

Assessment Plan & Report

Academic Year 2009-2010

California Polytechnic State University

Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration Department

Assessment Plan and Report, AY 2009-2010
Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration Department

Table of Contents

	Page
List of Figures	iv
List of Tables	v
Introduction.....	1
Institutional Policy on Assessment.....	1
Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals of the Academic Program.....	2
Mission.....	2
Vision.....	2
Values	2
Goals	2
Learning Outcomes	3
Metric Selection Matrices	4
Data Collection Procedures	6
Department Exams	6
Student Self-Assessments	6
RPTA 210 Self-Assessment	6
RPTA 405 Self-Assessment	6
RPTA 424 Self-Assessment	7
RPTA Student Focus Group.....	7
Student Assignments	7
RPTA 405 Mission, Vision, and Values Case Study-Assignment.....	7
RPTA 405 Human Resources Quiz	7
Data Analysis Procedures	8
Department Exams	8

Student Self-Assessments	8
RPTA 210 Self-Assessment	8
RPTA 405 Self-Assessment	8
RPTA 424 Self-Assessment	8
RPTA Student Focus Group	8
Student Assignments	8
RPTA 405 Mission, Vision, and Values Case Study-Assignment	8
RPTA 405 Human Resources Quiz	8
Assessment Results	9
Assessment Area 1: Foundation Understandings of the RPTA Field	9
Direct Measurements	9
Indirect Measurements	10
Assessment Area 2: Facilitating Recreation Experiences	11
Direct Measurements	11
Indirect Measurements	13
Assessment Area 3: Management, Marketing, and Finance	15
Direct Measurements	15
Indirect Measurements	17
Action Plan	20
Assessment Area 1: Foundation Understandings	20
Assessment Area 2: Facilitating Recreation Experiences	20
Assessment Area 3: Management, Marketing, and Finance	20

List of Figures

Page

Figure 1 Metric Selection Matrix.....5

List of Tables

	Page
Table 1 <u>RPTA 101 Student Performance on Embedded Final Exam Questions by Mean and Percentage</u>	9
Table 2 <u>RPTA 101 Student Performance on Embedded Midterm Exam Questions by Mean Frequency and Percentage</u>	9
Table 3 <u>RPTA 405 Entry-Level Competency Assessment</u>	18
Table 4 <u>RPTA 360 Student Ability to Select and Utilize Appropriate Data Analysis Techniques by Frequency and Percentage</u>	13
Table 5 <u>Data Analysis Techniques Utilized by Students on RPTA 360 Computer Final Exam by Frequency and Percentage</u>	13
Table 6 <u>Ability of RPTA 210 Students to Successfully Meet 7.04 Learning Outcomes According to Mean</u>	14
Table 7 <u>RPTA 405 Student Ability to Recognize Illegal Job Interview Questions by Frequency, Fall and Winter 2010</u>	17

Introduction

This document is a record of the Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration Department's learning assessment plan for 2009-2010. It includes the mission, vision, and values of the Department, a context for assessment, as well as:

- Specific educational objectives and learning outcomes
- Metrics used to assess those outcomes
- Plans for data collection and analysis
- A calendar for assessment
- Examples of tools used for assessment

The assessment plan for the 2009-2010 academic year is limited to the learning outcomes associated with the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions Services learning outcomes.

Institutional Policy on Assessment

The assessment of student learning outcomes is increasingly important among colleges and universities. This is in response to demands both internal and external to institutions of higher education for accountability for student learning. Academic units must be able to develop and document their assessment programs and to illustrate how assessment leads to informed curricular improvement. The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) is the regional accrediting body for the California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, and provides the institutions it evaluates with the *WASC 9 Standards of Accreditation*:

http://www.academicprograms.calpoly.edu/accred_progrev/wasc/compliance/compliance.html

Standard four stresses the “evaluation of student learning” and “assessment” as integral to the effective operation of an institution’s educational programs. Standard four highlights the importance of “systematic and reflective planning and self-assessment” as important to the institution’s purpose, planning processes, and overall effectiveness.

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo is governed by and complies effectively with the WASC Standards of Accreditation. On November 21, 2000, the Academic Senate adopted AS-553-00/IALA Resolution on Academic Program Review:

http://www.academicprograms.calpoly.edu/accred_progrev/progrev_files/documents/AS-552-00.pdf

This document provides an institutional mandate for the periodic review of academic programs, including mandates that the self study of academic programs is instrumental in

program improvement; links program learning outcomes to program goals; and provides accountability for program goals.

Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals of the Academic Program

Mission

The mission of the department of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration is to advance leadership and knowledge in recreation, parks, and tourism.

Vision

The vision of the department of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration is to promote healthy lifestyles, protect memorable places, and facilitate life-enhancing experiences.

Values

The core values that guide the RPTA Department's interactions with students, parents, alumni, professionals, faculty, staff, administrators, advisory council members and the community involve:

- Life-long learning
- Environmental stewardship
- Diversity of experiences
- Healthy lifestyles
- Personal and leadership development
- Service
- Community
- Celebration

Goals

The RPTA Program is a student focused "Learn by Doing" environment dedicated to the following goals:

Goal 1: Faculty will demonstrate a commitment to teaching excellence and innovation

Goal 2: The program will promote environmental stewardship and sustainability as it relates to the recreation, parks, and tourism discipline

Goal 3: The program will seek opportunities to develop resources and partnerships

Goal 4: Faculty will enhance the curriculum through state of the art resources, methods, and learning environments

Goal 5: Faculty will prepare students professionally and academically for career success

Goal 6: Faculty will pursue professional development and scholarship

Goal 7: The program will enhance student academic environment and achievement

Learning Outcomes

The RPTA faculty have identified nine learning outcomes for our undergraduate program. Four of these outcomes are required for professional accreditation through the Council of Accreditation on Recreation, Parks, Tourism and Related Professions¹.

