

Western Carolina University
College of Health and Human Sciences
School of Health Sciences

Recreational Therapy B.S. Degree Program

STUDENT HANDBOOK:

A Student Guide for Recreational Therapy Majors



The Recreational Therapy Program was the first Recreational Therapy degree program in the United States. It is recognized for quality education in recreational therapy by professionals and educators throughout the country. In 2007, the Recreational Therapy B.S. Degree Program became a pilot program in the WCU Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The Program continues to distinguish itself and to offer excellent learning opportunities to students, alumni and professionals.

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General Information

The B.S. in Recreation Therapy consists of 120 hours including Liberal Studies requirements (42 hours), the recreational therapy major of 71 hours including recreational therapy and supportive coursework, and electives (7 to 14 hours).

The Recreational Therapy offices are located in 186 Belk Annex. Recreational Therapy faculty members are:

Dr. Peg Connolly, LRT/CTRS, Program Director [mconnolly@email.wcu.edu]

Dr. Jennifer Hinton, LRT/CTRS [jlhinton@email.wcu.edu]

Mr. Glenn Kastrinos, LRT/CTRS [gkastrinos@email.wcu.edu]

Mission Statement

The Recreational Therapy Program at WCU, a nationally recognized curriculum, provides an engaging, service-based environment wherein students collaborate with faculty to become intentional, life-long learners who develop the knowledge, skills and abilities for competent practice.

Unique strengths of the Recreational Therapy (RT) Program at WCU are:

- ★ Students complete specialized recreational therapy coursework in
 - Geriatrics
 - Behavioral Health
 - Physical Rehabilitation
 - Adventure Based Recreational Therapy

- ★ Significant investment in student academic success, personal and professional development, and skill acquisition
- ★ Strong encouragement for student development of professional identity as evidenced by activity of campus Recreational Therapy Association, student and faculty attendance and participation at state and national annual meetings and conferences, and stated expectations in student handbook
- ★ Full commitment to the University Quality Enhancement Program (QEP) with designation of two service learning courses (RTH 360 RT for Older Adults and RTH 470 Adventure Based RT) and service learning integration into two other courses (RTH 200 Foundations of RT and RTH 405 Behavioral Health in RT).
- ★ Development of a comprehensive model of student assessment beyond basic outcome data that includes the use of trend analysis.
- ★ Inclusion of professional portfolio requirement as a means of tracking student development and achievement.
- ★ Well designed curriculum that is aligned with national guidelines (ATRA and NCTRC)

- ★ Utilization of national certification exam pass rates and evaluation report to monitor student performance and modify current course offerings.

The WCU Recreational Therapy Curriculum is one of the academic degree programs in the School of Health Sciences, College of Health and Human Sciences. The mission of the College of Health and Human Sciences is to offer quality education for a variety of professional careers. In fulfilling this role, the college provides undergraduate and graduate educational programs in Cullowhee and Asheville. The faculty of the college engages in instruction, research, and service. The primary activity of the faculty of the college is teaching. Quality undergraduate and graduate education is provided for a diverse student population through student-faculty involvement, which promotes creativity and critical thinking. Complementary faculty activities include providing individualized student advisement, service, continuing education opportunities, maintaining currency in areas of expertise, active involvement in professional organizations, and scholarly activities including research, creative activities, presentations, and publications.

The mission of the recreational therapy curriculum is linked to and is a reflection of both the mission of the College of Health and Human Sciences and the teaching and learning goals that constitute the central mission of Western Carolina University, to create a community of scholarship in which the activities of its members are consistent with the highest standards of knowledge and practice in their disciplines.

Goals & Objectives

The overall goals of the WCU RT B.S. Degree Program is **“To prepare competent entry-level recreational therapists in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains.”** This goal is accomplished in several ways through specific objectives followed by the Program.

Within the QEP, WCU has established five overall learning outcomes for students. These are core skills, behaviors and outcomes that are central to student development as *integrated and intentional learners*. These five core skills and behaviors are integrated throughout recreational therapy courses and liberal studies courses at the university. Therefore, students are encouraged accomplish the following skills and behaviors:

1. **INTEGRATES INFORMATION FROM A VARIETY OF CONTEXTS**: students will make connections between personal interest and abilities, liberal studies, your major, general electives and experiential learning opportunities and other co-curricular activities and relate the implications/value of these connections to 'real world' scenarios.
2. **SOLVES COMPLEX PROBLEMS**: students will identify the dimensions of complex issues or problems, analyze and evaluate multiple sources of information/data, apply knowledge and decision-making processes to new questions or issues, and reflects on the implications of their solution/decision.
3. **COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY AND RESPONSIBLY**: students will convey complex information in a variety of formats and contexts, identify intended audience and communicate appropriately and respectfully.
4. **PRACTICE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**: students will identify their roles and responsibilities as engaged citizens by considering the public policies that affect their choices and actions, by recognizing commonalities and interdependence of diverse views/values, and by acting responsibly to positively affect public policy.

5. **CLARIFY AND ACT ON PURPOSE AND VALUES:** students will examine the values that influence their own decision making processes, take responsibility for their own learning and develop in a manner consistent with academic integrity and their own goals and aspirations, intentionally use knowledge gained from learning experiences to make informed judgments about their future plans, and bring those plans into action.

The specific learning objectives for recreational therapy majors are:

1. **Educational Goal #1: Recreational therapy majors develop foundational knowledge for professional practice.**

- **Student outcome** in foundational knowledge for recreational therapy practice— The student applies principles related to recreation, leisure, and play behavior, human growth and development across the lifespan, and principles of anatomy, physiology and kinesiology, applying human behavioral change principles to clients from a variety of populations including cognitive, physical, mental, and emotional disabling conditions and illness in either group or individual interactions, with awareness of current legislation, relevant guidelines and standards.

- **Educational experiences for attaining goal**

- Lecture/discussion courses RTH 200, 350, 360, 370, 417
COUN 325, 430, HSCC 220, PSY 470, BIOL 291, BIOL 292, PE 423
- Service learning/delivery RTH 360, 370, 470
- Creative projects RTH 350, 417, 370
- Research projects RTH 350, 360, 417

2. **Educational Goal #2: Recreational therapy majors develop professional skills to practice in service delivery.**

- **Student outcomes** — Students demonstrate the ability to assess, plan, implement, evaluate, and document appropriate recreational therapy services based individual client needs in a variety of healthcare settings and to do so adhering to Standards of Practice and the Code of Ethics.

