

Christopher N. L. (Nathan) Williams
North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC
Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management
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Education

Ph.D., Educational Leadership, Policy, and Human Development August 2020
North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC
Dissertation Title: The Power of Campfire Spaces for Diversity Education: A Case Study
Analysis of the Diversity and Inclusion adVenture Experience Program (Chair: Dr. Joy
Gayles)

M.Ed., College Student Affairs Administration May 2013
University of Georgia, Athens, GA

B.A.Sc., Recreation - Outdoor Education, *summa cum laude* May 2011
University of Minnesota, Duluth, MN

Experience

Assistant Teaching Professor and Advisor 2021 – Present
North Carolina State University - Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management

Assistant Director, Outdoor Adventures 2015 – 2021
North Carolina State University - Wellness and Recreation

Co-Founder and Owner 2019 – Present
Current Wellness, Raleigh NC

Adventure Recreation Coordinator 2013 – 2015
University of North Carolina Wilmington - Campus Recreation

Graduate Assistant for Outdoor Recreation 2011 – 2013
University of Georgia - Department of Recreational Sports

Outdoor Education Instructor 2009 – 2010
North Carolina Outward Bound School

Web Developer 2005 – 2009
University of Wisconsin - Division of University Housing

Web Developer 2003 – 2005
University of Wisconsin - Biotechnology Center

Teaching Experience

Undergraduate Courses:

PRT 152: Introduction to Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Event Management North Carolina State University	Fall 2021 - Present
PRT 250: Facilities Management in Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Event Management North Carolina State University	Fall 2021 - Present
PRT 280: Explorations in Virtual Recreation and Esports North Carolina State University	Spring 2025 - Present
PRT 358: Recreation Program Planning North Carolina State University	Fall 2021 - Present
PRT 214: Introduction to Adventure Education Invited Guest Lecture: Careers in Campus and Outdoor Recreation North Carolina State University	Fall 2017, 2018, 2019
PRT 350: Outdoor Recreation Management Invited Guest Lecture: Career Paths in Outdoor Recreation North Carolina State University	Fall & Spring, 2018-2019
PRT 380: Analysis and Evaluation in Parks and Recreation Invited Guest Lecture: Assessment in Wellness and Recreation North Carolina State University	Fall 2018, 2019
PRT 238: Diversity and Inclusion in Recreation and Sport Invited Guest Lecture: Diversity and Inclusion in University Recreation North Carolina State University	Fall 2017
USC 225: Leadership Development for University Ambassadors Invited Guest Lecture: Leadership through Outdoor Recreation North Carolina State University	Fall 2017, 2018
PSY 312: Applied Psychology Invited Guest Lecture: Outdoor Recreation and The Brain North Carolina State University	Fall 2016, 2017

Graduate Courses:

EAC 542: Student Characteristics and the College Environment Co-Instructor with Dr. Joy Gayles North Carolina State University	Spring 2019
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ED 795: Diversity and Equity in Schools and Communities Co-Instructor with Drs. Sylvia Nassar and Cameron Denson North Carolina State University	Fall 2018
EAC 795: Foundations of Higher Education Research & Scholarship Invited Guest Lecture: Qualitative Research Methods North Carolina State University	Fall 2019
REC 362: North Carolina Coastal Issues and Experience Teaching Assistant and Expedition Co-Leader with Drs. Jim Herstine & Jennifer Biddle University of North Carolina Wilmington	Spring 2015

Course Evaluations

Notable Student Comments:

- “You can tell Professor Williams is passionate about his students, the material, and the field. This is obvious and that's my most favorite thing about the class.”
- “Dr. Williams is a wonderful professor and makes things so easy to learn. I feel like it is a family environment.”
- “[Nathan's instruction] is a teaching method that I can't say I've experienced yet, but it fosters a great classroom climate. Every class I see people who outside of class would never have been interested, or even talk to the other student, but I see it happen everyday.”

