Recreation Program Graduation Survey Fall 2013

Prepared by

Keith C Russell, Ph.D.
Professor and Coordinator of the Recreation Degree Program
Department of Physical Education, Health and Recreation
Western Washington University
Background Information
The purpose of the 2013/2014 Recreation Program Graduation Survey was to query graduating students from the Recreation Program for their perspectives on the relative experience and learning outcomes associated with their involvement in the Recreation Program at Western Washington University. The online survey was developed from versions used in years past, but included new questions that were more aligned with recently developed goals and objectives developed by program faculty in recent planning sessions. The goal and assessment alignment was accomplished to more directly link the programs’ goals and objectives to learning outcomes as the program shifts to focusing on 2013 standards set forth by the NRPA-Council on Accreditation. Faculty reviewed the survey and had opportunity to comment on the content and layout of the questions and answers. A total of 53 students were identified as graduating students from the program. A total of 42 surveys were returned, yielding a response rate of 79.2%. The following summarizes the results of the survey. Most questions are simply presented as to how students responded to the question based on simple illustrative descriptive and frequency statistics associated with each question.
Figure 1. Percentage of respondents, presented by year, who indicated the quarter in which they planned to graduate (Fall is the conclusion of the Recreation Program).
Figure 2. Average score asking students to rate each the following aspects of the Recreation Program according to their level of satisfaction (1 Very Unsatisfied – 4 Very Satisfied)
Figure 3. Average score asking students to rate their level of satisfaction of the Recreation Program’s contribution to developing their skills and abilities in the areas below (1 Very Unsatisfied – 4 Very Satisfied)

- Developing interpersonal skills: 3.88
- Analyzing complex social and political issues: 3.41
- Working effectively with other cultures: 3.6
- Using moral, philosophical or logical reasoning: 3.88
- Organizational management and socially responsible leadership: 3.67
- Working effectively with technology, especially computers: 3.17
- Working cooperatively in a group: 3.86
- Working and/or learning independently: 3.64
- Identifying, analyzing and solving problems: 3.62
- Critically analyzing written and other sources of information: 3.48
- Speaking effectively: 3.45
- Writing effectively: 3.31

Year comparisons:
- 2013
- 2012
- 2011
- 2010
- 2009
Figure 4. The skills and abilities, presented by percentages, that students experienced the most growth in their experience in the Recreation Program.
Figure 5. The top three ranked skills and abilities by year that students experienced the most growth in as a result of their participation in the Recreation Degree Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Ranked</td>
<td>Working cooperatively in a group</td>
<td>Working cooperatively in a group</td>
<td>Working cooperatively in a group</td>
<td>Working cooperatively in a group</td>
<td>Working cooperatively in a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Ranked</td>
<td>Using moral, philosophical or logical reasoning</td>
<td>Organizational management and socially responsible leadership</td>
<td>Organizational management and socially responsible leadership</td>
<td>Using moral, philosophical or logical reasoning</td>
<td>Using moral, philosophical or logical reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Ranked</td>
<td>Critically analyzing written and other sources of information</td>
<td>Analyzing complex social and political issues</td>
<td>Using moral, philosophical or logical reasoning</td>
<td>Organizational management and socially responsible leadership</td>
<td>Speaking effectively</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6. The top three ranked skills and abilities by year that students experienced the most growth in as a result of their participation in the Recreation Degree Program that will help them in their career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Ranked</td>
<td>Using moral, philosophical or logical reasoning</td>
<td>Working cooperatively in a group</td>
<td>Organizational management and socially responsible leadership</td>
<td>Working cooperatively in a group</td>
<td>Working cooperatively in a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Ranked</td>
<td>Working cooperatively in a group</td>
<td>Identifying, analyzing and solving problems</td>
<td>Working cooperatively in a group</td>
<td>Organizational management and socially responsible leadership</td>
<td>Organizational management and socially responsible leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Ranked</td>
<td>Organizational management and socially responsible leadership</td>
<td>Speaking effectively</td>
<td>Speaking effectively</td>
<td>Identifying, analyzing and solving problems</td>
<td>-Identifying, analyzing and solving problems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3rd Ranked</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speaking effectively</td>
<td>Organizational management and socially responsible leadership</td>
<td>Speaking effectively</td>
<td>Identifying, analyzing and solving problems</td>
<td>-Identifying, analyzing and solving problems</td>
<td>-Speaking effectively</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 7. The skills and abilities, presented by percentages, that students experienced the most growth in their experience in the Recreation Program that would help them in their career.
Figure 8. Average score asking students to rate how important the following aspects Recreation Program helped them learn the following skills (1 Very Unsatisfied – 4 Very Satisfied)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specific learning in your emphasis area</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your own personal philosophy toward recreation</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical and philosophical foundations of recreation</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and social benefits of leisure</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles of social justice and how to apply them in recreation contexts</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations and how people behave in them</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social, political, and economic systems and their relation to recreation contexts</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocating for the rights of all persons to leisure services</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciating differing philosophies/cultures</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 9. Knowledge and concepts, presented by percentages, that students experienced the most growth in through their experience in the Recreation Program.

