

**Graduate Programs in
Parks, Recreation, and Tourism:
General Information from the Graduate Bulletin**

**A Student Guide for the Successful Planning and
Fulfillment of a Graduate Degree in
Parks, Recreation, and Tourism**



**Revised and Updated
August 2020**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1: INTRODUCTION.....	3
Overview	3
Graduate Faculty (Areas of Expertise).....	3
Career Line Faculty.....	4
Degrees Offered.....	4
Assumptions About Graduate Education	4
Section 2: FINANCIAL AID AND TEACHING/RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS	5
ASSISTANTSHIPS	5
Qualifications for Assistantships	5
Assistantship/Class Load Requirements	5
Clarification of Assistantship Funding.....	6
Application for Assistantships	6
Section 3: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS.....	6
Graduate School Admission Requirements.....	6
Departmental Admission Requirements.....	6
Application Materials and Dates.....	6
International Students Who Are Non-Native Speakers of English.....	7
Section 4: ACADEMIC ADVISING FOR NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS.....	7
Section 5: REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS	7
Continuous Registration.....	7
Leaves of Absence	8
Transfer Credit.....	8
Eligible Course Numbers	8
Residency Requirement.....	9
Time Limit.....	9
Time Limit on Final Edits	9
Grade Requirements.....	10
Section 6: PROGRESS TOWARD DEGREE COMPLETION AND DISMISSAL	10
Appendix A: QUALITY LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS FOR EVALUATION OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS.....	12
Appendix B: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION	16
Appendix C: PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALLING REQUIREMENTS	17
CERTIFIED PARK AND RECREATION PROFESSIONAL (CPRP).....	17

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

The Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism offers the following graduate degrees in parks, recreation, and tourism: Master of Science, Master of Philosophy, and Doctor of Philosophy. Requirements for these degrees, along with associated policies and procedures are explained in detail in their respective sections. Programs are individualized as much as possible with consideration given to prior experience of the student and future needs and interests.

The Parks, Recreation, and Tourism curriculum offers the opportunity to study the leisure phenomenon in general, as well as topics related to the park, recreation, and tourism profession. As such, courses are offered in Community Recreation, Park Management, Sustainable Tourism, Outdoor Adventure, and in Experiential Education. Numerous recreation businesses and public agencies support the curriculum by serving on an advisory council and by providing opportunities for student internships and employment.

GRADUATE FACULTY (AREAS OF EXPERTISE)

Kelly Bricker, Ph.D., Professor (Sustainable Tourism)

*David M. Compton, Ed.D., Professor Emeritus (Leisure & Health, Physical Activity)

Daniel Dustin, Ph.D., Professor (Wilderness Policy, Outdoor Recreation, Environmental Ethics)

Camilla Hodge, Ph.D., Assistant Professor (Leisure & Family Relationships, Human Development, Leisure & Well-being)

*Karen Paisley, Ph.D., Associate Professor (Experiential Education, Youth Development, Leisure Behavior)

Edward J. Ruddell, Ph.D., Associate Professor (Environmental Interpretation, Social Psychology of Leisure, Scenic Beauty)

Dorothy (Dart) Schmalz, Ph.D., Associate Professor (Leisure Behavior, Health, & Well-being, Prejudice & Justice, Social Psychology)

Jim Sibthorp, Ph.D., Professor (Youth Development, Adventure & Outdoor Education)

Mary S. Wells, Ph.D., Associate Professor, (Sport Management, Community Recreation Programming)

*May not be actively accepting graduate advisees.

CAREER LINE FACULTY

Nathan Bricker, M.S., Co-coordinator, U-Explore

Nate Furman, Ph.D., Assistant Professor –Lecturer (Outdoor Recreation & Education)

Kirk Nichols, MPhil., Assistant Professor (Outdoor Recreation)

Jeff Rose, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Lecturer (Visitor Use Management, Homelessness, Outdoor Education)

Preston Tanner, M.S., Lecturer, Internship Coordinator, Online Program Coordinator (Sport Management, Community Recreation)

DEGREES OFFERED

The Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism offers four graduate degree options. The degrees and the minimum hours required for each degree are listed below. The exact number of hours and the specific courses to be taken are **determined through consultation with the student's supervisory committee**. These are dependent upon a number of factors, such as experience, student's need and interests, academic background, recommendations, and length of time since previous degree.

