



The University of Georgia

College of Education  
Department of Counseling and Human Development Services  
Recreation and Leisure Studies Program

**RLST 4900: Research and Evaluation in Leisure Services**  
**Spring 2008**  
**3 Credit Hours**

**Instructor:** Allie Smith, M.Ed.

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**Office Hours:** Monday and Wednesday from 10AM-11AM

**Class Meeting Times & Locations**

MWF 9:05-9:55AM          205 Ramsey

**Course Description:** This course will introduce you to the nature and value of research in leisure services. At the end of the course you will be able to understanding and use research, including needs assessment and program evaluation, in management, planning, and administration of leisure facilities and programs.

**Course Rationale:** As members of contemporary society, we are all constantly bombarded by information, much of which presents itself as being ‘research.’ In this information saturated society, you must be able to evaluate research according to its quality and relevance to your personal and professional interests. The intent of this course is to make you a more informed and critical consumer of research. Additionally, by exploring the process of evaluation, you will apply the research process to your professional interests in the field of leisure services.

**Required Resources and Fees**

Henderson, K. A., & Bialeschki, M. D. (2002). *Evaluating Leisure Services: Making Enlightened Decisions* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). State College, PA: Venture Publishing. ISBN: 1-892132-26-5

“Clickers” (aka Interwrite Personal Response System) \$55 from the university bookstore

Additional book chapters, articles, and supplemental readings will also be required but will be made available to students via WebCT to keep costs at a minimum. You must bring the day’s required readings, textbooks and personal response systems to class each day. Not having them may result in a reduction or loss of Learning Activity points.

## Course Outcomes

As an interdependent community of learners we will explore one major question as a part of this course, and you will have an opportunity to accomplish the following ten outcomes:

***What are the research and evaluation skills needed to make informed decisions in today's world?***

1. Locate and evaluate the quality of information and research sources.
2. Discuss and apply basic terminology and concepts used in research and evaluation.
3. Describe the strengths and weakness of different research designs.
4. Apply different methods of evaluation related to leisure service delivery.
5. Locate and apply for grant funding related to leisure service delivery.

Methods for accomplishing course outcomes include class lectures and discussions, required reading assignments, small group exercises and discussion, written papers, experience-based analysis, community-based service-learning, interactive in-class response, and field trips.

**Field Trips:** This course requires some out-of-class field trips. Check the course outline very carefully and mark your calendar/planner now! If you will be unable to participate in a field trip, you need to notify me by January 21, 2008 so that an alternative assignment can be developed. Students who do not notify me by that time are accountable for the assignments/trips as designed in this syllabus.

## Brief Descriptions of Assignments

Additional details on assignments will be covered in class as well as posted to Web-CT.

**Exams (150 points):** There will be three, 50 point exams throughout the course of the semester. Each exam will build on the previous exam and therefore each exam is cumulative.

**Learning Activities and Quizzes (100 points):** Attendance, participation, and content comprehension in this class will be assessed using announced and un-announced quizzes, cooperative learning assignments, peer review feedback, free-writes, clicker questions, and other short activities. We will complete 12 activities during the semester and will drop the 2 lowest Learning Activity grades before calculating the final Learning Activity score.

**Article Critiques (100 points):** To demonstrate your ability to effectively locate and utilize research products, you will be required review and critique two scholarly journal articles that utilize research.

**Professional Portfolio Assignment - Grant Proposal (100 points):** Administrators in leisure services and related fields are increasingly encouraged to supplement their organizational budgets with external grant funding. This assignment will require you to locate an actual source of grant funding related to your professional interests in the leisure services industry. You will create an application and proposal to hypothetically obtain the grant that you have chosen. Your choice of grants must be approved by the instructor no later than February 11, 2008.

**Executive Summery Report (50 points):** Throughout the semester we will work towards answering various research questions. To demonstrate your ability to effectively communicate your

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understanding and ability to practically apply research, you will prepare an executive summary report related to the research topic presented in class.

## **Instructor Expectations and Policies**

This class will be taught using a combination of lectures, class discussions, guest speakers, media presentations, and experiential activities. To create an environment in which learning (yours and mine) is possible, we must be well-prepared for class, challenge each other to think critically, express ourselves effectively, experiment with new ideas, respect and listen to everyone's ideas, and correct mistakes, misunderstandings, and errors in a positive and encouraging manner. If each of us does our part, we expect to create a fun and challenging learning environment.

**Accommodation Needs:** We are committed to providing access to all persons with disabilities and will provide accommodation if notified. If you have a documented disability or any other special needs and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact us as soon as possible. Necessary academic accommodations will be made for you based on the recommendations received from Disability Services. You must be registered with Disability Services to receive academic accommodations. Please visit <http://www.dissvcs.uga.edu> or call 706-542-8719 to learn more.

