marine environment and tropical rainforests provide intensive exposure to these unique environments. Finally, participants learn about innovative strategies to mitigate negative human impact on the environment.

<i>Examples of Specific Skills:</i>	<i>Examples of how these skills are taught:</i>
Backpacking and Outdoor Skills	NOLS wilderness training and hiking in rainforests
Appreciating different natural environments	Sailing, scuba-diving, kayaking and fishing Conservation study
Sustainability	Permaculture workshop, sustainable agriculture skills



Winterline Global Skills Gap Year Curriculum

8. Caregiving for Self & Others

As young adults, our participants are moving from the role of being cared for to caring for others. This new role requires both practical skills such as how to care for others and soft skills such as how to interact with someone with a disability in a respectful and positive way.

<i>Examples of Specific Skills:</i>	<i>Examples of how these skills are taught:</i>
Caring for each other	Students serve as Wellness person for the cohort
Helping in an emergency	Emergency Preparedness training
Relating to people with disabilities	Working with the physically or mentally challenged

9. Making & Building

Participants learn, to varying degrees of skill, a wide range of hard skills that are needed to make things. Participants emerge with useful skills such as repairing a car, planting a garden, and cooking a good meal. They become comfortable with planning and executing a project or task, understanding how various systems work, and recognizing good design.

<i>Examples of Specific Skills:</i>	<i>Examples of how these skills are taught:</i>
Construction and woodworking	Building a structure and woodworking
Design	Study permaculture design Art courses: art, dance, visual arts, crafts
Cooking, growing, and serving food	Culinary art classes in different regions Group meal planning and meal preparation
Robotics	Participate in a Robotics competition
Mechanics and using power tools	Learning to use hand and power tools safely