Recreation, Parks, & Tourism Administration

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ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

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Recreation, parks, and tourism are mainstays of the American culture and a foundation of the United States economy, with an estimated $2.5 trillion spent annually on leisure pursuits. U.S. households spend seven to eight percent of their income on recreation. The United States has been ranked as the top tourism earner in the world and generates over $50 billion from international tourism. Although recreation, parks, and tourism provide activities for people from all walks of life, these industries also provide numerous jobs, both in this country and abroad.

Students are prepared for professional employment in public, non-profit, private, and commercial recreation, parks, and tourism organizations. Students select a concentration in hospitality and tourism management; outdoor recreation management; event planning and management; and sport management. In addition, students may select a course of study in community recreation management.

To prepare students for their professional careers, the major includes a 400-hour required internship (one quarter) with a recreation, parks, tourism, sport, or special event-related organization. Graduates qualify for diverse positions including recreation supervisors, wedding planners, hotel general managers, sport managing directors, park and recreation administrators, ecotourism guides, environmental educators, concert and festival organizers, recreation-related business owners, athletic directors, adventure program planners, camp directors, convention and visitor bureau directors, meeting planners, youth sports coordinators, winery event managers, wilderness educations, and campus recreation directors.

Graduates employed nationally and internationally plan, organize, implement, and evaluate recreation, parks, and tourism programs and services. Management skills, developed through coursework and through practical hands-on applications, allow for career progress into executive management positions within the recreation, parks, and tourism industries.

Students develop those competencies through a myriad of partnerships developed by the department with local, state, national, and international organizations. These partnerships allow students, both in and out of the classroom, to gain valuable experience designing, implementing, and evaluation various recreation-related programs and experiences for diverse clientele.

Undergraduate Program

BS Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration

The Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration (RPTA) department prepares students to be leaders in an industry that promotes healthy lifestyles, protects memorable places, and facilitates life-enhancing experiences for individuals, communities, and the global society. The program is accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (COAPRT). In addition to major requirements, the curriculum provides a full range of general education and support courses. These courses are designed to fully educate and prepare students for cultural diversity, community engagement, and international understanding in a global society.

Concentrations

Event Planning and Management

Prepares students for a professional career in event planning, leadership, and management for a variety of event genres including festivals, celebrations, conventions, meetings, and expositions, social life-cycle events, mega and hallmark events, sporting, international, and non-profit events. Courses focus on event design, planning, implementation, and management.

Hospitality and Tourism Management

Prepares students for a professional career with organizations that provide leisure products or services for national and international tourists. Students may choose to emphasize in areas such as: hospitality, hotel sales and meeting management, tourism planning, tourism marketing, tour operation, resort management, and entrepreneurship.

Outdoor Recreation Management

Prepares students for leadership positions in a variety of organizations and settings including outdoor and adventure recreation, camp leadership, parks and protected areas management, challenge course management, wilderness education, and adventure travel. Areas of study include the planning, development, leadership, and management of outdoor recreation opportunities.

Sport Management

Prepares students for management positions with sport entities ranging from youth and high school sports to intercollegiate athletics and professional sports. Areas of study include sport marketing and promotion, sport ethics, sport structure and governance, sports-based youth development, and sport event management.

Graduate Program

Cal Poly offers a Master of Science degree in Agriculture with a specialization in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Management. Please refer to the MS Agriculture (http://catalog.calpoly.edu/collegesandprograms/collegeofagriculturefoodandenvironmentalsciences/#graduatetext) section of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences.

RPTA Courses

RPTA 101. Introduction to Recreation, Parks and Tourism. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W
Prerequisite: RPTA majors only.

History, philosophy, theory, and organization of recreation and leisure services. Exploration of the recreation, parks, and tourism profession; emphasis upon functions, areas, facilities, clientele, and career opportunities. 4 lectures.
RPTA 110. Orientation and College Success in Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration. 1 unit
CR/NC
Term Typically Offered: F, W
Prerequisite: Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration majors only.
Orientation to the Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration major and concentration areas. Development of two- to four-year plan toward graduation. Exploration of skills, learning strategies, and problem solving for success in college life. Career planning in recreation, parks, and tourism. Credit/No Credit grading only. 1 activity.

