

Research

Therapeutic Recreation Education: 2009 Survey

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Abstract

As part of the biannual recreation education survey for the Society of Park and Recreation Educators, Stein (1970) included a separate section on therapeutic recreation (TR). Anderson and Stewart (1980) conducted a therapeutic recreation education study 10 years later. Their study began a trend of follow-up studies for the next 3 decades. Stewart and Anderson (1990) conducted the TR Education: 1989 Survey study and Anderson, Ashton-Shaeffer, and Autry (2000) conducted the TR Education: 1999 Survey. In the last survey, questions addressing accreditation; type of graduate programs; therapeutic recreation courses offered per program; tenure status and race/ethnicity of faculty; number of courses taught by faculty; and NCTRC regions were introduced. The longitudinal research continues with the current 2009 study. The findings of this study are presented and compared with the previous surveys to identify trends in therapeutic recreation education. Numbers of programs, faculty, and students were examined. Programs were also inquired as to the number of lost faculty positions during the last 10 years and if they had difficulty filling open positions.

KEYWORDS: Education, Longitudinal, Trends, Therapeutic Recreation

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In 1969, Stein (1970) included a separate section on therapeutic recreation (TR) as part of the biannual recreation education survey for the Society of Park and Recreation Educators, a branch of the National Recreation and Park Association. Anderson and Stewart (1980) conducted a 10-year followup to the Stein survey that began a longitudinal study of therapeutic recreation education at the conclusion of each decade. Stewart and Anderson (1990) completed the third 10-year follow-up and Anderson, Ashton-Shaeffer, and Autry (2000) conducted the fourth 10-year study comparing results with those from the 1989, 1979 and 1969 surveys. The purpose of the current study was to describe the current status, document changes over the past 40 years, and identify trends and issues in therapeutic recreation education. Numbers of programs, faculty, and students were examined. Programs were also inquired as to the number of lost faculty positions during the last 10 years and if they had difficulty filling open positions.

Brief Review of the Therapeutic Recreation Education Surveys

In 1969, one of the major issues facing therapeutic recreation education was a projected personnel shortage to provide therapeutic recreation services to the growing numbers of potential clients and patients. Hillman (1970) called for a revision and improvement in existing curricula. Stein (1970) heeded the request to provide the field with curriculum data on therapeutic recreation/special recreation options within general recreation curricula.

Stein (1970) found 35 therapeutic recreation options with the majority housed in physical education or education departments. There were 37 full-time therapeutic recreation faculty, and only 17 had doctorate degrees. There were a total of 531 students majoring in therapeutic recreation, including 135 at the master's level

and 15 at the doctorate level. Stein recommended that more curricula be developed at the community college level to "upgrade non-professional personnel currently employed" in the field.

Anderson and Stewart (1980) replicated and expanded on Stein's study. Their major findings indicated that therapeutic recreation options, faculty, and students were demonstrating a dramatic growth. However, a concern was that curricula were expanding faster than degree-qualified faculty.

Ten years later, Stewart and Anderson (1990) found a reversal in therapeutic recreation education trends. There was a decrease in therapeutic recreation options, faculty, and students. Many respondents reported they had eliminated or were in the process of eliminating their therapeutic recreation options.

In the decade between 1989 and 1999, there was an 8% decrease in accredited therapeutic recreation options (Anderson et al., 2000). Although only three therapeutic recreation programs offered on-line courses in 1999, 41% currently offered or were planning to offer some type of distance education. There was a 32% overall increase in the number of therapeutic recreation students, and 75% of the majors were female. Over 2,000 students were expected to graduate in 1999; however, only one of them was earning the doctorate degree. The authors identified this as a critical issue that impacted all levels of therapeutic recreation, especially considering that 17 new faculty positions were anticipated in 2000.

The current authors believe education and specifically professional preparation is of paramount importance to the therapeutic recreation profession. This 40-year review of therapeutic recreation education shows both increases and decreases in curricula, faculty, and students, and begs the question: What is therapeutic recreation

education's current status and how does it fit into the broader context of higher education?

Trends in Academia and Health Professional Education

Higher education has experienced substantial growth, at both 2-year and 4-year colleges over the last 30 years. In 2008, the number of 18- to 24-year-olds attending college in the United States hit an all-time high (Fry, 2009). Almost 40% of young adults were enrolled in college, a 15.6% rise since 1973. This growth, however, is attributed to a recession-fueled spike in community college enrollments.

According to the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics, degree-granting institutions employed 1.4 million faculty members in 2007 (U.S. Department of Education, 2009), a growth of 38% since 1997 and 116% since 1976. Full-time and part-time faculty members were evenly divided in 2007, although, more males held full-time positions than females.

The National Education Association (2009) reported universities and colleges have increased their reliance on contingent faculty, threatening major changes in the nature of higher education. Johnson and McCarthy (2000) suggested colleges and universities rely too heavily on part-time, adjunct, and non-tenure track instructors, a practice that might undermine career aspirations of would be professors and the professoriate as a whole.

A problem common to most academic disciplines is the number of new Ph.D.s conferred each year exceeding the number of full-time positions available in academe (Huyssen, 2007); however, past research has indicated an opposite problem in therapeutic recreation (Anderson et al., 2000; Riley & Heyne, 1999), where open faculty positions were exceeding the number of new doctorates. Stumbo, Carter, and Kim

(2004a) found almost 40% of the teaching faculty members in therapeutic recreation were made up of adjuncts. Furthermore, Stumbo et al. (2004a) found the number of faculty who held only a bachelor's degree increased 2.4% since 1996, and the number who held a master's degree decreased 3.1%. Additionally, fewer therapeutic recreation faculty members were certified by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC).

Considering Stumbo, Carter and Kim's (2004a) findings, recent higher education trends toward employment of contingent faculty, and the apparent shortage of new doctorates (Anderson et al., 2000), the therapeutic recreation discipline may be experiencing a trend toward reductions in doctorate prepared full-time faculty. This issue warrants further investigation, as fewer doctorates in therapeutic recreation could lead to program closures, fewer professionals entering the field, and the loss of therapeutic recreation positions that go unfilled by certified professionals (Anderson et al.).

Trends in health professional education have varied over the past two decades. In 1995, the Pew Health Professions Commission recommended in its forward looking report, a reduction in the number of health professional education programs (O'Neil & the Pew Health Professions Commission, 1998). Their predictions included a reduction in nursing education programs by 10 to 20% and the number of new medical school students by 20 to 25% by 2005. A similar decrease in demand was expected for physical therapy between 1995 and 2005.

More recent trends, however, show a somewhat different situation than predicted. In 2005, the Public Health Workforce study (Bureau of Health Professions, 2005) found a widespread shortage of public health workers. In 2006, the American

Public Health Association (APHA) warned of a pending crisis regarding the shortage of public health workers entering the workforce. The APHA report pointed out that 45 to 50% of public health workers would be eligible for retirement within a few years, and there was a 20% vacancy rate in some states. Additionally, the Future Point Summit predicted a pending shortage of 1.6 million to 2.5 million allied health workers by 2020 (National Network of Health Career Programs in Two Year Colleges, 2006).

