Online Activity Director Program and MEPAP Classes at Ridgewater College

Welcome to the World of Online Learning!

This getting started section will provide tips and suggestions on things you need to know about online learning and how to be successful in online classes. First time taking an online class? It will be important for you to read the information in this section very carefully and get any questions you might have answered before jumping in.

Online Activity Director Associates Degree and Certificate

Ridgewater College offers a 60 credits Activity Director Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree and a 24 credit Activity Director certificate. Both options are fully online with the MEPAP 1 and 2 as a pathway and starting point. Prior learning and work experience may apply- contact the instructor for details.

Necessary Skills and Requirements for Online Learning

You should have a good foundation of basic time management and computer skills in order to be successful in an online course.

- Regular Internet accessibility. Students must have regular access to a dependable computer and internet. High-speed internet connection is required. Some personal and facility computers have security or firewall applications. You may need to disable these applications to access your course materials, videos and other resources.
- Basic computer knowledge and skills along with the ability to perform the following computer functions:
    - Keyboarding, using a mouse
    - MS Word processing; setting up, managing, and locating saved files and documents
    - Save and open documents
    - Print documents
    - Send emails with attachments
    - Conduct internet searches for information
- Good time management skills
- Able to structure time to complete assignments and projects online and off
- All students automatically receive a Ridgewater College email account. This email is the official form of email communication between the college, instructor and student. It is the student's responsibility to check this email account regularly for college and class related information. Access to your college email can be done on the college's website.
- Ability to seek and explore resources, work independently and stay on task
- Students have access to MS Office 365 at no charge. Assignments need to be submitted in a .docx or .rtf format
- A computer camera and mic will be needed to participate in virtual web conferencing.

Managing Your Time with Online Classes

When taking an online course, you must plan and organize your time and tasks very carefully. **The online program and classes are not independent study. There are weekly due dates and timelines to be met**.

Online classes are not easier than traditional on campus classes. They may actually take more of your time as you are required read course materials online, complete written assignments, participate in discussion topics, conduct web searches, etc. You must take the initiative in planning for your course work. Students are often

working full time and need to organize course work studies around job and family obligations. This makes it even more important for you to set up a schedule. Online courses require you to read and comprehend assignments with little assistance. Therefore, if you do need assistance, make sure you are asking for it with enough advance time to get a response from the instructor before the assignment is due. It is always in your best interest to NOT leave assignments until the last minute.

> *Some of the classes have a weekly schedule, format, and due dates that is rigorous and requires significant time and attention during the semester for successful completion. The classes are not independent study.*

COURSE DELIVERY & DESIGN

How are the online classes set up and taught?
Delivery format for all courses is based on weekly modules that run Monday morning through the following Monday evening. All class activities, discussion, assignments, etc. will be due by Monday of the next week by 11:30 pm, unless indicated or noted otherwise. Larger projects will have more time to complete.

Each module will focus on a particular topic(s) that we will cover for the week. Along with the content in the modules, there is reading from the textbooks, supplemental reading material provided in Desire2Learn (D2L) and internet resources to visit.

> *You **are not** required to be online at a given time each week for class. Webinar and Zoom meetings are scheduled throughout the semester and are optional. They are recorded and available for later viewing.*

Assignments and Projects
There will be assignments for each module or unit. These assignments will require a variety of different methods of work such as interviews, community research, writing papers and web searches. All assignments are required to be submitted via the Assignment Folders in D2L.

Class Participation/Discussion
Your success in the online class is based on active, continued class participation. You need to read assigned chapters, articles, content pages and other relevant information in order to be prepared for the discussion of the topic. Students will be required to interact throughout the semester using the discussion room, chat rooms and email for peer and instructor communication.

Quizzes
Quizzes given in the program are simply another method of assessment of the student. Quizzes are done online, are timed and will have a designated time in which they will be available to the student.

Grading
Grading rubric and assessment will vary depending on individual classes and its content and assignments. Many larger assignments have a rubric that is used for grading and student self-assessment.

Student Responsibilities
Students are expected to review weekly module content and do the required readings and work for each class according to the class schedule and actively participate in online discussion topics. It is the student's responsibility to ensure access to a dependable computer and internet, log in regularly to class, maintain a consistent study schedule, is aware of due dates, and be motivated to work independently.

Communication with the Instructor
One of the most important factors in being successful in online learning is staying in touch with your instructor. If you are having problems or do not understand the requirements of an assignment, you need to let your instructor know immediately.

