

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND LEISURE STUDIES

Patrick Lewis, Associate Professor and Chairperson

The Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies offers two majors: outdoor adventure leadership and therapeutic recreation. These majors allow students to specialize in recreation program areas and settings of particular interest and lead to a broad range of careers in the recreation, park, and leisure professions. The program is accredited by The Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions sponsored by the National Recreation and Park Association. Two minors are also available: one in recreation and one in outdoor pursuits. Students are also able to double major in therapeutic recreation and outdoor adventure leadership.

Please note that students are no longer being accepted into the two Recreation and Leisure Studies majors as of the fall 2021 semester.

Please note that students are no longer being accepted into the Recreation and Outdoor Pursuits minors after 12/31/2021.

Majors & Minors

- Outdoor Adventure Leadership Major – B.S. (<https://catalog.ithaca.edu/undergrad/schools/school-health-sciences-human-performance/department-recreation-leisure-studies/outdoor-adventure-leadership-major-bs/>)
- Therapeutic Recreation Major – B.S. (<https://catalog.ithaca.edu/undergrad/schools/school-health-sciences-human-performance/department-recreation-leisure-studies/therapeutic-recreation-major-bs/>)
- Outdoor Pursuits Minor (<https://catalog.ithaca.edu/undergrad/schools/school-health-sciences-human-performance/department-recreation-leisure-studies/outdoor-pursuits-minor/>)
- Recreation Minor (<https://catalog.ithaca.edu/undergrad/schools/school-health-sciences-human-performance/department-recreation-leisure-studies/recreation-minor/>)

RLS 10100 Leisure and Society (LA)

Introduction to the dimensions of leisure and recreation services in modern society. Potential of recreation as related to human needs and development. Survey of agencies, organizations, and programs in the leisure service field. Preference given to Freshmen and Sophomores. Junior and seniors considered based on availability. (F-S,Y)

Attributes: 1, HM, SS, TIDE

3 Credits

RLS 10400 Cooperative Games Facilitation (NLA)

Basic concepts of cooperative games – philosophy, leadership, curriculum development, and evaluation. The course includes leadership and referee techniques, safety considerations, group dynamics, and game philosophies. A variety of game strategies are presented. Other new and innovative approaches to games are also presented. (IRR)

1 Credit

RLS 10500 Fundamentals of Leadership (LA)

Basic concepts in leadership. Examination of sources required for authentic leadership: connections, identity, integrity, and personal power. Analysis of effective leadership practices and the application to collaborative environments. (F-S,Y)

Attributes: ESTS, SO, TPJ, TWOS

3 Credits

RLS 12500 Understanding Disability: Characteristics, Causes, Services (LA)

Introduction to the wide spectrum of disabilities – including cognitive disability, mental illness, physical disability, and sensory impairment – within home, school, community, and therapeutic settings. Course focuses on abilities, rights, characteristics, and needs of people with diverse abilities. Issues are discussed in light of societal, cultural, and historical barriers. Self-advocacy, family perspectives, technological developments, and current trends in educational and rehabilitative services are also considered. Includes an experiential swim program with children of varying abilities during class time. Preference given to Freshmen and Sophomores. (F-S,Y)

Attributes: 1, DV

3 Credits

RLS 13300 Introduction to Therapeutic Recreation (NLA)

An in-depth study of the scope of therapeutic recreation. Students study the historical and philosophical foundations of the profession. The role of therapeutic recreation professionals in the spectrum of health care and human service settings serving clients with a variety of disabilities is explored. Students participate in a 20-hour field experience and interact with professionals in the field throughout the course. (F,Y)

3 Credits

RLS 13700 Leisure Travel (NLA)

Develops an understanding of tourism and its social, economic, and environmental impact as one of the world's largest and fastest-growing industries. Examines travel motivation, travel trends including ecotourism, and the distinctive conditions that attract visitors to different regions of the world. Enables students to discover interesting places to visit and prepares them to deal with logistical concerns related to climate, monetary exchanges, customs, time changes, health, and safety. The role of intermediaries to facilitate travel arrangements and provide information is also examined. (S,Y)

