

What is Recreation Management & Leadership?

The purpose of recreation and leisure is to contribute to the health and well-being of individuals and enhance the quality of community life. As such, the study of recreation is multidisciplinary, requiring understanding of the social, behavioral, physical, and environmental sciences as they pertain to helping people grow and develop in their leisure while conserving our vital natural resources. Knowledge of the arts and humanities is important as well, because leisure is one of the most fertile opportunities for self-expression and the development of community.

Recreation Management & Leadership, BA

The major offers concentrations in tourism, community recreation, outdoor recreation, and therapeutic recreation. The department and faculty goal is to help students become knowledgeable, competent, and virtuous professionals — the sum of which is a foundation for professional excellence.

Recreation Management & Leadership at Western

Nationally accredited since 1986 by the Council on Parks, Recreation and Tourism, the Recreation Program offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in Recreation. The major offers concentrations in tourism, community recreation, outdoor recreation, and therapeutic recreation. The department and faculty goal is to help students become knowledgeable, competent, and virtuous professionals — the sum of which is a foundation for professional excellence.

The Recreation curriculum prepares students to design, implement, manage, lead, and evaluate recreation programs and services. The program is designed as four sequential 15-16 credit hour phases, which students move through as a cohort group. Students enter Phase 1 of the program during spring quarter, typically during their sophomore or junior year.

Hands-on-Experience and Internships

Each student in the Recreation Program must complete 240 hours of leadership prior to beginning their internship in Phase III of the program. That equates to an average of 10,000 hours of student service per year to organizations that serve individuals, families, communities, and the environment in Bellingham and throughout Washington. In recent years, our students have served the YMCA, the Max Higbee Center, Boys and Girls Club, Arne Hannah Aquatic Center, Whatcom Humane Society, and Northwest Therapeutic Riding Center to name just a few. In addition, students complete a 400-hour, ten-week internship experience.

What can you do with Recreation Management & Leadership?

In support of healthy individuals, families, and communities, career opportunities in recreation and leisure services are numerous and diverse. Graduates of the Recreation Program are employed throughout the region, nation, and world. They work in a variety of settings, including public recreation departments, outdoor recreation programs, hospitals, and tourism agencies. Specific jobs performed by graduates include working as recreation therapists, organizing and leading outdoor adventure trips, managing youth-serving agencies, such as Boys and Girls Clubs, supervising public sports programs, coordinating community cultural arts, operating sustainable tourism trips, and serving as park rangers with state and federal agencies, and managing youth-serving agencies, such as Boys and Girls Clubs. Some graduates have found their degrees useful for work in fields such as social work, the ministry, and law enforcement.

Employers of Recent Western Graduates:

- Alderwood Convalescent Center (Bellingham, WA)
- Alpengirl Summer Adventure Camp for Girls (Bozeman, MT)
- AmeriCorps (CO)
- Boys and Girls Club (Phoenix, AZ)
- Camp Wingate Kirkland (Yarmouth Port, MA)
- Celebrity Cruises
- Chena Hot Springs Resort (Fairbanks, AK)
- Earthcorps (Seattle)
- Holland American Cruiseline
- Jackson Hole Mountain Resort (Jackson, WY)
- Lacey Parks and Recreation (Lacey)
- Metro Parks (Tacoma)
- Mount Baker Ski Area
- Mount Rainier National Park
- NOLS Pacific Northwest (Conway)
- Outward Bound (CA)
- Skydive Snohomish (Snohomish)
- Wild Whatcom (Bellingham)

Recreation Management & Leadership careers

- Recreation Therapist
- Outdoor Adventure Leader
- Youth Programs Coordinator
- Sustainable Tourism Operator
- Park Ranger

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE RECREATION MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAM,
CONTACT

Jen Leita, General Information and Advising

Jen.Leita@wwu.edu | [360-650-4377](tel:360-650-4377)