



## Parks and Recreation Management - B.S.

WCU's Parks and Recreation Management (PRM) Program prepares students for professions in the leisure service, recreation, outdoor, and tourism industries, as well as with land agencies such as the National Parks and U.S. Forest Service. Students in the program earn a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree in Parks and Recreation Management.

**Cycles included in this report:**  
Aug 1, 2022 to Jul 31, 2023

## Program Name: Parks and Recreation Management - B.S.

Reporting Cycle: Aug 1, 2022 to Jul 31, 2023

### Student Learning Outcome (SLO) SLO 1 Discipline Specific Knowledge

Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the following entry-level knowledge: a) the nature and scope of the relevant park, recreation, tourism or related professions and their associated industries; b) techniques and processes used by professionals and workers in these industries; and c) the foundation of the profession in history, science and philosophy. [2021-22]

### Follow-up on Previous Improvement Actions for this SLO

The PRM program is accredited by the Council of Accreditation on Parks, Recreation, Tourism, and Related Professions. Because of this accreditation, we assess every SLO once a year. We intentionally measure SLOs at the “introduction,” “practice,” and “mastery” levels. We noticed, with this SLO, 7.01.01, that there was an issue at the “mastery” level particularly around student’s ability to express the mastery of PRM content in a clear written argument. Therefore, we chose to focus on this assignment (the senior seminar research paper) as evidence of this SLO and as something we believe needed improvement. We wish to track this SLO again this year to follow-up on changes made last year and to determine the effectiveness of these changes.

We last assessed this outcome in PRM 495: Senior Seminar during the Fall 2021 semester and identified a series of changes necessary. I’m pasting those changes below as a reminder so that our change this year clearly build on the improvement mechanisms. Our greatest concern was the quality of senior-level student writing. Students struggled to write coherent papers with substantiated arguments. Thus, we proposed the following changes to this problem: 1) the addition of a writing text and assigned readings and discussions from that text focused specifically on writing; and 2) better course integration with the campus Writing Center.

Zinser’s *On Writing Well* has since been added as a required text, and numerous presentations from Strunk & White’s *Elements of Style* are woven through the semester’s classes. Additionally, students are now asked to include a Written Work Pre-Submission Checklist, which includes confirmation that they’ve examined previous paper feedback, taken their assignment to the campus Writing Center for comment, integrated the feedback from the Writing Center into the present assignment; scanned their paper for grammar and spelling mistakes, and finally read their paper aloud before submitting. The checklist can be viewed below.

### Written Work Pre-Submission Checklist

Check Mark (X)	Criteria
	I have looked at Paul’s previous comments, cross-referenced the codes, and sought to improve in these areas within this current assignment.
	I confirm that I took this paper to the writing center and revised it in light of what I learned <i>before</i> submitting it here.
	After making my post-WALC revisions, I read my paper aloud and addressed problems or concerns I found.
	I have scanned my paper for words underlined in red or blue and confirmed they are accurate.
	Just before submitting, I proofread my paper one last time.

This year (2022-2023) we kept the above changes. We felt like writing had improved, but some students were having positive experiences with the Writing Center, and some were not getting the assistance they needed, primarily, we believe, because they were working with various Writing Center staff who weren’t all familiar with the assignment. Therefore, the course instructor worked with the Writing center to identify one person who could work with all PRM 495 students. Then, the

instructor was able to meet with that person and give them a full overview and understanding of the assignment. All students then met with the same person in the writing center during the revision process and could receive clear, direct, and consistent feedback and coaching.

### **Data Collection Process: When, Where, Why, and Who**

The original assessment (where we identified this problem) occurred in Fall of 2021 in PRM 495: Senior Seminar. We applied the suggested improvements (see above) and assessed the student scores on the final senior seminar paper again in Spring 2022 using the same rubric from 2021. This year (fall 2022 and Spring 2023), we made the following change: students will all have a 1-on-1 meeting to review their papers with the **same** Writing Center staff member. We used the same rubric (for consistency) to measure student scores in Fall 2022 and Spring 2023. The students in PRM 495 are all seniors. In Fall 2022 there were 19 students. In Spring 2023 there were 16 students.

