New Degree Program White Paper

Contact Person: Joseph Lovell
Degree name: Recreational Therapy
Department: Health and Human Performance
College: Health Sciences

Please answer the following questions:

1. Does this degree program include stacked credentials? ___Yes ___No. If yes, indicate with an X all included credentials: ___Certificate ___Associates ___Baccalaureate ___Masters
2. How many new courses need to be developed for this program? ___7-10____
3. For the baccalaureate degree, how many credits of core courses are required? ___43___ How many required elective credits? ___21___ How many open elective credits? ___25___ Counting 31 credits of GE courses, how many total credits are in this program? ___120____
4. If seeking external accreditation, please list organization(s) here ___National Council on Therapeutic Recreation Certification____________.

**Program Description.** Provide a brief description of the proposed program. If stacked credentials are included in the program, identify and describe each one. If one or more emphases are part of the program, identify and describe them.

**Response:** Recreational Therapy (RT) is a health and human service profession that uses activity-based interventions as part of the systematic RT process that targets specific evidence-based outcomes. Individual and group counseling techniques are implemented through prescribed play, recreation, leisure, sport, experiential activity and psycho education processes to improve the physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual functioning and well-being of individuals with injury, illness and/or disability to enable a greater quality of life. The American Therapeutic Recreation Association (2009) defines RT as, “A treatment service designed to restore, remediate and rehabilitate a person's level of functioning and independence in life activities, to promote health and wellness as well as reduce or eliminate the activity limitations and restrictions to participation in life situations caused by illness or disabling condition.”

The program is a stand-alone degree that will be interdisciplinary with supporting courses from Biological Sciences, Exercise Science, Family Studies and Human Development, Population Health, Psychology, and Recreation and Sport Management. The program will offer three emphases in Adapted Sport and Recreation, Child Life Practice, and Gerontology. The Adapted Sport and Recreation emphasis will focus on community-based sport and leisure organization that target individuals with physical and mental health issues such as Special Olympics, Veterans Affairs and Behavioral Treatment Centers. Child Life Practice will focus on clinical settings and prepare students to become Child Life Specialists, which are pediatric health-care professionals who work with children and families to help them cope with the challenges of hospitalization, illness, and disability. The Gerontology emphasis will be specific with working in assistant living and long-term care facilities as activity directors as well as within retirement communities as lifestyle managers to help with the aging process.

Utah is a licensor state and the RT bachelor’s program qualifies students for the Therapeutic Recreation Specialist license. In addition and upon completion of the degree, students will be eligible to sit for the national exam to become a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS).

**Strategic Alignment.** Cite specific examples of how this program aligns to the DSU strategic plan, mission, goals, and core themes. Include active learning-active life.

**Response:** The RT program fits DSU’s strategic move to offer more applied skills through rigorous learning and models the Active Learning-Active Life motto. The program will help fill the need for qualified healthcare professionals for the southern Utah region and throughout the state of Utah. The RT program aligns well with other College of Health Sciences programs and promotes interprofessional inquiry and progresses the academic
preparation of the healthcare profession. Specifically to the university strategic plan, Goal 2 to broaden and enhance the academic programs to facilitate growth at the university and within the community will be accomplished with this degree as it provides another avenue within the health sciences and fills a need for the southern Utah region with a growing population of retirees and individuals with physical and/or mental health issues. In addition, the program will align with goal 4 focusing on inclusion and equity as it seeks to serve underrepresented populations. Finally, the program will support goal 6 to strengthen DSU’s brand as the RT program will be only the second RT degree offered in the state of Utah.

**Comparison Benchmarks.** List a minimum of five universities whose similar programs were examined to inform the development of this proposal. State how this proposal compares in terms of required credits of core courses, electives, course content, etc. If there are similar programs in other departments at DSU, identify them and describe significant differences between the two.

**Response:** The National Council on Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) outlines the required curriculum for programs seeking certification for their students to become recreation therapists (CTRS). Therefore the majority of the curriculum is identical between all institutions offering a program in recreational therapy. The courses include a minimum of 18 credits of recreational therapy and general recreation coursework with no less than 15 credits or five RT courses with three courses specifically focusing on assessment, RT process, and the advancement of the profession. In addition, 18 supportive credits are required and includes anatomy and physiology, abnormal psychology, and human growth and development across the lifespan. The remaining credit hours must come from the social sciences and humanities. The University of Utah, Clemson University, Brigham Young University, Northwest Missouri State University, and California State University Long Beach were examined. The University of Utah has a stand-alone program due to recent realignments within their College of Health. This realignment has allowed for further coursework within the healthcare profession. The other four programs embed the RT curriculum as an emphasis within a traditional recreation degree.

