PREREQUISITES
Graduate Status

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Examines recreational administration concepts regarding organizational structure and operations, personnel management, financing, policy development, and public relations procedures.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Students will be able to:
1. Explain the relationship among participants, organizational management concepts, and recreational programs.
2. Identify the variety of businesses, agencies, and institutions providing recreational programs while interpreting their financing, policies development, and public relations’ procedures.
3. Articulate the fundamental principles and practices required of professionals managing recreational programs.
4. Complete an in-depth investigation into and discussion of current organizations, their operations, challenges, and possible future changes in the recreation industry.

COURSE OVERVIEW
This course examines the challenges and demands facing managers of recreational programs. Through readings and observation students will acquire the skills to develop policy and effective personnel management, investigate public relations procedures, and secure financing. An in-depth investigation within the course will provide future managers with resources to function as professionals in the 21st century.

ATTENDANCE AND HONOR CODE
Students are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code. You are expected to attend all class sections, actively participate in class discussions, complete in-class exercises and fulfill all assignments. Assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the specified date due or no credit will be given.

NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY
Face to face

REQUIRED READINGS
There is no textbook for this class. Articles and other readings are assigned per week. Please see schedule below.
EVALUATION
This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of 100 possible points. (See the “Assignments” section below for descriptions.)

Class Participation: 35 points
Reaction Questions: 15 points
Assignment 1: 5 points
Assignment 2: 5 points
Paper 1: 15 points
Paper 2: 25 points

Grading Scale

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TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE
Readings are to be completed prior to the class for which they are listed. You do not need to read the starred (**) articles unless you will be presenting them. All readings can be accessed through the GMU library’s e-journals or at the websites listed.

January 26: Class Overview, Vision & Mission

February 2: Organization and Management Theory


February 9: Organization and Management Theory


February 16: Strategic Planning


Be sure the read the articles before reviewing the strategic plans below.


February 23: Human Resources


**March 1: Budget and Finance**


Fairfax County Budget Guidance for FY2011 and FY2012. (http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/)

Fairfax County’s 10 Principles of Sound Financial Management. (http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/finance/transparency/)


**March 8: Budget and Finance**


**March 22: Performance Management**


**March 29: Park and Facility Planning**


**April 5: Partnerships**


*April 12: Policy Development*


Hall, J.L., & Jennings, E.T. (2010). Assessing the use and weight of information and evidence in U.S. state policy decisions. *Policy and Society, 29*(2), 137-147. (This journal is not available as an e-journal. You can access the article through the ScienceDirect database.)


*April 19: Public Participation*


*April 26: Marketing*


*May 3: Special Topic To be Determined*

**Note:** Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary.

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Class Participation**
Time in the classroom will be approximately 20 percent lecture and 80 percent discussion. The class will be a success only if everyone fully participates. In other words, read all of the assigned readings and come to class ready to discuss them. Don’t be afraid to ask questions and to challenge each other – and me. Consider everything in the context of what it means for practice. Do all of this and you should earn a good participation grade.

**Assignments 1 and 2**
Choose one of the starred (**) articles from the list of readings above. Prepare a one-page (single spaced) review of the article, concluding with a paragraph on your thoughts regarding the article’s practical implications. Provide copies of your review to all classmates and be prepared to lead a discussion in class on the article after presenting an overview to the class. (It will help if you prepare some discussion questions to get the ball rolling.) You will do this twice over the course of the semester; you will sign up for articles to present during the first week of class.

**Reaction Questions**
Each class, turn in three questions that you have in reaction to the assigned readings. The questions should be well thought-out and include a few sentences to set the context and background for your question. Here’s an example:

Crompton claims that public recreation departments must position themselves to compete with other agencies for funding. But that seems contrary to best practice, which indicates that agencies must partner to truly achieve their intended outcomes. Could repositioning, while perhaps a smart resource development tactic, in fact have a negative impact on the community the agency is supposed to be serving?

The assignment is for three questions per week, not per reading. You can submit multiple questions per reading, and a single question could cover multiple readings.
You do not need to submit reaction questions on the weeks when you submit Assignments 1 and 2.

