



**Recreation and Park Administration  
Strategic Plan  
2016 – 2021**



# RECREATION AND PARK ADMINISTRATION

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## **Arkansas Tech University Mission Statement**

Arkansas Tech University is dedicated to student success, access, and excellence as a responsive campus community providing opportunities for progressive intellectual development and civic engagement. Embracing and expanding upon its technological traditions, Tech inspires and empowers members of the community to achieve their goals while striving for the betterment of Arkansas, the nation, and the world.

## **Arkansas Tech University Vision Statement**

Arkansas Tech University: where students succeed, innovation thrives, and communities flourish.

## **College of Engineering and Applied Science Mission Statement**

The mission of the College is to provide high quality opportunities for learning that prepare students for their chosen profession and provide a foundation for life-long learning.

## **Recreation and Park Administration Program Vision**

The program will produce leaders in Recreation and Park Administration.

## **Recreation and Park Administration Program Mission Statement**

The mission of the Recreation and Park Administration Program is to educate Recreation and Park professionals for self, community and society.

## **Recreation and Park Administration Core Values**

The Recreation and Park Administration Program is committed to:

- Lifelong learning
- Service to community
- Personal and Professional development
- Diversity of experience
- Environmental stewardship
- Interpersonal communication
- Healthy lifestyles

## **RECREATION AND PARK ADMINISTRATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2021**

The Recreation and Park Administration Program at Arkansas Tech University prepared its first strategic plan in 1990. The first plan served as a guiding document for 3 years until the merger of Recreation and Parks with Hotel and Restaurant Management in July 1993. A position paper was prepared by the combined faculty of the new Department of Parks, Recreation and Hospitality Administration which contained goals for both degree programs.

In the spring of 1996 the RPA faculty updated the original strategic plan and goals from the position paper in preparation for its initial accreditation by the Council on Accreditation of the National Recreation and Park Association and the American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation. The resulting document outlined the goals and objectives for the RPA Program for the next 5 years, 1996-2001.<sup>1</sup>

The 1996 Strategic Plan was reviewed in 2001 in preparation to reaffirm accreditation. The strategic plan that resulted was an updated plan with goals and objectives for the next 5-year planning cycle (2001-2006).<sup>2</sup> A review of the goals and objectives from the 2001 plan can be found on pages 3-4 of this document.

The 2001 Strategic Plan was reviewed in 2006; which resulted in an updated plan with goals and objectives for the next 5-year cycle (2006-2011).<sup>3</sup> A review of the goals and objectives from the 2006 plan can be found on pages 5-6 of this document. A number of the objectives from the 2006 Strategic Plan were met or exceeded.

The 2006 Strategic Plan was reviewed in June of 2011 in preparation to reaffirm COAPRT accreditation. The Strategic Plan that resulted was an updated plan with goals and objectives for the next 5-year planning cycle (2011-2016).<sup>4</sup> This updated plan was based on the five goals developed by Arkansas Tech University's Strategic Planning process and were adopted in 2007.

The 2011 Strategic Plan was reviewed in January 2017 in order to review accomplishments/achievements and areas in which work was still needed. The 2016-2021 Strategic Plan was developed based on the new Arkansas Tech University Strategic Plan, which was adopted in Spring 2016. The RPA 2016-2021 Strategic Plan reflects the four goals laid out in the ATU Strategic Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> Strategic Plan, Recreation and Park Administration, Arkansas Tech University, 1996.

<sup>2</sup> Strategic Plan, Recreation and Park Administration, Arkansas Tech University, 2001.

<sup>3</sup> Strategic Plan, Recreation and Park Administration, Arkansas Tech University, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Strategic Plan, Recreation and Park Administration, Arkansas Tech University, 2011.

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## **Arkansas Tech University Goals**

**2016 – Present**

**Goal One:** Provide the learning environments needed for students to flourish and graduate from ATU equipped for a meaningful and satisfying future. At the same time, provide the support needed for faculty and staff to do the best work possible in their roles as teachers, scholars, mentors, and as supporters and facilitators of learning, respectively.

