

Procedures and Policies

Students majoring in Recreation and Park Administration should plan to enroll in REC 463 the last semester of their senior year.

BEFORE APPROVAL IS GRANTED TO REGISTER FOR REC 463, THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA MUST BE MET:

1. All REC courses must be completed with a grade of “C-” or higher. This includes all REC required courses in the core and curriculum option.
2. The student’s cumulative GPA must be 2.0 or higher.
3. Student must have ECU personal liability insurance. (See page 9)

Application and Resume

After discussion with the Seminar instructor and/or Practicum Coordinator, and approximately three months before assignments are scheduled, the student will file application for placement (See Appendix E). At this time the student will present two (2) up-to-date resumes to remain with the Seminar instructor and Practicum Coordinator.

Selection of the Agency

Selection of the agency should be the combined effort of the student and the Practicum Coordinator. The selection of the agency should be matched with the student’s needs so the individual student can best fulfill present and future career needs and goals. When the student makes a final decision in selecting an agency, the agency may then be contacted by the Practicum coordinator before solidifying final acceptance.

The Agency selected is typically within 250 miles of the campus unless permission is received from the Practicum Coordinator.

Upon request of a student, the Practicum Coordinator will decide if there should be an exception to the 250 mile policy.

Students may be allowed to commence the Practicum only when the agency has a supervisor who is qualified both by education and experience to supervise the student. The Waiver Form (See Appendix F) specifies the student's responsibility to select a setting with the most qualified and experienced staff person.

The following factors are considered in selecting a Practicum agency:

1. The Agency should show evidence of a sound professional philosophy of leisure service.
2. The Agency should show evidence of adequate community acceptance and support.
3. The Agency should be professionally recognized and competent in the area of Parks and Recreation, or in its specific emphasis. (e.g., therapeutic recreation or outdoor programming).
4. The Agency and its staff should be willing to provide opportunity for active participation as well as observation of programs and procedures.
5. The Agency should have adequate equipment and facilities that are utilized in programming.
6. The staff should be highly qualified through both education and/or experience to give supervision to students.
7. The Agency should have sound administrative procedures including an adequate budget, public relations methods, personnel policies, maintenance and in-service training programs.
8. Therapeutic recreation supervisors must be certified by the National Council on Therapeutic Recreation Certification (CTRS). Certified Park & Recreation Professional (CPRP) should supervise students not in the area of therapeutic recreation, however this is not required.

Grades (Evaluation)

Evaluation of the student field experience will be made at the termination of the scheduled assignment on the basis of agency performance and University written requirements.

The University supervisor will determine the final grade evaluation (Appendix P). A letter grade

will be issued for REC 463. It is essential that students stay on time when submitting all materials to the University (Appendix G).

Housing and Transportation

The student is expected to assume all expenses incidental to living in the area of the field experience and to work out satisfactory housing and transportation arrangements in order to be able to carry out Practicum assignments. Agency personnel may be able to assist the student in locating housing.

Absences and Holidays

Students are expected to report for duties as scheduled by the agency. Any absence from duty, including a single day or portion thereof, which did not receive prior approval in accordance with established agency procedures shall be considered as absence without leave. Where the absence is determined excusable on conditions which negated prior approval, the student will be allowed to continue the Senior Practicum and the condition of absence without leave shall be excused. The immediate agency supervisor shall be the official to whom the students are responsible in case of absences.

In case of sudden illness or other emergencies, the student shall immediately notify the agency office by telephone or messenger. Absences must be approved by the agency supervisor. Practicum students will usually observe the same holiday periods as that of the agency to which they are assigned. Students will not work on holidays if agency staff is not working. Hours missed due to agency scheduled holidays do not have to be rescheduled, and will count in the 480

hour total. Students should expect to be on duty at times when they can receive the best possible experiences.

Dress, Appearance and Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves as professional and in accordance with the standards of the agency. Since the personal appearance of students conveys to the public a general impression of the University and the agency, appropriate attire should be in good taste.

Cooperation

As part of a “team” providing services for the benefit of individuals and the public, each student must cooperate with fellow workers and all program/facility participants in order to set a high standard of work performance. Unwillingness or failure to cooperate shall be cause for dismissal from REC 463.