- **Educational experiences for attaining goal**

- Lecture/discussion courses RTH 350, , 352, 360, 370, 401, 470
- Service delivery projects RTH 360
- Clinical internship RTH 484/485

3. **Educational Goal #3: Recreational therapy majors develop the ability to organize professional services for clients.**

- **Student outcomes** — Student demonstrate the application of sound organizational and administrative skills for the practice of therapeutic recreation including budgeting, fiscal and facility management, continuous quality improvement, documentation, evaluation, and are able to work as a functioning member of the interdisciplinary healthcare treatment team.

- **Educational experiences for attaining goal**

- Lecture/discussion courses RTH , 352, 401, 417
- Group projects RTH 417
- Clinical internship RTH 484/485

4. **Educational Goal #4: Recreational therapy majors acquire the skills necessary to participate as a practicing professional in the advancement of the profession.**

- **Student outcomes** — Students engage in professional organizations, prepare a professional resume and portfolio, are able to apply for national certification prior to graduation, and have the ability to gain state licensure and apply for a professional position upon receipt of the baccalaureate degree.

- **Educational experiences for attaining goal**

- Lecture/discussion courses RTH 395, 417, 484, 485

Quality Enhancement Plan for Recreational Therapy

The WCU Quality Enhancement Plan is described as follows:

“*Synthesis: A Pathway to Intentional Learning at Western Carolina University* initiates new and enhances current connections among existing programs to create a more holistic approach to educating students. WCU faculty and staff recognize that a major challenge of higher education is the need for students to synthesize their curricular and co-curricular (outside of courses) college experiences. The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) uses *synthesis* – the ability to integrate knowledge from different areas into an original whole – as the driving framework for teaching and learning. This emphasis on synthesis enhances students’ educational journey and helps prepare them for life beyond college.” (WCU QEP, 2007, p. 1, retrieved on 2/1/08 from <http://www.wcu.edu/SACS/QEP/QEP-2-7-07-revised.pdf>).

The recreational therapy degree program was selected for inclusion in the preliminary implementation of the QEP plan at WCU. This preliminary report will delineate plans to refine the RT curriculum to meet the learning goals and objectives of the QEP which include the following focus from the WCU QEP Plan:

“The overarching learning goal of the QEP is one where students will synthesize knowledge and skills from their academic and co-curricular experiences to become intentional participants in their own learning. Specifically, students will:

1. Identify their aptitudes, abilities, and interests and articulate their future goals and aspirations;
2. Modify behaviors and values in response to knowledge and skills gained from their academic and co-curricular experiences; and
3. Recognize the synthesis of their university experiences and evaluate those experiences relative to their future education and career goals.” (WCU QEP, 2007, pp. 1-2)

The RT program incorporates the spirit and principles of the WCU QEP for a holistic approach to providing recreational therapy majors with a synthesized learning experience focused on engagement and individualization.

What is a competent and qualified recreational therapy professional?

A competent and qualified recreational therapy professional meets the following standards according to the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification:

“Standards of Knowledge, Skills and Abilities for the CTRS

1. Possess knowledge of the theories and concepts of therapeutic recreation, leisure, social psychology, and human development as related to the nature and scope of health and human service delivery systems and the ability to integrate these in a variety of settings.
2. Possess an essential knowledge of the diversity of the populations including diagnostic groups served within the therapeutic recreation process, including etiology, symptomatology, prognosis, treatment of conditions and related secondary complications. Possess a basic understanding of and ability to use medical terminology.
3. have a thorough understanding of the assessment process utilized within therapeutic recreation practice including, but not limited to, purpose of assessment, assessment domain (including cognitive, social, physical, affective, leisure, background information), assessment procedures (including behavioral observation, interview, functional skills testing, a general understanding of current TR/leisure assessment instruments, inventories and questionnaires and other sources of commonly used multidisciplinary assessment tools, including standardized measures), selection of instrumentation, general procedures for implementation and the interpretation of findings.
4. Have a basic understanding of the published standards of practice for the profession of therapeutic recreation and the influence that such standards have on the program planning process.
5. Possess detailed knowledge of the intervention planning process, including program or treatment plan design and development, programming considerations, types of programs, nature and scope of interventions, and selection of programs to achieve the assessed needs and desired outcomes of the person served.
6. Possess basic knowledge related to the implementation of an individual intervention plan, including theory and application of modalities/interventions and facilitation techniques/approaches.
7. Have a fundamental knowledge of methods for documenting and evaluating persons served, programs, and agencies.
8. Possess a broad understanding of organizing and managing therapeutic recreation services including, but not limited to, the development of a written plan of operation and knowledge of external regulations, resource management, components of quality improvement, as well as basic understanding of staff/volunteer management.
9. be able to identify and understand the components of professional competency within the realm of therapeutic recreation practice, including requirements for certification, ethical practice, public relations, and the general advancement of the profession.
10. Possess fundamental knowledge of how the TR process is influenced by diversity and social environment.
11. Possess fundamental knowledge of assistive devices/equipment and activity modification techniques.

12. Possess fundamental knowledge of group interaction, leadership, and safety.”

The knowledge and skills for recreational therapy practice are defined in the National Job Analysis of the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) and form the basis for evaluation for eligibility and the content outline of the national certification exam (see Appendix A). The knowledge areas of the National Job Analysis are presented within recreational therapy academic coursework as well as service learning and internship experiences. The skill areas of the National Job Analysis are expressed primarily through the final clinical recreational therapy internship. This internship includes the successful completion of the didactic portion of their undergraduate education, a 480-hour clinical internship, and preparation for eligibility to sit for the national certification exam administered by NCTRC. Upon passage of the national exam and state licensure application, graduates of the WCU recreational therapy degree program are also eligible for licensure as a Recreational Therapist in the states of New Hampshire, and Utah.

Admission Requirements for the B.S. Degree in Recreational Therapy

There are specific admission requirements for all students entering the recreational therapy degree program. These requirements include an application process, development of a strategic plan, pre-test on recreational therapy knowledge, skills and abilities, and the maintenance of a minimum GPA of 2.5 throughout their studies in the major. All students are welcome to enroll in RTH 200 Foundations of Recreational Therapy to learn more about the major and help determine their interest in pursuing a degree in this field.

