

## 2019-2020 Program Assessment Report

The Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration degree program in the department of Experience Industry Management at California Polytechnic State University is accredited by the Council on Accreditation for Parks, Recreation, Tourism, and related disciplines (COAPRT). In addition to the University Learning Objectives, there are four discipline-specific learning objectives were measured during the 2019-2020 academic year.

COAPRT Standard 7.01: Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the following entry-level knowledge: a) the nature and scope of the relevant experience industry professions and their associated industries; b) techniques and processes used by professionals and workers in these industries; and c) the foundation of the profession in history, science, and philosophy.

### **Assessment Methods**

Direct measure. As a requirement of the internship agreement between hosting agency, the student, and the Cal Poly Experience Industry Department, agency supervisors complete a final evaluation of the student at the end of their internship. This instrument contains several items related to the Program Learning Objectives, which address the techniques and processes used by professionals in the Experience Industry. Performance level/metrics: 80% of students will score 3.0 or above on questions 1-4 and 9 on the Agency Supervisor Final Intern Evaluation Assessment.

Indirect Measures. This learning objective was assessed in two courses that bookend the RPTA student experience. RPTA 110, *Orientation & College Success in Experience Industry Management*, RPTA 463, *Pre-Internship Seminar* do not specifically introduce, develop, or help students master the concepts of Standard 7.01; however, to understand student growth in these areas, the faculty measure student self-perception of their achievement of these competencies at the beginning and end of their degrees. The Hurd Competency Assessment (2008) is the indirect measure used to assess student perceptions of their achievement of the competencies and uses a four-point scale (1=Poor, 4=Excellent). An independent samples t-test will be used to calculate the differences between the groups. Performance level/metrics: Students score above a 3.0 average on their perceived competence on Hurd questions: 5-8, 11, 13-20, 22, 23, 25,30-33, & 36; 80% of students will score 3.0 or above on questions: 1-4, 9 on the Agency supervisor questionnaire assessment of intern on program learning objectives.

### **Analysis of the Results**

Direct Measure. Agency supervisors ( $n=109$ ) agreed or strongly agreed (96.5%) students are also able to verbally communicate and explain ideas ( $\bar{x}=3.73$ ,  $SD=0.555$ ) and ( $n=110$ ), (96.5%) are able to write effectively and explain ideas ( $\bar{x}=3.73$ ,  $SD=0.555$ ). The competency with the lowest agreement on by supervisors ( $n=103$ , (90.4%) RPTA student interns are able to work in groups effectively ( $\bar{x}=3.72$ ,  $SD=0.563$ ). It is important to note that none of the items for the 7.01 competencies on the Agency Supervisor Final Intern Evaluation Assessment (Questions 1-4, 9) were below 3.5/Agree or Strongly Agree target.

Indirect Measure. \*Data was not collected for RPTA 463 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Program Improvements Made/Planned**

Given the goals were met, we will set a target of 3.8/agree or strongly agree for the future measure.

COAPRT Standard 7.02: Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate the ability to design, implement, and evaluate services that facilitate targeted human experiences and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity.

### **Assessment Methods**

**Direct measure.** RPTA 360 student achievement of course learning objectives were assessed via the final exam. The exam questions consist of assessment and evaluation important parts of the practice of within the experience industry. Performance level/metrics: 80% of students will score 80 or better out of 100 on the final exam.

**Indirect measure.** In Winter 2020, the faculty member instructor for RPTA 210 measured student perceptions of their achievement of course seven learning objectives with a questionnaire. The instructor set a benchmark of 4.0 out of 5 on a five-point scale (1=low, 5=high). Mean scores were calculated on each item. Performance level/metrics: Students will have a mean score of 4.0 or better on each of the 7 learning objectives. (five-point scale; 1=low, 5=high).

### **Analysis of the Results**

**Direct measure.** In Winter 2020, the exam was moved online near the end of the quart due to Covid-19 pandemic. The exam consisted of 23 questions, both open-ended and multiple choice, and worth 70 points. The average score was 89.5%, with a range of 71.43% to 98.57%. The exam was modified this quarter due to the stress of the pandemic (as well as the social injustices happening throughout the country and the stress felt by many students). Faculty were encouraged to consider how much testing was truly necessary at this point, or to consider alternate forms of assessment). Four of the lower scoring questions were related to levels of data. Another lower scoring question was about methods to use in gathering data in the positivist and interpretive paradigms and another was about ways to ensure rigor in qualitative research. These areas *are not usually issues in this class, and feel this result was probably stress/new teaching format via zoom.*

Spring all course materials the same as Winter 2020 and added many additional 'mini' assessments for asynchronous lectures. Students watch a lecture and every 8-12 minutes within that lecture, would ask them to pause the video and go to Canvas for a mini, low-stakes assessment that helped the instructor ascertain if students were learning and understanding the material.