Desire2Learn (D2L) Brightspace

Desire2Learn (D2L) Brightspace is the learning management system used by Ridgewater College to deliver classes and information online. You will be able to access this information at anytime, anywhere, as long as you have connection to the internet and a web browser. D2L accessibility information: https://www.d2l.com/accessibility/

Practicum/Internship

What is an Internship?

An internship or on-the-job training is an opportunity where students practice skills learned in the classroom. The internship requirement of the Activity Program is designed to give the student who is not working in an elderly activity setting a hands-on experience in an activity department and program. It is an opportunity for the student to apply the information, resources, ideas, and skills learned in the classroom. During the hands-on experience, the internship site becomes the classroom where further learning and practical experience is obtained. The student and program instructor/advisor will work together to determine an internship site appropriate for a quality learning experience. A training plan will be designed to outline the tasks and duties to be completed by the student during the internship under the supervision of a qualified activity professional.

A student who <u>currently works</u> in an elderly activity or recreation setting will complete the required internship credits through a series of projects and assignments and determined between the student, program advisor and site supervisor. These projects and assignments are designed to support, build, evaluate, and assess the activity program, department and services. In order to complete required internship assignments and projects, students may need to access facility records, documentation, attend care conferences, and other forms of information.

It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements and secure permission with the appropriate supervisor to complete all assignments required for practicum/internship.

Checklist for Online Preparation

Online classes are part of the Activity Director program. Here are some basic questions and skills necessary for taking online classes.

Hardware and Software Availability
- √ Do you have access to a computer that is no more than 3 years old? Do you have access to the Internet on a regular basis?
- √ Do you have the latest version of a web browser such as Fire Fox, Safari, or Chrome? (recommended browsers)
- √ Are you able to disable firewalls or security blockers if working at your place of employment?
- √ Do you have a word processing program that has spell checker and can save documents in a *.pdf*, *.docx*, or *.rtf* format?

Comfort Level with Computers
- √ Can you run the programs you need to use on a computer such as word processer, email and web browser programs?
- √ Can you create, save, and manage (copy/move/delete/rename) files on your computer?

Internet Skills
- √ Can you access e-mail and the Internet daily?
- √ Do you know how to send and receive email messages?
- √ Do you know how to attach a file to an email message?
- √ Do you know how receive a file attachment from an incoming email message?
- √ Do you know how to paste text from a word processor into an email message?
- √ Do you know how to locate websites?

Learning Style Considerations
- √ Do you feel that high quality learning can take place without having face to face interaction?
- √ Do you stay on task without direct supervision? Self-motivated? Self-disciplined?
- √ Can you prioritize your workload, or do you procrastinate?
- √ Can you learn from reading source material and completing activities?
- √ Do you usually understand written instructions?
- √ Are you good at assessing and monitoring your own progress?
- √ Can you solve problems and work through difficulties independently?
- √ Are you planning to allocate as much time in your schedule for an online class as you would for a face-to-face class?
- √ Will you have time every week (4-6 hrs) to work on assignments and participate in the learning process?
- √ Do you have support and understanding from family, friends, and coworkers while you are taking an online class?

Communication Skills
- √ Are you able to communicate your thoughts and ideas in written format?
- √ Are you able to communicate using proper grammar, spelling, and sentence structure?
- √ Do you know how to use spell check?
- √ Do you enjoy reading?
- √ Do you see the value of introducing critical thinking into the learning process?

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) About Online Classes

Can I start classes at any time during the semester?

Each class in the Activity program is 16 weeks long. Class start dates are August (fall semester) January (spring semester).

Do I have to be online at a certain time each week?

No. Because students in the class are from different geographic locations, it becomes a challenge to accommodate time zones. Class participation is done in the Discussions room and allows students to "post" comments and replies at any time. Live webinar sessions are scheduled throughout the semester using Zoom. The sessions are not required to attend and are recorded.

How do I submit assignments? Can I email them to the instructor?

Assignments are required to be submitted in the Assignment folders and will not be accepted by email.

How much time will I be required to put in a week for the online class?

You can expect to spend a minimum of five to ten hours a week completing assignments, doing the required reading, participating in discussion topics, and doing web searches. Everyone has a different learning rate and style. Your computer skills will also determine how much time you will need.

What kind of programs do I need on my computer?

