

**Eastern Illinois University**  
**EIU 4121G, The American Perspective**

**1. Catalog Description**

- A. Course level: EIU 4121G
- B. Title: Leisure Time: The American Perspective
- C. Credit 3-0-3
- D. Term to be offered F, S, Su
- E. Short title: Leisure Time
- F. Course Description: Leisure is recognized as a basic component of the American lifestyle. Leisure is studied by psychologists, sociologists, economists, physicians, professional educators, and the business community. This course explores the nature of leisure time from these perspectives.
- G. Recreation Administration and Physical Education majors are excluded
- H. Course is writing intensive

**2. Student learning objectives:**

- \*To develop an understanding of the difference between leisure, recreation and play. CT (Critical Thinking)
- \*To have students utilize effective communication tools, including written reports, oral reports and class discussion. EL -OR (Enhancing Literacy-Oral Communication)
- \*To develop an understanding of leisure throughout the life cycle. CT (Critical Thinking)
- \*To discuss the major issues, which focus on contemporary leisure. CT (Critical Thinking)
- \*To engage in dialogue about the effects of leisure on personal relationships. EL-OC (Enhancing Literacy-Oral Communication)
- \*To learn the value of leisure time in modern society. CT (Critical Thinking)
- \*To learn how and why leisure is shaped by gender, class and culture. GC & CT (Global Citizenship & Critical Thinking)
- \*To conduct research using both primary and secondary sources. EL (Enhancing Literacy)

**3. Course Outline**

This course is designed to reflect many of the current issues that have emerged in contemporary society. Leisure is seen to be constructed from a wide diversity of cultural elements. During this course students will be exposed to a variety of these contemporary issues.

- Week 1 & 2 Introduction to the course, evaluation, and overview of the semester.  
Introduction to the concept of leisure in our modern society, its origins, various definitions and principles applied to leisure time.
- Week 3 Social Nature of Leisure
  - 1. Leisure is learned behavior
  - 2. Leisure is cultural and social
  - 3. Leisure has roles and expectations
- Week 4 Leisure and the Life Course: Children and Youth
  - 1. Childhood and play
  - 2. Youth, recreation and leisure

Week 5	Leisure and the Life Course: Adulthood and aging 1. Adulthood: Age and developmental changes 2. Later life and aging
Week 6	Leisure and work issues 1. The impacts of the industrial revolution 2. Work and leisure today 3. Vacation and holidays through-out the world
Week 7	Gender, Recreation and Leisure 1. Issues of girls and boys 2. Women and men 3. The perception of women as the social organizers
Week 8	Impacts of Ethnicity, Race and Social Class 1. Stereotypes and inequities of ethnic groups 2. Leisure and social class
Week 9	Popular culture and Mass Media 1. Popular culture defined 2. Print, visual, and auditory media
Week 10	Outdoor Recreation Resources 1. National resources providers 2. Activities in natural resource settings 3. Conflicts between users, developers, and preservers
Week 11	Recreation Opportunities in the Community 1. Public parks and recreation 2. Commercial agencies 3. Not-for profit agencies in local communities
Week 12	University assessment activities (not graded)
Week 13	Travel and Tourism 1. Social and cultural impacts of eco-tourism 2. Styles of travelers
Week 14	The World of Indulgent Leisure 1. Substance use as a social activity 2. Gambling 3. Violence in sport as a participant or spectator
Week 15	The Problems, Trends and Future of Recreation 1. Impacts of technology on leisure 2. Economic and cultural globalization

**4. Evaluation of student learning.**

- A. 1. Students will write summaries on carefully selected readings that demonstrate key issues in the study of leisure. This course revolves more around the issues than the results of research and theory building.

2. A schedule of debates for the term will be drawn up. Students can then sign up for the “yes” or “no” side for at least one debate. Each team presents its side of the debate to initiate class discussion. Teams should search for material and evidence outside the text.

- B. Each student will write a research paper on cultural diversity in leisure. The course evaluation indicates that over 55% of the final grade result from writing assignments.

Term paper	35%
Written summaries	20%
Class participation and discussion	25%
Student debates	

20%

100%

Each student will write a research paper on cultural diversity in leisure. The research paper will be returned to the students after preliminary evaluation for further revision before it is graded.

**5. Rationale**

- A. General Education Segment: Senior Seminar
- B. Prerequisite: 75 hours completed
- C. Similarity to existing courses: none
- D. Course will not be required in any majors or programs other than general education senior seminar

**6. Implementation**

- A. Initial instructor: William A. Smith
- B. Textbook  
Kelly, John R., Freysinger, Valeria J., (2000) 21st Century Leisure: Current Issues.  
Needham Heights, Massachusetts: A Pearson Education Company.
- C. Additional costs: none
- D. Term first offered: Fall 2001

**7. Community College Transfer: not applicable**

**8. Date approved by Department: 4-14-2000**

**9. Date approved by College Curriculum Committee: 4-24-2000**

**10. Date approved by Senior Seminar Advisory Committee: 11-13-2000**

**11. Date approved by CAA: 12-7-00**

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