Recreational Therapy Program Admissions Process: Students may apply for admission to the major at anytime after becoming a student at WCU Admission to the Bachelor of Science degree in Recreational Therapy requires completion of the application for new majors. The recreational therapy admission application includes development of a strategic plan for undergraduate studies in recreational therapy, submission of a reflective essay on why the applicant is choosing to study recreational therapy, and completion of the recreational therapy pre-admission knowledge assessment. Application to the program does not assure acceptance. Students admitted to the program must earn a grade of C or better in each RTH course in the major and must maintain an overall GPA of 2.50 to remain in the program.

How Does a Student Apply for Recreational Therapy Program Admission? A prospective student should schedule an appointment with one of the three recreational therapy faculty members: Dr. Peg Connolly [mconnolly@email.wcu.edu]; Dr. Jennifer Hinton [jlhinton@email.wcu.edu]; or Mr. Glenn Kastrinos [gkastrinos@email.wcu.edu]. The faculty member will set up an appointment and go over the admissions process with the student. The student may then submit their completed admission materials and will be notified of the faculty decision.

Strategic Plan Required for Admission to the Recreational Therapy Program: The strategic plan covers co-curricular activities that will help the student develop professionally and gain valuable experiences in recreational therapy while completing their B. S. Degree at Western Carolina University. The Recreational Therapy Program is part of the WCU QEP Plan and, as such, engagement and service learning in co-curricular activities are critical to the student’s professional development. The strategies of student involvement in the WCU Recreational Therapy Association, the state and national recreational therapy associations, development of specialty skills related to practice, collateral certifications, service learning experiences, and potential study abroad are included.

Written Essay Required for Admission to the Recreational Therapy Program: This one page, single spaced paper should explain why the student is choosing to study recreational therapy. Resources and website information on the profession will be provided to the student to help them in preparing their reflective essay that explores their thoughts, personal experiences, and the reasons that have led them to choose this major.

Upon acceptance to the program, the student will complete a pre-admission knowledge test for recreational practice which will be provided online. This will help gauge the student's learning as they progress through their curricular and co-curricular experiences in the curriculum.

Minimum GPA Requirements: All recreational therapy majors must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5 to remain in the major. Students dropping below 2.5 will be placed on probation for one academic semester to bring their GPA up to or above the minimum 2.5 required. If the student's GPA does not meet or exceed 2.5 after a semester on probation, the student will be removed from the RT major and placed in the Pre-RT Major until such time as his/her GPA is brought back up to the minimum 2.5 required of all majors..

Information for Majors in the Recreational Therapy B.S. Degree Program

There are some underlying ideas that we would like you to consider very carefully once you are accepted as a major in the Recreational Therapy B.S. Degree Program, as they will help you get the most out of the recreational therapy program and enable you to get a good job once you graduate. These ideas are about *commitment, studying, involvement, time management, maturity and writing skills.*

Commitment

Attend all classes, turn up for meetings, be on time and get yourselves a good reputation amongst your fellow students and faculty. This will be reflected in any reference that you get from the faculty. Often prospective employers do call us. We have to be honest in our response, so make it easy for us to give out glowing praise. Also, you must attend class regularly and you need to arrive at class on or before the starting time. There is a strong correlation between good grades and class attendance. Additionally, you are preparing for a professional career in healthcare and it is expected that you have the commitment to your profession, your clients, and your colleagues. Attendance and arriving on time for scheduled events is a must. Each day in your major you will have opportunities to demonstrate your commitment and reliability. This is essential for a recreational therapy major and your behaviors will affect the type of clinical internship you are able to secure during your senior year.

Studying

Put in the time to complete projects on time and to study. Be serious about this. For the Recreational therapy program a 2.5 GPA is a requirement. This will require that you put in the time to study and complete projects satisfactorily. Don't aim for just scraping through with a B or C. Do your best in everything. We also suggest that you selectively buy some of your textbooks for reference material in the future. Passing the certification exam and your state licensure requirements at the end of your schooling is not a given so keeping resources is crucial to becoming an LRT/ CTRS (Licensed Recreational Therapist/Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist).

Involvement

All employers ask about this. They are looking for ‘go-getters’ who will be highly involved and show resourcefulness. They can tell how much you were involved during your undergraduate studies by reading your resume and references. So start building your resume early in your undergraduate studies by involving yourself in the Recreational Therapy Association (RTA), volunteering for service learning opportunities, and completing the highest quality class projects. Get involved. Be a member of RTA, go beyond service requirements of classes, spend as much time as possible with clients as you can, and read about our profession regularly.

Time Management

Start projects early. Library research takes time and you may want to request inter-library loan materials. Don’t expect that you can get these on short notice. Starting class projects and assignments early may also enable you to have a peer or faculty member review your work before you submit it. If you catch each other’s mistakes through good peer review and editing then everyone’s grades will go up. Do the readings for each class before that class period so you can ask intelligent questions on the readings. This will also help you to retain information more easily. Trying to cram for several courses the last week of the semester is an extremely poor practice as the amount of information will simply be too much for you to cope with. And remember, after you complete your studies, you still have to pass a national standardized exam. The materials you learn in your classes are the materials that will be covered on that national exam. So plan your time and your projects so you can get the most out of your studies.

Professional Writing

Peer review and edit each others’ work and do it honestly and in a forthright fashion. It would be better for you to catch each other with English/spelling/typo’s on your written communication. Unless you are really the expert with your English, then visit the WCU Writing Center for assistance. For many of your projects, you will have to make edits after your final grade so that the documents are suitable for your senior portfolio. You will put your portfolio of your artifacts and samples of your course work together before you go out to interview for your senior clinical internship and students bring their portfolios with them to these interviews. You do not want to present poor examples of your work in an internship interview. Poor writing samples may limit your opportunities to gain a good clinical internship, and, ultimately, a good job in the field. Having good writing skills makes less work later and increases your grades at the same time. The ability to write will only improve with continual feedback. It is also suggested to rewrite assignments using feedback from your professors to prepare the document for your portfolio. Accept feedback professionally and don’t take it personally.

You will be required throughout your studies in recreational therapy to format your papers according to **APA Guidelines**. If you are unfamiliar with APA Guidelines for writing papers and referencing, please go to the Writing Center and Hunter Library to learn about this system as soon as you are accepted into the major.

Remember: one of the five core learning outcomes of an education at WCU is to **COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY AND RESPONSIBLY**: students will convey complex information in a variety of formats and contexts, identify intended audience and communicate appropriately and respectfully.