3 Credits

RLS 14000 Mountain Biking (NLA)

An experiential introduction to the concepts, skills, and techniques of mountain biking. Topics include riding technique, equipment and maintenance, riding for health and wellness, and environmental considerations. (B,F,S)

1 Credit

RLS 15000 Rock Climbing (NLA)

An introduction to the fundamentals of rock climbing, including safety considerations. Skills taught include the care and use of equipment, knot-tying, belaying, rappelling, and a variety of movements on rock. Pass/fail only. (F-S,Y)

1 Credit

RLS 15100 Foundations of Outdoor Adventure Pursuits (LA)

An examination of the historical, psychological, social, and philosophical foundations of outdoor adventure pursuits. (F-S,Y)

Attributes: 1, SS

3 Credits

RLS 16000 Selected Topics in Recreation and Leisure Studies (NLA)

Exploration of a specific area of recreation and leisure studies. Topics vary based on student demand and on faculty expertise in the international faculty exchange program. (IRR)
0.5-3 Credits

RLS 17100 Introduction to Backpacking (NLA)

An experiential introduction to the concepts, skills, and techniques of backpacking. Topics include trip planning and preparation, equipment use and care, backcountry cooking techniques, navigation and safety considerations, and minimal impact practices. Course includes mandatory weekend field experience. (F-S,Y)
1 Credit

RLS 18000 Selected Topics in Adventure Skills Fundamentals (NLA)

Examines fundamental concepts and standard practices of a specific adventure skill discipline. Application of technical skills. This course involves field experiences. This course may be repeated up to six times for different selected topics. (IRR)
1 Credit

RLS 18001 Selected Topics in Wilderness Medicine (NLA)

Teaches the fundamental concepts and standard practices that are the foundation of a given skill discipline. The process is presented as the application of technical, environmental, and organizational skills. Teaches the concepts and practices that are required in various skill disciplines such as backpacking, vertical environments, mountaineering, and whitewater as well as various other disciplines. This course involves field experiences. (IRR)
1 Credit

RLS 18002 Selected Topics in Winter Environments (NLA)

Teaches the fundamental concepts and standard practices that are the foundation of a given skill discipline. The process is presented as the application of technical, environmental, and organizational skills. Teaches the concepts and practices that are required in various skill disciplines such as backpacking, vertical environments, mountaineering, and whitewater as well as various other disciplines. This course involves field experiences. (IRR)
1 Credit

RLS 18003 Selected Topics in Whitewater Environments (NLA)

Examines fundamental concepts and standard practices of a specific adventure skill discipline. Application of technical skills. This course involves field experiences. This course may be repeated up to six times for different selected topics. (Y)
1 Credit

RLS 18004 Selected Topics in Vertical Environments (NLA)

Examines fundamental concepts and standard practices of a specific adventure skill discipline. Application of technical skills. This course involves field experiences. This course may be repeated up to six times for different selected topics. (Y)
1 Credit

RLS 18005 Selected Topics in Rescue (NLA)

Examines fundamental concepts and standard practices of a specific adventure skill discipline. Application of technical skills. This course involves field experiences. This course may be repeated for up to six credits for different selected topics. (Y)
1-2 Credits

RLS 19000 Selected Topics in Adventure Skill Fieldwork (NLA)

An experiential education opportunity that applies adventure skills to real-life situations. The student works in an adventure setting and is actively involved in some aspect of program planning, delivery, and direct leadership. This course may be repeated up to three times for different selected topics. Prerequisites: 1 Course from RLS 18000-18009. (Y)
2 Credits

RLS 19001 Selected Topics in Whitewater Environments (NLA)

An experiential education opportunity that applies adventure skills to real-life situations. The student works in an adventure setting and is actively involved in some aspect of program planning, delivery, and direct leadership. This course may be repeated up to three times for different selected topics. Prerequisites: Corresponding RLS 180XX. (Y)
2 Credits