- Microsoft Office is the preferred word processing program. Assignments are required to be submitted in a .docx or .rtf format. Some of the documents provided in the class are .pdf format. You may need to download a free Adobe Reader plug-in to view those documents. MS Office is available to students for free.
- Computer camera and mic for virtual meetings.

What about firewalls or blockers on my computer?

Students who access D2L or open documents or videos on computers at their work settings often experience problems due to firewalls and security. If you are planning on using a computer at your work, you will need to check with your organizations I.T. person for any security issues.

Do I need high speed internet connection?

Yes, it is highly recommended. There are some modules where you will be required to watch a video. With dial-up connection, you will not be able to access the videos. If dial-up is your only option, you may need to find an alternative option such as a library or family/friends' computer.

Do I need to be good at using the computer?

Basic skills are essential. See the checklist for specific requirements.

What if I am a procrastinator? Will I be successful?

Probably not! Online classes are **not** an independent study format that you can put off. There will be due dates and other course requirements that you will need to stay on top of on a weekly basis. Online learning requires motivation, self-discipline and being self-directed. Good time management skills are also important.

How do I get the books I need for the class?

Books can be ordered online from the campus bookstore. There is further information about getting your books later in this document. The thing to remember is not to wait until the last minute to order your textbooks. Often you will need to begin reading or participate in a discussion topic from the textbook at the start of the class.

What if I need help?

Your instructor is there to help you. If you do not communicate with the instructor, they will not know that you are having problems or are frustrated. Quick start guides are also available to assist you with using the different D2L tools.

What if I will be gone on vacation and an assignment is due during that time?

Arrangements can be made with the instructor for alternative options prior to being gone.

. **Get the Pulse App to help you stay on track!**

Check your upcoming readings, assignments, and tests quickly to make better decisions about how to handle your workload.

- Weekly calendar view shows the busiest times at a glance
- Full schedule view displays every important date and deadline
- Personal events and milestones can also be added

App notifications keep you up to date with course news and can even let you know when the latest grades are available.

- Notifications include announcements, new course content, and more
- Class discussions can be read and replied to right within the app
- Swipe-to-reveal gestures let students check grades when they're ready

Improve your productivity.

Help you to prepare.

Keep connected.

Pulse is available on iPhone, iPad, and Android™ devices and provides seamless login to the Brightspace Learning Environment. Stay connected with their courses anytime they're on campus, at home, or on the move.

Activity Program Application, Registration, and Program Completion Process (for degree and certificate options only)

Note: Students taking the 4 credit MEPAP course option only are considered visiting/casual student status and <u>do not need</u> to apply to the college. Registration is done by phone with Registrar's office.

Apply to Ridgewater College for the Activity Director AAS degree or Activity Director certificate.

- Complete the online application at www.ridgewater.edu. Click on "Admissions and Aid" and "Apply Now". Make sure to list "Activity Director" as your major on the online application.
- New applicants will need to create and activate their Star ID username and password prior to filling out the application. Follow the steps provided on the screen.
- Please send a copy of your high school transcript to Ridgewater College, Admissions Office. If you have completed 12 or more college-level credits, we can waive the high school transcript requirement, but you must have an Official college transcript sent directly to Ridgewater from your former college.
- Once the Admissions Office has received the application and high school or college transcripts, an acceptance letter will be mailed to the student. Included with the acceptance letter is more information about your next steps such as online orientation. You must complete the online orientation before you can register for classes.
- Questions? Contact the Admissions Office at 320-234-8501 or admissions@ridgewater.edu.

Program Orientation and Registration

- Advising and Registration will occur virtually via Zoom. (Students will be connected with program advisor Julie Reginek after they complete the online orientation.)
- Access Codes are required to register in eServices and will be given to you by your Advisor/Instructor, Julie Reginek.
- Students need to log into their eServices to register for their classes. They will log into eServices using their Star ID and password. eServices can be found at www.ridgewater.edu at the top of the page under "Logins".
- The student should become familiar with their eService account:
  - DAR (Degree Audit Report)
  - Grades
  - Bills and Payment
  - Financial Aid

Class Completion
- Meet with advisor (in person, phone or web conference) each semester for advising of classes and registration access code.

Internship
- If the student is not working in an activity setting, an internship will need to be set up. Contact Julie Reginek, program advisor, to discuss options.

