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A survey of the recreation and leisure studies graduates of the University of Nebraska at Omaha

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University of Nebraska at Omaha

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A SURVEY OF THE RECREATION
AND LEISURE STUDIES GRADUATES
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

A thesis
Presented to the
School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
and the
Faculty of the Graduate College
University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
University of Nebraska at Omaha

By
Dawn Stockman
November 1983

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THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College, University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Science of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Changes in work schedules, retirement age, and the economic situation have led to increased amounts of leisure time for individuals in our society. The demand for higher education in the recreation field has also increased to maintain pace with the growth in recreation.

In his article, "New Values, New Mission, New Role, New Preparation for Recreation Personnel," Gray (1973) stresses the need for appropriate changes in recreation curricula to meet the increased leisure demands of our society. According to Gray (1973),

If recreation personnel are going to undertake different tasks, occupy a different community role, help provide a broader kind of service, deal with unfamiliar clientele, and embrace a different set of values, clearly the recreation curriculum cannot follow traditional patterns and be relevant to the needs of the field. What kind of an education is needed to perform well under these new conditions and what part of the necessary learning should we attempt in the college program? In reaching these decisions there is no model; we are groping for the kind of curriculum we need (p. 359).

Since 1960, the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) has been striving to help discern and provide for the recreational needs of our society by developing a curriculum for students interested in entering the recreation field. Recreation courses were first introduced at the Municipal University of Omaha during the 1960-61 academic year when four courses were added to the physical education curriculum. In the following years, several recreation courses were gradually added to the

curriculum, further defining recreational studies as separate from physical education. In 1976-77, the recreation program was formally titled the Recreation and Leisure Studies (R/LS) Program. Periodic additions and revisions to the program have resulted in the current 15-course curriculum offering specializations in management/leadership, therapeutic recreation, and outdoor recreation.

Despite the growth in the curriculum, certain factors have surfaced which could be considered limitations to the UNO R/LS program. For example, over the years, the typical tenure of faculty members within the R/LS program has been of brief duration. These frequent changes of faculty members may imply a lack of continuity and limited growth within the program.

As evidenced in the statement by Gray (1973), there exists a need to determine which aspects of curriculum are relevant to meet the changing demands of the recreation profession. It would appear that one of the most efficient means of evaluating program effectiveness is through the use of graduate follow-up studies (Slack, 1980). Feedback from graduates may result in curriculum changes which will ultimately improve the quality of the program.

CHAPTER II

THE PROBLEM

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to to determine whether program perceptions differed among UNO R/LS graduates, and if so, to identify the nature of the differences.

Secondary purposes of this study were as follows:

1. To obtain the maximum possible demographic data so as to describe the nature of the population sampled.
2. To compare attitudes of the graduates regarding recreation growth and trends.

Null Hypotheses

It was believed that there would be no significant differences in perceptions of R/LS graduates regarding the recreation program experienced at UNO. Sub-hypotheses were as follows:

1. There would be no significant difference in perceptions of graduates regardless of the year of graduation.
2. There would be no significant difference in perceptions of graduates regardless of sex.
3. There would be no significant difference in perceptions of graduates regardless of age at the time of graduation.

4. There would be no significant difference in perceptions of graduates regardless of the area of specialization.
5. There would be no significant difference in perceptions of graduates regardless of recreation salary.
6. There would be no significant difference in perceptions of graduates regardless of employment in recreation versus those not employed in recreation.

Assumptions

In the initial phase of this study it was necessary to make a number of basic assumptions for the purpose of forming a framework for the research.

1. It was assumed that R/LS graduates involved in this survey were competent enough to make valid judgments relating to questions asked in the questionnaire.
2. It was assumed that intervening variables such as environmental factors and/or conditions, as well as psychological dispositions of individuals, were similar for the different populations when responding to the questionnaire.
3. It was assumed that for all data used in this study, the questionnaire was a valid instrument for data collection.

Delimitations

The scope of this study was to survey R/LS graduates of UNO from 1961 through 1983. This study included only those individuals with available current addresses.

Limitations

Limitations existed which may have greatly affected the results of this study. Any investigation that utilizes a questionnaire for its data collection can be limited by the structure of the instrument. A second limitation which may have affected the outcome of this study was the psychological set of the respondents at the time they completed the questionnaire. Specific limitations of this study included the following:

1. The percentage of responses from each graduating class differed due to the availability of addresses and the decision of some of the graduates not to respond to the questionnaire.
2. The time span covered in this study limited the effectiveness of some of the responses.
3. The recall of particular aspects regarding program experienced were not the same for all graduates.
4. Perceptions of the graduates regarding curriculum may have differed due to the curriculum changing over the years. Courses have been added, deleted, or modified, so graduates within the R/LS program may not have experienced the same course content areas.

Definition of Terms

NRPA. National Recreation and Park Association.

Recreation. A wide spectrum of voluntary leisure-time activities which provide gratification for the individuals involved.

R/LS. Recreation and leisure studies.

R/LS graduates. All graduates, male and female, who obtained a Bachelor's Degree with either a major or a specialization in recreation and leisure studies.

R/LS program. The courses of study and experiences offered under the guidance of recreation and leisure studies departments.

UNO. University of Nebraska at Omaha, a four-year accredited university operated under the University of Nebraska System. This definition included the Municipal University of Omaha and the University of Omaha, former names of the University as it existed prior to 1968.

Significance of the Study

Due to the growth in recreation over the past several years, new demands have been placed on recreation professionals. The increase in leisure time resulting from shorter work schedules, early retirement, and the economic situation has led to increased opportunities for recreation activities. An informal recreation background is no longer adequate to meet the challenges of programming leisure activities. Unfortunately, many colleges and universities are unaware of the program revisions necessary to meet the demands of the profession. One of the most beneficial sources of evaluation is the feedback of former graduates of recreation programs.

Trevor Slack (1980) listed three reasons for the use of graduate follow-up studies as an effective means of program evaluation. Reasons included were (1) to provide information for graduates regarding entry into the job market, (2) to provide feedback regarding utility of

programs, and (3) to serve as the data base for revising and updating programs.

The basis for a study done by Klar and Budd (1981) reiterates the need for recreation alumni studies. They suggest that interaction with graduates assists faculty in staying abreast with the needs of graduates to be prepared for entry into the field and subsequent advancement.

This study of recreation graduates of UNO was conducted to determine perceptions of the program experienced and indicate future needs of the program based on growth and trends. It is hoped that the information obtained in this investigation will serve as a basis for any necessary revisions of the program. An attempt will be made to improve the quality of the program so that future graduates will be more adequately prepared to meet the increasing demands of the recreation profession.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

It is essential that some form of curriculum evaluation be included in all recreation programs. As a part of its accreditation process, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) requires each college or university to conduct a curriculum evaluation of their professional preparation program (NRPA, 1975). One of the major purposes for accreditation by the NRPA is to promote continual self-evaluation and subsequently improve the quality of recreation programs. This self-evaluation process can be conducted in a number of different forms. Some colleges and universities have chosen alumni feedback as the primary course of curriculum evaluation.

As evidenced by the early study of Giles (1957), recreation program evaluations involving graduate follow-up have existed for many years. Although much information has been published regarding the subject of program evaluation, studies which specifically address evaluation involving recreation alumni are limited. There are schools throughout the country, such as Indiana University and Eastern Kentucky University, that currently employ surveys to assist in curriculum evaluation; however, only a limited number of these findings have been published.

The literature reviewed in the following pages addressed only those related studies which involve graduate follow-up surveys as the basis for the investigation. Included in this review were undergraduate and graduate studies.

Undergraduate and Graduate Studies

In 1957, Giles studied graduates of the University of Minnesota to determine the effectiveness of the recreation leadership training. Fifty alumni who graduated with a Bachelor's Degree from 1948 through 1953 were surveyed. Giles (1957) limited his study to only those graduates who had been employed full-time in a recreation position for at least one year.

Giles (1957) surveyed each graduate in person. A checklist was used to indicate job classification. A three-point scale was used for the graduates to rate recreation courses. Job classifications of the graduates were analyzed by frequency, percentage, and rank order of performance. The mean was the measure of central tendency used to determine the ratings of the courses.

Some of the more noteworthy conclusions drawn by Giles (1957) related to employment, human relations, and course specificity. The majority of graduates reported employment in semi-public recreation agencies. However, analysis of the data indicated that graduates appeared to be more adequately prepared for public recreation positions. Field work in recreation was seen by the graduates as the most important course in their professional preparation.

Based on his findings, Giles (1957) recommended that the University of Minnesota analyze the findings and compare them to training requirements for future recreation leaders. He also suggested that other colleges and universities become familiar with the duties performed by recreation graduates to insure adequate preparation for their future recreation leaders.

Opinions of graduates served as the basis for evaluation of the Health, Physical Education and Recreation professional preparation at Harding College. Martin (1978) utilized a questionnaire to obtain opinions regarding the curriculum and to collect personal and employment information about the graduates. Graduates who received degrees from 1970 to 1975 were included in the study.

