

Master of Science in Park & Recreation Resource Management

The Master of Science in Park and Recreation Resource Management is a program designed to provide professionals who have some administrative and supervisory experience with the skills and techniques necessary to become upper level managers in public, non-profit and commercial agencies in the parks and recreation field. Students with degrees in allied fields who are currently working in the park and recreation field are encouraged to apply and will find the program helpful to their career development.

The curriculum has several innovative features which are designed to provide students with a quality education. The program is designed to train the next generation of leaders in the park and recreation field and it caters to those working in the field who are interested in advancing themselves professionally. Next, the program utilizes practitioner educators who bring current issues and practices into the classroom. It emphasizes the use of case studies to bring real world situations into the classroom and to facilitate an interactive discourse between students and faculty. Last, the program utilizes a weekend campus approach that enables students to complete the program part-time while remaining employed. In addition, the weekend campus approach enables students to interact with faculty and moreover, to interact with other students who are preparing to assume key leadership roles within the field. Together, these features create a quality learning environment which helps students develop their career path in the field.

Weekend Campus Approach

A "weekend campus" approach is utilized throughout the curriculum and provides a "retreat" type of atmosphere to the curriculum. A typical three credit course is completed in three weekends. Normally, courses are staggered over several weekends which enables students to take two courses each semester. The program is designed to service students from Baltimore, Washington and Northern Virginia. It is designed to accommodate professionals working in the field who desire to remain employed while completing their program. Since all students are working professionals, they are part time students and complete two classes each semester. A new cohort is forming to begin classes in September 2008.

Case Study Approach

The program utilizes a case study approach where possible. This discussion-based approach is very often associated with professional programs. The case study approach enables students to build upon and integrate their experiences into the curriculum. Also, this approach focuses on decision making, which is characteristic of management positions for which the program is preparing students.

Mentorship Program

This program offers students the opportunity to choose a leader in the field as a mentor. The focus of the mentorship program is person-oriented rather than position-oriented, which differentiates it from an internship. Although graduate credit is awarded, completion of the mentorship program is in addition to the normal requirements for a master's degree.

Entrance Requirements

Completion of the baccalaureate degree at a regionally accredited institution of higher education with an undergraduate cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale and proper undergraduate preparation for study.

In addition to the general admission requirements, students are required to meet the criteria listed below. If any deficiency courses are required, they will be assigned by the coordinator upon entry into the program.

A. Professional Experience

The program is designed for professionals with experience in the parks and recreation field. Generally, there are three avenues of entry into the program.

1. Students should have the equivalent of three years experience in the parks and recreation field.
2. Students with a minimum of three years professional experience in allied fields who are interested in making a career shift may also apply. A field experience and/or deficiency courses may be required of these students.

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3. Although the program is designed for professionals working in the field, a limited number of recent graduates from baccalaureate programs may be admitted based on the professional experiences of the applicant and on the composition of the students currently in the program.

B. Recommendations

Three letters of recommendation are required reflecting the student's professional and academic background.

C. Career Goals

The applicant needs to include a statement of career goals and how the master's degree program relates to these goals. Normally, this statement is no longer than one page, single spaced.

D. Resume

The applicant is required to submit a current resume or professional vita as part of the application package.

Program Description

The program consists of twelve courses requiring 39 credit hours. The program is divided into four blocks: foundations, resource management, administration and research. A fifth block, supplemental courses, includes deficiency courses (e.g. Field Experience) and courses that are not required toward the completion of the degree but enhance the student's program (e.g. Mentorship Program).

Foundations (3 credits)

RECR 611 Concepts and Foundations of Leisure

Planning & Management of Natural Resources (6 credits)

RECR 641 Managing Open Space Resources

RECR 642 Land Use Strategies for Conservation and Protection

Administration (15 credits)

RECR 651 Organizational Behavior and Leadership in PRRM

RECR 652 Fiscal Management in PRRM

RECR 653 Communications and Organizational Decision Making in PRRM

RECR 654 Developing Promotional Information Systems in PRRM

RECR 655 Current Management Issues in PRRM

Research (15 credits)

RECR 681 Research Methods in PRRM

RECR 682 Evaluation and Statistics in PRRM

RECR 683 Thesis Preparation

RECR 700 Research Project or Thesis (6 credits)

Supplemental Courses

RECR 593 Field Experience in PRRM (6 credits)

RECR 694 Mentorship Program in PRRM (3-6 credits)

RECR 699 Individual Research in PRRM (3-6 credits)

Minimum credit hours: 39