**Goal Two:** Seek and implement new and stronger connections between courses or programs that will increase coherence as well as relevance to current and future students; develop an online program strategy; ensure that there are clear and available degree paths through the university such that more students achieve higher-level degrees.

**Goal Three:** Ensure that ATU's finances and infrastructure are appropriate to good stewardship in the changing landscape of higher education.

**Goal Four:** Increase ATU's presence and effective participation in our cities, region, state, and world.

## **Recreation and Park Administration Program Goals**

**2016-2021**

**Goal One:** To provide quality undergraduate education, through teaching, technology, and field experiences, that prepare professional graduates in natural resources, recreation sport management, therapeutic recreation, and interpretation.

**Goal Two:** Promote the RP Program and the uniqueness of its curricula in Arkansas; recruit quality individuals for the RP Program statewide and in a multi-state area.

**Goal Three:** Upgrade the physical facilities of the RP Program.

**Goal Four:** Increase the RP endowment fund in order to provide scholarships; increase the support of alumni and friends.

**Goal Five:** Effectively market the RP Program and the uniqueness of its curricula.

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## Summary of the 2011-16 RPA Goals and Objectives

**RPA Goal #1:** To provide quality undergraduate education, through teaching, technology, and field experiences, that prepares professional graduates in natural resources, recreation administration, turf management, interpretation, and therapeutic recreation.

<b>Program Initiatives</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Request another full time faculty</b>	ACHIEVED		We have continued to ask for an additional faculty member each year, just have not been granted a position.
<b>Emphasize computer technology specific to RP Program</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	We utilize Microsoft Office, but not software or programs specific to RP Program
<b>Develop learning lab for TR</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Not met – not sure if we currently have space for TR lab
<b>Encourage students to obtain certifications</b>	ACHIEVED		We do offer a number of certifications as students go through the program
<b>Develop more web courses</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Currently we offer a few courses on-line, but need to look to offering more on-line (possibly an emphasis area)
<b>Increase travel funds</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Did propose an increase in travel funds for 2017/18
<b>Increase library funds</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Have request annually, but have not been successful in securing funds
<b>Require faculty to have an ongoing research project</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Work towards this goal as University is moving this direction – keeps faculty abreast of current trends/issues

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<b>Require finance class for Rec Admin emphasis</b>	ACHIEVED – required for all emphasis		Implemented in Fall 2013 – required by all emphasis areas
<b>Create an additional TR Course</b>	ACHIEVED – TR Issues and Trends		Created course to meet NCTRC Standards (2013)
<b>Develop an Interdisciplinary certificate program for GIS</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Not sure if the RPA Program can take the lead on this – have encouraged other departments to do so
<b>Maintain COAPRT Accreditation</b>	ACHIEVED		Have maintained COAPRT Accreditation status yearly
<b>Develop a Turf Lab</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Need to decide what to do – need increased enrollment in Turf courses
<b>Develop a Water Resources Lab</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Start small – decide what direction we want this to take
<b>Continue to challenge students with “real world” assignments and/or projects</b>	ACHIEVED		We do provide practical application of skills learned in classroom

**RPA Goal #2:** Promote the RP Program and the uniqueness of its curricula in Arkansas; recruit quality individuals for the RP Program statewide and in a multi-state area.

<b>Program Initiatives</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Increase and maintain enrollment of 120 majors</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Will continue to look to additional ways of recruiting students
<b>Develop and cultivate relationships with agencies for Work Experience and Internship</b>	ACHIEVED		Internship site visits, Career Opportunities Day
<b>Create an Associate of Applied Science in Wildland Fire</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Continue to research possibilities
<b>Establish dedicated RP Scholarships</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	This has been initiated – hope to complete by 2016/17
<b>Revive RP Orientation course</b>	ACHIEVED		Revised and revived Fall 2014
<b>Continue to improve Work Experience and Internship courses</b>	ACHIEVED		Have revised both Work Experience and Internship Courses
<b>Emphasize importance of internship in student career placement</b>	ACHIEVED		Developed relationship with Career Services and Internship Prep
<b>Maintain and update PRHA Department website with current job/internship openings</b>	ACHIEVED		Added Career Opportunities link to PRHA Department home page in 2010

