



Recreation, Park, and
Nonprofit Administration

THE BIG PICTURE INTERNSHIP GUIDE

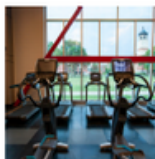
REC 490

Updated: February 21, 2024



ONE MAJOR **MANY CAREERS**

- Community Parks & Recreation
- Guides & Outfitters
- National & State Parks
- Campus Recreation
- Nonprofits
- Event Planning & Management
- Fish & Wildlife
- National Resource Management
- Military Morale, Welfare & Rec.
- Aquatics
- Recreation Business
- Recreational Sport
- Camps
- Tourism
- Facility Planning & Management



INTERNSHIP ELIGIBILITY



To get started, it's as easy as...

1. Complete all required* courses

With a minimum, overall,
2.0 GPA.

2. Document 150 contact hours

From at least three
different organizations.
More details on page 4.

3. Submit your intent to intern form

[Click here to view,
complete, & submit!](#)

- Near the middle of the semester prior to internship, there will be an **Internship Orientation**. During that meeting, all eligibility requirements will be confirmed by the Internship Supervisor. ●

*Required courses are:

REC 200, 302, 306, 328, 402, 406 for the "Essentials" degree and
all of those + REC 320 & REC 338 for the "Comprehensive" degree

WHY AN INTERNSHIP?

It's part of our mission!

The mission of the Recreation, Park, and Nonprofit Administration Program is to provide the students in our curriculum with a **well-rounded**, general education in the field by creating a **challenging, student-focused** learning environment and opportunities to apply the skills and theories taught in the classroom through **service** to the campus, community, and recreation profession.

It's an extension of the classroom:

Your internship is intended to help you develop professionally through an applied experience under the guidance of leaders in our field. During your internship, you can expect to:



Apply the theoretical knowledge and technical skills you've gained through classes.



Take part in valuable pre-professional in-service training.



Leave with an increase in skills and confidence to take on whatever's next!

WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

Short-term & full-time

For a 12 credit-hour internship:

You will log 480 clock hours over a minimum of 10 weeks.

For a 9* credit-hour internship:

You will log 400 clock hours over a minimum of 10 weeks.

- Internships can be completed during the fall, spring, or summer semester.
- Internship dates may not align with the university calendar (e.g. no spring/fall break).

Supervised

The organization and person you will report to regularly will be approved in advance.

Educational + professional experience

Half class, half professional work experience, your internship should be a balanced combination of 'thinking' and 'doing.'

**Students earning the "Essentials" degree must complete a 9 hour internship. Students in the "Comprehensive" and "Nonprofit" programs must complete a 12 hour internship OR a 9 hour internship + 3 hour recreation practicum.*



CONTACT HOURS ARE...

150 clock hours of work in a recreation service setting.

These experiences may be voluntary or paid, but they must involve the delivery of recreation and leisure services.

- You may begin accumulating contact hours upon declaration of your Recreation, Park, and Nonprofit Administration major.
- You must have contact hours from a minimum of three (3) different recreation-related agencies.
Try to gain experience with different sectors of the field!
- You must have a minimum of 50 contact hours from at least one agency.
- You may count no more than 100 contact hours from any single agency.
- Your contact hours supervisor must be a regular volunteer or employee of the organization
Think: someone with administrative or supervisory duties.
- Students are responsible for keeping a signed copy of their completed contact hour forms.
- Students will submit their contact hour forms, prior to registering for REC 490 (internship) on Blackboard, as directed during Internship Orientation.

Find Contact Hours information and forms for your record-keeping on the RPNA website (& by clicking here).



Students with field experience secure quality internships more quickly than students with less experience.

TIMELINE FOR INTERNSHIP

When you declare
a Rec. major

**Read this internship
manual & other
online resources.**

Semester
before

Verify you meet the basic
requirements to intern and complete
the intent to Intern form.

6 months
before

Submit contact hours & a copy of
your current resume.