- **Undergraduate Learning Outcome 1:** RPTA graduates should be able to understand the field of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration in relation to the larger world.
- **Undergraduate Learning Outcome 2:** RPTA graduates should be able to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.
- **Undergraduate Learning Outcome 3:** RPTA graduates should be able to use their knowledge and skills in the field of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration to make a positive contribution to society.
- **Undergraduate Learning Outcome 4:** RPTA graduates should be able to work effectively and productively as individuals and in groups.
- **Undergraduate Learning Outcome 5:** RPTA graduates will be committed to lifelong learning.
- **Undergraduate Learning Outcome 6:** RPTA graduates should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the scope of the profession, professional practice, and the historical, scientific, and philosophical foundations of the relevant recreation, park resources, leisure experiences or human service industries (COAPRT Standard 7.01).
- **Undergraduate Learning Outcome 7:** RPTA graduates should be able to demonstrate the ability to design, implement, and evaluate recreation, park resources, leisure, and human service offerings facilitating targeted human experiences and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity (COAPRT Standard 7.02).
- **Undergraduate Learning Outcome 8:** RPTA graduates should be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about management/administration of recreation, park resources, and leisure services (COAPRT Standard 7.03).
- **Undergraduate Learning Outcome 9:** RPTA graduates will demonstrate, through a comprehensive internship of not less than 400 clock hours, the ability to

¹ The COAPRT Accreditation Standards are further broken down into sub-standards. An enumeration of these standards is available in Appendix A.

use diverse, structured ways of thinking to solve problems related to different facets of professional practice, engage in advocacy, and stimulate innovation (COAPRT Standard 7.04).

Metric Selection Matrices

The RPTA faculty have decided on specific tools to assess learning outcomes. For the 2009-2010 academic year, assessment activities will be limited to those indicated in the following metric selection matrix as direct or indirect measurements (Figure 1).

Specifically, the following learning outcomes will be assessed in the 2009-2010 academic year:

- 7.01 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the following entry-level knowledge of the: a) the nature and scope of the relevant park, recreation, tourism or related professions and their associated industries; b) techniques and processes used by professionals and workers in those industries; and c) the foundations of the profession in history, science, and philosophy.
- 7.02 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to design, implement, and evaluate services that facilitate targeted human experiences and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity.
- 7.03 Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about management/administration in parks, recreation, tourism and/or related professions.

Academic Year 2009-2010 Assesment Plan		Direct, Indirect, or Process	101	101				360					
					7.01.01 Know scope and practices	7.01.02 Hist, Phil, Sci Fndts	7.01.03 Apply found. To dec. making	7.02.01 Design experience offerings	7.02.02 Exp offer cntx diversity	7.02.03 Ability to evaluate offerings	7.03.01 Mgmt/Admin (Recogn)	7.03.02 Mgmt/Admin (Apply)	7.04 Internship
1	Dept. Examinations	Direct	101	101				360					
2	RPTA 210 Student Self-Assessment	Indirect				X	X		X				
3	RPTA 405 Human Resource Exercise	Direct							X				
4	RPTA 405 Case Study Evaluation	Direct								X			
5	RPTA 405 Competency Student Self-Assessment	Indirect							X				
6	RPTA 424 Student Self-Assessment	Indirect	X		X				X	X			
7	RPTA 465 Internship Syllabus	Process										X	
8	RPTA Student Focus Group	Indirect			X	X							

Figure 1 Metric Selection Matrix

Data Collection Procedures

This section is a description of the procedures used to collect data for the RPTA Department's assessment program. Learning outcomes for the undergraduate program include exams in courses required for all RPTA majors, student self-assessments, and class assignments.

Department Exams

Exams are chosen for assessment in select RPTA core courses during the Fall, Winter, and Spring quarter each year. During Academic Year 2009-2010, these classes are RPTA 101 and 360. Questions specific to the learning outcomes being assessed in these courses (Table 2) are identified on the exams prior to administration.

During the finals weeks of fall and spring quarters (RPTA 101) and fall and winter quarter (RPTA 360), the faculty for these classes administered final examinations. The faculty then analyzed student responses on those select questions.

Student Self-Assessments

Student self-assessments were used in three courses, RPTA 210, 405, and 424, to assess student perceptions of their achievement of the learning outcomes identified in the Academic Year 2009-2010 measurement matrix (Table 2).

RPTA 210 Self-Assessment

At the end of fall quarter 2009, students in RPTA 210 were asked to assess their own learning about program design. Specifically, students were asked the following question:

“Based upon the lab experience and the class lectures, how would you assess your ability to successfully plan a program as related to the RPTA 210 learning outcomes outlined below:

- Ability to develop program outcome-oriented goals and objectives
- Ability to select and coordinate programs, events, and resources
- Understand promotional strategies
- Ability to design and implement programs and services
- Ability to develop and write a program plan
- Understand the basic principles and practices of risk management”

RPTA 405 Self-Assessment

Students in RPTA 405 were provided with an Entry-Level Competency Assessment at the beginning and end of fall quarter 2009. The Entry-Level Competency Exam was developed by Hurd et al., (2008) and consists of 40 items. Students rate their skills, knowledge, and abilities on each item (on a 4-point Likert-type scale; 1=poor,

4=excellent) and on their experience on each item (on a 3-point Likert-type scale, 1=none, 3=A lot).

RPTA 424 Self-Assessment

At the end of fall quarter 2009 and winter quarter 2010, students in RPTA 424 were asked to assess their own learning in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism management. Specifically, students will be asked the following question:

“Below is a list of the expected learning outcomes for RPTA 424:

- Understand the principles and procedures of budgeting and financial management
- Understand recreation, parks, and tourism service funding sources
- Understand and ability to conduct program cost analysis
- Ability to perform analysis and to determine program and service fees

Now that you have completed RPTA 424, provide an assessment of your achievement of each of the above stated expected outcomes. How would you rate your confidence level to completely implement each outcome?”

