

**Guidelines for  
Learning Outcomes  
for  
Therapeutic Recreation  
Education**



**Council on  
Accreditation**

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Parks, Recreation, Tourism  
and Related Professions

**Revised October 2012  
November 2011**

# **Guidelines for Learning Outcomes for Therapeutic Recreation Education**

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**Developed by:**

Dr. Lynn Anderson, CTRS, CPRP, State University of New York at Cortland  
Dr. Candace Ashton, LRT/CTRS, University of North Carolina Wilmington  
Dr. Marcia Carter, CTRS, CPRP, Western Illinois University  
Dr. Jo Ann Coco-Ripp, LRT/CTRS, Winston Salem State University  
Dr. Fran Stavola Daly, CTRS, Kean University  
Dr. Linda Heyne, CTRS, Ithaca College  
Dr. Terry Long, Northwest Missouri State University  
Dr. Neil Lundberg, CTRS, Brigham Young University  
Dr. Cathi McMahan, CTRS, Arkansas Tech University  
Dr. Brent Wolfe, CTRS, Georgia Southern University  
Dr. Ramon Zabriskie, CTRS, Brigham Young University

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## Introduction

### ***Guidelines for Learning Outcomes in Therapeutic Recreation Education***

In 2008, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC & U) and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA - the organization that accredits accrediting bodies), issued a jointly developed document entitled “New Leadership for Student Learning and Accountability: A Statement of Principles and Commitments to Action.” After dialogue with many colleagues, including leaders in the nation’s major higher education and accreditation associations, principles developed by these two organizations in accreditation and higher education sum up best practices in accreditation. Key among these principles for accreditation follow:

- The primary responsibility for achieving excellence falls on colleges and universities themselves. Accrediting organizations have played a significant role in advancing **the assessment of learning outcomes** and must continue to do so while encouraging institutions to set the highest possible standards.
- Each college and university (and major divisions, schools, and programs within them) should develop ambitious, specific, and **clearly stated goals for student learning** appropriate to its mission, resources, tradition, student body, and community setting.
- Each college and university should gather evidence about how well students in various programs are **achieving learning outcomes** across the curriculum and about the ability of its graduates to succeed in a challenging and rapidly changing world. The evidence gathered through this process should be used by each institution and its faculty to develop coherent, effective strategies for educational improvement (AAC&U & CHEA, 2008).

The focus on learning outcomes also permeates the principles and standards set forth by regional accrediting bodies for higher education. In 2003, healthcare organizations issued a Blue Ribbon Task Force document that recommended broader outcomes, a focus on core competencies, and greater emphasis on student learning outcomes and quality improvement based on those outcomes (NCHL, 2003). These same recommendations were reiterated by educators in our own field, as cited by the PEW Health Commission (Carter & Janssen, 2009).

Based on these principles and best practices in higher education accreditation, and on the significant work completed by the Council on Accreditation for Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (COAPRT) in developing its new *2013 Learning Outcomes Standards and Assessment*, a task force of therapeutic recreation educators from across the U.S. developed therapeutic recreation learning outcomes for accreditation of therapeutic recreation programs. Focused on student learning outcomes, the *Guidelines for Learning Outcomes for Therapeutic Recreation Education* provide guidance for therapeutic recreation programs at colleges and universities to assure excellence in the field.

The *Guidelines for Learning Outcomes for Therapeutic Recreation Education* are based on the body of knowledge in the field of therapeutic recreation and thus representative of the entire profession. The following professional documents were analyzed in relation to the 7.0 series of COAPRT Learning Outcomes, and used to develop the *Guidelines*:

- The Council on Accreditation Standards and Evaluative Criteria for Baccalaureate Programs in Recreation, Park Resources, and Leisure Services: Option D Therapeutic Recreation Standards (2004)
- National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification Job Analysis (2011)
- National Recreation and Park Association/National Therapeutic Recreation Society Standards of Practice for a Continuum of Care in Therapeutic Recreation (2004)

- Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association Standards of Practice for Recreation Therapists and Therapeutic Recreation Assistants (2006)
- ATRA Standards for the Practice of Therapeutic Recreation and Self-Assessment Guide (2000)
- ATRA Guidelines for Competency Assessment and Curriculum Planning for Recreational Therapy Practice (2008)

These documents, developed over several years through rigorous review of the therapeutic recreation profession, form the basis and parameters of the *Guidelines* and thus, accurately represent the body of knowledge of the field. This level of content and face validity in accreditation is essential for assuring excellence in educational programs offering therapeutic recreation curricula.

Appendix A contains the results of the analysis of the scope of therapeutic recreation practice documents in relation to the COAPRT 7.0 Learning Outcomes in matrix form. The complete analysis for each document is available at this link: [www.nrpa.org/coaprt](http://www.nrpa.org/coaprt).

## **Background and Rationale for *Guidelines for Learning Outcomes in Therapeutic Recreation Education***

Accreditation is recognized as a primary indicator of quality in higher education. In therapeutic recreation, accreditation has also been utilized as a means to identify and verify entry-level professional competencies (Harvey, 2004; Wise, 2005). Curriculum studies have consistently reported the need to identify uniform criteria that can be used to define the scope of therapeutic recreation preparation (Brasile, 1992; McGhee & Skalko, 2001; Stumbo & Carter, 1999; Stumbo, Carter, & Kim, 2004; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2000). Yet not all academic programs have sought accreditation for either their general foundational program or their therapeutic recreation curriculum.