- **Your own personal philosophy toward recreation**: 26%
- **Historical and philosophical foundations of recreation**: 12%
- **Personal and social benefits of leisure**: 7%
- **Principles of social justice and how to apply them in recreation contexts**: 7%
- **Organizations and how people behave in them**: 7%
- **Social, political, and economic systems and their relation to recreation contexts**: 10%
- **Interaction of society and the environment**: 0%
- **Advocating for the rights of all persons to leisure services**: 31%
- **Appreciating differing philosophies/cultures**: 7%
Figure 10. Concepts, presented by percentages, that students experienced the **most growth** in through their experience in the Recreation Program that would **help** them in their career.
Figure 11. The top ranked concepts, presented by percentages, that students experienced the most growth in as a result of their participation in the Recreation Degree Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Your own personal philosophy toward recreation</td>
<td>Your own personal philosophy toward recreation</td>
<td>Your own personal philosophy toward recreation</td>
<td>Your own personal philosophy toward recreation</td>
<td>Advocating for the rights of all persons to leisure services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Advocating for the rights of all persons to leisure services</td>
<td>Advocating for the rights of all persons to leisure services</td>
<td>Principles of social justice and how to apply them in recreation</td>
<td>Principles of social justice and how to apply them in recreation</td>
<td>Your own personal philosophy toward recreation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Personal and social benefits of leisure</td>
<td>Appreciating differing philosophies / cultures</td>
<td>Advocating for the rights of all persons to leisure services</td>
<td>Advocating for the rights of all persons to leisure services</td>
<td>Personal and social benefits of leisure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12. The top ranked concepts, presented by percentages, that students experienced the most growth in as a result of their participation in the Recreation Degree Program that would help them in their career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Your own personal philosophy toward recreation</td>
<td>Your own personal philosophy toward recreation</td>
<td>Principles of social justice and how to apply them in recreation</td>
<td>Principles of social justice and how to apply them in recreation</td>
<td>Advocating for the rights of all persons to leisure services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Social, political and economic systems and their relation to recreation contexts</td>
<td>Advocating for the rights of all persons to leisure services</td>
<td>Advocating for the rights of all persons to leisure services</td>
<td>Your own personal philosophy toward recreation</td>
<td>Social, political and economic systems and their relation to recreation contexts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Interaction of society and the environment</td>
<td>Appreciating differing philosophies / cultures</td>
<td>Your own personal philosophy toward recreation</td>
<td>Social, political and economic systems and their relation to recreation contexts</td>
<td>Principles of social justice and how to apply them in recreation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 13. Please rate each of the following courses in the Recreation Program according to how relevant you felt they were to their professional development (1 Not at all Relevant–4 Very Relevant)

- Phase I Introductory courses
- Elective or specialty courses
- Program evaluation
- Leadership
- Budgeting and finance
- Assessment
- Human relations
- Management
- Program planning
- Principles and contemporary issues related to profession
- Professional foundations (history, philosophy, values)

Scores for each course across different years:

- Phase I Introductory courses: 3.42
- Elective or specialty courses: 3.58
- Program evaluation: 3.54
- Leadership: 3.64
- Budgeting and finance: 3.7
- Assessment: 3.5
- Human relations: 3.94
- Management: 3.6
- Program planning: 3.6
- Principles and contemporary issues related to profession: 3.56
- Professional foundations (history, philosophy, values): 3.49
Figure 14. Average responses to how students felt about the most important activities in the Recreation program, and how they supported their growth and learning (1 Not at all Important – 4 Very Important)

