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**Template  
Degree Program  
Assessment of Student Learning Plan  
Kansas State University**

- Check the box if your program's student learning outcomes have been modified since November 2003. If so, please email ([apr@ksu.edu](mailto:apr@ksu.edu)) or attach a hard copy to this document.

**A. College, Department, and Date**

College: *Agriculture*  
Department: *Horticulture, Forestry & Recreation Resources*  
Date: *October 28, 2004*

**B. Contact Person(s) for the Assessment Plans**

*Thomas D. Warner, Professor and Department Head*

**C. Degree Program**

B.S. In Agriculture, Park Management and Conservation Major, Options in Park Management, Interpretation, Law Enforcement, Administration

**D. Assessment of Student Learning Three-Year Plan**

**1. Student Learning Outcome(s)**

**\*i. Discipline-Specific Knowledge/Technical Competencies  
Park Management and Conservation**

Discipline-specific knowledge/technical competencies will focus on the following core curriculum outcomes. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding in:

- "Conceptual Foundations" of the Parks and Recreation Enterprise
- The Parks and Recreation "Profession"
- Delivery Systems
- Program and Event Planning
- Administration and Management
- Legal Aspects

**\*National Recreation and Park Association Standards and Evaluative Criteria (2004 Council on Accreditation)**

**ii. Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking Skills**

Students will have the ability to solve problems and think critically using new knowledge and technological development in Park Management and Conservation. Students will increase their ability to solve problems individually and in a group setting through the process of: identifying and understanding the problem, being able to obtain background knowledge, generating possible solutions, identifying and evaluating constraints, choosing a solution, functioning within a problem-solving group, evaluating the process, and exhibiting problem-solving dispositions. Students will increase their critical thinking skills through the process of constructing the situation and supporting the reasoning behind a solution.

Last revised 1/20/05

### iii. Communication Skills

Students will develop the ability to communicate effectively in a variety of formats. Effective communication will include awareness of audience, organization, depth of thought; written communication will be grammatically correct, with proper spelling,; nonverbal communications; image.

Special rationale for selecting these learning outcomes (optional):

*None*

Relationship to K-State Student Learning Outcomes (insert the program SLOs and check all that apply):

| Program SLOs                             | University-wide SLOs (Undergraduate Programs) |                   |               |           |                                   | Program SLO is conceptually different from university SLOs |
|--|---|-------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|--|
|  | Knowledge                                     | Critical Thinking | Communication | Diversity | Academic / Professional Integrity |  |
| 1. Knowledge                             | ✓   |                   |               | ✓         | ✓                                 |  |
| 2. Problem-solving and Critical Thinking |   | ✓                 |               |           |                                   |  |
| 3. Communication                         |   |                   | ✓             |           |                                   |  |

## 2. How will the learning outcomes be assessed? What groups will be included in the assessment?

Our learning outcome assessment contains two levels of evaluation: (1) an assessment of graduates' success in finding employment and their preparation for continuing education; and (2) an assessment of learning competencies in three skill areas (student learning outcomes).

### i. Student Learning Assessment

Our learning outcome assessment will focus on undergraduate performance in three skill areas (discipline specific knowledge; problem-solving and critical thinking; and communication). Learner competencies in skill areas will be assessed using assessment of internship experiences in the student's area of specialization, baseline assessment, and end-program assessment. Skill areas are presented and reinforced throughout our core curriculum.

#### 1. Baseline Assessment [Direct measure]

All first year students (freshman and transfer students) will be evaluated using a division developed test reflecting the intended student outcomes for the Park Management and Conservation program. This baseline assessment will be conducted in **RRES 210** every fall semester.

#### 2. Embedded Assessment [Direct measure]

Our Park Management and Conservation students will be evaluated through our required internship program (RRES 492 – 6 hours). The student internship requires employment within a park/natural resources agency with agency-wide work responsibilities and exposures. Our students will be evaluated to assess competencies in specific knowledge, problem solving, critical thinking and communications. The employer and all internship supervisors within the agency will evaluate the student on the above competencies. As of this writing, the rubrics are in development.

### 3. End Program Assessment [Direct measure]

Graduating seniors will be evaluated using a division developed test reflecting the intended student outcomes of the Park Management and Conservation program. This end program assessment will be compared to baseline assessment to evaluate the Park Management and Conservation program's level of success in making positive change in the SLOs.

