

5-2014

Creating Course Curriculum for a Community College

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Recommended Citation

Reis, Carol E., "Creating Course Curriculum for a Community College" (2014). *Creative Studies Graduate Student Master's Projects*. Paper 204.

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SUNY Buffalo State
International Center for Studies in Creativity

Creating Course Curriculum for a Community College

A Project
in Creative Studies
by
Carol E. Reis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Science

May 2014

ABSTRACT OF A PROJECT

Creating college courses for a community college is the main focus of this project. The specific college is Erie Community College in Western New York. Three areas of course development that have been targeted are: recreation, creative studies, and therapeutics.

Just as the needs in society change, the need for a college to change to fit the needs of society coexists. A function of higher education is to train students to be competitive in the existing job market. The final outcome of a college certificate and/or degree is best suited to students if the certificates and degrees provide transferrable credit to higher institutions as well as marketable skills.

This project explores curriculum options and options of how the curriculum may fit into the existing structure of the Health, Physical Education and Recreation Department at Erie Community College. There are no decisions claimed in this paper – just suggestions. This is not a decision. It is a beginning.

Key words: Higher education, curriculum, adult education, classroom, cooperative learning

Date

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Dates of Approval:

Project Adviser

Candidate

Acknowledgements

Thank you to everyone who has been in my life and influenced my creativity. A special appreciation and credit goes to my boys Kristopher Kaminski and the late Casey Kaminski. They have been the building blocks for who I am today.

Life is a journey, not a destination. During one's life journey, change is inevitable. When opportunities arise bringing change, it can be perceived as an opportunity to grow and perhaps to create something simple or expectantly spectacular; it would grow into something grander than what was initially perceived as the final product. It is the fireworks of unexpected occurrences which brings an awe-inspiring beauty to our lives. Creative Studies has brought unexpected occurrences, awe and much inspiration to my life. I am coming out of the Creative Studies program completely different from when I came in – with much appreciation and new outlook into what can be created.

A special thank you goes out to Michael Fox, Professor in the International Center for Studies in Creativity; his patience, and guidance in bringing this project to completion, I am extremely grateful.

This project is dedicated to students in the field of recreation and leisure, health and wellness, physical education, and creative studies. Your future is my concern. The future is in your hands.

Author's Note

Forty years of experience in the field of Recreation are culminated in this project and paper. Over the years I have been directly involved in many facets of the field of recreation. I have worked with many different types of people in many different recreation settings. I have created simple programs and I have created national programs. From these experiences I pull much of the information included in this paper.

Much of the material in this paper is pulled from recent conversations, as well as conversations with people over the years, teaching this material, information gathered at conferences, meetings, and readings, and much is from listening to National Public Radio, 88.7 FM on our radio dial in Western New York. Teaching in many factions of recreation has resulted in massive files of information stored in my apperceptive mass. I have included information from these sources but the actual date of acquiring this information is long lost. Due to time restrictions within a semester and the desire to make a point, I have included some statistical data that has been pulled from resources but may not be correctly or adequately cited. I preface this paper with an apology to anyone I may have spoken with, used the information, but have not cited.

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SECTION ONE:

Introduction

The initial plan for the direction of the CRS 690 final Masters project and what resulted in a semester of exploring the options of creating college course curriculum changed during the research process. This project has taken many twists and turns. There are many parts of this project that will not have closure due to the limited time frame within a college semester. Through a continual Creative Problem Solving (CPS) process, sometimes on an hourly basis, a multitude of options on how to create college curriculum came to light. Some of the options were weeded out. The practical application of a PPCo (Pluses, Potentials and Concerns) was practiced religiously. This project serves as an exploration into possibilities of curriculum that could be created that may fit into the Health, Physical Education and Recreation (HPER) Department at Erie Community College in Western New York and how curriculum could be offered at the college.

This paper describes the reason to consider creating curriculum in recreation, therapeutics, and creativity. The history, the rationale and the surprises, trials, tribulations and elations of this journey are included in this introduction as well as in their perspective sections.

There are many facets to this project. Curriculum areas that were specifically targeted are: recreation, therapeutics and creative studies. The recreation realm, Recreation Leadership degree, of the Health, Physical Education and Recreation Department at Erie Community College (ECC) in Western New York was deactivated. An A.S. Degree in Physical Education exists. The A.S. Degree in Health & Wellness was created and is now pending the approval of New York State Education Department (SED). Therapeutics is currently addressed with one course. It is the recreation realm and creativity that need to be developed.

The introductory section of the paper includes individual sections for therapeutic, physical education section, and health & wellness. The placement of these sections in the beginning of the paper is to bring them to the table and bring an awareness of the common thread that connects these areas of expertise to each other and how they are interrelated to recreation and creativity. It is a focus of this project to explain the interrelatedness of recreation, health and wellness, therapeutics, physical education and creativity. The structure was developed for the sake of clarity and an easy flow for the writer as well as the reader.

Initially, my ultimate dream and purpose of the project was to resurrect the Recreation portion of the HPER Department at ECC in Western New York. Specific to this dream was the desire to create Associates in Science (AS) degree in Recreation Leadership that would be a combination of recreation, leadership, creativity, health and wellness. It would basically be what had been offered for the past forty years but with some current courses and updated material. The HPER Department housed at one time an Applied Associates in Science (A.A.S.) Degree in Recreation Leadership.

Figuring out how to connect ECC students with Creative Studies (CS) at SUNY Buffalo State was included in the initial plan of this project. This task was divided into how to connect ECC students with Creative Studies who transferred to SUNY Buffalo State and how to develop a class in Creative Studies at ECC. One of the major “aha” moments that happened on October 1, 2013 is documented under the Creative Studies chapter of this section. This was the first step to thinking differently. Ideas kept twisting after that and magically, through conversations with college personnel, a golden nugget of a suggestion, cross registration, was dropped. It was as if thought processes were put in a blender and what came out might be a cross registration of Creative Studies between ECC and SUNY Buffalo State. As of the writing of this paper, that

option is still in the exploratory phase.

In the process of exploring, the topic of therapeutics arose due to a co-worker's research for her CRS 690 Final Masters Project. It just so happens, the co-worker is also a graduate student in Creative Studies at the International Center for Studies in Creativity (ICSC). There is no such thing as coincidence.

It is a hope that through the creation of certain curriculum, retention of college students may increase. Student retention is a main focus for most colleges. It is a statistical fact that students enrolled in the introductory Creative Studies courses at SUNY Buffalo State hold a retention rate 40% higher than students who did not take Creative Studies courses (Michael Fox, personal communication, October 1, 2013). This fact is my rationale for exploring how CS could be offered at ECC.

Final Product

Whatever the results of my research and exploration, the final product needs to fit the current climate at the college. If it doesn't fit, it cannot be forced. Then again, it might just be a dream. The take away from my many semesters in Creative Studies graduate classes was to “dream big”. As I state at the conclusion of this paper – you just can't do it overnight just because you want to. People and time need to be factored into the process.

What at times was comparable to trying to find my way through a dark room, I knew that at some point I would find the light switch. My hope was that I wouldn't bump into something and hurt myself in the process. While advancing forward, I attempted to tread slowly and cautiously feeling my way in the dark – I had no idea what might be in front of me.

The most important focus of this project is the students who enter the college with the intent on learning practical knowledge and gaining practical experience. We need to keep up to

date on the changes in society and offer curriculum that will prepare students for a successful career.

What drove this project is the fact that the Health & Wellness degree at ECC is pending, the number of students entering Physical Education studies to become teachers may be declining, and the Recreation Leadership degree was deactivated. This is an exploration of what we might be able to create for the department.

Research for this project was acquired through personal interviews with professionals in the fields of recreation, therapeutics, creative studies, and physical education. Current information is important to consider when creating college courses. The methods of gaining information were by interviews conducted via telephone calls, emails and some personal meetings with professors from other colleges as well as faculty at ECC. College and university websites were looked at to see what was being offered at other institutions of higher learning. The trends and changes happening in society are an excellent indicator as to the path a college department may want to direct its efforts.

My Connection to My Dedication

I have a personal, professional, and passionate dedication for recreation and leisure.

For the past forty years I have been, in some capacity, involved in the professional field of recreation. I feel very passionate about the field. I believe in recreation like a religion. I have seen the benefits that others derive from being involved in a part of life that brings fun, laughter and enjoyment to their lives. I have witnessed a drastic change in a person's demeanor as they discovered through recreation that there is something positive they can do that brings happiness to their lives.

