



## Announcing 2022 Best Paper Award (Doctoral Dissertation)

AAPRA commits to promote, nourish, and embody an inclusive and equitable environment, strengthen our commitment to promote justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, combat systemic and structural racism, and promote a culture of equality for all, through our knowledge advancement, research, education, and scholarly efforts.

In support of its research goals, AAPRA annually hosts a research competition that alternates between best master's thesis (odd years) and best doctoral dissertation (even years).

The following three awards will be given:

- One (1) Doctoral Dissertation Award of \$1,000 and up to \$500 in travel funds to attend the NRPA 2022 Annual Conference in Phoenix, AZ (Note: if AAPRA does not hold in-person events at the NRPA Conference or if the selected awardee is unable to attend, the travel support will not be provided)
- Two (2) Certificate of Merit awards to the two "Best Doctoral Dissertation" finalists

[Apply Here](#)

### 2022 Timeline

- April 11 :** Call for papers (doctoral dissertation only)
- June 3:** Deadline to submit electronic executive summaries
- June 27:** Evaluation of the executive summaries & narrowed to three (3)
- July 11:** Top three (3) entries will submit full doctoral dissertation electronically
- Aug 15:** Evaluation of three (3) dissertations completed and awardees notified
- Aug 22:** Awardees/non-awardees notified
- Sept (TBD):** Presentation of awarded paper made to AAPRA (either in person or virtually)

# Best Paper Award Eligibility

1. The submission must have been written in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a doctoral degree.
2. The submission must have been completed within the previous two (2) calendar years and including spring semester of the current year. For the 2022 award, eligible dissertations are those completed in 2020, 2021, and Spring 2022.
3. The submission should make a contribution to scholarly literature and have clear implications for the improved practice of park and recreation administration.
4. The author of the awarded dissertation must provide a 5-minute synopsis of their doctoral dissertation (and its implications for the profession) for presentation to the Academy membership either in person or virtually.

## Criteria

The papers are evaluated using a weighted scoring system with the following criteria:

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 – 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 should demonstrate knowledge of techniques appropriate to the research and its objectives. Methodological quality should be judged in the context of the discipline and type of study which is most appropriate.
3. **CREATIVE APPROACH** (20 pts): The study should make a creative contribution. 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 beyond present understanding of the topic?
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 practicability.

5. **QUALITY OF PRESENTATION** (20 pts): The quality of the writing, including readability and use of graphics, is measured by this criterion. Technical jargon may be necessary, but the writing should be understood by practitioners. The organization, continuity and clarity, are of concern together with the quality of the style and grammar.

## Entry Procedure

Submit [online application](#) by June 3, 2022 with the appropriate files.

1. Cover page listing the title of the doctoral dissertation; student's name, current mailing address, e-mail address and phone number; academic advisor's name, e-mail address, and phone number; date on which the submission was completed; and date the degree requirements were completed.
2. The executive summary of the paper, not exceeding 1000 words; title of doctoral dissertation should be on every page of the summary

Writers of the three (3) executive summaries which receive the highest ratings will be requested to submit a full electronic copy of their doctoral dissertation to the Committee Chair no later than July 11th. The committee will review each entry, select the winner, and announce the results. The final awardees / non-awardees will be notified toward the end of August.

Questions? Contact Dr. Denise Anderson, AAPRA Best Paper Committee Chair; [dander2@clermson.edu](mailto:dander2@clermson.edu); 864.656.5679.

American Academy for Park & Recreation Administration  
*To Inspire, Influence and Advance the Park and Recreation Profession*  
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