



Graduate Studies Handbook

MS in Natural Resources

Emphasis in Parks, Recreation and Tourism



Parks, Recreation & Tourism
University of Missouri

About the Emphasis

Since virtually everyone participates in some form of leisure, the primary benefit of Parks, Recreation and Tourism (PRT) is to address quality of life issues. The unique interaction of people, places, and activities establish our profession as one of the world's largest industries. Students learn how to manage leisure service delivery systems by combining theory with practice. This degree is designed to prepare students for advanced positions in the parks, recreation, tourism and sport profession or admission into doctoral programs.

A note for the PRT Emphasis Area Coordinator:

The faculty of Parks, Recreation and Tourism appreciate the commitment and passion that our graduate students bring to their work and the department. Please let me know if there is ever anything we can do to improve your experience as graduate students. Don't hesitate to come to me with questions, concerns, suggestions and accomplishments you wish to share!

- Sonja Wilhelm Stanis

All guidelines herein are superseded by any campus Graduate Faculty Senate or University of Missouri policies. Any discrepancies between this document and those policies or discrepancies within this document should be noted to the Director of Graduate Studies.

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Table of Contents

Section 1: Admissions Criteria.....	4
Section 2: Degree Requirements.....	5
Thesis Option.....	6
Non-Thesis (Project) Option	7
Section 3: Thesis Guidelines.....	8
Section 4: Graduate Assistantship Guidelines	9
Section 5: Professional Development	10

Section 1: Admissions Criteria

Students must submit all required documents in electronic format in the MU Office of Graduate Studies' [online application system](#). Contact the Parks Recreation and Tourism Emphasis Area Coordinator or School of Natural Resources Director of Graduate Programs if your experience any difficulties.

Admission Criteria

- GRE required
- Minimum GPA: 3.0 in last 60 hours
- Minimum TOEFL scores: 80 (internet); 550 (paper)
- To be accepted as a candidate for the degree, an applicant must possess an undergraduate degree and academic performance that displays a breadth and depth of university education in social, behavioral, mathematical and natural sciences and major-specific coursework.

Required Application Materials

- All required MU Office of Graduate Studies documents
- Statement of purpose (1-3 pages, describes your academic and career background and goals)
- Resume or CV
- College transcripts (from every college or university attended); Unofficial transcripts can be used for initial admissions; if admitted, official transcripts will be required
- GRE scores
- TOEFL scores (for international applicants)
- Three letters of recommendation (use online admissions system for form and submission)

Once all these items have been received, the faculty will begin our deliberations for acceptance into our program. **No student is accepted without an adviser.** It is possible that you meet minimum requirements for entrance but be denied acceptance because no adviser is able to sponsor your degree program. We strongly encourage you to email or contact the professors you are interested in working with. Direct contact is a good way to introduce yourself as well as get additional information about the program

Details about materials and admissions guidelines are found at:

<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/programs/natural-resources/ms-parks-rec-tourism-emphasis.php>

Section 2: Degree Requirements

To obtain a MS degree, a student must following the general regulations of the Office of Graduate Studies and the requirements established by the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Emphasis Area. It is the student's responsibility to make sure all regulations are adhered to and all requirements are satisfied.

Office of Graduate Studies Master's Graduation Requirements: <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/graduation-requirements/masters-grad-requirements.php>

The Parks, Recreation and Tourism Emphasis consists of a minimum of 30 credits for the thesis option and 39 credits for the non-thesis option (see below for further details).

- Students are required to take four 8000 level courses in the PRT curriculum.
 - All students must take:
 - [P R TR 8400](#) Constructs of Leisure
 - [P R TR 8430](#) Research Methods in Parks, Recreation and Tourism
 - Students then choose two courses from:
 - [P R TR 8436](#) Visitor Behavior and Policy
 - [P R TR 8450](#) Administration in Leisure Service Delivery
 - [P R TR 8460](#) Financial Operations in Leisure Service Delivery
 - [P R TR 8080](#) Foundations of Sport
 - [P R TR 8088](#) Sport and Leisure Economics
- All students must take a graduate level analysis course (i.e., statistics, qualitative analysis, or mixed analysis).
- Electives should be selected in consultation of your advisor and must be approved by the student's committee.

Because students program are from a wide variety of circumstances, and pursue the M.S. at all different paces, a sample plan of study is not easily produced. Students work closely with their advisor to select appropriate coursework.