RPTA Student Focus Group

Students active in program co-curricular activities were asked to participate in a focus group near the end of spring quarter 2010. Students were chosen by faculty as those who were most representative of students engaged in co-curricular activities. The purpose of the focus group was to assess the impact of co-curricular activities on student learning and development. A script of focus group questions is available in Appendix B.

Student Assignments

RPTA 405 Mission, Vision, and Values Case Study-Assignment

Students enrolled in RPTA 405 in fall quarter 2009 were asked to complete an assignment on writing mission, vision, and values statements based on a specific case study. The case study is available in Appendix C.

RPTA 405 Human Resources Quiz

Students enrolled in RPTA 405 in fall quarter 2009 and winter quarter 2010 were asked to complete a quiz designed to assess their ability to recognize both appropriate and inappropriate questions in a job interview. The quiz is available in Appendix D.

Data Analysis Procedures

Department Exams

Questions identified as assessing learning outcomes were scored according to a grading rubric. Frequencies and percentages for correct responses were tabulated. Success rates equal to or greater than 80% on the identified questions indicated successful achievement of specific learning outcomes.

Student Self-Assessments

RPTA 210 Self-Assessment

Students were asked to identify their ability to successfully plan a program according to the learning outcomes named previously on a three-point rating rubric (3 = high level ability, 1=low level of ability). Average scores for each learning outcome were calculated.

RPTA 405 Self-Assessment

Means for the pre- and post-tests scores for the 19 competencies were calculated. A paired-sample t-test was conducted to determine significant differences between pre- and post-test means.

RPTA 424 Self-Assessment

Students were asked to identify their level of confidence in their ability to achieve the learning outcomes named previously using a yes/no question of “confident/not confident.” Frequencies and percentages of responses were calculated.

RPTA Student Focus Group

Two faculty members facilitated the focus group while two to three faculty members recorded responses. Responses to the focus group questions (Appendix B) were reviewed and grouped into common themes.

Student Assignments

RPTA 405 Mission, Vision, and Values Case Study-Assignment

Grading for the RPTA 405 Mission, Vision, and Values Case Study assignment included the use of a rubric for assessing student ability to write a vision, goals, and objectives for a hypothetical wilderness lodge. Five categories were used to evaluate student work, each of which was rated superior, acceptable, or unacceptable. Frequency of superior, acceptable, and unacceptable ratings in the five categories was calculated.

RPTA 405 Human Resources Quiz

The RPTA 405 Human Resources Quiz contained 10 legal and 10 illegal potential interview questions. Students were directed to circle the number corresponding to all questions that were illegal. Percentages of correct responses and average mean scores of correct answers for each quarter will be analyzed.

Assessment Results

Assessment Area 1: Foundation Understandings of the RPTA Field: COAPRT Standard 7.01

Direct Measurements

RPTA 101 Student Examinations

To assess student learning of these outcomes, a direct measurement was implemented in the fall of 2009 in RPTA 101 in both the midterm and final examination. The midterm focused primarily on COAPRT Standard 7.01.02 and the final predominately covered COAPRT Standard 7.01.01. For each exam, five multiple-choice questions, five true/false questions, and five short-answer questions were analyzed.

Tables displaying the results of the analysis of data associated with Standard 7.01 follow. These data indicate that RPTA students have the ability to demonstrate entry-level knowledge of both the scope of the profession as well as professional practices. Students (N=48) in RPTA 101 averaged 84.72% correct responses on final exam questions related to COAPRT Standard 7.01.01 (Table 1). They are also able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the historic, scientific, and philosophical foundations of the profession. Students in RPTA 101 averaged 81.53% correct responses on mid-term questions related to Standard 7.01.02 (Table 2).

Table 1
RPTA 101 Student Performance on Embedded Final Exam Questions by Mean and Percentage

Question	Mean	%
Multiple Choice	43.00	89.59
True/False	41.80	87.08
Short Answer		
Partially Correct	5.40	11.25
Completely Correct	32.60	67.92

Table 2
RPTA 101 Student Performance on Embedded Midterm Exam Questions by Mean Frequency and Percentage

Question	Mean	%
Multiple Choice	43.40	90.42
True/False	41.00	69.42
Short Answer		
Partially Correct	7.60	79.16
Completely Correct	37.60	78.33

Individual exam questions and student examinations are available for review but are not included in this report for reasons of test security.

Indirect Measurements

RPTA 424 Student Self-Assessments

Students in RPTA 424 provided a written self-assessment of their attainment of course learning outcomes. Specifically, students assessed their confidence level in achieving the following learning outcomes related to COAPRT Standard 7.03:

- Understanding of the principles and procedures of budgeting and financial management (7.01.01; cross listed with 7.03.01).
- Understanding of recreation, parks, and tourism funding sources (7.01.01; cross-listed with 7.03.01).
- Ability to perform cost analysis to determine program and service fees (7.01.03; cross-listed with 7.03.02)

All of the students indicated that they were confident in their understanding of budgeting and financial management and funding sources. Eight (25%) of the students indicated that they were less confident in their ability to conduct a cost analysis indicating the need for additional emphasis on this learning outcome.

RPTA Student Focus Groups

Finally, a focus group was conducted at the end of spring quarter 2010 to assess achievement of learning outcomes from co-curricular activities associated with COAPRT Standard 7.01.03. Co-curricular activities were defined for the students as extra-curricular activities that are sponsored in whole or in part by the department and result in an augmentation of classroom-based learning through the curriculum. Students were provided the following examples to represent co-curricular activities in the 2009-2010 academic year:

- Service as an officer in the RPTA club (major's professional development/social club) or Rho Phi Lambda (major's honors fraternity),
- Planning committee for the RPTA fundraising auction and dinner,
- Attendance and engagement at the California Park and Recreation Society annual conference in Palm Springs,
- Participation in the Professional Partners exchange through Rho Phi Lambda or RPTA Club,
- Planning committee for the annual senior banquet,
- Attendance at the AT&T Park professional tour and Sustainability Panel on the Hornblower Hybrid yacht.