In his study, Martin (1978) used a four-point scale to rate course value, teacher duties, and the degree to which departmental objectives were achieved. Using this method, the graduates had the opportunity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their undergraduate curriculum. The graduates judged the greatest strengths of the program as the dedication of teachers, the intramural program, and the teaching of sport skills. The greatest weaknesses were seen to be the inadequate preparation for coaching and the limited practical application of some courses. Also, as in Giles' study (1957), the graduates indicated that longer internships would improve the professional preparation. In general, all graduates were in close agreement as to the course value, course content, and the professional curriculum at Harding College. However, it is noteworthy to report that males generally evaluated

courses, objectives, and physical education duties more favorably than did women graduates.

Klar and Budd (1981) surveyed alumni of the Leisure Studies and Resources Program at the University of Massachusetts to determine what was needed for graduates to be adequately prepared for recreation positions and for subsequent career advancement. The approximate response rate of the questionnaires was 20%. Some of the more relevant findings in this study included:

1. Approximately 61% of the respondents working in recreation services were acting as supervisors or administrators.
2. Some 41% of those graduates employed in recreation areas earned at least \$1,000 per month. However, an equal number of graduates were earning \$600 to \$900 per month.
3. The five most important skills/knowledges for job performance were oral communications, public relations, written communication, salesmanship, and managerial skills.
4. Of the graduates who indicated that internships were relevant, the majority believed that they contribute much to effective performance in the first job.

Holley (1974) and Dance (1977) conducted studies at Brigham Young University using graduates to evaluate the Recreation Education Department. Holley (1974) surveyed recreation alumni from 1968 to 1973 and current students as a means of evaluating the recreation curriculum. Specific purposes of his study were (1) to determine the employment sources available to recreation alumni, (2) to determine if the alumni felt the education they received prepared them for their jobs, and (3)

to determine if alumni and students felt the curriculum and faculty advisement was satisfactory.

Major conclusions of this investigation by Holley (1974) were as follows. Therapeutic recreation was reported as the leading employment area for recreation graduates, followed by public recreation. Over one-third of the graduates were employed in non-recreation fields. As in other studies (Dance, 1977; Giles, 1957; Klar & Budd, 1981; Martin, 1978; Slack, 1980), the greatest contribution to preparation and the most frequent suggestion for improvement in the curricula involved additional field work experience. It is interesting to note that graduates indicated a need to make the requirements for entry into the recreation program more stringent.

Three years later, Dance (1977) surveyed those alumni who received degrees from 1970 through 1976. The purpose of his study was to evaluate the core curriculum of the undergraduate recreation program. Specific problems investigated were the adequacy of the curriculum in preparing students for recreation related positions, the relevancy and importance of the curriculum to alumni job success and fulfillment, and personal history of the alumni. A questionnaire was developed and administered to 350 alumni with undergraduate recreation degrees. Data collection included background information, evaluation of the core curriculum, and general questions.

Some of the findings of this study were similar to the previous study done by Holley (1974) at the same university. Representation from the graduates was generally equal for each of the years surveyed, and the majority of those responding to the survey questionnaires were

male. Graduates identified the greatest strength of the curriculum as practical experience. One finding of potential interest to future recreation graduates was that the majority of respondents secured recreation related positions within one month after graduation. In evaluation of the curriculum, over two-thirds of the alumni felt the core curriculum had inadequacies. For those alumni currently employed, the ratio increased to over three-fourths. This finding may suggest that those employed are more aware of the professional preparation necessary to perform on the job and further indicates a need for graduate input into curriculum.

A study done in Canada by Slack (1980) dealt with the curriculum perceptions of physical education and recreation graduates. He used a questionnaire to investigate the employment status of physical education and recreation graduates of the University of Alberta from 1973 to 1977. The investigation of employment status revealed that a majority of graduates secured employment. Teaching was the most frequently reported job for physical education graduates, and Assistant Director and Director of Recreation positions were the leading employment sources for recreation graduates. From a curriculum standpoint, most of the respondents indicated satisfaction with the professional training they received.

Recommendations for curriculum improvement suggested by Slack (1980) included adding a business management course and a writing and grammar course to both the physical education and recreation programs. He also suggested a possible need for more practical experience.

A second study of recreation graduates in Canada was done by Cousineau (1979) at the University of Ottawa to determine career profiles of recreation graduates. Questionnaires were distributed to 285 recreation alumni who graduated from 1970 through 1978.

In response to queries regarding employment, over half of the graduates employed in recreation fields identified their main functions as administrative. This finding was similar to the study by Klar and Budd (1981) which reported nearly 62% of those in recreation positions acting as supervisors or administrators. Another finding of possible interest to future recreation professionals was the fact that 66% of the respondents were employed in recreation positions. Also, the majority of graduates expressed satisfaction with the professional preparation they received at the University of Ottawa. Another significant finding reported by Cousineau (1979) was the difference in salaries between men and women. The salaries for men employed in recreation were significantly greater than those for women in the same field.

A more recent study by Bruce (1983) at Michigan State University included both undergraduate and graduate recreation alumni. The purpose of his study was to aid the Department of Park and Recreation Resources in determining if it was satisfactorily serving graduates in the field and current students. Primary concerns included determining employment percentages and sources and lending assistance to unemployed graduates.

Bruce (1983) examined areas of emphasis in regard to percentages of graduates employed and salaries. Undergraduate results revealed that 87% secured employment within one year of graduation, 94% of which

were within their areas of emphasis. However, starting salaries were low with 80% of the graduates indicating initial salaries of \$12,000 or below. Results of those who earned graduate degrees showed the percentage of graduates obtaining employment within one year of graduation as slightly lower (79%). However, initial starting salaries were substantially higher with only 40% of the graduates at \$12,000 or below.

Bruce (1983) also asked graduates to identify areas of the curriculum which they considered weak in relationship to their needs in the field. The most frequently indicated areas needing additional emphasis were (1) administration/management, (2) supervisory skills, (3) business courses, (4) practical experience and internships, (5) in-depth science courses, (6) personnel, (7) therapeutic recreation, and (8) law enforcement.

Research by Lewiski (1976) and Fagnani (1972) was aimed specifically at doctoral programs in recreation. Lewiski (1976) studied the program at the University of Alabama. The purpose of this investigation was (1) to evaluate the quality, quantity, and utility of the Doctor of Education Degree in Health, Physical Education and Recreation, (2) to collect biographical information about the Doctor of Education graduates, and (3) to gain information under which the doctoral candidates function while attending the University of Alabama. The source of data collection in this study was a two-part questionnaire which was administered to 52 graduates of the program.

The graduates evaluated their program in terms of quality, quantity, and utility of professional preparation. The highest rated area in each of these three criteria was the area of Contemporary

Problems and Issues. Sufficient or better quantity of preparation was received in all areas except Scientific Foundations and in Athletics and Intramurals. The quality and utility of preparation was judged average or higher in all areas except Athletics and Intramurals. In response to criticisms and recommendations by the respondents, Lewiski (1976) suggested careful examination of some aspects of the doctoral program.

Fagnani (1972) conducted a study at Indiana University for the following purposes: (1) to examine educational and professional backgrounds and future plans of doctoral graduates from Indiana University, (2) to obtain opinions of the graduates about the quality of the educational experiences at Indiana University regarding major requirements and specific competencies, and (3) to make recommendations for improving the program. The questionnaire technique was used to collect data from alumni who graduated from the recreation program from August 1949 to August 1971. Data were tabulated in table form denoting frequencies and percentages. The most noteworthy conclusions reported by Fagnani (1972) include the following. Doctoral recipients expressed only minor differences in the relevancy of competencies to present positions. The doctoral program, especially the faculty, received positive evaluations. Faculty were evaluated as qualitatively superior, but quantitatively inadequate to effectively carry out present doctoral program responsibilities.

Summary

The literature reviewed in this chapter concerned recreation program evaluations involving surveys administered to graduates of

recreation programs. Most of the studies reviewed used a mailed questionnaire as the primary instrument for data collection. Most studies included an assessment of the recreation curriculum, background information, and employment information. The ultimate purpose for each of the studies was to help improve the quality of the recreation programs. Noteworthy highlights of the studies include (1) field work experience was clearly seen as a vital element in the recreation curricula; (2) graduates were generally in agreement that their professional preparation was adequate; and (3) the majority of recreation graduates were able to secure employment, generally within one year following graduation.

CHAPTER IV

PROCEDURES

Questionnaire

The method of determining the program perceptions of UNO R/LS graduates was in the form of a three-part questionnaire. Part I of the questionnaire dealt with background information. Part II assessed attitudes about recreation growth and trends. Part III addressed the R/LS Program at UNO. The questionnaire was developed to collect data and was submitted to selected faculty members at UNO for analysis of format and content. It was then administered to a class of ten undergraduate recreation students as a pilot test to ensure clarity. These steps served to validate the questionnaire as an instrument for data collection. A coding system was used on each questionnaire to insure anonymity while determining which graduates had responded to the study. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

Selection of the Population

The population for this study consisted of 130 graduates of UNO from 1961 through 1983 with majors or specializations in R/LS. Only graduates with available current addresses were involved in this study. A cover letter accompanied the questionnaire explaining the purpose of

the study and emphasized the need for prompt response from the graduates. A copy of the cover letter can be found in Appendix B.

Endorsements

To enhance the return rate by the graduates, a letter of endorsement accompanied each questionnaire. The letter carried two endorsements. The first was from Dr. Richard Flynn, Director of HPER, UNO. The second endorsement was by Ernie Gorr, former Recreation Coordinator, UNO. A copy of the letter of endorsement can be found in Appendix C.

