Therapeutic Recreation, BS

Therapeutic recreation is a professional field that involves providing recreation programs designed to improve or maintain the physical, emotional, mental, and social functioning of patients and consumers. Therapeutic practice involves a continuum of services that use recreational activities to improve functional abilities; leisure education to help individuals acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes that facilitate an independent lifestyle; and other programs to enhance health, growth, development, and independence through intrinsically rewarding leisure activities. Additionally, inclusive recreation provides opportunities for people with all abilities and disabilities to participate together in meaningful and purposeful therapeutic recreation programs based on choice and common interests.

Programs designed to lead to professional licensure are subject to federal regulations regarding informational disclosures. Please visit Professional Licensure Disclosures by Program for further information.

Learning Outcomes

The BS degree in therapeutic recreation:

- instills an understanding and appreciation of leisure, recreation, and play in various settings;
- prepares students for professional fields and/or graduate study through the integration of research and critical thinking;
- provides service and experiential learning to enhance students' leadership strengths and their ability to build therapeutic relationships;
- teaches critical skills necessary to assess, plan goals, design appropriate interventions, and evaluate effectiveness;
- instructs students in the practice of inclusion for persons of various abilities and backgrounds; and
- teaches students how to facilitate therapeutic recreation programs.

Requirements

The Bachelor of Science with a major in therapeutic recreation requires a minimum of 120 s.h., including 58–66 s.h. of work for the major, which varies by track. Students must maintain a grade-point average (GPA) of at least 2.00 in all courses for the major and in all UI courses for the major. They must also complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE CLAS Core.

In planning coursework, students should be guided by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences maximum hours rule: students earning a BS may apply a maximum of 56 s.h. earned in one department to the minimum 120 s.h. required for graduation, whether or not the coursework is accepted toward requirements for the major; students who earn more than 56 s.h. from one department may use the additional semester hours to satisfy requirements for the major (if the department accepts them), and the grades they earn become part of their grade-point average, but they cannot apply the additional semester hours to the minimum 120 s.h. required for graduation.

The therapeutic recreation program prepares students for professional work with persons in various populations and as advocates for participant inclusion. The major emphasizes the use of a systematic process of assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation to provide opportunities for recreation, leisure, and play.

The curriculum consists of two tracks designed to allow students to acquire in-depth knowledge in their chosen area of interest. The courses in each track provide an opportunity for students to tailor the degree to best fit their career goals and academic interests. The inclusive recreation track (58–63 s.h.) allows students to gain knowledge in a variety of domains related to adaptive recreation. Students may choose to focus on a certain client population or vary their experience through their curriculum design. The National Council on Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) track (63–66 s.h.) focuses on developing therapeutic recreation competencies necessary to sit for the National Council on Therapeutic Recreation Certification examination and successfully pursue a career in clinical or community therapeutic recreation.

The BS with a major in therapeutic recreation requires the following coursework.

Requirements	Hours
Core Courses	33–36
Track Requirements (varies by track)	25–30

Students in both tracks are required to complete the following core courses, as well as additional courses required specifically for their track.

Core Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
This course:		
PSY:1001	Elementary Psychology	3
One of these:		
HHP:2130	Human Development Through the Life Span	3
NURS:1030	Human Development and Behavior	3
One of these:		
PSY:2501	Introduction to Social Psychology	3
SOC:1010	Introduction to Sociology	3
One of these:		
HHP:1400	Human Anatomy and Physiology	3
HHP:2100 & HHP:2400	Human Anatomy and Fundamentals of Human Physiology	6
One of these:		
TR:1800/ASP:1800/ CSD:1800/ NURS:1800/ SSW:1800	Aging Matters: Introduction to Gerontology	3
TR:3175/ASP:3175/ HHP:3175	Physical Activity and Recreation for Aging Populations	3
All of these:		
TR:1070	Leisure, Play, and the Human Experience	3
TR:2061/HHP:2061	Recreation Leadership and Programming	3

TR:2077	Children and Families in Healthcare	3
TR:2160	Introduction to Therapeutic Recreation	3
TR:3162	Therapeutic Recreation: Clientele	3
TR:3261/HHP:3261	Inclusive Recreation	3

Tracks

Students select one of the following tracks and complete the requirements.

