

Professional Internship Program Outline

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Recreation & Wellbeing

2025 - 2026



**RECREATION
& WELLBEING**
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Recreation & Wellbeing | Who We Are

Mission

We move Badgers to play hard, get fit, and live well.

Vision

To build a movement of healthy habits through inclusion, education, innovation, and connection.

Values

- ✦ We put students first.
- ✦ We celebrate what makes us different and use it to make us stronger.
- ✦ We believe recreation is a gateway to wellbeing.
- ✦ We remove barriers, build community, and push limits.
- ✦ We strive to make the healthy choice the easy choice.
- ✦ We practice what we preach.
- ✦ We lean yes.

Our Commitment

We offer opportunities for all people to exchange ideas, share experiences, and achieve personal fulfillment. This pursuit of wellness is a right afforded to everyone, regardless of identity or ability. We have a collective responsibility to foster a culture of mutual respect, courteous interactions, and equal opportunities. Through our programs, services, facilities, and staff, we are committed to cultivating and upholding an inclusive environment in which we celebrate the differences of every member of our community.

Human Capital Values

Communication: We are committed to face-to-face, sincere, consistent, clear, concise, and direct interactions with one another.

Ideas: We are committed to collaborative and innovative idea generation with a focus on providing context, following through, and executing.

Recognition: We are committed to the timely and meaningful acknowledgement of each other's achievements. We are fully aware of an individual's contribution to the bigger picture.

Environment: We are committed to providing a workplace that is built on mutual respect, understanding, and spirit of collaboration and community. We expect an environment that is focused on inclusion and achievement with an emphasis on doing it right.

Learning Objectives

The professional internship for Recreation & Wellbeing at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is structured to provide reciprocal value to both the professional intern and the Division. The professional internship program provides an opportunity that allows interns to further develop and apply acquired academic knowledge while advancing professional and technical skills in the workplace. Through this internship, Recreation & Wellbeing is awarded enhanced perspectives, fresh ideas, and specialized skillsets to assist in the administration of departmental operations and tasks. This experiential education program is based on a set of learning objectives that helps professional interns prepare for future career responsibilities. The goals of the program are:

- To provide professional interns with the experiences upon which to build professional careers and practice the application of skills.
- To allow professional interns to apply, evaluate, assess, and integrate academic knowledge and theoretical concepts in a work setting.
- To develop and expand professional interns' knowledge about themselves and their professional abilities, goals, and career interests in a work setting.
- To expand professional interns' awareness of the university campus, the field of campus recreation, and the professional workplace environment.
- To provide professional interns with experience in the disciplined and discriminatory use of evidence in making decisions and solving problems in a work setting.
- To enhance the perspective of Recreation & Wellbeing by bringing in novel perspective and innovative ideas.
- To leverage specialized strengths and skills sets of the professional intern to augment the abilities of the professional staff.

Professional Development Competencies

Curriculum and training design are guided by the below professional development competencies.

NACE Career Readiness Competencies

- Career & Self-Development
- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Equity & Inclusion
- Leadership
- Professionalism
- Teamwork
- Technology

NIRSA Student Employee Competencies

- Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion
- Leadership
- Wellbeing
- Teamwork
- Problem Solving
- Communication
- Professionalism

Learning Experiences

New Hire Orientation

Professional Interns will meet with the Human Resources team on their first day. The information reviewed includes an overview of Recreation & Wellbeing, the New Employee Checklist, resources, and payroll documentation and information.

Training Week

The Assistant Director of Staff Training & Development will host a training week for all new professional interns working for Recreation & Wellbeing. This week is designed to orient the individuals to the organization, learn about each other, and help prepare them to make the most of their internship experience. Through this training week, professional interns will...

- formulate relationships with other professional interns and Rec Well professional staff.
- demonstrate teamwork via communication and relationship-building practices.
- identify leadership characteristics in themselves and their peers that will be applied throughout the professional internship experience.
- reflect on experiences in pursuit of self-actualization both personally and professionally.
- generate self-confidence by being challenged to be uncomfortable & vulnerable through discussion, activities, and training sessions.

Development Meetings

Over the course of each semester the professional interns will meet as a group along with the Assistant Director of Staff Training & Development for continued learning and development. All interns and the Assistant Director of Staff Training & Development will meet bi-weekly for approximately 90 minutes at a predetermined, reoccurring time. Throughout the series, the professional interns will be exposed to a range of topics including career readiness, leadership development, guest speakers, panel discussion, campus and facility tours, and more. Each session will focus on development topics to enhance the professional interns' learning experience.

Building Presentations & Public Speaking

Professional interns will provide two presentations to the Rec Well professional staff. The first is an introductory presentation: "Who I Am' TedTalk". This session sets out to learn about each individual and their story. The second is a reflective presentation: "My Rec Well Experience". This session challenges the individual to reflect on their Rec Well experience and present on how they have grown personally and professionally since joining the organization.

Committee Involvement

Professional interns are expected to serve on and contribute towards Recreation & Wellbeing committees and work teams. Each professional intern may serve on a standing committee, a planning committee, and/or a search & screen or hiring committee, when applicable.

Professional Development

Recreation & Wellbeing is committed to providing ongoing professional development for all professional interns. Professional development includes staff retreats, departmental and university workshops/courses/activities, divisional work teams and committees. Professional Interns may be eligible for support to travel to professional development conferences, when possible.

1:1 Meetings & Goal Setting

Each professional intern will meet with their direct supervisor on a recurring basis to discuss progress towards goals, updates related to the responsibilities of the role, and personal and professional development topics. Professional interns will also meet individually with the Assistant Director of Staff Training & Development once per semester. These meetings are intended to discuss progress in their role, the professional internship program, career search process, and their overall experience as an employee with Recreation & Wellbeing.

Assessment & Evaluation

Assessment

Qualitative data is collected throughout the professional internship experience via these methods:

- Post-in-person training deliberation
- Exit interviews
- Career Readiness Questionnaire
- Reflections & recaps

Quantitative data is collected for these numbers:

- Post-professional internship job placement

Evaluation

Professional Interns are evaluated by their direct supervisor throughout their experience. Evaluations are conducted on three occasions: 30-day Evaluation (September), Midpoint Evaluation (December/January), and Summary Evaluation (May).

Professional Internship Development Curriculum

NACE Career Readiness Competencies

- Career & Self-Development
- Communication
- Critical Thinking
- Equity & Inclusion
- Leadership
- Professionalism
- Teamwork

Semester Themes

Fall: Leading Yourself to Success

Emphasis on career search and career readiness.

Spring: Leading Others to Success

Emphasis on leadership development.

Examples of Topics:

- ✓ Accessibility & Universal Design
- ✓ Advancement & Fundraising
- ✓ Advocating for Your Career-Growth
- ✓ Bias Awareness & Prevention for Leaders
- ✓ Campus Recreation Case Studies
- ✓ CliftonStrengths: A Strength-Based Personality Assessment
- ✓ Creating a Leadership Foundation & Teambuilding
- ✓ Designing Trainings for Effective Learning
- ✓ Evaluation, Coaching, & Critical Feedback
- ✓ Finding Your "Why"
- ✓ Interviewing: Tips, Tricks, and Practice
- ✓ Motivational Interviewing
- ✓ Navigating Difficult Conversations
- ✓ Personal Mission Statements
- ✓ Practicing Gratitude & Giving Feedback
- ✓ Problem Solving with Critical & Design Thinking
- ✓ Rec Well Brand Training
- ✓ Resumes, Cover Letters, & Career Search Prep
- ✓ Storytelling: The Art of Sharing Your Story