1. Impact, Justification, and Overall Essentiality - This criterion focuses on the overall importance of the program and its contributions to the institution’s success. 21 pts. (2500 characters)
2. Summarize and outline the key purpose and functions of your program.
3. How has the program evolved?
4. How does this program support the University and its Core Values (Community, Rigor, Opportunity, Environment, Inclusion, Connections and Innovation)?
   1. The Waterpark (WP) is an outdoor education and play space featuring waterslides, wave pool, natural exploration area, and seasonal aquarium. We provide a nexus between NMU and the Upper Peninsula via a fun, family destination which also functions as a teaching and learning site for NMU and students of all ages, a model for sustainability, and an asset to Marquette tourism.
   2. Since 2009, WP has expanded from a tiny nature center into a multi-attraction venue that draws 25k visitors per year, employs and trains hundreds of NMU students and community members, all while maintaining the integrity of the natural surroundings.
   3. WP business model has been to develop and evolve along the principles central to NMU, Marquette, and UP sensibilities. We found that we have been adhering to the Core Values all along.

* Community, Connection, and Inclusion- WP connects with Bay Cliff Health Camp, school districts, Michigan Works, and other agencies to provide educational, teaching, and employment opportunities. As a destination for tourists, family outings, birthday parties, reunions, etc., WP brings the outside community into the NMU fold.
* Opportunity- NMU students in various disciplines find meaningful experience at WP. Testimonials from graduates in Education, Outdoor Recreation, Biology, Hospitality Management, and other majors credit the WP experience with better preparing them for success. Construction Management students work on our physical projects, Earth Science students plan the Wildcat Wilderness Walk, and the list goes on. WP looks always to provide opportunities for students.
* Environment- An initial objection to WP was the fear that an artificial theme park would destroy the natural beauty of the Presque Isle we cherish. To allay that concern, we take innovative measures to incorporate WP into the landscape. Parking is a short distance off site – easily walkable, but with electric shuttles. The Willie Water Slide, our largest attraction, is on the footprint of a previous, defunct waterslide. The Moosewood Café and Gift Shop is located on the same spot as the former Nature Center, and the Wildcat Wilderness is a ramped-up version of the Bog Walk many residents remember.
* Innovation- WP recycles 95% of the water in our attractions. We favor gravel and soft surfaces over concrete where possible. Buildings meet strict LEED standards. We landscape with native plants and materials, and have converted as much area as possible into no-mow zones.

Character Count: 2487

*<<It is recommended that you use abbreviations as shown in 1.a – please make sure to identify the full name and the abbreviation/acronym in parenthesis the first time, then use the shortened version in the rest of the document>>*

*<<Use bulleted lists to concisely communicate and wisely use character counts>>*

*<<Each applicable question is addressed>>*

*<<This example goes into detail on how it specifically meets the Core Values>>*

*<<Character counts are for the full section – not divided between each question a-d)>>*

1. Quality – This criterion focuses on the quality of the services and efforts provided by the program. 18 pts. (2000 characters)
   1. What measurements and/or benchmarks do you use to track how your program is meeting its goals and providing services?
   2. Provide data that demonstrates your program’s efforts to meet its goals or benchmarks.
   3. Describe significant accomplishments over the past three years.
   4. Evaluate the program’s resources such as facilities (i.e., office and general space requirements), equipment, technology, and professional development and how they affect the quality of the program.
2. WP surveys guests who have provided contact info on five criteria: fun, affordability, likelihood of a revisit, distance traveled, and suggestions. We set annual goals for attendance, community outreach, student engagement, and profitability.
3. Guest response (2016)– 45% respondent rate. 94% (on a scale of 1 to 5; 5 high), gave WP a 4.5 for fun, 3.5 for affordability, and 4.2 for likelihood of a revisit. Distance travelled averages 25 miles. 70% are local, 30% of guests are from lower MI, IL, WI, and other states.
4. Attendance– WP has peaked at our current capacity of 25k guests/year. Our goals are to maintain that capacity and expand services to accommodate more visitors throughout the year.