Calls for increasing diverse representation among faculty and students have received attention over the last two decades. In 1995, the Pew Health Professions Commission (1995) called for action to ensure the nation's health profession workforce reflects the diversity of the population. Included in their recommendations were the adoption of admissions policies that would encourage student diversity, and university outreach to K-12 populations to encourage exposure to the sciences and health professions. Faculty and student diversity in the leisure studies disciplines, including therapeutic recreation, has been severely lacking. In 1999, 7% of full-time TR faculty and 20% of TR students were minorities (Anderson et al., 2000). Schlatter (2002) found that women and minority faculty in leisure studies were underrepresented in the field and clustered in the lower ranks. Researchers have called for initiatives to encourage minorities to pursue advanced degrees in therapeutic recreation and seek employment in higher education (Anderson et al.; Stumbo & Carter, 1999b; Stumbo et al., 2004a). Schlatter further recommended faculty recruitment practices in the hiring process that would encourage wider diversity of candidates.

Regarding curricula, Anderson et al. (2000) noted a movement away from therapeutic recreation option accreditation and toward accreditation of general recreation and leisure studies programs.

Stumbo, Carter and Kim (2004b) further identified wide variation in the makeup of therapeutic recreation curricula, from coursework to graduation requirements. Profession-wide concerns over therapeutic recreation education standards led to the Therapeutic Recreation Education Conference (TREC) I in 2005 and TREC II in 2009. The TREC II conference resulted in the recommendation to develop a new accreditation process for the profession. Three task forces were formed to: 1) draft potential accreditation standards; 2) investigate the requirements to form a new accreditation process through the Council on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Professions or the National Recreation and Park Association's Council on Accreditation; and 3) explore the possible unification of the two professional organizations American Therapeutic Recreation Association and National Therapeutic Recreation Society (Jordan & Passmore, 2009).

Much debate has occurred over the last decade about the status and trajectory of therapeutic recreation curricula (Carter & Zabriskie, 2009). As the profession investigates curricula standardization and revision of the accreditation process, the current status of curricula must be analyzed and reported. Furthermore, analysis of trends among faculty and students are needed to provide direction for the discipline.

Method

The current research utilized a survey instrument originally developed by Anderson and Stewart (1980) using the results from Stein's (1970) study related to therapeutic recreation. The instrument was revised with additional questions for the 1989 and 1999 surveys and further modified for the current study. The new questions in the 2009 survey addressed faculty positions lost and those difficult to fill. The new instrument was designed in SurveyMonkey, an internet-based survey tool.

Using the Anderson et al. (2000) mailing list and the NCTRC list of therapeutic recreation college and university programs, a comprehensive contact list was developed. Using this list, 2-year, 4-year, and graduate institutions were identified as possibly offering a degree major, option, concentration, or courses in therapeutic recreation. A personalized request for participation (Schaefer & Dillman, 1998) with a hyperlink to the SurveyMonkey questionnaire was emailed to the heads of 153 curricula. Four follow-up email requests were used to increase the return rate (Schaefer & Dillman, 1998). Phone calls were made to follow-up on email requests returned with address failure notifications. Of the 153 requests, 106 responses (69%) were received and 87 programs were identified as offering a degree, option, concentration, or courses in therapeutic recreation. However, four questionnaires were incomplete. Therefore, 83 programs provided usable data for this study.

The data from the 83 programs were analyzed using descriptive statistics in SPSS 17.0. The descriptive data were then compared to the findings of Stein (1970), Anderson and Stewart (1980), Stewart and Anderson (1990), and Anderson et al. (2000). Some of the 83 respondents did not respond to certain items on the questionnaire. Therefore, the results from the current study will be reported according to variations among total numbers recorded for curricula, faculty, and students.

Results

Eighty-seven therapeutic recreation programs out of 106 respondents replied to the current study's request for participation. Eighty-three provided usable data. This is the lowest reported number of participating programs in the history of the TR Education Survey since 1969 when Stein (1970) identified 37 programs. In 1999, 134 TR programs participated out

of 340 respondents; in 1989, 105 TR programs participated out of 163 respondents; and in 1979, 137 TR programs were identified by Anderson and Stewart (1980).

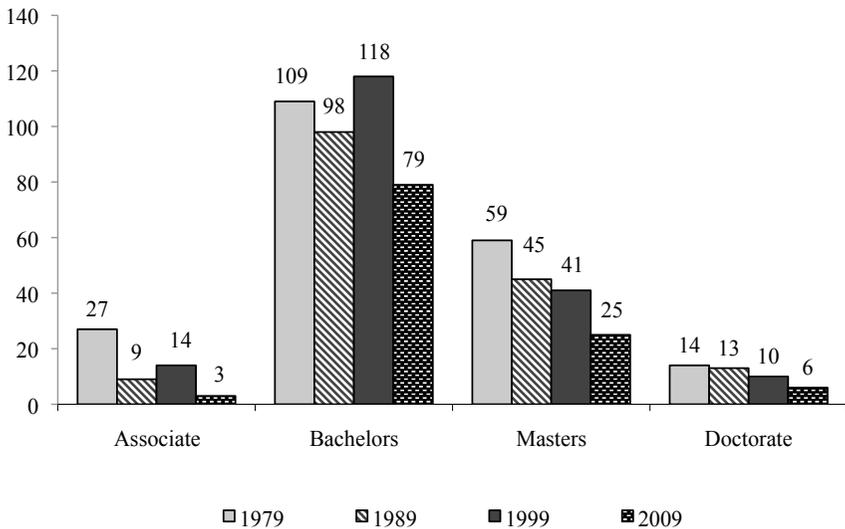
The results of the current study are divided into three sections: a) curricula, b) faculty, and c) students. This format follows the same presentation of results as in the four previous studies for the purpose of longitudinal comparison.

Curricula

In 2009, out of 83 respondents, three of the TR programs offered associate degrees, 79 offered bachelor's degrees, 25 offered master's degrees, and six offered doctorate degrees (see Figure 1). Such numbers are the lowest accounted for in each of these four degree levels when compared to the past 30 years. In 1969, the data were divided into two levels and accounted for 28 programs at the undergraduate level and 26 at the graduate. The results for 1999, included 14 associate, 118 bachelor's, 41 master's, and 10 doctorate degrees. In 1989, nine programs offered degrees at the associate, 98 at the bachelor's, 45 at the master's, and 13 at the doctorate levels. In 1979, such categories were at their highest numbers when 27 programs offered associate, 109 offered bachelor's, 59 offered master's, and 14 offered doctorate degrees. In relation to information within the past decade regarding the doctorate degree, four of the six current TR programs participated in the study in 1999. In addition, two of the 10 programs that offered a doctorate degree in 1999 reported not having a doctorate program in 2009. In fact, they reported no longer having a TR program. Overall, a decrease in TR graduate education continues.