Public Speaking

You will have a number of projects in Recreational Therapy and support coursework which require you to speak to the full class or a small group. See this as an opportunity to improve your communication skills which are so important in recreational therapy. Remember

Remember: one of the five core learning outcomes of an education at WCU is to **COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY AND RESPONSIBLY**: students will convey complex information in a variety of formats and contexts, identify intended audience and communicate appropriately and respectfully.

Maturity

As a major, you will be representing the Recreational Therapy Program and our profession in courses taught by other departments and in service learning situations. Your actions will reflect on the on all recreational therapists. Show your professors respect by being on time and acting like professionals. See yourself through their eyes. Appearance, dress and mannerisms can make a huge impression. You may be asking some of those professors for a reference and can only expect them to be truthful when they describe your professionalism to potential employers. Work hard and impress them.

Myths and Realities

Be prepared for fellow students, friends and relatives to ask what recreational therapy is. This can get old fast and may make you want to avoid the topic all together. Instead of feeling embarrassed or getting upset about it, take it as a challenge. Be proud and explain what recreational therapy is. How you present your major will definitely affect how others react to it. This is a good thing and will help you when clients ask you the same question. Recreational therapy is not an easy major and should be approached with energy and enthusiasm.

More Realities

You will learn about Recreational Therapy inside and outside the classroom. We highly encourage students to work on their own lifestyle issues during your university years. If you go out from the program with good grades, but don't live a lifestyle that reflects recreational therapy, it will be difficult to be effective in recreational therapy. You need to stay curious outside the classroom, maintain a healthy lifestyle, work on your communication skills, try new interventions/activities, lead groups, and volunteer as much as you can with people with disabilities. You need to read inside and outside our field from psychology to stories about people with disabilities to experts in various modalities and facilitation techniques. It is an information sharing age and anyone can learn from a variety of resources. Make time for this.

Minimum Requirements for Participation as a Recreational Therapy Major at WCU

Listed below are the minimum requirements for participation in the Western Carolina University Recreational Therapy B.S. Degree Program.

- The participant must be enrolled as a student at Western Carolina University.

- Students must be admitted to and enrolled in the Recreational Therapy Major within the School of Health Sciences in the College of Health and Human Sciences at Western Carolina University.
- Students must meet all additional requirements for admission as outlined under the section entitled “Admission Requirements for the B.S. Degree in Recreational Therapy” in this handbook.
- Students may choose to have more than one major while enrolled at Western Carolina University. However, more than four years may be required to complete the Recreational Therapy major in conjunction with another major or more than one minor or pre-requisites for various areas of graduate studies.
- Students must meet the academic requirements of the Recreational Therapy B.S. Degree Program, the School of Health Sciences, the College of Health and Human Sciences and Western Carolina University as outlined in this handbook and the Western Carolina University Undergraduate Catalog in effect at the time of your admission to the program.
- Students must meet the Technical Standards of the Recreational Therapy Program as stated in this handbook.
- Students must provide their own transportation to clinical education and service learning sites.

Recreational Therapy Technical Standards

The mission of the Recreational Therapy B.S. Degree Program at Western Carolina University is to prepare entry-level recreational therapists who can evaluate, manage, and treat the general population of mental health, geriatric, and rehabilitation clients in a variety of health care settings, by developing a sound conceptual foundation and professional preparation in the knowledge and skills necessary for competent practice in recreational therapy. Potential recreational therapists are expected to complete the academic and clinical requirements of the professional B.S. program in recreational therapy before they can sit for the certification examination and practice. The purpose of this document is to delineate the technical cognitive, psychomotor, and affective skills deemed essential to complete this program and to perform as a competent generalist in recreational therapy. Students will be required to sign and agree to abide by these Technical Standards each year of their undergraduate studies in Recreational Therapy at WCU.

If a student cannot demonstrate the following skills and abilities, it is the responsibility of the student to request an appropriate accommodation.

Cognitive Learning Skills:

The student must demonstrate the ability to:

1. Conceptualize a sequential progression of tasks and/or standardized testing and make objective conclusions based on the test results.
2. Apply critical thinking in the creation, development, generalization and implementation of adaptations to normative methods of behavior and function.
3. Select constructive activities suited to an individual's current physical capacity, intelligence level, and interest, so as to upgrade the individual to maximum independence, and assist in restoration of functions and/or aid in adjustment to disability.
4. Apply critical reasoning and independent decision-making skills.
5. Assess patient/client safety and maintain or create safe environments during specific tasks, to enhance patient/client independence in a variety of potential environments.

Psychomotor Skills

The student must demonstrate the following skills:

1. Sitting: Maintain upright posture.
2. Standing: Student-controlled activity employable during lecture, clinical instruction and laboratory time.
3. Locomotion ability to: a. get to lecture, lab and clinical locations, and move within rooms as needed for changing groups, partners and work stations; and b. physically maneuver in required clinical settings, to accomplish assigned tasks.
4. Manual tasks: Lifting ability sufficient to maneuver an individual's body parts effectively to perform evaluation and treatment techniques, to manipulate common tools used for screening tests and therapeutic intervention of the individual, to demonstrate the ability to safely and effectively guide and facilitate patient/client movement skills and motor patterns through physical facilitation, and to competently perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (C. P. R.) using guidelines issued by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross.
5. Gross motor ability to participate in recreational or movement activities that may involve tossing, catching, weight shifts, reaching, balancing on equipment, etc.
6. Small motor/hand skill usage ability to: a. legibly record/document evaluations, patient care notes, referrals, etc. in standard medical charts in hospital/clinical settings in a timely manner and consistent with the acceptable norms of clinical settings; b. demonstrate or

- complete activities or tests with adequate degree of fine motor dexterity; and c. legibly record thoughts for written assignments or tests.
7. Visual acuity to: a. Read patient/client charts or histories in hospital/clinical setting; and b. observe even the slightest aberrations of patient/client motor performance during tasks/tests.
 8. Hearing or ability to receive and: a. effectively respond to oral requests/instructions from patients and team members; and b. interpret the language used to communicate lectures, instructions, concepts, narratives, questions and answers.
 9. Communication ability to: a. effectively communicate with instructors, peers, and team members; and b. articulate detailed instructions to patients, caretakers, family or other clinical personnel.
 10. Self care ability to: a. maintain general good health and self care in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with whom one interacts in the academic and clinical settings; and b. arrange transportation and living accommodations for/during off-campus clinical assignments to foster timely reporting to classroom and clinical center.

