

Program Review

**BS in Recreation and Park Resources  
Follow-Up Report**

**College of Education and Human Services**

**November 2009**



**MARSHALL UNIVERSITY**

Program Review

# Marshall University

Date: 11/1/2009

Program: BS in Recreation and Park Resources Follow-Up Report

Degree and Title

Date of Last Review: October 2008

## Recommendation

Marshall University is obligated to recommend continuance or discontinuance of a program and to provide a brief rationale for the recommendation.

Recommendation

Code (#):

1. Continuation of the program at the current level of activity; or
2. Continuation of the program at a reduced level of activity or with **corrective action**: Corrective action will apply to programs that have deficiencies that the program itself can address and correct. **Progress report due by November 1 next academic year**; or
3. Continuation of the program with identification of the program for **resource development**: Resource development will apply to already viable programs that require additional resources from the Administration to help achieve their full potential. This designation is considered an investment in a viable program as opposed to addressing issues of a weak program. **Progress report due by November 1 next academic year**; or
4. Development of a cooperative program with another institution, or sharing of courses, facilities, faculty, and the like; or
5. Discontinuation of the program

**Rationale for Recommendation:** (Deans, please submit the rationale as a separate document. Beyond the College level, any office that disagrees with the previous recommendation must submit a separate rationale and append it to this document with appropriate signature.)

1 Recommendation: James Farmer Signature of person preparing the report: 11/1/2009 Date:

1 Recommendation: Eric Arnold Signature of Program Chair: 11/1/2009 Date:

1 Recommendation: Rosalyn A. Templeton Signature of Academic Dean: 11/1/2009 Date:

1 Recommendation: Tracy Christofero Signature of Chair, Academic Planning Committee: (Baccalaureate pgms only) 12/15/2009 Date:

1 Recommendation: Camilla Brammer Signature of President, Faculty Senate/ Chair, Graduate Council: 1/28/2010 Date:

Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of the President: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

Recommendation: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Chair, Board of Governors: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:

Mary E. Reynolds, Director of Assessment  
One John Marshall Dr.  
Marshall University  
Huntington, WV 25755

November 1, 2009

Dear Mary Beth,

The Recreation and Park Resources (RPR) Program is currently undergoing a major curriculum review and revision process. We have submitted the formal paperwork for a change in the major, the program name, and many course additions /changes. Thus, the RPR program is planned to evolve into a Natural Resources and Recreation Management program. Consequently, this document will provide a framework for the assessments being completed, but will not provide the entire framework for what classes will focus on specific program outcome, given the current state of transition. Rather, this document will detail our current findings, the learning outcomes / objectives that we will be focusing on, and the starting point for assessing the specific outcomes. Future reports will provide details as to specific classes that focus on specific program outcomes / objectives. The current document provides a synopsis as to the improvement and assessment outcomes / processes completed since the most recent evaluations were completed.

Rick Abel and I have made every attempt recently to alleviate the challenges and incorporate the recommended improvements for the Recreation and Park Resources program of the School of Kinesiology. The two primary areas for improvement were as follows:

- 1) The RPR program needed to review the vacant faculty position (by the School of Kinesiology chairperson) to ensure that position was defined in accord with the current disciplinary expectations and standards.
- 2) The RPR program needed to develop an assessment plan.

Throughout the 2008 and 2009 school year the Recreation and Park Resources program conducted a national search for the open tenure line position within the program. As deemed necessary by the interim chairperson for the School of Kinesiology, the open position needed to be filled by an individual with a terminal degree in recreation or a related field. In filling this position in such a manner, the Recreation and Park Resources program could again work towards accreditation by its national accrediting institution, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). In accordance with NRPA standards, the director of a recreation program must hold a terminal degree in recreation or related field. Additionally, two full time faculty are necessary, both of which must have a degree in recreation or a related field. A failed search for this position had occurred during the previous two school years due to the salary range being offered (\$33,000-\$35,000) for a person with a terminal degree in recreation / leisure. This in turn left Rick Abel and a host of adjunct faculty members with all responsibilities. An example of the overload felt by Rick Abel is visible in his teaching load. During the spring semester of 2008 and fall semester of 2008, Mr. Abel taught between 15-17 credit hours per semester. This in turn left a gap in the programs ability to recruit new students and complete administrative responsibilities. Thus, the objectives were to find a successful candidate with a terminal degree in recreation, leisure

