WCU Parks & Recreation Management Essay Instructions

In order to assist us in helping you with your major in Parks and Recreation Management, we would like you to put some thoughts in writing for us. This essay will not be graded, but it will be used in assigning an advisor to your program and will be used during your strategic planning. Your essay should include:

Part 1 – Your past experiences.
What experiences in your past have brought you to Parks and Recreation Management as a major? Examples: your parents introduced you to the outdoors, you attended camp as a child, you have worked during the summer with your local recreation park, your parents visited national parks or forests, you enjoy a variety of outdoor activities, you were a boy/girl scout when you were growing up, you enjoy participating and helping others lead a healthy lifestyle, etc.

Part 2 – Goal or goals.
What goal or goals would you like to achieve in the Parks and Recreation Management field? Which PRM focus area do you have the most interest in (see page 2 for descriptions)? Where do you see yourself working some day? Examples: you always wanted to work in a community recreation program, you would like to work in a national park or state park, you would like to lead others in outdoor recreation activities, you want to work with youth in a sport or fitness setting, etc.

Part 3 – Strategies.
What strategies will help you to achieve your goals? Examples: classes you should take in the major, focus area, and as electives, summer jobs that would benefit you, internships or volunteer positions that you should explore, involvement in PRM club or other organizations on campus, experience through Base Camp Cullowhee or the Campus Recreation Center, involvement in off campus organizations and conferences, membership in professional organizations and groups, certifications you plan to acquire.

Part 4 – Summarize.
How do you want to proceed? What questions do you currently have for your new advisor? Is there anything else your PRM advisor needs to be aware of to support you in this degree? Are you ready to start taking classes in your focus area or do you need to try out a variety to see which one fits your goals the best? If you could summarize why you want to be a PRM major in one sentence, do so here.

Key Points to Remember:
1. Please type your essay. Make sure you check for spelling, grammatical, and sentence structure errors. This essay reflects your writing style and ability. Comprehensive, critical writing is a skill that all PRM professionals need to be proficient in.
2. Include any references that you used to gather your information for the essay. Please use APA formatting when citing.
3. Be professional, yet let us see (read) your personality, your interests, what are you passionate about, why do you want to be in this major, etc.
4. Complete the essay in a timely manner so you can be ready to meet with your PRM advisor to create your strategic plan.
PRM Program Focus Areas

1. **Community Recreation:**
   This focus area is designed for students who would like to work in the city, county recreation profession. Job duties would include planning community sporting activities (soccer, baseball, football, basketball), assisting with community events and celebrations, working in a community recreation center. Students should consider taking courses in parks and recreation management, health and physical education, business, sport management, and recreational therapy.

2. **Outdoor Leadership and Instruction:**
   This focus area is designed for students who are interested in working in outdoor professional areas. Job possibilities include working for outdoor agencies, camps, boy and girl scouts, challenge courses, and experiential programs. Students should consider taking courses in parks and recreation, business and recreation therapy, and participating in an extended expedition style course.

3. **Commercial and Resort Recreation:**
   This focus area is designed for students interested in working the “for profit” areas of recreation. Job possibilities include resorts, recreation businesses, snow sports, retail establishments and park areas. Students may also be interested in exploring their own commercial recreation business. Students should consider taking courses in parks and recreation, business, entrepreneurship, hospitality and tourism, accounting, and management.

4. **Recreation Resource Management:**
   This focus area is designed for students interested in working for various land agencies such as the National Park Service, National Forest Service, Army Corps of Engineers, and state parks. Courses will be selected in consultation with your advisor.

5. **Community Health and Wellness:**
   This focus area is designed for students interested in providing health promotion programming to the community. Students may find employment in recreation departments, health departments, local government, schools and national organizations. Students should consider taking course work in parks and recreation, sport management, health and physical education, environmental health, nutrition and political science.