

STRUCTURE AND OPERATION

This concentration is designed to empower participants in effectively managing people, spaces, and implementing best practices. Courses offered will examine procedures, sustainability practices, and the reputation of your organizational brand. Achieving operational excellence hinges on your ability to serve optimally across various areas, including facilities, food service, finances, and resource management. (2023, 2026, 2029)

Theology - Lutheran Practice that Informs our Space

In this course we will review key Christian theological concepts. (Sacraments, Worship)
The session will include how our theology is the foundation for all of our programs and practices in outdoor ministries. We'll also look at core Lutheran beliefs and doctrinal cornerstones, how to create a culture of faith for all who visit our sites, and explore outside resources.

Philosophy - Overview and Definition

In this session we'll explore why having a philosophy of outdoor ministry is important to your daily operation and organizational structure. Identify your organization's philosophy of outdoor ministry and examine your role in implementing it in your daily work and those you manage.

Inclusivity with a Management Focus

This session will challenge you to take an honest look at your organizational structure, systems, and programs, and evaluate your culture of inclusivity. We'll uncover areas where you are unintentionally exclusive and develop strategies for organizational change. Work will be done on what you can do to ensure that your outdoor ministry site is a place for everyone to belong.

Marketing & Communicating Brand

To be recognized and noticed, your organization needs to have a strong and consistent brand. All communication and marketing efforts should be centralized so your brand remains reliable and even predictable. We'll look at several portfolios and learn basic strategies to strengthen your brand. Marketing doesn't need to be expensive; we'll explore ways that are accessible and realistic for all budgets. We'll also consider ways to measure ROI and the best places to use your marketing dollars.

Financial Development

A high functioning development operation is critical to the success of your fundraising efforts, whether you have a development team or a team of one. We'll discuss the best practices of development procedures from receiving gifts to acknowledging donors. This session will also explore the difference between annual funding, capital campaigns, and planned giving. We will look at the distinction between the roles of staff, board and consultants related to financial development.

Risk/Crisis Management for the Organization

Risk management is a necessity for the overall protection and sustainability of your organization year-round. In this session you will learn the components of effective risk management and

discover best practices on how to manage risks within your organization. Identify who in your organization is responsible for risk management and at what level.

Policy and Procedure Writing

In this course we'll reflect on how your organization's policies and procedures reflect the mission of your organization. We'll learn the importance of consistent policies and procedures and how often they should be reviewed. Together, we will discuss best practices when it comes to writing, updating, and editing policies and procedures.

Human Resources

Your number one resource is your staff. In this course, we'll discuss how to manage and care for your staff. Discover ways of creating a positive work environment where staff are cared for and can flourish through effective leadership. Other topics covered include fundamentals of job descriptions, personnel policies, recruitment, interviewing and background checks, self-care, vacation, sabbatical policies, professional development, with special emphasis on year-round staff, performance reviews, and much more.

Nonprofit Board Structure and Function

In this course you will learn how to work effectively with your board by looking at roles and responsibilities of boards and committees. Some topics will include board job descriptions, articulating mission and vision, recruiting the right members, fiduciary responsibilities, strategic planning, legal responsibilities, and more.

Food Service Management

Food service is a key aspect of every outdoor ministry. This session will include hospitality, customer service, kitchen management, and the staff's role in creating an inclusive, safe, and positive dining experience. In this course we'll look at food service philosophy, customer service, dietary restrictions and allergies, menu planning, health and safety, budgets, etc.

Site & Facility Maintenance

In this session we'll explore the components of a master maintenance plan with the how-tos, the why-fors, and the who-wills. Site and facilities are vital to your outdoor ministry operation, yet so often overlooked for a variety of reasons. Strategies to ensure a positive experience when the condition of facilities is the first thing noticed by guests.

Networking/Partnerships/Collaborations

Building a network and strong partnerships for your outdoor ministry organization is important work and has potential to be a great benefit to your operation. This session will help you assess your organization in regard to the surrounding resources, existing partnerships and collaborations, and community. Our goal will be to identify areas where you can expand into new markets or grow current relationships and how to manage and strengthen current partnerships.