On an educational level as an Associate Professor at ECC, I have seen the transformation of students as they entered our programs as timid students and graduated with a Recreation Leadership degree as confident, self-assured young adults with the necessary leadership skills for a successful career in recreation. The Recreation Leadership degree has been a prevalent starting point for many of the recreation professionals presently employed in WNY.

Presently, I teach at ECC in the Health, Physical Education and Recreation (HPER) department. Over the years, the Recreation part of the department has been going through several changes. The set-up of the program did not correctly track the number of students in the Recreation Leadership degree. It was fractured. Since a college structures degree programs around numbers, and the number of recreation majors appeared to be low, the college deactivated the program.

Also factoring into the equation is the Recreation Leadership degree was an A.A.S. Degree. The degree needs to be an A.S. Degree in order to articulate into a four (4) year program. We had attempted to introduce an A.S. Degree into the department years ago, but that is another story in itself.

There are three ECC campuses, north, city, and south. The main office for the program was at south campus so students using tuition assistance wishing to enroll in the program at city or north campus could not get access to books for Recreation courses that were offered at south. Many of the students were enrolled as General Study majors and were taking the recreation classes. These students were not being counted as Recreation Leadership students. Students enrolled in another degree program were not being counted as Recreation Leadership majors.

My interest is to create an AS degree in Recreation Leadership which would fill in the void of the AAS Recreation Leadership degree that was deactivated. My ultimate dream/goal is to create an AS degree that is a combination of recreation, leadership, creativity, health and wellness in collaboration with the Physical Education (PE) degree. In the past, some students had acquired both Recreation Leadership and PE degrees.

The set-up of the department is that each of the segments – Health & Wellness, PE, and Recreation, has their own particular degree which leads to a type of competition for students within the department. The ideal situation would be to find a way to create an umbrella degree, perhaps have separate certificates, or even degree programs branch off of the umbrella degree that encompasses health and wellness, recreation, and physical education. This project may result in creating a recreation degree or recreation certificate program within the HPER department which would prepare students to work in the recreation field. Creating a recreation certificate program may result in creating and or rewriting and re-entering recreation course curriculum. By creating a certificate program under the PE degree, the HPER department would not be competing for students but would offer students an alternative if they were not interested in pursuing a PE degree. Adding creativity and leadership to the mix would make for a dynamic program.

The courses that are offered in the recreation curriculum offer hands-on skill and leadership development: Recreation Program Planning, Recreation Skills, and Leadership Practicum. These courses can easily compliment two Minor degrees at SUNY Buffalo State – Creative Leadership and Creative Studies. My interest is creating a Creative Studies (CS) course at ECC. CS course credits at ECC would transfer to BS. The introduction to CS may lead to an interest in enrolling in the Minor in Creative Studies program. More information about the program can be found at <http://creativity.buffalostate.edu/creative-studies-minor>.

The task at hand is to figure out how to connect ECC and Creative Studies. Our department now has the expertise of two graduates from the Creative Studies Masters program to teach the basic courses in CS. It is part of the exploratory journey of this project to figure out how to bring CS to ECC.

In defense of why it may be of interest to the college to offer Creative Studies at ECC, as was referenced previously, it is a statistical fact that students enrolled in the introductory CS courses at BSC have a retention rate 40% higher than students who did not take CS courses.

A connection between ECC and SUNY Buffalo State would benefit the students, the colleges, and our community. There have been a number of ECC students who prefer to stay in Western New York to complete a four year degree. The associate's degree that they were pursuing was offered at colleges that required them to leave WNY. Connecting and creating a collaboration between ECC and SUNY Buffalo State would satisfy students desire to stay in WNY, colleges retention of local students and the community's wealth in having educated professionals coming into the work force.

Therapeutics

Therapeutics was a topic considered in the original scheme of things due to the employment options connected with recreation. Co-worker and fellow Creative Studies graduate student, Pam Simmeth's (2013) Master Final Project is dedicated to creating the Therapeutic section. In the area of Therapeutics, I acted more as support person for Simmeth. Simmeth is doing the majority of work in developing curriculum regarding therapeutics and possibly creating training curriculum for students who have an interest in working with people with developmental disabilities.

Attending meetings, personal interviews with CEO's of agencies and critiquing the other colleges' websites to see what they are offering has been the main way of collecting information for this part of the project.

A conversation with Susan Barlow, CEO of Parent Network of WNY early in September helped to solidify my interest in pursuing what we could offer in regard to training for working with individuals with developmental disabilities at ECC. While at a conference in Albany, with many administrators of agencies that service individuals with developmental disabilities, Barlow said the main topic of the conference was that agencies are in dire need of trained people. Barlow went on to say there are three basic skills that agencies look for when hiring staff, "common sense, a good work ethic and being able to pass a drug test" (personal communication, September 28, 2013).

This field is growing. The need for trained staff became obvious when attending a committee meeting at People, Inc. The meeting on November 7, 2013 was the Regional Centers for Workforce Transformation (RCWT) for a NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) program called Putting People First. The field, WNY and the state are

going through significant changes. A Code of Ethics and Core Competencies have been created by the Federal Government and handed down to the state agencies. There is a need for uniform training. The agencies are looking to community colleges to create the curriculum for the training. Creating a curriculum leading to a certificate may be accomplished through a collaborative effort with the college, agencies in WNY and OPWDD.

New York State is in transition and across the state it has been noted that training is needed for workers. The incidents of abuse are increasing at the homes for individuals with developmental disabilities. It has been documented by agencies that there is a decrease in the incidents of abuse to individuals when workers have been educated.

Due to the decrease in funding at the state and federal level, monies to agencies have been less than in the past. Agencies may deem it beneficial to seek other sources for staff training as they have had to lay off workers. Community colleges may fit the bill. "We'll pay you" is a direct quote from Rhonda Frederick from People, Inc. at the November 7 RCWT meeting in reference to developing training curriculum at the college.

This, is an entire project in itself. This is nothing to be taken lightly and could not be accomplished on a part-time basis. If interested parties were to take this challenge on, they may want to take a look at what the requirements are for civil service jobs in this domain.

Researching various colleges' websites around the country, we found that colleges have created specific training to work with individuals with developmental disabilities. The training has been developed into a certificate program. By invitation to the RC WT on November 7, it was evident that New York State, if not Western New York, is in dire need of uniform training requirements for employees of agencies who service individuals with developmental disabilities.

The representatives of local agencies servicing the developmental disabled expressed a

need to get agencies on board with the idea of universal training, possibly establishing a certification. State funding to agencies has decreased resulting in limited funds for training staff. Training could be picked up by local colleges. The issue would be figuring out what curriculum would need to be developed that would be accepted by agencies. At the college level, it would need to be determined what department would develop and house the training courses. In discussing this training with a number of faculties at ECC it may be that such a certification would fall under Human Services.

There are a number of colleges across the country that offer certificate programs in Direct Service Professional (DSP) training. These certificate programs were housed in Human Services. SUNY New Paltz offers the DSP training as a Sociology Major with a Concentration in Human Services.

Obesity, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and arthritis are only a few of the disorders that have been increasing in our society over the years. Further verification that training is needed and programs need to be developed is the rising cases of Autism. I currently have heard from a professional in WNY who would like to further develop a swimming program for children with Autism, that the statistic used to be 1 in 1000 people were diagnosed with Autism. "In the near future autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is projected to affect more American families and children than other serious illnesses" (Ohrberg, 2013).

Arthritis, an affliction usually associated with old age is now becoming prevalent in children as young as nine years old. There is an increase of head injuries due to high risk sports and contact sports. Each of these areas requires specialized training and specialized programs.

It is a known fact that obesity is a worldwide health issue. Obesity would also fall under the category of health and wellness, recreation, leadership, physical education and creativity.

Programs encompassing nutrition, health, fitness, and self-esteem need to be created.

The unfortunate consequences of war are now coming home. Our men and women wounded in war are returning home. The field of Therapeutic Recreation is now increasing as our soldiers come home and would like to be able to be active in sports and recreation they have always been involved in prior to their injuries. They deserve the right to live a quality life.