Inclusive Recreation Track

Requirements

Inclusive recreation in community-based settings is the fastest-growing area of practice in therapeutic recreation and the most varied. Community-based inclusive recreation specialists may be affiliated with community recreation departments, adaptive sports programs, school systems, independent living support services, special recreation associations, and community mental health agencies. The goals of inclusive recreation in community-based settings include enhancing quality of life, leisure education, health protection, the pursuit of positive health outcomes, and community integration in recreation programs.

Students who complete this track are not eligible for the National Council on Therapeutic Recreation Certification exam or for the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist credential.

Students earn a minimum of 25–27 s.h. in this track. Coursework is selected around several themes relevant for foundational comprehension and practice in the field.

Inclusive Recreation Coursework

Course #	Title	Hours
Social Foundations		
Two of these:		
GWSS:3100	LGBTQ/Queer Studies	3
GWSS:3138/ SJUS:3138	Writing to Change the World	3
SJUS:2250/ GWSS:2250/ HIST:2250	The History of Social Justice Movements	3
SOC:1030	Contemporary Social Problems	3
SPST:1074/ AMST:1074/ GWSS:1074	Inequality in American Sport	3
SSW:1022/ SOC:1022	Social Justice and Social Welfare in the United States	3
SSW:3712/ NURS:3712	Human Sexuality, Diversity, and Society	3
Culture		
One of these:		
HHP:4280	Applied Cultural Safety and Healthcare	3
CCCC:2220	Foundations of Critical Cultural Competence	3
Disability Studies and Inclusive Interventions		
Both of these:		
TR:3300/HHP:3361	Animal-Assisted Interventions in the Helping Professions	3
DST:1101	Introduction to Disability Studies	3
Administration and Nonprofit		
One of these:		
TR:3262	Therapeutic Recreation Administration	3
MGMT:3500/ ENTR:3595/ MUSM:3500/ NURS:3595/ RELS:3700/ SSW:3500	Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness I	3
SRM:3150	Recreation Administration	3
Human Interaction and Health Behavior		
This course:		
HHP:2200	Physical Activity and Health	3
One of these:		
TR:1010	Adapted Recreation and Physical Activity	1-3
HHP:4420	Planning and Evaluating Health Interventions	3
CSED:4175	Motivational Interviewing	3
CSED:4199	Counseling for Related Professions	3
Field Experience		
3 s.h. from these:		
TR:3164	Clinical Practice in Therapeutic Recreation	3
TR:4100	Practicum in Therapeutic Recreation	1-3
TR:4193	Independent Study	1-3
TR:4197/DST:4198/ HHP:4197	Therapeutic Recreation: Experiences in Adaptive and Inclusive Sports	3
ABRD:3712	Child Life Experiential Learning Program	3
CCP:1201	Academic Internship	1-3

NCTRC Certification Track

Requirements

Certified therapeutic recreation specialists (CTRS) work in both clinical and community-based settings with a wide variety of client populations. The most common clientele groups include persons with mental illness, persons with spinal cord and brain injuries, older adults, individuals who experience chemical dependence and substance abuse, at-risk youth, and people with developmental disabilities. Settings often focus on psychiatric or physical rehabilitation where the therapist works with a team of allied health professionals to provide treatment through recreation- and leisure-based interventions. Services may also be provided in long-term care settings where the therapist works with the health care team to provide treatment interventions and recreation opportunities to enhance the quality of life for residents in nursing homes, memory care and assisted-living centers, or respite care agencies. Many certified therapeutic recreation specialists are also employed by community and nonprofit agencies that provide services for underrepresented populations.

This is a selective track; students earn 30 s.h. of coursework for the NCTRC certification track. To enter the track they must complete 24 s.h. at the University of Iowa (or 12 s.h. for transfer students) and must have a University of Iowa GPA of at least 2.50 and a cumulative GPA of at least 2.50. Entrance to the track can occur after completion of TR:1070 Leisure, Play, and the Human Experience and TR:2160 Introduction to Therapeutic Recreation. Students who complete this track, including the therapeutic recreation internship, are eligible to sit for the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification exam. Successful completion of the exam confers the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) credential. Students must earn a C-minus or higher in prerequisite courses prior to admission to the NCTRC track.

