



**GEORGIA  
SOUTHERN  
UNIVERSITY**

**Strategic Plan (2020-2025)  
Recreation & Tourism Management Program  
Georgia Southern University**

**Responsible Administrator**

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**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Recreation and Tourism Management Program at Georgia Southern University is to promote academic excellence and enhance student success in two distinct emphasis areas: Outdoor Recreation and Tourism & Community Leisure Services. This mission is accomplished through classroom instruction, stringent academic expectations, undergraduate research, and real-world application of gained knowledge. The Recreation and Tourism Management program has a long tradition of providing experiential education, including service-learning, that is responsive to the needs of a diverse industry.

**Vision**

Preparing students to meet the recreation and leisure needs of diverse individuals, local communities, and visitors to the state of Georgia in a manner that promotes health and well-being, inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

**Values**

The Recreation and Tourism Management Program strives to fulfill the University's strategic pillars: student success; teaching and research; inclusive excellence; operational efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability; and community engagement. Our students have a

demonstrated record of success, as reflected by internship performance and job placements. They are actively involved in field trips, practicums and other experiential learning opportunities, the University Honors Program, and faculty mentored undergraduate research. Our students frequently engage in service learning activities that foster both community engagement and inclusion (e.g. Arts Fest; National Public Lands Day; Scare on the Square). Several of our courses are also included in the Environmental Sustainability Concentration.

## **Goals and Objectives**

### 1. Increase student enrollment.

- a. Expand the Lunch and Learn series offered to local high schools by May 31, 2022.
  - i. **Status:** Program faculty are currently engaged in efforts to expand our Lunch and Learn series in local high schools. Dr. Tom Sweeny has met with students at Statesboro High School on multiple occasions and is currently coordinating with Southeast Bulloch High School to arrange for our first event at that location.
- b. Update the program website to provide enhanced descriptions of emphasis areas, job opportunities, and student resources; to be completed by December 15, 2022.
  - ii. **Status:** The program coordinator completed several website updates during the Fall 2021 semester, including the addition of a student resources page. Information on available emphasis areas will be revised during the Fall 2022 semester.
- c. Develop a plan to promote dual enrollment in RECR 1530 by December 15, 2022.
  - iii. **Status:** Faculty are in the process of collaborating with the Georgia Recreation and Park Association to promote the major and a high school dual enrollment option to students around the state.
- d. Propose a change of name for the major by Feb. 1, 2023.
  - iv. **Status:** The program coordinator has completed the initial paperwork required to propose a change of name for the major. This will ultimately require approval from the University System of Georgia Board of Regents and will be an involved and time-consuming process.
- e. Increase the number of majors by 30% by May 1, 2025.
  - v. **Status:** The program increased the number of new majors by 100% between August 2020 and August 2021.

### 2. Increase external research funding.

- a. Program faculty will be awarded a minimum of three external grants or contracts by May 31, 2024.
  - i. **Status:** Drs. Peden and Sweeney were part of a successful proposal to complete

a community wide SWOT analysis that focused on promoting health and well-being in Hancock County, Georgia. A \$25,000 sub-contract was awarded through a CDC REACH grant in partnership with the Center for Public Health Practice and Research. Drs. Peden (Co-PI) and Bigley (Key Personnel) were contributors to a \$128,000 proposal to conduct heritage tourism research in the Gullah Geechee region of coastal Georgia and neighboring states. NOAA/Georgia Sea Grant recommended funding in October, 2021. The Notice of Award was received on July 26, 2022.

3. Expand and enhance curriculum to reflect needs and interests of students within the program
  - a. Expand online course offerings by January 10, 2022.
    - i. **Status:** We offered our first regularly scheduled online course in Spring 2022. RECR 1530 and RECR 3337 (International Tourism) will be offered in an online format in Spring 2023.
  - b. Hire a full-time tenure track faculty member who can contribute discipline-specific expertise consistent with program efforts to enhance course offerings by August 1, 2022.
    - ii. **Status:** Dr. Connor Clark was hired during the Spring 2022 semester with an August 1, 2022 appointment date.
  - c. All program faculty will successfully complete Teaching Online Courses certification by Dec. 15, 2022.
    - iii. **Status:** Drs. Peden and Sweeney have completed the training. Dr. Clark will complete the training during the Fall 2022 semester.
  - d. Add 1-2 additional courses that are consistent with faculty expertise and program needs, as reflected by assessment results and input from relevant stakeholders (e.g. students and practitioners); to be completed by August 1, 2023.
    - iv. **Status:** Faculty are in the process of considering curriculum revisions and new course offerings to be proposed in Fall 2022.
4. Complete COAPRT reaccreditation process including self-study document, site visit, response to site visit report, and participation in continuing accreditation hearing.
  - a. Self-study Committee will compile and submit self-study document by December 15, 2021
    - i. **Status:** completed December 2021
  - b. Site visit to be conducted February 14-18, 2021
    - ii. **Status:** completed February 2022
  - c. Program Coordinator will submit response to site visit by August 1, 2022

- iii. **Status:** completed.
- d. Program Coordinator and an additional faculty member will participate in the continuing accreditation hearing during Fall 2022 semester.
  - iv. **Status:** Awaiting hearing date from COAPRT.