Professional Conferences

Opportunities to attend conferences that may benefit the student will be encouraged and allowed. Requests to attend conferences shall be made in writing, to the agency supervisor prior to the requested date.

Visit other Recreation and Park Areas

The student should attempt to visit other related agencies in the geographical area while engaged in the field experience. The agency supervisor should encourage the student by helping with arrangements for visits to other areas. The student should mention this possibility to the agency supervisor early in the Practicum.

The Mechanics of Placement

THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS OF AGENCY SELECTION, THE STUDENT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING THE SEMINAR INSTRUCTOR/PRACTICUM COORDINATOR ADVISED OF HIS/HER PROGRESS. This may be done at the regular weekly meetings of the Seminar class (REC 450), or by staying in touch with the Practicum Coordinator.

Once the student has made a tentative choice, the following should be completed:

1. Arrange a confirmation appointment with the Practicum Coordinator.
2. Prior to the time of the confirmation appointment, compile and know agency information, such as:
 1. Agency name, location, description.
 2. Agency supervisor, credentials, tenure, email address, and phone number.
 3. Duties and responsibilities for the practicum.
 4. Remuneration/living arrangements.
 5. Other information pertinent to the agency and/or student s personal needs.

The student should bear in mind the importance of agency selection in terms of his/her personal needs and career goals. THE STUDENT MUST BE PREPARED TO CONVINCING THE PRACTICUM COORDINATOR WHY THIS IS THE “BEST” AGENCY FOR THE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE.

Criteria for the confirmation will be based on the student's:

1. Readiness to confirm.
2. Preparedness with agency literature.
3. Supportive points as related to area of interest and choice.
4. Ability to relate anticipated practicum experiences to future goals.

Once confirmation is achieved, the student will:

1. Send an acceptance letter to the cooperating agency supervisor.
2. Send “thank you” letters to all other agencies contacted.
3. Fill out the agency acceptance form (appendix L) and give it to the Senior Practicum Coordinator. The department will send the official agency acceptance form to the agency supervisor to be signed and returned.

4. Submit completed Seminar folder to the Seminar Instructor.

The Student Seminar folder will contain:

- 1) Senior Practicum application
- 2) Resume
- 3) Waiver

All agency correspondence will be typed/word processed, with only clean, correct and appropriately styled copies being sent to agencies. A clean copy of all correspondence is to be kept in the student's Seminar folder.

Personal Liability Insurance (PLI)

Each practicum student will be required to purchase professional liability insurance through Eastern Kentucky University. Information and instructions on purchasing liability insurance will be provided in REC 450, Senior Seminar. Proof of purchase must be presented to the Senior Seminar instructor before the end of the semester. Failure to present proof of purchase will result in disenrollment from REC 463. Medical/health insurance coverage is the responsibility of the student.

Confidentiality, Privacy and TR

With the continued professional growth of therapeutic recreation services, client confidentiality and privacy require a greater level of concern in procedure and practice. Therapeutic recreation practitioners must maintain standards of client confidentiality. Generally, this means any information that could be used to identify a particular client. Names, addresses, telephone numbers and social security/client numbers are examples of confidential information. Any unique and/or identifying physical features or medical conditions may also be identifying if they would relate to a limited number of individuals or one specific person. In many instances, the slightest breach of client confidentiality could be grounds for employment or employer sanctions or dismissal from Senior Practicum. Senior Practicum are advised to document the content of their internship in a manner that protects confidential client information. Case studies, reports, assessments, etc. provided to academic supervisors and/or NCTRC should never disclose the client's name, social security number, or any other identifying information.

The American Therapeutic Recreation Association includes this issue in its Code of Ethics (March 1990/Revised June 2001):

Principle 6 Confidentiality and Privacy

Therapeutic Recreation personnel are responsible for safeguarding information about individuals served. Individuals served have the right to control information about themselves. When a situation arises that requires disclosure of confidential information about an individual to protect the individual's welfare or the interest of others, the Therapeutic Recreation professional has the responsibility/obligation to inform the individual served of the circumstances in which confidentiality was broken.