4 months
before

Attend the Internship Orientation
(around the middle of each semester).
Start internship selection process.

2 months
before

Finalize your internship site selection.
*Sites must be approved by your University
Supervisor.*
Submit your Internship Application.

1 month
before

Submit Internship Assignment,
Internship Contract, &
Internship Goals & Plan.
Once approved, register for REC 490.

INTERNSHIP STARTS

Full checklist provided in "The Fine Print" [link].

INTERNSHIP POLICIES

Read the fine
print now.

You'll thank yourself later.

This guide is intended to review the "big picture" elements of a recreation internship. Likely, you'll have questions based on what you read here. Consult **"The Fine Print"** a.k.a. all of the detailed internship policies by clicking here [link]. If you still have questions, make an appointment with your adviser to discuss contact hours, internship, or practicum. Your adviser is here to help!



EXPECTATIONS

Student

- Conform with the policies in the internship handbook & those at your intern site.
- Plan thoroughly & do your best in carrying out all assignments.
- Submit all documentation to the University Supervisor by due dates.
- Be prepared for Agency Supervisor conferences.
- Notify the Agency Supervisor well in advance in cases of absence from work.
- Consult the Agency Supervisor when confronted with problems.
- Complete assignments and responsibilities as outlined in your internship contract.
- Represent the University in a professional manner at all times.



Agency Supervisor

- Provide a job description and establish goals & a schedule for the student.
- Provide student orientation & help the student understand the agency.
- Evaluate the work of the student in a constructive way.
- Complete a mid- and final evaluation, with comments, and submit it to the University Supervisor.
- Require the highest standards in performance of all internship work.
- Contact the University Supervisor when serious issues arise.

University Supervisor

- Assist student & agency supervisor in processing internship paperwork and requests.
- Visit intern at least once, if long distance, telephone intern in lieu of visit.
- Telephone intern/agency supervisor at least once (twice if long distance).
- Maintain communication (through email, Blackboard) as needed.
- Assign grades based on internship assignments, performance, and supervisor input.
- Conduct student evaluation in ways that assist the student with career and educational opportunities.

INTERNSHIP EVALUATION (GRADING)

The Agency Supervisor will provide all required evaluations of the Internship Student. These ratings will be taken into consideration when determining the final grade for the Internship Student. The University Supervisor will determine the final internship grade. Students must submit all items to the University Supervisor prior to receiving a passing grade.

The following list indicates the items and relative weight of each item:

- 25% Bi-weekly Reports
- 20% Student Mid-Term Performance Appraisal
- 10% Student Evaluations of Internship and Agency
- 10% Internship Project
- 25% Student Final Performance Appraisal
- 10% Final Presentation*

**Details on p. 12*



GOALS & PLAN

The Internship is an individualized learning experience for you. You should create your own list of **goals** prior to meeting with your Agency Supervisor to create an internship plan. The Agency Supervisor should review these goals and help you revise them if necessary to meet the needs of both you & the agency.

The purpose of the internship **plan** is to allow agencies and students to work together to design an experience that will be mutually beneficial. A plan helps:

- Eliminate questions about the tasks and responsibilities to be undertaken by the internship student.
- Allows the student to see the type of learning that will occur during their internship.
- Empowers the student to become more autonomous in the completion of their responsibilities to the agency.

Students must submit their Internship Goals & Plan before registering for REC 490.



Most students will work 40 hours per week for 12 weeks at their internship site. Other students may complete their hours in as few as 10 weeks. If a student works 35 hours per week, it will take 14 weeks to complete the requirements.