Adaptive recreation is a way of creating opportunities to enjoy recreation and leisure. Wounded Warriors is a program developed to bring a quality of life to our soldiers; to allow them to enjoy something that many of us take for granted – recreation and leisure.

Paralympics has increased people's interest in sports as they see athletes with all levels of disabilities participating in competitive sports at an Olympic level.

Creating programs to fit the need of any group requires creative thinking and the 'how to' knowledge to create programs. A course offered by HPER, *Recreation Program Planning* (RE 210) is all inclusive in regards to learning how to plan and implement any program. There is a need for educated professionals to deliver programs for individuals in the field of developmental disabilities.

Our department has the expertise to offer training in this field. TH 100 *Orientation to Disabilities* is a course our department does offer. Students enrolled in this course have been involved in editing the *Recreation & Leisure Services Directory*. This directory was voluntarily created thirty years ago by the Recreation Therapists in the WNY area and has served as a major recreation program resource all of these years. The distribution of the *Recreation & Leisure Services Directory* has been estimated to be over ten thousand copies. By involving students in the editing of the directory they are directly in contact with program directors and agencies who service individuals with developmental disabilities. The directory may be found on the Parent

Network website: www.parentnetworkwny.org.

Establishing either a degree or certificate program would be great. To find out what is involved in creating a certificate program, Simmeth and I met with Bruce Kennedy, Chairperson of Sociology at ECC. Kennedy had been instrumental in developing a certificate to compliment the A.S. Degree in Human Services and described the process of creating a certificate program “is just as involved if not more so than creating a degree” (personal communication, October 2013).

Before ending on this topic, the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA) has created a Recreational Therapy Medicare Project. This is a project created to raise the recognition and assure the access to Recreational Therapy services. Perhaps there is a connection that can be made with ATRA, the Recreational Therapy Medicare Project, any certification programs ATRA may offer and curriculum that could be offered at ECC. This would require more exploration.

In conclusion, the future speaks to us as to what programs will be needed years from now. Obesity will not end tomorrow. It will continue. We will continue to have accidents resulting in head injuries. On a daily basis we have thousands of baby boomers retiring which adds to the need for recreation for the retired population. There is a need to develop programs to address these issues and many others and service this population.

Physical Education (PE)

The PE degree was created in the HPER Department at ECC years ago to articulate with four years colleges and universities. The main focus on this degree is on teaching physical education. The national Physical Education standards are incorporated into the curriculum. The PE curriculum as it exists now, does not include any courses for students to educate them about or receive experience in programming: how to develop, implement, and evaluate community programs, special activities or events.

Some of the students who start out on the physical education track are disillusioned as to what the Physical Education (PE) degree entails. I have talked with many students who initially enrolled in the program because they are interested in going for a degree in Physical Therapy, coaching or just like to play sports. They latch onto the word “physical” and make assumptions that they will be physically active. As the program exists now, activities are a limited part of the PE curriculum. The PE degree is the beginning of preparation for teaching physical education in the schools. Once the students realize that is not the direction they prefer to go, students have been known to switch to general studies or drop out. By offering an alternative degree or certificate program that compliments the PE curriculum, a program that offers training in recreation, sports and leadership, perhaps we can keep them as majors and improve the retention and graduation rates of students in our department.

Retention of college students until they successfully satisfy the degree requirements for graduation is a major concern for the college. ECC is trying to figure out how to increase retention rates. It may be of interest to the college to have a program developed that allows

students either a certificate program that introduces them to the department or functions as a second choice if they change their minds about pursuing the entire PE degree the way it currently exists.

It would be nice if we had a recreation certificate program that complimented the PE degree but focused more on the activities and how to create programs. A certificate could benefit the students who change their minds once they were enrolled in the program. Instead of dropping out of the PE program, it might act as a retention measure and offer them education and experience in the area of recreation. The student could still graduate with a PE degree but have a concentration in a direction other than teaching. It would be something to keep them in the field, be involved in activities and develop skills necessary to work in recreation departments, Boys & Girls Clubs, and YMCA's just to name a few.

A fact that needs to be watched and may be of concern is the decrease in enrollment in PE college degree programs across the board. College PE departments are experiencing a drop in enrollment. "Canisius College went from 145 to 44 students." This statistic came directly from Lauren Cavanaugh, Professor in the Physical Education studies at Canisius College (personal communication, April 3, 2013). "The PE department doesn't exist at Brockport any more" was information shared by Arthur Graham in a phone conversation on October 29, 2013. The PE department at Brockport became so small it had to be housed with another department. Physical Education is housed under Liberal Arts at Herkimer Community College. Genesee Community College only offers degrees in Exercise Science and not Physical Education. SUNY Buffalo University no longer has a PE degree and it has dropped the mandated two (2) credit PE requirement.

SUNY Buffalo State is renowned as a teaching college providing excellent degree

programs for future teachers. During a conversation with Michael Fox, he shared information about students entering the field of Education, the college saw a “huge amount of loss with a very small percentage of the volume students entered into Education at the college in Fall 2013” (personal communication, December 6, 2013). It is a known fact that school districts are consolidating schools resulting in a loss of teaching positions. Informal conversations with PE teachers in the area paint a bleak picture for the future of securing full time jobs teaching PE.

A trend such as this, decrease in enrollment into the PE degree programs, should be incentive to keep the recreation curriculum at ECC to help boost the number of students in the department.

Jobs in the field of PE are decreasing due to the layoff of teachers. PE majors usually find employment in the recreation field but may lack the knowledge of how to create and implement programs. It is all the more reason to reactivate the recreation curriculum and try to figure out how to create a certificate program. The knowledge and experience of participating in the process of clarifying, ideating, developing, and implementing programs is essential to the profession. The steps of clarifying, ideating, developing, and implementing are also the core concepts of creative problem solving.

Not to be overlooked is the influence creative studies could have on PE majors who are aspiring to be teachers. Studies in PE address the cognitive (thinking) and affective (feeling) skills which directly correlate with creative studies. Future teachers would greatly benefit being introduced to creative thinking, the Torrance Incubation Model (TIM) for teaching,¹ and all of the creative studies scholars.

¹ TIM is a teaching template for teachers to grasp students' attention, encouraging them to be motivated and eager to learn. The three stages of TIM – heightening anticipation, deepening expectations, and extending the learning are ways to involve students in a creative learning experience.

Health & Wellness

Health may be considered a #1 priority in our nation as well as in the world. In the United States we have witnessed an increase in obesity, heart disease and cancer to name a few, resulting in health being a major expense. Inactivity, processed foods and a lack of education about proper nutrition all contribute to the rising incidence of an unhealthy nation.

A deterrent to increasing the cost of health coverage is prevention and steps that can be taken to avoid illness. Prevention may prove to be the lowest cost and highest return on the dollar. The creation of recreation programs and wellness education programs combined together offer healthy opportunities.

Whether for infants, children, adults or elderly the development of programs requires knowledge, creativity, and training preferably by a professional trained in the business, which are recreation as well as creativity. Important to the profession of health and wellness is the knowledge of how to develop, implement, and evaluate programs. Directly related to this is leadership which connects to the two separate Minor degrees – Creative Studies and Creative Leadership offered at SUNY Buffalo State.

An A.S. degree in Health & Wellness at ECC is pending. It is in the process of being reviewed by New York State Department of Education. SUNY Buffalo State offers a four year degree in Health & Wellness which students graduating from ECC are already transferring into. Informing ECC students about the minors in Creative Studies and Creative Leadership would be beneficial to their future careers.²

²Just as a side note – health and wellness have always been under the auspice of recreation.

We now live in a paradigm of obesity and fitness. In the United States 30% of our children are obese yet there is an emphasis as a nation on wellness, fitness and creating a good quality of life (creativity and recreation). Video games, TV, and movies on demand are providing children the opportunity to develop unhealthy, sedentary life habits. Recreation pulls them away from technological gadgets and gets them moving. To encourage children to be more active outdoors, The National Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA) created a program called No Child Left Inside to address the issue of children becoming disassociated with the outdoors.

Some people seek and demand good health. Tied in with health is enjoyment – enjoying what one is doing and engaging in activities one finds enjoyable (recreation and leisure). It is human nature to seek out experiences that bring us pleasure. During our leisure time and for recreation, we seek out opportunities (creativity) that are fun and perhaps adventurous.