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### **RPA Goal #3:** Upgrade the physical facilities of the RP Program

<b>Program Initiatives</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Develop water resources lab</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Need to determine if we want to pursue
<b>Develop turf lab</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Started in 2012, but have not continued with plans
<b>Develop TR lab</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Have looked at some software, but not pursued
<b>Remodel Williamson</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Carpet replaced and added in places, window units added. Currently pursuing Historic Foundation grant
<b>Continue to upgrade landscaping around Williamson</b>	ACHIEVED		Have worked with ATU Landscape Supervisor to improve landscaping
<b>Develop outdoor pavilion</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Space allocation may be an issue

### **RPA Goal #4:** Increase the RP endowment fund in order to provide scholarships; increase the support of alumni and friends.

<b>Program Initiatives</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Increase opportunities for social networking</b>	ACHIEVED		Department and Program alumni Facebook Page
<b>Encourage faculty and students to be professionally involved at the local, state, and national level</b>	ACHIEVED		Took students to national, state, and local conferences/faculty involved
<b>Identify and survey RP alumni</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Do get feedback from alumni – just not on formal basis
<b>Encourage faculty to be involved in the community</b>	ACHIEVED		Faculty volunteer for projects in community
<b>Continue partnerships with local, state, national, private, and non-profit entities</b>	ACHIEVED		On-going – involving class and service projects
<b>Host a major RP Alumni event at least once a year</b>	ACHIEVED		Events at Homecoming, 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Annual Golf Tournament
<b>Continue to have an active RP Advisory Committee and meet at least once a year</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Need to be consistent with Advisory Committee Meetings

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**RPA Goal #5:** Effectively market the RP Program and the uniqueness of its curricula.

	<b>Program Initiatives</b>	<b>ACHIEVED</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.	<b>Continue to maintain PRHA Department website for primary marketing tool</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	A continuous work in progress
2.	<b>Elevate the ATU RP brand</b>	ACHIEVED		Promotional items, brochures, t-shirts, etc
3.	<b>Emphasize the uniqueness of our curricula in Arkansas and the region</b>	ACHIEVED		Brochures, Work Experience, Internship, and Career Opportunities Day
4.	<b>Develop and execute "our" marketing plan</b>			Worked with HA 4013 Sales and marketing course to develop marketing plan
5.	<b>Continue career fair and increase number and variety of participants</b>	ACHIEVED		Have maintained data base of agencies/organizations to invite
6.	<b>Maintain and update PRHA Department website with current job/internship openings</b>	ACHIEVED		Added Career Opportunities link to PRHA Department home page in 2010
7.	<b>Identify needs of stakeholders</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	We do this in a number of ways – just don't document it well
8.	<b>Emphasize quality of graduates</b>		NOT ACHIEVED	Need to put more effort into testimonials, board for business cards, videos, etc.

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## 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR RPA 2016 – 2021

As part of the strategic planning process, the RP faculty reviewed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to the Recreation and Park Administration Program and the PRHA Department.