Follow-up Letters

The questionnaires were mailed to the R/LS graduates on July 8, 1983. Follow-up letters were sent to graduates who had not yet responded to the study on July 29, 1983, three weeks following the first mailing date. An identical copy of the questionnaire accompanied each letter. A copy of the follow-up letter can be found in Appendix D.

Treatment of the Data

The findings of the study are presented in terms of percentages and/or number of responses for each item in the questionnaire. Cross tabulations were utilized for those variables considered to be potentially different. The hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance using the Chi-square method. The VAX computer system at UNO was used to analyze the data.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

The results of this study were based on data obtained from 76 (58.5%) questionnaires returned. The presentation of data consists of three sections: frequencies, Chi-square analysis, and suggestions for UNO R/LS improvement.

Of the graduates involved in this study, the highest percentage of questionnaires returned was from graduates of the early years of the program. Seventy-five percent of the graduates between 1961 and 1977 returned questionnaires. This was contrary to what was expected.

Frequencies

Year Began College

The years in which graduates began college ranged from 1951 to 1982. The mean for the year began was 1970.

Years of Graduation Reported by Graduates

The years of graduation reported by the graduates ranged from 1964 to 1983. The most frequently reported year in which graduates received R/LS degrees was 1977. To aid in analysis of the questionnaire, the years of graduation were divided into five groups. These groups and frequencies of year graduated are presented in Figure 1.

The 1976 to 1979 group was clearly the leading group for year of graduation, followed by 1972-1975.

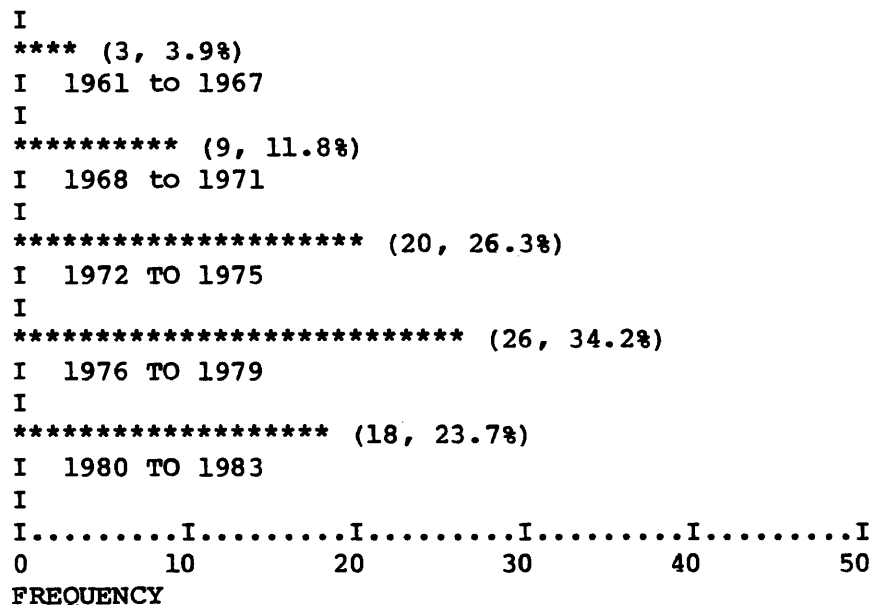


FIGURE 1. YEARS OF GRADUATION REPORTED BY GRADUATES

Continuous Student

In response to the question regarding continuity of study, the majority of graduates responded they were continuous students. Fifty-one (68.9%) indicated they were continuous students while 23 (31.1%) graduates were not.

Status While In School

More than half of the graduates reported full-time status. Fifty-five (72.4%) attended full time, one graduate attended part time (1.3%) and 20 (26.3%) graduates were combination full-time and part-time students.

Sex of Graduates

Results of this study revealed that male R/LS graduates still outnumbered females. Forty-two (55.3%) graduates were male and 34 (44.7%) were female.

Age at Graduation

The range of reported ages at the time of graduation was from 21 to 45. Twenty-two was the most frequently reported age (21.6%) followed by 23 and 24 (13.5%). Frequencies of ages are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1
AGE AT GRADUATION

AGE	n	PER CENT	AGE	n	PER CENT
21	7	9.5	30	2	2.7
22	16	21.6	31	4	5.4
23	10	13.5	32	1	1.4
24	10	13.5	34	1	1.4
25	6	7.9	35	1	1.4
26	5	6.8	36	1	1.4
27	6	7.9	41	1	1.4
28	1	1.4	45	1	1.4
29	1	1.4			

Specialization

Management (48.0%) was the leading area of specialization reported by R/LS graduates. Therapeutic recreation (40.0%) was the second leading area, while only nine (12.0%) graduates indicated outdoor recreation specializations.

Present Employment Status

The majority (72.6%) of respondents indicated some source of full-time employment. Eleven (14.5%) were employed part time, eight (10.5%) were unemployed and two (2.6%) graduates reported other employment status. Included in the "other" category were seasonal full-time employment and student status.

Recreation Related Position

In response to the question regarding recreation related employment, the percentages of "yes" and "no" responses were nearly equal. Thirty-seven (48.7%) graduates indicated they were employed in a recreation related position while 39 (51.3%) were not.

Nature of Employment Within Recreation

Administrator positions were the leading type of recreation positions reported, followed by leader and therapist positions. This is concurrent with results of the previous question which indicated the same order of frequency distribution for areas of specialization. Figure 2 presents the types of recreation positions and the reported frequencies. "Other" types of recreation positions included day camp counselor, sales, sporting goods manager, and rehabilitation.


```

I
***** (14, 37.8%)
I  ADMINISTRATOR
I
***** (8, 21.6%)
I  SUPERVISOR
I
**** (1, 2.7%)
I  EDUCATOR
I
**** (1, 2.7%)
I  STUDENT
I
***** (9, 24.3%)
I  LEADER, THERAPIST
I
***** (4, 10.8%)
I  OTHER
I
I.....I.....I.....I.....I.....I
0         4         8        12        16        20
FREQUENCY

```

FIGURE 2. NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT WITHIN RECREATION

Recreation Salary

Figure 3 indicates the levels of recreation salaries reported by the graduates. More than 50% of those responding were earning \$18,000 or above. This may be directly related to the numbers of graduates employed in administrator, supervisor, and therapist positions.

Reasons for No Recreation Employment

Reasons reported for no employment in recreation positions are shown in Table 2. "Other" reasons given included "negative civil service experience," "entertainment field," and "left to do training."

I
 ***** (7, 22.6%)
 I 30,000 OR ABOVE
 I
 ***** (3, 9.7%)
 I 25,000 TO 29,999
 I
 ***** (6, 19.4%)
 I 18,000 TO 24,999
 I
 ***** (2, 6.5%)
 I 16,000 TO 17,999
 I
 ***** (4, 12.9%)
 I 14,000 TO 15,999
 I
 ***** (5, 16.1%)
 I 12,000 TO 13,999
 I
 ***** (4, 12.9%)
 I 9,999 OR BELOW
 I
 I.....I.....I.....I.....I.....I
 0 2 4 6 8 10
 FREQUENCY

FIGURE 3. RECREATION SALARY

TABLE 2
 REASONS FOR NO RECREATION EMPLOYMENT

REASONS	n	PER CENT	REASONS	n	PER CENT
LOW PAY SCALES	15	30.0	DID NOT INTEND TO ENTER THE FIELD	1	2.0
JOB MARKET	13	26.0	GRADUATE STUDIES	1	2.0
MARRIAGE/FAMILY	8	16.0	UNSUCCESSFUL IN THE FIELD	1	2.0
MORE CHALLENGING CAREER	7	14.0	MILITARY	1	2.0
OTHER	3	6.0	SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHIC AREA	0	0.0

Non-recreation Positions Reported by Graduates

In response to the question regarding non-recreation positions, teaching was seen as the leading employment source. It is interesting to note that of those graduates employed in non-recreation positions, the majority of graduates reported employment in public service. Table 3 shows the types and frequencies of positions reported.

TABLE 3
NON-RECREATION POSITIONS REPORTED BY GRADUATES

POSITION	n	PER CENT	POSITION	n	PER CENT
EDUCATOR	4	16.7	FITNESS DIRECTOR	1	4.2
US POSTAL SERVICE	3	12.5	ELIGIBILITY WORKER	1	4.2
SALES	2	8.3	FASHION ACCESSORIES	1	4.2
INSURANCE AGENT	2	8.3	NURSE	1	4.2
RESIDENTIAL MANAGER	1	4.2	MILITARY OFFICER	1	4.2
NEBRASKA BOARD OF PAROLE	1	4.2	LABORER	1	4.2
CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATOR	1	4.2	WORKSHOP FACILITATOR	1	4.2
HOTEL GIFT SHOP	1	4.2	EPIDEMIOLOGIST	1	4.2
HOME IMPROVEMENT	1	4.2	COMPUTER SPECIALIST	1	4.2
COACHING	1	4.2	REHABILITATION	1	4.2
SPORTING GOODS MANAGER	1	4.2	RETAIL MANAGEMENT	1	4.2
CETA WORKER	1	4.2			

Member Professionally Related Organization

Forty-one (54.7%) of the graduates responding to the question regarding membership in professional organizations reported membership

in at least one organization. Twenty-two (29.3%) graduates were members of two organizations, nine (12%) held membership in three organizations and one (1.3%) graduate was a member of four organizations.