Through the focus group data, it was evident that several of the COAPRT standards and University Learning Objectives are either partially or fully fulfilled through participation in co-curricular activities.

Student participants provided the following comments that align with Standard 7.01.03:

“Outside the classroom allows you to see decision-making in real life situations, how others make decisions, and ethically how those decisions affect you and others.”

“As an officer with the RPTA club, an example of maintaining ethics can be seen in dealing with ASI (Associated Students Incorporated). ASI requires that detailed e-plans be submitted for all events. At first, this step seemed unnecessary, and I was tempted not to complete them and hold events anyway. However, after talking to our advisor, I realized that choosing to do event plans is an ethical decision. By not completing an event plan, I realized that choice would potentially put our club and major in jeopardy. Ethics is a big part of leadership.”

“In environmental ethics, you must look at the results of every decision to see how the decisions of different groups affect the environment, seeing how things play out and can potentially have different results depending upon the context and setting. Co-curricular activities allow us to be involved in these decisions, which is really important when we think about venturing forth into a career.”

The results obtained from the focus group indicate RPTA students are able to recognize and apply learning objectives demonstrated in the classroom. Another theme that emerged from the focus group was that co-curricular experiences offer students the opportunity to develop interpersonal communication skills with professionals. This highlights the fact that students require both classroom exposure and industry-related experiences for reasons of academic achievement and professional preparation. However, it was also evident from the focus group that students sometimes have a difficult time understanding the link between the philosophical foundations of the field and these co-curricular experiences. To strengthen that connection, it may be necessary to provide some context for co-curricular experiences for the students when possible, and provide them with learning objectives for the experiences if applicable.

Further discussion of the focus group results is available in the discussion of assessment area of this report.

Assessment Area 2: Facilitating Recreation Experiences COAPRT Standard 7.02

Direct Measurements

RPTA 360 Final Exam

During the winter and spring 2010 quarters, 69 students enrolled in RPTA 360: Assessment and Evaluation of Recreation, Parks, and Tourism were assessed on their abilities to meet COAPRT Standard 7.02.03. This included a review of completed RPTA 360 final exams. Specifically, students were given a final exam designed to assess the students' ability to do the following:

- Select appropriate data analysis technique(s)
- Utilize appropriate data analysis computer programs (e.g. Microsoft Excel©)
- Report findings resulting from analysis

- Create appropriate tables and charts
- Interpret findings
- Draw accurate conclusions
- Make relevant recommendations

Particular attention was paid to the ability of students to select the appropriate data analysis techniques to adequately address the purpose statement and research questions for a case study provided to them.

Results of the assessment revealed that 7% of the students were highly competent and 39% were fairly competent at selecting and utilize appropriate data analysis techniques (Table 4).

Table 3
RPTA 360 Student Ability to Select and Utilize Appropriate Data Analysis Techniques by Frequency and Percentage

Ability Level	<i>f</i>	%
Highly Competent	5	7.25
Fairly Competent	27	39.13
Somewhat Competent	27	39.13
Minimally Competent	10	14.49

Appropriate data analysis techniques for the exam included:

- Mean Scores
- Frequency
- Percentage
- Cross-Tabulation
- T-tests

Most students were able to identify when calculating mean scores was appropriate for and were able to accurately conduct the analysis. However, very few students were able to both identify when conducting a t-test was appropriate and accurately conduct a t-test (Table 5).

Table 4 Data Analysis Techniques Utilized by Students on RPTA 360 Computer Final Exam by Frequency and Percentage

Data Analysis Technique	<i>f</i>	%
Mean Scores	60	86.96
Frequency	54	78.26
Percentage	51	73.91
Cross-Tabulation	30	43.48
T-test	6	8.69

Indirect Measurements

RPTA 210 Student Self-Assessments

During the fall 2009 quarter, 26 students enrolled in RPTA 210: Introduction to Plan Design completed a self-assessment addressing their ability to successfully plan a program as related to the following learning outcomes:

- Ability to develop program/event outcome-oriented goals and outcomes. (7.02.01)
- Ability to select and coordinate programs, events and resources. (7.02.01)
- Understand promotional strategies used to market program and events. (7.02.01, cross-listed with 7.03.01)
- Ability to design and implement programs and services (7.02.02)
- Ability to develop and write a program plan (7.02.01)

A 3-point rating scale (1=low ability, 3=high ability) was developed to measure the students' perceptions of their ability to successfully meet the learning outcomes (Table 6).

Table 5 Ability of RPTA 210 Students to Successfully Meet 7.02 Learning Outcomes According to Mean

Learning Outcome	Mean
Ability to develop program/event outcome-oriented goals and outcomes	2.85
Ability to select and coordinate programs, events, and resources	2.78
Understand promotional strategies used to market programs and events	2.82
Ability to develop and write a program plan	2.67
Ability to design and implement programs and services	2.89

The ability to develop and write a program plan and emergency and risk management issues received the lowest ability level ratings indicating additional emphasis of these areas in the future. However, RPTA 210 serves as an introductory prerequisite to both major and concentration courses that also address these elements of program development.