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### **Assessment Method: How and Why**

The Senior Seminar Paper is assessed using a rubric (see below). This assessment method is used because it offers clear guidance to students regarding content in each section of the paper and clearly outlines the writing expectations. We also have kept the rubric the same this year so that we could easily compare results with last year’s scores to determine if our improvement intervention (all students see same staff at Writing Center) worked.

### **Senior Seminar Rubric**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Scoring Criteria</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Cover Page &amp; TOC</b>	Paper includes an APA formatted cover page with page number, header, title of paper, each student’s name, instructor names, name and number of the course, and the date assignment is due. Paper includes an APA formatted table of contents	
<b>Abstract</b>	Paper includes an APA formatted abstract including the following elements: motivation, purpose, methods or approach, major findings, main conclusions and recommendations. The students introduce the issue they will be examining, and provide a brief rationale for their choice.	
<b>Introduction</b>	Introduction is attention-getting and information is presented in a clear and logical sequence. The introduction establishes a logical framework for the rest of the paper. Purpose and thesis statements are well-written and provide a clear and specific outline of the rest of the paper.	
<b>Background Information (Literature Review)</b>	Shares with the reader a history or a timeline of the topic, as well as the results of other studies or major works that are closely related to the project being proposed. Provides a framework for establishing the importance of the project. Relates the study to the larger, on-going dialogue in the literature about a topic – presenting major terms, definitions, concepts, and theories.	

The Pro Argument (all three of the argument points...pro thesis statement) is outlined clearly at the beginning of the section, setting the stage for the arguments that will be presented.

Argument Point #1: The student chooses a specific argument that supports their thesis and discusses it in-depth by making specific and detailed correlations with research. Examples are well-articulated and thoroughly discussed and provide support for the argument made in the thesis statement. **(Note: Student must reference at least three different articles, at least one for each analysis point).**

**Pro  
Argument  
(Body)**

Argument Point #2: The student chooses a specific argument that supports their thesis and discusses it in-depth by making specific and detailed correlations with research. Examples are well-articulated and thoroughly discussed and provide support for the argument made in the thesis statement.

Argument Point #3: The student chooses a specific argument that supports their thesis and discusses it in-depth by making specific and detailed correlations with research. Examples are well-articulated and thoroughly discussed and provide support for the argument made in the thesis statement.

The Con Argument (all three of the argument points...con thesis statement) is outlined clearly at the beginning of the section, setting the stage for the arguments that will be presented.

Argument Point #1: The student chooses a specific argument that supports their thesis and discusses it in-depth by making specific and detailed correlations with research. Examples are well-articulated and thoroughly discussed and provide support for the argument made in the thesis statement. **(Note: Student must reference at least three different articles, at least one for each analysis point).**

**Con  
Argument  
(Body)**

Argument Point #2: The student chooses a specific argument that supports their thesis and discusses it in-depth by making specific and detailed correlations with research. Examples are well-articulated and thoroughly discussed and provide support for the argument made in the thesis statement.

Argument Point #3: The student chooses a specific argument that supports their thesis and discusses it in-depth by making specific and detailed correlations with research. Examples are well-articulated and thoroughly discussed and provide support for the argument made in the thesis statement.

Provides a concise and interesting summary of the ideas discussed in the paper (without simply regurgitating). Two or three of the most important concepts, notions, or facts that support your arguments: What do you want to the reader to leave with?

**Conclusion**

Students clearly and convincingly draw parallels between the research presented in the above section and the implications of that research for the PRM field. Students address the following questions: What does your research mean? What are the multiple implications of the new knowledge you have created? What are the societal, "real world" impacts, as related to PRM in particular?

\*Your opinion/personal voice OK here

Paper is written in first-person active or third-person active voice. Paper does not contain any 2nd person "you" voice or any passive voice. Note: Each instance of 2nd person voice will cost one point up to three.