RLS 19002 Selected Topics in Vertical Environments (NLA)

An experiential education opportunity that applies adventure skills to real-life situations. The student works in an adventure setting and is actively involved in some aspect of program planning, delivery, and direct leadership. This course may be repeated up to three times for different selected topics. Prerequisites: Corresponding RLS 180XX. (Y)
2 Credits

RLS 21500 Youth at Risk (LA)

Students explore, through theoretical and experiential learning, the factors that contribute to or influence the leisure, educational, and social problems of youth at risk. Included among these factors are abuse, neglect, homelessness, recent immigration, minority group membership, having single and/or addicted parents, and various kinds of family dysfunctions. An overview of developmental, social, and psychological perspectives is presented along with innovative programs for youth at risk. Includes weekend workshop (minimal fee). Prerequisites: Sophomore standing or above. (IRR)
Attributes: 1
3 Credits

RLS 21600 Outdoor Adventure Skills (NLA)

Introduction to basic skills and concepts in a variety of outdoor adventure pursuits. Skills include trip preparation, menu planning, cooking techniques, and safety considerations in both moderate and cold-weather camping. Fundamentals in backcountry travel may include backpacking, flat-water canoeing, rock climbing, kayaking, and winter travel. Component of the Immersion Semester Program with associated fees. Pre-requisites: RLS 15100; RLS 21800; permission of instructor. (S,Y)
Attributes: ESTS
3 Credits

RLS 21800 Wilderness First Responder (NLA)

Improvised resources, varying environmental conditions, and extended care used as the framework for learning to respond to medical emergencies in remote wilderness settings. Examines necessary tools to make critical medical and evacuation decisions. Certification awarded upon successful completion. Course includes required weekend or Fall/Spring break participation. Course includes fee for materials, resources, and certification exam. Prerequisites: RLS 15100; permission of instructor. (F,Y)
Attributes: ESTS
3 Credits

RLS 22000 The Wilderness Experience (LA)

Exploration of the complexity of a wilderness experience. Focuses on wilderness values and the relationship humanity has with shaping the natural environment as well as the effects wilderness has on human relationships. This is an extended field experience. Component of the Immersion Semester Program with associated fees. Prerequisites: RLS 15100; RLS 21800; outdoor adventure leadership major or outdoor pursuits minor; permission of instructor. (S,Y)
4 Credits

RLS 22300 Wilderness Literacy (LA)

Survey of works in a variety of media that focuses on the theme of wilderness as a metaphor. Examination of the important ideas, people, cultures, and deep intellectual history of the wilderness movement. Component of the Immersion Semester Program with associated fees. Prerequisites: RLS 15100; RLS 21800; outdoor adventure leadership major or outdoor pursuits minor; permission of instructor. (S,Y)
Attributes: HU
2 Credits

RLS 23200 Program Planning (NLA)

Takes students through the process of programming, including the setting and evaluation of goals and objectives. Provides opportunities to experience the implementation of ideas in the community. This course also incorporates activity analysis, leisure education, program safety and risk management, and public relations. Prerequisites: RLS 10100 and RLS 10500. (F,Y)
3 Credits

RLS 23800 Leisure and Aging (LA)

Explores the role of leisure in the aging process. Students analyze the effects of incorporating meaningful leisure activities into the lifestyles of older individuals, based on their needs and interests. Visits to facilities and interaction with older individuals in leisure settings demonstrate the importance of leisure to a healthy lifestyle for older individuals. Prerequisites: RLS 10100 or GERO 10100. (IRR)
3 Credits

RLS 24300 Interventions and Protocols in Therapeutic Recreation (NLA)

Explores ways in which arts and related recreation activities can aid in the rehabilitation process of individuals with disabling conditions, develop individual creativity, and enhance the quality of life. Programming areas include art, music, dance, drama, writing, literary readings, movement, reminiscence, horticulture, pet therapy, and biofeedback. Prerequisites: RLS 12500. (FY)
3 Credits