behavior, or related field. Additionally, this person needed to be qualified to expand and revise the Off-Highway Vehicle trail program, work with Mr. Abel to reconstruct the program, and begin the process of reaccreditation with the National Recreation and Park Association. In late April of 2009, James Farmer, then ABD, accepted an offer made by Dean Rosalyn Templeton to join the Marshall University faculty in the fall of 2009. The applicant completed his degree in the Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies Department at Indiana University and was awarded a Ph.D. in Leisure Behavior on August 31, 2009. Dr. Farmer is now the program coordinator and single tenure line faculty member in the Recreation and Park Resources program. The program has increased its enrollment by 33% (from 30 to 40 majors) and is completing a self study in preparation for NRPA accreditation.

The second area for improvement included the assessment of learning outcomes. The Recreation and Park Resources faculty have embarked on the assessment of these outcomes. Though not yet fully engaged, several steps in assessing the student learning outcomes have been incorporated. These steps include both indirect assessments (IA) and direct assessments (DA). The IA includes intern evaluations by site intern supervisors, a questionnaire completed by those who have hosted our interns, and current major / enrollee survey. The DA includes the measurement of program outcomes / objectives through in-course assessments.

### Indirect Assessments

- Intern Evaluation Report (IA)
  - First, all of our graduates must complete a 12 credit 12 week internship at the fruition of their academic studies. Students are evaluated by both their supervisor as well as the internship coordinator (Rick Abel). Students were evaluated on both personal qualities and professional qualities. Though the faculty posit that our program has some impact on a person's personality qualities, the professional qualities are a stronger benchmark of learning outcomes and the assessment of our interns. (The professional and personal qualities are broken into two areas and are listed in the following table)

<b>Evaluation of Student Intern Professional Qualities (n=9, Summer 2009)</b>		
<b>Assessment Category</b>	<b>Mean Score (1-5 Scale) 1 = Low 5 = High</b>	<b>What the score represents</b>
<b>Professional Qualities (overall)</b>	<b>4.14</b>	<b>Above average score in professional qualities</b>
Job Knowledge	4.34	Good to excellent basic knowledge for position
Job Skills	4.34	Above average to excellent skills and abilities for the position
Quality of Work	4.44	Good to excellent quality of work performed
Quantity of Work	4.11	Very industrious to superior in quantity of work accomplished
Accuracy	3.67	Usually accurate to exact and precise most of the time in work performed
Communication Ability	4.22	Above average to excellent in clearly communicating with others
<b>Personal Qualities (overall)</b>	<b>4.09</b>	<b>Above average composite score in personal qualities</b>
Initiative	3.89	Average to above average in show casing initiative
Dependability	4.67	Requires little to minimum supervision in position
Attendance	4.34	Prompt to always regular and on time attendance
Physical Ability	4.45	Energetic to excellent physical ability to accomplish tasks associated with position.
Creativity	3.11	Displays average or slightly above average levels of creativity in completing position responsibilities
<b>Overall Performance</b>	<b>4.89</b>	<b>Above average to superior in overall performance</b>
<b>Recommendation for Future Employment w/ the Organization</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>All supervisors would recommend all interns for available positions in their organizations.</b>

- Agency Director Survey (IA)
  - A second survey was completed by agency directors whose organizations had hosted our interns in the past. Six surveys were completed and returned. The data from the survey is qualitative in nature, with the two following themes emerging:
    - Areas for Improvement
      - Students need more training and education in the following areas: Geography, Biology / Conservation, Organizational Management
    - Preparation for the Position
      - Students were marginally to well prepared for their internship
- Current Major / Enrollee Survey (IA)
  - This is currently underway and data will be presented in the December 15 assessment report.