The **minimum** number of semester hours for each degree is as follows:

Master of Science

Thesis option 36 hours beyond B.S. or B.A.

Non-thesis (professional option) 36 hours beyond B.S. or B.A.

Master of Philosophy 56 hours beyond M.S. or M.A.

Doctor of Philosophy 67 hours beyond M.S. or M.A.

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT GRADUATE EDUCATION

Following are a set of assumptions about the desired outcomes of study in masters and doctoral programs in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism.

1. Graduates should, first and foremost, be educated individuals. They should be capable of recognizing, directing, coping effectively with and managing uncertainty and diversity in a changing society. They should be capable of speaking and writing effectively in general and about PRT and related fields specifically. They should operate from a continually growing and dynamic knowledge base that enables them to make effective decisions.
2. Graduates of the doctoral and master's programs should be capable of assuming professional leadership positions in addressing concerns and issues faced by the parks, recreation, and tourism field.

3. Graduates with master's degrees should have "professional preparation" that enables them to assume supervisory level positions in leisure service agencies.
4. Graduates with master's degrees should be sufficiently prepared to benefit from advanced studies at the doctoral level.
5. Graduates with doctoral degrees should be capable of effective teaching, scholarship, and research in higher education settings.
6. Graduates with doctoral degrees should have special professional preparation that qualifies them for high level line and staff positions in park, recreation, and tourism service agencies.
7. Graduates with doctoral degrees should be able to interpret, analyze, and evaluate leisure phenomena from the perspective of at least one other discipline.

SECTION 2: FINANCIAL AID AND TEACHING/RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

ASSISTANTSHIPS

Stipends for teaching/research assistants are available for nine-month appointments; compensation depends upon experience, recommendations, qualifications, and funding source. Additional funding is often available for teaching/research assistants seeking summer teaching opportunities. Teaching/research assistants hired at .50 FTE (20 hours/week) will be exempt from tuition fees (not including the activity card fees or other student fees which may be charged). See tuition benefits program at <https://gradschool.utah.edu/tbp/> for additional details, restrictions, and limitations. Teaching responsibilities will typically be three to six credit hours per week and/or include other comparable responsibilities such as assisting faculty research or other assigned duties, as determined by the department chair. Other assistantship positions involve responsibilities in other units on campus or with local leisure service agencies. Teaching and research assistants are expected to fulfill all rules and regulations pertaining to regular faculty members.

Qualifications for Assistantships

Factors such as grade point average, recommendations, and previous academic and work experience will be considered in awarding teaching and research assistantships. Other factors being equal, doctoral students are given preference over master's students.

Assistantship/Class Load Requirements

Teaching and research assistants must pursue an approved course of study leading to an advanced degree with a major emphasis within the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Graduate students receiving a .50 FTE stipend (20 hours/week) may not be employed elsewhere on campus. Other employment on campus would invalidate the tuition waiver.

Clarification of Assistantship Funding

Students on Funding from Sources External to the Department

As these positions are funded at the behest of a specific faculty member or agency that secured/provided the funding, they are available to students at either M.S. or Ph.D. level and during any year of study. Duties are to be determined by the faculty member and/or agency providing the funding. These positions are usually renewable on a semester or annual basis and are dependent on both continuity of this external funding and satisfaction of the parties involved. Students will, however, need to comply with graduate eligibility for tuition waivers which is largely based on tenure in the program, credit hour minimums, and level of the funding. Examples of such positions are stipend arrangements with community partners, University Teaching/Research Assistantships (UTA), or work on grants or contracts.