The [Graduate Student Progress System](#) (GSPS) is a Web-based reporting system through which students document their progress toward degree completion. All graduate students are required to submit annual progress reports by establishing or updating a GSPS record. Faculty members use the GSPS to review students' annual reports, assess their progress and provide feedback. <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/progress/annual-review.php>

Degree Program Forms required by the Office of Graduate Studies:

- [M1- Program of Study for the Master's Degree](#). Presents the course work to be included in the student's program of study. Complete by the end of 2nd semester.
- [M2- Request for Thesis Committee](#) (Thesis only). Presents the graduate faculty on the thesis committee. Complete by the end of 2nd semester.
- [M3- Report of the Master's Examining Committee](#). Reports the official results of the thesis defense. Submitted upon completion of thesis defense.
- [Graduate Student Change of Committee Form](#) is completed immediately if committee members change.
- [Program of Study Course Substitution Form](#) is completed when courses are substituted after the doctoral program committee has approved the program of study.

Thesis Option

The thesis option is most appropriate for M.S. candidates who aspire to pursue doctoral education in the future, desire distinct research training and experience, and/or desire research or technical writing experience. Students who complete a thesis are encouraged to publish their findings in peer-reviewed journals.

Credit Hour Requirements: The thesis option requires a minimum of 30 credit hours, which includes:

- a minimum of 15 hours at the 8000/9000 level
- a minimum of 12 hours of 8000 level theory-based contact courses within the PRT curriculum
- a graduate level analysis course
- minimum 3 credits thesis research (PRTR 8090)
- up to a maximum of 12 credits of independent study (Thesis Research, Guided Readings, Problems, or Independent Work).

Thesis Research Boundaries: The thesis endeavor engages content of a solid academic/theoretical need that adds to or extends the knowledge base. It typically requires the student to display original scholarship or application of an existing theory to solve a specific problem. The rigor of the thesis challenges the student to address and engage the scientific process, which includes an evaluative component of peer and academic review.

Thesis Committee: The thesis committee consists of a minimum of three graduate faculty members: two within the PRT department, and one outside the department. Emeritus and/or adjunct faculty members are eligible to serve on student committees, provided they have graduate faculty status.

Procedures: The student develops the thesis proposal with primary guidance of the committee chair. The proposal is defended in a scheduled open forum followed by committee approval or disapproval. Following proposal approval by the committee, the student conducts the research and completes the thesis paper. The student then defends the completed study in a scheduled open forum, followed by committee action to pass or fail the thesis defense. Students must submit the M-1 and M-2 forms by the end of their second semester. The M-3 form should be submitted shortly after the thesis defense.

<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/process/masters-process/>

<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/thesis-dissertation/process/>

<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/graduation-commencement/timeline-deadlines/>

Non-Thesis (Project) Option

A non-thesis option is also available that requires additional coursework and a research project. The non-thesis option is most appropriate for M.S. candidates who view the Master's Degree as the terminal degree, aspire for practitioner work within the profession, and/or desire additional course work to balance their program of study.

Credit Hour Requirements: The non-thesis option requires a minimum of 39 credit hours, which includes:

- a minimum of 15 hours at the 8000/9000 level
- a minimum of 12 hours of 8000 level theory-based contact courses within the PRT curriculum
- a graduate level analysis course
- 3-6 credits of PRTR 8089 (Research Project)
- Up to a maximum of 12 credits of independent study (Research Project, Guided Readings, Problems, or Independent Work).

Non-Thesis Boundaries: The non-thesis option engages content of an academic/professional practice need that addresses issues or problems. It requires the student to display independent scholarship in the definition, review and analysis of a problem or issue under study. The rigor of the project challenges the student to engage content to professional standards, which include the evaluative component of peer and professional review.

Project Committee: The project committee consists of a minimum of three graduate faculty members (one maybe be from outside the PRT department, but not a requirement). Emeritus and/or adjunct faculty members are eligible to serve on student committees, provided they have graduate faculty status.

Procedures: The student develops the project proposal with primary guidance of the committee chair. The committee chair approves the proposal. Following approval, the student completes the project. The student then defends the completed project in a scheduled open forum, followed by committee action to pass or fail the project defense. Students must submit the M-1 form by the end of their second semester. The M-3 form should be submitted shortly after the project defense.