The National Recreation and Park Association (19.4%), the Nebraska Recreation and Park Association (15.3%), and the National Therapeutic Recreation Society (8.3%) were the leading recreation organizations reported.

Professional Registration/Certification Plan

Twenty-two (28.9%) of the respondents indicated professional registration or certification. Nearly half (48%) of those graduates were registered or certified in therapeutic organizations or associations.

Accreditation by NRPA

In response to the question asking whether or not R/LS professional preparations programs should be accredited by the NRPA, the majority (71%) of graduates felt R/LS programs should be accredited. Six (7.9%) graduates indicated in the negative and 16 (21%) were undecided.

Graduate Degrees

Forty-seven (62%) of the respondents surveyed reported that recent growth and trends indicate a need for graduate degrees for recreation practitioners. Thirteen (17%) of the graduates disagreed and 16 (21%) were undecided.

Professionals Registered or Certified

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the respondents felt recreation professionals should be registered or certified. Seven (10%) indicated no need for registration/certification while 13 (17%) were undecided.

Reasons for Attraction to UNO

Table 4 shows the reasons which attracted R/LS graduates to UNO and the frequencies and percentages of the responses. Included in the "other" category were "just an education," "moved into area," "wife has a career," "able to work," and "bootstrap."

TABLE 4
REASONS FOR ATTRACTION TO UNO

ITEM	n	PER CENT	ITEM	n	PER CENT
CLOSE TO HOME	53	29.0	ATHLETIC SCHOLARSHIP	10	5.5
FINANCES	47	25.7	URBAN CAMPUS	9	4.9
INFLUENCE OF FRIENDS/ FAMILY	21	11.5	INFLUENCE OF A PROFESSIONAL	6	3.3
QUALITY OF PROGRAM	14	7.7	OTHER	6	3.3
NIGHT CLASSES	14	7.7	ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP	3	1.6

Most Useful Courses

Graduates were asked to select, in rank order, the three courses which they considered to be most useful. In reporting these courses, Practicums and Field Work and Seminars (to be referred to in future references as "field experience") were grouped into one category.

Tabulation of responses clearly indicated that field experience was considered the most useful courses. More than one-third of the graduates reported field experience as one of the three selections. For the first and third courses selected, field experience was the leading course, followed by Organization and Administration of Recreation. For the second selection, field experience was again the most frequent course indicated, followed by Recreational Leadership. Table 5 presents frequencies of the most useful courses tabulated across all three rankings.

TABLE 5

COURSES GRADUATES CONSIDERED MOST USEFUL IN RECREATION EXPERIENCES

COURSE	n	PER CENT
FIELD EXPERIENCE	80*	39.0
ORG AND ADMIN OF RECREATION	37	18.0
RECREATIONAL LEADERSHIP	23	11.2
THERAPEUTIC RECREATION	11	5.4
RECREATION PROGRAMMING	11	5.4
HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF RECREATION	8	3.9
OUTDOOR EDUCATION	7	3.4
RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES	4	1.9
CAMP COUNSELING AND OUTDOOR RECREATION	3	1.4
CAMP LEADERSHIP	3	1.4
RECREATION EDUCATION	3	1.4
RECREATIONAL SOCIAL GAMES	3	1.4
FOUNDATIONS OF RECREATION	3	1.4

TABLE 5--Continued

COURSE	n	PER CENT
RECREATION FOR THE AGING	3	1.4
INTRODUCTION TO HPER	2	1.0
RECREATION PROGRAMMING FOR MI AND MR	2	1.0
CAMP COUNSELING	1	0.5
EDUCATION FOR LEISURE	1	0.5
PROBLEMS OF RECREATION	0	0.0

* Multiple rank order response as a result of consolidating field experiences with practicums.

Least Useful Courses

In responding to the selection of the three courses considered least useful, History and Philosophy of Recreation was the most frequently indicated course tabulated across all rankings with approximately 21% of the graduates including it as one of the three selections. In looking at the selections individually, History and Philosophy of Recreation was the leading course resported for the first and third selections while Foundations of Recreation was the leader for the second selection. Table 6 shows the frequencies for tabulation of all courses deemed least useful by the graduates.

TABLE 6

COURSES GRADUATES CONSIDERED LEAST USEFUL IN RECREATION EXPERIENCES

COURSE	n	PER CENT
HISTORY AND PHILOSPHY OF RECREATION	33	20.6

TABLE 6--Continued

COURSE	n	PER CENT
FOUNDATIONS OF RECREATION	21	13.1
ORG AND ADMIN OF RECREATION	13	8.1
INTRODUCTION TO HPER	11	6.9
CAMP COUNSELING AND OUTDOOR EDUCATION	10	6.3
RECREATION EDUCATION	10	6.3
RECREATIONAL SOCIAL GAMES	10	6.3
EDUCATION FOR LEISURE	9	5.6
THERAPEUTIC RECREATION	7	4.4
RECREATIONAL LEADERSHIP	6	3.8
FIELD EXPERIENCE	6*	3.8
CAMP COUNSELING	5	3.1
CAMP LEADERSHIP	5	3.1
OUTDOOR EDUCATION	4	2.5
PROBLEMS OF RECREATION	3	1.9
RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES	2	1.2
RECREATION FOR THE AGING	2	1.2
RECREATION PROGRAMMING FOR MI AND MR	2	1.2
RECREATION PROGRAMMING	1	0.6

* Multiple rank order response as a result of consolidating field experiences with practicums.

Recreation Courses Required for All R/LS Majors

In analyzing the three courses which graduates felt should be required for all R/LS majors regardless of specialization, field experience was the most frequent selection. It was reported as the leading course for each of the three possible selections. Table 7 indicates the frequencies for all selections combined.

TABLE 7
RECREATION COURSES REQUIRED FOR ALL R/LS MAJORS

COURSES	n	PER CENT
FIELD EXPERIENCE	62*	33.5
ORG AND ADMIN OF RECREATION	32	17.3
RECREATIONAL LEADERSHIP	14	7.6
RECREATION PROGRAMMING	13	7.0
HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF RECREATION	11	5.9
THERAPEUTIC RECREATION	11	5.9
PROBLEMS OF RECREATION	9	4.9
EDUCATION FOR LEISURE	5	2.7
RECREATIONAL SOCIAL GAMES	4	2.2
INTRODUCTION TO HPER	4	2.2
FOUNDATIONS OF RECREATION	4	2.2
RECREATION FOR THE AGING	4	2.2
RECREATION PROGRAMMING FOR MI AND MR	4	2.2
OUTDOOR EDUCATION	3	1.6
RECREATION EDUCATION	2	0.5

TABLE 7--Continued

COURSES	n	PER CENT
RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES	1	0.5
CAMP COUNSELING AND OUTDOOR EDUCATION	1	0.5
CAMP COUNSELING	1	0.5
CAMP LEADERSHIP	0	0.0

* Multiple rank order response as a result of consolidating field experiences and practicums.

Areas of Recreation Study Graduates Desired Added to the Curriculum

Graduates were asked to indicate which three areas of recreation study not currently offered they felt should be offered to recreation students. Several graduates indicated selections not classified in the recreation area, the majority of which were either business related courses or skill related courses. Table 8 shows recreation related areas of study reported by two or more graduates.

TABLE 8

AREAS OF RECREATION STUDY GRADUATES DESIRED ADDED TO THE CURRICULUM

COURSE	n	PER CENT
FEDERAL FUNDING AND BUDGETING	11	11.3
CORPORATE RECREATION	6	6.2
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	3	3.1
RECREATION FOR HANDICAPPED	3	3.1

TABLE 8--Continued

COURSE	n	PER CENT
MUNICIPAL RECREATION	3	3.1
RECREATION COMMUNICATIONS	3	3.1
SPECIFIC TR COURSES	3	3.1
CAMP ADMINISTRATION	2	2.1
RECREATION FOR AGING	2	2.1
COMMERCIAL OUTDOOR RECREATION	2	2.1
RECREATION EQUIPMENT	2	2.1

Non-recreation Courses Required for All R/LS Majors

In tabulating the responses of the non-recreation courses which graduates felt should be required, it is clear that graduates see a need for some type of business background. Analysis of all courses reported showed Business Administration, Accounting and Budget and Finance as three of the four most frequently reported courses. Communications courses were also among the leading non-recreation courses suggested. Table 9 indicates non-recreation courses reported by three or more respondents.

TABLE 9

NON-RECREATION COURSES REQUIRED FOR ALL R/LS MAJORS

COURSE	n	PER CENT
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION	21	15.0

TABLE 9--Continued

COURSE	n	PER CENT
ACCOUNTING	11	7.9
PSYCHOLOGY	10	7.1
BUDGET AND FINANCE	10	7.1
FIRST AID	8	5.7
ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY	5	3.6
SOCIOLOGY	5	3.6
PUBLIC RELATIONS	5	3.6
COMMUNICATIONS	5	3.6
PUBLIC SPEAKING	5	3.6
HEALTH	4	2.9
ARTS AND CRAFTS	4	2.9
COUNSELING SKILLS	3	2.1
MARKETING	3	2.1
BUSINESS COMMUNICATION AND REPORTS	3	2.1

Quality of Field Experience

In regard to the final applied experiences, more than half (54.3%) of the graduates rated the quality of field experience as excellent. Approximately 98% rated the quality of their field experience as average or above, while only one graduate (1.4%) rated it below average.