On the other hand there are a number of people who have no idea what constitutes good health and have developed sedentary habits. These are the people who require some level of professional intervention to educate and guide them (recreation, recreation therapy, and creativity).

Fitness trends are emerging as people seek out different and unique experiences. Triathlons and Tough Mudder are just a couple of programs that have been created and are gaining in popularity (recreation, leadership and creativity). Keeping up with the fitness/recreation obstacle course trends, Tough Mudder is as much about camaraderie and sense of achievement as fitness and “disparate for this kind of experience” (Woods, E. 2013).

There are several programs developed by the NRPA to address fitness. The American Specialty Health Incorporated (ASH) is a national health service organization that provides fitness and exercise programs, total population health programs, and specialty health care

management programs for health plans, insurance carriers and employer groups nationwide. More information can be found at www.ashcompanies.com. Silver & Fit instructor training certification is another fitness program. People with a B.S. degree in Recreation qualify for the certification as do those certified as a personal trainer, water aerobics or yoga instructor.

Next to obesity, stress and the negative effect stress has on one's health comes in at a close second. Children are now being prescribed *medication for stress*. In the catalogue *The Benefits of Parks and Recreation* distributed by the Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario, they state, "Stress is a serious issue in modern society – all of the popular 'prescriptions' or solutions highlight the role of leisure and relaxation" (p.19).

Where has childhood fun and play gone? Are we so caught up in testing, technology and reliance on medications that we have lost sight of our children? How can we bring play back into children's lives and back into society – not competition but good, healthy, noncompetitive play? Play is a central core to everything talked about in this paper – recreation, creativity, health & wellness, fitness and physical education. The health link associated with play and one's mental and physical health is well documented.

Section Summary

Recreation, Physical Education, Health & Wellness, and Creativity are inherently, closely connected in that they address physical movement, personal health and share a common philosophy of creating a quality of life. Creative Studies and leadership would be the frosting on the cake. They all support each other. There is a way of creating some sort of degree/certification that links the basic knowledge of recreation leadership, health and programming.

It is a skill to know how to develop and run an activity and I know these skills can be taught. I have taught the skills of developing and running activities for the past twelve years at ECC. The link between recreation and leadership exists. The combination of health, wellness, recreation, creativity, physical education, and leadership would be an incredible degree program. A person coming into the profession would most certainly be expected to be learned in the area of program planning and have experience in leading a group.

SECTION TWO: Recreation and Leisure

Arthur Graham, Professor in the Recreation & Leisure Department at SUNY Brockport summed up the reason to offer training in recreation and leisure, “Everyone recreates. Recreation is like food. Everyone has to have it” (A. Graham, personal conversation, November 8, 2013), thus creating the need to train students in the field of recreation.

On the Tompkins Cortland Community College's website, the first line of the description for the Recreation Leadership A.S. Degree, is “Recreation and leisure is America's number one economic activity.” The description goes on to read “Leisure time experiences are big business and organized recreation offerings are growing, creating demand for capable recreation leaders to develop and coordinate an array of recreational, cultural, and athletic activities for people to enjoy and improve their quality of life.”

Employment in the recreation profession could be as high as 75% of the total employment in the United States and perhaps the world combined. That is common knowledge in the recreation profession. The following are *some* of the recreation areas requiring trained recreation personnel: the arts – music, dance, drama, theater, art, literary activities, aquatics, sports, games, athletics, outdoor recreation, social recreation, family recreation, self-improvement, educational activities, health promotion, wellness, hobbies, coaching, counseling, travel and tourism with cruises included, big resorts, volunteer services, outreach programs, event planning, playground development and playground inspection, afterschool programs, child care, guided learning, sports administration, recreation departments – municipal/town/state/national, local/state/national parks, historic preservation, officiating, grounds maintenance, respite, environmental activities, arts & crafts, activity directors at supported living and nursing homes, day camp and overnight camps. Within each of these

categories are off-shoots of hundreds of thousands other job opportunities. Listing all recreation positions available can easily fill volumes. Only a small sample has been presented.

Recreation job opportunities can be categorized under four (4) general areas:

1. Public recreation: indoor or outdoor, sports and fitness programs, environmental as well as crafts, offered by nonprofit public agencies designed to meet the need of the communities – all backgrounds, ages, and interests. Museums, zoos, art galleries and tourism are but a small sample of the topics under public recreation.
2. Commercial recreation: these are programs offered for a cost to a consumer, set up to function at a profit, e.g. fitness centers, health clubs, indoor sports facilities for every sport, dance, yoga and aerobics studios.
3. Corporate recreation: these are activities and programs sponsored by agencies and companies for employee's benefit.
4. Therapeutic recreation: programs designed for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Listed are *some* of the professional positions that are available to someone with an educational recreation background:

Recreational Administration: Study of the administrative practices in recreation and parks, including legal aspects, principles of planning and operation of parks and recreation facilities, financial and business procedures, public relations, and personnel practices and evaluations.

Therapeutic Recreation: Recreation Therapists work with mentally, physically, emotionally, or socially disabled individuals requiring special attention. Through a

wide range of activities designed to enhance an independent lifestyle, recreation therapists strive to improve an individual's physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Therapeutic recreation can be used in both a clinical, such as a hospital, or non-clinical, such as an adult day care center, setting. Both have the objective of enhancing an individual's ability to participate in everyday life in a self-satisfying manner. Comprehensive therapeutic recreation services involve a continuum of care as varied as the interests and abilities of the people served, incorporating therapy, leisure education, and recreation participation in order to remediate or rehabilitate functional abilities and assist in diagnosis, acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes that facilitate an independent lifestyle, enhance health, personal growth, and development through intrinsically rewarding leisure behavior.

Leisure/Tourism/Commercial Recreation: Focuses on the establishment, organization, management, and marketing of various leisure, tourism, and commercial recreation services. Areas addressed include travel and tourism, entertainment services, leisure services in the outdoor environment, hospitality/food services, and retail outlets.

Recreation Leader: An understanding of the dynamics of group interaction and theories, principles, and practices in leadership. Applications, methods, and techniques are implemented for experiences working with individuals and in group settings.

Facility/Park Manager: Principles and procedures involved in planning for parks and recreation resources, land acquisition and utilization, maintenance of park and recreation areas, facilities, and equipment.

Outdoor Adventure Leadership: Recreation leadership in outdoor adventure activities.

Attention directed toward conceptual and technical aspects of adventure programs.

Aquatic Management: Area which trains individuals with knowledge, techniques, and skills required to operate an aquatic facility as a manager or director.

Aquatics: Area involves instructor level participation in swimming lessons at all levels and all aquatic skills, American Red Cross Water Safety Instructor (WSI), Lifeguard Training and Lifeguard Training Instructor, water aerobics, synchronized swimming, constantly changing fitness programs, i.e. spinning (cycling on stationary bicycles) in the water, possibly SCUBA leading to a position as Aquatic Director.

Cruise lines have been recruiting qualified candidates to work on the cruises as Aquatic and Fitness Instructors.

The growth of recreation and leisure in years to come is expected to grow as the need for recreation and leisure services increase due to the growing number of retiring Baby Boomers. The bubble is coming through the system. Nationally, every day, 10,000 people retire. (National Public Radio, n/d) It is known that recreation and leisure are the most sought after areas in retirement years.

There will always be a need for professionals trained in the field of recreation. It is usually the assumption of some unfamiliar to the field that anyone can do recreation. This may be true, but it is a question as to how effective an untrained person would perform in the workforce. Anyone can do anything they want. That doesn't mean they will be good at the task or even safe.

“There are now only two community colleges in the state of New York that offers straight recreation courses” (Arthur Graham, personal communication, October 1, 2013). The Health,

Physical and Recreation (HPER) Department at Erie Community College (ECC) was, as of recently, in that mix. ECC is the college where many of the recreation professionals in Western New York started and then continued on for a Bachelor degree in Recreation at a four-year college. ECC students most frequently transferred to SUNY Brockport and SUNY Cortland.

The Applied Associates in Science (A.A.S.) Recreation Leadership Degree program at ECC had been a respected degree program for about forty years. Over the years the Recreation Leadership degree had been under scrutiny due to the number of students enrolled in the program. The unfortunate fact is that many of the students intending on graduating with the Recreation Leadership degree were registered as General Studies majors. This was a contributing factor to the low count of recreation major students. These students were enrolled in the recreation classes but they were never considered by the college as a recreation major. There were some students who were in the system specifically as Recreation Leadership majors.

