

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism  
PRLS 490—Internship (12)  
Fall 2010

DAY/TIME:	TBA	LOCATION:	PW
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PREREQUISITES: Parks and Outdoor Recreation - 90 hours, including HEAL 205, HEAL 323, HEAL 350, PHED 200, PRLS 210, PRLS 241, PRLS 310, PRLS 316, and PRLS 317.

Therapeutic Recreation - 90 hours, including HEAL 205, HEAL 323, HEAL 350, PHED 200, PRLS 210, PRLS 241, PRLS 310, PRLS 316, and PRLS 327.

#### CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This paid or voluntary supervised professional experience provides a continuous and structured opportunity to apply principles and skills developed in the classroom to the solution of practical problems in a park and recreation setting. This course meets the general education synthesis requirement.

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Work placements are selected by the student, pending approval of faculty supervisor. A minimum period of 10-12 weeks of full-time employment is required for parks and outdoor recreation students, while therapeutic recreation students must be employed full-time for 480 hours over 12 consecutive weeks. Therapeutic recreation students must additionally work under the direction of a certified therapeutic recreation specialist. The internship includes meetings and assignments prior to as well as during the internship.

#### COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Apply, in an appropriate and professional work setting, theories, concepts, and philosophies learned through previous academic and other experiences;
2. Demonstrate skills and competencies in routine business administration (e.g., accounting and record keeping, planning, public relations, assessments, and staff relations);
3. Apply decision-making and problem-solving skills through the formulation, evaluation and implementation of alternative solutions to problems and issues;
4. Attend or participate in professional board and committee meetings, conferences, hearings, state meetings, training sessions and workshops in order to acquire practical career enhancing skills;
5. Describe and evaluate the overall agency/company organizational structure and its management philosophy (or corporate culture) and clientele base, as well as the agency's relative position to other local, national and/or global competition in the market place;
6. Assess personal strengths and weaknesses in light of demands and expectations of employment in the various roles and responsibilities assigned in a work setting;
7. Set personal objectives for a career in the park and recreation field utilizing both personal assessment and evaluation by the academic institution and the internship agency; and
8. Compile a list of industry professionals that can be used when seeking full-time employment.

#### REQUIRED READING

Lawton, L. J. (2004). *Internship manual: A guide for students, faculty and agencies participating in the HFRR internship program*. Manassas, Virginia: Department of Health, Fitness, and Recreation Resources, George Mason University.

## EVALUATION

### *Requirements*

During the internship, students must fulfill specific requirements and complete specified forms and assignments in order to be evaluated and receive a grade for their internship. These include:

- attending mandatory internship seminars (if interning in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area) or complying with other arrangements such as telephone conferencing and/or GMU TownHall conferencing (if interning outside of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area) (see Lawton, 2004, p. 30);
- working full-time at an approved agency for a minimum of 400 hours of professional practice over a period of 10 to 12 consecutive weeks, for no less than 30 hours per week/no more than 40 hours per week. For those students in therapeutic recreation, the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification requires students to work 480 hours, twelve consecutive weeks at one agency site (see Lawton, 2004, p.12);
- completing *Weekly Progress Reports* (see Lawton, 2004, pp.13, 46, 58);
- submitting signed copies of the *Midpoint and Final Internship Performance Assessment Forms* completed by the Agency Supervisor after discussion with and agreement by the intern (see Lawton, 2004, pp.14, 49-54, 58);
- developing and completing a *Special Project* in cooperation with their Agency Supervisor. The intent is to provide the agency and/or its clientele with a tangible and useful finished resource or service. The project provides the intern with an opportunity to demonstrate and improve their problem solving and communication skills. The project should be realistically and reasonably 'doable' and be of interest to the intern. **Work on the special project should be considered part of an intern's hours and is to be completed in incremental stages throughout their internship** (see Lawton, 2004, pp. 14-15, 55, 58);
- meeting with their Agency Supervisor and the University Supervisor during a routine visit at their placement agency. Alternative arrangements are made for those interns based outside the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area (see Lawton, 2004, pp. 15, 30);
- presenting an overview of their internship site work experience and special project at a mandatory closing panel session attended by all working interns, University Supervisor(s), Departmental Internship Program Coordinator, relevant faculty advisors and other staff members, as warranted toward the end of the synthesis course. Other arrangements may be made if the placement site is located outside the Washington D.C. metropolitan area (see Lawton, 2004, pp.15-16; 30; 34); and
- submitting an internship *portfolio* which encapsulates the cumulative experience of their internship (see Lawton, 2004, pp.16, 56-59 [Appendix 7 – Portfolio Guidelines]);

### *Grading Scale*

The University Supervisor assigns the grade based on the intern meeting the above course requirements. The grade will be either 'Satisfactory' (S) (reflecting a C grade or better for undergraduates) or a 'No Credit' (NC, which is equivalent to a failing grade). Any intern receiving a NC grade for their overall performance in their internship program will be required to begin a new internship, including re-enrollment and repayment for the 12-credit hours. An 'Incomplete' (IN) grade may be assigned until all course work requirements are completed and submitted to the University Supervisor, who is responsible for overseeing the internship. Once all requirements have been met, the University Supervisor changes the 'Incomplete' grade to 'Satisfactory' by submitting a *Change of Grade Form* to the Registrar. Credits for this course count toward General Education and Professional Course work for graduation requirements.



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George Mason University

- ❖ All students are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code.
- ❖ University policy states that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the professor.
- ❖ **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** Students having documentation on file with the Disability Resource Center should bring this to the attention of the professor at the beginning of the semester.
- ❖ <http://rht.gmu.edu/>