<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/process/masters-process/>

<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/graduation-commencement/timeline-deadlines/>

Section 3: Thesis Guidelines

The M.S. thesis option is designed for students wishing to conduct a full-fledged research study under faculty guidance. Theses in social sciences typically follow a 5- chapter structure. The finished document can range from 40 to 150 pages (more or less) depending on size, scope, type of data collected, and analyses of said data. At the completion of the thesis process, the students will present their process, findings and conclusions in a defense.

Process

1. With the chair of your committee (advisor), identify other faculty to serve on your committee.
2. Develop a formal proposal that outlines your project. This proposal is, in essence, your first 3 chapters of the thesis.
3. Student provides proposal to committee 1-2 weeks prior to the meeting (this time frame does not include the time for your advisor to review before sending to the committee)
4. Student presents thesis proposal (as approved by the chair) in an open format
 - a. Audience is excused from the room following presentation and general questions; committee asks additional questions in a closed-door format
5. Obtain IRB approval for your research project (the approved proposal must match the IRB protocol).
6. Do the research - stay in contact with your committee chair to maintain progress and focus in your work. You should consult your committee members as needed.
7. Schedule your defense by contacting your committee members and finding a 2 hour time period that is available for everyone; schedule a room for the defense.
8. Submit the final draft of your thesis to your committee members at least 1-2 full weeks before your defense. It is important to give enough time for your committee to identify any red flags to the chair that should be addressed prior to the defense. If major concerns are identified (that cannot be rectified prior), the defense can be cancelled and rescheduled for a later date.
9. Student presents thesis (as approved by the chair) in an open format
 - a. Audience is excused from the room following presentation and general questions; committee asks additional questions in a closed-door format
 - b. Committee meets after closed-door session to approve, disapprove, or approve the thesis pending changes
 - c. Student is made aware of decision
10. Make any changes to the thesis, as prescribed by your committee at defense, with the aid of your chair
11. Submit the thesis in paper or electronic format to the Office of Graduate Studies (note due dates for graduation: <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/academics/graduation-commencement/timeline-deadlines/>)
12. Submit bound versions of your thesis/dissertation to the Emphasis Area Coordinator for the department's library

In general, it is not your advisor's to serve as an editor. It is your responsibility to reconcile issues with your writing by considering addition training or utilizing an editor. Graduate level writing is an expectation for all students

Section 4: Graduate Assistantship Guidelines

Note: Procedures and guidelines relate to departmentally funded positions.

Guidelines for Graduate Assistants

1. Graduate assistants given .5 FTE positions (20hrs/week) should not have any other regular positions or jobs. This would not include one-time consulting or low-commitment seasonal work. As a graduate assistant, you are not only indicating a desire to pursue a graduate degree, but to immerse yourself in graduate life. Students with .25 FTE assistantships (10hrs/week) should limit work with another position to approximately 10 hours per week.
2. Graduate assistants are expected to follow the academic calendar similar to faculty or staff. Therefore, you are expected to work during breaks and holidays in which the university does not release faculty or staff. Alternate arrangements can possibly be made with supervising faculty and/or the Emphasis Area Coordinator.
3. Proper attire while teaching is a firm expectation. Consult with the faculty member in which you are being supervised for his or her definition of proper attire.
4. Working on coursework or individual projects is not considered a part of your paid time as a graduate assistant.
5. Graduate assistant offices are professional spaces on loan during your time here. You should treat them as such and not as your personal room. Décor to personalize your desk area is encouraged, but should not be distracting or offensive to others.
6. Because this is a shared environment, you should be aware and cognizant as to distractions that family, friends, pets, music, etc. may cause to your fellow graduate assistants. We want to be a friendly environment, but not to the detriment of the work of your colleagues.
7. If you are provided office space, you will be given a key and granted after hour access to the building (but not the PRT office). The office key must be returned upon termination of your appointment.
8. Graduate teaching assistants are expected to keep in line with FERPA policies and student privacy. GTA's should not discuss the work of a student with other students.
9. Notify the Emphasis Area Coordinator of any questions or concerns regarding your assistantship position.

Graduate Assistant Review Process

For all graduate assistants, reviews will ensue annually. If there are concerns, a review may also be conducted mid-year. Reviews will determine whether a student is renewed. Renewals are made on a year-by-year basis.