NCTRC Certification Coursework

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these (17 s.h.):		
TR:3161	Assessment and Evaluation in Therapeutic Recreation	3
TR:3163	Concepts and Issues in Therapeutic Recreation: Advancement of the Profession	3
TR:3164	Clinical Practice in Therapeutic Recreation	3
TR:3262	Therapeutic Recreation Administration	3
CLSA:3750	Medical and Technical Terminology	2
PSY:2930	Abnormal Psychology: Health Professions	3

Field Experience

Course #	Title	Hours
Both of these (13 s.h.):		
TR:4190	Preinternship Seminar	1
TR:4191	Therapeutic Recreation Internship	12

Combined Programs

BS/MS in Health and Human Physiology (Child Life Subprogram)

The combined program allows qualified students to begin work toward a master's degree while they complete their bachelor's degree. It permits students to count certain courses toward both degrees, completing them in less time than they would need to complete each degree separately.

The completion of the two degrees in five years is designed for students who wish to pursue a career providing services to children and their families, primarily in the health care field. Graduates are eligible to be credentialed professionals in child life (certified child life specialist). They fill positions such as child life specialist, activity director, or administrative positions.

Students follow the standard curriculum of their BS degree the first two years and complete all the prerequisite courses for the MS in health and human physiology with a child life subprogram during the third year. Successful students receive a BS at the end of the fourth year and an MS at the end of the fifth year.

Applicants to the combined program must:

- be enrolled as a BS student at the University of Iowa;
- have completed a minimum of 80 s.h. at the time of admission to the combined program, with at least 30 s.h. earned at the University of Iowa;
- have completed all GE CLAS Core requirements and all prerequisites; and
- have a cumulative University of Iowa grade-point average of at least 3.25.

Applicants must submit a letter of application to the program that includes a statement of purpose, a résumé, documentation of paid or volunteer experience in a child life and/or pediatric health care setting, and three letters of recommendation.

Each application is reviewed by the program and requires support from the applicant's undergraduate advisor. Recommendations for approval will be sent to Graduate Admissions. Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate College; visit the Manual of Rules and Regulations on the Graduate College website.

For more information about applying to the combined program, contact the child life program in the Department of Health, Sport, and Human Physiology.

Honors

Honors in the Major

Students have the opportunity to graduate with honors in the major. Departmental honors students must maintain an overall grade-point average (GPA) of at least 3.33 in work for their major and a cumulative University of Iowa GPA of at least 3.33.

In order to graduate with honors, students must successfully complete TR:4194 Honors Readings and TR:4195 Honors Problems, in which they conduct a reading or research project under the supervision of a faculty member in their major and write a paper summarizing the project's results.

University of Iowa Honors Program

In addition to honors in the major, students have opportunities for honors study and activities through membership in the University of Iowa Honors Program. Visit Honors at Iowa to learn about the university's honors program.

Membership in the UI Honors Program is not required to earn honors in the therapeutic recreation major.

Career Advancement

Graduates find jobs in a variety of settings. Therapeutic recreation professionals are employed in settings such as skilled nursing facilities, community recreation centers, state and community mental health institutions, general medical hospitals, physical rehabilitation centers, special recreation districts, the Special Olympics, correctional facilities, senior living communities, facilities for persons with intellectual disabilities or mental illness, substance abuse programs, and camp programs as inclusion specialists. The majority of children’s hospitals and pediatric units in other

health care facilities employ child life specialists to address cognitive, social, and psychological issues associated with child illness and hospitalization. Child life specialists also work in rehabilitation centers, private practice and consulting, school systems, special-purpose camps, and hospices.

The Pomerantz Career Center offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.

Academic Plans

Four-Year Graduation Plan

The following checkpoints list the minimum requirements students must complete by certain semesters in order to stay on the university's Four-Year Graduation Plan. Courses in the major are those required to complete the major; they may be offered by departments other than the major department.

Before the fifth semester begins: eleven courses.

Before the seventh semester begins: two more major requirement courses, 3 s.h. of supporting coursework, and at least 90 s.h. earned toward the degree.

Before the eighth semester begins: two more major requirement courses and the remaining supporting coursework.

During the eighth semester: enrollment in all remaining coursework in the major, all remaining GE CLAS Core courses, and a sufficient number of semester hours to graduate.

Sample Plans of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, visit MyUI.