Last Semester
- Meet with advisor for final evaluation of DARS report
- Apply for graduation when registering for last semester of classes
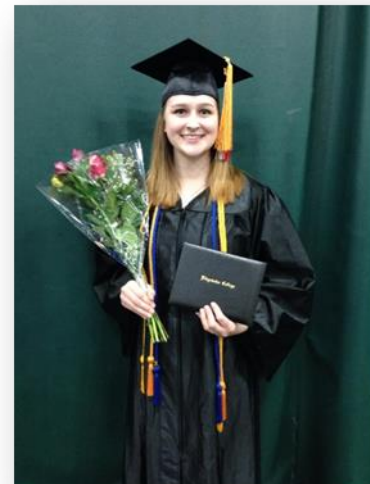- Order cap and gown for graduation and participate in graduation ceremony if you are able ☺

Activity Director Program Advisor

Julie Reginek   320-234-8588   julie.reginek@ridgewater.edu
Ridgewater College   www.ridgewater.edu
2 Century Ave   www.ridgewater.edu/activitydirector
Hutchinson, MN 55350

You too can earn your online Activity Director Associate's Degree!

This section of information is about the ADR 1500 MEPAP 1 Basic Activity Course and ADR 1520 MEPAP 2 Activity Management Course

The MEPAP 1 and 2 are the starting point into the associates and certificate program; however, some individuals are pursuing just the MEPAP courses for certification.

Modular Education Program for Activity Professionals (MEPAP)
NCCAP #218005

Ridgewater College offers the following online training classes that meet the NCCAP standardized Modular Education Program for Activity Professionals (MEPAP) education component for certification.

ADR 1500 Basic Activity Course (MEPAP Part 1) (NCCAP #218005)
This is a 4-college credit course that consists of 4 units with each unit being about 4-6 weeks in length.
     Unit 1: Introduction to Activities and Aging Services
     Unit 2: Health and Social Issues in Aging
     Unit 3: Activity Care Planning and Documentation
     Unit 4: Activity Calendar Planning and Program Delivery
     90-hour internship/practicum**

ADR 1520 Activity Management Course (MEPAP Part 2) (NCCAP #218005)
This is a 4-college credit course that consists of 4 units with each unit being about 4-6 weeks in length.
     Unit 1: Introduction to Activity Management
     Unit 2: Activity Department Management
     Unit 3: Communication Skills for Activity Managers
     Unit 4: Volunteer Management
     90-hour internship/practicum**

Both MEPAP 1 and 2 classes are offered _fully online._ Classes start at the beginning of each semester, late August and early January. The course design offers flexibility for the working activity professional but in a semi-structured format that allows for networking, collaboration, and communication with other activity professionals in the program.

Since the MEPAP courses lead to NCCAP Activity Director and Activity Professional Certification, the courses are rigorous and require significant time and attention during the semester. These classes are NOT independent or self-paced classes. Students are required to participate in the class weekly.

Note: ADR 1500 and ADR 1520 class final grade will be an average of all units and practicum/internship.
You are required to pass each individual unit and practicum with a "C" or better to receive certificate of completion for the MEPAP.

If you are interested in the certificate or AAS degree options, contact Julie for additional information.

How Do I Register for just the MEPAP Classes?
1. Call Ridgewater College registration office at 1-800-722-1151, ext. 8592 to register.
2. Registration for just the MEPAP classes is done by phone only.
3. Arrange for tuition payment at time of registration.
4. Obtain your student ID number from the registrar upon registering.
5. Email the instructor with your name, mailing address, phone, and email address so additional information can be emailed to you.
6. Get the required textbooks- see page 5.
7. Contact the instructor with any questions you might have.
8. Start thinking about how you will set aside and manage your time and schedule once the class starts.
9. Make sure you have fast speed internet and a dependable computer that is in good working condition.
10. See www.ridgewater.edu/activitydirector for MEPAP course name/number.

RIDGEWATER COLLEGE

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Basic Activity class (MEPAP part 1) is specifically designed and scheduled for those working in an activity program and are seeking certification or training as an Activity Assistant or Activity Director. The Basic Activity class consists of 4 credits of curriculum and practicum experience (90 hrs). The program is delivered fully online using D2L Brightspace learning management system. Upon successful completion of the 4-credit Basic Activity class, the participant will receive an award of completion certificate. Approved by the National Certification Council for Activity Professionals (NCCAP #218005), this program meets the education requirements of the modular education program, part one. NCCAP certification as an Activity Director also requires completion of the Activity Management Program (MEPAP part 2), CEU's, work experience, and additional college credits.

