**Program:** Bachelor of Science, Recreation Administration, Recreation and Park Management (RPM) 

**Concentration:** 

**Department:** Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration 

Number of students enrolled in the program in Fall, 2011: **188**

Faculty member completing template: Greg Shaw  

Date: **01-31-12**

**Period of reference in the template: 2006-07 to present**

1. *Please describe your program’s learning-outcomes trajectory since 2006-07: Has there been a transformation of organizational culture regarding the establishment of learning outcomes and the capacity to assess progress toward their achievement? If so, during which academic year would you say the transformation became noticeable? What lies ahead; what is the next likely step in developing a learning-outcomes organizational culture within the program?* 

   **[Please limit your response to 200 words or less]** 

   Assessment for the Recreation and Park Management (RPM) Concentration has undergone a continual evolution over the last six years. To ensure that the curriculum is current and supportive of our department learning outcomes, we use several assessments described below and elsewhere in this document. Each of these assessments was designed on the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (COAPRT) accreditation standards of our national accrediting body, the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA). The department also uses input from our Advisory Committee (during three annual meetings) and department alumni (for portfolio review). Results are evaluated during the summer and are reviewed during the faculty retreat before the start of the fall semester. Course changes can be made based on this review. 

   - **Exit Exam** – The exam specifically measures accreditation standards, which focuses on our core curriculum – assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of recreation-based programs. Required by all students. Since 2008. 
   - **Portfolio Assessment** – The portfolio uses graded rubrics to measure student learning outcomes in three competency areas: oral skills (presenting), written skills (formal written paper) and group work (team leadership and group dynamics administration). Since 2001 (required beginning in 2005). 
   - **Agency Supervisor Survey** – The survey is administered to all site supervisors and is used to improve curriculum as geared towards internship preparedness. Since 2009. 

2. *Please list in prioritized order (or indicate no prioritization regarding) up to four desired learning outcomes (“takeaways” concerning such elements of curriculum as perspectives, specific content knowledge, skill sets, confidence levels) for students completing the program. For each stated**
outcome, please provide the reason that it was designated as desired by the faculty associated with the program.

[Please limit your response per outcome to 300 words or less]

The four learning outcomes listed below are not ranked or prioritized. Nor are they the limit of what we assess. We assess all of the learning outcomes as based on the NRPA accreditation standards used by all accredited recreation programs in the United States. These outcomes are from the Department Assessment Plan (although the wording has been changed slightly for this document from our NRPA accreditation standards).

a) **Students will have an understanding of and ability to apply personnel administration/management techniques, including job analysis, recruitment, selection, training, motivation, career development and evaluation of staff and volunteers.**

The recreation, parks and tourism industry is a wide, loosely associated set of industries and fields that provide experiential products to the public. These agencies can be managed using a variety of different techniques, that can be grouped into those that fall under government administration (National Parks, National Forests, Army Corps of Engineers lands, Bureau of Land Management, State Parks, etc.), non-profit administration (Girl Scouts, Boys Clubs, YMCAs, etc.), and for-profit or private administration (resorts, hotels, cruise lines, etc.). However, many students find themselves in situations where administration (and the associated funding/budgeting, marketing and legal issues) and not so clearly divided. A ski resort, for example, may operate as a private business, but use National Forest lands. For this reason, students must be prepared to understand administration basics of several types of agencies.

Under our accreditation, this outcome has several sub-objectives. The department’s Advisory Committee as well as agency internship supervisors have supported this outcome as being essential to a degree in Recreation Administration. The standards emphasize that students can be effective administrators in a variety of recreational settings. This outcome is measured in several core RPTA courses, including RPTA 30, 32, 42, 105, 106, 109, 166 and 183. This outcome is further developed in elective courses such as 151, 164 and 180.

b) **Students are able to demonstrate skills in program strategies and will have the ability to organize and conduct leisure programs and services in a variety of recreation settings.**

Programming is a broad term in the recreation fields that has to do with planning the use(s) of recreation space and resources. Programs are typically the manner in which recreation agencies produce revenue, and therefore students must be competent at creating, organizing, promoting, funding, executing and evaluating programs upon completing their education in RPTA. The NRPA accreditation standards have several outcomes based on the set of skills required for programming. Programming is typically the direct responsibility of students during their first jobs and the department focuses many resources on preparing the students to perform well as they enter the field.

