



Sustainable Parks and Recreation Community Initiative (SPARCI)



Purpose of Project

The SPARCI Project is a partnership between Fresno State's Department of Recreation Administration and parks and recreation agencies in the San Joaquin Valley. For Spring 2016, the City of Fresno Parks, After School, Recreation and Community Services (PARCS) Department partnered with SPARCI to address a number of concerns, issues and opportunities for improving the quality of life in Fresno.

Students and faculty connect with high-priority, high-need community projects, thereby generating interest and fresh ideas that create momentum and provide real service to the community. The interface provided by students and faculty provide an avenue for the city to engage the community on a controversial issue. Presently, we have 19 courses (14 RA courses and 5 other Fresno State courses) involved in the project.



An Integrated Community Engagement Curriculum Program

Outcomes and Goals

The SPARCI Project promotes student success by providing Recreation Administration and other classes on campus with opportunities for applied learning, service in local communities, and research. Students in these classes engage in meaningful work that helps address a city's key sustainability challenges related to parks and recreation. Students acquire skills and experiences that they can list on their resumes; and they develop a professional network while working to solve issues.

Rationale for the Project

The SPARCI Project embodies the University's commitment to serving students, engaging alumni, and contributing to the public good by focusing thousands of hours of course-based student involvement with high-impact activities in a community in the valley. The program allows students to:

- create solutions to meet community needs; and
- work with a diverse audience in the community.

Cities, counties and special districts are challenged to meet community needs, service delivery, and new demands of sustainability. Course projects are tied directly to the work plan of the city/county/special district, ensuring products are meaningful and student work is focused on real world problems. The ideas, designs, products, and service students generate can have real-world impact by addressing critical but unmet community needs.

For additional information:

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