Of the 78 U.S. curricula in the current study, 62% (48) reported their general program was accredited by the National Recreation and Park Association's Council on Accreditation. An increase in this trend can

FIGURE 1. Number of Programs Per Degree Level Over the Past 30 Years.



be seen from 10 years ago where reporting curricula in 1999, stated that 50% of their programs were accredited by NRPA/AALR. Of the 48 current programs with accreditation, 24 programs reported the accreditation of their TR option as well. Overall, in the current study, 31% of the U.S. curricula, in comparison to 37% in 1999 and 45% in 1989 reported their TR options were accredited. Therefore, the trend in decreasing accredited TR options continues when compared to data from the last two studies.

The use of therapeutic recreation in the curricula titles continues to increase when compared to the last 30 years. Currently, 16% of the responding TR programs ($n = 79$) use the specific curriculum title of therapeutic recreation or recreation therapy. This is an increase from 9% in 1999, 3% in 1989, and 9% in 1979. The use of recreation or leisure in curricula titles remained relatively steady within the past 20 years where 81% of the current programs included such terms in comparison to 85% in 1999, 82% in 1989, and 75% in 1979.

The data regarding administrative location of the curricula provided new categories; however, a comparison to titles from the past 40 years will be presented first. In the current study, physical education or education was the administrative location for 42% of the TR programs ($n = 79$), which was an increase from 10 years ago. This percentage can further be divided into 10% in physical education (PE) and 32% in education. In 1999, 28% of the programs reported being located in the category of PE or education, 42% in 1989, 64% in 1979 and 82% in 1969. In 2009, 5% of the TR programs were located administratively in the arts and sciences. This remains consistent with most of the past results where in 1999, 6% of the programs were located in arts and sciences, 11% in 1989, and 6% in 1979. In 1999, a new category of administrative location emerged from the data titled, health or health and human performance, where 36% of the TR curricula were reported. In 2009, this category included 37% of the programs. How-

ever, the authors deemed it important to divide this broad “health” category further into sub-categories, where 9% were strictly located in health and human performance, 18% were located in health sciences or health professions, and 10% were located in health and human services/human development. Lastly, 16% of the 2009 programs were located in “other” areas (e.g., business, graduate school, career/professional programs, general studies, public programs, or family/youth). The 1999 administrative location data were recalculated to match the location categories represented in the 2009 data. More information regarding this comparison will be provided in the discussion.

The current results revealed a slight shift in the past decade within the type of program offered at the undergraduate level. An increase occurred in the percentage of those offering a general recreation degree with the TR option and those offering an exclusive degree in TR/RT. In fact, in 2009, all three associate degree programs were offered as TR/RT degrees. A decrease occurred in those undergraduate programs offering a general recreation degree with TR courses (not an option, concentration, or emphasis). In 2009, 1999, and 1989 respectively, the division included 5%, 15%, and 14%

for programs offering a general recreation degree with TR courses; 66%, 63%, and 64% offering a general recreation degree with a TR option; and 28%, 22%, and 15% offering a TR/RT degree. The question on the type of program at the graduate level was first asked in 1999. At the master’s level ($n = 25$), the percentage of programs offering a general recreation degree with TR courses decreased from 30% in 1999 to 24% in 2009; decreased in TR options from 54% in 1999 to 48% in 2009; and increased in TR/RT degrees at the master’s level from 16% in 1999 to 28% in 2009. In 1999, at the doctorate level, 67% of the programs offered a general recreation degree with a TR option and 33% offered a general recreation degree with TR courses. However, in the current study, none of the reporting doctorate programs ($n = 5$) offered options in TR and only offered courses in TR. In 1999 and 2009 there were no programs that offered TR/RT degrees at the doctorate level.

In the 1999 study, categorizing participating TR programs by geographic location was first introduced. The locations were divided into the same regions used by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) (see Table 1). For the past decade, the Southeast and

TABLE 1:
Percent Curricula, Full-Time Faculty and Enrolled Students per NCTRC Region

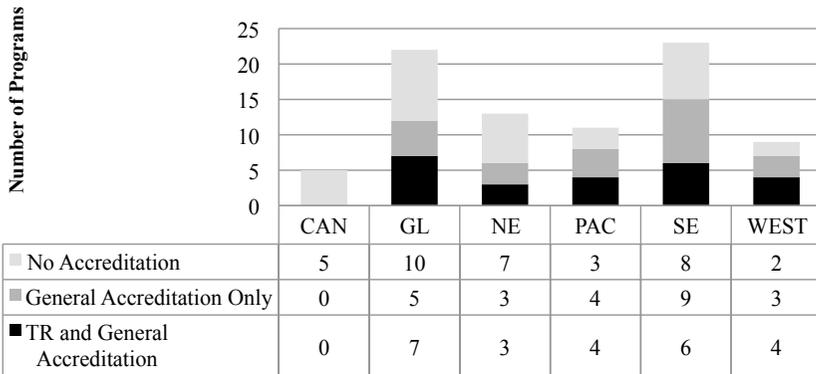
	Curricula		Faculty		Students	
	1999	2009	1999	2009	1999	2009
NCTRC Region	$n=132$	$n=83$	$n=195$	$n=142$	$n=5649$	$n=3096$
Canada	6	6	7	8	7	9
Great Lakes	27	26	28	28	28	21
Northeast	20	16	22	23	24	18
Pacific	8	11	6	6	6	13
Southeast	28	28	29	25	27	24
West	11	11	7	9	8	15

Great Lakes have continued to be the greatest represented NCTRC regions followed by the Northeast. In addition, of the 24 programs with an accredited TR option, the Great Lakes (7) and Southeast (6) regions represent the highest number followed by the Pacific (4), West (4) and Northeast (3) regions (see Figure 2).

In relation to the curricula that require all majors to take specific courses focusing on leisure services for people with disabilities, the percentage has increased in the past decade. However, the percentage is close to what it was 20 years ago. In 2009, 83% of the reporting programs ($n = 82$) required specific courses on people with disabilities for all majors and in 1999, 1989, and 1979 the percentage of programs fluctuated in the past 30 years at 71%, 88%, and 75% respectively. The percentage of reporting programs ($n = 83$) that included topics related to people with disabilities in other recreation courses was 89% in 2009. This result remains relatively stable in comparison to past studies where 91% in 1999, 91% in 1989, and 94% in 1979 included such topics.