Application for Assistantships

We assume that students want assistantships if they are available. If you do not want to be considered for any assistantship opportunities, please let us know.

SECTION 3: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students seeking further information on graduate school admission requirements may want to visit the University of Utah Graduate School website at <https://gradschool.utah.edu/>, 310 Park Building, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.

DEPARTMENTAL ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Graduate School policy prohibits any department from denying admission to graduate students based solely on the criterion of the applicant holding a previous degree from the University of Utah. It is the practice of graduate faculty within the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, however, to strongly encourage individuals who complete Master of Science degrees in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism at the University of Utah, who wish to pursue advanced study at the doctoral level, to consider applying for studies at another university. This practice is based on the strong belief of faculty that diversity of views and interests is of central importance of graduate education at the doctoral level. This diversity can best be achieved through study at separate institutions for masters and doctoral degrees.

Application Materials and Dates

Applications of all master's students will be considered collectively after materials are due March 1 of each year. Applications for doctoral students are considered collectively after materials are due January 15th of each year. New students will be admitted for the Fall semester of each year.

All applicants for graduate degrees in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism must submit the following to be considered for admission:

1. Completed University Graduate Application Form and Fee.

2. Transcripts of all previous academic work, including completion of baccalaureate degree.
3. Three personal reference forms (submitted by references).
4. Resume of work experience.
5. Essay response to the admission examination question. See website for further details.
6. Graduate Record Exam (or equivalent) test score.
7. A minimum score on English proficiency (TOEFL or IELTS) is required by the University of Utah Graduate School of all applicants who are non-native speakers of English. Applicants who are non-native speakers of English should also read the section entitled "International students who are non-native speakers of English" (below) concerning their application.

All information can be submitted electronically through the online application system.

International Students Who Are Non-Native Speakers of English

All individuals who are admitted to graduate study in the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism and who are non-native speakers of English may be required to complete the English "Placement Examination" that is offered through the English Language Institute and to complete the courses that are recommended based on the results of that test.

SECTION 4: ACADEMIC ADVISING FOR NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS

Following acceptance, new graduate students should contact either their identified advisor or the Director of Graduate Studies to discuss scheduling of course work. This advisor will assist the student with direction related to any required prerequisite coursework as well as required courses. Graduate advisors have the authority to approve both prerequisite courses and up to 50% of the area of concentration classes. Before this limit is reached, students should form a supervisory committee. Students should be aware that subsequent (> 50%) classes taken without approval of the student's supervisory committee may not be accepted on the Program of Study plan. Students should review the faculty profiles available through the [departmental web site](#). It is also advisable to meet with selected faculty to discuss mutual research interests or expertise that may be compatible with the student's goals when forming a committee.

SECTION 5: REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION

All students must maintain continuous registration

- This is met by registering for a minimum of one graduate level course each fall and spring semester from semester of admission through semester of the final defense.
- Registration during summer semester is not required

- Students who do not maintain continuous registration will be required to re-apply to the University
- Students may also take an official leave of absence for either 1 or 2 semesters. Such requests must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies or Department chair.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Except for the summer semester, graduate students must maintain continuous enrollment in consecutive semesters until their degrees are completed. Leave of absence requests must be made during the semester that precedes the semester during which the student intends to be absent and the student must be enrolled during that semester.

Students who wish to discontinue their studies for one or more semesters may request a leave of absence from the Department's Director of Graduate Studies, which may be granted subject to the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School in the following circumstances:

1. Leaves of absence will generally be granted and reviewed on a yearly basis for reasons relating to illness, military service, pregnancy and/or child care, or residence outside the state of Utah.
2. Leaves may also be granted and reviewed on a yearly basis to students who, in the judgment of the Director of Graduate Studies, are engaged in work considered beneficial to their academic goals, such as temporary teaching or professional positions or employment which will ultimately allow the student to complete the degree.
3. Leaves for other reasons may be granted and reviewed on a yearly basis when the Director of Graduate Studies believes the leave is in the best interest of both the student and the University.