Media Appearances

White, K. (2024, December 19). Five Ways to Expand Accessibility in Outdoor Workforce Development. *OPEN Space: The official blog & podcast of NRPA*.
<https://www.nrpa.org/blog/five-ways-to-expand-accessibility-in-outdoor-workforce-development/>

Gosalvez, E. (2024, November 7). Susannah Weaver Explores Lifelong Passion for the Outdoors. *NC State University College of Natural Resources News*.
<https://cnr.ncsu.edu/news/2024/11/susannah-weaver-explores-lifelong-passion-for-the-outdoors/>

Reeve-Parker, N. (2024, March 27). Immersive VR Tours Promote Inclusive Recreation. *NC State University DELTA News*.
<https://news.delta.ncsu.edu/2024/03/27/immersive-vr-tours-promote-inclusive-recreation/>

Tips for Teaching in a Pandemic. (2021, December 2). *NC State University Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management News*.
<https://cnr.ncsu.edu/prtm/2021/12/02/tips-for-teaching-in-a-pandemic/>

Grants

See Insights/VaridX Live Data Sensor Donation for Digital Twins Project (\$14,000)	2026
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NC State University OASIS Academic Innovation Accelerator (\$25,000) (Collaborative grant, Kyle Bunds - PI)	2025-2026
NC State University DELTA Exploratory Grant (\$8,000)	2025
NC State University DELTA Exploratory Grant (\$8,000)	2023
NC State University Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Institute (\$1,250)	2023
NC State University Libraries Alt-Textbook Grant (\$2,500)	2023
NC State University DELTA Exploratory Grant (\$8,000)	2022
Downtown Raleigh Alliance COVID Pivot Grant (for Current Wellness - \$3,500)	2020
City of Raleigh Building UpFit Grant (for Current Wellness - \$25,000)	2020
NC State University Sustainability Fund Grant (\$10,000)	2019
Morris K. Udall Undergraduate Scholarship Award (\$5,000)	2010 – 2011
Richard and Carol Flint Environmental Scholarship Award (\$10,000)	2009 – 2011
Bohannon Merit Scholarship Award (\$800)	2010 – 2011
Undergraduate Research Opportunities Award (\$1,700)	2009

Refereed Publications

Journal Articles & Abstracts:

Williams, N. (2025). Why aren't we building parks in the metaverse. *Leisure Studies*, 1-19.

Williams, N. (2025). Review of the book *Routledge handbook of mobile technology, social media and the outdoors*, edited by S. K. Beames & P. T. Maher. *Leisure Studies*.

Williams, N. (2024). "Nature Environments Without Actually Being There": Virtual Recreation Experiences and Real-World Intentions. *Journal of Experiential Education*, 47(2), 295-300.

Williams, N. (2022). The power of campfire spaces for diversity education: A case study analysis of a diversity-focused outdoor trips program. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education and Leadership*, 14(2), 34-53.

Williams, N. (2022). Exploring outdoor recreation activities as a context for college student diversity experiences. *Recreational Sports Journal*, 46(1), 42-51.

Williams, N. (2020). College student experiences on diversity-focused outdoor adventure trips. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership*, 12(2), 241-244.

Andre, E. K., **Williams, N.**, Schwartz, F., & Bullard, C. (2017). Benefits of campus outdoor recreation programs: A review of the literature. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership*, 9(1), 15-25.

Book Chapter:

Pate, J., Anderson, M., & **Williams, N.** (2015). Benefits of outdoor adventure experiences on student learning and transformation. In P. A. Sasso, J. L. DeVitis (Eds.), *Today's college students: A reader* (pp. 385-398). New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Conference and Professional Presentations

Research:

Williams, N. (2023, Nov). “Nature environments without actually being there”: Virtual recreation experiences and real-world intentions. Association for Experiential Education Symposium on Experiential Education Research, Madison, WI.

Williams, N. (2020, March). Engaging with Diversity on College Outdoor Adventure Trips. American College Personnel Association (ACPA), Nashville, TN.

Williams, N. (2019, Nov). College Student Experiences on Diversity-Focused Outdoor Adventure Trips. Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education – Association for Experiential Education Joint Annual Conference Research Symposium, Spokane, WA.

Williams, N. (2010, April). The Effects of Freshmen Trips Participation on Student Engagement. National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Missoula, MT.

Teaching:

Williams, N. (2026, March). Creating a 360-Degree Virtual Reality Video Tour in Under 30 Minutes. NC State Conference on Faculty Excellence, Raleigh, NC.

Williams, N., Spencer, D., McKeown, C., Yalcinkaya, A. (2026, March). The Reality of Virtual Reality: Enhancing Experiential Learning in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism [Poster session]. NC State Conference on Faculty Excellence, Raleigh, NC.