RPTA 112. Parks and Outdoor Recreation. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: W
Introduction to park and outdoor recreation systems. History, philosophy, policy and principles of outdoor recreation, wilderness, park management, environmental education, outdoor education, and natural resources recreation at the local, regional, national, and international levels. Field visits. 3 lectures, 1 activity.

RPTA 114. Introduction to Hospitality and Travel. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W
Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.
History and development of the hospitality and travel industries. Exploration of different sectors of the hospitality and tourism industry, supply and demand for tourism products and services, effects of tourism on individual cultures and the natural environment, and travel motivations. Career opportunities in the hospitality and travel industries. Field trips required. 4 lectures. Formerly RPTA 214.

RPTA 160. Introduction to Sport Management. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: W
Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.
Introduction to the philosophy, organization, issues and career paths of sport management. Emphasis on ethical decision-making and career opportunities in youth, interscholastic, intercollegiate, professional, and international sport. 4 lectures.

RPTA 201. Sociocultural Dimensions of Work and Leisure. 4 units
GE Area D3
Term Typically Offered: F,W,SP, SU
History and theoretical frameworks associated with the interplay between work and leisure in the United States; global perspective examining sociocultural differences and marginalization of groups; issues impacting work-life balance including technology, demography, geography, corporate culture, and career fields. 4 lectures. Fulfills GE D3.

RPTA 203. Resource Law Enforcement. 3 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Law enforcement applied to natural resource conservation on public and private lands. Examination of state and federal laws related to fish and wildlife management. Problems associated with implementation of resource laws examined. 3 lectures. Crosslisted as NR/RPTA 203.

RPTA 205. Leadership and Facilitation. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: RPTA or FNR majors only, sophomore standing or consent of instructor.
Recreation, parks, and tourism leadership with small and large groups. Skills, knowledge, and abilities required of effective leaders in leisure organizations and settings. 3 lectures, 1 activity.

RPTA 207. Leadership and Diverse Groups. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA majors only, sophomore standing.
Development and application of leadership skills in recreation activity settings. Emphasis on applicable leadership techniques for working with groups consisting of representatives from diverse populations such as those with disabilities or special needs, cultural and social differences, and diversity of ages. 3 lectures, 1 activity.

RPTA 210. Introduction to Program Design. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W
Prerequisite: Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration major and sophomore standing.
Methods of program planning, organization, implementation and evaluation in public and private settings. Interrelationship of needs and interests of people, physical settings, and activity content. Emphasis on program construction and scheduling in recreation, parks, and tourism services. 3 lectures, 1 activity. Not open to students with credit in RPTA 260.

RPTA 216. Resort and Lodging Operations. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 114 and sophomore standing.
Exploration of the technical operations integral to resort and lodging: food, beverage and restaurant; housekeeping and engineering; sales and catering departments; staff management and classification system statewide, nationally, and internationally. Field trips required. 3 lectures, 1 activity. Formerly RPTA 316.

RPTA 221. Professionalism and Customer Service. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W
Prerequisite: RPTA major; sophomore standing.
Emphasis on professional service qualities and behaviors in a variety of recreation, parks, and tourism environments. Focus on development and delivery of customer service strategies to create a service-focused organization. Development of competencies to enhance participant experience. 4 lectures.

RPTA 252. Therapeutic Recreation and Special Populations. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration majors only, sophomore standing or consent of instructor.
Introduction to special populations and therapeutic recreation. Specialized leadership and communication techniques. Modification requirements for programs, areas, facilities, equipment, and supplies. Exploration of disability rights issues, including legislation which impacts the delivery of recreation and leisure services. 3 lectures, 1 activity.

RPTA 257. Leadership and Diverse Groups. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA major; sophomore standing.
Development and application of leadership skills in recreation activity settings. Emphasis on applicable leadership techniques for working with groups consisting of representatives from diverse populations such as those with disabilities or special needs, cultural and social differences, and diversity of ages. 3 lectures, 1 activity.