Therapeutic Recreation, BS

- Inclusive Recreation Track
- NCTRC Certification Track

Inclusive Recreation Track

Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
Students may declare the Therapeutic Recreation (Inclusive Recreation) BS major at any point in their academic career.		
GE CLAS Core: Sustainability		
	Hours	**0**
First Year		
Fall		
PSY:1001	Elementary Psychology [a]	3
RHET:1030 or ENGL:1200	Rhetoric: Writing and Communication or Interpreting Literature	3 - 4
GE CLAS Core: International and Global Issues [b]		3
CSI:1600	Success at Iowa	1
Elective course [c]		4
	Hours	**14-15**
Spring		
SOC:1010 or PSY:2501	Introduction to Sociology [a] or Introduction to Social Psychology	3
TR:1070	Leisure, Play, and the Human Experience [a]	3
ENGL:1200 or RHET:1030	Interpreting Literature or Rhetoric: Writing and Communication	3 - 4
GE CLAS Core: Historical Perspectives [b]		3
GE CLAS Core: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts [b]		3
	Hours	**15-16**
Second Year		
Fall		
DST:1101	Introduction to Disability Studies [a, d]	3
TR:2160	Introduction to Therapeutic Recreation	3
Major Elective: human anatomy and physiology requirement [a, e]		3, 6
GE CLAS Core: World Languages First Level Proficiency or elective course [c, f]		4 - 5
Elective course [c]		2
	Hours	**15-19**
Spring		
NURS:1030 or HHP:2130	Human Development and Behavior or Human Development Through the Life Span	3
TR:2077	Children and Families in Healthcare	3
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences with Lab [b]		4
GE CLAS Core: Quantitative or Formal Reasoning [b]		3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level Proficiency or elective course [c, f]		4 - 5
	Hours	**17-18**
Third Year		
Fall		
HHP:2200	Physical Activity and Health [d]	3
TR:2061	Recreation Leadership and Programming	3
IR Track: Social Foundations course [d, g]		3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Third Level Proficiency or elective course [c, f]		4 - 5
Elective course [c]		3
	Hours	**16-17**
Spring		
TR:1800 or TR:3175	Aging Matters: Introduction to Gerontology [a] or Physical Activity and Recreation for Aging Populations	3
TR:3162	Therapeutic Recreation: Clientele	3
IR Track: Field Experience or elective course [c, h]		1 - 3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Fourth Level Proficiency or elective course [c, f]		4 - 5
Elective course [c]		3
	Hours	**14-17**

Fourth Year		
Fall		
HHP:4280 or CCCC:2220	Applied Cultural Safety and Healthcare [d] or Foundations of Critical Cultural Competence	3
TR:3261	Inclusive Recreation	3
IR Track: Social Foundations course [d, g]		3
IR Track: Field Experience or elective course [c, h]		1 - 3
Elective course [c]		3
Elective course [c]		3
	Hours	**16-18**
Spring		
MGMT:3500 or TR:3262 or SRM:3150	Nonprofit Organizational Effectiveness I [d] or Therapeutic Recreation Administration or Recreation Administration	3
TR:3300	Animal-Assisted Interventions in the Helping Professions [d]	3
IR Track: Human Interaction and Health Behavior course [d, g]		3
Elective course [c]		3
Elective course [c]		3
Degree Application: apply on MyUI before deadline (typically in February for spring, September for fall) [i]		
	Hours	**15**
	Total Hours	**122-135**

a Fulfills a major requirement and may fulfill a GE requirement.

b GE CLAS Core courses may be completed in any order unless used as a prerequisite for another course. Students should consult with an advisor about the best sequencing of courses.

c Students may use elective courses to earn credit toward the total s.h. required for graduation or to complete a double major, minors, or certificates.

d This course fulfills a themed area within the Inclusive Recreation Track.

e Students must complete either HHP:1400 (3 s.h.) or both HHP:2100 and HHP:2400 (6 s.h.).

f Students who have completed four levels of a single language or two levels of two different languages in high school or college have satisfied the GE CLAS Core World Languages requirement. Students who have completed three levels of a single language may complete a fourth-level course in the same language or may choose an approved World Language and Cultural Exploration course. Enrollment in world languages courses requires a placement exam, unless enrolling in a first-semester-level course. Contact your academic advisor or CLAS Undergraduate Programs Office with questions concerning the World Languages requirement.

g See the General Catalog for list of approved courses.

h Complete 3 s.h. of field experience coursework; see the General Catalog for list of approved courses.

i Please see Academic Calendar, on Office of the Registrar website, for current degree application deadlines. Students should apply for a degree for the session in which all requirements will be met. For any questions on appropriate timing, contact your academic advisor or Degree Services.

