

SUNY Cortland

Department of
Recreation, Parks & Leisure Studies

Professional Portfolio



SUNY Cortland
Recreation, Parks & Leisure Studies Department

Portfolio Advising

What is portfolio advising?

Portfolio advising is the process of compiling a longitudinal collection of your work as a student, organizing it in a manner that is meaningful to you, and using the collection as a basis for regular reflection and self-assessment. Reflection and self-assessment should focus on your learning and progression as a student and your development as a professional in Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies. Your portfolio will include writing assignments, as well as a wealth of other materials of use to you as you progress in the degree program and move toward the professional world.

Why use portfolio advising?

As a student in the Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies major, you will take a core of courses common to all students in the major. In addition, you may pursue a concentration in any of these four areas: leisure/recreation program delivery; management of leisure services; outdoor recreation management and education; and, therapeutic recreation. The core classes are the foundation on which the concentrations are built. In the core and concentration courses, you will complete writing assignments, oral presentations, and other work that becomes more complex and applied as you progress through the major. In addition you will do valuable work of all sorts in your general education, liberal arts and sciences, and required and elective courses outside of the department. Because of the extensive and valuable work done by students in the Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies major, and because on the need for students to be able to integrate and apply this work to their future professional practice, a system of portfolio advising will be used.

Portfolio advising offers the following benefits to you as a student in the Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies Department:

- * Assists you in organizing and documenting the work you are doing in your courses
- * Assists you in conducting an ongoing self-assessment of the learning that has occurred for you as you progress through the major
- * Assists you in having more responsibility and control in your own learning process, helping to shift the locus of control from faculty members and advisors to you, the student
- * Assists you in making wiser decisions in course selection and sequence, and in completing the requirements of your degree
- * Assists you in working with your advisor, as your advisor will gain a more holistic view of your work
- * Serves as a resource of your completed work for your future search for a professional position in the field

How do I use the portfolio?

- ❑ Begin to collect your work from your courses, fieldwork experiences, co-curricular activities, leisure activities, and professional involvement. Use the portfolio to help you organize your work. Suggested assignments to collect are given in some portfolio sections, but you may choose to collect others.
- ❑ For each *significant* piece you add to your portfolio, complete a “Portfolio Cover Sheet” (blue form). The “Portfolio Cover Sheet” asks three basic questions: 1) What? 2) So What? 3) Now What? Its purpose is to help you assess your learning and apply that learning to future learning and future professional practice. “Portfolio Cover Sheets” are provided, but you can design your own, as long as you answer the three basic questions.
- ❑ For each advising session with your advisor, you must write a “Portfolio Review & Reflection” paper. Use the questions on the “Portfolio Review & Reflection” sheet (green form) to assist you. Also, use all your materials in your portfolio, including any “Portfolio Cover Sheets” you completed, to help you write this reflection paper each semester.
- ❑ When you come for advising each semester, ***you must bring your portfolio and your portfolio reflection paper*** with you. It is your ticket to advising. Be prepared to discuss the work you have been doing and the changes you may observe in it.
- ❑ Keep your CAPP reports and degree plan up-to-date and organized in your portfolio. When pre-registration period arrives, you will have a better idea of courses you need to take and can plan out your semester course plan prior to meeting with your advisor. This will allow for much more quality time with your advisor, where you can talk about your academic and professional development instead of course scheduling.
- ❑ Periodically, you will be required to review your portfolio in specific courses. For example, part of your grade in REC 470: Senior Seminar, depends on YOU having kept your portfolio up-to-date as you have progressed through the major. You will not be able to do this kind of work the night before it is due. It must be done regularly, under your own initiative.
- ❑ Upon graduation, you may want to reorganize your portfolio to use as a tool in your job search. It will be an invaluable way to present to prospective employers the quality and amount of knowledge, skills and competencies you have gained as you earned your degree in Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies.

What should go into my portfolio?

Each section of the portfolio is clearly identified and describes examples of work you could include. At times, your professors will encourage you to include certain work you have completed in your portfolio. It really is your choice on what to include, as the portfolio represents the learning and professional development that has occurred for you. The sections of the portfolio represent the important areas where development as a professional is expected:

- Academic program information
- Communication and technology skills
- Professional development
- Professional/field experiences
- Leisure skills & co-curricular involvement
- Pre-internship materials (completed in REC 470)
- Internship materials (completed in REC 475)
- Other entries of your choice

Portfolio Cover Sheet

Each *significant* entry (not every entry) you make in your portfolio should include:

- 1) the assignment or evidence
- 2) this Portfolio Cover Sheet

Periodically, you need to remind yourself to complete this reflective exercise.

1. What?

Describe the assignment, evidence or artifact.