Scores from the final exam in Spring 2020 were on average higher than Winter 2020, it appears the mini-assessments in a flipped class model motivated students to make sure they fully understood the material and would be able to answer a question or provide an example.

In Spring 2020, the first fully virtual quarter, students in RPTA 360 had an average score of 92.76. The exam consisted of 32 questions, both open ended and multiple choice. The range was from 76.7% to 100%. The three lowest scoring test questions were all about levels of data. There was confusion as to if an example given was categorical ordinal, interval or ratio level data.

**Indirect measure.** RPTA 210 student self-perception of the course learning objectives was highest for their ability to illustrate and explain how to design, implement, and facilitate a program, and with consideration of all structural and interpersonal elements ( $\bar{x}$ =4.64), ability to successfully design, implement, market, and implement a program in a small group and with the support of a community agency ( $\bar{x}$ =4.64), identify staffing, equipment, resources, facilities, and budgeting needs for recreation programs ( $\bar{x}$ =4.57), identify, explain and create an effective mission, vision, values, and goals and objectives for a program ( $\bar{x}$ =4.53), to identify, define, and describe the parts of a program/services, including the physical/logistical and interpersonal ( $\bar{x}$ =4.42), and their ability to identify potential barriers and constraints to participation, and will be able to adapt an event for a variety of diverse audiences ( $\bar{x}$ =4.39). The learning objective they ranked lowest was their ability to identify sources of risk, create a plan to mitigate risk, and apply day- of strategies to mitigate risk ( $\bar{x}$ =3.92), though this was still well-above the mid-point of the scale and does show improvement from last year's score of ( $\bar{x}$ =3.76).

### ***Program Improvements Made/Planned***

Future class sessions in RPTA 360 will include additional hands-on practice examples, and as noted above, quizzes or small assessment with points attached so students have additional motivation to truly learn and be able to use the concepts before the assessment. We will utilize a flipped model of class where students do the reading *and* a mini-assessment (2 pt. quiz, for example) before attending class, to ensure they have basic definitions down, then we can practice the concepts in class and work through a variety of examples together. Faculty instructing RPTA 210 have provided more emphasis on risk management as the score did show improvement ( $\bar{x}=3.76$ ) to ( $\bar{x}=3.92$ ). In the future the course will continue to add additional readings on risk management and/or inviting more guest speakers who specialize in the topic to the course as well as incorporate this area into assignment(s).

COAPRT Standard 7.03: Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about operations and strategic management/ administration the experience industry and/or related professions.

### ***Assessment Methods***

Direct measure. Students' achievement of the learning objectives for RPTA 424 was measured using embedded final exam questions on contribution margin and break-even points. Performance level/metrics: 80% of students will score 80 or better out of 100 on the final exam.

Indirect measures. Students in RPTA 342 were given a self-assessment of their achievement of course learning objectives. \*Note: we will use the Hurd competency questions that apply to 7.3 for future measures. Performance level/metrics: Students score above a 3.0 average on their perceived competence on Hurd questions: 1-4, 9, 10, 26-28, 37-39.

### ***Analysis of the Results***

Direct measure. Students performed well with the integration of problem-solving questions that test their knowledge on financial operations in the experience industry. Thirty-one out of 40 students (77.5%) scored 80% or higher on the final exam. Average score was 85.10 and SD was 10.68.

Indirect measure. \* RPTA 342 data were not collected due to Covid-19.

### ***Program Improvements Made/Planned***

The relatively large standard deviation indicates that some students were still having problems with integration of more problem-solving questions in the final exam of RPTA 424. The instructor plans to add one more individual assignment on financial statement analysis to encourage students to accumulate more independent hands-on experience with real financial statements in the experience industry and using Excel to generate insightful ratios. We feel the Hurd competency questions that apply to 7.3 for future measures is a better assessment than RPTA 324.

COAPRT Standard 7.04: Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate, through a comprehensive internship of not less than 400 clock hours and no fewer than 10 weeks, the potential to succeed as professionals at supervisory or higher levels in park, recreation, tourism, or related organizations.

