

Recreation Therapist

What is a Recreation Therapist? A Recreation Therapist is a professional who plans, directs, and coordinates recreation-based treatment programs for people with disabilities, injuries, or illnesses. Recreation therapists help people recover basic physical and mental abilities; build confidence; reduce depression, stress, and anxiety; and socialize effectively. They use recreational activities to help their patients. For example, a recreation therapist may help a patient who is paralyzed on one side of their body by teaching them to adapt activities, such as casting a fishing rod, to use their functional side. To help a patient develop social and coping skills and manage depression and anxiety, a recreation therapist may introduce a therapy dog. Recreation therapists may work with physicians and surgeons, registered nurses, psychologists, social workers, physical therapists, teachers, or occupational therapists.

More details? For more detailed information, including salaries and job prospects, visit the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics: <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/recreational-therapists.htm>

Can UWW help me become a licensed Recreational Therapist? Absolutely! Although we do not have an accredited program in Recreation Therapy, we can help you prepare for licensure or qualify for a Masters program.

To Qualify for National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) Licensure students must meet two prerequisites: coursework and work experience. Graduates who have met the prerequisites are eligible to write the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS) licensure exam.

Coursework: The eligibility requirements to take the CTRS examination are a baccalaureate degree or higher from an accredited college that includes the following coursework:

1. 18 CH of therapeutic recreation and general recreation content coursework with no less than 15 CH in therapeutic recreation content. A minimum of 5 courses in therapeutic recreation is required and each course must be a minimum of 3 CH.

UWW 15 CH in Therapeutic Recreation Content		
Course #	CH	Title
RECREATN 360	3 CH	Aging & Leisure
RECREATN 361	3 CH	Recreation & Leisure for Special Populations
RECREATN 498	3 CH	Independent Study: Management of the Therapeutic Recreation Process
PEPROF 475	3 CH	Adapted Physical Education
PEPROF 498	3 CH	Independent Study: Assessment of Therapeutic Recreation Programs

2. Supportive courses including 18 CH with a minimum of:

UWW 18 CH of Supporting Coursework		
Course #	CH	Title
BIOL 361 AND BIOL 362	4 CH AND 4CH	Human Anatomy and Physiology I AND Human Anatomy and Physiology II
PSYCH 345	3 CH	Abnormal Psychology
EDFOUND 230	3 CH	Introduction to Human Development
+ 4 CH of any social sciences and humanities courses related to TR.		

Work Experience (must include direct client services): A minimum of 1 year full-time, paid work experience in therapeutic recreation services under the supervision of a CTRS that uses the therapeutic recreation process as defined by the current NCTRC Job Analysis.

Taking the NCTRC exam: The exam is based on the NCTRC Job Analysis of the Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist. Once NCTRC has reviewed your application, you can schedule an exam which is administered at Prometric Testing Centers across the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico. The NCTRC Exam is offered six times throughout the year with a two-week testing window for each administration.

Professional organization: Most recreation therapists belong to the American Therapeutic Recreation Association. Assistants, www.atra-online.com; this organization is an excellent source of information for everyone with questions about recreation therapy. The accrediting body is the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) at <http://www.nctrc.org>.