This outcome is taught in core courses, including RPTA 32, 42, 106 and 136, and is also developed further in elective courses such as RPTA 132, 139 and 149. Department alumni and agency internship supervisors have supported our belief that this outcome should be a core component of our program.
c) Students will have an understanding of principles and procedures for assessment, planning and evaluation of recreation programs and services.

The NRPA accreditation standards and several individual employers of our students have stressed the importance of students being able to conduct practical research for an agency, evaluate the data, and then present the data in both written and oral formats. As funding for recreation becomes more competitive, the ability to show concrete results for programs and products is increasingly important. Competency in this area is a primary focus for the department.

This outcome is addressed in the core courses, RPTA 105, 106, 136 and 110. Students are also taught more specific elements of assessment and evaluation in the elective courses of RPTA 180 and 182.

d) Students will have knowledge of the legal foundations and responsibilities of leisure service agencies, and of the legislative process and the impact of policy formation on leisure behaviors and service in all levels of government, community organizations, and business enterprise.

This outcome is anchored in the NRPA accreditation standards. Most recreation programs nation-wide have incorporated legal and legislative concerns in several courses and have also developed courses specifically on this topic. In addition to legislative processes which form the foundation for establishing government and many non-profit agencies, students are also required to be familiar with the advocacy process. Recreation, park and tourism agencies are very susceptible to law suits and liability issues as many of our facilities provide experiential products which may encourage risk-taking behaviors. Students must be keenly aware of how to protect the agency and also the public. Beginning in the 2010 catalog, the department added a new legal issues core course, RPTA 160, which had been an elective prior to its inclusion in the core. In addition, students are exposed to legislative processes that affect recreation in RPTA 30, 105, 106 and 166. Students are also exposed to legal foundations in RPTA 30, 105 and 136. Students can also take the elective courses, RPTA 164 and 180, which have further learning outcomes related to this NRPA standard.

3. For undergraduate programs only, in what ways are the set of desired learning outcomes described above aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals? Please be as specific as possible.

[Please limit your response to 400 words or less]

RPTA has based its department assessment outcomes on the national accreditation standards, and the department’s outcomes are also designed to meet the university’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals.

Competence in the Disciplines: Addressed by all four department outcomes. It is closely tied with the practical skills associated with administration, evaluation, assessment, programming and the knowledge required for a foundational understanding of the legal issues and legislative processes related to RPTA agencies.

Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World: Addressed most specifically in the first two outcomes. Students take core courses in natural resource management that
includes a study of the physical world related to outdoor recreation land management. In addition, human cultures are explored in core courses related to leisure theory and history and dealing with diverse populations and universal access to recreation. Students may further cultures and the natural world with elective courses related to tourism, the ecology of recreation areas, visitor management and diversity. 

**Intellectual and Practical Skills:** This relates to most closely to the first three outcomes listed above and the RPTA portfolio. The RPTA student portfolio is completed by all RPTA undergraduates. The portfolio uses graded rubrics to measure student learning outcomes in three competency areas: oral skills (presenting), written skills (formal written paper) and group work (team leadership and group dynamics administration). Students also are exposed to numerous opportunities for creating thinking and problem solving (both individually and in groups), and take core classes in information literacy and quantitative literacy.

**Personal and Social Responsibility:** This relates to the forth outcome listed above. Students are required to know the legal and legislative foundations for administration, as well as with regards to inclusion of diverse populations and persons with disabilities. More than one core course in the major requires students to volunteer at community agencies and plan programs for agencies in the community. In addition to the class requirements, all students are required to complete 600 hours of pre-internship prior to the 400 hour internship.