NCTRC Certification Track

Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
The Therapeutic Recreation (NCTRC Certification) BS program is a selective track. Entrance to the track can occur after requirements are met. [a]		
GE CLAS Core: Sustainability [b]		
	Hours	**0**
First Year		
Fall		
PSY:1001	Elementary Psychology [c]	3
RHET:1030 or ENGL:1200	Rhetoric: Writing and Communication or Interpreting Literature	3 - 4
GE CLAS Core: Understanding Cultural Perspectives [d]		3
CSI:1600	Success at Iowa	1
Elective course [e]		4
	Hours	**14-15**
Spring		
TR:1070	Leisure, Play, and the Human Experience	3
ENGL:1200 or RHET:1030	Interpreting Literature or Rhetoric: Writing and Communication	3 - 4
GE CLAS Core: Historical Perspectives [d]		3
GE CLAS Core: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts [d]		3
Elective course [e]		3
	Hours	**15-16**
Second Year		
Fall		
SOC:1010 or PSY:2501	Introduction to Sociology [c] or Introduction to Social Psychology	3
TR:2160	Introduction to Therapeutic Recreation	3
Major Elective: human anatomy and physiology requirement [c, f]		3, 6
GE CLAS Core: International and Global Issues [d]		3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages First Level Proficiency or elective course [e, g]		4 - 5
	Hours	**16-20**
Spring		
TR:2061	Recreation Leadership and Programming	3
TR:2077	Children and Families in Healthcare	3
GE CLAS Core: Quantitative or Formal Reasoning [d]		3
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences with Lab [d]		4
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level Proficiency or elective course [e, g]		4 - 5
	Hours	**17-18**
Third Year		
Fall		
CLSA:3750	Medical and Technical Terminology	2

NURS:1030 or HHP:2130	Human Development and Behavior or Human Development Through the Life Span	3
TR:3161	Assessment and Evaluation in Therapeutic Recreation	3
TR:3163	Concepts and Issues in Therapeutic Recreation: Advancement of the Profession	3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Third Level Proficiency or elective course [e, g]		4 - 5
	Hours	**15-16**
Spring		
PSY:2930	Abnormal Psychology: Health Professions	3
TR:3175 or TR:1800	Physical Activity and Recreation for Aging Populations [c] or Aging Matters: Introduction to Gerontology	3
TR:3162	Therapeutic Recreation: Clientele	3
TR:4190	Preinternship Seminar	1
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Fourth Level Proficiency or elective course [e, g]		4 - 5
	Hours	**14-15**
Fourth Year		
Fall		
TR:3164	Clinical Practice in Therapeutic Recreation	3
TR:3261	Inclusive Recreation	3
TR:3262	Therapeutic Recreation Administration	3
Elective course [e]		3
Elective course [e]		3
Elective course [e]		3
	Hours	**18**
Spring		
TR:4191	Therapeutic Recreation Internship	12
Degree Application: apply on MyUI before deadline (typically in February for spring, September for fall) [h]		
Exam: National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification [i]		
	Hours	**12**
	Total Hours	**121-130**

a The Academic Advising Center advises Therapeutic Recreation Interest students on prerequisite course planning. Students are advised for success, based on academic strength, not necessarily for a four year plan.

b Sustainability must be completed by choosing a course that has been approved for Sustainability AND for one of these General Education areas: Natural Sciences; Quantitative or Formal Reasoning; Social Sciences; Historical Perspectives; International and Global Issues; Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts; or Values and Society.

c Fulfills a major requirement and may fulfill a GE requirement.

d GE CLAS Core courses may be completed in any order unless used as a prerequisite for another course. Students should consult with an advisor about the best sequencing of courses.

e Students may use elective courses to earn credit toward the total s.h. required for graduation or to complete a double major, minors, or certificates.

f Students must complete either HHP:1400 (3 s.h.) or both HHP:2100 and HHP:2400 (6 s.h.).

g Students who have completed four levels of a single language or two levels of two different languages in high school or college have satisfied the GE CLAS Core World Languages requirement. Students who have completed three levels of a single language may complete a fourth-level course in the same language or may choose an approved World Language and Cultural Exploration course. Enrollment in world languages courses requires a placement exam, unless enrolling in a first-semester-level course. Contact your academic advisor or CLAS Undergraduate Programs Office with questions concerning the World Languages requirement.

h Please see Academic Calendar, on Office of the Registrar website, for current degree application deadlines. Students should apply for a degree for the session in which all requirements will be met. For any questions on appropriate timing, contact your academic advisor or Degree Services.

i Students who complete the curriculum, including the therapeutic recreation internship, are eligible to sit for the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification exam. Successful completion of the exam confers the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) credential.