2. So What?

How did this assignment add to learning the subject? Relate this to the standards, skills and competencies needed to be a professional in the Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies field.

3. Now What?

How did this assignment add to your growth and learning as a person and as a developing professional? How will you apply what you learned in this assignment to future practice in the field?

Portfolio Review & Reflection Paper

Before you meet with your advisor each semester, review your entire portfolio, its contents and the Portfolio Cover Sheets you have completed and use this reflection to write a summary paper. Use the following questions to help you with your portfolio reflection paper:

- As you review the contents and reflection notes in your portfolio, do you observe changes in your work?
- Have your ideas or thoughts taken new direction?
- Can you identify changes in your ability to get your ideas across?
- Are there pieces of your work that seem to you to mark turning points in your thought or in your ways of expressing yourself?
- Are there pieces you learned a lot from, that made real changes in you?
- As you go over your portfolio, choose assignments you feel good about. What do you like about them?
- Are there pieces in your portfolio that fall short of your own purposes and standards? What about them dissatisfies you?

These are just examples of questions you could ask yourself as you review your portfolio. The goal is for you to take responsibility to assess your learning and your development as a professional.

Write a paper that summarizes your reflections, put one copy in your portfolio, and bring one copy to submit to your advisor. Be sure to put your name and the date/semester on your portfolio reflection paper.

Summary of Portfolio Entries for Communication and Technology Skills

Course	Evidence (see examples on the back of this page)
CPN 100: Academic Writing I	
CPN 101: Academic Writing II	
CAP 100: Computer Applications	
COM 210: Public Speaking	
REC 271: Foundations of Rec	
REC 280: Programming	
REC 293: Diversity & Inclusion	
REC 370: Outdoor Ed. Practicum	
REC 380: Leadership	
REC 402: Mgmt. of Rec. Resources	
REC 407: Evaluation and Research	
REC 445: (WI) Admin. of Recreation	
REC 470: Senior Seminar	

Evidence/Assignments to Include in the Communication & Technology Section of Your Portfolio

Written Examples:

- Papers
- Projects
- Journal Entries
- Brochures
- Newsletter
- Press Releases
- Lesson Plans
- Activity Analyses
- Program Plans
- Management Plans
- Etc.

Oral Examples*:

- Speeches
- Poster Presentations
- Reflective Journal Entries of Presentations Given
- Etc.

Technology Examples:

- Word-processed document
- Data base printout
- Spreadsheet printout
- Presentation software printout
- Web page printout
- Statistical results printout
- Etc.

*Note: Effective evidence could include photos, video tapes, audio tapes, printouts of Power Point presentations, evaluations from audience members, etc.

Summary of Portfolio Entries for Professional Development

Area	Evidence (see examples on the back of this page)
Foundations of the field	
Programming, leadership, and administration	
Cultural competence & diversity	
Professional ethics	
Professionalism (resume, recommendation letters, professional memberships, conference attendance, etc.	
Certification preparation and documents	
Other:	

Evidence/Assignments to Include in the Professional Development Section of Your Portfolio

Foundations Examples:

- Papers from REC 271 (recreation, leisure and play definitions)
- Media assignment from REC 271
- Projects that show an understanding of play, recreation, and leisure
- Interviews with professionals in the field

Programming, Leadership, and Administration Examples:

- Journal entries from REC 280
- Program plans
- Brochures developed, marketing materials developed
- Journals from REC 370 OEP
- Leadership assignments/papers
- Risk management plans
- Policies and procedures manuals developed
- Budgets developed
- Research poster and paper
- Etc....

Cultural Competence & Diversity Examples:

- Journal entries from REC 293
- I-Search
- Scores on cultural competence assessments
- Fieldwork journal entries
- Accessibility surveys
- Projects that deal with other cultures or groups
- REC 150 assignments
- GE class assignments from Other World Cultures
- International study or international internships (photos, journals, etc.)
- Etc....

Professional Ethics Examples:

- Journal entries from fieldwork hours that wrestle with ethical issues
- Debate materials from REC 470
- Ethical dilemma case scenarios from classes (e.g., REC 470, REC 438)
- Codes of Ethics
- Case for peer supervision from your internship
- Etc....

Professionalism Examples:

- Resume
- Recommendation letters
- Professional memberships
- Conference attendance
- Awards, honors (e.g., Rho Phi Lambda)
- Etc....

Certification Preparation Examples:

- Applications for CTRS or CPRP
- Responding to Emergencies or Wilderness First Responder certification cards
- Other certifications received (e.g., ACA Kayak Instructor Certification, etc.)