**Integrative Learning:** This relates to mostly to the first, second and forth outcomes. The RPTA internship requirements (RPTA 195) and the advanced administration workshop (RPTA 166) are required by all Recreation and Park Management Students. These courses (as well as capstone elective courses such as 185) require a synthesis and application of numerous skills from previous courses and pre-internship experiences.

4. For each desired outcome indicated in item 2 above, please:
   a) Describe the method(s) by which its ongoing pursuit is monitored and measured.
   b) Include a description of the sample of students (e.g., random sample of transfer students declaring the major; graduating seniors) from whom data were/will be collected and the frequency and schedule with which the data in question were/will be collected.
   c) Describe and append a sample (or samples) of the “instrument” (e.g., survey or test), “artifact” (e.g., writing sample and evaluative protocol, performance review sheet), or other device used to assess the status of the learning outcomes desired by the program.
   d) Explain how the program faculty analyzed and evaluated (will analyze and evaluate) the data to reach conclusions about each desired student learning outcome.

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less per learning outcome]

*Students will have an understanding of and ability to apply personnel administration/management techniques, including job analysis, recruitment, selection, training, motivation, career development and evaluation of staff and volunteers.*

a) Competency in this objective is assessed over a series of courses, the department’s exit exam and the agency internship supervisor survey. The RPTA core requires courses in
administration (an introductory course and advanced workshop are required, although students may take additional administration courses in sub-areas). The introductory course uses group problem solving assignments of management-related issues, exams, and an oral presentation of findings/results to measure knowledge of management in the three basic areas of government, non-profit and for-profit. The advanced workshop requires students to perform integrated case study analysis work that is evaluated several times during the semester. Core courses: RPTA 30, 105, 166.

b) All students must take the above described courses and complete the exit exam. The exit exam is made up of questions as determined by the NRPA accrediting standards.

c) See appendix.

d) The exit exam results are compiled by a designated faculty and then reviewed at the department retreat before the beginning of the fall semester. While students have typically performed well (approximately two thirds each year score above 85% while the lower third scores between 70-84%), we do make modifications to courses by combining the results of the exit exam, the comments from external portfolio review (conducted by RPTA alumni), suggestions from the Advisory Committee and changes in accreditation standards.

Students are able to demonstrate skills in program strategies and will have the ability to organize and conduct leisure programs and services in a variety of recreation settings.

a) Competency in this objective is assessed primarily in two core courses, RPTA 32 and RPTA 136. The department’s exit exam is also used to assess this goal as well as exams, projects and assignments in the core courses. As many student internships also involve programming as part of the internship final project, the agency internship supervisor survey is also used to measure this outcome. The internship is graded, although not all students are required to complete programming for their internship.

b) All students must take the above described courses and complete the exit exam.

c) See appendix.

d) The exit exam results are compiled by a designated faculty and then reviewed at the department retreat before the beginning of the fall semester. Both the exit exam and outside internship supervisors support our students’ strengths in this area.

Students will have an understanding of principles and procedures for assessment, planning and evaluation of recreation programs and services.

a) Competency in this outcome is assessed by the department’s exit exam, and the agency internship supervisor survey. This outcome is measured specifically in the core course, RPTA 110, although several courses, including RPTA 105 and RPTA 136 contain sub-elements of this objective. Students are advised to take RPTA 110 in the last semester before their internship so that they already have many of the foundational skill necessary to complete research and evaluation. The department’s exit exam is also used to assess this goal as well as exams, projects and assignments in the RPTA 110 course. Students are required to
complete a paper during their internship on evaluation methods used at their particular agency. This paper is graded, as is the entire internship.

b) All students must take the above described courses and complete the exit exam.

c) See appendix.

d) The exit exam results are compiled by a designated faculty and then reviewed at the department retreat before the beginning of the fall semester. Specifically for this objective, evaluation is an area that students perform very well in. Both the exit exam and outside internship supervisors support our students’ strengths in this area.