Concern about how much students are learning in universities and colleges dates back to the mid 1980s. This spawned an assessment movement in higher education. Regional accreditors like the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) adopted an institutional effectiveness standard calling on schools to provide evidence of goal attainment including goals of student learning. Various health professions because of their focus on licensure also moved toward student achievement in their accreditation processes.

The Pew Health Professions Commission through a 1999 report of the Task Force on Accreditation of Health Professions Education identified the important role of accreditation in preparing new professionals for practice. The Task Force identified four accreditation issues: (a) the need to simplify the process, (b) focus on improvement, (c) linking more closely with clients and consumers, and (d) using generic benchmarks or standards. The Pew Health Professions Commission encouraged specialized and professional accreditors to adopt a consistent accreditation approach based in part on regularly assessing the achievements of students and graduates and having in place a continuous self-assessment, planning, and improvement process. The report noted that greater linkage between regulation (licensure) and accreditation is an important issue suggesting the two processes may be linked if both are focused on the same outcomes such as competency-based performance assessment.

In the therapeutic recreation/recreation therapy profession, while individual measures of accountability have been in place since 1956 (e.g., registration, certification and/or licensure), the tie between these measures of individual quality and the quality of professional preparation is not well documented. This disconnect created a void between assessment of student learning outcomes and assurance of professional practice competence essential to entry-level professional practice. This gap can be filled by an accreditation program that identifies essential learning outcomes derived from standards of practice, job analyses, and recognized professional competencies. Consequently, a need currently exists to present an accreditation program that embraces the essential and unique elements of the therapeutic recreation/recreation therapy profession; and, secondly, facilitates linkage between existing individual credentialing programs and professional preparation of entry-level practitioners. Further, consistency in the outcomes of professional preparation results when the gap is closed between academic preparation and professional practice.

The *Guidelines for Learning Outcomes for Therapeutic Recreation Education* are derived from existing professional standards documents (ATRA, 2008; CTRA, 2006; NCTRC, 2011; NRPA/NTRS, 2004) and curriculum research (Autry, Anderson, & Sklar, 2010; Brasile, 1992; McGhee & Skalko, 2001; Stumbo & Carter, 1999; Stumbo, Carter, & Kim, 2004; Zabriskie & McCormick, 2000) and reflect the focus on student learning outcomes desired by accrediting bodies (AAC&U & CHEA, 2008). In an effort to enable maintenance of accreditation by programs currently accredited through the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Programs (COAPRT), the *Guidelines* are formatted to be consistent with the 2013 COAPRT program and process. In its new 2013 Standards, COAPRT delineates foundational curriculum in three areas:

- Foundations (background, nature, and scope of the profession, including its history, philosophy, and social and behavioral science underpinnings)

- Provision of services and experience opportunities for guests, visitors, participants, clients, or other constituent groups
- Management/administration (p. 10)

These three foundation areas align closely with the foundational areas delineated in the NCTRC Job Analysis for Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (2011) knowledge areas for therapeutic recreation practice:

- Foundational knowledge
- Practice of therapeutic recreation/recreation therapy
- Organization of therapeutic recreation/recreation therapy service
- Advancement of the profession

Further, COAPRT states that:

“It is incumbent upon the program to determine the specific body of knowledge applicable to the three areas of foundational curriculum. That decision must reflect current literature and current practice in each of the three areas.” (p. 10)

In these *Guidelines*, the specific body of knowledge applicable to the three areas of foundational curriculum, and thus the focus area, is that of therapeutic recreation/recreation therapy.

Also, the intent of the *Guidelines* is to present a model that might be embraced by any therapeutic recreation program, regardless of its history with accreditation. There is an urgency to promote and support accreditation in therapeutic recreation/recreation therapy education that is reflective of the entire profession. The gap between preparation and practice must be closed with assurance of quality and accountability that results from a consistent approach to defining learning outcomes (accreditation) and measuring achievement of those outcomes (certification and licensure).

COAPRT is the longstanding recognized benchmark of quality in the field. The *Guidelines for Learning Outcomes for Therapeutic Recreation Education* provide a roadmap for therapeutic recreation curricula, whether currently accredited by COAPRT or newly seeking accreditation, to meet the highest standard of excellence with a long history of quality.

# At a Glance

## ***Guidelines for Learning Outcomes for Therapeutic Recreation Education***

### **7.01 Historical, philosophical, theoretical and scientific foundations of therapeutic recreation**

- Scope of professional practice
- Processes and techniques of practice
- Historical, philosophical, theoretical, and scientific foundations

### **7.02 Design and execution of the therapeutic recreation process**

- Assessment
- Planning
- Implementation and Facilitation
- Documentation
- Evaluation

### **7.03 Management, marketing, and finance of therapeutic recreation services**

### **7.04 Application of the therapeutic recreation body of knowledge through experience**

- Readiness for culminating internship
- Culminating internship experience

#### **NOTE: Definition of Standards and Fundamental Elements**

*"The **individual standard** is expressed in one or two sentences .... The **fundamental elements** are an explication of the standard, and, as such, they specify the particular characteristics or qualities that together constitute, comprise, and encompass the standard. Institutions and evaluators will use these elements, within the context of institutional mission, to demonstrate or determine compliance with the standard. Institutions will utilize the fundamental elements, along with the standards, as a guide to their self-study processes. The fundamental elements specified for each standard have an inherent relationship to each other, and collectively these elements constitute compliance. In light of this, neither the institution nor evaluators should use the fundamental elements as a simple checklist. Both the institution and evaluators must consider the totality that is created by these elements and any other relevant institutional information or analysis. Where an institution does not demonstrate evidence of a particular fundamental element, the institution may demonstrate through alternative information and analysis that it meets the standard. (p. vi) (from Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2009, pg. vi)*



