Parks and Recreation, BS

Department: Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Department
College: Emma Eccles Jones College of Education & Human Services

Overview

About This Degree

Parks and recreation involves creating and implementing recreational activities for various groups in communities. Graduates of the program seek to provide meaningful activities and programs to help improve the quality of life for those they serve.

In this program, students develop business skills, including budgeting and personnel management. They also learn about program development and how to direct and administer recreational programs, such as camps, intramurals, youth groups, and outdoor leadership programs. Additionally, students learn how to measure the success of these programs with the goal of understanding the needs of diverse populations, improving programs, and providing meaningful services for organizations and communities.

Students also gain hands-on experience through internship opportunities built into the curriculum during the junior and senior years.

Career Options

With this degree, students are qualified to provide management and programming services for city, state, and federal parks and recreation departments; community agencies (YMCA, etc.); youth-serving agencies (Boy and Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc.); and commercial agencies doing the following types of work:

- Administering and directing recreational programs (camps, intramurals, and outdoor leadership programs)
- Budgeting
- Designing recreational programs
- Evaluating (conducting basic research) to measure the effectiveness of programs
- Managing personnel

Career Services provides counseling and information on hundreds of job and internship opportunities and even helps students apply and interview.

What it takes

Admissions Requirements

In addition to Utah State University's admissions requirements, the parks and recreation program has additional requirements:

- **Freshman:** New freshmen admitted to USU in good standing qualify for admission to the parks and recreation major.
- **Transfer Students:** Transfer students from other institutions and other USU majors need a 2.5 total GPA for admission to the parks and recreation major.

International students have additional admissions requirements.

Major Requirements

Click here to see course requirements for the **Bachelor of Science**.

Students are required to select a minor from an approved area outside the field of parks and recreation.

All students must complete an internship to gain field experience during their junior or senior year.

Contact

Advising

All new USU students participate in a New Student Orientation program, where they receive detailed information about major requirements, registering for classes, and other important advising information.

Melanie Stein
Advisor
Office: HPER 156
Phone: (435) 797-1494
Email: melanie.stein@usu.edu

Get Involved

Professional Organizations, Honor Societies, and Clubs

American Camp Association: ACA works to preserve, promote, and improve the camping experience. The association is committed to helping members and all camps provide safe environments, competent adult role models, healthy experiences, learning opportunities, and more.

Association for Experiential Education: This is a nonprofit, professional membership association made up of ropes course operators; school, college, and university staff and faculty; therapists; outdoor education practioners; organizational development specialists; experience-based professionals working in the nonprofit, private, and academic space; and members of many other areas of experiental education.

National Recreation and Parks Association: NRPA is the leading advocacy organization dedicated to the advancement of public parks and recreation opportunities. Its mission is to advance parks, recreation, and environmental conservation efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people.

Utah Recreation and Parks Association: This association is dedicated to actively promoting and supporting the growth, development, and preservation of recreation, leisure, parks, and natural resources in the state of Utah.

Parks and Recreation Club: This club seeks to provide interested students with opportunities to meet on a regular basis to discuss professional parks and recreation opportunities related to internships, employment, and conference attendance. The club also sponsors socials and conducts community service and fundraising activities.

Labs, Centers, Research

With the second oldest undergraduate research program in the nation, USU offers students a wide range of opportunities to gain hands-on research experience. The Undergraduate Research and Creative Opportunities program allows students to apply for grants and receive funding. USU's Honors Program prepares students for excellent graduate programs by helping them build relationships with professors, participate in research projects, take smaller, more intensive classes, and develop leadership skills.

Health, Physical Education, and Recreation Building: The HPER building contains approximately 50,000 square feet of programming space. It houses the HPER Department and USU Campus Recreation advising and faculty offices, a number of classrooms, three gymnasiums, one dance studio, two swimming pools, a 1,500-square-foot weight room, six racquetball courts, and male and female locker rooms. Adjacent to the HPER building is a grass outdoor facility used for activity classes, club sports, and intramurals. Eight outdoor tennis courts complete the HPER complex.

Outdoor Recreation Program: The goal of the Outdoor Recreation Program is to enable USU community members to experience the physical and mental benefits of safe, fun outdoor recreation by providing them with excellent equipment, instruction, and resources. It provides equipment rentals, skills training, and planned group activities for anyone interested.