RPTA Student Focus Groups

A focus group was conducted at the end of spring quarter 2010 to assess achievement of learning outcomes from co-curricular activities associated with COAPRT Standard 7.02.01. Co-curricular activities were defined for the students as extra-curricular activities that are sponsored in whole or in part by the department and result in an augmentation of classroom-based learning through the curriculum. Students were provided the following examples to represent co-curricular activities in the 2009-2010 academic year:

- Service as an officer in the RPTA club (major's professional development/social club) or Rho Phi Lambda (major's honors fraternity)
- Planning committee for the RPTA fundraising auction and dinner
- Attendance and engagement at the California Park and Recreation Society annual conference in Palm Springs
- Participation in the Professional Partners exchange through Rho Phi Lambda or RPTA Club,
- Planning committee for the annual senior banquet,
- Attendance at the AT&T Park professional tour and Sustainability Panel on the Hornblower Hybrid yacht.

Through the focus group data, it was evident that several of the COAPRT standards and University Learning Objectives are either partially or fully fulfilled through participation in co-curricular activities.

Student participants provided the following comments that align with Standard 7.02.01:

“The reinforcement of what you learn in class, leadership that you gain from actually doing it, and being able to communicate and develop those interpersonal skills with professionals is a huge in helping to get you engaged with the professional culture of our field.”

“When you are presented with a situation where you have a budget, you have to be both critical and creative in determining what you can and cannot do with that budget. We were presented with those situations on numerous occasions through co-curricular participation.”

“We’re able to take the practical knowledge that we learn in the classroom and not only apply it through co-curricular involvement, but we will also then use it in our future career/internship. It is essentially building blocks for us.”

The results obtained from the focus group indicate RPTA students are able to recognize and apply learning outcomes demonstrated in the classroom. Students referred frequently to their experiences as planning committee members for the annual departmental auction and dinner and the annual spring banquet as opportunities to hone their programming skills.

Further discussion of the focus group results is available in the discussion of the 7.01 Standards of this assessment report.

Assessment Area 3: Management, Marketing, and Finance COAPRT Standard 7.03

Direct Measurements

RPTA 405 Mission, Vision, and Values Case Study-Assignment

Students enrolled in RPTA 405 during fall 2009 completed a case study that among other components of the assignment required developing a vision, goals and objectives for a hypothetical wilderness lodge. Grading for this portion of the assignment utilized a rubric as detailed below. Each of these five categories was rated superior, acceptable, or unacceptable for 35 student papers. An overall score was given with +1 for each superior rating, 0 for each acceptable rating, and -1 for each unacceptable rating. For example, if a student received an acceptable rating in three categories, an unacceptable rating in one category, and a superior rating in one category the total score would be 0.

A Paper Superior rating in 4 or 5 categories from C Paper

B Paper Superior rating in 1, 2, or 3 categories from C Paper

C Paper Acceptable ratings in four of five categories

1. Comprehension and creativity – insightful, creative, forward thinking
2. Organization – follows directions, organized, answers all parts of assignment
3. Content – describes culture of organization in vision, considers trends presented in the case study
4. Accuracy – goals are broad statements relevant to the case study, objectives are specific and measurable
5. Few errors – spelling, word choice, grammar

D Paper Unacceptable ratings in 2 or 3 categories from C Paper

F Paper Unacceptable ratings in 4 or more categories from C Paper

For the purposes of this assessment, interest is in the frequency of superior, acceptable, and unacceptable ratings in the five categories. The students’ organization, grammar and writing is generally acceptable. Vision statements are clearly written and approximately 25% (n=9) of the students have written superior vision statements. Many of the students (n=15) are having difficulty applying content from the case study to their responses. As has been the case with previous years’ assessments, the students are having difficulty writing goals and objectives as rated in the Accuracy category. In particular, the students sometimes confuse the two and rarely write objectives that are measurable. In discussing this issue with the RPTA 405 students, they indicated that they often have not written goals and objectives since taking RPTA 210 Program Design 2-3 years earlier.

Table 6
RPTA 405 Student Ability to Write Vision, Goals, and Objectives by Frequency

Category	Frequency Superior	Frequency Acceptable	Frequency Unacceptable
Comprehension & creativity	9	21	5
Organization	5	25	5
Content	8	12	15
Accuracy	1	1	33
Few errors		30	5

RPTA 405 Human Resource Assessment

Students in RPTA 405 were administered a quiz during fall 2009 and winter 2010 that addressed legal and illegal interview questions as a component of the course content relating to human resources management (COA Standard 7.03.01). Students were informed that they would be taking a quiz on job interview questions following reading of a human resources chapter as a required reading. Thirty-seven students took the quiz during fall 2009 and 19 students completed the quiz during winter 2010.

The quiz contained 10 legal and 10 illegal potential interview questions. That students were directed to circle the number corresponding to all questions that had been illegal.

Grading was based on the number of correct illegal questions circled. A total of 10 points was possible. The average mean score of correct answers for the fall 2009 class was 8.899. The average mean score for the winter 2010 class was 8.895. Scores with lower percentages of correct answers both quarters were for the questions regarding date of birth and an arrest (Table 7).

Table 7
RPTA 405 Student Ability to Recognize Illegal Job Interview Questions by Frequency, Fall and Winter 2010

Questions/Statements	F09 % Correct	W10 % Correct
What is your date of birth?	59.46	36.84
Are you married or single?	89.19	100.00
How many children do you have	100.00	100.00
Have you ever been arrested?	71.79	63.16
Are you pregnant or is someone in your family pregnant?	100.00	100.00
Please provide three references to include a previous employer, professor and your pastor or minister.	83.78	94.74
Please submit a photo of yourself prior to your interview.	86.49	100.00
What is your credit rating?	100.00	100.00
If you have been in the military what type of discharge did you receive?	97.44	100.00
What is your weight and height?	100.0	94.75

Indirect Measurements²

RPTA 405 Student Self-Assessments

An assessment of entry-level competencies developed by Hurd (2008) was undertaken in RPTA 405 Recreation, Parks and Tourism Management during winter quarter 2010. Thirty students in the class completed Hurd's (2008) competency assessment during the first week of the quarter and again during the tenth week of the quarter. Nineteen of 40 competencies relate to the outcomes of the course and COAPRT Standard 7.03 "Students graduating from the program should be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about

² See Section 7.01 for results of assessments conducted in RPTA 424 for standards 7.03

management/administration of recreation, park resources, and leisure services.” The students’ self-perception of their skills, knowledge, and abilities for these 19 competencies were analyzed.

