For Accepted Students Handbook
Brown Environmental Leadership Lab: Rhode Island

Program Dates
Session 1: Sunday, July 1 – Thursday, July 12
Session 2: Sunday, July 15 – Thursday, July 26
I. A Note to Parents, Guardians, and Students

Congratulations! We are looking forward to your participation in this unique and engaging program. We have compiled some important information for you; please review this carefully with your family and don’t hesitate to contact us with any questions. Please do NOT finalize travel arrangements or submit final payment for the program until you receive an email from Brown confirming this program.

II. Next Steps for BELL RI

You will soon receive a personalized email outlining a checklist of items that need to be completed for you to attend the program. Included in the checklist are student account activation, electronic billing and payment access, travel itinerary request, forms completion via DocuSign, and an online tutorial that reviews Brown’s values and policies.

Forms will be submitted electronically through DocuSign, an electronic signature provider where you can digitally fill out and sign our required forms and waivers. Forms include sections for both students and parents to complete.

You can expect to complete the following forms:

- Pre-College Off-Campus Programs Student Acceptance and Release and Waiver Form
- Medical Authorization Form
- Medical and Immunization Medical Report — Requires a medical provider’s signature
- Off Campus Dietary Form

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If applicable:
Disability, Medical, and Dietary Services Request Form Students with significant food allergies or intolerance should complete a complete a Disability Accommodations or Services Request Form. Along with this form, students may need to submit documentation of their area of disability and needs. Please reference the SEAS guidelines for documenting a disability and contact them if you have any questions or concerns: SEAS-SPS@brown.edu or 401-863-9588. More information can also be found on the SEAS Website under School of Professional Studies (SPS) Programs

You can also expect to receive emails with instructions for how to activate your Brown account, pay your balance online, and complete an online tutorial that reviews Brown's values and policies.

Online Program Orientation
An online program orientation for you and a parent will be scheduled before your departure.

We will review important program information and give you an opportunity to ask questions. Even if you cannot attend the live event, please register at this link so that you can receive a recording of the webinar for review at your convenience. To participate in this orientation, you will need access to a computer or smartphone (download the GoToWebinar app). No webcam necessary.

DATE: May 10 at 7pm
REGISTER HERE

III. What to Bring

Tip #1: Remember to bring only what is on the enclosed equipment list. We will be outdoors every day and do not need to be dressed up, so think in minimalist terms. If your bag is too heavy to carry by yourself, you have packed too much.

Tip #2: New England weather can change at the drop of a hat. We have had sessions where temperatures were around 90°F and sunny, and we’ve had sessions where it rained nearly every day. In particular, nights can be cool, which is why we include a warm hat and at least one sweatshirt or long sleeve fleece. Please check the weather in West Greenwich, RI (zip code: 02817) prior to packing.

Tip #3: Rain gear is important. We will be spending time outdoors rain or shine. If you have nylon pants that can function as rain pants, bring them.
Tip #4: Linens, including pillows, blankets, sheets, and towels will all be provided for you.

Required items:
- A soft, large duffel bag is easiest to store but any type of suitcase is fine
- Rain jacket
- Warm sweatshirt or fleece jacket
- 1–2 pairs long, lightweight pants for hot weather wear
- 3–6 pairs of shorts (quick-dry are best)
- 10–14 t-shirts
- 2–3 long-sleeve t-shirts
- Sleep wear
- Underwear and socks for 12 days
- Bathing suit
- Sturdy, close-toed walking shoes (no need for hiking boots)
- Water shoes (Old tennis shoes, Tevas, Keens, or Crocs w/ back strap; NOT flip flops)
- Toothbrush and toiletries, feminine products (if needed)
- Sun block (30+ SPF)
- Any prescribed medications in their original bottle with a copy of the prescription
- Prescription glasses or contacts (if needed) and back up pair of glasses if lost or broken
- Journal or notebook
- Reusable water bottle
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Watch (preferably waterproof)

Recommended items:
- Hat for sun protection
- Warm hat for cool nights
- 2 bandannas (to use as table napkins)
- Beach towel
- Insect repellent
- Flip flops (to wear at the lake)

Optional items:
- Envelopes and stamps, if you would like to send out letters to family and friends
- Sketch pads or art materials
- Inexpensive camera (cannot be part of phone)
- Musical instrument (We also have a piano on site!)
- Book to read/independent leisure activities (we do have playing cards, Frisbees, soccer balls, and a few other board games on site)

What not to bring
Students should not bring laptops, tablets, or other valuable electronics. Students are prohibited from
bringing illegal drugs, alcohol, and weapons of any sort, including pocket or Swiss Army knives.