TRANSFER CREDIT

The University allows students to transfer a total of 6 *graduate credits* from another University. The following must be met for a student to transfer credits toward his/her degree requirements:

- Credits cannot have been used in the completion of a previous degree
- A grade of "B" or higher must have been earned in the transferred course(s)
- Credits must have been earned at an accredited college or university, as determined by the University
- The transferred credits must have been earned in the equivalent of a 5000-level course or higher at the University of Utah
- The student's supervisory committee must approve of the transferred courses

ELIGIBLE COURSE NUMBERS

- All courses counted toward graduate degrees at the University should be at the 6000-level or higher

- Courses taken below the 6000-level may be taken, and may be required if deficiencies must be met
- 5000-level courses may be applied toward the degree upon supervisory committee approval
- Courses below the 5000-level may not be applied toward graduation
- Courses below the 5000-level will not be paid by the tuition benefit program

When thesis (6970) or dissertation (7970) hours are taken alone, without any other courses, the tuition for these courses is charged at the in-state rate.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

- All doctoral students must have two, back-to-back semesters of 9 credit hours of registration to demonstrate residency in Utah
- Any graduate student who has completed 40 credit hours at the University may apply for residency in the State of Utah (most applicable to doctoral students, especially those on extramurally funded research assistant positions, which only cover non-resident tuition for the first 84 credit hour).
- Applications for residency must be submitted to the Graduate Admissions Office and supported by evidence of living in Utah, such as
 - Utah driver's license, utility bills with Utah address, Utah car registration, Utah bank account, etc.

TIME LIMIT

- The time limit for completing the Ph.D. is seven consecutive calendar years from the date of matriculation into the program
- All work for the master's degree must be completed within four consecutive calendar years.
- Formal requests for extension of this time period must be made through a written proposal to the graduate faculty within the **Department** of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Proposals must include (1) a statement of commitment to completion of the program, (2) a detailed plan of how the program will be completed, and, (3) a time line of tasks to be completed. The plan for extension should be limited to a one year period of time. Only in rare circumstances will plans that exceed one calendar year be approved.

TIME LIMIT ON FINAL EDITS

All final edits to theses or dissertations must be completed as soon as possible and no longer than one calendar year from the date of the defense. Students who have not submitted their thesis or dissertation document with the appropriate forms to the thesis office within a calendar year will need to repeat their final oral defense and may be required to retake or update any coursework that is over seven year old at the time of this rescheduled defense.

GRADE REQUIREMENTS

- The University requires all graduate students to maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0. Students who do not maintain this GPA
 - Cannot receive a tuition waiver
 - Will lose support from any type of assistantship
 - Will be placed on academic probation
- A grade of D+ or lower cannot be counted toward the completion of a graduate degree.
- MS students in the non-thesis option who earn any C grade in a required course for their academic program will be required to write a comprehensive exam question on that content area. Alternatively, the course may be re-taken.

SECTION 6: PROGRESS TOWARD DEGREE COMPLETION AND DISMISSAL

Each graduate student will be required to submit an annual progress report to the Director of Graduate Studies each spring. The faculty will use this report to assess adequate progress and to provide feedback to the student, either via the student's academic advisor or the Director of Graduate Studies. Reporting generally follows the checklists for MS and Ph.D. degree completion.

CRITERIA FOR DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Doctoral students may be dismissed from the program for failure to achieve any of the following:

1. Maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0
2. Officially register documentation of a supervisory committee and supervisory committee chair by the end of their 5th semester as a doctoral student.
3. Continuously maintain an official advisor and/or supervisory committee from the time of official registration through completion of the program.
4. Pass qualifying exams by the time they have completed 60 credit hours in the doctoral program.
5. Make acceptable progress toward the degree as determined by the majority of the supervisory committee.
6. Adhere to the student responsibilities as outlined in [University of Utah policy 6-400](#).
7. Successfully propose their dissertation research study by the end of their 8th semester as a doctoral student.