The content covered in the Basic Activity class provides the student with an understanding of aging services across the continuum of care and the role activity professionals have in developing a quality activity program. The student will be introduced to various physical, cognitive, and psychosocial issues that affect activity programming and delivery.

Basic Activity MEPAP Part 1 Course Outline

Unit 1 Introduction to Activities and Aging Services

- Identify agencies and organizations in the continuum of care
- Identify professional resources
- Describe regulatory requirements for the activity services
- Identify resident rights, vulnerable adults, neglect, and abuse
- Describe purpose and process of resident and family councils

Unit 2 Health and Social Issues in Aging

- Explain physical, cognitive, and sensory changes in aging
- Explain adaptations to use for different functioning levels
- List activity programming ideas and interventions
- Identify infection control and safety issues in activity services
- Identify behavioral concerns

Unit 3 Activity Care Planning and Documentation

- Explain survey process and the implication for activity services
- Identify assessment process
- Explain how to assess resident for activity needs and interests
- Write care plans and progress notes
- Identify documentation procedures and protocols

Unit 4 Activity Calendar Planning and Program Delivery

- Define types of activity programming
- Explain wellness model and it's implication for activity services
- Explain activity program management strategies
- Identify activity calendar planning basics
- List activity ideas and resources

Important Note

Basic Activity Class Practicum/Internship Requirement – (90 hours)
A 90-hour practicum/internship is required for all students in the MEPAP Basic Activity class and is done in conjunction with the classroom component. This 90-hour practicum or internship is a requirement of the MEPAP and NCCAP.

A student who currently works in an elderly activity or recreation setting will complete the 90-hour practicum through a series of projects and assignments in addition to the class assignments. These practicum projects and assignments are infused into the curriculum and are designed to build, evaluate, and assess the activity program, department and services. In order to complete required practicum assignments and projects, students may need to access facility records, documentation, attend care conferences, and other forms of information*. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements and secure permission with the appropriate supervisor to complete all assignments.*

A student who does not work in an activity or recreation setting will be required to complete the 90 hours of internship experience. The goal of the internship is to provide the student with the real-world experience of activity program delivery and to apply the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom. The student and program instructor/advisor will work together to determine a practicum site appropriate for a quality learning experience. This should be set up within the first two weeks of the semester to assure hours will be completed by the end of the semester. A training plan will be designed to outline the tasks and duties to be completed by the student during the practicum under the supervision of a qualified activity professional.

TEXT AND REFERENCES

Required Textbook:

Long Term Care for Activity Professionals (2018)
Seventh Edition
By Best-Martini, Weeks, & Wirth
www.idyllarbor.com

Textbooks are available online at Ridgewater College bookstore www.ridgewaterbookstore.com or at other online book websites. To order books online through the college bookstore, you will need to create an account for billing and shipping. Please follow the instructions on the website for creating your bookstore account. Be sure to select "Hutchinson Campus."

Additional references and resources provided online.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
The Activity Management class MEPAP part 2 is specifically designed and scheduled for those working in an activity program and are seeking certification or training as an Activity Assistant or Activity Director. The Activity Management class consists of 4 credits of curriculum and practicum experience (90 hrs). The class is delivered fully online using Desire2Learn course management system. Upon successful completion of the 4-credit Activity Management class, the participant will receive an award of completion certificate. Approved by the National Certification Council for Activity Professionals (NCCAP #218005) this program meets the education requirements of the modular education program, part one. Certification as an Activity Director also requires completion of the Basic Activity Program (MEPAP part 1), CEU's, work experience, and additional college credits.

The content covered in the Activity Management class provides the student with an understanding of leadership and management skills needed to effectively lead and manage an activity department and staff. The student will be introduced to the many responsibilities and tasks required of the Activity Director. Students enrolled in this class should have a basic knowledge of regulatory compliance, program and calendar development, standards of practice, aging issues, care planning and documentation and various intervention techniques.