Mean scores for the pre- and post-test for each of the 19 competencies are provided in Table 3. Each competency was measure using a 4-point scale: 4=excellent, 3=good, 2=fair, and 1=poor. A paired sample t-test was conducted to determine significant differences between pre and post-test mean scores. A .05 significance level was utilized. For 18 of the 19 competencies, mean scores increased during the quarter. The one exception was listening to staff and customers that decreased from 3.73 to 3.70. All post-test competency scores were above 3 “good” on the scale except for providing input on strategic, master, recreation, marketing, & technology plans that received a score of 2.90. Significant differences between pre and post-tests were present for 14 of the 19 competencies. The five competencies that did not increase significantly were “clearly communicate with staff...,” “listen to staff & customers,” “have leadership skills & abilities,” “be able to work in a team,” and “use effective organizational skills.” These competencies are emphasized in other RPTA courses and were among the highest pre-test scores among the 19 competencies.

Table 8
RPTA 405 Entry-Level Competency Assessment

Competencies	Pre-test	Post-test	<i>P</i> -value
Possess knowledge of management principles	2.60	3.43	.0001
Clearly communicate with staff, customers, & the public	3.45	3.61	.289
Possess effective written & oral communication skills	3.00	3.58	.0001
Listen to staff & customers	3.73	3.70	.737
Communicate the organization’s values, vision, & mission	3.03	3.52	.001
Know the community & its needs	2.94	3.39	.003
Develop partnerships with other organizations	2.42	3.10	.0001
Work with boards and elected officials	2.61	3.03	.011
Use effective problem-solving & conflict-resolution skills	3.17	3.62	.001
Make ethical decisions	3.48	3.77	.041
Understand the hiring process	2.57	3.47	.0001

Supervise, discipline & evaluate a diverse staff	2.58	3.13	.0001
Motivate employees	3.13	3.65	.0001
Have leadership skills & abilities	3.52	3.65	.147
Be able to work in a team	3.81	3.94	.093
Use effective organizational skills	3.35	3.52	.187
Prioritize & manage multiple tasks	3.19	3.48	.008
Participate in policy formation, evaluation, & revision	2.19	3.06	.0001
Provide input on strategic, master, recreation, marketing, & technology plans	2.13	2.90	.0001

The 40-item competency list is available for review upon request.

RPTA 210 Student Self-Assessment

During the fall 2009 quarter, 26 students enrolled in RPTA 210: Introduction to Plan Design completed a self-assessment addressing their ability to successfully plan a program as related to the following COAPRT Standards:

- Understand promotional strategies used to market program and events. (7.02.01, cross-listed with 7.02.02)
- Understand basic principles and practices of safety, emergency, and risk management related to recreation programs (7.03.01)

A 3-point rating scale (1=low ability, 3=high ability) was developed to measure the students' perceptions of their ability to successfully meet the learning objectives. While students rated their perceived ability to understand promotional strategies used to market events and programs highly (mean=2.82), they rated themselves less highly on their understanding of basic practices of safety, emergency, and risk management (mean=2.57).

A copy of the self-assessment is available upon request.

Action Plan

Assessment Area 1: Foundation Understandings: COAPRT Standard 7.01

- RPTA 101 students performed more effectively on multiple choice and true false examination questions than they did on short-answer questions. Therefore, the RPTA faculty plan to focus instruction on student ability to not only memorize and retain information at the foundational level, but on their ability to articulate this information in short answers.
- Results of the RPTA 424 student self-assessment suggest the students are confident in their understanding of budgeting, financial management, and funding sources. However, some were less confident in their ability to conduct a cost analysis. Because this initial assessment was conducted in at the beginning of the academic year, an adjustment was made in the winter and spring quarters to allow for additional time on this topic. Future sections of this class will also include extra focus on this topic.
- Continue offering students opportunities to participate in co-curricular activities that provide exposure to the practical application of foundation knowledge of the RPTA field.

Assessment Area 2: Facilitating Recreation Experiences: COAPRT Standard 7.02

- Results of the RPTA 360 final exam analysis suggest students require more instruction on the appropriate use of data analysis techniques when assessing recreation programs. RPTA faculty will concentrate instruction in RPTA 360 and RPTA 460 (Research in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism) on the selection and use of data analysis techniques.
- RPTA faculty plans to provide additional emphasis on student ability to write program plans. This effort will be focused in RPTA 210 as well as those major and concentration courses that emphasize program planning.
- Continue offering students opportunities to participate in co-curricular activities that provide exposure to the practical application of foundation knowledge of the RPTA field.

Assessment Area 3: Management, Marketing, and Finance: COAPRT Standard 7.03

- The RPTA curriculum should continue to find ways of integrating the writing of goals and objectives in multiple courses using the foundation established in RPTA

210. Apparently reinforcing this into program planning is necessary at the 200, 300 and 400 course levels. Obvious courses to emphasize additional writing of goals and objectives include RPTA 252 Therapeutic Recreation and Special Populations and RPTA 360 Evaluation and Assessment.

- Based on the results of the RPTA 405 entry-level competency assessment, RPTA faculty should further concentrate on planning processes, policy formulation, partnerships, and staff evaluation.

The competency assessment items utilized in RPTA 405 should be integrated into the RPTA major curriculum and evaluated at multiple points during a student's academic career. It is recommended that students in RPTA 110 (Career Planning) complete the assessment during their first year of enrollment in the program and that students repeat the assessment during RPTA 463 (Pre-Internship Seminar) or as a portion of a senior exit survey.