Due to the “low enrollment” and other issues, the A.A.S. Recreation Leadership degree was deactivated. It was always the intention to revamp and resurrect the recreation aspect of Health, Physical Education and Recreation Department. The A.A.S. Degree did need to be changed to allow for better articulation with four year college. For better articulation, an A.S. Degree would need to be created. Although this had been successfully accomplished in the past, it was not adopted at the time it was introduced.

But we are here now, faced with the annihilation of not only the recreation courses but even the word 'recreation' from the department name. This project lays out the reasons to keep the courses and suggestions as to how might we create certificate programs that complement the entire department or create an AS degree in Recreation.

I first developed a chart of what I thought might be a workable structure for the

department. A copy of the chart can be found in the Appendix. The chart maps what exists now at ECC and the proposed programs. Developing and offering Service Learning Certificates in areas of Community Recreation Leader, Therapeutic Specialist and Coaching could be housed under the PE degree. Connecting all students to the Creative Studies, if transferring to SUNY Buffalo State, was considered.

The coaching aspect was not pursued in this project. It would be a project of its own, with the possibility of creating a link with the coaching certification required by New York State. The New York State Education Department (NYSED) requirements for offering coaching courses can be found at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/pe/documents/coaching-guidelines.pdf>. Another coaching program connection is with the National Alliance for Youth Sports (NAYS) which is a required certification for employment by some of our local recreation departments.

The National Football League Player's Association offers four educational programs to enhance youth football for those who play, coach and support the game. Their information can be found at www.NFLHS.com.

The need to create an atmosphere of fun and fairness in youth sports is evident by the increased incidents of injuries and violence in games. This is an area that can be addressed through recreation, leadership, and creativity. Knowing how to be an effective leader can result in positive coaching in youth sports.

Leadership and recreation go hand-in-hand. To be successful in the recreation field one needs to have the skills to lead people regardless of the size of the group. There is a need for students to learn about leadership. There is a need for students to practice leadership. Being involved in clubs on the college campus provides students with the opportunity to learn how to plan an activity and gain experience in implementing an activity that was their idea from the

beginning. To experience that every activity will not run smooth, is just as important as feeling of an activity or event being successful. Failure is part of the learning curve. Practicing the act of planning and implementing events on campus under the direction of experienced faculty provides the student with the prime set-up to run an activity/event. The failure of an event is just as precious a learning experience as having an event run successfully. If the event does not go well, that can be one of the best teaching tools. There is no lecture or reading assignment that can provide the feeling of despair. It does not mean that the student has failed. It shows the student what they need to work on to make an event a success. It can only get better when they throw their heart and soul into it next time. It is like any other skill – it needs to be practiced.

Everyone seeks recreation and leisure. Someone needs to be trained to run facilities, programs, and activities and create programs. I know studying recreation curriculum benefited the students who came through our program. Courses introduce students to the numerous recreation professional opportunities through interview assignments, site visits and practicums.

Introduction to Recreation, RE 110, introduced students to all of the recreation and leisure job opportunities in WNY. West Side Rowing Club, museums and the Buffalo Zoo, Himalayan Institute, corrections and the world renowned Olmsted Park system in Buffalo, NY are but a few of the sites students were introduced. A connection was always made to the Wellness Institute of Greater Buffalo.

The Recreation Practicum RE 260 and 265 offered the students experience in a field of their interests. Many of the students were offered employment after the required practicum hours were satisfied. One student started a kid's sports business with the knowledge he gained in the Recreation Program Planning course.

Presently health and fitness programs are popular. Triathlons are becoming more popular

and are not targeted for the athletically elite. At triathlons you will see the elite athlete but you will also meet and see people who had never been physically competitive. At some triathlons there is a children's event. Someone has to know how to coordinate and run these events. The students at ECC have been involved in planning and running an indoor triathlon.

Keeping up with the trends is important for *all* of the students coming through our department. They will be the ones planning and running the events in the future. Providing the opportunity to experience *how* to do this is important to their future in the field: they will be expected to run events, maybe not a triathlon specifically but they will be expected to be able to run events and activities.

The experience of participating in the creative process of ideating, clarifying and experiencing an idea grow from a thought to an actual product (growing legs) is priceless. It is necessary to *feel* the process. It is important to *feel* success and failure. A lecture or an assigned reading cannot provide the feeling of those experiences that are successful or a failure. "Failure is a feeling that may act as a catalyst to improve" (SUNY Buffalo State, Creative Studies class notes, n.d.).

Under health promotion and wellness some of the program possibilities a college could target are: health promotion, exercise and wellness, preventive and rehabilitative cardiovascular health, stress management, fitness management and health education and counseling. These areas would require an expertise in that particular area. The Human Resources Department at ECC created Staff Play Days (recreation, creativity, health & wellness) in collaboration with Blue Cross Blue Shield Health Care provider. The possibilities of the number and kind of recreation/health & wellness programs that have been created and can be created are endless. Recreation, health & wellness, and fitness are integrated into one when one participates in

hiking, canoeing, kayaking, jogging, marathons, triathlons, walking, rock climbing, skiing, skating, etc.

Also under the recreation and therapeutic domain but also encompassing health and wellness is a new partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association and the Arthritis Foundation with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). There are two programs intended as a health and wellness intervention to improve quality of life for those living with arthritis. The two scientifically proven intervention programs are called the Walk with Ease and the Arthritis Foundation Exercise program. There is also a Recreational Trails Program (RTP). More information about their programs is available on the National Recreation and Park Association's website at www.nrpa.org.

The New York State Parks has created a recreation/leisure/health & wellness program that has run for the past few years on the first day of the year. The program, First Day Hike, was developed by the parks recreation professionals to encourage families and individuals to get outdoors on the first day of a new year and enjoy a hike through a New York State Park with a park guide. What a great way to a healthy start of a new year! As Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario (PRFO), Canada states in their catalogue, "Pay now or pay more later! Investment [both money and time] in recreation as a preventive health service makes sense" (1992, p. 14).

There are an incredible amount of ideas for recreation programs that are available and others that could be developed. Due to baby boomers retiring, the paradigm has shifted. The amount of recreation and leisure services workers may grow in the future due to the number of people retiring on a daily basis. John Crompton, in the December issue of NRPA's *Park & Recreation* magazine speaks to this by saying, "The future viability of agencies is likely to be

influenced by their ability to respond to change.” I feel strongly that a college needs to heed the responsibility to change with society. Crompton continues, “...such as the emerging trend in which seniors are moving from being a relatively small fringe group to being a large central focus of their services” (2013, p.37).

The growth of retirees is obvious and Crompton sites five evolving changes “...in the status of seniors that suggests recreation and parks departments (and colleges) should move seniors to the center of their service efforts” (p.38). The five evolving changes Crompton lists are: “extension of active retirement time, enhanced discretionary income, contributions to economic development, enhanced leisure literacy and disproportionate political influence” (p.38).

The growth of recreation as well as therapeutic recreation in years to come will happen as the need for recreation & leisure services will be an expectation of retirees. The growing number of baby boomers will bring a demand for recreation and leisure services. As quoted earlier, “nationally, everyday 10,000 people retire” (NPR, n.d.). It is common knowledge written in many articles, that in the year 2020 the majority of the population will be 65 and older. It is known that leisure and recreation are important factors in retirement years. In an article in *Time* magazine, author Zakaria states “In 2030, 1 in 5 Americans will be over 65”. In reference to the workforce, Zakaria writes “By 2025, there will be just over two workers per retiree” (2012, p. 22).

What can we create at ECC that could provide a student with the requirements to work in the field? There is a professional certification for activity leaders through the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA). Wouldn't it be great if we could create curriculum that led to certification in this field? This also falls under the therapeutic domain.

Not only will programs and activities be sought out by retirees but it may be the retirees coming back to college to gain knowledge and experience to work the recreation and leisure jobs. The generation that is now retiring and will be up for retirement over the next twenty plus years have been involved in recreation and leisure since they were young. Crompton states in his article about seniors, “Older seniors who reached their milestone before the 1960’s generally have limited leisure skills and interests.” Now, as Crompton explains, “The level of leisure literacy among baby boomers is much higher, since they were exposed to many more leisure opportunities in their youth” (2013, p.40). Most have developed some passion for sports, the great outdoors or some form of recreation and leisure and they may seek a situation after retiring from their profession where they can combine that passion with a job. There may be a number of people looking for a second career in an area of which they have a vested interest. Older people are coming back into the work force seeking a second career after retiring or having been laid off from the work force.