<b>Spelling and Grammar</b>	The writing is essentially error-free in terms of spelling and grammar. Employs words with fluency, develops concise standard English sentences, and balances a variety of sentence structures effectively. (0-5 total errors for full points)	
	The paper contains well-written transition sentences between paragraphs and sections in order for the paper and ideas to flow nicely. Paper includes headings and subheadings as appropriate to guide the reader through each section.	
<b>References and Formatting</b>	Paper contains at least <b>10</b> references. All are properly cited following APA style <b>both</b> within the text and in the reference list. Only <b>2</b> of the reference are online sources such as websites. The rest are scholarly peer-reviewed sources.	
	Paper is written in 12-point Times New Roman font and is double-spaced. Paper includes proper APA running head.	
<b>Score</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>100</b>

### Target Expectation & Rubric/Scoring Criteria

#### Target & Derivation of Analysis

70% of student work will meet or exceed expectations (75% or higher) for this measure.

### Assessment Results & Analysis of Data

From Fall 2022, here are the results:

<b>Level of Expectation</b>	<b>Thresholds for Levels</b>
Exceeds Expectations	<i>100% scored 90% or above</i>
Meets Expectations	<i>0% scored 75% or above</i>
Below Expectations	<i>0% scored 75% or below</i>

From Spring 2023, here are the results:

<b>Level of Expectation</b>	<b>Thresholds for Levels</b>
Exceeds Expectations	<i>63% scored 90% or above</i>
Meets Expectations	<i>33% scored 75% or above</i>
Below Expectations	<i>4% scored 75% or below</i>

A combination of Fall 2022 and Spring 2023, here are the results:

<b>Level of Expectation</b>	<b>Threshold for Levels</b>
Exceeds Expectations	<i>83% scored 90% or above</i>
Meets Expectations	<i>14% scored 75% or above</i>
Below Expectations	<i>3% scored 75% or below</i>

Fall 2022 seems to be something of an anomaly with all students scoring at the mastery (exceeds expectations) level. Although I do think the additional expectation of taking paper's to the WALC was helpful, for some reason, these students were particularly hard working and met with *me* far more

than in past semesters. The addition of a PRM 495-WALC specific tutor appears to have made some difference in Spring 2023 as the averages were still higher than in previous semesters. With that said, students still complain that the WALC tutor does not seem to know much about the PRM discipline.

Looking at the comparative data, the total number of PRM 495 students for the Fall 2022-Spring 2023 academic year was 34. We are encouraged to see 83% of the students achieving a 90% or above. Similarly, only 3% are registering below 75%.

**Analysis:** Provide an analysis of the findings/results. What do the results imply about learning of this SLO topic in the program? If findings differ from what was expected, what might have contributed to the results? If data from previous assessments is available, compare the findings from this assessment to past assessments of this measure and explain differences.

We are pleased to see such improvement in this assignment. The quality of student papers has rather significantly increased, and students appear to be increasingly confident in their writing ability. Further developments are in process and we hope to see these steady improvements continue.

### **Additional Information**

N/A

### **Recommendations for Continuous Improvement**

Given the degree of success we've experienced, we'd like to continue with the changes we've made. Additionally, we would like to add a graduate EOE GA to the course (for fall 2023 and spring 2024) to work 10 hours a week with Dr. Stonehouse on mentoring students through the writing process. The GA will be able to provide detailed feedback on student writing and act almost as a "committee member" sharing another perspective and encouraging the student to grow in their thinking and writing.

### **Faculty and Stakeholder Involvement in Assessment**

The PRM faculty team meets weekly, and all faculty are directly involved in decisions surrounding assessment (which SLO to assess, and which course/assignment to use as the measurement). Additionally, PRM meets annually with a PRM Advisory Board. The board routinely identifies our program's need to strengthen student writing. These changes were an effort to address the board's concern. For this course and this assignment, Dr. Paul Stonehouse was the lead faculty member in charge of creating and implementing the assignment.

### **Student Learning Outcome (SLO) SLO 2 Diversity/Cultural Awareness**

Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate the ability to design, implement, and evaluate services that facilitate targeted human experiences and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity. [2021-22; 2020-21]

### **Follow-up on Previous Improvement Actions for this SLO**

This outcome has not yet been assessed in this 5 year cycle.

### **Data Collection Process: When, Where, Why, and Who**

**When and where** did the assessment occur? For example – the semester/year of the assessment, the course name and number, etc.

We will be using the "Group Project Presentation" assignment in PRM 270: Leadership and Group Dynamics. This course is offered every year in the fall and spring.