Affective learning skills

The student must be able to:

1. Demonstrate appropriate, affective behaviors and mental attitudes to ensure the emotional, physical, mental, and behavioral safety of the patient/client in compliance with the ethical standards of the American Therapeutic Recreation Association.
2. Sustain the mental and emotional rigors of a demanding educational program in recreational therapy that includes academic and clinical components that occur within set time constraints, and often concurrently.
3. Acknowledge and respect individual values and opinions in order to foster harmonious working relationships with colleagues, peers, and patients/clients.

Check One Below:

I certify that I have read and understand the technical standards for selection listed above and I believe to the best of my knowledge that I can meet each of these standards without accommodation.

I certify that I have read and understand the technical standards for selection listed above and I believe to the best of my knowledge that I can meet each of these standards with accommodation. Should I feel I require accommodation to meet these standards, I will contact Services for Students with Disabilities at (828) 227-2716 to determine what accommodations may be available. I understand that if I am unable to meet these standards with or without accommodations, I will not be admitted into the program.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Printed Name of Applicant _____

Recreational Therapy Courses and Course Sequencing

Academic Program

A student completing the Academic Program is required to complete all the required courses within the Recreational Therapy Major at WCU. The student must complete a minimum of 120 credit hours as recognized by Western Carolina University and the State System of Higher Education (SSHE) in the State of North Carolina. A WCU General Catalog may be obtained from the Admissions Department and is available online at <http://catalog.wcu.edu/index.php>.

If a student elects to pursue an additional degree in any other major at WCU, or is on a pre-PT or pre-OT track, an amended course sequence will be developed in cooperation with the appropriate department personnel to assure that both major programs of study can be completed in an expedient manner. It should be noted however that students pursuing more than one major or multiple minors may require greater than four years to complete their studies at WCU. It is also important to know that the recreational therapy curriculum will train you to be a recreational therapist and not another type of therapist.

Recreational Therapy Courses, Prerequisites and Sequencing

- RTH 200 - Foundations of Recreational Therapy Credits: (3) - An investigation into the prescribed use of recreational activity as a clinical treatment modality for persons whose functional abilities are impaired.
- RTH 350 - Recreational Therapy and People with Physical Disabilities Credits: (3) - Addressing physical and psychological needs of individuals with physical disabilities through recreational therapy service in clinical and community settings. PREQ: RTH 352 and accepted as a major in RT. *This course is ONLY offered in the Fall Semester.*
- RTH 352 - Recreational Therapy Processes and Techniques Credits: (3) - Assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation strategies attendant to recreational therapy service delivery. PREQ: RTH 200.
- RTH 360 - Recreational Therapy Services for Older Adults Credits: (3) - Addressing the physical, psychological, and social needs of the elderly through recreational therapy. 2 hrs lecture/2 hrs lab PREQ: RTH 352 and accepted as a major in RT.
- RTH 370 - Methods in Recreational Therapy Credits: (3) - Theoretical and practical examination of contemporary implementation procedures used in recreational therapy practice. PREQ: RTH 352. *This course is ONLY offered in the Fall Semester.*
- RTH 395 - Pre-Internship Seminar Credits: (1) - Overview of NCTRC standards for professional certification, personal communication skills, practicum documentation requirements, internship site selection, and blood borne pathogen training. PREQ: RTH 352, RTH 370 as a pre or co-requisite, accepted as RTH major. *This course may not be taken until the semester prior to registration for the senior Clinical Internship (RTH 484/485).*
- RTH 401 - Client Assessment in Recreational Therapy Credits: (3) - Study of the role of reliable assessment in the recreational therapy treatment planning process. Focus on assessment, developing treatment goals, evaluating outcomes, and documentation. PREQ: RTH 352.
- RTH 405 - Recreational Therapy in Behavioral Health Credits: (3) - Addressing psychiatric, social and addiction disorders through recreational therapy interventions in behavioral health settings. 2 hrs lecture/2 hrs lab PREQ: RTH 352 and accepted as a major in RT.

- RTH 417 - Administration of Recreational Therapy Services Credits: (3) - Contemporary recreational therapy program organizational principles and administrative issues. PREQ: RTH 352. *This course is ONLY offered in the Fall Semester.*
- RTH 470 - Adventure-Based Recreational Therapy Credits: (3) - A theoretical and practical investigation of structured outdoor experiences as vehicles for facilitating human growth and development. Field trips required. PREQ: RTH 352, PRM 270.
- RTH 484 - Recreational Therapy Clinical Internship Credits: (6) - Full-time internship in a recreational therapy program under direct professional supervision. PREQ: RTH 350, 352, 360, 370, 395, 401, 405, 417, "C" or better in all RTH prefix courses and permission of instructor. *Student must enroll in RTH 485 at the same time as RTH 484.*
- RTH 485 - Recreational Therapy Clinical Internship Credits: (6) - Full-time internship in a recreational therapy program under direct professional supervision. PREQ: RTH 350, 352, 360, 370, 395, 401, 405, 417, "C" or better in all RTH prefix courses and permission of instructor. *Student must enroll in RTH 484 at the same time as RTH 485.*
- BIOL 291 - Human Anatomy and Physiology I Credits: (4). *This course is ONLY offered in the Fall Semester.*
- BIOL 292 - Human Anatomy and Physiology II Credits: (4). *This course is ONLY offered in the Spring Semester.*
- COUN 325 - Survey of Human Development Credits: (3)
- COUN 430 - Individual and Group Counseling Credits: (3). This course is ONLY offered each Spring Semester.
- HEAL 250 - First Aid and Safety Education Credits: (2)
- HSCC 220 - Medical Terminology Credits: (3)
- PRM 270 - Leadership and Group Dynamics in Recreation Credits: (3)
- PSY 150 - General Psychology Credits: (3)
- PSY 470 - Abnormal Psychology Credits: (3)
- PE 423 - Kinesiology Credits: (3), or PE 365 - Physical Activity and Aging Credits: (3), or HPE 225 – Applied Kinesiology II – Exercise Physiology Credits (4), or HPE 235 – Motor Behavior Credits: (3)

Recreational Therapy Coursework

You will be working with three RT faculty that are experts in their field. All three professors will be sharing ideas in and outside of class. Make sure you do everything to your best in classes. Each professor will treat you as a professional, and expect that you come to class prepared and enthusiastic about the field. This is your field and you will get out of classes what you put into them. It is also imperative that you start paying attention to your own lifestyle issues related to recreational therapy. This is a field in which you must practice what you preach. Clients can be very perceptive about whether you follow the course of action you may be helping them with.