Summary of Portfolio Entries for Professional/Field Experiences

(See full description of the Professional/Field Experience requirement on the back of this page)

Agency	Number of Hours	Evidence Provided (log sheets, verification letter from agency, recommendation letters/evaluations, job descriptions, etc.)
Total:	At least 160 hours	In at least 3 different areas of the field

Professional/Field Experiences Requirement

What is the requirement for professional experience in the Recreation Degree?

Students majoring in Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies are expected to accumulate a minimum of 160 hours of professional experience in the field prior to their internship experience (REC 475). This experience is described below in detail.

What is the purpose of the professional experience requirement?

The purpose of the professional experience requirement is to gain exposure to and understanding of *current* practice in the Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies field. An important part of the experience is reflection, through the documentation you will do. This in turn will help you understand more fully the body of knowledge you will learn in your academic courses. It will help you more easily integrate theoretical ideas with practical applications.

What are the criteria for the professional experience requirement?

- Your experience must take place in at least 3 different agencies, in differing aspects of the field (e.g., therapeutic recreation, management, community, outdoor, etc.).
- At each agency, you must complete a minimum of 20 hours for it to count as a part of your professional experience requirement.
- At each agency, you must have clear supervision from a paid professional in the field at that agency.
- The content of the professional experience must be *recreation services and with an established agency*.
- If you want to use a job as part of this requirement, you must provide a job description that clearly identifies that recreation services are a part of your duties, under the supervision of a paid professional.
- You must document your experience in your portfolio using the required format (see attached form to use).
- Your supervisor must verify your professional experience (on the letterhead of the agency); the supervisor can also provide a letter of recommendation or evaluation for your portfolio, if you desire that.
- The experience must have taken place within the last five years, and you must be able to clearly document all the above requirements for it to count as a part of your total hours.
- What does not count? Academic courses; extracurricular activities; travel time as a part of the professional experience; overnight experiences only count 12 hours/day.

When do I need to complete the professional experience requirement?

In order to do your internship, you must have completed at least 160 hours of professional experience, clearly documented in your portfolio. In two courses, EDU 328, *Programming and Leadership*, and REC 293, *Recreation for Persons with Disabilities*, you will complete 20 hours in each course. In REC 470, *Senior Seminar*, you will complete 30 hours of fieldwork. These can be included as a part of your professional experience requirement. It is important for you to begin accumulating this experience as soon as possible.

How do I document and show proof that I have completed the professional experience requirement?

You must complete the form, *Professional Experience in Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies*, for each professional experience you want to count in your 160 hours (you can use the paperwork you complete in REC 380, REC 293 and REC 470 for those experiences in lieu of the form). You must have a letter of verification from the agency supervisor, on agency letterhead, for each log sheet you complete. You must provide a written job description from the agency, if you are using a paid job as meeting part of the professional experience requirement.

You will compile your log sheets and documentation in this section of your Professional Portfolio. Please work closely with your academic advisor in determining and reviewing your professional experiences. The intent of the requirement is not the mere accumulation of hours – it is to encourage professional development through meaningful experience, reflection, and integration into your growing knowledge base. Enjoy!

Log Sheet Professional Experience in Recreation, Parks and Leisure Studies

Please use this form to document your professional experience hours in the field for each agency/experience.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

WHERE?
Name of agency:
Address of agency:
Phone number of agency:
Type of agency:

SUPERVISION?
Name of supervisor:
Contact information for supervisor:
Attach verification letter of experience on agency letterhead from supervisor listed above.

WHEN?
Specific dates of the professional experience: (Be sure these dates are in the verification letter)
Number of hours completed: (Be sure these hours are in the verification letter)

WHO?
Describe the general characteristics of those who participated in the programs or services offered:

WHAT?
Describe your responsibilities and duties: (If you are using a job, attach your job description from the agency)

SO WHAT?
Describe your thoughts, feelings, perceptions, reactions to the experience:

Summary of Portfolio Entries for Leisure Skills & Co-Curricular Involvement

Leisure/Recreation Skill Area and Co-Curricular Areas	Evidence Provided (see examples on the back of this page)
Arts and Crafts	
Sports, Games, and Social Recreation	
Dance, Drama, and Music	
Environmental/ Outdoor Activities	
Community Service	
Organizations	
Campus Activities	
Other Areas	

Evidence/Assignments to Include in the Leisure Skills/Co-Curricular Section of Your Portfolio

Leisure Skills Examples:

- Activity courses (course outlines of skills learned)
- Photos
- Journal entries
- Outcomes of the leisure skill development (drawings, photography, artwork, craft projects, etc.)
- NOLS course participation and materials
- Etc....

Co-Curricular Involvement Examples:

- Membership and involvement in CCRA
- Leadership in COOP, participation in COOP
- Involvement in the Community Bike Program
- Membership and involvement in campus activities
- Community service activities
- Leadership positions in student clubs
- Raquette Lake retreats, etc.
- Etc....