Quality of UNO Supervision

R/LS graduates generally viewed the quality of UNO supervision of their final field work experience favorably. Forty-one (59%) rated the supervision above average to excellent. Fifteen (22%) graduates felt the supervision was average while 13 (18.8%) rated it below average to poor.

Practicum Value

The most frequently reported rating for practicum value in reference to current employment was excellent (39%). The value was generally seen as positive with approximately 89% of the graduates rating it at least average. Only seven (11%) graduates felt the value was below average to poor.

Adequacy of Instructional Facilities

In looking at the results of the question regarding adequacy of the instructional facilities at UNO, the majority of respondents (76%) rated the facilities average to excellent. Ten (14%) rated them below average and seven (10%) poor ratings were given.

Quality of UNO Faculty

More than half (53%) of the R/LS graduates rated UNO faculty above average to excellent. Approximately 36% rated the faculty average while 11% felt the quality of faculty was poor.

Quality of Advising

Results of the study showed that the majority (79%) of graduates felt they received satisfactory advising from the R/LS

faculty. For those (21%) expressing dissatisfaction, reasons reported included faculty turnover rate, limited instructor experience, advisor inadequacies, limited advisors, and lack of advisor interest.

Preparation at UNO

The questionnaire asked graduates to rate their R/LS professional preparation at UNO in comparison with that received by graduates from other universities. Seven (10.4%) graduates rated their preparation excellent. An equal number felt it was below average or poor while 53 (79%) gave their preparation a rating of average or above average.

Overall Rating of UNO R/LS Program

Frequencies of this question were nearly identical to the previous question comparing R/LS preparation at UNO with other universities. Seven (10.3%) graduates gave the program an overall rating of excellent. Fifty-three (78%) indicated average or above average while eight (12%) rated the overall program below average to poor.

Majors of Graduates Enrolled in Graduate Studies

Eleven (14.5%) graduates responding to the questionnaire were currently enrolled in graduate studies while 60 (84.5%) were not. Table 10 indicates the frequencies and types of majors identified.

TABLE 10
MAJORS OF GRADUATES ENROLLED IN GRADUATE STUDIES

MAJOR	n	PER CENT
NONE	59	83.0
NURSING	2	2.8
RECREATION	2	2.8
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	2	2.8
GERIATRICS	1	1.4
URBAN STUDIES	1	1.4
GUIDANCE, COUNSELING	1	1.4
SPORTS PUBLIC ADMIN	1	1.4
EXERCISE SCIENCE	1	1.4
ELEMENTARY ED	1	1.4

R/LS Graduate Study at UNO

Twenty-five (35.7%) graduates indicated they would consider returning to UNO for graduate study in R/LS.

Class Time Frames

The most appropriate class times for graduate studies reported were nights (73%) and mornings (18.8%).

Sessions for Graduate Study

Fall and Spring (61.2%) were the most favorable sessions reported for graduate study. A limited number of graduates (16.3%) expressed a desire for summer courses.

Chi-Square Analysis

The Chi-square method was used to determine whether significant differences existed among the graduates. Variables examined included area of specialization, sex of graduates, age at time of graduation, recreation salaries, graduates employed in recreation versus those not employed in recreation, and year of graduation.

Analysis of cross tabulations by area of specialization revealed significant differences involving four variables (Table 11). The first difference seen was in the types of recreation positions held. The largest percentage (75%) of graduates with management specializations were employed as administrators or supervisors. The majority (85.7%) of those specializing in therapeutic recreation were acting as supervisors or leaders and therapists. The only positions reported by outdoor recreation specialists were administrator (66%) and other (33%).

In the area of professional registration/certification, graduates specializing in therapeutic recreation (50%) were clearly more apt to be registered or certified. Only 19.4% of the management specialists indicated professional registration or certification while none of the outdoor recreation specialists reported registration or certification.

In reference to the opinion question asking whether or not recreation professionals should be registered or certified, the percentages of therapeutic (86.2%) and outdoor recreation (88.9%) graduates were nearly equal. While the majority (58.3%) of management specialists favored registration/certification, several (30.6%) were undecided.

Analysis of coursework revealed significant differences in the courses considered most useful by the graduates. The courses indicated by graduates specializing in administration were field experience (48.6%) and Organization and Administration of Recreation (20%). Results were similar for therapeutic specialists with 46.5% selecting field experience and 17.9% selecting Organization and Administration of Recreation. The difference occurred in looking at outdoor recreation specialists. An equal number (37.5%) reported field experience and Organization and Administration of Recreation while 25% indicated Recreational Leadership as the most useful course.

TABLE 11
CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS BY SPECIALIZATION

VARIABLE	χ^2	df	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
RECREATION POSITION	1.56472	2	0.46
TYPE RECREATION POSITION	20.99236	10	0.02 *
SALARY	17.29490	12	0.14
MEMBER PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION	0.09498	2	0.95
GRADUATE REGISTERED/CERTIFIED	11.61557	2	0.00 *
ACCREDITATION BY NRPA	3.43364	4	0.49
NEED FOR GRADUATE DEGREES	4.59920	4	0.33
PROFESSIONALS REGISTERED/CERTIFIED	10.00618	4	0.04 *
MOST USEFUL REC COURSE	49.59496	28	0.01 *
SECOND USEFUL REC COURSE	37.94110	28	0.10
THIRD USEFUL REC COURSE	43.03408	30	0.06

TABLE 11--Continued

VARIABLE	χ^2	df	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
LEAST USEFUL REC COURSE	36.27835	32	0.28
SECOND LEAST USEFUL REC COURSE	39.59181	30	0.11
THIRD LEAST USEFUL REC COURSE	41.87333	32	0.11
FIRST REQUIRED REC COURSE	27.38863	24	0.29
SECOND REQUIRED REC COURSE	43.58323	34	0.13
THIRD REQUIRED REC COURSE	38.91845	34	0.26
FIRST REC COURSE NOT OFFERED	57.23325	48	0.17
SECOND REC COURSE NOT OFFERED	62.96189	56	0.24
THIRD REC COURSE NOT OFFERED	29.66667	26	0.28
FIRST NON-REC REQUIRED COURSE	21.45060	32	0.92
SECOND NON-REC REQUIRED COURSE	62.66995	54	0.20
THIRD NON-REC REQUIRED COURSE	53.49781	40	0.08
QUALITY OF FIELD EXPERIENCE	2.96581	6	0.81
QUALITY OF UNO SUPERVISION	11.67628	8	0.17
VALUE OF FIELD EXPERIENCE	6.30029	8	0.61
QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES	6.86595	8	0.55
QUALITY OF UNO FACULTY	9.87387	8	0.27
QUALITY OF ADVISING	1.47261	2	0.48
RATING OF OVERALL R/LS PROGRAM	4.88390	8	0.77
PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION COMPARED TO OTHER UNIVERSITIES	9.11465	8	0.33

* p less than .05

As can be seen in Table 12, the difference between sexes with regard to salary was clearly significant. Analysis of the data showed 100% of the males employed in recreation reporting income of \$18,000 to \$30,000 or above. The same percentage (100%) of females were employed at salaries of \$17,999 or below. No significant differences were found in any of the other variables cross tabulated with sex.

TABLE 12
CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS BY SEX

VARIABLE	χ^2	df	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
SALARY	31.00000	6	0.00 *
QUALITY OF FIELD EXPERIENCE	1.86445	3	0.60
QUALITY OF UNO SUPERVISION	4.65748	4	0.32
VALUE OF FIELD EXPERIENCE	2.89071	4	0.58
QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES	4.90517	4	0.30
QUALITY OF UNO FACULTY	7.50825	4	0.11
QUALITY OF ADVISING	1.18605	1	0.28
RATING OF OVERALL R/LS PROGRAM	1.85048	4	0.76
PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION COMPARED TO OTHER UNIVERSITIES	5.13615	4	0.27

* p less than .05

Quality of advising (Table 13) was the only variable emerging as significantly different when looking at selected variables cross tabulated with age and the time of graduation. Most (92%) of the graduates between the ages of 22 and 24 reported satisfaction with the

quality of advising they received. In combining all other ages reported, 67% indicated satisfactory advising.

TABLE 13
CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS BY AGE

VARIABLE	χ^2	df	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
ACCREDITATION BY NRPA	35.63919	32	0.30
NEED FOR GRADUATE DEGREES	27.81028	32	0.68
PROFESSIONALS REGISTERED/CERTIFIED	40.80960	32	0.14
QUALITY OF FIELD EXPERIENCE	46.83453	48	0.52
QUALITY OF UNO SUPERVISION	63.60392	64	0.49
VALUE OF FIELD EXPERIENCE	54.02607	52	0.40
QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES	50.73791	60	0.80
QUALITY OF FACULTY	59.02777	60	0.51
QUALITY OF ADVISING	25.34675	14	0.03 *
RATING OF OVERALL R/LS PROGRAM	40.99078	56	0.93
PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION COMPARED TO OTHER UNIVERSITIES	50.90651	60	0.79

* p less than .05

Rating of professional preparation in comparison to other universities and overall rating of UNO R/LS program were the only variables analyzed with regard to salary. This was done to determine whether or not level of salary earned could have influenced graduates in rating the program. As indicated in Table 14, no significant differences were detected.