- Mentorship and supervision of faculty: 3.84
- Panel discussions and guest lectures: 3.29
- Internship: 3.86
- Cohort or phase element of program: 3.79
- Recreation club participation: 3.44
- Adapted sports day: 3.67
- Raft trip: 3.49
- Camp TEAM: 3.64
- Retreats: 3.62
- Service learning opportunities: 3.45
- Practicum visits: 3.36
- Leadership hours: 3.33

Legend:
- 2013
- 2012
- 2011
- 2010
- 2009
Figure 15. Percentage of students who indicated their emphasis area by emphasis area and year.
Figure 16. Open Ended Responses from the Question: Is there anything else that you want to tell us about your experience in the Recreation Program?

Those things highlighted in yellow represent constructive criticisms of the program. Other comments suggest satisfaction with the experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This has lead my life and learning to places I would have never expected. I am so grateful for the phase experience, I know the peers I had will remain my friends and colleagues for the rest of my life. The phase V community will be a wonderful network for careers after college. I have nothing but gratitude and praise and so hope that what I give back to the community as a whole can impact lives as it has my own.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The recreation program is so great because you learn real life skills that will help you in your career. Many majors at western do not put enough emphasis on how to communicate effectively and understand people. I appreciate each and everyone of the faculty in the recreation program so much and they have helped me grow and figure out what I would like to do in my career. Thank you so much! You truly care about us and want us to create change in the world. My life has changed for the better because of you! I will stay in touch!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shaped my future for sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you for all of the knowledge and support!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I could go back and do it all over again, I would in a heartbeat. I could write so much, but I'll just sum up by saying the Phase has impacted my life in so many amazing ways than are even imaginable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could not imagine a more successful way of organizing a program. The community I experienced as a part of the phase was remarkable and created a fun, safe and strong environment for me to feel comfortable and accepted in. The phase system helped me to figure out things that I was passionate about and has grown me in to the person I am today. Three cheers for the Recreation program!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was amazing and i would recommend it to anyone! love the experience, love the people, and i love the professors!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What an experience, great faculty, would love to take 201 again with Charlie!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you so much for your dedication, commitment, and passion for the program, it has made my college experience into an incredible journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is amazing! The recreation phase has prepared me for my future and it has helped me find my path for the future. Recreation is for everyone and I want to be the person to provide it for all people. During the phase I built, learned, and improved on all my skills. The professors are the best teachers of the subject and have truly helped me follow my dreams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This program is incredible. I feel so lucky to have had this opportunity, and know that I am a changed,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
better person because of it.

I loved the Phases!

It was amazing and unforgettable! Though it is sad to leave, I am looking forward to phase 5:) Thanks to everyone for making it one of a kind!

I really appreciated this program and everything it has done for me. It has given us the opportunity to learn and grow not only in education, but within ourselves as well. I have grown so much from this program and feel that I have a solid understanding on what to expect for the future and look forward to it. I have been able to create so many relationships and connections within the field and know that it was all thanks to this program.

What an amazing experience I would recommend the program to anyone I liked. Such professional down to earth staff made the major the best for me.

The most important aspect of the Recreation program is the bond that phase mates have for each other. I've seen phases that do not like each other and it is harder for students to be invested in the program.

This program is one-of-a-kind and rightly so. I am so proud and thankful to have been a part of it. The faculty and staff offer so many challenges and opportunities, and I feel ready to take the lessons I have learned into the real world. Thank You!

*I felt that social justice was used a little too much. I believe that it is an important topic but I felt that it was used so much that I was tired of talking about it.*

I enjoyed my time in the Phase. The connections I made will last a lifetime. I grew as an individual and felt a lot of support from the faculty. Phase 4, was hectic and at times I felt it was filled with some busy work instead of work that could have taught me more about what my career path will be.
For Question 10 I said not at all important but that is only because I wasn't able to go - I'm sure it would have been important if I did go.

Being in the tourism emphasis I felt some of the topics talked about in all-phase classes did not apply to me because they had more to do with community or TR concepts (for example, easements). I appreciated that there were examples for tourism given and understand that learning concepts that don't apply to my chosen field helped me attain a rounded knowledge of recreation, but it was hard to grasp concepts when I felt they did not apply to my future/intended career.