Dixie State University – 43 RT Core credits, 21 Emphasis credits
University of Utah – 69 RT Core and required supportive credits
Northwest Missouri State University – 63 REC/TR and required supportive credits
California State University Long Beach – 69 REC/RT and required supportive credits
Clemson University – 67 REC/RT Core and required supportive credits
Brigham Young University – 41 REC/TR Core credits, 34 Business core credits

**Timeline (Stacked Credential Programs Only)** Describe the timeline and benchmarks that will be met as you add one credential at a time moving forward. Example: This program will start with a 12-credit institutional certificate that can be completed in two semesters. The first two courses have no prerequisites and are the prerequisites for the second two courses. Once we have a minimum of 20 students enrolled in the first two courses, we will add the associate’s degree. Or...This program will begin as an emphasis in the BS in Integrated Studies program. Once we have a minimum of 10 students per year working on this emphasis, we will establish the certificate using four of the emphasis courses and begin marketing the associate’s degree that will lead to the baccalaureate degree.

**Response:** While this is not a stackable program it does provide students the opportunity to advance within the licensor process within the state of Utah. Students that complete six credits and a 125 hours of work experience are eligible for the Therapeutic Recreation Technician license. In addition, students that seek an emphasis in child life practice may become eligible for the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist exam as well as the Child Life Specialist Exam. Please note that the Child Life Specialist route requires an additional internship after graduation before being eligible to sit for certification.

**Departmental Capacity for Program.** State the capacity that currently exists within the department to support this program in terms of faculty, space, equipment, etc. If building a stacked credential program, describe a tiered approach to build capacity such as identifying the crossover skills for this program you will include as
necessary requirements in candidates as new faculty are hired for other programs in the department. If building a non-stacked credential program, briefly describe any new resources including faculty that will be needed in order to launch the program. Complete and attach Appendix D of the USHE form (Budget and Finance section).

**Response:** The RT program would be housed within the Health and Human Performance Department in the College of Health Sciences. The office space is available in the Human Performance Center. While the curriculum does not require specific lab space, the Human Performance Center has a lab specifically dedicated to aging and at-risk populations. This area will be a great resource for the RT program. The program would require additional faculty within the Health and Human Performance Department that are certified recreational therapists to meet the NCTRC requirements. One tenure-track faculty will be required and an additional professional-track position is needed to act as a clinical/internship coordinator. Supplemental courses will be taught by current faculty within various colleges/departments. The library’s current subscription to the SPORTDiscus database provides access to all relevant literature for the RT program.

**Documented Need for Program.** What is the rationale for bringing this program forward at this particular time? Validate the need with hard data from reliable sources. Include student demand, regional and national employment needs, economic trends that might add to a need for this program, new directions set forth from external accreditors, etc. (See Resources Packet)

**Response:** Beginning in Fall 2019, the University of Utah will be the only Utah Institution of Higher Education offering a program in therapeutic recreation. With the move to the Marriott School of Business, BYU is no longer be able to offer the program due to curriculum requirements from both business and therapeutic recreation accreditors. There are roughly 120 students annually in the BYU program that will now be looking for another institution with the only option being the University of Utah. This presents an opportunity for DSU to enter the market providing a quality education, meeting the needs of students as well as a growing need of underrepresented populations including those with disabilities, illness, or injury, which includes the entire lifespan.

The labor market within the state and nationally for recreational therapists remains high. Recreational Therapy is a licensed healthcare profession in the State of Utah. The Division of Occupational and Professional Licensing has reported a shortage of professionals with an advanced recreational therapist license (Therapeutic Recreational Specialist). The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a job growth rate for recreational therapists of 7% through 2026 with the highest number of jobs being with the older adult population. The Bureau also notes that Utah ranks second in the country for the highest concentration of RT jobs. The state of Utah labor market records are not as clear as they combined statistics of several professions under the recreational therapy title. The data varies between 2.4% and 5.2% through 2026.

**Program Fit.** Describe the niche this program fills within the DSU academic portfolio and the contributions it makes beyond simply graduating its students. How might some of the courses accommodate non-majors of the program? Is there a certificate that students from other departments could complete to add depth to their own degrees, etc.? Also describe the fit and uniqueness of this program relative to similar programs within other USHE institutions.

**Response:** The program will help fill the need for qualified healthcare professionals for the southern region and throughout the state of Utah as well as neighboring states. The RT program aligns with other traditional healthcare professions and advances the interprofessional inquiry and progresses the academic preparation of the healthcare profession that is central to the College of Health Sciences. DSU will provide a unique program that offers three separate emphases that will allow students to specialize in a specific area within the healthcare industry. Emphases are not common within RT curriculums as most RT curriculums are embedded in a traditional recreation program.