## **Relationship of Therapeutic Recreation Education Guidelines to COAPRT 2013 Learning Outcomes and Standards and CHEA Recognized Accreditors**

To illustrate, the learning outcomes for therapeutic recreation education, when used in conjunction with the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions (COAPRT) *2013 Learning Outcomes Standards and Assessment* (March, 2011), appear on the following pages. These guidelines recognize that, in addition to meeting the 7.0 standards in this document, programs must meet COAPRT Standards 1.0 to 6.0:

1.0 Eligibility Criteria

2.0 Mission, Vision, Values, and Planning

3.0 Administration

4.0 Faculty

5.0 Students

6.0 Instructional Resources

7.0 Learning Outcomes

**Please note that these guidelines provide an interpretation of the 7.0 series with a focus on therapeutic recreation. Thus, this document may provide guidance to therapeutic recreation education programs using the 7.0 standards and the therapeutic recreation body of knowledge for the foundational curriculum.**

These *Guidelines* also serve as recognition of the essential and unique elements of therapeutic recreation/recreation therapy practice. Therefore, programs wishing to undertake accreditation may elect to use the defined outcomes as presented in the 7.0 series as the basis for accreditation of their professional preparation programs in therapeutic recreation/recreation therapy. If this course of action is elected, the 1.0-6.0 standards as identified above remain critical to the accreditation review process as they are elements supportive of and assuring that a program does have the resources in place in an academic institution to support programmatic or specialty accreditation. Thus, any program seeking accreditation under the auspices of a CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation) recognized organization may expect to prepare a self-study that addresses criteria evident in the above 1.0-6.0 series.

## Rubric for Evaluating Compliance with Standards 7.01 through 7.04

Each standard is evaluated separately

Rating	Description
<b>Exceptional</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Program evidences multiple opportunities for student achievement of the learning outcomes, has multiple direct and indirect assessment measures, has collected data, and evidences use of the complete assessment process for continuous program improvement.</li><li>• Evidence is extensive and rigorous analysis of assessment measures.</li></ul>
<b>Present</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Program evidences opportunities for student achievement of the learning outcome, has assessment measures of acceptable quality, has collected data, and is utilizing assessment results for continuous program improvement.</li></ul>
<b>Emerging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Program evidences opportunities for student achievement of the learning outcome, has assessment measures of acceptable quality, and a plan in place for collection of assessment results and their utilization.</li></ul>
<b>Absent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evidence indicates the program is not in compliance with this standard, or evidence is insufficient to warrant the conclusion that the program is in compliance with the standard.</li></ul>

Standard Number	Standard	Rating	Comments
7.01	<p><b>Historical, philosophical and scientific foundations</b></p> <p>Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the following entry-level knowledge: a) the nature and scope of the relevant park, recreation, tourism or related professions and their associated industries; b) techniques and processes used by professionals and workers in those industries; and c) the foundations of the profession in history, science, and philosophy.</p>		
Guidance for TR Focus	<p><b>Historical, philosophical, theoretical, and scientific foundations of therapeutic recreation</b></p> <p>Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the nature and scope of the therapeutic recreation profession and its associated service delivery systems, and the foundations of the therapeutic recreation profession in history, theory, science, and philosophy.</p>		
7.01.01	The program shall demonstrate that students are provided with sufficient opportunity to achieve this learning outcome. Evidence <i>might</i> include a) syllabi for courses relevant to this learning outcome, b) descriptions of special assignments and extra-instructional learning opportunities that are central to meeting this standard, c) a matrix of courses and extra-instructional experiences by specific learning objectives associated with 7.01.		
7.01.02	The program shall demonstrate that quality assessment measures were used to assess learning outcomes associated with this standard. At least one of the measures used to assess this learning outcome shall be a direct measure. Evidence <i>might</i> include the following: a) a description of the process of constructing and evaluating the measures used, b) evidence of inter-rater agreement, reliability, validity or criteria appropriate to the measure, c) a description of when measures are administered and to whom they are administered, d) an assurance that assessment tools are not being used for purposes other than that for which they were developed.		
7.01.03	The program shall demonstrate that results of its assessment program indicate that graduates of the program are achieving this Learning Outcome. Evidence <i>must</i> include a written interpretation about student attainment of learning outcomes based on data from the measures used. At least two measures of learning outcomes must be used. One of these must be a <b>direct measure</b> of the learning outcome (e.g., test scores, scores on embedded assignments, standardized test pass rates, ratings of observed performance by appropriate raters). The second measure can be either a direct or an <b>indirect measure</b> of the learning outcome.		
7.01.04	The program shall demonstrate that it uses data from assessment of Learning Outcome 7.01 for continuous program improvement. Evidence <i>must</i> include a written explanation of how the data associated with Learning Outcome 7.01 are used to inform decision making.		
Guidance for TR Focus (7.01 a, b, c)	<p>a) Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the <u>scope</u> and <u>practice</u> of the therapeutic recreation. Fundamental elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professionalism, including standards of practice, credentialing, and codes of ethics of therapeutic recreation service</li> <li>Role and function of therapeutic recreation professionals in health, human, recreation, education, and other relevant systems</li> <li>Models of service delivery and best practices in the profession</li> </ul> <p>b) Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the <u>techniques and processes</u> of the therapeutic recreation profession in decision-making. Fundamental elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of best professional practices based on theoretical, philosophical, and scientific foundations of the field</li> <li>Adherence to laws, regulations, standards of practice and codes of ethics</li> <li>Professional involvement</li> </ul>	<p><b>Exceptional</b></p> <p><b>Present</b></p> <p><b>Emerging</b></p> <p><b>Absent</b></p>	<p><i>a) Suggested Evidence of Compliance:</i> Students demonstrate familiarity with the scope and practice of therapeutic recreation as evidenced by classroom assignments, examinations (including certification examinations), fieldwork experiences, portfolios, and other methods.</p> <p><i>b) Suggested Evidence of Compliance:</i> Students demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the techniques and processes of professional practice and the historical, scientific, and philosophical foundations as evidenced by classroom assignments, examinations (including certification examinations), fieldwork experiences, portfolios, and other methods.</p>