The Graduate Tuition Support Program waives tuition for qualified students. Please see the eligibility criteria, requirements, eligible course work, and time limits:

<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/financials/tuition-support-program/eligibility/>

Information regarding the Student Medical Insurance Subsidy Program:

<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/financials/student-medical-insurance/subsidy-program/>

Section 5: Professional Development

Office of Graduate Studies Professional Development

<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/professional-development/>

- Chart Your Path. Compare your transferable skills to the skills that are in demand by employers across job sectors. Learn to set goals and target dates for acquiring new skills and abilities.
- Build Your Skills. After you chart your path, start building your transferable skills: leadership, teaching, spoken communication, scholarly writing and more.
- Find Your Career. Explore career options. Ready job search documents. Prepare for interviews. Network. Search for jobs.

Blackboard Resources

<http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/professional-development/electronic-resources-for-online-learners.php>

The Graduate School manages several Bb organizations to meet students' needs.

- **Grad Careers:** Designed for students exploring job opportunities in business, industry, government, nonprofit and/or higher education. Provides examples for competitive résumés, CV's and cover letters. Strategies for job search, interviewing and marketing your transferable skills (e.g., leadership, writing, public speaking, management) across job sectors. Look for **ID org_grad_careers**
- **Grad Scholar:** Provides writing resources for abstracts, outlines, literature reviews, theses/dissertations, journal articles, scholarly presentations/posters and teaching the public about research findings. Look for **ID org_grad_scholar**
- **Grad Electronic Thesis and Dissertation:** Contains links to policies, procedures, and requirements for masters and doctoral students that will be submitting a thesis or dissertation. Degree candidates are able to upload a thesis or dissertation to this site. Look for: **ID org_grad_thesis_dissertation**
- **Grad Proposal Writer:** Resources for developing grants or fellowship and scholarship proposals. Includes guides for getting organized and constructing effective proposals; step-by-step instructions; links for locating funders; proposal examples; basic budgeting and evaluation guides. Look for **ID org_grad_proposal_writer**

Trainings and Workshops

- University System trainings for students and employees (Under “myTraining”:
MakeITSafe Trainings, Preventing Discrimination)
<https://myhr.umsystem.edu/psp/prd/?cmd=login>
- IRB training for doing research with Human Subjects:
https://research.missouri.edu/irb/CITI_Instructions.php
- Library tutorials and workshops for graduate students:
<http://libraryguides.missouri.edu/gradstudents>

Parks, Recreation and Tourism Graduate Student Association (PRT GSA)

- Facebook: [Mizzou PRT GSA](#)
- Professional development, social events, service, and funding opportunities

Graduate Awards & Travel Scholarships

- Thesis & Dissertation Awards. <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/financials/graduate-awards-travel-scholarships/dissertation-thesis-awards/>
- Teaching and Research Assistant Awards. <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/financials/graduate-awards-travel-scholarships/donald-k-anderson-awards/>
- Travel Scholarships <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/financials/graduate-awards-travel-scholarships/travel-scholarships/>
 - Professional Presentations Travel Scholarship <http://gradstudies.missouri.edu/financials/graduate-awards-travel-scholarships/travel-scholarships/professional-presentations/>
 - MU Graduate Professional Council (GPC) Presentation Travel <http://gpc.missouri.edu/funding/travel-awards/>
 - MU Graduate Student Association (GSA) Presentation Travel <http://gsa.missouri.edu/travel-grants/>
- ORG funding through PRT GSA

Departmental Support for Conference Travel

Pending availability of funds, partial financial support may be provided in some cases for graduate assistants presenting at a conference. For example, if a graduate student secures funding through ORG, GSA, etc. and would need additional funding, the department may consider such funding. Consult with the DGS should additional funding be needed. However, if external funding covers the total, no internal funding would be dispersed. In addition, if the graduate assistant fails to meet deadline for external funding (e.g. ORG, GSA), faculty retain the right to deny internal funds. Individual faculty members may provide additional support as they see fit.

Note: If you are supported by (any part of) this institution regarding professional conference travel, the expectation is that you attend all aspects of the conference unless you have specific permission by your advisor and the DGS. Students for whom reservations are made are expected to attend those functions (if the student must cancel, he/she may be responsible for those expenses).

Publications, Conference Abstracts & Posters

Share your accomplishments with the rest of the Department and School of Natural Resources by posting any publications, conference abstracts and posters. Please work with your advisor or the emphasis area coordinator in doing so. Include the date of posting on your work so that we can rotate out the oldest contributions.