#### ii. Employment and Continuing Education of Graduates

Overall teaching program success will be evaluated based on success of graduates in finding employment and overall satisfaction with their program of study. Exit surveys conducted with all graduating seniors will include items to assess student opinions on their improvement on the selected learning outcomes during their tenure in the Park Management and Conservation program.

#### Goals and Measures of Success

| GOAL   | MEASURE   | CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS  |
|--|---|---|
| Students graduating from the department will have a high level of satisfaction with their training and program of study. | Conduct <b>exit survey</b> of graduating students to determine level of satisfaction with their program of study. Students will be asked to rate the extent to which they accomplished these three learning outcomes (will begin 2007).<br>[Indirect measure] | More than 70% of graduates will be "very satisfied" with the education they receive from our department.                  |
| Graduates of the Park and Management Conservation baccalaureate program will be favorably evaluated by their employer.   | One-year post graduation <b>survey</b> of graduates employers (will begin 2008). [Indirect Measure]   | More than 70% of Park Management Conservation employers of our graduates will be satisfied with the students' performance |

#### Park Management and Conservation Required Core Courses

| Class/Outcome                          | Discipline Knowledge | Problem Solving/Critical Thinking | Communication |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| RRES 210 Leisure and Life              | +                    |                                   | +             |
| RRES 310 Outdoor Recreation Leadership | +                    |                                   | +             |
| RRES 350 Parks & Recreation Practicum  | +                    | +                                 | +             |
| RRES 489 Program and Event Planning    | +                    | +                                 | +             |
| RRES 690 Park & Rec Administration     | +                    | +                                 |               |
| RRES 492 Internship in Parks & Rec.    | +                    | +                                 | +             |
| RRES 575 Mgt of Water Res for Leisure  | +                    | +                                 |               |
| RRES 580 Park Ops & Facilities Mgt     | +                    | +                                 |               |
| RRES 635 Environmental Interpretation  | +                    | +                                 | +             |

+instructor's indicated outcome as outcome for their course

Last revised 1/20/05

**3. When will these outcomes be assessed? When and in what format will the results of the assessment be discussed?**

| LEARNING OUTCOMES  | ASSESSMENT TIMETABLE |                              |          |  |          |  | DISCUSSION OF RESULTS  |
|--|----------------------|------------------------------|----------|--|----------|--|--|
|  | 2005                 |                              | 2006     |  | 2007     |  | 2008   |
|  | Spring               | Fall                         | Spring   | Fall                                     | Spring   | Fall   | Fall   |
| <b>Discipline Specific Knowledge<br/>Conceptual Foundation</b> |                      | RRES 210<br>Baseline<br>Exam | RRES 492 | RRES 210<br>Baseline<br>Exam<br>RRES 492 | RRES 492 | RRES 210<br>Baseline<br>Exam<br>RRES 492<br>End-Program<br>Senior Exit<br>Exam | Comparing 2007 End-<br>Program with 2005<br>Baseline<br><br>2010 Baseline created<br><br>All teaching faculty<br>will meet annually to<br>consider the results of<br>the assessment as it<br>pertains to the core<br>curriculum. |
| <b>Problem Solving/Critical<br/>Thinking</b>                   |                      | Baseline<br>Exam             | RRES 492 | Baseline<br>Exam<br>RRES 492             | RRES 492 | Baseline<br>Exam<br>RRES 492<br>End-Program<br>Senior Exit<br>Exam             |  |
| <b>Communication</b>   |                      | Baseline<br>Exam             | RRES 492 | Baseline<br>Exam<br>RRES 492             | RRES 492 | Baseline<br>Exam<br>RRES 492<br>End-Program<br>Senior Exit<br>Exam             |  |

**4. What is the unit's process for using assessment results to improve student learning?**

The Park Management and Conservation teaching faculty will meet once each fall semester to review the summary data from all the measures described and to discuss implications for course or core curriculum changes. The baseline assessment will provide a better understanding of the students' strengths and weaknesses at the start of their park management and conservation studies and will be used to inform the instructors of the core courses on design of their courses. The baseline and end-program assessment results will be used to determine if and what changes in performance have been made. If significant weaknesses in student learning outcomes are apparent, improvements or changes to the core courses and core curriculum may occur. The imbedded assessment will be used by the core course instructors to determine if the intended student learning outcomes are being met. From the annual review of the data, the teaching faculty will discuss the results and changes that may be needed if intent and outcome for the core courses and core curriculum are significantly different. Recommendations will be made from these reviews for course and/or core curriculum improvement following current departmental protocol.