Liberal Studies Requirements

Each recreational therapy major is required to complete the WCU Liberal Studies Program Requirements of at least 42 hours.

Support Coursework

The Recreational Therapy Program contains the most well thought out sequence of support courses. These include courses in Anatomy and Physiology, Medical Terminology, Individual and Group Counseling, Abnormal Psychology, Developmental Psychology, and Kinesiology. Take these courses seriously, and put time into them so you excel. You will be working for

yourself and you will be representing our department to other departments across campus. Take it as a professional and prove yourself every day to people in your support courses. You may be working with other students who will be future colleagues in the professional arena. Respect starts here.

Service Learning

Service learning is where you can put into practice what you are learning in recreational therapy. Service learning will take place in three different areas.

- I. Service Learning attached to a course: Several courses in the major have a service learning component from five hours to twenty hours.
- II. Service learning in summers and on vacations-From working in summer camps to working as a volunteer or aide in a hospital or nursing home. The more varied your experience with people with disabilities, the more competent you will become and the more marketable you will be.
- III. The internship-Twelve credits of hands on work under the supervision of a licensed recreational therapist will be your chance to put your knowledge and skills into action in a setting that you will choose with the help of the pre-internship teacher and your advisor.

It is very important that you take your service learning opportunities seriously and that you put your heart into the experience. A few expectations related to all service learning experiences.

- Dress appropriately for service learning. Remember: you are representing the profession of recreational therapy in the community when completing service learning.
- Always show up early or on time for the experiences. Reliability is key in working with clients and other professionals/volunteers.
- Be aware of boundaries. Do not give phone numbers to clients you will be working with. Physical boundaries are also important. Hugging or flirting can easily become misinterpreted so should be avoided.
- Stay focused on the clients. Don't go to hang out with other students.
- Be professional-Keep things confidential, treat other faculty, clients and students with respect. Keep your integrity at all times.
- You may be nervous and unsure of what to do with certain clients who may be difficult to understand or puts you at unease. Keep at it, learn from the experience, and ask questions when you reflect on the experience.
- Make connections with what you are learning in class and what you are experiencing.
- Introduce yourself as a recreational therapy student, not as a recreational therapist or recreational therapist in training. Get in practice explaining what recreational therapy is.

Advising Policies

Advisor Roles and Responsibilities

The advisor's role is to provide support, guidance, information, and referrals that enable the student to take an active role in developing his or her program. The following are the central forms of support and guidance by the advisor:

- To assist the student in exploring his or her therapist style/s and what populations they would like to work with;
- To offer advice in the selection and sequencing of courses that meet requirements for graduation;
- To provide guidance and make referrals that help the student explore career options consistent with the program of study;
- To keep informed about University policies, regulations, programs and procedures;
- To discuss student strengths and weaknesses in relation to coursework and professionalism.
- To discuss technical standards, recreational therapy standards in the field, and explain curricular guidelines.

Student Roles and Responsibilities

The student's role is to take primary responsibility for the development of their academic program and for meeting all graduation requirements. In the advisor-advisee relationship, student responsibilities include the following:

- To make appointments with the advisor in a timely manner that ensures the advisor is kept informed about the student's progress and performance;
- To understand the courses needed for the RT degree and keep track of their progress through the degree audit.
- To become knowledgeable about University policies, programs and procedures;
- To maintain a 2.5 cumulative grade point average, and continually meet all technical standards.
- To be proactive with regard to career planning and to actively involve the advisor as an adjunct to the development of career goals and objectives.
- To come prepared for advising times with degree audit and courses needed for the next semester.

Senior Clinical Internship in Recreational Therapy

After completion of all recreational therapy coursework and major requirements, the student will complete a senior clinical internship. The Recreational Therapy B.S. Degree Program has legal contracts with agencies across North Carolina and in other states that meet the requirements for a clinical affiliation with the College of Health and Human Sciences and the certification and licensure requirements for recreational therapy. A list of approved internship sites is maintained by the Program Director and a Recreational Therapy Internship Manual is available for further information. When students enroll in RTH 395 Pre-Intern Seminar the semester before their planned senior clinical internship, they will prepare a professional resume, professional portfolio, and will be instructed on the application process for a recreational therapy clinical internship. When students complete their clinical internship, they are enrolled in RTH 484 and RTH 485 for a total of 12 credit hours.

Recreational Therapy Association

The Recreational Therapy Association (RTA) is run by and for students majoring in recreational therapy. It is very important that students take an active role in RTA. RTA helps students go to conferences, provides service to the community, raises funds to bring experts in recreational therapy to campus to teach such specialized techniques as aquatic therapy, adapted wheelchair sports, and other topics, to fund field trips to specialized recreational therapy programs, provides leadership development for students in managing a professional organization, and will have activities and events for students to get to know each other and to bond as future professional recreational therapists. RTA also serves as a voice for students to speak up for their education and opportunities.

General RT Disciplinary Procedures

There are separate policies for Alcohol and Illegal Drug Procedures and for the Criminal Background Screening which are administered through the College of Health and Human Sciences. The following procedures are specific to recreational therapy and have been established to ensure the smooth operation of the Western Carolina University Recreational Therapy Education Program and the College of Health and Human Sciences. Offenses of the rules and regulations of the University or the Recreational Therapy Technical Standards shall be deemed as either “minor offenses” or “disciplinary offenses”. The compilation of three minor offenses shall be the equivalent of one disciplinary offense. Each disciplinary offense shall require the student to appear before the Recreational Therapy Faculty for disciplinary action or dismissal from the Recreational Therapy Education Program. The following three steps indicate formal procedures resulting from disciplinary offenses of the WCU Recreational Therapy Education Program. All disciplinary actions by the Recreational Therapy Faculty shall be entered into the recreational therapy student’s permanent file.

Step I: When applicable, two “minor offenses” by the student will result in a meeting with the primary RT Advisor. This meeting will serve as a warning that any further offenses of the Recreational Therapy Education Program rules and regulations will result in formal action against the recreational therapy student.