- The RPTA faculty plans to focus more instruction in RPTA 405 on human resource issues, particularly the job interview process. For the 2010-2011 academic year, it is recommended that this portion of the course be further developed with peer-review of interview questions prior to implementation of the mock interviews and emphasis during the class lectures on the intricacies of asking interview questions about issues like age and criminal records.
- The RPTA faculty plans to provide additional emphasis on student ability to recognize issues in risk and emergency management when planning/implementing recreation programs. This effort will be focused in RPTA 210 as well as those major and concentration courses that emphasize program planning and in RPTA 342 Legal Aspects of Recreation, Parks and Tourism.

Appendix A

**Council on Accreditation for Parks, Recreation, Tourism and
Related Professions Standards**

COAPRT Accreditation Standards

7.01 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the following entry-level knowledge of the: a) the nature and scope of the relevant park, recreation, tourism or related professions and their associated industries; b) techniques and processes used by professionals and workers in those industries; and c) the foundations of the profession in history, science, and philosophy.

7.01.01 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the scope of the profession that is the focus of the program, along with professional practices of that profession.

7.01.02 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the historical, scientific, and philosophical foundations of the profession(s) for which the program prepares students.

7.01.03 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge of professional practice, and the historical, scientific, and philosophical foundations of the relevant profession in decision making.

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

7.02.01 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to design recreation and related professional experiences clearly reflecting application of knowledge from relevant facets of contemporary professional practice, science, and philosophy.

7.02.02 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to facilitate recreation and related professional experiences for diverse clientele, settings, cultures, and contexts.

7.02.03 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to evaluate recreation and related professional service offerings and to use evaluation data to improve the quality of offerings.

7.03 Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about management/administration in parks, recreation, tourism and/or related professions.

7.03.01 Students graduating from the program shall be able to recognize basic facts, concepts, principles, and procedures of management/administration in parks, recreation, tourism and/or related professions.

7.03.02 Students graduating from the program shall be able to apply entry-level concepts, principles, and procedures of management/administration in parks, recreation, tourism and/or related professions.

7.04 Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate, through a comprehensive internship of not less than 400 clock hours, the ability to use diverse, structured ways of thinking to solve problems related to different facets of professional practice, engage in advocacy, and stimulate innovation.

Appendix B

Focus Group Script

Focus Group Script and Questions:

Introduction:

Faculty Member A: Thanks for taking the time to meet with us today.

You have been identified by the RPTA faculty as a student who has been involved with co-curricular activities relating to our major – for example – participating with the RPTA Club, Rho Phi Lambda, a CPRS Conference, a professional development trip, the RPTA newsletter, etc.

As a department, we are in the process of conducting a self-study. A portion of this self-study provides our department with the opportunity to assess the learning outcomes for our students.

We have decided it would be valuable to conduct today's focus group and to hear from all of you as we ask you to reflect on whether or not your co-curricular experiences have been valuable to your development as students.

What we learn from talking with you will assist our department as we strive to make decisions about future resources and opportunities for students.

We will be taking some notes to keep track of what you say today – but, everything you share with us will be confidential – meaning we won't be attaching your name to anything that you say.

Do you have any questions before we get started? Introduce Jeff and Marni as facilitators.

General Questions related to Co-Curricular Activities through RPTA

Let's Begin - Facilitated by Dr. Jeff Jacobs

- 1) Let's go around the room – please quickly share your name and your anticipated career.
- 2) In your opinion – what makes a learning experience valuable?
- 3) Up to this point – what has been your most valuable learning experience at Cal Poly?
- 4) How would your Cal Poly RPTA experience be different if there were no co-curricular activities or opportunities?
- 5) What would you share with an incoming RPTA student next fall about RPTA co-curricular activities?

- 6) Are there certain concepts or objectives that are enhanced or more easily understood through involvement in co-curricular activities versus a classroom setting?
- 7) How do you think your co-curricular involvement will be judged by potential employers?

Note (off-script). These first seven questions have been general in nature but with an expressed intent to elicit general thoughts and feelings on the learning outcomes associated with co-curricular activities offered through RPTA.

Specific Questions related to Co-Curricular Activities through RPTA

Note (off-script). Based on whether or not the general questions elicited responses aligned with the Council on Accreditation standards and university learning objectives, focus group attendees will be asked more specific questions (as needed) trying to ascertain whether or not students feel that any or all of these standards/objectives are developed through co-curricular activities.

Faculty Member B - Cal Poly has a list of University Learning Objectives. We'd like you to reflect on whether or not participation in co-curricular activities has helped to foster your attainment of these learning objectives. We'd like to highlight the importance of you answering these questions honestly rather than telling us what you think we want to hear.

Let's Continue - (decide on questions based on answers to 1-7)

- 8) In thinking about your preparation to be a professional in our field, what role has participation in co-curricular activities played in helping apply knowledge from the classroom to ethical decision-making in the working world?
- 9) Please share some reflection on whether or not participation in co-curricular activities has helped you to think more critically and creatively.
- 10) Please share some reflection on whether or not participation in co-curricular activities has helped you to communicate more effectively.
- 11) Please share some reflection on whether or not participation in co-curricular activities has helped you in working independently on projects.
- 12) Please share some reflection on whether or not participation in co-curricular activities has helped you in working collaboratively in groups on projects?
- 13) Please share some reflection on whether or not participation in co-curricular activities has helped you to have respect for diversity.

- 14) Please share some reflection on whether or not participation in co-curricular activities has helped raise your awareness of issues related to sustainability?
- 15) Please share some reflection on whether or not participation in co-curricular activities has helped to enhance your commitment to lifelong learning.