### ***Assessment Methods***

Direct measure. As a requirement of the internship agreement between hosting agency, the student, and the Cal Poly Experience Industry Department, agency supervisors complete a final

evaluation of the student at the end of their internship. This nine-question instrument contains several items related student competencies as emerging professionals in the field. They rate the students on a five-point scale (1=Poor, 5=Outstanding) on certain professionalism measures. Mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for each item. Performance level/metrics: Mean scores will be or higher for each of the 9 questions.

Indirect measure. Students complete a final self-assessment of their achievement of the program learning outcomes for the RPTA degree as a component of their final internship assignment. They measure their agreement with statements about the learning objectives on a four-point scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 4=Strongly Agree). Mean scores and standard deviations were calculated for each item. Performance level/metrics: Students score above a 3.0 average on their perceived competence on program learning objectives: 1-15.

### ***Analysis of the Results***

Direct measure. Agency supervisors ranked the professionalism of their interns according to attitude, personal habits, responsibility, attendance and punctuality, productivity, communication, quality of work, judgment, and writing ability and oral expression. The top three professionalism factors agency supervisors ranked highest were attendance and punctuality ( $\bar{x}$ =4.56, SD=0.704), student attitude ( $\bar{x}$ =4.55, SD=0.692), personal habits ( $\bar{x}$ =4.54, SD=0.680); followed by responsibility ( $\bar{x}$ =4.52, SD=0.668), quality of work ( $\bar{x}$ =4.45, SD=0.692), writing ability and expression ( $\bar{x}$ =4.42, SD=0.677) and productivity ( $\bar{x}$ =4.41, SD=0.689). The lowest-ranked items were judgement ( $\bar{x}$ =4.35, SD=0.820), and communication ( $\bar{x}$ =4.32, SD=0.834), which were still well- above the midpoint of the scale and within the “above average/outstanding” range.

Indirect Measure. Overall, students finishing their 400-hour internships reported that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statements about their competencies in a number of different areas. Specifically, students agreed/strongly agreed on the ULO items embedded in COAPRT standard 7.01: work collaboratively in groups ( $\bar{x}$ =3.84, SD=0.559), work independently in a productive manner ( $\bar{x}$ =3.74, 0.606), engage in lifelong learning ( $\bar{x}$ =3.74, 0.606), write effectively and explain ideas ( $\bar{x}$ =3.72, .SD=0.614), verbally communicate and explain ideas ( $\bar{x}$ =3.68, SD=.0.650), think critically and creatively ( $\bar{x}$ =3.66, 0.631), make decisions based on accepted professional practice ( $\bar{x}$ =3.66, 0.631) and understand issues and practices relating to sustainability ( $\bar{x}$ =3.45, 0.681). Students agreed/strongly agreed on the ULO items embedded in COAPRT standard 7.02: facilitate/supervise experiences for diverse populations ( $\bar{x}$ =3.66, 0.631) and plan and implement programs, services, & experiences. ( $\bar{x}$ =3.66, 0.631). ULO items embedded in COAPRT standard 7.03: students agreed that they are able to apply marketing and experiential marketing concepts and processes ( $\bar{x}$ =3.59, 0.671), coordinate operations and management of employees and participants in programs, events, and service-based experiences ( $\bar{x}$ =3.48, 0.666), effectively supervise program staff, interpret data and evaluate programs, services, & experiences ( $\bar{x}$ =3.46, 0.714), and interpret budgets and analyze basic financial documents( $\bar{x}$ =3.41, 0.677), and interpreting budgets and analyze basic financial documents ( $\bar{x}$ =3.31, SD=.610).

It is important to note that most students did strongly agree or agree with statements about their competencies related to ULOs and departmental PLOs. The competencies with the lowest average were still in the “agree” range, for example, interpreting budgets and analyze basic financial documents ( $\bar{x}$ =3.31, SD=.610).

### ***Program Improvements Made/Planned***

Like last year, the results indicate students are very confident in their ability to work effectively in groups as well as individually, and their ability to communicate orally and in writing and areas students feel they could improve are the ability to interpret data and evaluate programs, services, and experiences and financial documents (e.g., budgets) with the lowest score of 3.31. However, it is important to note that

students scored above the 3.0 average on self-assessments as well as a above 4.0 on supervisor assessment items. Furthermore, *students* improved in all standard 7.04 assessments from the previous 19-20 year despite the pandemic). Continued focus should also be on financial documents and evaluation/data. Targets for the student-self assessments will be increased to 3.3 and 4.5 for supervisor assessments for the next year.