### RECREATION AND PARK ADMINISTRATION SWOT ANALYSIS

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
ATU has strong academic programs in fish/wildlife, hospitality, EAM, Agriculture, and Rehab Sciences to support RP	Low faculty salaries	ATU has been one of the fastest growing 4-year academic institution in Arkansas (67% in last 10 years)	Low faculty salaries
WiFi in Williamson	Lack of campus financial support	ATU sits in the center of the "tourism triangle" between Branson, Hot Springs & Little Rock	State support for higher education
PRHA has their own building	GIS courses/GIS certification	Technology potential on campus	Higher cost of education
Two computer labs in Williamson	Poor technology training & support	Combination with HA	Federal budget deficits
Web courses	Lack of capital funds	More or additional web courses	
LCD in classrooms	Too few dollars in library funds	Increasingly structured internship	Other 4- year RP programs in state
	Too few dollars for faculty travel	Focus on Best Management Practices (BMP)	
	Lack of knowledge of natural history	Scholarship development	
Natural Resources emphasis meets 401 series standards (Federal Gov't)	Lack of web courses and/or training for web course development	Enhanced student recruiting	Lack of accessible Natural History courses
Willingness of students to go out-of-town for internships	Lack of support from development office	Availability of Lake Point Conference Center	Lack of administrative support
The only accredited Parks and Recreation Program in Arkansas	Lack of program orientation (orientation course for RP majors) <span style="color: red;">Revived Fall 2014</span>	Opportunity to explore educational and developmental practices for 5 <sup>th</sup> grade camp	Lack of support/cooperation from Biology Department
Location of ATU	Lack of grants	New Public History program	
Combined program with HA	Shortage of full time faculty	GIS Certificate	

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Innovative/assertive department leadership	Lack of administrative support	Revive Freshman Orientation course (Fall 2014)	
Solid students, good work ethic	No focus on best mgmt. practices (BMP)	Involvement with "Leave No Trace"	
TR Program meets NCTRC requirements	Support courses for Recreation Administration emphasis	Close working relationship with federal, state, and local agencies	
Firefighting courses/certifications	Lab space for turf and water resources	Increased number of veterans returning to college	
Wildland Fire Academy	Stringent pre-requisites for upper division Biology courses	Revision of Recreation Administration emphasis	
Certifications offered (Red Card, PLT, CIG, CHI, Hunter's Education, Boating Education, etc.)	Lack of cooperation and/or support from Science Department	More involvement with education and schools around the state	
Involvement of faculty in campus and community			
Revived RP 1001 Orientation to RPA			
Smart Board in Room 125			
Well established program – 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2016			

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## RECREATION AND PARK ADMINISTRATION 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 - 2021

**RPA Goal #1:** To provide quality undergraduate education, through teaching, technology, high impact educational practices, and community engagement opportunities that prepares professional graduates in natural resource, interpretation, recreation sport management, and therapeutic recreation.

	<b>Program Initiatives</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Primary person and/or entities responsible</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.	<b>Request and secure another full time faculty</b>	2021	Department Head	We request another full time faculty member each year/budget
2.	<b>Secure computer technology specific to RP Program</b>	Request at least one new software or program each year	All RP faculty	Faculty should request software or computer programs applicable to courses they teach
3.	<b>Develop learning lab for TR</b>	2021	Dr. McMahan	May be able to secure TR learning lab with renovation of Williamson
4.	<b>Develop more web courses (have at least one emphasis area completely on-line)</b>	2021	All RP faculty	Dr. Post has taken the lead on moving a few of the RP courses from in-class to on-line.
5.	<b>Require faculty to have on on-going research project that involves students</b>	2020	All RP Faculty	Not yet achieved – still a work in progress
6.	<b>Develop an Interdisciplinary certificate program in GIS</b>	2021	Natural Resource faculty member and GIS faculty	Need to continue to focus on this certificate as it could be beneficial to graduates
7.	<b>Expand interdisciplinary cooperation through curriculum offerings</b>	2020	RP Faculty	Take the lead on developing an interdisciplinary course – course involving a number of other disciplines
8.	<b>Develop a general education course</b>	2021	Dr. Post	Work with General Education Committee to determine possibilities
9.	<b>Provide Service Learning opportunities in at least 25% of RP courses</b>	2020	All RP Faculty	Currently about 10% of RP courses have a service learning component
10.	<b>Update curriculum to meet student demand and industry and societal trends</b>	Yearly	All RP Faculty	Poll RP Advisory Committee on an annual basis. Review internship and work experience surveys

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### **RPA Goal #2: Promote the RP Program and the uniqueness of its curricula in Arkansas.**