SAMPLE INTERNSHIP PLAN

- Week 1:
 - Orientation: facility tour, meet with all department heads
 - Assist day camp director with planning summer staff training
- Week 2:
 - Assist with day camp staff training
 - Work with Aquatics Director to learn about pool maintenance
- Week 3:
 - Plan, implement, and evaluate 2 hour program for day camp
 - Work with Special Event Coordinator to plan 4th of July Celebration
- Week 4:
 - Plan, implement, and evaluate a second 2 hour program for day camp
 - Work with Special Event Coordinator to plan 4th of July Celebration
 - Create plan for Internship Project
- Week 5:
 - Plan, implement, and evaluate a third 2 hour program for day camp
 - Prepare for and set up 4th of July Celebration
- Week 6:
 - Plan, implement, and evaluate a fourth 2 hour program for day camp
 - Evaluate 4th of July Celebration
 - Work with Athletic Coordinator to plan All-Sports Day Camp
- Week 7:
 - Plan, implement, and evaluate a fifth 2 hour program for day camp
 - Work with Marketing and Public Relations Coordinator
 - Continue planning All-Sports Day Camp
 - Develop staff training program for All-Sports Day Camp
- Week 8:
 - Plan, implement, and evaluate a sixth 2 hour program for day camp
 - Continue planning All-Sports Day Camp
 - Lead staff training for All-Sports Day Camp
- Week 9:
 - Direct All-Sports Day Camp
- Week 10:
 - Evaluate All-Sports Day Camp
 - Plan, implement, & evaluate a seventh 2 hour program for day camp
 - Share Internship project with Agency

INTERNSHIP PROJECT

Your Internship Project should be coordinated between the Agency Supervisor and yourself, and must be proposed to your University Supervisor before you begin. Projects with practical value are encouraged.

Project examples:

- Facility inventory
- Participant survey
- Public relations campaign
- Data collection, analysis, or synthesis
- Historical or chronological recording
- Educational seminar

Grades will be based upon the following criteria:

- Original and/or useful project idea
- Student works independently
- Necessary research is conducted
- Planned in advance & completed systematically
- Project is of value to the agency.

There are two forms associated with the Internship Project: the **Internship Project Outline** should be submitted between weeks 4 and 6 of the internship & the **Internship Project Evaluation** should be submitted with all final internship paperwork. A complete list of forms can be found on p. 14



FINAL PRESENTATION

At the end of your internship, you will create a video or slideshow highlighting your internship experience. This will be used to share your internship experience with RPNA faculty and possibly students. *High-quality videos may be placed on the WKU Recreation Administration website.*

Your video/slideshow should be:

- An overview of your internship experience:
 - Describe your internship duties
 - Describe your internship project
- High-quality, fun, & high energy
- 5-10 minutes or about 10 slides in length
- Capable of being uploaded online & linked to the WKU RPNA website.
- Submitted by the due date (your University Supervisor will give you a deadline).

Students may also deliver their presentation to faculty members and current students in the program in-person. When preparing for the presentation, they should consider questions that may be asked by faculty members and students in attendance. Students should be able to answer questions from faculty and students in an articulate, succinct, and intelligent manner.



FORMS you complete,

unless otherwise noted

PRE-INTERNSHIP

- link all of these

- Contact Hours
- Internship Application
- *Attend the Internship Orientation Meeting*
- *Select Agency*
- Internship Assignment Form
- Contract between Intern, Agency, & University Supervisor
- Internship Goals and Plan
- *Meet with University Supervisor to submit all of the above*
- *Enroll in REC 490 and establish start date*

DURING INTERNSHIP

- Biweekly Activity Report #1
- Biweekly Activity Report #2
- Internship Project Outline
- Student Mid-term Performance Appraisal - **Agency Supervisor completes**
- Biweekly Activity Report #3
- Biweekly Activity Report #4
- Biweekly Activity Report #5
- Internship Project Evaluation - **Agency Supervisor & University Supervisor completes**
- Biweekly Activity Report #6 - *if longer than 10 week internship*
- *Submit Final Project (copy or report)*
- *Submit Final Presentation to University Supervisor*

POST INTERNSHIP

- Student Final Performance Appraisal - **Agency Supervisor completes**
- Internship Experience Evaluation
- *Attend Final Internship Meeting OR submit Final Presentation*
- Final Presentation Evaluation - **University Supervisor completes**
- Exit Survey