Summary Remarks:

1. The Practicum experience shall be a full time work-learning experience of 40 hours per week for a duration of twelve consecutive weeks. The student receives 12 semester hours credit for this practicum experience.
2. The student should not take additional course work or have other employment during the Senior Practicum.
3. The Practicum experience should include three different aspects: (A) direct face-to-face leadership, (B) routine administrative responsibilities– exposure to office procedures, filing, record keeping, staff meetings, etc., and (C) extramural activities– hearings, board meetings, committee meetings, conferences, workshops, state meetings, etc.
4. In the beginning, the student is expected to observe and assist until he/she is somewhat familiar with the staff, agency clientele, general policies, procedures, organization pattern, facilities and equipment, rules, regulations, etc. As the student becomes ready, he/she should assume increasing responsibilities and eventually be in charge of his/her programs, case loads, or other appropriate activities.
5. Keeping individual differences in mind, each student should be led or directed, as soon and as far as practical into greater and greater responsibility as the Practicum experience progresses.
6. Each student should have opportunities for practical experience in the organization and administration of recreation and park services.
7. The student should gain an understanding and appreciation of the roles, duties, and responsibilities of the full-time practitioner.
8. The student should be assisted in becoming more aware of the dynamic and challenging nature of his/her chosen profession.
9. The student should be exposed to the work of professional organizations and other related community groups, and encouraged to participate in their activities.
10. The student should have learning experiences which will strengthen his/her understanding of human beings and human relations, and develop professional abilities to get along with people.

11. Learning experiences should be of such nature that they will assist the student and supervisors in discovering the student's strengths and weaknesses as a professional practitioner.
12. The experience should emphasize the reasons for professional leadership as well as the competencies necessary for utilizing proper methods and techniques for initiating and conducting meetings, programs, and other professional services.
13. The Practicum should assist the University with perspectives for evaluation of student performance and curriculum, and opportunities for the faculty to interact with field professionals and confront practical problems in the field.
14. The Practicum should provide cooperating agencies with adequately prepared personnel and the opportunity to contribute to the professional preparation of future recreation and park leaders.
15. Dependent upon the agency and the assigned responsibilities, the student, through the practicum work-study program, should gain quality experience in the following major areas:

Administration. The student should study and observe the policies and practices of the agency. This should include the study of the legal status of the agency, board relations, personnel and supervisory practices, general staff relations, and the value of techniques in dealing with the agency constituency in a courteous and effective manner.

Program. The student should help plan and implement a broad program of activities and services characteristic of the agency involved. The student should prepare program plans in an effective manner and act as a leader in executing various types of program services.

Layout and Facilities. The students should gain practical experience in the planning, maintenance, and operation of a variety of recreation and park areas and facilities. This would include experiences in long range planning as well as layout and operation of facilities and apparatus for everyday use in a broad and diversified recreation program. Routine, special and seasonal maintenance operations, including the specific care and purchase of equipment and supplies should also be included.

Other Experiences. The student should gain experience in dealing with public relations problems, attend board and other community meetings, work with committees, visit individuals in the agency and community, and receive broad agency and community experience.

Furthermore, a particular emphasis should be placed on the study of the agency's primary organizational purpose, including analyses for the means of processes utilized in order to maintain and strengthen effectiveness. For example, such study might include the development of agency philosophy, goal setting, managerial decision making, and personnel matters such as the recruitment, selection, training, and retention of staff.

16. The University will provide a written manual for the Senior Practicum. This Manual shall provide complete information regarding the practicum experience including purposes, guidelines, roles and responsibilities of the student, the University, and the agency. Information on evaluation and grading, forms, projects, and reports related to the practicum shall be covered in this Manual.
17. Agencies are not to exploit students as inexpensive help or labor. The most important consideration during the Practicum is that the student must receive the most beneficial learning experiences available through the selected agency. With this in mind, the provision of remuneration (hourly pay/stipend) is the option of the agency. In-kind services such as room, board, and transportation may also be provided by the agency.
18. The mid-term and final evaluations are required. (See Appendix M and N). These evaluations include input from the agency supervisor. Evaluation discussions focus on rectifying weaknesses and developing strengths. Where it is appropriate, all agency personnel having sufficient contact with the student should have input into the evaluation. Agencies are required to submit the mid-term/final evaluations on the dates requested by the University supervisor.
19. Grading involves both the agency and University supervisor. It must be consistent with REC 463 standards (Appendix P).