**Why** were these particular courses or assignments chosen for the assessment?

PRM 270 is a core course, so all majors take this course, usually in the first year of the program. For each of the COAPRT SLOs, the accrediting body asks us to track them at levels of "introduction" "practice" and "mastery." In this course, students are introduced to the content in the SLO at the beginning of the course and are also given an opportunity to engage with the content at the level of "practice." This assignment in particular is the final assignment for the course. Students have had practice with group facilitating early in the course (introduction) and then they scaffold their work

towards this final “group project presentation” where they facilitate a larger-scale activity for a group of participants and evaluate their work. We map the assignments to course-level SLOs which then map to program-level SLOs. The course SLO that this assignment evaluates is: Practice, apply, and evaluate leadership and facilitation skills in a variety of small and large group settings (7.02).?

As a quick overview, the assignment requires students to design, implement, and evaluate a group activity (game, lesson, team building initiative, etc.). They must design it for a particular human developmental stage (e.g., middle schoolers or elderly adults), choose an appropriate activity to facilitate, rehearse and facilitate the activity for a group of 25 peers, and then evaluate their facilitation skills and the success of their activity in meeting the designated outcomes.

**Who was included in assessment? Please list the total number of students being assessed, their academic levels, and their modality (residential, residential-online, or distance-online).**

**Response:**

We assessed the Fall 2022 and the 2023 spring section of this course for a total of 59 students (28 in Fall 2022, 31 in Spring 2023). Most of these students were sophomores or juniors, and the course is a residential face-to-face course.

**Assessment Method: How and Why**

We chose the “group project presentation” assignment which is a direct measure of learning. This assignment is the final assignment for the course. Students have had early practice with group facilitating (introduction) and then they scaffold their work towards this final “group project presentation” (practicing) where they facilitate a larger-scale activity for a group of participants and evaluate their work. We map the assignments to course-level SLOs which then map to program-level SLOs. The course SLO that this assignment evaluates is: Practice, apply, and evaluate leadership and facilitation skills in a variety of small and large group settings (7.02).?

**Target Expectation & Rubric/Scoring Criteria**

?The baseline expectation for student performance is 75% of students will score 80% or above on the presentation. The rubric we use to score the presentation is below. We also have students provide peer-to-peer feedback to one another (see this rubric below as well). While this peer-to-peer feedback is shared with the presenters, the instructor determines the final score for this assignment.  
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**1. PRESENTATION TO THE CLASS (100 points)??**

?

**Activity, Problem Solving, Initiative(s) (25 Points)??**

1. This initiative is the focus of your activity session and should be facilitated smoothly with clear preparation.?
1. *The process and outcomes of the activity meet overall goals of the session and the theme and is appropriate for the selected developmental stage.??*

**?Debriefing/Processing questions and/or activities. (25 points)??**

1. Make sure you build time into your activity session for an adequate debrief.???
1. Debriefing can be an activity itself which helps to summarize the outcomes, or you can use guided questioning. The debrief ties the whole experience together and allows for reflection and application.??
1. The debrief is not just a set of questions but involves some kind of creative activity to engage the participants.

**Facilitation skills will be evaluated on the following criteria (50 points)??**

?

- \_\_\_ Maintained attention of group throughout the process??
- \_\_\_ Clearly explained and demonstrated instructions with the attention of participants??
- \_\_\_ Transitioned smoothly from one objective to the next??
- \_\_\_ Appropriately modified instructions and activity for the diverse needs of the group??
- \_\_\_ Spoke clearly, enthusiastically, or attentively, and projected voice??
- \_\_\_ Adhered to 30-minute time limit?
- \_\_\_ Clearly appeared prepared and well-rehearsed??
- \_\_\_ Balanced leadership and contribution from team members??
- \_\_\_ Dressed recreational professional??

?

?

1. **PEER EVALUATIONS. (50 Points)?**

?

1. **Positive feedback related to the activity appropriateness, facilitation, clarity, content, creativity, presentation quality, etc. Use individual names as much as possible.??**

?

?

?

1. **Constructive feedback related to the activity appropriateness, facilitation, clarity, content, creativity, presentation quality, etc. Use individual names as much as possible.? *What would you change to improve the experience???***

?

?

?