**Academic Integrity:** "Academic honesty is vital to the very fabric and integrity of UGA. All students must comply with an appropriate and sound academic honesty policy and code of honest behavior" (p37-38 Undergraduate Bulletin). "All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense" (A Culture of Honesty). All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. You can read the policy at [www.uga.edu/ovpi](http://www.uga.edu/ovpi). Violations include: cheating (use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means, unauthorized aid or assistance or the giving or receiving of unfair advantage on any form of academic work; plagiarism (using the ideas or work of another without giving credit to the source); copying the language, structure, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and adopting those as one's original work; falsification, statement of untruth, either spoken or written, regarding any circumstances relating to academic work. Copying the work from a previous class, using another student's work, failing to cite references, etc. are also considered violations.

**Attendance:** In accordance with the university class attendance regulations, students are expected to punctually attend class sessions. While attendance is important, you must also take an active role in your learning experience. Therefore, you are responsible for all class materials. If you do miss a class, be sure to ask a classmate for any handouts, notes, assignments, etc. The student is held accountable for all of the work covered in each class meeting. Students who will be absent because of religious observances are requested to notify the instructor at the beginning of the semester in order to allow for accommodations in testing or assignments.

If you expect to miss class, be sure to notify me. You may not make up or be excused except with 72 hour *advanced* written notice via WebCT. I will utilize Learning Activities to build content and accountability. Each Learning Activity will count towards your grade and some of the activities will also support your major assignments. The Learning Activities take place at times that are unannounced and announced. They must be completed and turned in at the specified time.

**Deadlines:** All assignments due in-class, must be turned in on time hard-copy at the beginning of the class period for which they are due. If you anticipate being absent or late to class, turn it in the day before. If you ever have a question about when something is due, please ask. Computer problems and other excuses are

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unacceptable. Late papers and assignments will be penalized 10% per day (the 10% deduction begins immediately). After three days, late papers will not be accepted unless prior arrangements were made with the instructor (prior arrangements means at a time other than during class -- come by, call us, email us). A student who is late for an exam may not take the exam if a student has already completed the exam and left the room. A missed exam results in a zero unless arrangements have been made with 72-hour *advanced* written notice to the responsible instructor, or extreme emergency circumstances can be documented.

**Class Preparation and Professionalism:** Student participation is critical for the success of this class. Therefore, it is expected that the student will come to class prepared by having read the assigned materials and being able to discuss the material in an intellectual and critical manner. Anticipate spending a minimum of three hours working outside of the classroom for every one hour in the classroom; please plan your schedules accordingly. Much of your time outside of the classroom will be spent reading and writing. Reading is essential to your learning. So vital, in fact, that all assignments require some connection to the readings. Our class sessions will be used to extend and amplify the material from the reading; therefore, you must have read the assignment before each class session.

**WebCT:** <https://webct.uga.edu> (log in with UGA myID & password). Students should check the course site for important information and to print student handouts. Also, official university correspondence is conducted using your UGA email address and we expect you to check that email at least daily.

## **Assignment Point Detail & Final Grade Allocations:**

**Evaluation of Student Performance:** As instructors we do not give grades; as students, you earn them. To earn an “A” on your exams/assignments you must do excellent work. Excellent means that your work makes a creative contribution as a well-written, insightful, coherent, and original piece of work. A “B” means that your work is good and that you do have a grasp of the content, but it is conventional work. You will earn a “C” or grade of adequate if you simply do the assignment, follow directions, and are competent within a limited scope. A “D” means that the work is poor or flawed. Those who show evidence of effort, thought, and synthesis of the class material with their projects will likely receive higher grades. Assignments that receive a “D” or an “F” (without a late penalty) may be redone. Redone assignments must be completed within 3 days of being returned and submitted with the original graded work. Once the redone assignment is complete, the two grades are averaged together to arrive at a final score. You are encouraged to do your best job the first time. Learning Activities and exams may not be redone.

Writing is one of the most powerful tools for learning in any college course and is important for clearly and effectively communicating your ideas and/or thoughts to a specific audience. When writing is required outside of the classroom, assignments are to follow the APA standards of written work. Creative titles for your papers are always appreciated! Those who have consistent difficulty with writing will be referred to the University’s Writers Resource Lab. Please feel free to utilize this valuable resource on your own by calling 706-542-2119, emailing [wrctr@english.uga.edu](mailto:wrctr@english.uga.edu) or checking the website <http://www.english.uga.edu/writingcenter/home.html> for locations and hours tutors are available. All written work is graded according to the assignment rubric provided. These rubrics are based on the following criteria:

- Adequacy (breadth and depth) of analysis of the assignment.
- Direct evidence that assignment is synthesized from class material and readings.