RLS 24800 Service Learning in Recreation (NLA)

An experiential education opportunity that applies program planning theories and skills to real-life situations. The student works in a leisure service agency and is actively involved in some aspect of program planning and direct leadership. This course combines classroom and agency experience. Prerequisites: RLS 10100; RLS 10500; RLS 23200 (may be taken concurrently); major or minor status in department or aging studies major. (F-S,Y)
3 Credits

RLS 25000 Intermediate Rock Climbing (NLA)

This course builds upon the fundamentals of rock climbing through more advanced application of climbing skills, techniques, site management, and contemporary climbing issues. Specific topics will include sport lead climbing, top-rope anchor building, and top-rope site management considerations for an outdoor climbing environment. This course includes a mandatory field experience. There is course fee associated with this course. Prerequisites: RLS 15000. (F-S,Y)
1 Credit

RLS 25500 Outdoor Adventures for People with Differing Abilities (NLA)

Principles and practices of planning, leading, implementing, supervising, and evaluating outdoor adventure programs for people with disabilities. The focus is on the abilities, rights, characteristics, and needs of people with varying abilities – including cognitive disabilities, mental illness, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, and sensory impairments – that impact participation in outdoor adventure. Use of outdoor adventure as therapeutic intervention is also examined. Prerequisites: RLS 12500. (IRR)
3 Credits

RLS 27700 Sustainable Tourism (LA)

Examines sustainable tourism from an international perspective. Emphasis is placed on management of the natural resources necessary in delivering a variety of sustainable tourism attractions (wildlife, plant life, scenery). Additionally, cultural resources associated with indigenous cultures are explored. A majority of the course is spent traveling to various private and public sustainable tourism ventures (e.g., whale watching, hiking, sea kayaking). Students engage in the sustainable tourism ventures, as well as meet leisure service personnel who own, operate, and direct these ventures. Includes fee for travel, food, and gear rental. Prerequisites: Sophomore standing. (IRR)
Attributes: G, LAEL
1-3 Credits

RLS 28000 Selected Topics in Adventure Skills Management (NLA)

Emphasizes core competencies required to manage clientele in a specific adventure skill environment. This course involves field experiences. This course may be repeated up to three credits for different selected topics. May have fees associated. Prerequisites: Corresponding RLS 180xx. (Y)
2 Credits

RLS 28001 Selected Topics in Wilderness Medicine (NLA)

Emphasizes core competencies required to manage clientele in a specific adventure skill environment. This course involves field experiences. This course may be repeated up to three credits for different selected topics. May have fees associated. Prerequisites: Corresponding RLS 180xx. (Y)
2 Credits

RLS 28002 Selected Topics in Winter Environments (NLA)

Emphasizes core competencies required to manage clientele in a specific adventure skill environment. This course involves field experiences. This course may be repeated up to three credits for different selected topics. May have fees associated. Prerequisites: Corresponding RLS 180xx. (Y)
2 Credits

RLS 28003 Selected Topics in Whitewater Environments (NLA)

Emphasizes core competencies required to manage clientele in a specific adventure skill environment. This course involves field experiences. This course may be repeated up to three credits for different selected topics. May have fees associated. Prerequisites: Corresponding RLS 180xx. (Y)
2 Credits

RLS 28004 Selected Topics in Vertical Environments (NLA)

Emphasizes core competencies required to manage clientele in a specific adventure skill environment. This course involves field experiences. This course may be repeated up to three credits for different selected topics. May have fees associated. Prerequisites: Corresponding RLS 180xx. (Y)
2 Credits

RLS 33100 Supervision of Recreation Personnel (NLA)

Contemporary issues and related administrative practices associated with managing human resources in leisure services. Examining concepts, principles and objectives of personnel supervision, including functions, processes, identification and application of methods and techniques. Prerequisites: RLS 33000. (S,O)
3 Credits