1. **Give the facilitators a score based on their facilitation skills:? \_\_\_\_\_?**

**Exceptional 100%?**

**Well done, 1-2 areas for growth 90%?**

**Good, 2-3 areas for growth 80%?**

**Average, 4-5 areas for growth 70%?**

**Below Average, many modifications needed 60%?**

**Unbearable, 50% and below??**

### **Assessment Results & Analysis of Data**

89% of students scored 80% or above on the group project presentation (25/28) (Fall 2022)

Fall 2022 Results ( $n = 28$ )

#### **Level of Expectation    Thresholds for Levels**

Exceeds Expectations    *46% scored 90% or above*

Meets Expectations        *43% scored 80-89%*

Below Expectations        *11% scored 79% or below*

96% of students scored an 80% or above on the group project presentation (30/31) (Spring 2023)

From Spring 2023 Results ( $n = 31$ )

#### **Level of Expectation    Thresholds for Levels**

Exceeds Expectations    *61% scored 90% or above*

Meets Expectations        *35% scored 80-89%*

Below Expectations        *4% scored 79% or below*

\*The baseline was that 75% of students would score 80% or above, so this exceeds the baseline.

### **Additional Information**

N/A

### **Recommendations for Continuous Improvement**

We made a change between the fall and the spring semesters last year in order to improve student scores.

For the spring semester, the instructor made smaller project groups. This allowed for better individual assessment of facilitation and leadership skills. Additionally, the instructor required students to conduct two mini-facilitation experiences before the group project. The instructor focused on taking more time in class discussion to debrief each experience and provide critical feedback. We believe that these changes contributed to the success in the spring semester. We would like to continue to measure this assignment for one more cycle to see if these improvements in scores hold steady.

### **Faculty and Stakeholder Involvement in Assessment**

First, the PRM faculty team has weekly faculty meetings and are in continuous communication regarding assessment and program improvement. We decided as a team which SLOs to assess this year and which assignments to use to assess them. Rebekah Henderson was the lead faculty



instructor for PRM 270, so she played the lead role in designing, implementing, and evaluating the “group project assignment” assessment tool.

Additionally, we want to note that at our advisory board meeting this year. We received feedback that one of the number one things members of the board are looking for when hiring our graduates are “soft skills” such as “people skills” like being able to work with groups successfully and provide great customer service. This assignment directly builds students' abilities to facilitate group activities and work well in groups.

**All Programs: Assessment Plans**

*Files:*

CIR Planning 2021-2027 - Copy

**All Programs: Curriculum Maps**

<b>PRM Curriculum Map</b>	<b>Core PRM Courses</b>	<b>Core PRM Courses</b>	<b>Core PRM Courses</b>
<b>PRM- Program Level Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Practicing</b>	<b>Mastery</b>
7.01 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the following entry-level knowledge: a) the nature and scope of the relevant park, recreation, tourism or related professions and their associated industries	PRM 250	PRM 254	PRM 430, 495
7.01 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the following entry-level knowledge: b) techniques and processes used by professionals and workers in these industries	PRM 250, 270	PRM 254	PRM 430
7.01 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the following entry-level knowledge: c) the foundation of the profession in history, science and philosophy.	PRM 250, 270	PRM 254	PRM 430
7.02 Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate the ability to design, implement, and evaluate services that facilitate targeted human experiences and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity.	PRM 250, 254, 270	PRM 275, 361	PRM 461
	<b>Core PRM Courses</b>	<b>Core PRM Courses</b>	<b>Core PRM Courses</b>
<b>PRM Curriculum Map</b>	<b>Core PRM Courses</b>	<b>Core PRM Courses</b>	<b>Core PRM Courses</b>
<b>Program Level Student Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Practicing</b>	<b>Mastery</b>
7.03 Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about operations and strategic management/administration in parks, recreation, tourism and/or related professions.	PRM 254	PRM 361	PRM 430, 461
7.04 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate, through a comprehensive internship of not less than 400 clock hours and no fewer than 10 weeks, the potential to succeed as professionals at supervisory or higher levels in park, recreation, tourism, or related organizations.	PRM 370	PRM 370	PRM 483/4

**CIR Feedback (To be completed by the Office of Institutional Assessment)**

End of report