TABLE 14
CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS BY SALARY

VARIABLE	X ²	df	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
RATING OF OVERALL R/LS PROGRAM	14.36722	18	0.70
PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION COMPARED TO OTHER UNIVERSITIES	19.48725	18	0.36

Cross tabulations were used to determine if significant differences existed in perceptions of graduates employed in recreation positions versus graduates not employed in recreation positions. As seen in Table 15, value of field experience was the only variable indicated significantly different with regard to recreation employment status. Approximately 84% of the graduates employed in the field rated the value of their field experience above average to excellent.

For those not employed in recreation positions, 50% rated the value above average to excellent.

TABLE 15
CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS BY RECREATION EMPLOYMENT VS.
NO RECREATION EMPLOYMENT

VARIABLE	X ²	df	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
ACCREDITATION BY NRPA	3.28298	2	0.19
NEED FOR GRADUATE DEGREES	0.29577	2	0.86
PROFESSIONALS REGISTERED/CERTIFIED	0.22467	2	0.89
MOST USEFUL REC COURSE	21.61905	14	0.09

TABLE 15--Continued

VARIABLE	χ^2	df	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
SECOND USEFUL REC COURSE	16.55050	15	0.35
THIRD USEFUL REC COURSE	12.06667	15	0.67
LEAST USEFUL REC COURSE	21.71464	16	0.15
SECOND LEAST USEFUL REC COURSE	21.43219	15	0.12
THIRD LEAST USEFUL REC COURSE	23.00968	16	0.11
FIRST REQUIRED REC COURSE	18.17963	13	0.15
SECOND REQUIRED REC COURSE	21.16985	17	0.22
THIRD REQUIRED REC COURSE	11.15873	17	0.85
FIRST REC COURSE NOT OFFERED	25.32857	24	0.34
SECOND REC COURSE NOT OFFERED	27.31019	29	0.56
THIRD REC COURSE NOT OFFERED	13.67273	13	0.40
FIRST NON-REC REQUIRED COURSE	23.85049	17	0.12
SECOND NON-REC REQUIRED COURSE	29.75723	27	0.33
THIRD NON-REC REQUIRED COURSE	18.46753	20	0.56
QUALITY OF FIELD EXPERIENCE	3.59492	3	0.31
QUALITY OF UNO SUPERVISION	6.22791	4	0.18
VALUE OF FIELD EXPERIENCE	10.77035	4	0.03 *
QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES	2.39803	4	0.66
QUALITY OF UNO FACULTY	2.62974	4	0.62
QUALITY OF ADVISING	0.01560	1	0.90
RATING OF OVERALL R/LS PROGRAM	4.17639	4	0.38

TABLE 15--Continued

VARIABLE	χ^2	df	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION COMPARED TO OTHER UNIVERSITIES	5.00714	4	0.29

* p less than .05

Table 16 indicates the variables cross tabulated with year of graduation. In looking at year groups by employment in recreation positions, significant differences existed. The leading year groups for graduates employed in recreation positions were 1968 to 1971 (77.8%) and 1980 to 1983 (72.2%). Percentages for other year groups ranged from 33.3% to 35%.

A significant difference was also found in the relevance of coursework. Foundations of Recreation (18.9%) was the leader for the second course considered least useful by the graduates. The majority (90%) of those indicating Foundations of Recreation graduated between 1976 to 1983. Only one graduate (4.3%) from all other years indicated the same course.

Federal Funding and Budgeting was indicated most frequently as the first selection of recreation courses not currently offered. The years 1968 to 1971 and 1976 to 1983 accounted for all graduates reporting Federal Funding and Budgeting as a desired course.

Value of the final applied field experience was rated differently between years of graduation. The significant difference can be seen in the number of graduates who rated the value of their field experience above average to excellent. Percentages for each year group

were as follows: 1961 to 1967, 50%; 1968 to 1971, 100%; 1972 to 1975, 44%; 1976 to 1979, 65%; and 1980 to 1983, 94%.

The last variable revealing a significant difference in regard to year of graduation was the quality of UNO instructional facilities. Forty percent of all graduates between the years of 1972 to 1979 rated the instructional facilities below average to poor. In looking at all other years combined, only 7% of the graduates indicated below average to poor. In analysis of above average to excellent ratings, percentages ranged from 13.6% (1976 to 1979) to 82% (1980 to 1983).

TABLE 16
CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS BY YEAR OF GRADUATION

VARIABLE	χ^2	df	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
RECREATION EMPLOYMENT	10.88311	4	0.03 *
ACCREDITATION BY NRPA	8.48692	8	0.39
NEED FOR GRADUATE DEGREES	1.62862	8	0.99
PROFESSIONALS REGISTERED/CERTIFIED	5.93693	8	0.65
MOST USEFUL REC COURSE	73.65295	56	0.06
SECOND USEFUL REC COURSE	63.40933	60	0.36
THIRD USEFUL REC COURSE	75.08639	60	0.09
LEAST USEFUL REC COURSE	75.16630	64	0.16
SECOND LEAST USEFUL REC COURSE	83.03334	60	0.03 *
THIRD LEAST USEFUL REC COURSE	72.80122	64	0.21
FIRST REQUIRED REC COURSE	62.41301	52	0.15
SECOND REQUIRED REC COURSE	75.43591	68	0.25

TABLE 16—Continued

VARIABLE	χ^2	df	LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE
THIRD REQUIRED REC COURSE	85.00519	68	0.08
FIRST REC COURSE NOT OFFERED	128.02251	96	0.02 *
SECOND REC COURSE NOT OFFERED	123.48604	116	0.30
THIRD REC COURSE NOT OFFERED	52.40000	52	0.46
FIRST NON-REC REQUIRED COURSE	56.81657	51	0.27
SECOND NON-REC REQUIRED COURSE	93.05146	81	0.17
THIRD NON-REC REQUIRED COURSE	68.06668	60	0.22
QUALITY OF FIELD EXPERIENCE	16.91703	12	0.15
QUALITY OF UNO SUPERVISION	17.59000	16	0.35
VALUE OF FIELD EXPERIENCE	27.41240	16	0.04 *
QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES	32.88957	16	0.01 *
QUALITY OF UNO FACULTY	11.83628	16	0.76
QUALITY OF ADVISING	1.17961	4	0.88
RATING OF OVERALL R/LS PROGRAM	20.33231	16	0.21
PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION COMPARED TO OTHER UNIVERSITIES	16.39082	16	0.43

* p less than .05

Suggestions For Improvement

Graduates were asked to list specific suggestions for improving the R/LS program at UNO. Suggestions which were not included under specific courses are as follows:

1. Expansion of the therapeutic recreation specialization

2. Increased professionalism within the program
3. Increased R/LS faculty
4. Increased field experience
5. Career seminars for job interviews, resumes, etc.
6. More tours of recreation-related facilities
7. Maintain a listing of national job openings
8. Better preparation for realities in the field
9. Internships with more agencies
10. Guest lecturers from related fields
11. Increased supervision of field experience
12. Addition of a seminar course to include such topics as public relationships, marketing leisure services, personnel management, resource development, and facilities management
13. Organization/administration lab class--include staff selection, budgeting, and planning for and administration of recreation for hypothetical city
14. Survey recreation professionals in the field to determine relevant coursework
15. Greater emphasis on communication skills, both oral and written
16. Continue to recruit quality instructors
17. Examine recreation curricula of other colleges and universities
18. Careful screening of practicum sites and site supervisors
19. Promote greater student involvement in local organizations, require more volunteer work

20. Include basic education courses such as curriculum development in required courses
21. Availability of more out-of-state practicum sites
22. Rotation of prefield work experience at various sites
23. Differentiate more between courses so that severe overlap does not occur
24. Require student exposure to all areas of recreation rather than strictly area of specialization
25. Upgrade the level of courses to increase level of difficulty
26. Add a therapeutic recreation course for prosthetics and adaptive equipment
27. Place a greater emphasis on management
28. Emphasize the need for appropriate dress in the recreation field
29. Incorporate health, nutrition, fitness and mental health into the recreation concept
30. Provide a better assortment of games for young children

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine whether program perceptions differed among UNO R/LS graduates, and if so, to identify the nature of the differences.

Secondary purposes of this study were as follows:

1. To obtain the maximum possible demographic data so as to describe the nature of the population sampled.
2. To compare attitudes of the graduates regarding recreation growth and trends.

The largest percentage (75%) of questionnaires returned were from graduates of the earlier years of the program. Two possible explanations are offered for the highest percentage of returns being from graduates between the years of 1961 and 1977. First, graduates of the earlier years have been employed longer and may have a greater interest in the development of R/LS curricula. Secondly, over time, individuals tend to forget negative experiences; therefore, early graduates may have been more eager to assist in program evaluation than later graduates encountering negative experiences in either recreation positions or the UNO R/LS Program.

Regardless of the year graduated, the age at time of graduation generally fell into the "college age" category. The majority (56.7%) of graduates responding to the study reported ages at the time of

graduation between 21 and 24. These data indicate that most students generally graduate on schedule based on full-time status. The number (26.3%) of respondents who were combination full-time and part-time students would account for some of the graduations at later ages.

For many years, recreation has been a field dominated by male leadership. The percentage of females (64.5%) who responded to the study was higher than the percentage of males (54.5%) responding. However, the number (42) of returns by males was greater than that by females. These results seem to suggest that although colleges and universities are still producing more male than female R/LS majors, the gap appears to be closing. Also, since the percentage of female respondents was higher, women seemed to be more interested in participating in the study.