In 1999, questions focusing on the number of TR courses offered and required in the curricula were introduced into the questionnaire. Within the past decade, an average increase of almost two courses in these two categories has been reported. In 2009, an average of 7.2 TR courses were offered per reporting program ($n = 83$) in comparison to 5.3 in 1999. Of the total TR courses offered, 8% were offered online and 3% were new courses starting in fall 2009. In 2009, an average of 6.3 TR courses were required per reporting program ($n = 82$) in comparison to 4.6 in 1999. In addition, the most common number of offered and required TR courses in the current study was 5. The range included 1 to 15 TR courses being offered and required across the curricula. Furthermore, 48% (40) of the curricula offered 1 to 5 TR courses, 31% (26) offered 6 to 10 TR courses, and 21% (17) offered 11 to 15 TR courses. Sixty-three percent (52) of the curricula required one to five TR courses, 21% (17) required 6 to 10 TR courses, and 16% (13) required 11 to 15 TR courses. The majority of those offering and requiring 11 to 15 courses were

FIGURE 2. 2009 Accreditation Standing of TR Programs per NCTRC Region.



identified as programs that offered TR/RT degrees.

In 1989, the question of whether programs anticipated offering an additional degree level in TR in the next 2 years was introduced to the survey. In 2009, 17% of the reporting programs affirmed they were going to offer an additional degree level as compared to 11% in 1999 and 20% in 1989. Furthermore, in 2009, eight programs were anticipating an additional master's degree as compared to five in 1999 and 17 in 1989. In 1989, two programs reported adding a doctorate degree; however, in 1999 and 2009, no programs reported developing a new doctorate degree in the area of TR.

Questions focusing on distance education were also first addressed in 1999. In 2009, 27% (22) of the reporting programs ($n = 83$) affirmed they currently offered distance learning opportunities for degree seeking students in TR as compared to 15% in 1999. Of the 22 reporting programs, 21 provided additional information regarding the level of opportunity. In 2009, 76% (16) offered distance learning opportunities at the undergraduate level, 14% (3) at the undergraduate and master's levels, 5% (1) at the master's level and 5% (1) for continuing education. Of the 20 reporting programs in 1999, 30% offered distance learning opportunities at the bachelor's level, 20% at both the bachelor's and master's levels, 15% at the master's level, and 35% for continuing education. No curricula in 1999 offered their degree program entirely on-line; however, a decade later a shift can be reported. In the current study, five programs offered a degree on-line; three at the undergraduate level, one at both the undergraduate and master's level, and one at the master's level. Of the 61 programs that reported they currently did not offer distance learning opportunities for degree seeking students in TR, 60 responded to

the question if they would offer distance learning opportunities in the next 5 years. Of the 60, 44 said yes (20) or maybe (24) to this future offering. In 1999, 35 programs reported they planned to offer distance learning in the future. Of the current programs that provided additional information, 21 described future distance learning opportunities at the undergraduate level versus two in 1999; seven at the master's or post-baccalaureate levels versus three in 1999; and four for continuing education versus 16 in 1999.

Faculty

A total of 216 faculty, with specializations in TR, taught among reporting programs ($n = 79$) in 2009 as compared to a total of 274, 231, and 349 in 1999, 1989, and 1979, respectively. Of the current study's 216 faculty, 70% (152) were full-time, which calculates to an average of 1.9 full-time faculty per TR program. In 1999, 73% of the faculty were full-time, with an average of 1.6 per program. In 1989, 75% of the faculty were full-time, with an average of 1.9 per program. In 1979, 72% of faculty were full-time, with an average of 1.7 per program. In 1969, 37 full-time faculty were reported within Stein's (1970) study. In addition to reporting full-time faculty, the number of TR courses taught per calendar year per full-time faculty was first introduced in 1999. In the current study, a total of 602 reported TR courses were taught among 149 reported full-time faculty, which calculates to an average of four courses per calendar year. The same average was calculated in 1999 where a total of 773 reported TR courses were taught among 187 reported full-time faculty.

The following sections provide descriptive information on faculty in relation to degree level, major field of study, rank, tenure, certification, and demographics. The last section provides results that focus on TR faculty positions.

Of the 152 full-time faculty, 79% (120) held doctorate degrees, which is the highest percentage to date when compared to past studies. Seventy-three percent of full-time faculty held doctorates in 1999, 71% in 1989 and 42% in 1979.

The major field of study has continued to be reported for all faculty (full-time and part-time). Currently, 82% of all reported faculty ($n = 207$) held TR as their major field of study followed by recreation/leisure at 8%, other at 7%, education at 2% and physical education at 1%. In sharp contrast, only 53% of all faculty in 1999, 46% in 1989, and 32% in 1979 held TR as their major field of study. In 1999, 28% of all faculty held recreation/leisure as their major field of study followed by education at 8% and physical education at 2% and in 1989 recreation/leisure was at 36%, education at 8% and physical education at 7%.

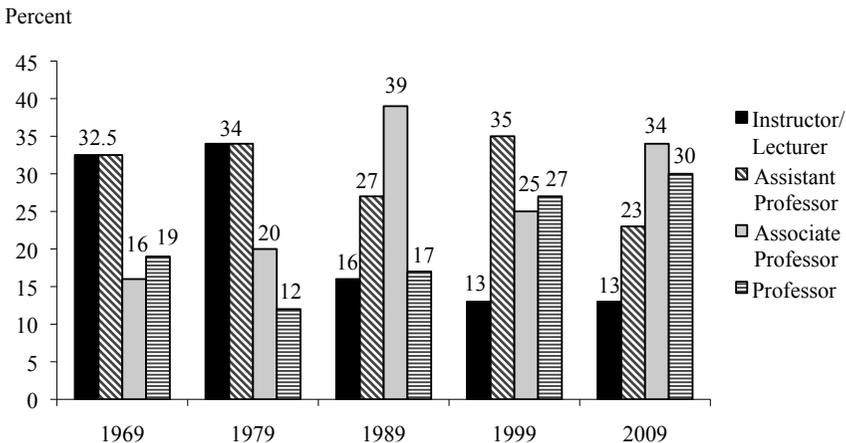
In 2009, the rank of 150 full-time faculty was divided into 13% (20) instructor/lecturers, 23% (34) assistant professors, 34% (51) associate professors and 30% (45) full professors. As noted in Figure 3, associate and full professors have increased since 1999 by 9% and 3%, respectively; however, the assistant professor rank decreased by

12% in the last decade for full-time faculty. The percentage of full professors has steadily increased within the past 30 years while the percentage of assistant professors is currently at its lowest in the history of this survey.

In 1999, the question of tenure was first introduced. Of the full-time faculty ($n = 151$) in the current study, 64% (97) were tenured as compared to 56% in 1999. This change reveals an 8% increase in tenured faculty within the past decade.