Students will have knowledge of the legal foundations and responsibilities of leisure service agencies, and of the legislative process and the impact of policy formation on leisure behaviors and service in all levels of government, community organizations, and business enterprise.

a) This outcome is assessed by the core course, RPTA 160, and the exit exam, which reflect questions related to legal issues and the legislative process. In addition, the core courses of RPTA 30, 42, 106 and 105 relate to this outcome, as do the elective courses of 153, 164 and 180.

b) All students must take the above described courses and complete the exit exam.

c) See appendix.

d) The exit exam results are compiled by a designated faculty and then reviewed at the department retreat before the beginning of the fall semester. Specifically for this objective, the department introduced RPTA 160 as a core course beginning in 2010 (although the course had existed previously as an elective). Students with a strong interest in this area may take courses in other departments that relate to legal issues and substitute those for (some) RPTA electives. As core courses relate specifically to legal issues pertaining to recreation, tourism and hospitality agencies, those courses cannot be substituted.

5. Regarding each outcome and method discussed in items 2 and 4 above, please provide examples of how findings from the learning outcomes process have been utilized to address decisions to revise or maintain elements of the curriculum (including decisions to alter the program’s desired outcomes). If such decision-making has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less per item]

In relation to all learning outcomes assessed by national accreditation, the accreditation report (our most recent was submitted in 2010 following the 2009 accreditation visit) indicates the changes that will be made to curriculum, other assessment strategies, learning outcomes, etc. Since 2009, we have already addressed the changes in curriculum that included the requiring of RPTA 160 as a core course. Our next accreditation visit is in 2014.

All Exit Exam and Portfolio comments and scores are reviewed by faculty during the department’s fall retreat. We also meet with the department’s Advisory Committee three times annually to discuss changes to better prepare our students. The department/committee jointly performs a SWOT Analysis to generate a list of areas to improve.
a) **Students will have an understanding of and ability to apply personnel administration/management techniques, including job analysis, recruitment, selection, training, motivation, career development and evaluation of staff and volunteers.**

Our primary focus with this outcome has been to broaden the scope of administration types covered in the core courses to focus more heavily on hospitality agencies, which are currently a primary interest for students. It has also been evident that both non-profit and government agencies are more actively employing techniques once seen as being exclusive to “commercial” for-profit agencies. This began in 2006 when the marketing course became core for all Recreation and Park Management students, and not just an elective for students in the Commercial Recreation, Tourism and Hospitality Management area. We have also focused more heavily on working with volunteers as all students should be well-versed in managing unpaid workers.

b) **Students are able to demonstrate skills in program strategies and will have the ability to organize and conduct leisure programs and services in a variety of recreation settings.**

The department is currently increasing its scope and has added the course, RPTA 132 in 2010. This elective course provides students with the opportunity to learn programming specifics for the growing areas of campus and military recreation. This is essential to keeping the major current with the expanding job markets and also makes the RPTA program at Sacramento State unique among the CSU. Our connections with The Well are especially important in that the Directory, Assistant Director, and the Facilities Manager are all alumni of our program at either the Master’s or Bachelor’s levels. Additionally, the head of Recreational Sports was an RPTA minor, and the Director for Peak Adventures completed her Master’s in our program. The campus recreation course gives our department a working campus “lab.”

An existing course, RPTA 154, is currently being remade to focus more specifically on facility management which will support this new type of programming.

A major change for the department took place in 2009 when the internship changed from credit/no credit to a graded internship. As the required 400-hour internship is large, it is felt that students now take the internship more seriously.

c) **Students will have an understanding of principles and procedures for assessment, planning and evaluation of recreation programs and services.**

The department has an ongoing commitment to excellence in this area as professionals in the industry have recently become more concerned with the evaluation of programs and concrete analysis of data in relation to program effectiveness. This directly affects budgeting for programs in both the public and private sectors. By making RPTA 160 a core course, we have given all students a stronger background in budgeting issues that works in tandem with RPTA 110, the primary core course in this area. We have also made the graduate level course, RPTA 207, available to undergraduates that want more direct experience in grant writing and budgeting.

d) **Students will have knowledge of the legal foundations and responsibilities of leisure service agencies, and of the legislative process and the impact of policy formation on leisure**
behaviors and service in all levels of government, community organizations, and business enterprise.