RPTA 260. Recreational Sport Programming. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: SP
Prerequisite: RPTA majors only, sophomore standing.
Philosophy, foundations, policy and techniques underlying recreational sport programs in public, private and commercial settings. Methods of program planning, organization, implementation and evaluation with emphasis on program construction and scheduling. Not open to students with credit in RPTA 210. 3 lectures, 1 activity.
RPTA 270. Selected Topics. 1-4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: Open to undergraduate students and consent of instructor.
Directed group study of selected topics. The Schedule of Classes will list title selected. Total credit limited to 8 units. 1 to 4 lectures.

RPTA 275. Challenge Course Facilitation. 2 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: MSL 103 or RPTA 205 or RPTA 257.
Techniques and models used in challenge course leadership and facilitation. Emphasis on facilitation styles, challenge course terminology, facilitation models, safety guidelines, and industry best practices. 2 seminars. Crosslisted as MSL/RPTA 275.

RPTA 302. Environmental and Wilderness Education. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260 with C- or better, junior standing or consent of instructor.
Education and teaching techniques that apply to learning experiences in an outdoor environment. Impact of natural resource usage that affects sociological, biological and physical resources. Educational strategies for presenting environmental learning to grades K-12 in selected environments. 3 lectures, 1 activity.

RPTA 313. Sustainability in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260 with C- or better, junior standing or consent of instructor.
Investigation of the recreation, parks, tourism, and leisure services-related industry from a sustainability perspective. Emphasis on facility design, industry practices, and services provisions in the RPTA field that sustain social, cultural, heritage, and natural environments while generating economic development. 3 lectures, 1 laboratory.

RPTA 314. Sustainable Travel and Tourism Planning. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: W
Prerequisite: Junior standing; RPTA 210 or RPTA 260; and RPTA 114 (formerly RPTA 214) with C- or better or consent of instructor.
The planning and development of tourism destinations, agencies, and services from a sustainable development perspective. Emphasis on the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism. Examination of alternative forms of tourism. Emphasis on sustainable tourism. Travel research and planning models. Field visits required. 3 lectures, 1 laboratory.

RPTA 317. Hospitality, Convention and Meeting Management. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260 with C- or better, junior standing or consent of instructor.
Role of conventions, meetings management, and events in the hospitality and travel industry. Factors involved in meeting planning for small and large groups to include committees, amenities, operations logistics, venue selection, technology, virtual meetings, registration, catering arrangements, sustainable operations and evaluation. Field visits required. 3 lectures, 1 activity.

RPTA 320. Special Event Planning. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: W
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260 for RPTA majors or completion of GE Area A for all other majors; and junior standing.
Major trends and successful practices in special event planning. Emphasis on conceptualization, analysis, and planning considerations of small to large-scale events. Exploration of event management field as a profession. 3 lectures, 1 activity.

RPTA 321. Visitor Services in Recreation, Parks and Tourism. 1-4 units
Term Typically Offered: W, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260.
Management issues in meeting the needs of recreation, parks, and tourism organizations. Topics to include customer satisfaction, service quality, visitor management, customer service skills and procedures, and creating a customer focused organization. The Schedule of Classes will list topic selected. Total credit limited to 12 units. 1-4 seminars.

RPTA 325. Outdoor and Adventure Leadership. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 205 or RPTA 257; and junior standing or consent of instructor.
Theoretical principles and experience in leadership, judgment, and decision-making in outdoor and adventure settings. Total credit limited to 8 units. The Schedule of Classes will list topic selected. 3 lectures, 1 activity.

RPTA 330. Directed Field Experience. 3 units
CR/NC
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260 with C- or better or consent of instructor.
Practical work experience in related phases of recreation administration in organization or agency under qualified supervision. Minimum of nine hours per week. Credit/No Credit grading only. Total credit limited to 9 units.

RPTA 332. Visitor Management. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260 with C- or better, junior standing.
Management issues in meeting the needs of recreation, parks, and tourism organizations. Topics to include customer satisfaction, service quality, visitor management, customer service skills and procedures, and creating a customer focused organization. The Schedule of Classes will list topic selected. Total credit limited to 12 units. 1-4 seminars.

RPTA 342. Risk Management for Recreation, Parks and Tourism. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260 for RPTA majors or completion of GE Area A for all other majors; and junior standing.
Legislative and legal aspects of public, private, commercial, and non-profit recreation, parks, and tourism agencies. Emphasis on risk management, including liability, insurance, and negligence. Understanding of legal foundations and the legislative process. Field trips may be required. 3 lectures, 1 laboratory.