Certification of full-time faculty (excluding those in Canada since it is a national certification in the United States) has been included in the survey over the past 20 years. In 2009, 82% of the full-time faculty ($n = 139$) were Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialists (CTRS) as compared to 79% in 1999 and 66% in 1989. In 2009 7% of full-time faculty were Certified Park and Recreation Professionals (CPRP; previously referred to as Certified Leisure Professionals) as compared to 17% in 1999. In 2009 and 1999, 6% and 13% were both CTRS and CPRP, respectively. In 2009, 11% held no certification as compared to 17% in 1999. New categories were added in the current study where 13% of the full-time

FIGURE 3. Rank of Full-time Faculty Over the Past 40 Years.



faculty were CTRS with an “other” certification (besides CPRP) and 6% held an “other” certification all together.

Demographic information has also been reported on full-time faculty over past studies in relation to gender, disability, race, and geographic location. Of the reported full-time faculty ($n = 141$), 63% were female in 2009, as compared to 65% a decade ago. Female full-time faculty became the majority in 1989 at 56%, after being the minority at 44% 30 years ago. Questions on disability and race were first asked in the 1999 survey. In 2009, 8% the reported full-time faculty ($n = 126$) were identified as having a disability in comparison to 5% in 1999. Of the reported full-time faculty ($n = 144$) in the current study, 91% were Caucasian, 5% African American, 2% Asian American, 1% Hispanic, and 1% other. In 1999, 93% were Caucasian, 5% African American, 1.5% Asian American, and 0.5% Hispanic. The geographic location of full-time faculty were first categorized into NCTRC regions in 1999 where 29% of full-time faculty were in the Southeast, 27% were in the Great Lakes, and 22% were in the Northeast. In comparison to the current study, the same three regions continued to represent the highest percentage of full-time reported faculty ($n = 142$) at 25% in the Southeast, 28% in the Great Lakes, and 23% in the Northeast (see Table 1).

This last section provides information regarding TR faculty positions; new positions, those that were difficult to fill, and those that were lost. In the current study, five of the total reporting programs ($n = 78$) were planning to add one new full-time faculty member in fall 2009. The number of new lines continues to decrease when compared to 17 in 1999 and 23 in 1989. In the 2009 study, two new questions were introduced to gain additional information on the status of TR faculty positions: 1) Have you had difficulty in the last 10 years (in-

cluding fall 2009) filling full-time positions in your TR program? and 2) Have any full-time faculty positions in your TR program been lost in the past 10 years (including fall 2009)? Of the 76 TR programs that answered the first question, 21 affirmed they had difficulty filling full-time TR positions. Of the 77 TR programs that answered the second question, 18 answered yes. Furthermore, 14 reported the loss of one full-time TR faculty position. Four programs had lost two positions. This is a total of 22 full-time TR faculty positions lost within the past 10 years as reported among 77 TR programs.

Students

The results related to students are divided into two sections; students enrolled and students expected to graduate. In the current study, a total of 3096 students were enrolled as reported by 75 of the TR programs and a total of 976 students were expected to graduate as reported by 76 of the programs.

Enrolled students. The total number of enrolled students has fluctuated over the past 40 years. In 1969, a total of 531 enrolled students were identified as compared to 7992 in 1979, 4267 in 1989, 5649 in 1999 and again, 3096 in 2009. The average number of enrolled students per reporting program was also identified; 15 students in 1969, 58 in 1979, 41 in 1989, 52 in 1999, and 41 in 2009.

The degree levels among the enrolled students have been reported for the past 40 years as well. In 2009, 93 students were identified at the associate's level, 2830 at the bachelor's, 164 at the master's, and nine at the doctorate. The results for enrolled students at the associate's level are only available for 1999 at 346 and 1989 at 198. The number of enrolled students at the bachelor's level was 4981 in 1999, 3482 in 1989, 6194 in 1979, and 381 in 1969. The number of enrolled master's students was documented at 300 in 1999, as com-

pared to 519 in 1989, 947 in 1979, and 135 in 1969. Twenty-one enrolled doctorate students were identified in 1999 as compared to 65 in 1989, 94 in 1979, and 15 in 1969.

The percentage of enrolled female students has been reported for the past 20 years. In 1989 and 1999, all four degree levels were designated; however, in the current study, the results fell under the three levels of undergraduate (programs reported bachelor's and associate together), master's, and doctorate. While most of the degree levels, except at the master's, decreased in percentage females from 1989 to 1999, the past decade revealed an increase in the percentage of females. Overall, female enrolled students have been the majority in all degree levels during the past two decades. In 2009, 77% of the enrolled students, at the undergraduate level, were female. In 1999 and 1989, correspondingly, 76% and 84% of the enrolled associate's degree students and 74% and 77% of the enrolled bachelor's students were female. Respectively, in 2009, 1999, and 1989, 83%, 76%, and 74% of enrolled master's students were female while 78%, 62%, and 68% of enrolled doctorate students were female.

Additional demographic information on disability, race and geographic location of enrolled students was first provided in 1999. In 2009, 7% (133) of a reported 2004 enrolled students from 47 programs were identified as having a disability in comparison to 3% in 1999. Enrolled students who were Caucasian decreased from 80% in 1999 to 73% in 2009, increased for African American students from 12% in 1999 to 17.8% in 2009, remained the same for Asian American students in 1999 and 2009 at 2%, increased from 5% to 6.6% in 1999 to 2009 for Hispanic students. In 1999, 1% and in 2009, 0.6% of the reported enrolled students were identified as "other". The

results of enrolled students per NCTRC region continued to place the highest percentage in the Southeast at 24%, the Great Lakes at 21%, and the Northeast at 18% in 2009 as compared to 27% in the Southeast, 28% in the Great Lakes, and 24% in the Northeast in 1999. An increase in percentage of enrolled students occurred in the other two U.S. regions over the past 10 years where 15% were in the West and 13% were in the Pacific in 2009 as compared to 8% in the West and 6% in the Pacific in 1999. The percentage of enrolled students in the Canada region increased slightly from 7% in 1999 to 9% in 2009 (see Table 1).

Students expected to graduate. In 1969, a total 200 TR students were expected to graduate in the fall, compared to 2,380 students in 1979, 1,371 students in 1989, and 2,007 students in 1999. In 2009, 976 students were identified as expected to graduate, which is the lowest reported number since 1969. However, the average number of graduating students per reported program has remained relatively the same within the past 30 years, where 13 students per program were identified in 2009 as compared to 15 in 1999, 13 in 1989, and 17 in 1979. An average of six graduating students per program was reported in 1969.

The number of students expected to graduate decreased or remained the same at each degree level in the past decade. Out of the reporting programs in 2009, 37 associate level students, 880 bachelors, 58 masters, and one doctorate student were identified. In comparison, 116 associate level students, 1785 bachelors, 105 masters, and one doctorate student were expected to graduate in 1999. The decade from 1989 to 1999 revealed an increase in graduate students and a decrease in undergraduate students, when in 1989, 74, 1074, 210, and 13 students were identified at the associate, bachelor's, master's and doctorate levels,

respectively. In 1979, the highest numbers of graduating students per degree level were identified with 268 associate, 1795 bachelors, 296 masters, and 18 doctorates. In 1969, 111 bachelors, 86 masters, and three doctorate students were expected to graduate (no students at the associate level were reported). The percentage of female students expected to graduate has been reported for the past 20 years. In 1999 and 1989, all four degree levels were designated; however, in the current study, the results fell under the undergraduate, master's and doctorate levels. Over the past two decades, the percentage of females expected to graduate has always been the majority in all degree levels. In 2009, 82% of the undergraduate students were female, 81% masters, and 100% doctorate. In 1999 and 1989 correspondingly, 85% and 86% of the graduating associate degree students, 71% and 79% of the bachelors, 81% and 74% of the masters and 100% and 69% of the doctorate students were female.