Master's students may be dismissed from the program for failure to achieve any of the following:

1. Maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0
2. Officially register documentation of a supervisory committee and supervisory committee chair by the end of their 3rd semester as a master's student.
3. Continuously maintain an official advisor and supervisory committee from the time of official registration through completion of the program.
4. Make acceptable progress toward the degree as determined by the supervisory committee.
5. Adhere to the student responsibilities as outlined in [University of Utah policy 6-400](#).
6. Successfully propose their project or thesis research study by the end of their 4th semester as a master's student.

Dismissal of a student from the program will be carried out in compliance with [University of Utah Policy 6-400](#).

APPENDIX A: QUALITY LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS FOR EVALUATION OF THESES AND DISSERTATIONS

Introduction Section(s)

EXCELLENT

Excellent development and presentation of the rationale for the research. Logical flow of positions, excellent topic sentences and use of transitions between paragraphs, clear purpose statement. Exceptionally well supported by PRT citations from the literature. Virtually free from spelling, grammar, and reference citation errors.

ACCEPTABLE

Good development and presentation of the rationale for the research. Logical arrangement of topics, but may be lacking in terms of transitions and some topic sentences. Adequate support from the literature for positions advanced. Minor errors in spelling, grammar, and/or reference citations.

UNACCEPTABLE

Poor development and presentation of the rationale for the research. Little evidence of a logical flow of positions pointing to the need for the study. Inadequate literature based support for positions. Major errors in spelling, grammar, and/or use of reference citations.

Literature Review and Synthesis Section(s)

EXCELLENT

Excellent work characterized by logical organization, thorough coverage of all PRT topics, and detailed descriptions of studies reviewed with synthesis of major themes and positions. Effective use of topic sentences and transitions, full development and defense of positions, and absence of spelling, grammar, and reference citation errors.

ACCEPTABLE

Good work, characterized by adequate coverage of major topics, fairly detailed descriptions of studies reviewed, and a degree of synthesis of major themes and positions. Good writing with identifiable topic sentences and transitions. Minor errors in spelling, grammar, and/or reference citations.

UNACCEPTABLE

Poor work, characterized by unclear writing, unacceptable depth of literature review, little detail in describing individual studies, and lack of synthesis of major themes and positions. Major errors in spelling, grammar, and/or use of reference citations.

Method Section(s)

EXCELLENT

Exceptionally well written, including sufficient detail to enable a reader to replicate the study. Includes complete descriptions of characteristics of the sample and near absence of errors in grammar, spelling, and use of reference citations.

ACCEPTABLE

Well written, but some details are lacking that would make replication difficult. A description of characteristics of the sample is included. Minor errors in spelling, grammar, and/or use of reference citations.

UNACCEPTABLE

Poorly written, characterized by lack of detail in procedures, unclear writing, and poor editing. Major errors in spelling, grammar, and/or use of reference citations.

Results Section(s)

EXCELLENT

Exceptionally thorough, well organized, and well written. Appropriate use of subheadings. Attention to consistency of data with assumptions of statistical tests, detailed and thoughtful examination of hypothesis tests and/or tests of strength of relationships between or among variables. Very effective use of tables and figures to summarize results. Near absence of errors in grammar, spelling, and use of reference citations.

ACCEPTABLE

Good summary of results. Includes basic description of tests of assumptions and hypothesis tests. Appropriate use of figures, tables, and subheadings. Minor errors in spelling, grammar, and/or use of reference citations.

UNACCEPTABLE

Poor summary of results, lacking in organization and detail. Major errors in spelling, grammar, and/or use of reference citations.

Discussion Section(s)

EXCELLENT

Exceptionally thorough and thoughtful discussion. Includes succinct summary of results, thoughtful and extensive integration with previous literature, discussion of limitations, directions for future research, practical applications (if appropriate), and other appropriate topics. Characterized by excellent writing, with exceptional use of topic sentences and transitions, and logical flow and full development of arguments. Near absence of errors in grammar, spelling, and use of reference citations.