Also along the lines of tourism - I felt like the elective classes were not structured very well and honestly didn't help me a lot in learning about tourism or what that job market is going to be like. Wendy's phase 2 class was interesting and fun but it was extremely unstructured and we didn't learn anything other than a lecture on interpretive signage. Jasmine's class was also interesting and gave me new knowledge, but I felt disappointed because we were only lectured on case studies and chapters from a book. What I would have liked to learn about were real-life experiences both professors had had in the field, tourism trends, what types of jobs are available, how to incorporate social justice into tourism, how to properly interact with other cultures and establish relationships, and how to effectively and with awareness of culture, expose people to different cultures. I have to say I was very underwhelmed with the tourism classes :/ which is sad to write, but it is true.

Other than that I cannot put into words what the Rec Program and Phase experience has meant to me. It really changed my life and I'm so grateful to have found this program. I think the phase/coh Ort set up is VERY beneficial, not only for learning but also for establishing relationships and connections within the field. I feel like I gained more from my education because I was in a room with 50+ like minded people. Charlie, Jill, Keith, and Randy were all fantastic professors and each taught effectively - I wouldn't have wanted to learn rec from any other people. I also liked that Jill, Keith, and Randy were all aware of what was going on in the other classes during the phases. It was great when they would bring in concepts from other classes and make connections because it helped facilitate greater learning. Having social justice as an overarching theme was AMAZING! I have grown so much not only as a rec professional, but also as a person, from the social justice concept. It made me very happy to know that it was such a big component of the rec program because I know other programs do not learn that way and I think it will improve our future careers as rec professionals and will improve the quality of service that our future clients receive.

Another characteristic I liked about the rec program and the professors was that they respected the students and treated us as equal-level colleagues. That not only pushed me to work harder in classes but it also raised my confidence in myself within this field. Knowing I had that respect from professors allowed me to challenge my thoughts about the concepts we were learning and ask questions that I might not otherwise have asked if I felt they did not respect me. I also enjoyed that Charlie, Jill, Keith, and Randy all had open minds and were accepting of everyone's thoughts and opinions. I am a very black and white person but through the rec program and I have learned to look at things in life and the rec field objectively and can now approach issues from different angles that I wouldn't have used before. The phase education teaches students how to focus on each client and understand where they are coming from and what they need which I think is very valuable and will help us provide better service to our future clients.
All in all my time in the Rec Program has been life-changing and I would do it all over in a heartbeat. Especially Phase 2 - that one was my favorite and the most influential on my career. I’m going to miss everyone and miss learning about this field, but I am glad to know that my reccies and professors will always be a resource I can use. GO REC!

I think that this was an awesome experience! I did not quit get why you guys did what you did at first but as time went on I started to understand and needless to say it is genius! I do wish there was more computer assignments with excel and more rec classes offered about rec when you are out side of the phase. that being said I fell in love with the program and it has changed my life for the better! thank you all for being amazing professors and going the extra mile to help us be successful. you dont find that in many programs and thats why this one is so awesome!

#thatissall

Loved it! But the teachers need to be more strict! Force us to do lots and we will do lots! If you don't force us to do much, kids will slack off.

This program was pretty amazing and changed the way I view myself and what is important in my life. It was great to be in such a tight knit program where I felt completely valued and supported.

Thank you all for your amazing work with our phase! This program has molded me into the person I am today, and will forever be a positive part of my life.

I just wanted to take this anonymous opportunity to thank everyone in the recreation department. I don't think you all will ever know how much you have helped me. Even when I was having personal and difficult problems with my life I was still able to come to any of you for advise and support. I am also someone who tends to get very sick and nobody ever made me feel bad about having to miss class. There are so many ways that the recreation program has helped me, especially putting the perspective of interacting with other people and seeing things through other peoples lenses. I had the fortune to realize that though I might have strong opinions regarding my passions and issues but also that the one thing I feel passionate about someone else might have the opposite opinion. I don't even know if that was your intention to teach me that but I sure learned it. The only thing I would wish to see for future recreation majors would be introducing service learning projects in a more accountable and group setting. I would have gotten a lot more out of practicum visits if they were more me interacting and volunteering rather then interviewing professionals.

I love all of you

The professors make this program what it is. If I could I would allocate all of the $ that I have spent on WWU's tuition and put in directly in their wallets. They truly deserve it. They are the main reason I am graduating college at all, and for this I cannot show them enough gratitude.