Activity Management Class MEPAP Part 2 Course Outline

Unit 1 Introduction to Activity Management

- Describe the role of the activity professional as a department manager
- Define leadership skills for activity managers
- Identify community relations and its effect on activity services
- Describe program and department responsibilities of the activity professional

Unit 2 Activity Department Management

- Describe the process of personnel management
- Outline strategies for time and space management
- Describe process for managing the activity program and department records
- Demonstrate Quality Assurance process for evaluating programs and services

Unit 3 Communication Skills for Activity Managers

- Identify effective communication skills for activity professionals
- Describe problem solving techniques
- Develop an educational presentation
- Identify teamwork process for the activity department

Unit 4 Volunteer Management

- List methods for recruiting volunteers
- Identify steps for training and orientation of volunteers
- Identify ways for volunteer recognition

Important Note

Activity Management Class Practicum/Internship Requirement – (90 hours)
A 90-hour practicum/internship is required for all students in the MEPAP Activity Management Program and is done in conjunction with the classroom component. This 90-hour practicum/internship is a requirement of MEPAP and NCCAP.

A student who <u>currently works</u> in an elderly activity or recreation setting will complete the 90-hour practicum through a series of projects and assignments in addition to the class assignments. These practicum projects and assignments are infused into the curriculum and are designed to build, evaluate, and assess the activity program and department. In order to complete required practicum assignments and projects, students may need to access facility records, documentation, attend care conferences, and other forms of information. *It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements and secure permission with the appropriate supervisor to complete all assignments.*

A student who <u>does not</u> work in an activity or recreation setting will be required to complete the 90 hours of internship experience. The goal of the internship is to provide the student with the real-world experience of activity program delivery and to apply the skills and knowledge learned in the classroom. The student and program instructor/advisor will work together to determine a practicum site appropriate for a quality learning experience. This should be set up within the first two weeks of the semester to assure hours will be completed by the end of the semester. A training plan will be designed to outline the tasks and duties to be completed by the student during the practicum under the supervision of a qualified activity professional. See page 24 for internship information.

TEXT AND REFERENCES

All books are required.
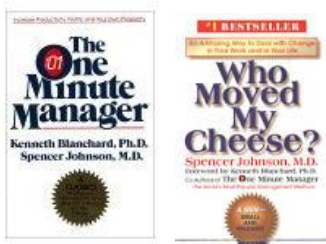
You will also need "***Who Moved My Cheese***" and "***The One Minute Manager***" which can be purchased at any general bookstore or online.

Textbooks are available online at Ridgewater College bookstore www.ridgewaterbookstore.com or at other online book websites. To order books online through the college bookstore, you will need to create an account for billing and shipping. Please follow the instructions on the website for creating your bookstore account. Be sure to select "Hutchinson Campus."

MEPAP Class Completion Checklist

Use this checklist to keep track of the classes/units that you have completed for the MEPAP.

ADR 1500 Basic Activity Class MEPAP Part 1 (4 credits)

____ Unit 1 Introduction to Activities and Aging Services

____ Unit 2 Health and Social Issues in Aging

____ Unit 3 Care Planning and Documentation

____ Unit 4 Activity Calendar Planning and Program Delivery

____ Internship; 90 hours required for students **not** working in an activity program (see below)

ADR 1520 Activity Management Class MEPAP Part 2 (4 credits)

____ Unit 1 Introduction to Activity Management

____ Unit 2 Activity Department Management Skills

____ Unit 3 Communication Skills for Activity Managers

____ Unit 4 Volunteer Management

____ Internship; 90 hours required for students **not** working in an activity program (see below)

How to get started with your 90-hour internship

1. Identify an internship site in your community to complete your internship hours. The site can be long-term care, assisted living, independent living, adult day services, or memory care and is specific to the elderly population.

2. The site supervisor must be on-site during your entire internship schedule. The site supervisor must be an Activity/Recreation Director with at least three years experiences and <u>cannot</u> be the Administrator, Director of Nursing, Social Worker, etc.

3. Contact the site Activity Director to secure their willingness to be an internship site. If they agree and are willing to supervise your internship, email Julie the following information: Site contact name, address, phone, email, facility name, address, and activity director's office hours. See information form in the internship packet and in the D2L internship class. I will then contact the site Activity Director to complete your training plan and contract. You can let them know that I will be contacting them.

4. If you are employed outside of the activity profession, you will need to arrange with your employer to complete the internship hours. Internship hours are done generally during the day, Monday-Friday.

5. It is important that this process gets started early in the semester to assure the 90 hours required will be completed during the semester. All internship hours must be completed one week prior to the end of the semester.

6. Internship is specifically for those students who <u>do not</u> work in an activity department.