Williams, N. (2026, Feb). Metaverse Skills for Leisure Scholars and Students. The Academy of Leisure Sciences, Philadelphia, PA.

Yalcinkaya, A., Cuares, M., **Williams, N.,** Acker, D., Ruffino, R. (2025, Oct). From Idea to Immersion Collaborative Efforts in VR Classroom Development. Educational Technology Collaborative Annual Conference, Raleigh, NC.

Williams, N. (2024, Mar). Get on the (virtual) bus! Using Virtual Reality Experiences to Enhance Learning in Courses. NC State Conference on Faculty Excellence, Raleigh, NC.

Williams, N. (2024, Jan). Student Explorers and Creators: Virtual Recreation in Recreation and Leisure Courses. The Academy of Leisure Sciences, New Orleans, LA.

Williams, N. (2023, Nov). Immersive Learning Without Limits: Creating 360-Degree Virtual Reality Experiences for Participant Engagement and Outcomes. Association for Experiential Education Annual Conference, Madison, WI.

Williams, N. (2023, Feb). When the Headset Comes Off: Facilitating Real-World Learning with Virtual Reality Experiences. American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Conference on General Education, Pedagogy, and Assessment, New Orleans, LA.

Williams, N. (2022, Nov). Expanding Your Educational Reach: Digital Media Making for “Wannabe” Creatives. Association for Experiential Education Annual Conference, Black Mountain, NC.

Williams, N. (2022, October). Virtual Recreation; Real Impact. SHIFT Summit, Fort Collins, CO.

Practitioner:

Williams, N. (2025, Sep). Using Virtual Reality to Build the Future of Real-World Parks. National Recreation and Parks Association Annual Conference, Orlando, FL.

Williams, N. (2022, Nov). Will we learn anything from the pandemic?!? Connecting the dots to a sustainable future for recreation professions. Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education Annual Conference, Myrtle Beach, SC.

Hauer, A., **Williams, N.** (2020, Oct). In Sickness and in Health: Leveraging Outdoor Professional Communities through Challenges. Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education. Virtual Conference.

Heiser, E., **Williams, N.**, Seevers, R. (2020, Oct). So You’re Getting a New Climbing Wall, Now What?!. Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education. Virtual Conference.

Williams, N. (2020, March). Expanding the Limits of (Virtual) Reality for Real-World Student Programs. ACPA, Nashville, TN.

Williams, N. (2019, Nov). The Virtual Mountains are Calling and I Must (Oculus) Go. Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education – Association for Experiential Education Joint Annual Conference, Spokane, WA.

Williams, N. (2017, Feb). Gearing Up for the Future, NIRSA, National Harbor, MD.

Williams, N., Gerbers, K. (2016, Nov). Combining Forces to Advance Collegiate Outdoor Recreation. Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education (AORE), Minneapolis, MN.

Williams, N., Gerbers, K. (2015, Nov). Is the Outdoors for Everyone? Addressing Class Barriers in Outdoor Recreation. National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) Region II Conference, Greenville, SC.

Williams, N., Gerbers, K. (2014, Nov). Solidifying the Core of Your Outdoor Program Marketing. Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education (AORE), Portland, OR.

Williams, N. (2014, Oct). Why Should I Care? Communicating Cornerstone Experiences in Interviews, Applications, and Leadership Situations. NIRSA Region II Conference, Richmond, VA.

Curtis, R., **Williams, N.** (2013, Nov). Solidifying the Core of Your Outdoor Program Marketing. AORE, College Park, MD.

Williams, N. (2013, Oct). Advocacy and the AORE: Ensuring the Future Success of Campus Outdoor Recreation. AORE, College Park, MD.

Williams, N. (2013, March). Expeditions in Outdoor Program Administration: Choosing a Staffing Model. NIRSA (as part of the NIRSA – ACPA Joint Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV).

Williams, N. (2013, March). Increasing Student Leadership Capacity through Outdoor Leadership. ACPA (as part of the NIRSA – ACPA Joint Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV).

Williams, N. (2012, Nov). Outdoor Programs Assessment in an Age of Accountability. AORE, Snowbird, UT.

Williams, N. (2012, Nov). Digital Storytelling for Social Justice. Association for Experiential Education, Madison, WI.