As America’s senior population grows so will the need for recreation and leisure services and programs. As the need for services grow, so too will the need for trained professionals grow. Hopefully the HPER Department at ECC can resurrect the recreation portion of the department to address this issue.

The younger generation is in need of recreation and leisure programming between the hours of 3:00 and 6:00 PM. This is the time when children and teenagers are most prone to get into trouble because they are unsupervised. It is the time between the end of the school day and when parents arrive home. Developing programs at the schools has been successful in the past. Many schools have cut the after school programs due to budget cuts.

Students in recreation studies prepare for employment to work in already existing

programs with youth as well as develop new programs. How to collaborate with existing agencies to create programs is part of the curriculum. A couple of the many examples of collaboration with agencies are the Sierra Club Inner City Outings (ICO) and the New York State Parks Nature Interpretive program.

The Sierra Club ICO is a community outreach program that involves low income, inner city youth and physically disabled individuals in day hikes, backpacking, bicycling, canoeing, and other outdoor activities. The program also teaches the importance of preserving wild places. More information about the Sierra Club ICO program can be found at <http://sierraclub.org/outings/ico>.

Another youth program that students could be involved in developing through recreation studies is the SUNY Youth Sports Institute. The SUNY Sports Institute teams up with community colleges to provide a summer sports camp for children age 6 to 18 and offers a positive sports environment.

There is much work yet to be done to create recreation programs. College curriculum that educates students how to create recreation programs is beneficial to our communities.

It was my intention at the beginning of this project to do a Creative Problem Solving (CPS) session with the HPER department at ECC. This did not occur within the time frame necessary to be included in this report. It would be nice in the future to schedule a CPS session with the Health, Physical Education and Recreation Department. It would be interesting to have everyone's input into creating a direction for the department. This is the time for the department to take a good look at what is going on in society and make a plan to change the curriculum to fit the future.

SECTION THREE: Creative Studies

Creativity is an integral part of our everyday lives. From the moment we wake to the moment we put our heads on our pillow at the end of the day we create a day for ourselves. Some days are productive. Some days are in need of direction to be productive. Amabile, a well-known scholar in the profession of creativity defines creativity this way, “Creativity is the product of novel and appropriate solutions to open-ended problems in any domain of human activity” (Amabile, n.d.).

Teaching at a community college I have been witness to the need to bring creativity to the classroom. The inability for students to think on their own became obvious the day I requested the students to journal their thoughts and feelings. I gave journaling as an assignment this past semester. I had experienced the power of being allotted ten minutes at the end of a Creative Studies graduate class to reflect on the days' lessons. I thought I would share this experience with my students.

They stared at me like a deer in headlights and did not move. I had to instruct them step-by-step to take out a piece of paper, a pen and write down their thoughts as to what they had absorbed in the past fifty minutes which is the length of the class. I extended the invitation to include the past 24 hours, a week or even the semester. Nothing but blank stares from the students was the response. I hypothesized that they were conditioned to write down only what was provided to them on a power point presentation. To extend my hypothesis I pulled out the smart cart (computer and projector on a portable cart) and proceeded to set it up. The students' attention was directed to the smart cart and the screen in front of the room. They sat poised and ready to write whatever appeared up on the screen.

The last part of the class was spent discussing what had just happened in regard to the

request for them to write their own words versus their reliance on someone else providing the words. They were conditioned to write down what was provided to them and not conditioned to write their own thoughts. Discussion with the students provided an explanation as to why they could not write any freelance material about themselves – they had never been asked to do it, no one had ever encouraged them to write down their thoughts. Basically, they did not know how to express themselves in their own words.

Most of the college courses are taught using power point as the main source of relaying course information. Put the power point up, students copy down the information (usually in a poorly lit room so the power point is easier to read), students study the information for a test and at some point during the semester the students are expected to regurgitate the information out into the test and thus receive a grade which will determine how much information they were able to retain and spit back out, or not. Perhaps instead of finding fault and grading, professors could find strength and reward students for their creativity. There seems to be a lack of encouraging creativity in the classroom.

Bringing Creative Studies to the college will introduce students to creative thinking. As per the description on the ICSC website, the core competencies in Creative Studies include:

- Expertise in facilitating problem-solving teams
- Enhanced ability to manage diverse groups
- Ability to develop, implement, and support an environment that nurtures creative thinking
- Learn a practical skill set for individual and group problem solving
- Ability to use problem solving tools to define complex problems, to generate creative solutions, and to transform solutions into action

- Learn theories and models for managing and coping with change in a complex world
- Increased effectiveness in decision making
- Sound theoretical base for understanding creativity
- Learn strategies to nurture the creative talent of others
- Enhanced leadership capabilities

ICSC (n.d.).

Sid Parnes provides great insight as to a reason to emphasize creative learning. “The traditional emphasis for the curriculum has been the mere *acquisition* of knowledge by focusing on memorization and recall.” To further his point he continues “creative learning stresses the importance of using knowledge by focusing on analysis and synthesis” (Parnes, p.426).

Covington (1967) researched the effectiveness of creative learning and provided support for it being a central concern for education. He concluded “The nurturing of the cognitive skills of productive thinking should assume a central place in the curriculum, not a secondary or incidental one.” He goes on to say “Training of these skills should not be subordinated to the overriding demands of subject matter acquisition, as at present, but should be dealt with directly.” What Covington saw as a need is “a curriculum which nurtures the process of productive thinking in its own right and yet in such a manner as to be fully coordinated with the other more traditional content-centered curricula” (Parnes, p.425).

In the *Source Book for Creative Problem Solving* Arthur Combs (1981) wrote, “An educational system that offers the opportunity to study creative problem solving may be providing students an education that prepares them for the work force.” Combs, continues with

insight to the future by saying, “Tomorrow's citizens must be effective problem-solvers, persons able to make good choices, to create solutions on the spot. That is precisely what intelligence is all about” (Parnes, p.426).

A good description of what creative learning may entail can be found in the following Table that is Ruth Richards' adaptation of Dr. Woldt's “Seven Suggestions for Everyday Creative Learning”. An entire description of each of the seven suggestions can be found in the Gestalt Review, 13(2):153-162, 2009 in the article written by Ruth Richards “Commentary II: Everyday Creativity and Gestalt Learning: Ansel Woldt's Message in the terms of 7 Suggestions for Creative Education.

Table 1
Seven Suggestions for Creative Learning

We need greater valuing and conscious development of our:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) OUTER SPACE | Creating a rich and safe environment, accepting of divergence, errors, novelty, surprise; making room for innovation |
| 2) INNER SPACE | Valuing our fullest human experienced and ways of knowing, including unconscious modes and the curious revelations they may force upon us, even when we don't want them. |
| 3) OUTER BRAVERY | Awareness of pressures and willingness to address social constraints and obstacles, while able to follow what is creatively necessary to produce and share one's creative activity. |
| 4) INNER BRAVERY | Risking new knowing and self-awareness, taking creative risks, conscious of inner pressures and fears, and doing what's needed even when it is uncomfortable. |

**5) VALUING OUR
CREATIVE SELVES**

Valuing our creativity, and not devaluing creative qualities in self and others, even when this is uncomfortable, as with others' more difficult views and behaviors, and conflicting perspectives.

**6) RELATING
CREATIVELY**

Practicing and valuing interpersonal creativity beginning with authentic presence, and valuing the revelations and mutual growth that can result.

7) KNOWING THE JOY

Embracing the glowing and uplifting moments that can result from positive use of creative talents, e.g., in personal growth or social action.

(Richards, 2009, p.155)

Ruth Richards is one of the world's leaders in the study of creativity. It would be great to introduce college students to Richards' world of empathy and her simple messages for a peaceful life. Simple messages of being aware of the present, notice the miracles around you, notice what is in front of you and stop, look and breathe I can see as very beneficial studies for college students. On a daily basis, I see the lack of confidence and confusion in some students. Simple words of kindness and sense of self can lead to confidence.