ACCEPTABLE

Good, complete discussion section. Addresses all of the major components (summary, integration, limitations, directions for future research, applications), but does not show the rigor of "A" level work in this area. Minor errors in spelling, grammar, and/or use of reference citations.

UNACCEPTABLE

Poorly prepared discussion section. Major components may either be not addressed or addressed only in a most superficial way. Little evidence of rigorous conceptual work in interpreting and integrating the research. Little, if any, suggestions for future research. Major errors in spelling, grammar, and/or use of reference citations.

References List

EXCELLENT

Absence of errors in spelling, consistency with text, and use of APA format.

ACCEPTABLE

A few minor errors in spelling, consistency with text, and use of APA format.

UNACCEPTABLE

Major errors in spelling, consistency with text, and use of APA format.

Oral Defense Presentation

EXCELLENT

Exceptional presentation, including use of well constructed slides representing each of the major components of the project: Introduction/rationale/purpose/hypotheses, method, results, discussion.

ACCEPTABLE

Good presentation, including use of slides, top quality transparencies, or other visual aids. A few problems with quality, accuracy, or completeness.

UNACCEPTABLE

Poor presentation with no slides used. Major problems with exclusion of important topics and/or lack of clarity.

Oral Defense

EXCELLENT

Responses to questions showed exceptional understanding of the student's own research as well as the supporting literature. Thoughtful, rigorous discussion of questions raised.

ACCEPTABLE

Responses to questions show acceptable level of understanding of the student's research and some degree of understanding of the supporting literature. The student is able to adequately answer questions, but may be lacking in terms of ability to provide PRT elaboration.

UNACCEPTABLE

Marginally acceptable defense. Student has limited understanding of related literature and the significance of his or her own research. The student is unable to provide acceptable answers to some questions posed by committee members.

APPENDIX B: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The University of Utah is fully committed to policies of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination. This position is affirmed by the policy statement below:

The University of Utah is fully committed to policies of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination. Accordingly, the University pursues a vigorous program of affirmative action in all its classifications of employment in order to prevent any form of discrimination, harassment or prejudicial treatment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or status as a handicapped individual, disabled veteran, or veteran of the Vietnam era. All University administrative and supervisory personnel are required in turn to assure that this policy will be furthered by imposing only valid requirements for employment decisions and for promotional opportunities and to see that all personal actions, such as compensations, benefits, transfers, layoffs, institutional sponsored training, education, tuition assistance, social and recreational programs, will be instituted and administered so as to comply with the standards of fairness and nondiscrimination which are the basis for the Equal Opportunity Policy.

Each administrative and supervisory officer of the University exercising personnel management functions personally shares responsibility for the implementation of this policy. Under the direction of the central administration, the University will continue to evaluate and upgrade its reporting and monitoring procedures as an essential means of assuring compliance. The Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity for the University reports directly to the president and is assigned direct staff responsibility for assisting the line officers in the implementation of this policy and for programs related to it.

Members of the University community are expected to familiarize themselves with the University's Affirmative Action Program and to further its objective in ways consistent with the University policies and procedures.

APPENDIX C: PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALLING REQUIREMENTS

A university education often provides opportunities for individuals to pursue credentials that are necessary or desirable for their professional responsibilities. Many types of credentials are related to the various branches of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Perhaps the most common of these is the "Certified Park and Recreation Professional" program administered by the National Recreation and Park Association.

CERTIFIED PARK AND RECREATION PROFESSIONAL (CPRP)

The CPRP is administered by the [National Recreation and Park Association \(NRPA\)](#). A written examination is required. Graduates of accredited programs in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism are qualified to sit for the examination. Graduates of non-accredited programs in higher education may sit for the examination after they have completed two years of full-time employment in a Parks, Recreation, and Tourism service agency. Additional information about the CPRP program may be obtained by contacting NRPA.