**Paper 1: SWOT Analysis**

Complete a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis on a recreation organization of your choice. (*Please let me know which organization you plan to use prior to beginning your work.*) Your paper should include three main sections:

1. Overview and description of the organization: What do they do? Who do they serve? What is their history? Are they part of a larger organization? If so, describe how they fit in. Do they have any major new initiatives? (This section will probably be 2-4 pages.)

2. Process: How did you conduct the SWOT Analysis? Who did you talk to? What other kind of research did you do? (This section will probably be 1-3 pages.)

3. Findings: What strengths did you identify? How have they helped the organization? What weaknesses did you identify? How have they hurt the organization? What opportunities did you identify? How have they helped the organization? What threats did you identify? How have they hurt the organization? (This section will probably be 6-8 pages.)

If you Google “SWOT Analysis” you’ll find multiple tools and resources to help you.

Formatting: Times New Roman, 12 point font, double spaced, 1” margins, double-sided
Suggested length: 9 – 15 pages

Due: February 23rd

**Paper 2: Strategic Plan**

Develop a five-year strategic plan for the organization you wrote about in your SWOT Analysis. Include the following sections:

A. Background
   a. Basic information on the population you serve (e.g., demographics of the county or of participants, any other basic information such as where you are located)
   b. Basic information on your organization (e.g., organizational structure, number of staff, operating basics)

B. Strategic Planning Process
   a. Description of how your SWOT analysis was conducted (e.g., who you talked to, what resources you consulted)
   b. Statement that the SWOT results were used to guide the development of strategies
   c. Any other process or information you used to develop strategies

C. Strategic Initiatives*

* You should have 12 – 20 strategies, grouped by topic. Topics can include (but are not limited to) financing and resource development, performance management as a means of improving services, citizen participation in planning and policy development, workforce development, organizational structure and management, partnerships to better serve constituents.

For each topic, include a paragraph or two that explains:
• Why the topic is important to the organization. Include references to **effectiveness**, **efficiency**, and **equity**. References to readings from the semester will also help make your case.
• What you discovered in the SWOT analysis related to the topic.

Each strategy should include the strategy, a specific objective, and a performance measure. (The objective and the measure can be combined if appropriate.)

Here’s an example:

**Workforce Development.** The diversity of the workplace is incredibly important to our efforts to promote the community center. The community has become much more racially and ethnically diverse over the last decade as recent immigrants from Asia and South America have settled here. To ensure that we are equitably serving these populations, we should have a staff that reflects their diversity. This helps make people feel more comfortable and accepted when they enter the center (Jones, 2003). A thorough understanding of diverse populations’ needs will also improve program effectiveness, as we can better tailor programming to these populations. Our SWOT analysis indicated large segments of the local recent immigrant population that are educated yet unemployed, raising the possibility of engaging them on our staff.

**Strategy 1. Increase workforce diversity.**

  **Objective 1.** Hire two outreach workers – one from the local South American community and one from the local Asian immigrant community – to advise programming staff on community needs and conduct outreach to engage recent immigrants in center programming.

**Some Notes About Papers:**

- Remember to cite all sources using APA format. A good resource on citation formatting can be found at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1/).
- The suggested lengths are suggestions only. Turning in an eight page paper won’t count against you, in and of itself. If you can coherently and effectively make your point in that amount of space, you should earn a good grade. Likewise, if your paper is 30 pages, isn’t too verbose, and stays on topic, the length won’t affect your grade. But the suggested lengths are likely to be about right for a good paper.
- Grammar and spelling are important. Even if your paper is making a good argument, if its written like this, your grade will be affected. Don’t rely on spell check a lone; it’s not perfect. Be sure to proofread your paper.
- If you email me a draft of your paper by Monday before the class before it’s due (i.e., 10 days before it’s due), I’ll review it and provide comments and suggestions to you at that week’s class. In my experience, students who take advantage of this opportunity rarely get less than an A on their papers.
Student Expectations

• Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/].

• Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See http://ods.gmu.edu/].

• Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html].

• Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

• Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

• Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

Campus Resources

• The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students’ personal experience and academic performance [See http://caps.gmu.edu/].

• The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/].

• For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism, please visit our website [See http://rht.gmu.edu].

CORE VALUES COMMITMENT: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.