Ruth Richards' empathy and peaceful philosophy directly correlates with the recreation leisure pursuit of retreats. Once again, there is a correlation among recreation, creativity, and health and wellness. Retreats are increasing in popularity as a place for people to seek respite and "to learn how to be present with what is here and now, and put your whole self into the moment" (Dellasanta-Swam, 2013, p.19). Many retreats around the world have become so popular there is a waiting list that can be as long as six months.

My personal knowledge of the benefits of Creative Studies has developed over the years through my involvement in the Creative Studies Master of Science program at SUNY Buffalo State. I have personally experienced the change in my outlook in life to be positive. I have

changed my way of solving problems to a Four Sight structure which is to clarify, ideate, develop and implement.

Supportive literature is available. The written works of Torrence, Parnes, Noller, Puccio and other scholars provide reams of supportive evidence for creative problem solving and creative thinking. This information will be used as supportive information to the benefits of Creative Studies if it becomes necessary to qualify the benefits of bringing Creative Studies to ECC. Basic courses in Creative Studies would concentrate on the Person and Process.

The work for this project is not finding supportive material to substantiate the “why” Creative Studies should be integrated into ECC. It is the ‘how to’ that is the project. I know where to find the supportive material. I need to figure out the process of bringing a course that is not yet being offered into the college curriculum. The guidance and suggestions by Dr. Gerard Puccio and Michael Fox have been helpful in getting started.

I have not found anyone, yet, who has brought Creative Studies to a community college in New York State. ECC could be the first to offer Creative Studies curriculum. The important connection to establishing this curriculum is that the International Center for Studies in Creativity (ICSC) known internationally as the hub of creativity is literally just down the street from any one of ECC’s three campuses.

In my effort to figure out H2 get CS into ECC, it was a meeting on October 1, 2013 with advisor Michael Fox, which changed the course of my direction. I had come into this project with the intention of linking ECC students to CS at SUNY Buffalo State. My focus was on connecting ECC students transferring to Buffalo State with the Creative Studies Minor and/or the Creative Leadership Minor at SUNY Buffalo State. Fox's suggestion was to offer Creative Studies at ECC. This became a completely different focus and direction. It required exploring the

different options of how to bring Creative Studies into the curriculum at ECC.

The result of a conversation with Mark Hoerber, Assistant Academic Dean at ECC led to the idea of developing CS as a cross registration. An ECC student, carrying a 12 credit load could take the CS course for free at SUNY Buffalo State and the credits would transfer. Anyone outside of the college could enroll in the SUNY Buffalo State course that is being offered.

SECTION FOUR: Summary and Recommendations

Summary

I end this project with many questions and many uncertainties. I also end this project with much anticipation and hope for programs that can be developed. It has been an interesting journey. Along the way I have picked up new information, seen old friends from past jobs, visited with and have spoken with people I normally may have not had the opportunity to speak with. I have enjoyed this creative venture. CPS has been by my side, or rather inside my right brain, left brain, whole brain the entire time.

It is quite evident there is a strong correlation with all of the areas discussed – recreation, creativity, health & wellness, fitness, and physical education. Interwoven within all are play and a link to a culture of nurturing the mind, body, and spirit.

For all of the work and exploring that may have been accomplished for this project, it is all for naught if there is no interest in pursuing the suggested course curriculum. Identifying the assistors and resistors and working with either party is the key to successfully creating college courses. If the interest is there, it will be a concerted effort by more than one person to plan, develop, and implement college courses.

It is in the interest of our students' future we create curriculum which empowers students with confidence and knowledge to carry on in the profession of their choice.

There are a number of ways a college course may be created. Regardless if it is a course, certificate program, or a degree that is created, due to the amount of work that is required, faculty should be compensated.

Recreation and Leisure

I wish many things but most of all I wish that the suggestions I have put forth in this paper may be taken to heart. The future of recreation is vibrant. I wouldn't want to miss the bus of opportunity. There are so many programs to which we can connect students; there are so many opportunities we can offer at the college level to prepare students for the job market. Recreation and Leisure will always be a main benefit personally, socially, economically, and a benefit to the environment.

The connection between recreation, health and wellness, creativity and physical education is strong. Arthur Graham in a personal interview stated “the health and wellness trend is just another way of rewording recreation” (personal communication, October 1, 2013).

The most pressing issue is the acceptance of creating any program, curriculum or degree.

The task at hand commands attention to the press, the CPS reference to the environment. There are many factors to take into account including the protocol within the college.

A suggestion would be for the HPER Department to do a CPS session, set priorities and establish short term, mid-term, and long-term goals.

Therapeutics

There is a golden opportunity for job readiness training to be developed in collaboration with ECC, agencies in WNY who service individuals with developmental disabilities and the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD).

I am not sure of my future involvement in the development and implementation of training if this idea were to come to fruition. One of the first questions to be answered is what department this would fall under.

Wherever this project may fit, this is a project all its own.

Creative Studies

I would love to bring creative studies to Erie Community College. The study of creativity and the ability to apply creative problem solving goes across the borders of all college curriculums. Students enrolled in all areas of study could benefit from the ability to adopt new ways of thinking – visionary thinking. Students doubting their abilities and lacking direction would be provided building blocks for self-esteem, healthy relationships, and empathy. They will learn how to make a difference in the world. They will be given the opportunity to use their imagination. Some famous quotes by Albert Einstein in regards to imagination are “Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited.” and “Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will get you everywhere.”

A great addition for Physical Education degree would be an Introduction to Creative Studies course for students who have their sights on being Physical Education teachers. The teaching models in Creative Studies would provide them exceptional knowledge about teaching techniques such as the Torrence Incubation Model.

Determining which department Creative Studies best fits will require more exploration. A meeting with the Chairperson of Human Services, Bruce Kennedy, did not result in an answer as to whether the Creative Studies would fit in the Human Services department.

CS courses that would be developed for ECC would be the entry level courses concentrating on the Person and Process of the Creative Problem Solving model.

Proposed courses:

ECC

SUNY Buffalo State equivalent

- Introduction to Creative Studies CRS 205
 - Introduction to the 4 P's of Creative Studies:
Person, Process, Product, Press

- The Process CRS 302
 - Introduction to the Creative Process tools
 - How to use the tools.
 - Concentration on each individual student
 - How to do the Creative Problem Solving process

- Facilitation of Creative Problem Solving (CPS) CRS 304
 - Knowledge base to application
 - Group work. Meta-level thinking

Credits from these courses would transfer to SUNY Buffalo State setting a student up for direct transfer into the Minor in Creative Studies.

Recommendations and Options for Curriculum Development

Many ideas surfaced with some details included in this write up. This is by no means a complete and accurate description on what is available and how to do it. These are merely suggestions, and an attempt at explaining what might be needed.

Further work is needed. Creating curriculum is not my forte – creating recreation programs is.

Definite results did not happen within the time frame of this project. There are definitely opportunities for developing college courses. Some of the options for creating college curriculum are as follows:

1. A new degree
2. New courses/revamp existing recreation courses
3. Create Experimental Courses at ECC
4. Certificate Programs – credit and non-credit
5. Workforce Development at ECC
6. Pathways to Success at ECC
7. BOCES
8. Cross Registration
9. Corporate Training – non credit
10. Labor Management Health Fund
11. Personal Fitness Prescription – one (1) credit

Description of Curriculum Development Options

There are a number of ways a college course may be introduced to a college. Options listed are followed by the steps needed to be completed in order to be offered at the college.

This list is only suggestions, not decisions. I have attempted to explain the option. This information may be in need of some corrections. This is only the beginning.

1. Create a new degree. Create an AS degree in Recreation

Two (2) SUNY colleges need to be identified that will transfer our course

Make a matrix that will complement their curriculums

Make degree compliant with the new General Education requirements

and the seamless transfer initiative

SUNY requires 7 General Ed areas and 60-64 credits

Need to look into the Seamless Transfer:

http://www.suny.edu/provost/academic_affairs/SeamlessTransferFAQ.cfm

2. Create new courses/revamp existing recreation courses

This requires developing the course description, course outline, check out course outcomes, check student Learning Outcomes (LO's), mapping course outcomes to LO's, map program competencies to LO's and map all to course assessment. Any new course would need to fit into a degree matrix and transfer to a 4 year college.

A. Recreation:

*Introduction to Recreation/Introduction to Community Resources

*Recreation Program Planning

*Orientation to Disabilities

B. Creative Studies: (CS)

CS courses that would be developed for ECC would be the entry level courses concentrating on the Person and Process of the Creative Problem Solving model.