RLS 33200 Research Methods (LA)

Procedures and applications of social science research methods to recreational settings. Topics include research design, methods of data collection, and the presentation and interpretation of data. Prerequisites: RLS 10500; RLS 23200; WRTG 10600 or ICSM 108xx or ICSM 118xx; junior standing. (FY)
Attributes: QL, WI
3 Credits

RLS 33400 Leisure Education: A Therapeutic Recreation Intervention (LA)

The therapeutic recreation professional is considered a facilitator of his or her client's expanded leisure awareness. Focus is on assessing the client's leisure attitudes, skills, and options and developing individualized intervention programs to enhance independent functioning. Prerequisites: RLS 10100; junior standing. (FY)
Attributes: 1
3 Credits

RLS 33600 Commercial Recreation (NLA)

Study of commercial and entrepreneurial recreation as a major component of the leisure service delivery system. Analysis of the development potential of different types of recreation enterprises, including resources, location, risks, sources of financing, pricing, managerial requirements, marketing, and sources of technical assistance. Prerequisites: RLS 33000 or a level-2 business or economics course. (S,E)
3 Credits

RLS 34000 Inclusive Recreation and Diversity (LA)

Social stigmas of leisure choices based on disability, race, gender, sexual identity, and socio-economic status and the dynamic impact of inclusive leisure experiences on promoting social justice. Rationale for inclusion, historical context, and legislative initiatives are addressed. Prerequisites: RLS 12500. (S,Y)
Attributes: DV
3 Credits

RLS 34900 Advanced Fieldwork (NLA)

Practical in-depth work experience in a leisure service agency. Prerequisites: RLS 24800; permission of department chair. (F-S,Y)
2-9 Credits

RLS 35000 Therapeutic Recreation Process I: Introduction (NLA)

Introduction to the therapeutic recreation process, including the application of theory, client assessment, individualized treatment plan development, intervention planning, and documentation procedures. Focuses on the development and application of knowledge and skills necessary for meeting professional standards of practice, accreditation requirements, and third party payment criteria. Prerequisites: RLS 12500; RLS 13300; RLS 23200. (F,Y)
3 Credits

RLS 35300 Clinical Application in Therapeutic Recreation (NLA)

An interdisciplinary experiential learning lab at which students apply the knowledge they learn in RLS 35000 Therapeutic Recreation Process I and RLS 36000 Therapeutic Recreation Process II. Students are assigned a caseload and are responsible for assessment, treatment plan development, intervention planning, and documentation on assigned client(s). Participation in interdisciplinary team meetings is required. Prerequisites: RLS 13300. Corequisites: RLS 35000 (F); RLS 36000(S). (F-S,Y)
3 Credits

RLS 35400 Organization and Supervision of Outdoor Pursuits (NLA)

Application of principles and practices in planning, implementing, leading, supervising, and evaluating outdoor trips and programs. Study of outdoor program supervision using a variety of organizational models. Students design field-based experiences. Non-majors and non-minors considered based on availability. Prerequisites: RLS 21600; RLS 21800; outdoor adventure leadership major or outdoor pursuits minor. (F-S,Y)
2 Credits

RLS 35700 Therapeutic Recreation in the Schools (NLA)

Prepares students to deliver therapeutic recreation services to students with disabilities in public school systems, as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Students learn to apply the therapeutic recreation process in a school setting and develop appropriate recreation goals for individualized education plans. Curricula to support therapeutic recreation in the schools are identified, as well as the roles therapeutic recreation specialists can play to advocate for and deliver leisure education in schools. Through a case study method, students apply concepts and techniques to an actual public school setting. Prerequisites: RLS 23300; junior standing. (IRR)
3 Credits

RLS 36000 Therapeutic Recreation Process II: Advanced Applications (NLA)

Advanced study of the therapeutic recreation process, including assessment, the design and implementation of agency-specific assessments, standardized interdisciplinary assessment instruments, and systems design intervention planning and evaluation. Focuses on interdisciplinary treatment plan development and intervention planning and documentation. Prerequisites: RLS 35000. (S,Y)
3 Credits