**Will I be able to do laundry?**

There are no public laundry facilities at BELL: RI. Students should pack enough clothing for all days of the program. Please pack enough clothing for every day of the program.

**IV. Check-In and Closing Event Details**

**Arrival and Check-In**

Session 1: Sunday, July 1  
Session 2: Sunday, July 15  
Students should arrive at Brown University's Main Green on opening day.

9:00–11:00am* Registration on the Main Green. Parents and students register, meet staff, and take a campus tour if desired. Please check in no later than 11:00am.

11:30am Brief orientation for students and parents. We will have location details at the registration table.

12:00pm Bus takes students from Main Green to Whispering Pines Conference Center. (Students will be served lunch upon arrival to Whispering Pines.)

Parents will not see the actual site on opening day. However, we hope that families can join us for our closing program at Whispering Pines. The site is 35 minutes southwest of the campus.

*If your travel is delayed*

If you experience a delay while traveling to Providence, please call or text Brown’s BELL On-site Director at 401–523–6218 with your new arrival time, and we will help coordinate your transportation to Whispering Pines Conference Center

*Note: This number will not be active until a few days before the program starts.*

**Closing Day Schedule**

Session 1: Thursday, July 12  
Session 2: Thursday, July 26

1:00 pm Enjoy the grounds, meet staff and students  
1:45 pm Closing presentation  
2:00 pm Action Plan presentations  
3:00 pm Depart from Whispering Pines

*Brown University Pre-College Programs*  
Brown Environmental Leadership Lab: Rhode Island | 2018  
Session 1: July 1 – 12 | Session 2: July 15 – 26
We strongly encourage parents and families to come to our closing day program. This will be an opportunity for you to see the site, hear Action Plan presentations from the students, and meet the staff. You are welcome to arrive between 1:00pm and 1:45pm on Closing Day.

**Note:** On Closing Day, we provide bus transportation for students to go to the airport or back to the main Brown University Campus where students may later take a shuttle or taxi to the next leg of their journey home. The bus will depart Whispering Pines at 3:00pm. Please see the “Late Departure” section below if you need to stay on campus an extra night due to flight arrangements. Students may also depart directly from Whispering Pines with friends or family.

**Whispering Pines Conference Center Address**
The BELL: Rhode Island program is located at the Whispering Pines Conference Center 401 Victory Highway, West Greenwich, RI 02817.

**V. Student Travel**

**Directions to Brown University for Arrival Day**
Students are responsible for making their own transportation arrangements to Brown University on check-in day.

Brown University Pre-College Programs maintains a detailed [website with travel directions and transportation options](#).

**Early Arrival**
Although students should make every effort to plan their travel to Brown based on a Sunday arrival, procedures are in place to accommodate a Saturday arrival for students who need to work around flight schedules. The $150 early arrival fee will be waived for BELL RI students arriving on Saturday. Early arrival must be requested in advance of the program. If you meet the early arrival criteria due to long-distance travel, please complete the Early Arrival Request Form in your student portal.

**Late Departure**
Students should plan to leave Whispering Pines on the Thursday that their session ends. If flight schedules and long distance travel plans necessitate a Friday departure, you must request permission to
stay at Brown Thursday night. Please email precollege@brown.edu to make arrangements. There is a 
$150 per night extended housing fee.

VI. Program Information (FAQ)

About Whispering Pines
BELL: Rhode Island takes place at the Whispering Pines Conference Center, a pristine site that sits on 
2,300 acres of forests, lakes, and streams.

What are the Whispering Pines facilities like?
Whispering Pines Conference Center features a variety of “outdoor classrooms” where students will get
to spend time. The property sits right on a large lake and right beside a stream, both of which we’ll be 
able to study and wade in. In addition, we have a well-equipped kitchen and outdoor areas for all types of 
sports.

