Winterfest
Climbing: Horse Pens 40, and Chattanooga
January 9-16, 2016
$375
Price includes: round trip transportation, group equipment, fees and permits, two nights in a hostel, camping fees, and all backcountry meals

Trip Overview
Activity: Climbing
Difficulty Level: ★★★★★

This trip will take you on a tour of two of the top climbing spots in the south eastern United States. With its unique rock formations dating back nearly 1.3 billion years, Horse Pens 40 in Alabama is recognized as one of the best bouldering sites on the east coast. Its grounds are rich with Native American history, and its rock caves and secret passages were used as hideaways by Civil War soldiers and outlaws alike. The second stop on your trip will take you to Chattanooga, Tennessee, an adventure capital. The area is famous for its Southern sandstone rock, and the endless number of routes will provide the opportunity for beginners and experts alike to find challenge and success.

The group will be exposed to a variety of bouldering, top rope, and sport climbing experiences. You will camp for the first four nights in Alabama, and will stay in a local climbing hostel in Tennessee. Come meet new people, learn about climbing, explore a new area, and put your skills to the test!

General Schedule of Trip

January 9 (Saturday): Return to Gettysburg before noon, review gear, and pack.

January 10: Depart Gettysburg for Alabama, and camp near the climbing site.

January 11-13: Bouldering at Horse Pens.

January 14: Drive north to Chattanooga, TN. Explore the town and scout out the climbing area, while staying at a local climbing hostel.

January 15: Spend the day climbing. Final group dinner and last night in Tennessee.

January 16 (Saturday): Complete the drive from back to campus.
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The Climb: Horse Pens 40 and Chattanooga both have climbing routes that span all levels of difficulty, making this trip accessible for people with all levels of climbing experience. The group will be exposed to a variety of climbing types including bouldering, top roping, and sport climbing.

Group Size: The trip will consist of 3 GRAB staff members from the Office of Experiential Education and 6-8 participants.

Accommodations: On campus housing may be arranged for Friday and Saturday night (January 8-9), but may not be in your normal room. The group will camp in Horse Pens for the first four nights, and then travel to Chattanooga where we will stay in a local hostel for the last two nights of the trip. Fees, permits, and gear are provided by GRAB and are included in the program’s cost.

Meals: We will provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner each day we are in the field, and you will learn how to cook delicious backcountry meals on a backpacking stove. Travel dinners on the first and last night are also included, but you will be responsible for breakfast, lunch, and any additional food while traveling to and from Alabama/Tennessee. You will also provide your own meals prior to the beginning of the trip.

Weather: The weather can vary in Alabama/Tennessee at this time of year, but expect to see nightly lows in the low 40s and daily highs in the mid-50s to 60s. You can expect rain on at least a few days.

Physical Preparations: Moderate terrain and temperatures make this a great trip for participants with all levels of experience. The best way to prepare for this trip is to stay active. Getting over to the climbing wall to practice top roping and bouldering can be a great way to make your experience more enjoyable.

Communication & Emergencies: Our trip locations often have cell service, but some sections may be spotty. The staff will carry a cell phone in the event of an emergency; however, we will not be able to completely rely on the service, and the group needs to know they may be without communication at times. We have specific emergency information and take time to develop contingency plans, but we are also aware that based on location and access it may take time to contact or reach definitive medical care, should the need arise. Although participants are permitted to carry phones, most choose to leave technology behind to more fully immerse themselves in the group experience.

Health and Medical & Release of Liability: Each participant is asked to fill out a Health and Medical form for this trip. We request that you are truthful with your medical information and speak with your GRAB staff facilitator about any concerns or pre-existing conditions. In addition, we want to inform you that you will be asked to sign our indemnity form, and that you are aware that all Gettysburg College policies and procedures apply to this trip.

Medical Kit and Medicine: It is our top priority to mitigate risk on these experiences. As such, we rely on medical forms so we can properly prepare together for this trip and ensure everyone’s safety. All GRAB staff members are certified Wilderness First Responders, and while in the field, we carry a medical and trauma kit. The medical kit has basic bandaging and wound care items, whereas our trauma kit has basic splinting and medicines such as aspirin, anti-diarrheal, epinephrine, and Benadryl. We ask that you have with you your prescription medicine that you need on a daily/weekly basis, and that you transport it in its original container/bottle with your name and dosage. It is your responsibility to manage your own medication. For those with strong allergies that require medication, it is very important that you bring extra epinephrine or necessary medication in the event that yours becomes lost or broken.