



Understanding Policy

STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA EXPLORE
THE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR RECREATION

**THE FRAMEWORK FOR RECREATION
IN CANADA GOALS AND PRIORITIES:**



**RECREATIONAL
CAPACITY**

CHALLENGES ADDRESSED

The course *Public Policy in Recreation, Sport and Tourism* helps students develop a critical understanding of public policy and governance in relation to sport, recreation and tourism. It was initiated after a curriculum review identified the understanding of policy and policy processes as a major gap in what students were learning. It is critical for them to learn about the various policies in recreation, sport and tourism that drive decisions and work on the ground. The challenge is to engage students in learning about policy and get them excited about the relevance of policy to their lives and their future work. “Policy” can be an intimidating term to many, especially to students who have not yet seen how it plays out and its importance on the ground.

IMPLEMENTATION

The course was integrated into the curriculum. It was designed as a combination of lecture (including guest presenters) and with an emphasis on interactive activities (e.g. Q and As, students do presentations on topics they're interested in related to the policy).

Policy was presented as a tool they can use to make decisions when in practice; influence resource and political decisions in the future and have increased control when determining where they're going. The common ground related to policies in recreation, sport and tourism was highlighted and students were asked to present current issues that apply across the board.

The Framework for Recreation in Canada policy was successfully integrated into the course (see below). This policy is particularly important since the Recreation program (which has been at the University for over 50 years) has always had strong roots in community-based recreation and in preparing students for work in the field. It is, however, challenging to teach. It is difficult to get students who are not delivering programs to move beyond the conceptual content of the Framework and think about how the policy affects outcomes and the recreation experience.



One of the students attended the final Framework consultation in Toronto and reported back to the class on what he learned and experienced



OUTCOMES

Tom Hinch was involved in the cross-Canada consultations leading up to the development and ratification of the Framework so was well aware of the development process. This helped when he introduced it in the second class as an example of good policy and the recognition of parallel policies in sport, tourism and other areas. He comes back to it at end of term and after discussion on process and components, reflects back on framework to see what the students have learned.

Peers make an important contribution to the learning. In 2015, one of his students attended the final Framework consultation in Toronto and reported back to the class on what he learned and experienced. Two other students, earning a living as consultants working in the area of policy, made presentations.

The Framework for Recreation in Canada has subsequently become an essential part of the *Public Policy in Recreation, Sport and Tourism* course.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Demonstrate the relevance of the policy. Challenge students to think about the relevancy of the issues presented in the policy and the implications to them and areas they care about. Point out the relevancy to their ambitions and the direction that they are going in their practicums, summer jobs and eventually in their full-time work.
- Include guest speakers and interactive components in the class. This makes policy come alive.
- Link the policy to current issues that students will have an opinion about (for example, news about Banff National Park and over-tourism, the pros and cons of developing bike lanes).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

- Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport and Recreation: www.ualberta.ca/kinesiology-sport-recreation

Framework Goal and Priority	Goal # 5 Recreation (Capacity development, advanced education)
Population Addressed	Students in Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation, University of Alberta
Community	Faculty has about 1100 students: undergrads 900-1000; grad students 150.
Setting	University of Alberta, Edmonton
Lead Implementer and Organization	Dr. Tom Hinch, Professor, Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation; Course instructor: Public Policy in Recreation, Sport and Tourism
Key Partners	Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation, course designer and instructor, guests from the community (graduates of the program and others)
Activity Focus	Teaching future recreation leaders about policy and the Framework for Recreation in Canada
Stage of Development	Ongoing course (running for 4 years)