

**FINAL 12/13/05**

**LEISURE STUDIES AND RECREATION PROGRAM REVIEW  
2004-05**

**SUMMARY OF REVIEWERS' COMMENDATIONS**

1. The program provides a broad and well-integrated view of the recreation profession. Core classes are designed in accordance with the National Parks and Recreation Association/ American Association for Leisure and Recreation Council on Accreditation program standards, even though the department is not accredited currently.
2. Students praise the faculty for working with them individually and collectively to address their career aspirations. In conversation with small groups of students, they rated the faculty very high as teachers and advisors.
3. Faculty have designed a plan of study tailored to meet the student's personal needs while developing a core curriculum designed to be general enough to benefit all majors.
4. The department's assessment plan is a good one that will provide useful information for curricular improvement and structural change.
5. The program's history is an asset, reflecting a nearly 50-year effort to prepare leisure services professionals, an effort recognized by members of the academy and the professional community.
6. Faculty have consistently sought to maintain a rapport with their students, alumni, and the professional community that informs program revision and improvement.
7. Faculty have been recognized by various professional organizations for exemplary service. Faculty project great enthusiasm, not only for the recreation profession and their students, but also for the future of the department.
8. Given the limited financial resources at the University, the department has done very well in helping faculty meet their professional development goals. The department chair is proactive in securing funds for new faculty to assist them in their development.

The Department wishes to note the following:

- The university acknowledges that the department almost doubled its FTES in a one-year period. The faculty credit the devotion and leadership of the current department chair for this accomplishment.
- The reviewers did not have an opportunity to visit the department's Castaic Lake program. The CSUN Aquatic Center at Castaic Lake has twice received the Excellence in Aquatics Award from the National Parks and Recreation Association. The program serves over 10,000 individuals each year, 75% of these through community service programs. It is a revenue producing program and has recently received over \$80,000 in grants.

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**SUMMARY OF REVIEWERS' RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The desire to expand into commercial recreation is appropriate given the opportunities for employment of graduates. There need to be adequate fiscal and personnel resources to accommodate such an expansion.

**Understanding: The department is working with Dean Castillo in securing a tenure track position in the area of Travel/Tourism and Hospitality. There is faculty agreement that this is a growing area that should be pursued. Along these lines, the department is preparing a proposal to change its name to Recreation and Tourism Management. The department also plans to partner with other programs such as Family & Consumer Studies and Child & Adolescent Development, as well as local community colleges, in order to attract more students.**

2. Two areas where evaluation and redirection might be appropriate are in municipal parks and recreation management, and recreation therapy.

**Understanding: Since June 2005, the LSRC faculty has been in the process of developing two task forces to assist in re-assessing these areas of the program. Each task force includes professionals from the community, which will help the department maintain networks in these fields.**

3. The program needs better and consistent implementation of the assessment plan and a systematically prepared record of the results. Such data are valuable in support of resource needs.

**Understanding: The department is in alignment with the University with regard to the 5-year assessment plan. It began implementation of its assessment plan before the Program Review and is collecting data this semester. The assessment plan is based upon National Parks and Recreation Association accreditation standards.**

4. The department and its students would be better served by a support/administrative staff member dedicated solely to the department, capable of providing insights and service to students as an adjunct to the faculty.

**Understanding: The dean agrees that the department would benefit from a designated staff person. The dean is currently assisting the LSRC department in filling this need.**

5. Classrooms assigned to the Department are identified as being substandard; some have insufficient access to critical technology.

**Understanding: "Substandard" for the department means that their classrooms are crowded with armchair desks and cannot be used in more interactive learning.**

**LSRC needs smart classrooms, with tables and chairs. Together with the dean, the department is working on classroom configuration as well as classroom scheduling conflicts within the college. The dean's office is assisting in finding a smart classroom for LSRC to share beginning next Spring semester.**

6. The faculty seek to extend the program in outdoor recreation and play behavior through dedicated labs. Faculty need to prepare fully documented needs assessments for dedicated labs and be willing to propose alternatives, such as shared, rather than sole-use, arrangements.

**Understanding: The High Ropes Challenge course, taught in an outdoors lab, is used to develop leadership training, group dynamics, and problem solving skills. The department's goal is to use the High Ropes course to attract corporate groups and for this they also require nearby classroom space for instructional purposes. The department is working with the dean and the Kinesiology department chair to find a location for the course, possibly in the Kinesiology building. Corporate groups are already aware of the course and once an appropriate classroom location is found, the department will develop a plan with marketing strategies. The department is concerned that the university's Vision 2035 plan shows the High Ropes lab space as earmarked for student housing, without any plans for relocation of the lab.**

**In the area of Play there is a need for shared space that provides students access to water, shelves and storage. Further, faculty members would like to engage in observational and experimental design research projects that require appropriate laboratory space. The department, together with the dean, is looking for a shared or multipurpose use space to accommodate these needs.**

7. The faculty are being proactive by furloughing the graduate program for one year. During that period the department will reconsider the focus of the graduate program, develop a revised curriculum, and prepare a marketing strategy to recruit graduate students.

**Understanding: The department is re-evaluating all aspects of the graduate program, utilizing task force and focus group discussions. The program is not accepting new students until the decision is made whether to continue the graduate program.**