The curriculum also aligns with the required NCTRC curriculum that is also offered at the University of Utah. The same name and numbering will be used where possible between the two institutions. In addition, the DSU curriculum satisfies the prerequisites to advance into the University of Utah’s masters in recreational therapy.
program. Salt Lake Community College provides coursework for students seeking the Therapeutic Recreation Technician (TRT) license. Students enrolled in that program would need to complete the bachelor’s degree with a focus in RT to become a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. While the DSU program focuses on students majoring in RT with the goal of becoming a TRS/CTRS, students not majoring in RT would be eligible for the TRT licensor exam upon completion of six credits of RT coursework and the completion of 125 hours of experienced training in RT while being supervised by a TRS or higher credentialed professional.

**Innovation.** Describe innovative aspects of the program in terms of delivery mode, instructional design, scheduling, flexibility, removing traditional barriers, etc. (See Resources Packet)

**Response:** Based on recent curriculum changes from the NCTRC, RT programs required a substantial internship with a minimum of 560 contact hours over a minimum of 14 weeks. Both the internship site supervisor and the faculty internship coordinator must be a CTRS.

**Building University Capacity.** Describe how the program will build university capacity in terms of research or creative opportunities, new markets, etc. for both faculty and students and the university as a whole.

**Response:** According to the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Statistics and Demographics, 10% of the population in Utah has a disability. In addition, the Gardner Policy Institute at the University of Utah projected the population of ages 65 and older to double over the next 50 years in the State of Utah with Washington County having the most rapid growth among all counties. Both of these populations are served by recreational therapists. Recently, Special Olympics Utah has been trying to expand services in southern Utah and with current partnerships between them and the HHP departments there has been some positive movement to provide more services. As mentioned earlier, the program will fill a gap created with the elimination of the BYU program. These positive changes will provide additional opportunities to engage in scholarly work including research and new intervention implementation, of which students are expected to be involved in those experiences.
Appendix D: Projected Program Participation and Finance

Part I.
*Project the number of students who will be attracted to the proposed program as well as increased expenses, if any. Include new faculty & staff as described in Appendix C.*

### Three Year Projection: Program Participation and Department Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Preceding Implementation</th>
<th>New Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Data</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Majors in Department</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Majors in Proposed Program(s)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Majors in Proposed Program(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Graduates from Department</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of Graduates in New Program(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department Financial Data</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Budget</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year Preceding Implementation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EXPENSES – nature of additional costs required for proposed program(s)

*List salary benefits for additional faculty/staff each year the positions will be filled. For example, if hiring faculty in Year 2, include expense in years 2 and 3. List one-time operating expenses only in the year expended.*

- **Personnel (Faculty & Staff Salary & Benefits):** $706,618, $106,000, $190,200, $190,200
- **Operating Expenses (equipment, travel, resources):** $27,033, $2,000, $2,000, $2,000
- **Other:**

*TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSES:* $733,651, $841,651, $925,851, $925,851

### FUNDING – source of funding to cover additional costs generated by proposed program(s)

*Describe internal reallocation using Narrative 1 on the following page. Describe new sources of funding using Narrative 2.*

- **Internal Reallocation:**
  - Appropriation: $390,419, $59,400, $105,710, $105,710
  - Special Legislative Appropriation
  - Grants and Contracts
  - Special Fees: $23,798
  - Tuition: $319,434, $48,600, $86,490, $86,490
  - Differential Tuition (requires Regents approval)
- **PROPOSED PROGRAM FUNDING:** $108,000, $192,200, $192,200
- **TOTAL DEPARTMENT FUNDING:** $733,651, $841,651, $925,851, $925,851

*Difference:* $0, $0, $0, $0
Part II: Expense explanation

Expense Narrative
*Describe expenses associated with the proposed program.*
In year one, a full-time tenure track faculty member will need to be added to accommodate the additional work-load within the department. As the program expands, an additional professional track faculty member will be added in year two.

Operating expenses of $2,000 are anticipated to provide the new hires with computer, supplies and professional development opportunities, as well as recruiting and marketing supplies for students.

Part III: Describe funding sources

Revenue Narrative 1
*Describe what internal reallocations, if applicable, are available and any impact to existing programs or services.*
The funding for the degree will come from state appropriations and new tuition revenue. No current reallocation of department funds is planned.

Revenue Narrative 2
*Describe new funding sources and plans to acquire the funds.*