	<p>c) Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the <u>historical, philosophical, theoretical, and scientific foundations</u> of the therapeutic recreation profession. Fundamental elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theoretical foundations of play, recreation, and leisure behavior</li> <li>• Theoretical and historical foundations of therapeutic recreation</li> <li>• Theoretical foundations of therapeutic recreation service delivery (e.g., foundational models and theories)</li> <li>• Theoretical and scientific foundations of the systems in which therapeutic recreation is delivered, including the impact of technology and globalization on those systems</li> <li>• Human functioning, including anatomy and physiology, human growth and development across the lifespan, variations in development and resulting disability, psychology, including abnormal psychology, and theories of human behavior change</li> <li>• Human services supportive areas (e.g., medical terminology, pharmacology, counseling approaches, therapeutic communication, community development, positive behavioral supports)</li> </ul>		<p><i>c) Suggested Evidence of Compliance:</i>  Students demonstrate familiarity with historical, scientific, and philosophical foundations as evidenced by classroom assignments, examinations (including certification examinations), fieldwork experiences, portfolios, and other methods.</p>
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Standard Number	Standard	Rating	Comments
7.02	<b>Design and execution of leisure services</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to design, implement, and evaluate services that facilitate targeted human experiences and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity.		
<b>Guidance for TR Focus</b>	<b>Design and execution of the therapeutic recreation process</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to assess, plan, implement, document, and evaluate therapeutic recreation services that facilitate targeted outcomes, and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity.		
7.02.01	The program shall demonstrate that students are provided with sufficient opportunity to achieve this learning outcome. Evidence <i>might</i> include a) syllabi for courses relevant to this learning outcome, b) descriptions of special assignments and extra-instructional learning opportunities that are central to meeting this standard, c) a matrix of courses and extra-instructional experiences by specific learning objectives associated with 7.02.		
7.02.02	The program shall demonstrate that quality assessment measures were used to assess learning outcomes associated with this standard. At least one of the measures used to assess this learning outcome shall be a direct measure. Evidence <i>might</i> include the following: a) a description of the process of constructing and evaluating the measures used, b) evidence of inter-rater agreement, reliability, validity or criteria appropriate to the measure, c) a description of when measures are administered and to whom they are administered, d) an assurance that assessment tools are not being used for purposes other than that for which they were developed		
7.02.03	The program shall demonstrate that results of its assessment program indicate that graduates of the program are achieving this Learning Outcome. Evidence <i>must</i> include a written interpretation about student attainment of learning outcomes based on data from the measures used. At least two measures of learning outcomes must be used. One of these must be a <b>direct measure</b> of the learning outcome (e.g., test scores, scores on embedded assignments, standardized test pass rates, ratings of observed performance by appropriate raters). The second measure can be either a direct or an <b>indirect measure</b> of the learning outcome.		
7.02.04	The program shall demonstrate that it uses data from assessment of Learning Outcome 7.02 for continuous program improvement. Evidence <i>must</i> include a written explanation of how the data associated with Learning Outcome 7.02 are used to inform decision making.		
<b>Guidance for TR Focus (7.02)</b>	<p>a) Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to create/select, conduct, and evaluate individualized <u>assessment</u> for therapeutic recreation services clearly reflecting application of knowledge from relevant facets of contemporary professional therapeutic recreation practice, science, and philosophy. Fundamental elements of assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on leisure, physical, social, cognitive, psychological/emotional, and spiritual domains of human well-being</li> <li>• Encompass standardized assessments, observation, interview, and record review</li> <li>• Are team-based and inter/transdisciplinary</li> <li>• Ascertain participants' abilities, strengths, goals, and aspirations</li> </ul> <p>b) Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to conduct individualized <u>planning</u> of therapeutic recreation services clearly reflecting application of knowledge from relevant facets of contemporary professional therapeutic recreation practice, science, and philosophy. Fundamental elements of individualized planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize assessment results to generate person-centered contextualized plans</li> </ul>	<p><b>Exceptional</b> <b>Present</b> <b>Emerging</b> <b>Absent</b></p>	<p><i>a) Suggested Evidence of Compliance:</i> Students demonstrate familiarity with and ability to conduct therapeutic recreation assessment as evidenced by classroom assignments, examinations (including certification examinations), fieldwork experiences, portfolios, and other methods.</p> <p><i>b) Suggested Evidence of Compliance:</i> Students demonstrate familiarity with and ability to conduct individualized planning as evidenced by classroom assignments, examinations (including certification exams), fieldwork experiences, portfolios, and other methods.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate and correctly formatted goals and objectives</li> <li>• Use culturally relevant evidence-based interventions, strategies, facilitation techniques, modalities, activities, and adaptations</li> <li>• Are team-based and involve the family/community</li> <li>• Are contextualized to the service delivery system (e.g., health care, human services, recreation, education)</li> </ul> <p>c) Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to <u>implement and facilitate</u> therapeutic recreation interventions and services for diverse clientele, settings, cultures, and contexts. Fundamental elements of implementation and facilitation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual and group leadership skills</li> <li>• Helping relationship skills</li> <li>• A variety of common therapeutic recreation interventions, facilitation techniques, activities, and modalities</li> <li>• Activity/task analysis, adaptation, and assistive technologies</li> <li>• Team and family participation</li> <li>• Advocacy</li> <li>• Contextualization to the service delivery system (e.g., health care, human services, recreation, education)</li> </ul> <p>d) Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to <u>document</u> therapeutic recreation services according to regulatory, professional, and system requirements. Fundamental elements of documentation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment results</li> <li>• Individualized plans</li> <li>• Progress notes</li> <li>• Discharge/transition summaries</li> <li>• Compliance with agency, accreditation, and professional standards for documentation</li> </ul> <p>e) Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to <u>evaluate</u> therapeutic recreation services at the participant and program level and to use evaluation data to improve the quality of services. Fundamental elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of appropriate research and evaluation designs and methods to conduct formative and summative evaluation to document outcomes from services</li> <li>• Use of evaluation results to improve services or programs and show accountability</li> <li>• Quality assurance/quality improvement contextualized to the service delivery system</li> </ul>		<p><i>c) <u>Suggested Evidence of Compliance:</u></i> Students demonstrate the ability to implement and facilitate therapeutic recreation services as evidenced by classroom assignments, examinations (including certification exams), fieldwork experiences, portfolios, and other methods.</p> <p><i>d) <u>Suggested Evidence of Compliance:</u></i> Students demonstrate the ability to document therapeutic recreation services as evidenced by classroom assignments, examinations (including certification exams), fieldwork experiences, portfolios, and other methods.</p> <p><i>e) <u>Suggested Evidence of Compliance:</u></i> Students demonstrate the ability to evaluate participant and program outcomes as evidenced by assignments, examinations (including certification exams), fieldwork experiences, portfolios, and other methods.</p>
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Standard Number	Standard	Rating	Comments
7.03	<b>Management, marketing, and finance of leisure services</b> Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about management/administration in parks, recreation, tourism and/or related professions.		
<b>Guidance for TR Focus</b>	<b>Management, marketing, and finance of therapeutic recreation services</b> Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about management/administration of therapeutic recreation services.		
7.03.01	The program shall demonstrate that students are provided with sufficient opportunity to achieve this learning outcome. Evidence <i>might</i> include a) syllabi for courses relevant to this learning outcome, b) descriptions of special assignments and extra-instructional learning opportunities that are central to meeting this standard, c) a matrix of courses and extra-instructional experiences by specific learning objectives associated with 7.03.		
7.03.02	The program shall demonstrate that quality assessment measures were used to assess learning outcomes associated with this standard. At least one of the measures used to assess this learning outcome shall be a direct measure. Evidence <i>might</i> include the following: a) a description of the process of constructing and evaluating the measures used, b) evidence of inter-rater agreement, reliability, validity or criteria appropriate to the measure, c) a description of when measures are administered and to whom they are administered, d) an assurance that assessment tools are not being used for purposes other than that for which they were developed		
7.03.03	The program shall demonstrate that results of its assessment program indicate that graduates of the program are achieving this Learning Outcome. Evidence <i>must</i> include a written interpretation about student attainment of learning outcomes based on data from the measures used. At least two measures of learning outcomes must be used. One of these must be a <b>direct measure</b> of the learning outcome (e.g., test scores, scores on embedded assignments, standardized test pass rates, ratings of observed performance by appropriate raters). The second measure can be either a direct or an <b>indirect measure</b> of the learning outcome.		
7.03.04	The program shall demonstrate that it uses data from assessment of Learning Outcome 7.03 for continuous program improvement. Evidence <i>must</i> include a written explanation of how the data associated with Learning Outcome 7.03 are used to inform decision making.		
<b>Guidance for TR Focus (7.03)</b>	Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about facts, concepts, principles, and procedures of management/administration in therapeutic recreation. Fundamental elements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulatory and legal compliance contextualized to the service delivery system (e.g., health care, human services, recreation, education)</li> <li>• Operations and maintenance</li> <li>• Finance and budgeting, reimbursement</li> <li>• Marketing and advocacy</li> <li>• Strategic and other agency/program level planning</li> <li>• Risk and safety management</li> <li>• Quality management</li> <li>• Human resource development and management</li> <li>• Professional development</li> <li>• Evidence- theory-based practices</li> <li>• Research and technological impacts</li> </ul>	<b>Exceptional</b> <b>Present</b> <b>Emerging</b> <b>Absent</b>	<u>Suggested Evidence of Compliance:</u> Students demonstrate entry-level knowledge of management, marketing, and finance in therapeutic recreation services as evidenced by assignments, examinations (including certification exams), fieldwork experiences, portfolios, and other methods.

