



### **BEST PAPER AWARD TIMELINE**

Each award is offered every other year.

|      |                       |
|------|-----------------------|
| 2012 | Doctoral Dissertation |
| 2013 | Best Paper            |
| 2014 | Doctoral Dissertation |
| 2015 | Best Paper            |
| 2016 | Doctoral Dissertation |
| 2017 | Best Paper            |

One year prior to the award year, a Doctoral Dissertation and Best Papers Awards Chair and Committee will be selected for a minimum of a two year cycle.

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| April 15          | Deadline for submission of Executive Summary.  |
| June 1            | Evaluation of Executive Summary completed by committee and narrowed to three (3) entries   |
| July 1            | Top three (3) entries will submit full dissertation/paper  |
| August 1          | Evaluation of the three (3) papers completed and winner notified.  |
| September/October | Presentation of winning paper and certificate of merit awards at Academy's Business Meeting during the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA) Conference. |



## **BEST PAPER AWARD CRITERIA**

### **AWARDS**

The following three awards will be given:

- One (1) Best Student Paper Award of \$500 plus expenses of up to \$250 for the author to travel to the Academy's Annual Meeting to receive the award and present the paper
- Published in *Parks & Recreation Magazine*
- Certificate of Merit awards to the two (2) next best student papers submitted

### **ELIGIBILITY**

1. A student paper refers to either a master's thesis or a major professional paper written in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a master's degree; or to a senior undergraduate thesis written in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a baccalaureate degree or similar qualification.
2. The paper must have been completed in the previous two (2) calendar years.
3. The paper should make a contribution to scholarly literature and have clear implications for the improved practice of park and recreation administration.
4. Papers written by students who were pursuing a doctoral degree at the time the paper was written are not eligible.
5. The writer of the winning paper must personally attend the Academy's annual meeting during the National Recreation and Park Association's Annual Congress and present a five (5) minute synopsis of his or her paper.

### **ENTRY PROCEDURE**

1. An electronic copy of an executive summary of the paper, **not exceeding 1000 words** should be submitted to the Chair of the Academy's Best Paper Award Committee. Summaries exceeding this word limit will not be considered.
2. The title should appear on the executive summary but not the student's name or affiliation. The executive summary should have a separate cover page including: the title; student's name, current address and phone number; guiding professor's name, current address and phone number; and date on which the paper was completed.
3. A blind review of the executive summary will be undertaken by the Academy's Committee.

4. Writers of the three (3) executive summaries that receive the highest ratings will be requested to submit two (2) full electronic copies of their paper to the Committee Chair. The committee will then review each paper and announce the results.

### **CRITERIA**

A committee of Academy members will evaluate the papers with the following criteria using the weighted scoring system:

1. **RELATIONSHIP TO PARK AND RECREATION ADMINISTRATION** (15 pts)  
The subject matter must relate to park and recreation administration in some way. While it may use a separate disciplinary approach – for example, management, marketing, economics, financing, evaluation, or social psychology – it must have relevance to park and recreation administration in the broad context. Given these parameters, is the topic timely and of importance?
2. **QUALITY OF THE PROBLEM DEVELOPMENT** (25 pts)  
The methodology should be clearly presented and demonstrate knowledge of techniques appropriate to the research and its objectives (research questions, hypotheses). Methodological quality should be judged in the context of the discipline and appropriateness to the study. For example, economic studies are likely to utilize a different methodology from those pertaining to management. Similarly, case study, quantitative, historical, and phenomenological studies will adopt different methodologies.
3. **CREATIVE APPROACH** (20 pts)  
The study should make a creative contribution to the discipline and/or profession. Does the study examine a new problem? Does the study make a creative contribution to the knowledge of park and recreation administration? Does the study use new techniques to examine an old problem? Does the study extend the topic beyond our present understanding?
4. **USEFULNESS AND APPLICABILITY** (20 pts)  
While the development of theory is important, the study should have implications for the improved practice of park and recreation administration. This criterion is concerned with measuring the application to practice.
5. **QUALITY OF PRESENTATION** (20 pts)  
The quality of the writing, including readability and use of graphics, is measured by this criterion. Although technical jargon may be necessary, practitioners should understand the writing. Overall organization, continuity and clarity, along with the quality of the style and grammar fall within this criterion.