

Mission & Vision

Department Mission. The mission of the Recreation and Leisure Studies Program is to prepare students to deliver recreation and leisure services in a diverse society, to engage in research on leisure, and to foster a new generation of scholars who can do the same.

Program Vision. Recreation and Leisure Studies at the University of Georgia will be known for outstanding scholarship, leadership, and educational excellence in the areas of recreation administration, experience-based education, and the scholarly study of leisure. To that end faculty and students address the design, provision, and evaluation of recreation and leisure services that facilitate health, education, and well-being across the lifespan, and study the psychological and social dimensions of leisure. It is our belief that recreational contexts can foster positive growth and development, engage citizens in their communities, and promote understanding and respect for diversity.



Recreation & Leisure Studies Program
University of Georgia
343 Ramsey Center, 300 River Road
Athens, GA 30602-6555

Department of Counseling and
Human Development Services

RECREATION & LEISURE STUDIES PROGRAM

Graduate Studies



The University of Georgia

Masters Degree

The masters degree in Recreation and Leisure Studies prepares students for advanced management positions in recreation settings. Graduates move into supervisory careers at summer camps and youth organizations, municipal and non-profit recreation agencies, campus recreation administration, and community or clinical therapeutic settings.

The program focuses on experience-based education in a supervisory capacity which significantly enhances the ability of our graduates to create meaningful, engaging recreation programs that have an educational and beneficial focus.



At the masters level students take supporting coursework in areas such as youth development, sport management, or non-profit organizations. Core graduate courses include:

- Concepts of Leisure
- Experiential Education Theory
- Group Processing
- Advanced Administration
- Research Methods
- Research into Practice

Doctoral Degree

Doctoral students gain teaching and publication experience to move into faculty positions at colleges and universities throughout North America. Given the interdisciplinary nature of Recreation and Leisure Studies, the program emphasizes individualized faculty mentorship, and encourage students to seek courses outside of the discipline to gain valuable knowledge that relates to their area of interest.

A unique aspect of the doctoral program at the University of Georgia is its commitment to engaging students in other departments across campus. Doctoral students develop a program of study that includes coursework in other disciplines in order to expand their theoretical framework for understanding leisure. The campus offers several interdisciplinary graduate certificates including the following:

- Qualitative Inquiry
- Women's Studies
- Gerontology
- Disability Studies
- Nonprofit Organizations
- University Teaching



Graduate Faculty

Corey W. Johnson, Ph.D.—qualitative inquiry, non-dominant populations, cultural studies

Doug Kleiber, Ph.D.—life-span development, social psychology of leisure

Gwynn Powell, Ph.D.—camp management, experiential education

Diane M. Samdahl, Ph.D.—sociology of leisure, women and marginalized populations, power

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