Standard Number	Standard	Rating	Comments
7.04	<p><b>Internship</b></p> <p>Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate, through a comprehensive internship of not less than 400 clock hours, the ability to use diverse, structured ways of thinking to solve problems related to different facets of professional practice, engage in advocacy, and stimulate innovation.</p>		
<b>Guidance for TR Focus</b>	<p><b>Internship</b></p> <p>Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the sustained ability to apply the therapeutic recreation process, use diverse, structured ways of thinking to solve problems related to different facets of professional practice, engage in advocacy, and stimulate innovation.</p>		
<b>Guidance for TR Focus (7.04)</b>	<p>a) Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate a <u>readiness</u> for the internship as determined by meeting criteria set by the program (e.g., fieldwork hours prior to the internship, competency testing, GPA requirements in core coursework, basic certifications in first aid/CPR, other dispositions or candidacy benchmarks set by the program).</p> <p>b) Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate, through a <u>comprehensive and culminating internship</u>, the ability to apply the therapeutic recreation process, use diverse, structured ways of thinking to solve problems related to different facets of professional practice, engage in advocacy, and stimulate innovation. The internship must meet current professional standards for credentialing with the state, national/international credentialing bodies.</p>	<p><b>Exceptional</b></p> <p><b>Present</b></p> <p><b>Emerging</b></p> <p><b>Absent</b></p>	<p><i>a) Suggested Evidence of Compliance:</i> Students demonstrate readiness for the internship as evidenced by assignments, examinations (including certification exams), fieldwork experiences, portfolios, competency testing, GPA requirement, course completion, and other methods.</p> <p><i>b) Suggested Evidence of Compliance:</i> Students demonstrate successful completion of the internship as evidenced by time sheets, assignments, examinations (including certification exams), site and academic supervisor evaluations, portfolios, competency testing, and other methods.</p>



## **Visitor Review of Learning Outcomes**

### **Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions**

**1. Are the students provided with sufficient opportunities to achieve the outcomes stated in responses to the 7.0 series?**

Evidence

- A. Written program assessment plan and reports that include learner outcomes, direct and indirect measures, results, and feedback.
- B. Matrix of program courses and extra instructional experiences with specific learning goals/objectives to correlate educational and professional experiences with learning outcomes.
- C. Course syllabi for courses and descriptions of extra-instructional learning opportunities and requirements that are central to meeting the 7.01-7.04 standards.
- D. Artifacts (e.g., sample assignments, experiences, materials from portfolios) and other evidence that opportunities are available to achieve outcomes.
- E. Interviews with class instructors, students, and professionals of external experiences central to learning outcomes of 7.01-7.04.

**2. What evidence is provided demonstrating the existence of quality assessment measures being used to assess the outcomes?**

Evidence

- A. A description of when (timeline) measures are administered and to whom they are administered is included in the assessment plan or provided separately for this purpose.
- B. Appropriate content-related and criterion-related evidence of validity of inferences that the program might make from the data. This response would include a description of how the measures were developed, how they are evaluated, and, if available, empirical psychometric/metricology data (e.g., reliability estimates, validity coefficients).
- C. An assurance that assessment tools are not being used for purposes other than that for which they were developed (an ethical component of educational testing).
- D. Copies of measurement tools used in the process are available for site visitor inspection.
- E. Interviews with faculty, students, and professionals to identify respective roles in developing, completing, and using program's assessment measures.

**3. What do the results of the assessment measures indicate with respect to students' achievement of outcomes?**

Evidence

- A. Explain/interpret what the results of the assessment measures indicate with respect to students' achievement of each learning outcome. This interpretation should reflect information found in the assessment plan and report.
- B. Written interpretations the program makes about student attainment of learning outcomes based on data from the measures used.
- C. Written interpretations the site visit team makes about student attainment of learning outcomes based on analysis of artifacts (e.g., assignments in student portfolios), and through discussion of assessment results with students, faculty, intern supervisors, and employers (e.g., on-site interviews with students, review of portfolios, on-site interviews with employers of graduates of the program, on-site interviews with internship supervisors).

**4. How does the program use the assessment results for continuous program improvement?**

Evidence

- A. Written explanation or tangible evidence of how the data are used for decision-making. With whom and how assessment results are shared (e.g. faculty meeting discussions, revisions in the strategic plan?) Explain any advice or consultation sought during the interpretation phase of analyzing the data. If assessment results are reported to a common office in the institution, explain the status of the program's report to this unit.
- B. Specific artifacts that signal that assertions in item 1 are true (e.g., discussion of assessment-based decisions about curricula in faculty meeting minutes, student advisory committee minutes, discussion with or email evidence of consultation with practitioners). On-site visit team review of documents and interviews with administrators, faculty, students, and professionals.
- C. A written plan to address assessment results and improve the effectiveness of the program's efforts to assess and improve student learning over the next year and visit cycle.

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## **Appendix A**

Matrix of TR Learning Outcomes to Standards of Practice,  
Job Analysis, and Other Scope of Practice Documents

COAPRT Standards Learning Outcomes for Therapeutic Recreation	Current COA TR Option Standards	NCTRC Job Analysis	NRPA/NTRS Standards of Practice	CTRA Standards of Practice	ATRA Standards of Practice	CARTE Standards	ATRA Competency Guidelines
<b>7.01 Historical, philosophical and scientific foundations</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the following entry-level knowledge: a) the nature and scope of the relevant park, recreation, tourism or related professions and their associated industries; b) techniques and processes used by professionals and workers in those industries; and c) the foundations of the profession in history, science, and philosophy.							
<b>TR Guidance:</b> <b>Historical, philosophical, theoretical, and scientific foundations of therapeutic recreation</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the nature and scope of the therapeutic recreation profession and its associated service delivery systems, and the foundations of the therapeutic recreation profession in history, theory, science, and philosophy.							
<b>a) Scope of practice</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the <u>scope</u> and <u>practice</u> of the therapeutic recreation. Fundamental elements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professionalism, including standards of practice, credentialing, and codes of ethics of therapeutic recreation service</li> <li>Role and function of therapeutic recreation professionals in health, human, recreation, education, and other relevant systems</li> <li>Models of service delivery and best practices in the profession</li> </ul>	9D.01 9D.04 9D.07 9D.08 9D.21	KA 20-24 KA 50 KA 64-65 KA 68 KA 70-71	7	7 9	7	1.1	Foundations of Professional Practice (pp. 31-32)
<b>b) Professional techniques and processes</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the techniques and processes of the therapeutic recreation profession in decision making. Fundamental elements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adherence to laws, regulations, standards of practice and codes of ethics</li> <li>Professional involvement</li> <li>Use of best professional practices based on theoretical, philosophical, and scientific foundations of the field</li> </ul>	7D.02 9D.21 9D.22	JT 1-9	6 7	7 8 9	7	1.1	Foundations of Professional Practice (pp. 31-32)

<p><b>c) Historical, philosophical, theoretical, and scientific foundations</b>  Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate entry-level knowledge of the <u>historical, philosophical, theoretical, and scientific foundations</u> of the therapeutic recreation profession. Fundamental elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theoretical foundations of play, recreation, and leisure behavior</li> <li>• Theoretical and historical foundations of therapeutic recreation</li> <li>• Theoretical foundations of therapeutic recreation service delivery (e.g., foundational models and theories)</li> <li>• Theoretical and scientific foundations of the systems in which therapeutic recreation is delivered, including the impact of technology and globalization on those systems</li> <li>• Human functioning, including anatomy and physiology, human growth and development across the lifespan, variations in development and resulting disability, psychology, including abnormal psychology, and theories of human behavior change</li> <li>• Human services supportive areas (e.g., medical terminology, pharmacology, counseling approaches, therapeutic communication, community development, positive behavioral supports)</li> </ul>	7D.01 7D.02 7D.03 7D.04 7D.05  9D.02 9D.03	KA 1-15 KA 62	7	--	--	1.1 1.8	Foundations of Professional Practice (pp. 31-32)  Functional Aspects of the Human Body (p. 46)  Human Growth and Development (p. 47)  Psychology, Cog/Ed Psych, Abnormal Psych (p. 48)  Disabling Conditions (p. 51)  Pharmacology (p. 52)  Recreation and Leisure (p. 54)
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COAPRT Standards of Excellence: Learning Outcomes for Therapeutic Recreation	Current COA TR Option Standards	NCTRC Job Analysis	NRPA/NTRS Standards of Practice	CTRA Standards of Practice	ATRA Standards of Practice	CARTE Standards	ATRA Competency Guidelines
<b>7.02 Design and execution of leisure services</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to design, implement, and evaluate services that facilitate targeted human experiences and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity.							
<b>TR Guidance:</b> <b>Design and execution of the therapeutic recreation process</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to assess, plan, implement, and evaluate therapeutic recreation services that facilitate targeted outcomes, and that embrace personal and cultural dimensions of diversity.							
<b>a) Assessment</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to create/select, conduct, and evaluate individualized <u>assessment</u> for therapeutic recreation services clearly reflecting application of knowledge from relevant facets of contemporary professional therapeutic recreation practice, science, and philosophy. Fundamental elements of assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on leisure, physical, social, cognitive, psychological/emotional, and spiritual domains of human well-being</li> <li>• Encompass standardized assessments, observation, interview, and record review</li> <li>• Are team-based and inter/transdisciplinary</li> <li>• Ascertain participants' abilities, strengths, goals, and aspirations</li> </ul>	9D.09 9D.10 9D.11	KA 25-41  JT 10-15	1A	1	1	1.2	Individualized Patient/Client Assessment (pp. 33-34)
<b>b) Planning</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to conduct individualized <u>planning</u> of therapeutic recreation services clearly reflecting application of knowledge from relevant facets of contemporary professional therapeutic recreation practice, science, and philosophy. Fundamental elements of individualized planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize assessment results to generate person-centered contextualized plans</li> <li>• Use appropriate and correctly formatted goals and objectives</li> <li>• Use culturally relevant evidence-based interventions, strategies, facilitation techniques, modalities, activities, and adaptations</li> <li>• Are team-based and involve the family/community</li> <li>• Are contextualized to the service delivery system (e.g., health care, human services, recreation, education)</li> </ul>	9D.10 9D.11 9D.15 9D.18	KA 42-43 KA 45-46 KA 49 KA 51-52  JT 16-21	1B 2	2	2	1.3	Planning Treatment/Programs (pp. 35-36)

Under NCTRC, KA=Knowledge Areas, JT=Job Task



<p><b>c) Implementation and facilitation</b>  Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to <u>implement and facilitate</u> therapeutic recreation interventions and services for diverse clientele, settings, cultures, and contexts. Fundamental elements of implementation and facilitation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual and group leadership skills</li> <li>• Helping relationship skills</li> <li>• A variety of common therapeutic recreation interventions, facilitation techniques, activities, and modalities</li> <li>• Activity/task analysis, adaptation, and assistive technologies</li> <li>• Team and family participation</li> <li>• Advocacy</li> <li>• Contextualization to the service delivery system (e.g., health care, human services, recreation, education)</li> </ul>	7D.06  9D.03 9D.05 9D.06 9D.10 9D.11 9D.12 9D.13 9D.14 9D.15 9D.16	KA 18-19 KA 44 KA 47-48 KA 66  JT 22-27 JT 36-39	1C 2 3	3 6 10	3 6	1.4 1.5	Implementing Treatment/ Programs (pp. 7-38)  Modalities and Facilitation Techniques (pp. 39-42)  Counseling, Gr. Dynamics, Leadership (p. 49)
<p><b>d) Documentation</b>  Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to <u>document</u> therapeutic recreation services according to regulatory, professional, and system requirements. Fundamental elements of documentation include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment results</li> <li>• Individualized plans</li> <li>• Progress notes</li> <li>• Discharge/transition summaries</li> <li>• Compliance with agency, accreditation, and professional standards for documentation</li> </ul>	9D.18 9D.20	KA 41 KA 53-54  JT33-35	1D 4	4	4 5	1.2 1.3	Evaluating Treatment Programs (p. 43)
<p><b>e) Evaluation</b>  Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the ability to <u>evaluate</u> therapeutic recreation services at the participant and program level and to use evaluation data to improve the quality of services. Fundamental elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of appropriate research and evaluation designs and methods to conduct formative and summative evaluation to document outcomes from services</li> <li>• Use of evaluation results to improve services or programs and show accountability</li> <li>• Quality assurance/quality improvement contextualized to the service delivery system</li> </ul>	9D.19 9D.20	KA 55-56  JT 28-32	1D 5 8	5	4 5 10 12	1.6	Evaluating Treatment Programs (p. 43)

COAPRT Standards of Excellence: Learning Outcomes for Therapeutic Recreation	Current COA TR Option Standards	NCTRC Job Analysis	NRPA/NTRS Standards of Practice	CTRA Standards of Practice	ATRA Standards of Practice	CARTE Standards	ATRA Competency Guidelines
<b>7.03 Management, marketing, and finance of leisure services</b> Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about management/administration in parks, recreation, tourism and/or related professions.							
<b>TR Guidance:</b> <b>Management, marketing, and finance of therapeutic recreation services</b> Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about management/administration of therapeutic recreation services.							
Students graduating from the program shall be able to demonstrate entry-level knowledge about facts, concepts, principles, and procedures of management/administration in therapeutic recreation. Fundamental elements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulatory and legal compliance contextualized to the service delivery system (e.g., health care, human services, recreation, education)</li> <li>• Operations and maintenance</li> <li>• Finance and budgeting, reimbursement</li> <li>• Marketing and advocacy</li> <li>• Strategic and other agency/program level planning</li> <li>• Risk and safety management</li> <li>• Quality management</li> <li>• Human resource development and management</li> <li>• Professional development</li> <li>• Evidence- theory-based practices</li> <li>• Research and technological impacts</li> </ul>	9D.07 9D.17 9D.21 9D.22	KA 16-17 KA 56-61 KA 63 KA 67-73  JT 40-43 JT 44-54 JT 55-58	6 7 8	11	8 9 10 12	1.7	Managing Recreational Therapy Practice (pp. 44-45)  Health Care Systems (p. 53)

COAPRT Standards of Excellence: Learning Outcomes for Therapeutic Recreation	Current COA TR Option Standards	NCTRC Job Analysis	NRPA/NTRS Standards of Practice	CTRA Standards of Practice	ATRA Standards of Practice	CARTE Standards	ATRA Competency Guidelines
<p><b>7.04 Internship</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate, through a comprehensive internship of not less than 400 clock hours, the ability to use diverse, structured ways of thinking to solve problems related to different facets of professional practice, engage in advocacy, and stimulate innovation.</p>							
<p><b>TR Guidance:</b> <b>Internship</b> Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate the sustained ability to apply the therapeutic recreation process, use diverse, structured ways of thinking to solve problems related to different facets of professional practice, engage in advocacy, and stimulate innovation.</p>							
<p>Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate a <u>readiness</u> for the internship semester as determined by meeting criteria set by the program (e.g., fieldwork hours prior to the internship semester, competency testing, GPA requirements in core coursework, basic certifications in first aid/CPR, other dispositions or candidacy benchmarks set by the program).</p>	--	--	--	--	--	1.9	First Aid and Safety (p. 50)
<p>Students graduating from the program shall demonstrate, through a <u>comprehensive and culminating internship</u>, the ability to apply the therapeutic recreation process, use diverse, structured ways of thinking to solve problems related to different facets of professional practice, engage in advocacy, and stimulate innovation. The internship must meet current professional standards for credentialing with the state, national/international credentialing bodies.</p>	(In the core standards)	A minimum 560-hour, fourteen (14) consecutive week field placement experience in therapeutic recreation services that uses the therapeutic recreation process as defined by the current NCTRC Job Analysis.	---	----	----	1.9	Not addressed

A complete analysis of the *Learning Outcomes for Therapeutic Recreation Education* in relation to each of the following scope of practice documents is available at this link: [www.nrpa.org/coaprt](http://www.nrpa.org/coaprt).

- ATRA Competency Guidelines (2008)
- ATRA Standards of Practice (2000)
- Canadian Therapeutic Recreation Association Standards of Practice (2006)
- COAPRT Standards for Therapeutic Recreation Options (2004)
- NCTRC Job Analysis (2011)
- NTRS/NRPA Standards of Practice (2004)