Discussion

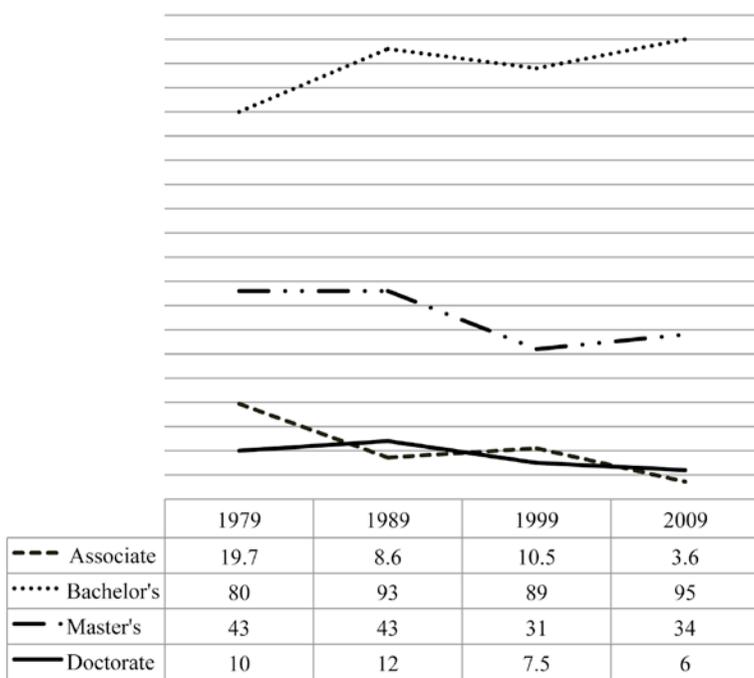
The final data sets of the TR Education Survey have fluctuated each decade in reported numbers of TR programs. While the method has remained relatively the same for each survey, one difference occurred in the current study. The questionnaire link was provided on-line through e-mail contact. Although this one difference was implemented, a comprehensive list of TR programs and sending multiple follow-up letters remained a part of the regiment of recruiting participants. The return rate was very good at 69% in comparison to 53% in 1999, 76% in 1989, and 91% in 1979. The reported number of TR programs in 1999 was at a high at 134. A decade later, the number fell to 83, the lowest reported number since 1969. Similarly, Stumbo et al. (2004b) reported their final numbers of participating institutions that offered 4-year TR curricula to be 114 in 1996 and

65 in 2003. Their recruitment procedures each time had remained the same as well. Reasons for such low numbers in Stumbo, Carter and Kim's 2003 study and in this current 2009 study are unknown. Since both of these research studies are comprehensive in recruiting TR programs to participate, the overall result of such low returns should be a major concern for therapeutic recreation in relation to curricula, faculty, students, and future practice.

Curricula

Several trends and concerns surrounding curricula developed out of the current study when comparing it to the past studies of 1999, 1989, 1979, and 1969. With the lowest number of reporting programs over the past 30 years, the results in 2009 also exhibited a decrease in programs at all degree levels (associate, bachelor's, master's and doctorate) as compared to the past three studies. However, after calculating the percent distribution at each level among reporting programs, the percent of bachelor's and master's degrees increased, while the percent of associate and doctorate degrees decreased (see Figure 4). In summary, while most of the degree levels have fluctuated in number and percent distribution over time, the doctorate programs have continued to decrease in number and percent over the past 40 years. In addition, in 1999 and 2009, there were no programs that anticipated offering new degrees at the doctorate level. In fact, two reporting programs that had doctorate programs in TR in 1999 no longer had programs in 2009. Another area of concern relates to the type of doctorate degree programs offered. In 1999, two-thirds of the doctorate programs offered a general degree with a TR option and one-third offered a general degree with TR courses. None offered an exclusive degree in TR. In 2009, all reporting doctorate programs offered only a general degree with TR courses. Additionally,

FIGURE 4. Number of programs offered at each degree level.



there were few reported courses at this level (an average of two doctorate TR courses per program). These results signify a definitive trend in the decline of doctorate programs in TR altogether and the type of curricula offered at this level. This trend is the first in a series of intertwining trends related to faculty and students that will have a major impact on the education and standards of delivery in TR in the future.

Additional notable trends were observed from the curricula data. They include: administrative location and titles of curricula; undergraduate characteristics involving TR courses, type of program, accreditation and distance learning; and master's degree characteristics involving the type of program, new programs and distance learning.

It would be difficult to distinguish what started first, a change in a curricu-

lum title or a movement toward a specific administrative location. Does a change in title happen because a curriculum moves to a new administrative location or does changing the title of a curriculum influence its movement to a new location especially when many programs, colleges, and universities are being restructured? Whatever the case, two interesting observations evolved from the current data as compared to 1999. In 2009, a 7% increase occurred where TR or RT was used in the title of curricula. While the general use of the terms "recreation" and "leisure" were still prominent among curricula titles, 2009 revealed the highest percentage of programs (16%) with TR or RT in the title in the history of the survey. At the same time, a change in administrative location to Health Sciences/Health Professions is notable when comparing the 1999 and 2009 administrative

locations of curricula. This trend became more prominent after a recalculation was conducted, using the same coding system for the locations for both years. The results from the recalculations showed minimal decreases from 1999 to 2009 in the percent distribution of programs located under Education, Arts and Sciences, Health and Human Performance, and Health and Human Services/Development. Specifically, a 4% decrease from 1999 to 2009 in distribution each occurred in Physical Education and "other" locations and the rest each revealed only a 1% decrease. However, a notable increase of 12% from 1999 to 2009 in the distribution of programs occurred within the administrative location of Health Sciences/Health Professions. In fact, with the decrease over the past decade from 134 to 83 in the overall number of reporting programs, there were paralleled number decreases in each of the above mentioned administrative locations except for Health Sciences/Health Professions. This category increased in the number of programs. When the categories were rank ordered, Education was the administrative location ranked with the highest number of programs in 1999 and 2009. Health Sciences/Health Professions was ranked last in 1999; however, 10 years later, it was ranked as the second highest location. In summary, the trend of curricula titles including TR or RT and for curricula to be located administratively in Health Sciences/Health Professions occurred over the past 10 years.