RPTA 350. Recreation Areas and Facilities Management. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260 with C- or better, junior standing or consent of instructor.
Management of recreation areas and facilities: clientele considerations, facility and outdoor area site planning; day-to-day operations of common recreation areas and facilities. Agency visitation required. 3 lectures, 1 laboratory.
RPTA 360. Assessment and Evaluation of Recreation, Parks and Tourism. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260 with C- or better or consent of instructor. STAT 217 or STAT 218 or STAT 251 or STAT 252, junior standing. Required: CSC 110 or CSC 113.

Evaluation of recreation, parks, and tourism programs using a variety of research methodologies. Needs assessment, program evaluation, research design, and decision making based on data analysis. 3 lectures, 1 laboratory.

RPTA 370. Experiential Marketing Strategies for Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Services. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: W, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260; BUS 346; and Junior standing.

Core principles of experiential marketing within the realm of destination management, recreation programming, environmental interpretation, and special events. Emphasis on strategies to actively engage consumers in recreation, parks, and tourism settings. 4 lectures.

RPTA 400. Special Problems for Advanced Undergraduates. 1-4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260 with C- or better and consent of instructor.

Individual investigation, research, studies, or surveys of selected problems. Total credit limited to 8 units, with a maximum of 4 units per quarter.

RPTA 405. Recreation, Parks and Tourism Management. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W
Prerequisite: RPTA 205 or RPTA 257; and RPTA 210 or RPTA 260; and senior standing or consent of instructor.

The study, analysis, and practice of management processes as they are applied to recreation organizations: planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling. Emphasis upon application of theories, practices and case studies in specific recreation settings. 4 lectures.

RPTA 412. Tourism and Outdoor Applications Seminar. 2-4 units
Term Typically Offered: W, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260, or consent of instructor.

Selected topics on aspects of the tourism field. The Schedule of Classes will list topic selected. Field visits may be required. Total credit limited to 12 units, repeatable in same term. 2-4 seminars.

RPTA 413. Tourism and Protected Area Management. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260, or consent of instructor.

Practices of tourism and recreation management in protected areas. History and principles of protected areas. Social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits of and risks to protected areas and communities. Environmental stewardship in tourism and recreation management worldwide. 3 lectures, 1 laboratory.

RPTA 414. Commercial Recreation Enterprise. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: BUS 212, BUS 346, RPTA 210 or RPTA 260 with C- or better and senior standing.

Development of the domains of commercial recreation and related services. Role of entrepreneurial activity. Procedures for creating and managing a socially responsible commercial leisure service. 4 lectures.

RPTA 420. Festival and Event Management. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 210 or RPTA 260, junior standing, or consent of instructor.

Management strategies and practices for small to large scale community festivals and events. Emphasis on sponsorship, marketing, staffing, production, and budgeting. 4 lectures.

RPTA 424. Financing Recreation, Parks and Tourism Services. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: BUS 212, RPTA 360 with C- or better, or consent of instructor, senior standing. Recommended: ENGL 310.

Financing leisure products and services in public, private, commercial and voluntary settings. Emphasis on sources and methods of financing; operational/ financial cost analysis; forecasting, budgeting, pricing and fiscal master planning through use of computer technology. 4 lectures.

RPTA 430. Sports Field Construction and Management. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: AEPS 343 and junior standing.

Construction and maintenance of sports fields. Basic agronomics including sports field construction, sports turf establishment and maintenance, environmental issues, and personnel management. 3 lectures, 1 laboratory. Crosslisted as AEPS/RPTA 430.

RPTA 450. Resource and Grant Development. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: W
Prerequisite: Junior, senior or graduate standing.

Principles of all aspects of grantsmanship; researching grant funding resources from both the private and public sector, preparing the grant proposal, and grant administration. Field visits required. 4 lectures.

RPTA 460. Senior Project in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA 360 with a C- or better; ENGL 310; and senior standing.

Selection and completion of an individual senior project. Ability to collect data and/or synthesize and evaluate information and draw conclusions based on that process. Project results are presented in a formal oral and written report. Project design, literature review, information collection and synthesis management, and computer applications. 3 lectures, 1 laboratory.