Step II: The initial “disciplinary offense” shall result in a student / RT Faculty formal meeting. Minutes of the meeting as well as a written response, including any disciplinary action to be taken, will be filed in the Program Director’s office. One copy of the written response will be sent to the recreational therapy student’s local address within ten (10) days. An additional copy

will be placed in the student's permanent file. A second "disciplinary offense meeting" with the RT Faculty will minimally result in a probationary period of one semester.

Step III: The "third disciplinary offense" shall result in immediate dismissal from the WCU Recreational Therapy Education Program.

Minor Offenses: Minor offenses include, but are not limited to, dress code violations, tardiness to assigned clinical education experiences, or failure to complete required documentation.

Disciplinary Offenses: Disciplinary offenses include, but are not limited to, failure to complete recreational therapy tasks as assigned by the clinical supervisor, failure to attend assigned clinical education experiences, insubordination, failure to perform duties in a professional manner or failure to act in a manner consistent with the standards of WCU, the Recreational Therapy Technical Standards, and the American Therapeutic Recreation Association Code of Ethics.

Appeals Policy: Any recreational therapy student has the right to appeal all disciplinary decisions made by the RT Faculty. All appeals must be typed and submitted to the Program Director's office within seven (7) days of receiving the disciplinary written response. The RT Faculty in conjunction with the Department Head for the School of Health Sciences will review the appeal and submit a written response within ten (10) days of receipt of the appeal letter of the student.

Alcohol and Illegal Drug Disciplinary Procedures

All Recreational Therapy majors, as well as students taking courses in Recreational Therapy that require clinical hours (regardless of major), will abide by the College of Health and Human Sciences *Alcohol and Illegal Drug Testing Policy for Students*.

The policy may be viewed in full on the College of Health and Human Sciences site at http://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/Alcohol_and_Illegal_Drug_Testing_Policy.pdf. In summary, it states that students may not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Students who are either 1) suspected of alcohol or drug violations; 2) required to be drug tested for an agency affiliation; or 3) is required to be randomly tested during an agency placement period must consent to drug testing at his or her own expense. The results of these drug tests must be disclosed to the College. All students must sign an agreement stating that they understand and will abide by this policy.

The Recreational Therapy Program requires any student who receives a positive test (in any of the above testing conditions) to be subject to disciplinary procedures. At minimum, a student will be removed from all Recreational Therapy coursework which includes clinical components or placements for one semester. If the positive drug screen was incurred immediately prior to a clinical placement, a student will need to a) repeat RTH 395 the semester prior to a second clinical placement attempt and b) complete two consecutive drug screenings with negative results at least 90 days prior to clinical placement.

Recreational Therapists abide by the philosophy that all individuals may be rehabilitated. Although a person who has tested positively for drugs is considered impaired and not fit for practice at the time of the screening, it is possible for him or her to again become fit for practice. To enable this process, RT faculty may recommend that the student complete a full evaluation at the WCU Counseling Center. After said evaluation, it will be recommended that the student follows the Counseling Center recommendations. This may include further testing with an outside provider, if necessary. Though students will be asked to sign a release of information so

that faculty may monitor the student's attendance at Counseling Center evaluations and sessions, faculty will *not* monitor the content of the sessions. All evaluation and sessions will, again, be incurred at the student's expense (if applicable).

Any student who refuses to follow these disciplinary procedures, or who is unable to complete two consecutive drug screens with negative results within two consecutive semesters (including summers), will be removed from the major.

Blood Borne Pathogens Policy

Policies have been developed to protect health care workers from blood-borne pathogens (BBP). The blood-borne pathogens of main concern to recreational therapists are HIV and Hepatitis B. Recreational therapists can be exposed in a variety of ways; including but not limited to bloody wounds, vomit, saliva, etc.. Therefore, it is imperative to practice preventative measures at all times.

OSHA Regulations: OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) has developed federal regulations for employees whose jobs may put them at risk to blood-borne pathogens. All of these guidelines must be followed at all times when treating patients in the health care setting.

If you have a risk of exposure to a blood-borne pathogen, it is required that the minimum proper precautions be adhered to. The health care professional must minimally wear latex gloves when exposed to any body fluids. If a glove should tear, it should be replaced immediately. In addition, one must change gloves if worn for more than ten (10) minutes. Some gloves may be slightly permeable; so two layers may be worn. After use, carefully remove gloves and discard them in a biohazard waste container or bag. Your hands should be washed thoroughly after wearing gloves or handling any item contaminated with body fluids. In addition, hands should be washed between contact with each patient in order to prevent the spread of possibly infectious materials.

Any contaminated area (treatment table, counter top, floor, etc.) should be cleaned thoroughly to help decontaminate surfaces. Sources recommend using a 1:10 bleach-water solution, which needs to be made daily to be effective. Western Carolina University will purchase appropriate cleansing solutions to treat exposed areas. These cleaning materials will be made available in each clinical setting. In addition, tables and counters must be cleaned with an appropriate cleaning solution between each use.

When cleaning an area that may be contaminated with a BBP, it is advised to wear latex gloves and absorb the fluids with paper towels, not terry cloth towels. Discard soiled towels in the biohazard waste container bags. Saturate the area with the appropriate cleansing solution, allowing the solution to soak ten to twenty minutes whenever possible. Clean the area with another paper towel utilizing rubber gloves. All cleaning materials should go in the biohazard bags for disposal after use. After cleaning, remember to wash hands thoroughly, using proper hand-washing procedures.

Method of Compliance: There are many ways to minimize and prevent exposure to a blood-borne pathogen. These include implementing work practice controls, such as having rules and regulations in the work place, providing and using personal protective equipment and consistently implementing appropriate housecleaning procedures.

Personal protective equipment is used to provide a barrier between the health care provider and the exposed blood-borne pathogen. Personal protective equipment consists of latex gloves, goggles, face shields, CPR masks and gowns. It is recommended that the personal protective equipment be inspected periodically for any defects to ensure its effectiveness. Any reusable equipment should be cleaned thoroughly and decontaminated after use. Single use equipment should be disposed of in red biohazard bags and placed in the appropriate containers.

Housekeeping is the third area of compliance. This involves maintaining all equipment used in recreational therapy interventions in a clean and sanitary condition. In order to meet this requirement, it is necessary clean all recreational therapy equipment after each use and before returning equipment to the recreational therapy office.