Community Outreach– Our goal is to engage with or incorporate at least one new program, agency, or school annually. In 2016 we added a day-trip program with Bay Cliff, afternoon play and explore program with Mr. McGregor’s Garden preschool, and an NMU credit-bearing class sited in the Wildcat Wilderness area.

Profitability– WP broke even in 2015 and 2016. At just 8 years old, we consider that a major accomplishment. Our goal is to create a profit within 10 years, and we have every confidence we will meet that goal.

Over the past 3 years, WP has developed several strong community partnerships with MARESA, Michigan Works, and the Children’s Museum. Our attendance has grown from 15k to 25k visitors per year. We have implemented a fall program that makes use of the Wildcat Wilderness area in the cooler weather and affords local schools an excellent nearby field trip opportunity.

1. The current facilities are still under development, most notably in the aquarium, enhancement of which would augment educational opportunities. An increase in parking and bathroom facilities would be necessary to grow daily attendance; parking is the biggest challenge. As it is, the only opportunity for attendance increase would be in stretching the operational months.

Character Count: 1964

*<<Specific Data is included in summary form – not an overwhelming table of data to be interpreted >>*

*<<Answer is limited to the past three years, as requested>>*

1. Internal Demand – This criterion focuses on the utilization of the services and reliance on the function’s efforts by internal individuals, departments, and programs within the institution. 19 pts. (2250 characters)
   1. Describe the key internal users (admitted students, staff, faculty, and depts.) of your program.
   2. Describe current internal demands and/or institutional policies that affect this program.
   3. Quantify and describe the changes in internal demand over the last three years.
   4. Describe any approved projects or initiatives that will affect internal demand in the next three years.

a./b. WP was established separately from NMU, so internal demand has evolved with its development. There are currently 4 credit-bearing classes sited on or associated with WP. The attractions have been developed with an educational component built in, and the Wilderness Walk and Aquarium especially are used as auxiliary lab sites for Outdoor Rec, Education, Earth Sciences, Biology, and other programs. Our instructional schedule is full. Additionally, WP employs between 75 and 100 student workers every academic year, with summer-long employment for an additional 50 workers from both NMU and the community.

c. At its inception, WP had little or no demand from within the NMU community as such. There was a piece of property with great potential, and our mission was to fulfill that potential. As we find ways to reach that potential, WP has actively created partnerships and alliances that now rely on the services and facilities of WP.

WP must and does adhere to all NMU policies and procedures regarding human resources, public safety, marketing and communications, finance and risk/liability (insurance), and facilities. Because of the unique nature of WP, additional layers of oversight are required and discussed in the next section.

d.Thanks to a grant from the Great Lakes Watershed Initiative and the Wildcat Innovation Fund, WP will be building a Lazy River attraction that will incorporate the fun of a tubing adventure with education as it travels through the Wildcat Wilderness area, skirts the rear of the waterslide, and circles the Little ‘Cats Paddle Pool. The rear of the waterslide will be resurfaced to emulate a rock outcropping to enhance the educational experience, the surrounding area landscaped and planted with alternating bog and beach environments. There are grant benchmarks that must be met; for instance, the mechanicals for the water circulation in the river must be installed and tested prior to November 2018. The Construction/Maintenance specialist will be reappointed from a .83 FTE to 1.0 FTE during the renovation. Reporting on progress, grant benchmarking, and adherence to all safety standards will be completed.

