

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Sport and Recreation Studies

PRLS 598.001 – Strategic Leadership in Recreation Administration
3 Credits, Spring 2017
Monday 7:20 – 10:10 pm [sessions noted in syllabus]
1010 Thompson Hall

Faculty

Name:	Dr. Ellen Rodgers	Dr. Brenda Wiggins
Office Hours:	By Appointment	By Appointment
Office Location:	2300 Thompson Hall	1407 Thompson Hall
Office Phone:	703.993.2034	703.993.2068
Email Address:	erodger1@gmu.edu	bwiggins@gmu.edu

Mr. Paul Gilbert (Executive in Residence)

Prerequisites/Corequisites

Graduate Standing

University Catalog Course Description

Focuses on strategic leadership in recreation administration necessitated by demographic, social, political, and legal challenges; addresses organizational culture, positive leadership, innovation, partnerships, data-driven decision making, and accountability.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a seminar format, ensuring the opportunities to meet course objectives through instructor-facilitated discussions and significant student participation. The course content broadly includes, but is not limited to: Organizational structures, governance, culture, and change; Trends in Recreation Administration; Partnerships and innovations; Demographic, social, technological and political challenges; Human resource management, conflict resolution and negotiation; Data-driven decision-making and accountability; Liability; Land Acquisition; Advocacy and positioning; Positive leadership and visioning.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Analyze the demographic, social, technological, and political challenges impacting recreation administration.
2. Apply strategic leadership principles in order to positively impact organizational outcomes.
3. Assess organizational standards, accountability measures, and data sources to effectively utilize data-driven decision-making.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of human resource management, conflict resolution, and negotiation.
5. Evaluate organizational and personnel needs.

6. Develop a plan for positioning a recreation and park agency.
7. Prepare and deliver a professional presentation and effectively lead group discussion.

Professional Standards

Not Applicable

Required Texts

Gilbert, P. A. (2014). *High performance agency: The entrepreneurial model for parks, recreation and tourism organizations*. Urbana, IL: Sagamore. [Direct purchase from Author or Sagamore Publishing]

Additional References

Additional readings (articles, manuscripts, monographs) will be required throughout the semester.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor(s).

Engagement (20%)

- Attendance, participation and class contributions.
- In this graduate seminar, students are expected to attend all class meetings and actively engage as a partner in discussion of strategic leadership relevant to the discipline.

Strength Finder Assessment (5%)

[February 20, 2017]

- Take the Strength Finder Assessment:
 1. Go to <https://masonwbu.gallup.com/signin/default.aspx#home>.
 2. Under register, click "new account"
 3. Create an account using your Mason e-mail address. (Note: You will be asked to go into your e-mail to confirm the account.)
 4. Complete the assessment (it should take about 20 minutes)
 5. After the assessment is complete, please print the "Strengths Insight" and "Signature Themes" documents and bring them to your training. *Note if you have previously taken the assessment, your results will appear when you create a new account.*
- Briefly identify and describe your five key strengths (1-2 pp memo format); grading will be based on completion of the assessment, reporting and description of your strengths, and professional writing/presentation

Lessons from the Legends (20%)**[March 6, 2017]**

- Read Dustin, D. L., Bricker, K. S., Brownlee, M. T. J., & Schwab, K. A. (2016). Lessons from the legends: A content analysis of the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration's legends videos. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 34(3), 106-115.
- Watch [Legends Video Synthesis](#)
- Synthesize the key themes and lessons of “the legends” and address how these resonate with you as a current or prospective leader (1-2 pp memo format); grading will be based on synthesis, depth of thought, and professional writing/presentation.

Data-Driven Decision Making Assessment (20%)**[March 27, 2017]**

- Interview at least one leader or manager in your identified agency
- Briefly describe key data currently collected or used by this agency, as well as that which should be collected, and how it may best serve the agency in decision-making (3-5 pp memo format); grading will be based on description of key data sources and their current and potential utility, as well as professional writing/presentation.

Board or Association Meeting Leadership Assessment (5%)**[April 17, 2017]**

- Attend at least one board or association meeting
- Complete the Meeting Evaluation Matrix
- Briefly describe the meeting and observed leadership strengths and weaknesses (1-2 pp memo format); grading will be based on completion of the matrix; thoughtful consideration of the observed leadership strengths and weaknesses and how they contributed to meeting success; and professional writing/presentation.

Research to Practice Review (5%)**[May 1, 2017]**

- Attend at least one research conference (multiple presentations and poster sessions)
- Briefly describe and synthesize the research presentations and their relevance to practice in your identified agency (1-2 pp memo format); grading will be based on conference attendance, thoughtful consideration of the relevance of topics and findings to practice in your agency, and professional writing/presentation.

Positioning the Agency Memo and Presentation (25%)**[May 15, 2017]**

- Analyze your identified agency
- Briefly discuss how the agency is currently positioned and steps that may be taken for improvement (3-5 pp memo format)
- Create a powerpoint and make a 10 minute presentation on positioning your agency; grading will be based on completeness of positioning description and steps for improvement, professional written and oral presentation of findings.

- **Grading**

A	=	94 – 100	B+	=	88 – 89	C+	=	78 – 79	F	=	0 – 69
A-	=	90 – 93	B	=	84 – 87	C	=	74 – 77			
			B-	=	80 – 83	C-	=	70 – 73			

Professional Dispositions

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

Class Schedule

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS DUE
January 23	Introduction to Class Management and Leadership Trends in Recreation Administration	
February 6	Demographic, Social, Technological and Political Challenges Diversity in the Workplace and Society	Gilbert (Section I; pp. 205-212) IDENTIFY AGENCY AND CONTACTS
February 20	Positive Leadership Strengths Human Resource Management Organizational Culture	Gilbert (Section III) STRENGTH FINDER ASSESSMENT
March 6	Data-Driven Decision-making and Accountability Performance-Based Management	LESSONS FROM THE LEGENDS
March 27	Liability Issues Land Acquisition	Gilbert (Section IV) DDDM ASSESSMENT
<i>OPTIONAL: April 2 – 4</i>	<i>Research to Practice: National Environment and Recreation Research Symposium</i>	
April 17	Advocacy and Positioning Governance	Gilbert (Section II) BOARD OR ASSOCIATION MEETING LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT
<i>OPTIONAL: April 25</i>	<i>Research to Practice: CEHD Student Research Symposium*</i>	
May 1	Visioning Research to Practice Debrief Class Wrap-Up	Gilbert (Section V) RESEARCH TO PRACTICE REVIEW
May 15	Student Presentations on Agency Positioning	POSITIONING THE AGENCY: MEMO AND PRESENTATION

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

*See course content

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:

<http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- The Writing Center 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/>).
- The 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 Student Support & Advocacy Center staff helps students develop and maintain healthy lifestyles through confidential one-on-one support as well as through interactive programs and resources. Some of the topics they address are healthy relationships, stress management, nutrition, sexual assault, drug and alcohol use, and sexual health (see <http://ssac.gmu.edu/>). Students in need of these services may contact the office by phone at 703-993-3686. Concerned students, faculty and staff may also make a referral to express concern for the safety or well-being of a Mason student or the community by going to <http://ssac.gmu.edu/make-a-referral/>.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/>.