Sleeping quarters are hotel-style rooms with a private bathroom in each room. Each student will sleep on 
their own bed in a share room with 1 – 2 other students of the same gender. All linens are provided.

Will we be able to swim?
We will be swimming in the lake on some afternoons during the program. On those days, students will 
have access to kayaks and canoes as well. The lifeguards will provide a life vest for every student. On a 
few days of the program, we will be hiking through a stream. Students will need water shoes (please see 
packing list) for these lessons. Flip-flops are not acceptable as they will not stay on your feet. Students are 
not permitted to swim in the lake or stream outside of supervised lessons or free time.

Is the site secure?
Whispering Pines is located on a private property. Other programs will be running while BELL students 
are on the property, however it is unlikely that BELL students will see the other program participants, as 
we are housed in completely separate areas of the large property. Trespassers or people not affiliated 
with a program are strictly forbidden from entering the property. BELL staff live on-site with the 
students.

Students will have clear guidelines regarding where they can go alone or with a buddy, but the group 
stays together most of the time. Student will have a few hours of unstructured free time to explore the
Brown campus the day we visit Providence. Staff is available for support and assistance 24 hours a day.

**What is a “Challenge Course”?**
A Challenge Course, or low ropes course, is an outdoor experience that challenges groups to solve problems and work effectively together. It provides an opportunity for students to gain insight into their own leadership styles and to observe the ways in which groups work best. Our challenge course is located just a short walk away. This is one of the activities where students will be required to wear long pants (NOT capris) and closed-toe shoes.

**What do I need to know about ticks?**
As with most outdoor locations in the Northeast, deer ticks that sometimes carry Lyme disease may be present at our site. We take a number of precautions throughout the program, including review with students on high-risk areas, provision of tick identification charts on site, and designated time for three tick checks per day, with a fourth recommended before bed. When students are out in the woods, they are required to wear long pants tucked into permethrin-treated socks. We will provide one pair of treated socks to each student when they arrive at Whispering Pines.

Should a student find a tick on him/herself, our staff works closely with Brown Health Services to implement a protocol that may include a preventative course of antibiotics. Although not required, some families may be interested in purchasing tick repellent clothing prior to the course or having their own clothing treated. Information can be found here:  
[http://www.tickencounter.org/prevention/tick_repellent_clothing](http://www.tickencounter.org/prevention/tick_repellent_clothing)

If your student experiences any flu-like symptoms, joint aches, or a bulls-eye rash upon return home, you should contact your medical provider and inform him/her that your student has been in an area where there are deer ticks that sometimes carry Lyme disease. We have had hundreds of students participate without any problems, but we want you to know about deer ticks and tick-bite prevention should you be unfamiliar with this information.
Program Information

What is our schedule?

8:30 – 9:00am  Breakfast, students help with set-up and clean-up
9:00 – 9:30am  Community tasks
9:30 – 11:30am Morning session
11:30 – 12:00pm Free time
12:00 – 1:00pm Lunch, students help with set-up and clean-up
1:00 – 2:00pm Solo time
2:00 – 5:00pm Afternoon session
5:00 – 6:00pm Free time
6:00 – 7:00pm Supper, students help with set-up and clean-up
7:00 – 7:45pm Recreation Time
7:45 – 9:00pm Evening program
9:00 – 10:00pm Free time
10:00pm In tents

There will also be several special days when the schedule will be different. These will include:

- A day on the Brown campus exploring the facilities and talking to faculty and students
- A day of teambuilding and leadership development on a Challenge Course

What time is curfew?

Our days are busy, requiring the students’ energy and attention throughout the day. Although students must be in their rooms by 10:00pm, we respect the students’ ability to choose when to go to sleep. We encourage all students to monitor their sleep requirements and to respect their roommates’ need for sleep.

What leadership skills will I learn?

- Identification and analysis of personal leadership style
- Effective listening skills
- Group problem solving
- The role of diversity in leadership
- Public speaking
- Social Change Model of Leadership Development

What is the Action Plan?