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- Professionalism (style, presentation, organization, grammar and spelling).
- Completed task according to the guidelines given.
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When turning in final versions of assignments for which earlier drafts have been returned to you, you must turn in those drafts (with instructor feedback) as well. If the draft is missing, the final grade for that product will be reduced by 30%.

**Grade Dispute Policy:** When you have a question or concern about the grading of an assignment, the student must put their question or concern in writing and turn it in to the responsible instructor (along with the assignment) within 5 days of receiving the grade. The instructor will then have time to consider the student's question or concern and respond appropriately. This policy does not apply to instructor calculation errors, just show me the error and I will correct it. It is recommended that a student keep all graded material until a final grade appears on her/his transcript. Graded materials may be necessary to settle discrepancies regarding the final grade of the course.

#### Assignment Breakdown by Percentage & Points:

Assignment	Points	Percentage
Exams (3)	150	30%
Article Critiques (2)	100	20%
Learning Activities (10)	100	20%
Research/Grant Proposal	100	20%
Executive Summary Report	50	10%

#### Grading System Breakdown by Percentage & Points:

Grade	Points	Percentage
A	462.5 – 500	92.5 – 100%
A-	447.5 – 462.4	89.5 – 92.4
B+	437.5 – 447.4	87.5 – 89.4
B	412.5 – 437.4	82.5 – 87.4
B-	397.5 – 412.4	79.5 – 82.4
C+	387.5 – 397.4	77.5 – 79.4
C	352.5 – 387.4	70.5 – 77.4
C-	347.5 – 352.4	69.5 – 70.4
D	297.5 – 347.4	59.5 – 69.4
F	0 – 297.4	59.4 or below

**Incompletes and Withdraws:** No incomplete will be given unless arrangements have been made with the instructor at least 14 days prior to the last scheduled class meeting. If you have exceptional circumstances during the last two weeks that require you to withdraw from the course, please seek the appropriate assistance from Academic Affairs: [www.uga.edu/studentaffairs/students/withdrawals.shtml](http://www.uga.edu/studentaffairs/students/withdrawals.shtml).

Any student wishing to withdraw from the class at any time during the semester should consult with an advisor of the Recreation and Leisure Studies faculty as not to impede timely graduation.

**Extra credit:** I do not typically give extra credit assignments. I see extra assignments as a way to help the student who is excelling delve into an area of interest, and not as a way to help a struggling student by loading on more work. Rather than ask for something extra, plan ahead and ask for assistance where needed.

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**Appropriate classroom behavior:** You are adults and we expect you to show respect for the instructors, guests, and your fellow classmates and use good/professional manners. If unusual circumstances require you to come in late or leave early, please sit near the door and make your exit quietly. Also, the use of cell phones in any way (that includes text messaging) and other disruptive devices (ie. Using the computer to on-line chat or browse the internet) will not be tolerated under any circumstances. If any of these devices are used or go off during class the student responsible for the device will write a 2-3 page essay commenting on the impact of cellular/digital technology on the recreation and leisure experience. The paper is due exactly one-week from the incident. Failure to complete the paper on time will result in 10 % being deducted from the final course grade. Please do not put me in a position of enforcing this policy; turn off devices or leave them at home or in your car.

**Office Hours and Appointments:** In addition to normally being available before and after class, we encourage you to visit during our office hours or to make an appointment to see us as you have ideas, questions or concerns. Please do not wait until it is too late to ask an important question. Since the management of time is critical for students and professors alike, you are requested to please observe the following guidelines regarding office appointments.

→ **Priority:** Those students who have made appointments with me personally (either in person, by phone, sign-up, or via email) will be given priority.

→ **Drop-ins:** If I am in my office and no appointment has been scheduled you are always welcome. Dropping in is encouraged and if I am busy with other items, I will invite you back at another time.

→ **Non-office hour appointments:** Please try to stick to scheduled office hours for appointments. However, if you find it impossible to schedule an appointment during regular office hours, I will work with you to find a mutually convenient time.

→ **Canceling appointments:** Should you find you will be unable to keep an appointment it would be appreciated greatly if you would contact me via one of the means identified above to cancel your scheduled appointment. Thank you for your professional courtesy in this regard.

Occasionally office hours may be canceled due to meetings or travel. We will make an effort to contact you if you have scheduled an appointment during such times. Please accept our apologies in advance for this possible inconvenience.