Williams, N., Fresk, K. (2012, March). Beyond the Buzzword: Understanding and Using Student Development Theory. NIRSA, Tampa Bay, FL. (*Also presented as an invited NIRSA webinar in November of 2012*).

Williams, N. (2012, March). Lessons from the Trail: Facilitating Reflection to Promote Student Leadership. ACPA, Louisville, KY.

Deus, T., **Williams, N.** (2012, Feb). Your Definality Not Quiet Their Yet (*presentation on professional communication*). Georgia Collegiate Leadership Conference, Athens, GA.

Zmudy, M., **Williams, N.** (2009, Nov). Urban Orienteering. AORE, Minneapolis, MN.

Williams, N. (2008, Nov). What a Great Idea! Now What? (*presentation on creating a first-year trips program*). AEE, Vancouver, WA.

Invited Panel Talks:

Williams, N. “Creating Cross-Disciplinary Platforms for Experiential Learning in the Library.” Designing Libraries for the 21st Century at North Carolina State University, October 27, 2024.

Poster Sessions:

Additional Experience

Fish Monger and Oyster Shucker Locals Seafood and Locals Oyster Bar	2017 – 2023
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Founding Co-Director University of Wisconsin - Wisconsin Basecamp outdoor orientation program	2006 – 2009
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Sea Kayaking Instructor Rutabaga - The Paddlesports Shop, Madison, WI	2006 – 2009
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Honors

University of Georgia Outstanding Student	2013
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University of Georgia Graduate School Emerging Leader	2012
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Service

University & Search Committees:

NC State Esports Steering Committee, 2026-present
College of Natural Resources Buzzard Leadership Program Committee, 2022-present
College of Natural Resources Teaching Awards Selection Committee, 2024-present
College of Natural Resources College Forests Committee, 2025-present
Natural Resources Foundation Forest Management Committee, 2025-present
PRTM Scholarship and Awards Committee, 2022-present (Chair, 2024-present)
PRTM Undergraduate Programs and Curriculum Committee, 2022-present
PRTM Peer Teaching Evaluation Committee, 2022-2024, 2025-present
Park Scholarships Final Selection Committee, 2026
College of Natural Resources Director of Continuing and Professional Education Search Committee, 2022
University Common Reading Program Committee (2018 – 2020)
Diversity and Inclusion Committee (2018 – 2021)
Division of Academic and Student Affairs Sense of Belonging Assessment Implementation Team (2019)
Search Committee Chair – Assistant Director, Aquatics (2021)
Search Committee – Assistant Director, New Student Programs (2019)
Search Committee – Assistant Director, Wellness (2018)

Student Supervision and Mentorship:

Park Scholar Faculty Mentor for Isaac Drown, 2022-2026

Course Consultations:

Assisted Dr. Samuel Sotillo with the development of 360-degree video filming for study abroad course, *WLSP 395: Study Abroad Programs in Spanish* (May, 2025)
Assisted Drs. Alice Lee and Michael Taveirne with the development of 360-degree video filming for study abroad course, *Plagues, History, and Public Health* (May, 2025)
Assisted Dr. Marcelo Ardon with the development of 360-degree video filming for course, *FOR 330: North Carolina Forests* (October, 2025)

Manuscript Review:

Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education and Leadership, Reviewer, 2018-present
Research Associate with Dr. Audrey Jaeger, Submission review (2017-2019) *Research in Higher Education*

Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education:

Board of Directors (2015-2017)
Diversity and Inclusion Task Force (2015-2016)
Research and Publications Committee (2011-2015)
Campus Outdoor Recreation Assessment and Accountability Task Force (Chair, 2011-2013)

Workshops & Other Events:

WPI Institute on Project-Based Learning, Worcester Polytechnic Institute (2025)
LeaderShape Cluster Facilitator, UNC Wilmington (2015)

Trainings and Certifications

NC State RED Core Teaching Certification	2021
NC State Advisor Development Institute	2021
NC State Inclusive Excellence Certificate	2021
Wilderness First Responder Certification	2007 - Present
First Aid/CPR/AED Instructor	2014 - 2018
C.T. Vivian Race Awareness Workshop	June 2016
Professional Climbing Instructors Association Climbing Wall Instructor	2010 - 2016
American Canoe Association Coastal Kayaking Instructor - Level 3	2006 - 2018
ACPA Student Affairs Assessment Institute	2012
Leadership Educators Institute	2012