The creating of RPTA 160 and its entrance into the RPTA core was a direct response to the need for increased knowledge related to this objective. The NRPA approved text for RPTA 105 has also added two chapters related to legal issues. Adding courses in Hospitality Law or Recreation Law is a national trend being pursued by many recreation programs that fall under NRPA accreditation.

6. Has the program systematically sought data from alumni to measure the longer-term effects of accomplishment of the program’s learning outcomes? If so, please describe the approach to this information-gathering and the ways in which the information will be applied to the program’s curriculum. If such activity has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

[Please limit your response to 300 words or less]
RPTA has an Advisory Committee of professionals in the various recreation fields, many of which are alumni of the department. The department’s faculty meet three times annually with the Advisory Committee to discuss curriculum, accreditation standards and the specific concerns of the various sectors of the leisure services fields that our students will become employed in. The Advisory Committee review recent curricular changes and also perform a SWOT Analysis with department faculty to determine new directions for the next academic year.

In addition, alumni are part of our annual portfolio review. Each year alumni are contacted through faculty, the Advisory Committee and through online sources such as Facebook, to participate in a review of student portfolios. The review covers not only the content, but also the quality of the student work, the rubric comments by faculty and the professionalism of the portfolio itself (including cover letter, resume, personal mission statement, career goals and portfolio organization). Alumni are actively invited to make comments on the portfolios and the feedback has been positive and helpful. For example, when the cover letters were determined to be one of the weaker elements of the portfolio, RPTA 101 was modified to include a mandatory visit the career center for career planning and cover letter review.

7. Does the program pursue learning outcomes identified by an accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization as important? Does the set of outcomes pursued by your program exceed those identified as important by your accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization?

[Please limit your response to 300 words or less]
The Recreation and Park Management Concentration does not exceed the outcomes identified as important by our accrediting body, the NRPA, our internship agency supervisors and our Advisory Committee. The department has worked hard to make our program as efficient as possible, and still maintain the high standards of our national accreditation. The coursework also effectively meets the Baccalaureate Learning Goals. Our program is comparable in size to other recreation programs in the CSU, and the recreation program at Sacramento State is the oldest accredited program in the state of California.
We continue to modify and streamline the curriculum. For the 2010-2012 catalog, we eliminated six units from the major, and are currently restructuring the program to potentially eliminate two more units.

8. **Finally, what additional information would you like to share with the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities regarding the program’s desired learning outcomes and assessment of their accomplishment?**

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less]

The Recreation and Park Management Concentration includes three focus areas that are not recognized as “programs”:

- Commercial Recreation, Tourism and Hospitality Management (including Event Planning)
- Community Recreation Management (including Campus Recreation)
- Park and Recreation Resource Management (including Experiential Education)

The program strives to provide solid coursework so that students will be strong contenders in the regional market for jobs in recreation, parks and tourism. These focus, or specialty, areas are dynamic and provide students with solid areas of learning for effecting job skills. Our department assessment takes these areas into account and has been a continual and evolving process for the last several years. Our assessment has maintained several components that have been related to our department objectives, the BALGs, and to our national accreditation. The department has maintained a close contact with the Advisory Committee and with department alumni. These groups provide valuable input and help to keep our curriculum current and our assessment practical and relevant to what people in the field value.
Appendix

The online appendix contains the following information which may help the committee:

- Exit Exam for Bachelor of Science
- Internship Agency Supervisor Survey
- Portfolio Guidelines
- Portfolio Grading Rubrics
- RPTA Course Listing

(http://www.csus.edu/indiv/s/shawg extra/IPP_Appendix.htm)