	<b>Program Initiatives</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Primary person and/or entities responsible</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.	<b>Increase and maintain enrollment of 120 majors</b>	2021	RP faculty in conjunction with Admissions Office	Work closely with ATU recruiters to recruit students. Faculty needs to work together to maintain enrollment.
2.	<b>Develop new certificate programs that meet demands within Arkansas</b>	2020	RP Faculty	Looking to develop a certificate in trail design and maintenance
3.	<b>Establish dedicated RP Scholarship</b>	2019	RP Faculty/Development Office	Have started the process – just need to continue to secure funds
4.	<b>Continue to improve Work Experience and Internship Courses</b>	2021	Department Head	Continuous process
5.	<b>Provide Leadership to the Profession at national, regional, and state level</b>	2021	All RP Faculty	McMahan- Board member TRSSW and ARPA Post – Board member – Wilderness Education Association
6.	<b>Maintain and update PRHA Department Website and social media sources</b>	2021	All RP Faculty and Administrative Assistant	Work in progress

### **RPA Goal #3: Upgrade the physical facilities of the RP Program.**

	<b>Program Initiatives</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Primary person and/or entities responsible</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.	<b>Develop water resources lab</b>	2020	Dr. Bishop	Dr. Bishop has retired – so need to determine if we need one now.
2.	<b>Develop TR lab</b>	2021	Dr. McMahan	Looking to add with re-build of Williamson Hall
3.	<b>Remodel Williamson</b>	2021	ATU Administration and PRHA Department Faculty	Williamson was in the middle of a remodel when it burned. It will now experience a major remodel soon.
4.	<b>Continue to upgrade landscaping around Williamson</b>	2021	ATU Administration and PRHA Department Faculty	Same as above
5.	<b>Develop outdoor pavilion</b>	2021	PRHA Department Faculty	Space may be an issue, but will see with remodel

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### **RPA Goal #4: Increase the support of alumni, friends, and supporters in order to increase RP endowment fund.**

	<b>Program Initiatives</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Primary person and/or entities responsible</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.	<b>Increase opportunities for social networking</b>	2019	PRHA Department Faculty and staff	Have developed a Department Facebook page, also alumni page. Twitter account
2.	<b>Encourage faculty and students to be professionally involved at the local, state, and national level</b>	Yearly	RP Faculty	Continue to encourage to be involved – stay in touch with alumni
3.	<b>Identify and survey RP alumni</b>	2021	Department Head	Look to starting a department newsletter to stay in touch
4.	<b>Encourage faculty to be involved in the community</b>	Yearly	Department head	Faculty need to continue to volunteer for community projects
5.	<b>Continue partnerships with local, state, national, private, and non-profit entities</b>	Yearly	RP Faculty	On-going – service learning projects, etc are a good opportunity
6.	<b>Host a major RP Alumni event at least once a year</b>	Yearly	Department Head/Alumni Office	Dr. Herrick Golf Tournament
7.	<b>Continue to have an active RP Advisory Committee and meet at least once a year</b>	Yearly	Department Head	Twice yearly RP Advisory Committee Meetings and yearly TR Advisory Committee Meetings

### **Goal #5: Effectively market the RP Program and the uniqueness of its curricula.**

	<b>Program Initiatives</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Primary person and/or entities responsible</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.	<b>Continue to maintain PRHA Department website for primary marketing tool</b>	Yearly	Department Head and MARCOM	A continuous work in progress
2.	<b>Emphasize the uniqueness of our curricula in Arkansas and the region</b>	Yearly	All RP faculty	Continue to develop marketing materials, take students to conferences/workshops, Work Experience and Internship Opportunities and Career Opportunity Day
4.	<b>Continue career fair and increase number and variety of participants</b>	Yearly	All RP Faculty/Norman Career Services	Continue to maintain and grow data base for Career Opportunity Day and work with Norman Career Services to increase attendance at campus Career Fairs
5.	<b>Identify needs of stakeholders</b>	Yearly	All RP Faculty	Work closely with Advisory Boards & Internship Supervisors,