At BELL, we help our students define the issues that they are passionate about and construct an Action Plan to address them. We work with you to set realistic goals, identify mentors and resource people, and anticipate challenges.
We encourage you to think about some potential Action Plan topics before you come to BELL, but most students don't actually know what their Action Plan will be until they start working on it at BELL. Your instructors will help you design an Action Plan that fits your interests and skills.

Examples of BELL Student Action Plans:
- Received a grant to install solar panels on a High School
- Developed composting systems or recycling programs
- Constructed a wind turbine at school
- Eliminated Styrofoam in county buildings
- Published an educational article in an online teen magazine
- Coordinated an e-waste collection
- Implemented Meatless Mondays in a school cafeteria

How much homework should I expect?
Students will be provided with a reading pack on the first day and will need to complete daily readings. Students should expect to spend about one hour a day doing work outside of class.

How many students are there?
There is a maximum of 32 students in each BELL session. Usually, there are slightly more females than males. BELL students come from all over the U.S. and the world, and range from 10th grade to graduated seniors.

Will we spend time on the Brown University campus in Providence?
We will spend one full day on campus. Students will have opportunities to meet with faculty and undergraduate students to learn about the curriculum and life at Brown. We will also eat lunch in a campus dining hall.

How much money should I bring?
Meals, snacks, and housing are covered in the program. Students will only need money while traveling to and from Providence and for any incidental expenses. Some students choose to purchase items at the Brown Bookstore the day we visit campus.

How often can I use my cell phone?
When students arrive at BELL, we will collect and secure all electronic devices, including cell phones, tablets, and e-readers. As a general philosophy, we believe in disconnecting from digital devices to better pay attention to each other and to our natural surroundings.

For the first four days of BELL, students will not have access to their phones. This gives us time to form a
community and get acquainted. After a few days, students will have a few hours after 5:00pm EST with their phones. We can make accommodations for students to speak with families who are in other time zones. When we are in Providence on campus, students will again have their phones. Students do not have access to email except for the last 10 minutes of research time in a campus computer lab during our day on campus.

**How can I contact my student during the session?**

**During the day:** Parents may call the BELL Rhode Island On-site Director at (401) 523–6218 with urgent requests or concerns.

You may send mail to your student at:
(Student’s Name)
Brown University Guest in Sycamore Lodge
Whispering Pines Conference Center
401 Victory Highway
West Greenwich, RI 02817

*Note:* It is VERY IMPORTANT to address to the attention of “BELL.”

**Health and Wellness**

**Dietary Restrictions and Medical Conditions**

We will work with the staff to make accommodations for dietary restrictions and food allergies if we are notified in advance. Students must communicate significant food allergies that require meal accommodations (e.g. gluten, shellfish, soy, eggs, milk) on the Off-Campus Dietary Concerns Form. Please also indicate any dietary preferences, including vegetarians and vegans, to allow us to plan accordingly.

**What if I take prescription medication or need medical attention?**

The On-Site Director or his/her designee will collect and store all prescription medications on the first day of the program. Students must be responsible for requesting and taking prescribed dosage. Students with life-saving asthma and anaphylaxis medications (e.g., inhalers and epi-pens) must keep them on their person at all times.

All students who are taking prescription medications should bring prescribed medication in its original container and a copy of their prescription. Having a copy of the original prescription will enable us to replace medication if needed.

Students with minor health concerns can be seen at Brown University Health Services Monday through Friday, during business hours. For minor problems, in the evenings or weekends, we have a well-
equipped first aid kit and staff certified in first aid. In the case of a medical emergency, students will be transported to Hasbro Children’s Hospital in Providence.

VII. Policies

Code of Conduct
Please review the Brown Pre-College Code of Conduct.

Financial Information
The payment deadline for the program is Friday, May 25. Students must be paid in full PRIOR to the start of the program. Please review our financial policies, including payment and refund information.

Evaluation
There is no homework in the traditional sense. For the most part students will participate in experiential learning together with some reflective writing. Students will be required to present a short oral presentation related to their learning at the end of the program.

Students will receive a Course Performance Report, written by program staff and will also be asked to complete a course evaluation. Students who successfully complete the program will receive a Certificate of Completion. All completion materials including the evaluation will be sent 6 weeks after the program concludes. The certificate will be sent via US Mail but other items will be sent electronically to the student email we have on file.