Direct Assessments

The Recreation and Park Resources Program is currently working toward the assessment of more in depth learning outcomes based on the feedback from Drs. Hensley and Reynolds, which were based on the two separate reviews completed in 2007 and 2008 respectively. Noted by both individuals, the RPR program needed to develop learning outcomes / objectives that “specify what students will be able to do when they complete the BS in Recreation and Park Resources, stressing skill that require the use of higher levels of learning, e.g. analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.” In accordance with Dr. Reynolds’ suggestion, the RPR program has recently developed a new mission statement to coincide with the major / curriculum / program change. The new mission statement is as follows:

*Marshall University’s Natural Resource and Recreation Management (currently RPR) program supports the aspirations of students seeking knowledge, skills, and abilities to better both humans and the environment; fosters an excellence in scholarship that seeks to comprehend the human experience in both in natural and urban areas; while serving communities both local and beyond.*

Additionally, eight program outcomes for assessment have been identified in accordance with the National Recreation and Park Association accreditation guidelines. The following outcomes will be measured, beginning a cyclical rotation this year (see Appendix A for program outcome sheet).

Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the scope of the profession that is the focus of the Program, along with professional practices of that profession.
Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the historical, scientific, and philosophical foundations of the profession(s) for which the Program prepares students.
Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate the ability to apply relevant knowledge of professional practice, and the historical, scientific, and philosophical foundations to develop valid and sound arguments on which to base decisions about professional policies, procedures, practices, techniques, and related ethical and professional issues.
Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate the ability to design experiences clearly reflecting application of knowledge from relevant facets of contemporary professional practice, science, and philosophy.
Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate the ability to facilitate recreation experiences for diverse clientele, settings, cultures, and contexts.

Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate the ability to evaluate service and experience offerings and to use evaluation data to improve the quality of offerings.

Students graduating from the Program shall be able to recognize basic facts, concepts, principles, and procedures of management/administration, infrastructure management, financial and human resource management, and marketing/public relations.

Students graduating from the Program shall be able to apply entry-level concepts, principles, and procedures of management/administration, infrastructure management, financial and human resource management, and marketing/public relations to a specific setting.

Throughout the remainder of the semester, the RPR faculty will be developing a long-term assessment plan for the eight outcomes / objectives listed previously. Specifically, outcomes will be aligned with specific courses and methods for assessment will be developed and finalized for future assessments.

Though our assessment program is far from complete, much has been accomplished in a short period of time with a limited number of faculty members. We look forward to sharing our comprehensive plan for the assessment of the program's learning outcomes / objectives. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

James Farmer  
Recreation and Park Resources Program Coordinator  
School of Kinesiology

## Appendix A

### Marshall University

Assessment of Program's Student Learning Outcomes for the Recreation and Park Resources Program  
2009-2010

Program's Student Learning Outcome	Year Evaluated	Assessment Measures	Benchmarks	Results	Analysis / Planned Actions
Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the scope of the profession that is the focus of the Program, along with professional practices of that profession.	2009-10	Student Internship Supervisor Evaluation	To Be Determined (TBD)	TBD	TBD
Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the historical, scientific, and philosophical foundations of the profession(s) for which the Program prepares students.	2009-10	Final Examination in PLS 101 (NRRM 180)	TBD	TBD	TBD
Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate the ability to apply relevant knowledge of professional practice, and the historical, scientific, and philosophical foundations to develop valid and sound arguments on which to base decisions about professional policies, procedures, practices, techniques, and related ethical and professional issues.	2010-11	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate the ability to design experiences clearly reflecting application of knowledge from relevant facets of contemporary professional practice, science, and philosophy.	2010-11	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Page 1 of 2

Program's Student Learning Outcome	Year Evaluated	Assessment Measures	Benchmarks	Results	Analysis / Planned Actions
Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate the ability to facilitate recreation experiences for diverse clientele, settings, cultures, and contexts.	2011-12	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Students graduating from the Program shall demonstrate the ability to evaluate service and experience offerings and to use evaluation data to improve the quality of offerings.	2011-12	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Students graduating from the Program shall be able to recognize basic facts, concepts, principles, and procedures of management/administration, infrastructure management, financial and human resource management, and marketing/public relations.	2012-13	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Students graduating from the Program shall be able to apply entry-level concepts, principles, and procedures of management/administration, infrastructure management, financial and human resource management, and marketing/public relations to a specific setting.	2012-13	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD