The Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies was founded on July 1, 1946 and has been a distinct department since its inception. The Department offers specializations in Public, Nonprofit, and Community Recreation; Recreational Sport Management; Recreational Therapy; Tourism, Hospitality, and Event Management; and Outdoor Recreation, Parks, and Human Ecology. There are more than 400 undergraduate students and more than 50 graduate students, including 27 doctoral students. The Department works closely with local, state and national agencies in cooperative research, education, and internship opportunities. The Department has a variety of external activities and initiatives, including Bradford Woods, the Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands, and the Leisure Research Institute.

Mission

The mission of the Department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies is to serve as a state, national and international leader in the creation, dissemination and application of knowledge of human behavior in leisure, recreation, tourism and natural environment contexts to promote, progress, and enhance human health and quality of life.

Vision

From its inception, the organized parks and recreation movement in the United States has held as core values the protection of open space and healthy recreational activity as a means to promote the health and well-being of the public and enhance social justice. Our vision is to be the pre-eminent department of Recreation, Park, and Tourism Studies through the integration of excellence in research, relevance in education, and responsiveness in service.

Values

- High quality education
- Community engagement
- Access to leisure and recreation
- Strong community quality of life
- Sustainable practices
- Social justice
- Positive health impact
- Healthy living
- Environmental justice