Appendix C

RPTA 405 Case Study

RPTA 405 Case Study

The Dark Forest Called Confusion

10 points

Frank started a wilderness company in 1985. He started this “resort” as a way to live an outdoor life. He purchased an old lodge in Utah’s Kings Canyon Forest, about 100 miles north east of Salt Lake City. To start his business, he ran a small ad in OUTSIDE magazine, offering people a place to stay while they explored, on their own, the canyons, mountain peaks, rivers, and Native American artifacts scattered throughout the area. The Ute Indian nation lived in the area for thousands of years and there are many interesting and significant archeological treasures throughout the Kings Canyon Forest. Many young college students, who were mountain climbers, booked rooms at FRANK’S WILDERNESS LODGE, as did families with young children, kayakers who ran the challenging nearby American River, and amateur archeologists interested in Native American artifacts.

Most people visiting the area were from nearby Salt Lake City, but a significant number came from Los Angeles and San Francisco. One guest was Melissa, a single mother who rented a small cabin adjoining the main lodge. She and her six-year-old son went on nature hikes and visited the nearby Native American Museum. She and Frank became acquainted and he learned that Melissa was a college graduate with a degree in outdoor recreation from Utah State University. Frank needed an assistant who had great people skills, and who could lead nature trips for guests. Frank, was an accounting major in college and took great care in keeping books straight, but had little skill in building a business. He did not have a clear vision for what he wanted, or goals. There were no policies written down, as he was the only employee, except for a groundskeeper. Melissa happily took the job as Assistant Resort General Manager for a small salary, and annual bonus tied to total resort revenue. She was highly motivated and went to work quickly.

In the eighteen years Frank owned the property he expanded his room rentals from five rooms to a capacity of about twenty. There were requests from guests for him to serve dinner and breakfast. Frank applied for and received a permit to operate a restaurant. He added a breakfast menu but never got around to providing dinner. Guests had to drive five miles to the nearest diner. He did offer free transportation service to town for guests.

Lately, Frank has seen the demand for his accommodations grow substantially. His guests were loyal and word of mouth advertising brought in new guests. When he approached Melissa and asked for her help, he knew it was time to organize his establishment into a full-scale operating business. He wanted a vision for the future, goals, and policies for handling guests and for the many new employees he felt he would have to hire.

What Would You Do?

Your Job! Act in Melissa's place to lay the initial groundwork for building a well-organized resort operation. Vision, goals, and policies must precede any formal organizational changes in strategy and tactics – precisely what Frank and Melissa are attempting to do with FRANK'S WILDERNESS LODGE. Your job is to provide basic ideas about a vision, goals, and policies. Here are the basic ideas you should consider for each of the three major categories of vision, goals, and policies, taken from chapter 3 of your text. Feel free to consult your text.

BUT, first you must identify your resources: list all the recreation/educational programs you can envision based on the description of the business. Consider Melissa's background. Next, estimate the number of new employees you might need to hire. This is an estimate only. Then proceed to the following tasks.

VISION

A vision is a forward thinking exercise. It should describe the culture of the organization at all levels, i.e. programming, service, promotion, maintenance, and employee selection and training. Consider trends in this field. These trends include aging baby boomers who are healthy, have money, and seek adventure. Family vacations are a growing trend, as is conservation of resources. You'll want to consider taping multi-cultural markets. This statement, for class purposes, should be limited to a half page. (If you feel like it, you should come up with a name that reflects your vision.)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives are fundamental planning tools. You covered these in great detail in RPTA 210. Goals are broadly defined as aims or intentions, i.e. "we will seek cross culture markets." Or, "we'll offer nature education programs for children." Come up with your own examples. How will you communicate your goals to all concerned 'publics'?

An objective is a tactic you will employ to achieve a particular goal. For example, "we will invest ten percent of our advertising budget in print ads in Hispanic and other ethnic media."

Provide three goals with at least two objectives for each goal.

POLICY

In simple terms, a policy is the way things are done. Your text states that policies are formal guidelines that set a course of action that guides human behavior. These guidelines are written documents that spell out purposes, aims, goals, objectives, principles, procedures, and rules that provide direction to staff within the organization.

These policies are grouped into three main categories: 1. *Enabling behavior* – staff can do these things, i.e. “maintenance staff can eliminate dangerous hazards without permission but must identify risks in writing,” etc. 2. *Regulating Behavior* – “staff cannot conduct personal business during work hours without manager’s consent,” and, “the accountant is responsible for bank deposits.” 3. *Inhibiting behavior* – prohibited acts that violate safety regulations such as “no smoking on premises.”

ALL POLICIES MUST:

1. Be flexible
2. Comprehensive
3. Coordinative
4. Ethical
5. Clear

For this assignment you need to provide two policies in each of the three areas mentioned above to illustrate you understand what the area covers.

As a recap, your response to this case should include the following:

1. List and describe all the recreation/educational programs you can envision based on the description of the business
2. Indicate how many employees you will need and the positions they will fill
3. Write a vision statement
4. Write three goals with at least two objectives for each goal
5. Write two policies in each of the three policy categories

Good luck!

Appendix D

RPTA 405 Human Resources Quiz

JOB INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Circle the number for questions that are illegal to ask in a job interview or on a job application.

1. What is your name?
2. What is your current address?
3. What is your phone number?
4. What is your date of birth?
5. What position are you applying for?
6. Are you married or single?
7. How many children do you have?
8. Have you ever been arrested?
9. Are you pregnant or is someone else in your family pregnant?
10. Please provide three references to include a previous employer, professor and your pastor or minister.
11. Please submit a photo of yourself prior to your interview.
12. What languages do you speak fluently?
13. Are you a U.S. citizen?
14. Do you have any physical, mental, or sensory handicaps which might affect work performance or which should be considered in job placement?
15. What is your credit rating?
16. In case of an emergency whom can we contact?
17. What is your previous education?
18. Have you been in the military?
19. If you have been in the military what type of discharge did you receive?
20. What is your weight and height?