RLS 36600 Social and Cultural Aspects of Play (LA)

Explores qualities of play through interdisciplinary reading, experiential learning, and in-depth classroom discussion. Students learn about social and cultural aspects of play and rekindle their personal sense of playfulness. Prerequisites: Three courses from recreation, psychology, anthropology, history, music, philosophy, or sociology; junior standing. (IRR)
Attributes: 1
3 Credits

RLS 37000 Wilderness Land Use Ethics (LA)

Examination of the people and social forces that have influenced land use related to designated wilderness. Focus on philosophical and historical basis for wilderness management. Emphasizes development and promotion of a personal land-use ethic. Includes an extended field experience. Component of the Immersion Semester Program with associated fees. Prerequisites: RLS 21600; RLS 21800; outdoor adventure leadership major or outdoor pursuits minor; permission of instructor. (S,Y)
Attributes: ESTS
3 Credits

RLS 39900-39903 Selected Topics in Recreation (NLA)

Topics of current interest to faculty and students. Experimental courses are offered under this course number and title. This course may be repeated for credit for different selected topics. Prerequisites: As appropriate to topics. (IRR)
1-3 Credits

RLS 42100 Wilderness Expedition Leadership (NLA)

Integrates human understanding, outdoor techniques, and teaching ability in expedition leadership. Emphasis on sound judgment and decision making with groups in wilderness settings. This is an extended field experience. Component of the Immersion Semester Program with associated fee. Prerequisites: RLS 15100; RLS 21800; RLS 35400; outdoor adventure leadership major or outdoor pursuits minor; permission of instructor. (S,Y)
4 Credits

RLS 43000 Adventure Education (LA)

Modern educational theory, experiential education, and adventure education theories are examined. Ethics of adventure education leadership are explored. Prerequisites: Senior standing. Outdoor adventure leadership major or Outdoor pursuits minor. (F,Y)
3 Credits

RLS 43300 Advancement and Administration of Therapeutic Recreation (NLA)

Provides an awareness and working knowledge of the skills needed to administer a therapeutic recreation department. Topics to be discussed include standards of practice, accreditation standards, third-party reimbursements, alternate funding sources, team involvement and intervention, marketing and advancement of the profession, clinical supervision, and continuous quality management as it relates to the therapeutic recreation process. Prerequisites: RLS 35000. (S,Y)
3 Credits

RLS 43500 Risk Management in Outdoor Adventure Programming (NLA)

A focused exploration of organizational, administrative, and instructor level risk management and legal liabilities. Topics include risk management and safety considerations for programs, staff, equipment, and transportation; legal issues; and crisis management. Prerequisites: RLS 21600; RLS 42100. (Y)
3 Credits

RLS 44100 Internship in Recreation and Leisure Studies (NLA)

Supervised, full-time work experience during the summer or regular academic school year in a leisure service agency. Prerequisites: Minimum cumulative GPA of 2.00; minimum GPA in RLS courses of 2.50; minimum grade of 3.00 in RLS 24800; completion of at least twenty-four credits of required recreation courses (RLS); approval of department chair. (F-S-Sum,Y)
8-12 Credits

RLS 45000-45003 Independent Study: Recreation and Leisure Studies (LA)

Individual pursuit of the solution to a problem of interest to the student and consultant faculty member. Prerequisites: RLS 33200; permission of department chair. (F-S-Sum,Y)
1-3 Credits

RLS 45300 Seminar: Professional Development (NLA)

Capstone course to develop skills necessary for professional involvement after graduation. Topics include an in-depth study of the national certification processes, professional organizations and committee involvement, and legislative and consumer advocacy skills. Students also learn to develop proposals for presentations at professional conferences and to develop professional presentation and multimedia skills. Professional publications and publication requirements are discussed. Prerequisites: Senior standing. (F-S,Y)
Attributes: CP
3 Credits