RPTA 461. Senior Project. 3 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: Senior standing and completion of RPTA 460 with C- or better or consent of instructor.

Completion, under faculty supervision, of an investigative project typical of problems which graduates must solve in their fields of employment. Required minimum of 90 hours. Analytical, formal report is required.
RPTA 463. Pre-Internship Seminar. 1 unit
CR/NC
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: RPTA majors only and senior standing. Recommended: enrollment two quarters prior to RPTA 465.
Exploration of internship opportunities and practices. Internship selection process and procedures introduced. Credit/No Credit grading only. 1 seminar.

RPTA 465. Internship. 6 units
CR/NC
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: Minimum GPA of 2.0; 1,000 verified hours of advisor-approved paid and/or volunteer experience subsequent to high school; completion of all university coursework other than Internship; approval of Internship Coordinator.
400 hours of full-time concentration-specific practical work experience over a ten-week period in an approved agency. Comprehensive involvement in agency program. Credit/No Credit grading only.

RPTA 470. Selected Advanced Topics. 1-4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.
Directed group study of selected topics for advanced students. Open to undergraduate and graduate students. The Schedule of Classes will list title selected. Total credit limited to 8 units. 1-4 lectures.

RPTA 471. Selected Advanced Laboratory. 1-4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.
Directed group laboratory study of selected topics for advanced students. Open to graduate and undergraduate students. The Schedule of Classes will list title selected. Total credit limited to 8 units. 1-4 laboratories.

RPTA 472. Leadership Practice. 1 unit
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.
Leadership styles used in the natural resources management and recreation administration professions. Study and practice in setting goals and objectives; developing, evaluating and implementing an entrepreneurial project plan; decision making and problem-solving. Total credit limited to 4 units. 1 laboratory. Crosslisted as NR/RPTA 472.

RPTA 500. Individual Study. 1-6 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: Graduate standing and consent of department head.
Advanced independent study planned and completed under the direction of a member of the department faculty. Total credit limited to 6 units.

RPTA 502. Current Issues in Recreation, Parks and Tourism. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: SP
Prerequisite: Graduate standing or consent of instructor.
Societal issues that influence the management and delivery of recreation, parks, and tourism services. Critical investigation of current research and trends. 4 seminars.

RPTA 527. Leisure Behavior and Theory. 4 units
Term Typically Offered: F
Prerequisite: Graduate standing.
Theories of recreation and leisure: conceptual and theoretical foundations of leisure; the role of leisure behavior in modern day society. The Schedule of Classes will list topic selected. Constructs that contribute to contemporary understanding of leisure behavior. Connection of theories to individual research. Total credit limited to 8 units. 4 lectures.

RPTA 539. Graduate Internship in Recreation, Parks and Tourism. 1-9 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: Consent of internship instructor.
Application of theory to the solution of problems of recreation, parks and tourism or related businesses in the field. Analyze specific management problems and perform general management assignments detailed in a contract between the student, the firm or organization, and the faculty advisor before the internship commences. Degree credit limited to 6 units.

RPTA 570. Selected Topics in Recreation, Parks and Tourism. 1-4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: Graduate standing or consent of instructor.
Directed group study of selected topics for advanced students. The Schedule of Classes will list title selected. Total credit limited to 12 units. 1-4 seminars.

RPTA 571. Selected Advanced Laboratory in Recreation, Parks and Tourism. 1-4 units
Term Typically Offered: TBD
Prerequisite: Graduate standing and consent of instructor.
Directed group laboratory of selected topics for advanced students. The Schedule of Classes will list title selected. Total credit limited to 12 units. 1-4 laboratories.

RPTA 581. Graduate Seminar in Recreation, Parks and Tourism. 1 unit
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: Graduate standing.
Group study of selected developments, trends and problems in the field of recreation, parks and tourism. Total credit limited to 4 units. 1 seminar.

RPTA 599. Thesis in Recreation, Parks and Tourism. 1-9 units
Term Typically Offered: F, W, SP
Prerequisite: Graduate standing and consent of instructor.
Individual research in recreation, parks and tourism management under the general supervision of faculty, leading to a graduate thesis. Degree credit limited to 9 units. Students must enroll each quarter advisement is received.