Criminal Background Screening

The RT Program will be in full compliance with the College of Health and Human Sciences Policy on **Criminal Background Screening Policy for Students** (see http://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/PDFs/Student_Criminal_Background_Screening_Policy.pdf).

According to this policy, “criminal background investigation will be performed, **at the student’s expense**, by a third party vendor under contract with UNC/WCU (e.g., Certiphi), with the results of the investigation sent to the Dean’s Office for review and judgment in accordance with applicable College policies and procedures. If possible, review and judgment of a student’s criminal background history for placement in a particular clinical site should be performed using that clinical site’s policies and procedures/criteria, which have been provided to College for that purpose. This should be addressed in the clinical affiliation agreement.”

For RT Majors, the mandatory criminal background investigation will be scheduled to be completed during RTH 395 Pre-Intern Seminar during the semester immediately preceding clinical internship placement. All criminal background investigations will be completed by September 15 if enrolled in the fall semester RTH 395 course and by February 15 if enrolled in the spring semester RTH 395 course. All criminal background investigations will be conducted through Certiphi and students are responsible for the cost of this investigation (approximately \$20.00).

Criminal Background Investigation Procedure:

1. The Dean’s Administrative Assistant (DAA) in the College of Health and Human Sciences will perform a preliminary investigation of students’ criminal background check (CBC) prior to clinical placement.
2. The DAA will notify the School Director or Department Head if students have “passed” the CBC (no criminal activity found) or if the student’s CBC needs review (indicating criminal activity found). No other information will be provided to the Director or Department Head related to the CBC.
3. For students who need review, the DAA will notify the Dean and the Associate Dean. The Associate Dean will convene three to five members of the Academic Action Committee who will then review the case. The Associate Dean will serve as ex officio (non-voting) chair of this committee. At least one faculty member on the committee should represent the major or discipline of the student(s) who need CBC review. In cases of CBC review, students will not serve as committee members (unlike other academic action appeals).

4. The Academic Action Committee will review the student's CBC for the following felonies. A conviction or plea of guilty or no contest to any of the **felonies** noted below will **disqualify** the student from participating in a clinical learning experience.
 - a. Homicide
 - b. Kidnapping and abduction
 - c. Assaults with weapons or inflicting serious injury
 - d. Rape or other sex offense
 - e. Robbery or larceny
 - f. Abuse, neglect or exploitation of children, disabled adults or elder adults

5. Any other types of felony or misdemeanor convictions, including sale, possession, distribution or transfer of controlled substances, or questionable criminal histories will be reviewed by the Academic Action Committee in accordance with the following criteria:
 - a. Would the student pose a threat to the health and safety of the university community and any patient or client?
 - b. What were the:
 - 1) The dates, locations, and nature of the conduct/crime?
 - 2) Characteristics of the victim(s)?
 - 3) Frequency of convictions or pleas?
 - 4) Opinions of law enforcement officials, district attorney?
 - c. In addition, is/are there:
 - 5) Any pending charges?
 - 6) Evidence of successful rehabilitation?
 - 7) Evidence of remorse/accountability?
 - 8) Positive references?
 - 9) Evidence of the accuracy and truthfulness of the information submitted?

6. Based on the above criteria, a recommendation by the Academic Action Committee will be submitted to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences. The Dean may accept the recommendation of the Committee or make an alternative decision. The decision of the Dean will be final. Once the decision is made, the Dean's office will notify the School Director or Department Head and the student.

Hepatitis B Vaccinations

Hepatitis B vaccinations are available to all certified and licensed recreational therapy staff and recreational therapy students via the Western Carolina University Health Center for a minimal fee. The Hepatitis B vaccinations consist of a series of three injections over a six-month period. It should be noted that the series of three injections does not guarantee immunization to Hepatitis B in all persons. Therefore, a follow-up antibody test is recommended but not required. If an employee or student declines to have the Hepatitis B vaccination, he or she must sign a vaccine declination form. However, if the employee or student changes his or her mind, he / she may still receive the vaccine at a later date. Vaccinations can be received at the Western Carolina University Student Health Center or can be obtained at an off-campus facility.

If an employee or recreational therapy student is involved in an incident that exposes her or him to a blood-borne pathogen, he must receive medical consultation and treatment as soon as possible. This follow-up care is available at the WCU Student Health Center. All costs post-exposure care is the responsibility of the student.

Proper Hand-Washing Procedures

Thorough hand-washing is the BEST way to prevent the spread of infection.

Hand-washing Procedures:

1. Use continuously running water.
2. Use a generous amount of soap.
3. Apply soap with vigorous contact on all surfaces of hands. (nails, fingers, hands, forearms)
4. Wash hands for AT LEAST 10 seconds. (Sing the *Happy Birthday Song* twice.)
5. Clean under and around fingernails.
6. Rinse with your hands down, so that runoff goes into the sink and not down your arms.
7. Avoid splashing.
8. Dry well with paper towels.
9. Use a towel to turn the water off.
10. Discard the towels into a bag provided for that purpose.

Professionalism

It is of vital importance to the profession of Recreational Therapy that a high level of professionalism is maintained by all Recreational Therapy Students. Of particular importance is your sensitivity, confidentiality and professional attitude. This includes being prompt to service learning and education assignments, dressing professionally and appropriately and conducting oneself in a professional manner at all times. Proper attire is required for all clinical education experiences. Recreational Therapy Students must maintain a professional relationship with all peers, clients and faculty at all times. Please understand that your actions outside of the classroom, service learning projects, and clinical education experiences are a direct reflection of you, the faculty and staff at WCU, the Recreational Therapy Education Program and the profession as a whole.

Cellular Phones

All cellular phones are to be turned **off** prior to beginning any class, service learning activity, or clinical education experience. Cellular phones may be taken to the clinical education site and used **ONLY** in the case of medical emergency. At no time will the student be allowed personal calls during any clinical education assignment nor may the student engage in text messaging at any time in a class, service learning activity, or clinical education experience.

Final Thoughts

Welcome to Recreational Therapy. You are joining a profession which is fun yet challenging. We are in critical times where there are greater demands for good quality therapists than ever before. From the obesity epidemic to an aging population, the demand for rehabilitation and community services for people with disabilities and chronic illnesses, qualified recreational therapists are needed more than any other time in our history. If you work hard, stay fit mentally and physically, learn the field and develop your skills, you will have a long and exciting career. For more information on the professional job of a recreational therapist, visit the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook overview RT at <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos082.htm>.