Consistent with results of the study by Slack (1980), the majority (72.6%) of graduates secured some source of full-time employment. This finding suggests that although not all graduates secure employment in recreation positions, a college degree does increase opportunities for employment. Low pay scales and limited number of recreation positions available accounted for 56% of the reasons given for no recreation employment.

Of those graduates who were employed in recreation positions, over half (59.4%) reported employment as administrators and supervisors. This finding is similar to results by Cousineau (1979) and Klar and Budd (1981). Nearly half (48%) of all the graduates reported management specializations. Chi-square analysis of area of specialization revealed a significant difference in the types of recreation positions held.

Seventy-five percent of the management specialists reported administrative or supervisory positions. The majority (85.7%) of graduates specializing in therapeutic recreation indicated employment in their area of specialization. Two-thirds (66%) of the outdoor recreation specialists were employed in administrative positions. These findings strongly suggest that of those graduates who do secure recreation employment, the majority are employed in positions within their area of specialization. Bruce (1983) reported similar findings in his study at Michigan State University.

In looking at the data regarding salary of graduates employed in recreation, a significant difference existed in the salaries reported by the two sexes. One-hundred percent of the males reported recreation salaries of \$18,000 to 30,000 or above. The same percentage (100%) of females indicated salaries of \$17,999 or below. The following explanations are offered for the differences in salaries. The majority of males (84.2%) indicated administrative or supervisory positions compared to only 33% of the females indicating that level of employment. Several (44.4%) females reported therapist/leader positions. Also, more females (27.7%) than males (10.5%) reported part-time employment status. These findings may be factors in the explanation of differences between the sexes' salaries.

The percentage of graduates (54.7%) reporting membership in at least one professionally related organization and the percentage of graduates employed in recreation (48.7%) were fairly equal. These findings imply that many graduates employed in recreation are members of at least one professional organization.

Analysis of data showed that 22 (28.9%) of the graduates indicated they were registered under a professional registration/certification plan. Nearly half (48%) of the professional plans indicated were therapeutic-related associations. A significant difference existed in the area of specialization by the number of graduates registered or certified. As could be anticipated from the above data, the majority (68%) of graduates reporting registration/certification were therapeutic recreation specialists. Graduates specializing in management (32%) were the only others indicating registration/certification.

In analyzing the findings regarding growth and trends in recreation, most graduates (71%) felt R/LS programs should be accredited by the NRPA. Over half (62%) perceived a need for graduate degrees for recreation practitioners, and 73% of the graduates indicated that recreation professionals should be registered or certified. These views suggest that graduates generally agree that, in order to meet increasing demands of the recreation profession, the qualifications of practitioners must become more stringent.

Analysis of the data indicated that the majority (54.7%) of graduates were attracted to UNO due to financial situations and UNO's proximity to home. This finding may be of interest to faculty members and University administrators for future recruiting purposes.

Based on results of recreation courses deemed most useful and courses which graduates indicated should be required of all R/LS majors regardless of specialization, field experience was clearly viewed as the most important course. This finding was concurrent with those of other

studies investigated (Dance, 1977; Giles, 1957; Klar & Budd, 1981; Martin, 1978; Slack, 1980). Area of specialization was the only variable showing a significant difference with regard to the most useful courses. Field experience and Organization and Administration were leading courses reported by management (68.6%) and therapeutic recreation (64.4%) specialists whereas field experience (37.5%) and Organization and Administration of Recreation (37.5%) and Recreational Leadership (25%) were preferred by Outdoor Recreation specialists. However, the validity of the outdoor recreation preference finding is questionable since only eight outdoor recreation majors responded to the question.

History and Philosophy of Recreation and Foundations of Recreation were the leading courses indicated least useful by the graduates, respectively. Chi-square analysis of the second least useful course showed a significant difference with regard to year of graduation. Ninety percent of those selecting Foundations of Recreation were graduates from the years 1976 to 1983. Only 4.3% of the graduates from all other years indicated the same course. Reasons for selection by a specific range of years must be carefully examined. Quality of instruction or course content may serve as possible explanations of this finding.

When asked to indicate suggested course additions to the curriculum, graduates indicated Federal Funding and Budgeting as the leading recreation course not currently offered. This finding implies that graduates felt the amount of emphasis placed on funding sources and

budgeting processes was inadequate and that there exists a need for further depth in these two subject areas.

Analysis of results of the non-recreation courses required for all R/LS majors regardless of specialization clearly indicated that graduates see a need for business based courses and experiences. This finding was consistent with the study conducted by Bruce (1983). It suggests that graduates view duties of recreation professionals as extending outside the recreation curriculum.

Graduates were generally positive in their evaluations regarding the value of the preparation they received and the quality of the UNO R/LS Program. However, significant differences were found in some areas.

A significant difference was seen in the value of the final applied field experience in reference to current employment when cross tabulated with graduates employed in recreation versus graduates not employed in recreation. Eighty-four percent of the graduates employed in recreation rated the value above average to excellent compared to those not employed in recreation (50%) rating it the same. This difference in rating suggests that graduates employed in recreation would generally be expected to rate the value of their experience higher.

Nearly all (92%) of the graduates indicating ages 22 to 24 at the time of graduation reported satisfaction with the quality of advising they received from the UNO R/LS faculty. However, in looking at all other ages at graduation combined, only 67% reported satisfactory advising. These results suggest that older students have greater expectations and tend to be more critical of the quality of advising.

A significant difference was present in the ratings of the UNO instructional facilities in regard to year of graduation. Only 27.8% of the graduates between the years of 1961 to 1979 rated the facilities above average to excellent. However, 82.4% of the graduates from 1980 to 1983 rated it at the same level. The opening of the new HPER facility undoubtedly was an important factor for consideration in the latter year ratings.

On reviewing the hypotheses tested, the primary hypothesis was rejected because significant differences were found regarding year of graduation, sex, age at graduation, area of specialization, and graduates employed in recreation versus those not employed in recreation. Perceptions of graduates regardless of recreation salary was the only subhypothesis accepted as no significant differences were detected.

It is believed that results of this study, as well as similar graduate follow-up studies, may benefit the UNO R/LS Program. Additional follow-up studies should assist the faculty in staying abreast with the changing needs of recreation professionals active in the field and allow for curriculum modifications to meet those needs.

After reviewing the results of this study, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. That consideration be given to adding to the curriculum a course or courses addressing funding sources and budgeting processes.
2. That a careful examination be conducted to determine whether or not courses deemed least useful by the graduates should continue to remain in the R/LS curriculum. It is suggested that this

examination include an evaluation of the instructors and instructional methodology.

3. That consideration be given to adding basic courses in business administration to the list of required courses.

4. That consideration be given to including communications courses as courses required for graduation.

5. That additional field work experience be included in the freshman and sophomore years.

6. That future R/LS graduate follow-up studies be limited to recreation alumni who have graduated within five years previous to the study in order to increase the effectiveness of current curriculum evaluation.

7. That in future R/LS graduate follow-up studies, course evaluation be limited to only those graduates employed in recreation related positions.

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APPENDIX A

**UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA
RECREATION/LEISURE STUDIES
ALUMNI QUESTIONNAIRE**

RECREATION/LEISURE STUDIES

ALUMNI QUESTIONNAIRE

Please X the appropriate item(s) for each question.

Part I

1A. In what year did you begin college? _____

1B. In what year did you receive your undergraduate degree? _____

1C. Were you a continuous student? A. Yes _____ B. No _____

1D. What was your status?

_____ A. Full-time _____ B. Part-time _____ C. Combination

2A. _____ Male _____ Female

2B. Age _____ (at the time your degree was received)

3. What was your Recreation/Leisure Studies specialization?

_____ A. Management, Leadership

_____ B. Therapeutic Recreation

_____ C. Outdoor Recreation

4. Presently employed

_____ A. Full-time

_____ B. Part-time

_____ C. Unemployed

_____ D. Other (specify) _____

5. Are you presently employed in a recreation related position? If you answer "No", go directly to question #8.

_____ A. Yes _____ B. No

6. What type of recreation position do you have?

_____ A. Administrator _____ D. Student

_____ B. Supervisor _____ E. Leader/therapist/counselor/programmer

_____ C. Educator _____ F. Other (specify) _____

7. If you are currently employed full-time in a recreation/leisure service position, what is your salary?

_____ A. 30,000 or above _____ E. 14,000 to 15,999

_____ B. 25,000 to 29,999 _____ F. 12,000 to 13,999

_____ C. 18,000 to 24,999 _____ G. 10,000 to 11,999

_____ D. 16,000 to 17,999 _____ H. 9,999 or below

8. If you are not presently employed in recreation/leisure services, please give the reason.

_____ A. Did not intend to enter the field.

_____ B. Low pay scales

_____ C. Am continuing in graduate studies

_____ D. Could not find a position due to the job market

_____ E. Wanted to stay in a specific geographic area

_____ F. Unsuccessful in the field

_____ G. Employed in a more challenging career

_____ H. Left for marriage/family

_____ I. Military

_____ J. Other (specify) _____

9. If you are currently employed, but not in a recreation position, please list your position.

10. Are you a member of any professionally related organization(s)?

_____ A. Yes _____ B. No

If yes, please list the organization(s) to which you belong. _____

11. Are you registered under a professional registration/certification plan?

_____ A. Yes _____ B. No

If yes, please list the plan _____

Part II

1. Do you feel that recreation and leisure studies professional preparation programs should be accredited by the National Recreation and Park Association?

