Recreational Therapy

According to a 2011 CNN Money report, Recreation Therapy ranks as one of the “Best jobs for saving the world.”

Recreational Therapists provide recreation and activity interventions to clients who desire to improve their health and quality of life. Recreational Therapy (RT) is the purposeful use of recreation and activity interventions to improve clients’ functioning in six domains:

- Cognitive
- Emotional
- Physical
- Social
- Spiritual
- Leisure

Recreational Therapy Job Tasks and Responsibilities

- Formal client assessments
- Planning purposeful interventions based on assessment results
- Implementation of selected interventions for groups of clients or individuals
- Evaluation of intervention effectiveness
- Regular documentation of RT services

Recreational Therapy Employment Settings

- Hospitals
- Institutions
- Nursing homes
- Rehabilitation centers
- Residential schools

- Schools
- Correctional facilities
- Camps
- Mental Health Centers
- Parks and Recreation Departments

Recreational Therapy Populations Served

- Spinal cord injuries
- Multiple sclerosis
- Spina bifida
- Autism
- Mental health
- Mental retardation
- Cerebral palsy

- Traumatic brain injury
- Amputations
- Cerebral vascular accidents
- Adolescents with emotional and behavioral disorders
- Elderly

Selected Recreational Therapy Interventions

- Adventure Therapy
- Anger Management Techniques
- Aquatic Therapy
- Expressive Arts
- Leisure Education
- Stress Management Techniques

- Therapeutic Horseback Riding
- Therapeutic Reminiscence
- Animal Assisted Therapy
- Therapeutic Use of Exercise
- Therapeutic Use of Play
- Values Clarification
Recreational Therapy at Georgia Southern University

Students who complete the Recreational Therapy emphasis area at GSU are qualified to become nationally certified as Recreational Therapists and serve the rehabilitation and recreation needs of individuals in a variety of settings. Recreational Therapy students participate in many experiential opportunities where they observe practitioners in clinical, medical, and community settings as well as participate in disability simulations to gain a greater understanding of the clients they will work with. As a part of their coursework in the RT program, students will complete a minimum of 100 hours of first-hand experience in RT settings and their academic work will culminate with a 480-hour internship in the approved RT setting of their choice.

Recent GSU RT alumni employment and internship locations

- Shepherd Center
- Coastal Harbor Treatment Center
- Roosevelt Warm Springs Rehabilitation Institute
- Peachford Care Hospital
- The Bridge (Residential Treatment Center)
- VA Hospital in Augusta
- Rockdale County Parks and Recreation
- Camp Twin Lakes
- Coliseum Rehabilitation Center
- Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center

RT Coursework at GSU

As one of the emphasis areas within the Recreation and Tourism Management Program, students in the RT emphasis complete five core Recreation courses in addition to their Area F requirements. The RT emphasis is comprised of five RT specific courses:

- RECR 2131 Introduction to Therapeutic Recreation
- RECR 3135 Program Planning in Therapeutic Recreation
- RECR 4130 Assessment and Documentation in Therapeutic Recreation
- RECR 4135 Therapeutic Recreation Intervention Techniques
- RECR 4730 Professional Advancement in Therapeutic Recreation

Additionally, students complete coursework in Anatomy and Physiology, Lifespan Development, and Abnormal Psychology. Students in RT are strongly encouraged to identify a minor or area of concentration that will compliment their future employment setting. Suggested minors and areas of concentration include:

- Child and Family Development
- Community Health
- Exercise Science
- Health Behavior
- Justice Studies
- Nutrition and Food Science
- Psychology
- Sociology

For more information about Recreational Therapy at Georgia Southern University, please contact Dr. Brent Wolfe at brentwolfe@georgiasouthern.edu or 912.478.7381.