<u>ECC</u>	<u>SUNY Buffalo State equivalent</u>
○ Introduction to Creative Studies	CRS 205
Introduction to the 4 P's of Creative Studies: Person, Process, Product, Press	
○ The Process	CRS 302
Introduction to the Creative Process tools How to use the tools. Concentration on each individual student How to do the Creative Problem Solving process	
○ Facilitation of Creative Problem Solving (CPS)	CRS 304
Knowledge base to application Group work. Meta-level thinking	

Credits from these courses would transfer to SUNY Buffalo State setting a student up for direct transfer into the Minor in Creative Studies.

C. Therapeutics

Collaborate with nonprofit agencies who service developmentally disabled and OPWDD for universal training for Direct Service Professionals.

3. Experimental Course – Recreation, Creative Studies and possibly Therapeutics

Prepare a Course Outline Proposal; secure the approval of the department chair/head in writing; Secure the approval of the Assistant Academic Dean in writing; Complete a Datatel Course Build form. Before experimental courses can be offered by academic departments they must be presented to the CWCC for approval.

The proposal will be placed on the CWCC agenda for presentation by the faculty who authored the course proposal. On the day that the presentation is to be made it is expected that the Department Chairperson and the Assistant Academic Dean who gave their approval would be present at the CWCC meeting.

Experimental courses may only be offered for two semesters. Prior to the course being offered a third time, it must be presented to the CWCC for approval as a permanent course offering. Procedures for this stage are outlined in the Curriculum Handbook and are more extensive than the approval process for an Experimental Course. Assistance can also be provided by the Offices of the Assistant Academic Deans and Associate Vice Presidents.

Information retrieved from the ECC website.

4. Certificate Programs – credit and noncredit

Internal certificate vs SUNY

Internal certificate would be to create a training that results in an internal certificate awarded by the department. The course information would introduce

students to the basics of recreation and leisure, health & wellness, physical education and fitness. The course would complement existing degrees and encourage students to continue on in their studies after completing the certificate program.

After one (1) semester they are qualified to work at a beginning level job.

Certain jobs may be set up that after 4 or 5 classes they are qualified to work.

A work study program could be set up in any of the areas described in this section.

Certificate program recognized by SUNY: needs to be researched

“It’s just as much work as writing a new degree,” was Bruce Kennedy’s personal opinion after he had developed a certificate program for Human Services at ECC. (personal communication, October 2013).

A. Recreation Leadership/Community Recreation Leader

- Develop to transfer to 4 year college/university
- This could be an internal certificate specific to the department vs SUNY
- Program could be set up for students to receive a diploma after one semester of completion and a certificate received after 2 semesters

Suggested courses:

*Introduction to Recreation/Introduction to Community Resources

Areas to consider including in curriculum:

Tourism

Adventure

Therapeutics

Seniors

Aquatics & Aquatic profession to include possible
certifications for fitness programs; American Red Cross;

Rehab; Arthritis Foundation; Silver Sneakers

*Recreation Program Planning

*Orientation to Disabilities

Other areas to be considered for inclusion: leadership, play, child care, and directing activities.

If it did not work out for an AS Recreation degree, it would be nice if we created a certificate program that worked off of the PE degree that focused on activities and how to create programs. A certificate option would benefit the students who change their minds once they were in the PE program. Instead of dropping out of the PE degree program, it could act as retention, offering them education and experience in the area of recreation. The student could still graduate with a PE degree but have a concentration in a direction other than teaching. It would be something to keep them in the field, be involved in activities and sports and possibly work in the recreation departments, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA, camps and the like.

B. Creative Studies – direct transfer to SUNY Buffalo State

C. Therapeutics

Collaborate with nonprofit agencies who service developmentally disabled

and OPWDD for universal training for Direct Service Professionals.

5. Workforce Development – would be noncredit; needs to be checked into

6. Pathways to Success – investigation in progress.

This information was pulled from an information sheet about the program:

The mission of the Pathways to Success Department is to increase the successful movement of students from basic educational programs to college completion through partnerships between ECC, Buffalo Public Schools Adult Education Division, Erie 1 BOCES, Kenmore-Tonawanda School District, Maryvale Community Education and Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES. These partnerships include a common design of student intake, seamless education services and timely connections between the participating institutions. The Pathways to Success program is for someone at least 17 years of age who is not eligible to be enrolled in high school and wishes to enroll at ECC.

7. BOCES – investigation in progress

8. Cross Registration

A student may register for a course at another college if:

1. They are a full time student at the home college
2. They register until late registration or drop/add
3. The class has to be open. No force registering unless they know the faculty member.

Websites for Cross Registration information:

ECC

<http://www.ecc.edu/academics/specialprograms/crossregistration.aspx>

SUNY Buffalo State

<http://www.buffalostate.edu/dailybulletin/undergraduate-cross-registration-update-new-suny-ug-cross-registration-program>

The rules for colleges is on this site:

<http://www.daemen.edu/OFFICES/REGISTRAR/CROSSREGISTRATION/CALENDAR/Pages/default.aspx>

9. Corporate Training – non credit – investigation in progress

10. Labor Management Health Fund – provide courses for everyone in the country.

Investigation in progress. It may need to be established first if there is an interest.

This may be a niche to bring in FTE's with the possibility of Blue Cross Blue Shield Health Care Provider paying part of the tuition.

11. Personal Fitness Prescription – one (1) credit

Investigation in progress. Possibility of developing fitness plans for students, faculty, and staff. Would be a great practicum for students to be involved in developing the fitness prescriptions.

Closing Statement

All or any of these suggestions cannot happen overnight just because I would like for it to happen. It will take time and collaboration and perhaps *years* for anything to come to fruition. The exploration part of this project was a phenomenal journey, opening-up my world to the possibilities of courses and degrees that could be created. The time frame that is required to create courses and degrees far out distances the time allotted within a semester.

The direct correlation between recreation and leisure, health and wellness, fitness, physical education and creativity is *so* closely knit. Recreation, being the second oldest profession in history, is comprised of all these areas. Recreation covers an *incredible* vast area of employment opportunities. I barely touched on the total number of job possibilities in recreation. It would be great if we were to develop a curriculum that addresses the recreation profession – combined with Creative Studies!

It is in the interest of a college to provide up to date training in fields that are in need of trained personnel. Our society is changing in many ways. “Embracing the changing demographics and trends now is the best way to provide for community needs” (Crompton, 2013, p.41). Higher education provides for community needs by training the workforce. Creating certificates and degrees that best correlate with the needs of society and employers is something that ECC is able to do.

It may also be in the best interest of the Health, Physical Education and Recreation Department to make a grand plan in order to survive the changes that are happening in society and all of the different and varied professions. What surprised me was discovering in the course

of my research, how much our department was on target with the trends and needs of our society. Hopefully we can get back on track.

This exploration during the Final Project for CRS 690 is only the beginning. There are so many things that can and will hopefully be created. So many things to create, so little time.

Acronym Guide

ASH	American Specialty Health Incorporated
ATRA	American Therapeutic Recreation Association
CPS	Creative Problem Solving
CDC	Center for Disease Control
CS	Creative Studies
DD	Developmentally Disabled
DSP	Direct Service Professional
ECC	Erie Community College in Western New York
HPER	Health, Physical Education and Recreation
ICO	Inner City Outings – Sierra Club
ICSC	International Recreation & Parks Association
NPR	National Public Radio (88.7 FM in Western New York)
OPWDD	NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities
PRFO	Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario, Canada
RCWT	Regional Centers for Workforce Transformation
RTP	Recreational Trails Program
SED	NY State Education Department
TIM	Torrence Incubation Model

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Appendix

<u>Erie Community College</u>	<u>SUNY Buffalo State College</u>
<u>Two-year degree</u>	<u>Four-year degree</u>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">Health & Wellness</div>	-----Health & Wellness
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">Phys Ed</div>	
<u>Certificate Programs (proposed)</u>	
1. Community Recreation Specialist-----	-----Multidisciplinary
2. Therapeutic Training-----	-----Multidisciplinary
3. Coaching-----	-----Coaching
4. Creative Studies-----	-----Creative Studies
5. Creative Leadership-----	-----Creative Leadership
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