_____ A. Yes _____ B. No _____ C. Undecided

2. Do recent trends and growth in recreation indicate a need for graduate degrees for recreation practitioners?

_____ A. Yes _____ B. No _____ C. Undecided

3. Do you feel that recreation professionals should be registered or certified under a professional plan?
A. Yes _____ B. No _____ C. Undecided _____

Part III

1. What attracted you to attend UNO rather than another university? Please X all items which apply.

- ____ A. Quality of the program _____ F. Urban campus
____ B. Influence of friends/family _____ G. Night classes
____ C. Influence of a professional _____ H. Academic scholarship
____ D. Close to home _____ I. Athletic scholarship
____ E. Finances _____ J. Other (specify) _____

Recreation Courses

(For use with questions 2-3-4)

1. Camp Counseling (1977-78 to present)
2. Camp Counseling and Outdoor Education (1968-69 to 1976-77)
3. Camp Leadership (1960-61 to 1967-68)
4. History and Philosophy of Recreation (1971-72 to present)
5. Recreation Education (1960-61 to 1970-71)
6. Recreational Leadership (1960-61 to present)
7. Recreational Social Games (1971-72 to present)
8. Recreational Activities (1960-61 to 1964-65)
9. Organization and Administration of Recreation (1963-64 to present)
10. Introduction to Health, Physical Education and Recreation (1967-68 to 1970-71)
11. Practicum I (1978-79 to present)
12. Beginning Recreation Field Work and Seminar (1967-68 to 1977-78)
13. Practicum II (1978-79 to present)
14. Advanced Recreation Field Work and Seminar (1967-68 to 1977-78)
15. Foundations of Recreation (1971-72 to present)
16. Problems of Recreation (1974-75 to present)
17. Outdoor Education (1975-76 to present)
18. Education for Leisure (1976-77 to present)
19. Therapeutic Recreation (1975-76 to present)
20. Recreation Programming (1975-76 to present)
21. Recreation for The Aging (1981-82 to present)
22. Recreation Programming for the Mentally Ill and the Mentally Retarded (1981-82 to present)

4. Which three courses have been most useful in your recreation experiences? (In rank order) Use numbers to the left of each course from the list provided.

A. _____ B. _____ C. _____

3. From the courses you took, which three courses have been the least useful to you? (In rank order)

A. _____ B. _____ C. _____

4. Which three recreation/leisure studies courses do you feel should be required for all recreation students REGARDLESS OF SPECIALIZATION? (In rank order)

A. _____ B. _____ C. _____

5. What types of recreation/leisure studies courses not listed should be offered to recreation students?

A. _____ B. _____

C. _____

6. Which nonrecreation/leisure studies courses do you feel should be required for all recreation students REGARDLESS OF SPECIALIZATION? (In rank order)

A. _____ B. _____

C. _____

7. How would you rate your final applied experiences which may have been titled Practicum of Field Work and Seminar?

Quality of site experience _____ Quality of UNO supervision

____ A. Excellent _____ A. Excellent

____ B. Above average _____ B. Above average

____ C. Average _____ C. Average

____ D. Below average _____ D. Below average

____ E. Poor _____ E. Poor

8. How would you rate the value of your Practicum/Field Work and Seminar in reference to your current employment?

____ A. Excellent

____ B. Above average

____ C. Average

____ D. Below average

____ E. Poor

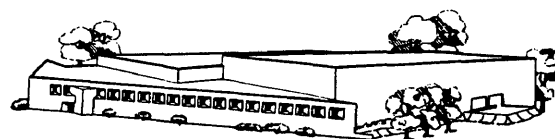
9. How adequate were the instructional facilities at UNO?
 ___ A. Excellent
 ___ B. Above average
 ___ C. Average
 ___ D. Below average
 ___ E. Poor
10. How would you rate the faculty in the Recreation/Leisure Studies Program at UNO as a quality faculty?
 ___ A. Excellent
 ___ B. Above average
 ___ C. Average
 ___ D. Below average
 ___ E. Poor
11. Did you receive the quality of advising necessary from the R/LS faculty?
 ___ A. Yes ___ B. No. Why? _____
12. In comparison with recreation graduates from other universities, how would you rate your preparation at UNO?
 ___ A. Excellent
 ___ B. Above average
 ___ C. Average
 ___ D. Below average
 ___ E. Poor
13. How do you rate the overall Recreation/Leisure Studies degree program at UNO?
 ___ A. Excellent
 ___ B. Above average
 ___ C. Average
 ___ D. Below average
 ___ E. Poor
14. Are you currently enrolled in graduate studies at a college or University?
 ___ A. Yes ___ B. No
 If yes, what is your major? _____
15. Would you consider returning to UNO for a Masters Degree in HPER with a specialization in Recreation/Leisure Studies?
 ___ A. Yes ___ B. No ___ C. Undecided
16. Which class time frames would be most appropriate for you?
 ___ A. Mornings ___ B. Afternoons ___ C. Nights
17. Which sessions would be most appropriate for you?
 ___ A. Fall ___ B. Spring ___ C. Summer
18. Please list specific suggestions you might have for improving the quality of the Recreation/Leisure Studies Program at UNO.

APPENDIX B

ORIGINAL COVER LETTER



University of
Nebraska
at Omaha



School of Health, Physical
Education and Recreation
Omaha, Nebraska 68182-0216

July 8, 1983

Dear R/LS Graduate:

I am a graduate student at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. I am working on my Master's thesis which is entitled, "A Survey of Recreation and Leisure Studies Graduates of the University of Nebraska at Omaha." This study has been approved by Dr. Edsel Buchanan, Coordinator, Recreation and Leisure Studies at UNO.

In order to improve the quality of the Recreation and Leisure Studies Program at UNO, we are surveying R/LS graduates to determine their perceptions of the program. Your recommendations for improving the program are also invited.

Your cooperation in completing the enclosed questionnaire as quickly and as completely as possible will greatly assist in making the study as accurate as possible. A self-addressed envelope has been provided for your convenience.

Do not put your name on the questionnaire. All respondents will remain anonymous. No person, city, or agency will be identified in any aspect of this study. Code numbers appear at the top of the questionnaires. They will be used only to determine which graduates have not responded and will be permanently removed prior to analysis of the questionnaires.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dawn Stockman".

Dawn Stockman

Approved: _____

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Edsel Buchanan".

Dr. Edsel Buchanan

☐ Please X here and return this sheet in a separate envelope if you would like to receive a summary of the completed study.

Name _____

Address _____

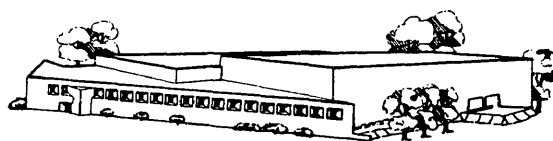
Zip code

APPENDIX C

LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT



University of
Nebraska
at Omaha



School of Health, Physical
Education and Recreation
Omaha, Nebraska 68182-0216

July 29, 1983

Dear Graduate:

The purpose of our letter is to endorse Dawn Stockman's thesis project, "A Survey of the Recreation and Leisure Studies Graduates of the University of Nebraska at Omaha." We are enthusiastic in our endorsement as we believe that her study has the potential to contribute significantly to strengthening the R/LS curriculum. We are also pleased to have this opportunity to re-establish contact with our alumni. The University is proud of its graduates and we value this contact with you as it will enable us to increase and enhance future contacts with alumni.

We urge you to complete the questionnaire as quickly and as accurately as possible. A postage paid, self-addressed envelope is provided for your convenience. Please permit us to thank you in advance for your participation.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Richard B. Flynn".

Dr. Richard B. Flynn
Director, School of HPER

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Ernie Gorr".

Ernie Gorr
Emeritus R/LS Faculty

APPENDIX D

SECOND COVER LETTER



July 29, 1983



School of Health, Physical
Education and Recreation
Omaha, Nebraska 68182-0216

Dear R/LS Graduate:

Hello Again!

You may recall from my earlier letter that your help is essential to the success of my Master's thesis research. At the recommendation of Dr. Edsel Buchanan, Coordinator, Recreation and Leisure Studies at UNO, I am surveying Recreation graduates to determine their perceptions of the program. This involves all Recreation graduates of the University, including those from the Municipal University of Omaha. I realize this is a busy time of year, but I hope that your interest in recreation will allow you to take a few minutes and complete the enclosed questionnaire.

If you have already returned a completed questionnaire, please check (✓) this space ____ and return this letter in the envelope provided.

Do not put your name on the questionnaire. All respondents will remain anonymous. No person, city, or agency will be identified in any aspect of this study. Code numbers appear at the top of the questionnaires. They will be used only to determine which graduates have not responded and will be permanently removed prior to analysis of the questionnaires. Your assistance is most appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Dawn Stockman.

Dawn Stockman

Approved: _____

A handwritten signature of Dr. Edsel Buchanan.

Dr. Edsel Buchanan

☐ Please X here and return this sheet in a separate envelope if you would like to receive a summary of the completed study.

Name _____

Address _____

Zip code