Another trend that is known to be influenced by a broader change in the field of TR is the increase in the number of courses required in curricula. Two phases of changes to standards set by NCTRC in the past decade changed the requirement of the number of TR courses from 1) three to four for those students graduating by 2007 and 2) four to five for those students graduating by 2013 (National Council for Therapeutic

Recreation Certification, 2003; 2009). Standards regarding the content of TR courses were also introduced. Implications for TR programs that provide pre-service training for TR certification involved adding courses and/or re-organizing curricula to meet such requirements by fall 2003 and 2009 at the earliest if they were admitting freshmen into their TR program. Freshmen students would need to matriculate with the "new" curricula and graduate with the necessary courses and content in 2007 and 2013.

As a result of the additional TR course and content standards from NCTRC, the data from the current study, in comparison to 1999, revealed an increase of almost two TR courses offered and required per program. While most programs increased courses and content meeting these certification standards, some programs offered and required more courses than NCTRC requires. In the current study, 52% of the programs *offered* a range of 6-15 TR courses. In addition, 37% of the programs in the current study *required* a range of 6-15 TR courses for their students, where 21% required 6-10 and 16% required 11-15 courses. Of the 63% programs that required a range of one to five courses, 28% required five. Since the current study asked respondents to list all TR courses including new TR courses starting fall 2009, this means 35% (29) of the 82 reporting programs required less than NCTRC standards if they were to make a matriculation deadline of fall 2009 for the class of 2013.

If NCTRC standards are used as a gauge and are an influencing factor on the number of courses required in TR curricula, the fact that 37% of the programs required more than five courses at this point is notable in relation to the type of programs offered at the undergraduate level. The results revealed an increase from 1999 to 2009 in programs that offered general rec-

recreation degrees with a TR option and those that offered degrees exclusively in TR/RT. Curricula have been moving away from offering general undergraduate degrees in recreation with just TR courses. An option (emphasis, concentration, etc.) or degree in TR would be comprised of more TR courses and would be more structured and formal than a degree with just TR courses. The structure and formality of an option or degree may provide more depth within and acknowledgment towards the professional preparation of TR students. However, the current study revealed a related but conflicting trend within undergraduate education. From 1999 to 2009 the number of TR options accredited by NRPA COA decreased. In 1999, 39 programs had their TR option accredited. This number decreased to 24 in 2009. Similarly, the reported data from Stumbo et al. (2004b), revealed a decrease of 23 accredited TR options in 1996 to 19 in 2003. However, they reported an increase in the percentage across participating programs with accredited TR options from 1996 to 2003. The current study revealed a decrease in the percentage as well as the number of participating programs with accredited TR options from 1999 to 2009. With conflicting results and interpretations in the current study in comparison to those in Stumbo et al. (2004b), further research and in-depth inquiry is recommended on the complexities surrounding accreditation.

Another phenomenon surrounding undergraduate education focused on distance learning. In 1999, 10 programs offered distance learning for degree seeking students in TR at the bachelor's level. In 2009, this number increased to 19. In addition, four of these 16 offered their entire undergraduate TR program online. In 1999, two programs planned to offer distance learning opportunities in the future at the bachelor's level. In 2009, this number in-

creased to 21. In contrast, the number of programs that offered or planned distance education opportunities for continuing education purposes decreased from 1999 to 2009. According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center of Education Statistics (2009), 65% of universities offered college level credit granting distance education courses in 2007. In summary, and parallel to this national trend, a notable trend towards more TR programs offering online courses related to degree requirements in TR has occurred.

Graduate curricula at the master's level are also a focus for several trends. The overall number of master's programs decreased from 41 in 1999 to 25 in 2009 while the percent distribution among reporting programs increased from 31% in 1999 to 34% in 2009. This increase in distribution was influenced by a shift away from associate and doctorate level degrees as discussed earlier (see Figures 1 and 4). In relation to the type of program offered, the percent of programs with exclusive degrees in TR at the master's level increased in the past decade; however, the percent of programs that offered general recreation degrees with TR options and with TR courses decreased. While the programs that offered distance education opportunities at the master's level decreased over the past decade, programs that planned to offer them in the future increased. Developing on-line opportunities remains to be an important trend when providing graduate opportunities to those practitioners who are working full-time or who do not live close to a university. Overall, the master's level data, in comparison to the other degree levels, revealed more positive results longitudinally. In fact, eight programs anticipated offering additional degrees at the master's level in 2009. However, concerns still arise for the future of education in TR. While doctorate degree programs are on the decrease and

master's degrees are stable and potentially increasing, the terminal degree in TR held by future TR faculty in higher education may be at the master's level. If so, a terminal degree at the doctorate level for faculty in TR programs would occur outside the discipline. The next section provides additional trends focusing on TR faculty.

Faculty

Notable trends that emerged from the data on faculty focus on demographics, major field of study, terminal degrees, tenure, rank, and various results surrounding faculty positions. While statistics surrounding the average number of full-time faculty per program, the percent of females, the number of courses taught per faculty per year, and the percent of faculty certified as CTRs, have remained stable over the past decade, changes in the aforementioned areas are important to discuss. In relation to demographics, TR programs have reported an increase in diversity in full-time faculty regarding race and disability. Minority TR faculty increased from 7% in 1999 to 9% in 2009 and TR faculty with disabilities increased from 5% in 1999 to 8% in 2009. Nationally, the U.S. Department of Education (2009) reported 17.3% of full-time faculty were minority in 2007 and the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (2009) reported 18.4% for the employment-population ratio for persons with a disability in November 2009. While these demographic changes surrounding TR faculty were not considerable and the current results are less than the national statistics, they are areas to monitor in the future especially when projecting the recruitment of students of minority and disabilities to TR programs at all degree levels.

The previous projection of the need to potentially recruit faculty with doctorate degrees outside of TR may be a trend to pay attention to in higher education in the future. However, the current study revealed

that in 2009 the major field of study for faculty (part-time and full-time) was primarily therapeutic recreation versus general recreation, education, physical education, or "other". More specifically, the TR category increased substantially from 53% in 1999 to 82% in 2009. In addition, the percent of full-time faculty with doctorates has increased while the percent with master's degrees has decreased as observed over the past 20 years. Overall, these results reveal a trend that more TR curricula have been taught by full-time faculty with doctorate degrees, and their major field of study is TR. In addition, the results showed an 8% increase in the percent of tenured full-time faculty in the past decade. The tenure figures paralleled the rank of full-time faculty where associate professors increased from 25% in 1999 to 34% in 2009.

Other results concerning rank revealed more long term trends in full, associate, and assistant professors as well. While the percent of associate and assistant professors have fluctuated up or down from decade to decade for the past 30 years, the percent of full professors has always been on the rise since 1979. Most specifically, over the past decade, the full and associate professors rose by 3% and 9%, respectively, and the assistant professors decreased by 12%. With the oncoming retirement of many full professors of the baby boomer generation, it is a positive trend for the near future that the percent of associate professors increased; however, it is a concern for the far future that the percent of assistant professors did not. In fact, they had the highest percent change of all three ranks, and this change was a decrease, the opposite direction needed for growth of TR education.

