

The Department of Sport and Recreation Professions offers two majors—sport and recreation management and recreational therapy. Both focus on improving lives through the provision and management of meaningful leisure-time programs. Professionals work in a variety of settings such as sport facilities, public parks and recreation, and travel and tourism. They may also work with sport teams, hospitals, non-profit organizations like the YMCA, commercial agencies such as theme parks and fitness centers, and long-term care facilities. The principles of human motivation and satisfaction, current trends, and a philosophy of practice combine to provide programs and services that improve lives.

THE PROGRAM

The primary purpose of the program is to provide both classroom and practical learning experiences in the study of sport, recreation, and leisure. Nationally accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Park, Recreation, Tourism, and Related Professions, the department supports students studying one of two majors: sport and recreation management and recreational therapy.

The curriculum infuses practical learning opportunities with outside agencies. Classroom work is reinforced through “real-world” experiences that allow students to hone their career preferences. The program is nationally recognized for its assessment, work with alumni and professionals, and for ensuring that all graduates are eligible to sit for the examination to become a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist.

THE MAJOR

The recreational therapy major requires a six-course “core” which provides the foundation for the major. Students are also required to take 10 additional specialization courses. All students complete a final semester capstone internship.

CORE COURSES

Introduction to Recreational Therapy
Disabilities (Physical & Mental Health Conditions)
Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating
Recreational Therapy
Recreational Therapy Management & Organization
Recreational Therapy Analysis & Assessment

THE CURRICULUM

Classes at VWU are small and interactive. Recreational therapy majors learn about a variety of disabling conditions, assessment skills, treatment interventions, and management and organization. Students are also required to study anatomy and physiology, psychology, and allied health courses. Opportunities for volunteering in various settings are infused within the coursework to provide multiple opportunities.

INTERNSHIPS

All students complete a final-semester internship, working with a faculty advisor to select an internship that mirrors their interests during a senior-level internship preparation course. The senior internship is with an employer of their choice and under the direct supervision of a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS). This experience gives the student a competitive edge as they transition from college to the workplace or graduate studies. Students also have an opportunity to complete a junior internship—another practical experience to enhance their skills and experience.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Graduates typically secure employment in health care agencies (hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, long-term care), schools, correctional institutions, community recreation and park settings, and adapted sports programs. Students may sit for the national certification exam during their last semester and may graduate as a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. Some students choose to enter graduate school to study fields such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language pathology.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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