Another cause of concern related to the future viability of TR full-time faculty is related to questions surrounding faculty positions. A decade ago, 17 programs

(14%) indicated that they were planning to add one new full-time faculty in the fall as compared to five programs (6%) in 2009. This decrease combined with the reported loss of 22 full-time faculty positions in the last 10 years, is an indicator that the percent of assistant professor positions will most likely not increase within the next decade. More so, 28% of the programs had difficulty filling full-time TR faculty positions in the past 10 years. With this said, the current questionnaire asked the participants to further explain their loss or difficulty in filling positions in their programs. Participants reported detailed concerns about their positions, but more notable was the possible and known eliminations of their entire program. Six programs in the current study indicated their TR programs were likely to be eliminated in the near future and two additional programs reported that elimination of their programs was already announced by the administration. As an aside, this does not include the TR programs that did not participate in the current study due to their closure/elimination over the past 10 years. Of the eight programs that reported possible and definite closures, the major reasons offered were they cannot meet the NCTRC's new fifth course requirement because they lack the resources to offer the additional courses. The reason for limited resources is a shortage of faculty due to retirement and difficulty in hiring qualified TR faculty which is due to a limited pool of applicants. The current economic situation's effect on higher education budgets is also affecting losses in faculty positions because administrators are cutting positions and programs with low FTEs, where they see a lower enrollment in TR students per TR full-time faculty. The next section will provide additional trends focusing on students.

Students

In 1968, the average number of enrolled students per reporting TR program was 15. Since then, over the past 30 years, the average number of enrolled students per reporting program has been in the 40s and 50s. The same consistency existed with students who were expected to graduate where the number has remained in the teens. When 1999 was compared to 2009, the results revealed that the average number of enrolled students per program had decreased by 11 over the past 10 years. This drop was further found at the bachelor's level. For students expected to graduate, a drop in the average number per program was calculated at the associate and bachelor's levels.

Overall, TR has seen an increase in female students at all degree levels over the past 20 years that demographic data have been reported in the survey. The following trends focus on the past decade. While the percent of enrolled female students remained stable at the undergraduate level, the master's level increased from 76% in 1999 to 83% in 2009 and doctorate females increased from 62% in 1999 to 78% in 2009. These percents are above the national statistics. The U.S. Department of Education (2009) reported 60% of enrolled graduate students in 2007 were female. In fact, the undergraduate percents were above the national statistics by 20%. Likewise, the percent of TR female students expected to graduate were above the national statistics at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Other demographic trends focused on race and disability of enrolled students and ran parallel to those demographics discussed on full-time faculty. Small increases have occurred. Overall, while the U.S. Department of Education (2009) reported a higher percentage (32%) of minority enrolled students in 2007 than the

percentage (27%) of enrolled minority TR students in the current study, TR programs still attracted 7% more minority students than in 1999. Enrolled TR students with disabilities increased as well from 3% in 1999 to 7% in 2009. This was a little under national statistics where the U.S. Department of Education (2009) reported 11.3% of undergraduate students with disabilities in 2003-04.

The most significant and important trend surrounding enrolled and graduating students concerns doctorate students. In reviewing the overall numbers for the past 30 years, in 1979 there were 94 enrolled doctorate students to 18 graduating, in 1989 65:13, in 1999 21:1, and in 2009 9:1. In 1999, there were 17 new TR positions and one graduating student. In 2009, the ratio was five new positions to one graduating student, plus, as explained by 28% of the reporting programs, there were numerous positions not filled in the past due to a lack of qualified doctorate applicants. Per the 1999 study, Anderson et al. (2000) shared concern about this trend. This ongoing trend is a grave concern today as the cohort of baby boomer faculty will begin retiring in the next decade. To summarize, a decrease in doctorate programs, a decrease in new positions, and a decrease in doctorate students has occurred. As a consequence, the academic field of TR has already seen and will continue to see difficulty filling open faculty positions, elimination of programs, hiring more part-time faculty with master's degrees, and hiring faculty with doctorate degrees outside the discipline. Where does this leave TR in a higher education system faced with budget cuts and restructuring? How will this affect pre-service training of practitioners in TR? How will this affect research to document the outcomes of TR services?

The purpose of this survey, over 40 years, has been to identify trends. While

some reflect stability and growth, other trends have revealed instability and decline to the point where programs are struggling and being eliminated. The latter is where TR needs to pay more attention because 10 years from now the current programs that are viable might be in the same position as the struggling ones. What can be done to turn these escalating and ominous trends around so more optimistic results about the future of TR education and practice can be observed in the future?

Conclusion

The number of therapeutic recreation curricula has fluctuated each decade showing an increase followed by a decrease, and an increase followed again by a decrease. Some of the variance can be explained by the number of programs reporting each 10 years. However, an obvious decrease in TR graduate education has occurred - especially at the doctorate level. Moreover, in 1999 and 2009, no program reported developing a new doctorate in TR. If this continues, a doctorate degree outside the discipline will most likely occur for TR faculty. The administrative location of the TR programs is also interesting. The trend of therapeutic recreation programs cycling between education and health has occurred historically. And there has been a continual move away from the TR option accreditation. New certification standards are impacting TR curricula. Of the eight programs that reported possible and definite closures, the major reasons offered were they could not meet the NCTRC's new fifth course requirement because they lack the resources to offer the additional courses. The reason for limited resources is a shortage of full-time faculty due to retirement and difficulty in hiring qualified TR faculty, which is due to a limited pool of applicants. Five new TR faculty lines were planned for this year. However, as mentioned above, within the past 10 years, 21 (28%) of the programs had dif-

faculty filling full-time TR faculty positions and 22 lines were actually lost.

Anderson and Stewart (1980) first expressed concerns about the low number of doctorate students and 20 years later Anderson et al. (2000) commented on the subject again. The number of doctorate students has decreased from 94 in 1979 to nine in the current study. Furthermore, only one doctorate student is expected to graduate this year, with five new faculty lines planned. This trend will most likely result in hiring faculty with terminal degrees in other disciplines—or hiring none at all. This can only be expected to worsen as the baby boomer faculty begin retiring.

While the TR profession continues to debate separate TR accreditation, more courses to meet higher certification standards, and the never ending topic of two professional organizations, TR education appears to be struggling in some areas. Given the multiple issues facing the profession, there is none more important than professional education—especially when it impacts the profession in so many ways.

In conclusion, this study pointed out some positive aspects about TR education and some very disconcerting areas as well. The authors draw your attention to these concerns—especially the doctorate situation—and ask the profession to focus on them. Endless disputation about other issues, while neglecting these concerns, might someday find us without TR education.

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