Character Count: 2159

*<<Some answers may be combined – as shown in 3.a and 3.b (a./b.) >>*

1. External Demand and Mandates – This criterion focuses on factors related to the level of external (e.g., prospective students, alumni, retirees, community members) interest in the services provided by the program, as well as the external mandates (e.g., OSHA and/or other required state or federal mandates) influencing the program’s efforts. 16 pts. (2250 characters)
   1. Describe the key external audience or constituencies such as prospective students, community members, alumni, retirees, etc. of your program.
   2. Quantify and describe the external demand of the program.
   3. Quantify and describe the changes in external demand over the last three years.
   4. Describe current or proposed mandates (e.g., OSHA and/or other required state or federal mandates) that affect external demand and/or how services are delivered for this program.
2. While WP does not separate NMU guests from those outside of the university, our best estimate is that 80% of our annual unique visitors are external. Our “Come Back in the Summer” campaign in July ’16 drew a crowd of 1,500 alumni, retirees, and their families.

b./c. In 2016, WP hosted 51 birthday parties, 156 field trips from preschool, elementary, middle, and high school students, and trained 35 docent volunteers ranging in age from 15 to 75. At this writing, we are 75% fully booked for the 2017 season and anticipate the need to establish a waiting list for scheduled program events. The demand for our programs has grown by 39% since 2013, as follows.

* 2013- 122 programs
* 2014- 141 programs
* 2015- 167 programs
* 2016- 207 programs

We are making plans to handle the anticipated peak times of 4th of July and Labor Day, when last year, sadly, we were forced to turn guests away.

d.WP is subject to inspection and must comply with safety standards set by The City of Marquette, the Michigan [Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs](http://www.saferparks.org/agency/michigan-department-licensing-and-regulatory-affairs), OSHA, the CDC, and our insurance carrier. Due to our proximity to Lake Superior, we are also under regulation by the DEQ, the US Army Corps of Engineers, and the EPA. In the current political climate, it is unclear how our regulatory burden will evolve. In any event, we expect no decrease in the employee hours necessary to track the changes, if any.

Character Count: 1399

*<<Hard to read data is lined out to show growth>>*

1. Cost Effectiveness – This criterion focuses on the expenses (including assigned overhead) incurred by the program in providing its services and conducting its activities. (For programs that have revenue-generating capability, costs are considered net of revenues.) 15 pts. (1500 characters) **DEPARTMENT DATA WILL BE PROVIDED**
   1. Comment on the annual cost of the program and/or its annual income generated.
   2. Comment on the staffing of your program (FT or PT including titles, GA, students – student hours).
   3. Describe efforts to analyze and reduce cost, increase revenue, and/or operate more cost effectively over the past three years.
2. WP broke even the past two fiscal years. The previous years involved considerable investment in infrastructure, development and construction. The initial building phase has slowed, and thanks to a grant from the Great Lakes Watershed Initiative and the WIF, we are able to expand with a net decrease in university support. Operating expenses, maintenance, and personnel will remain our largest ongoing expenditures.
3. Staffing consists of three full time employees: General Manager (SA), Attraction & Program Manager (AP), Executive Secretary (TOP). Two 10-month employees: Training & Staffing Specialist (AP) and a Construction/Maintenance Specialist. 75 to 100 students are office workers, greeters, wait staff, cooks, life guards, attraction attendants, grounds crew, ticket sales, and cleaning crew. Most students work May – October; 10 to 15 students work the off-season for maintenance and planning. Two GAs are crew leaders.

May – October staff is augmented by a security contingent and professional cleaning service that are contracted out. There is normally the need to hire 10 to 20 peak season workers for positions that we are unable to fill with a student work force, who may work as many as 40 hrs/wk during the summer.

1. Our initial efforts towards sustainability and environmental consciousness are beginning to pay off in the long-term benefits of reuse of resources (water), efficient energy use, and lower grounds and maintenance costs. We continue to improve these initiatives.

Character Count: 1499

*<<Data specific to your program will be included on the form and you are expected to use those numbers to address the questions in this section>>*

*<<Specific titles and levels of staff are included>>*

1. Opportunity Analysis – This criterion allows the program to describe the additional contributions it could make with specified additional resourcing. 11 pts. (1500 characters)
   1. Describe opportunities for growth or enhancement in your program with new investment/collaboration/resources that would allow you to deliver services more effectively and efficiently in the short and/or long term. (Please be as specific as possible when describing what is needed to achieve the growth or enhancement.)
2. WP is currently unable to accommodate any additional parking, which curtails our expansion capabilities. We are working on a feasibility study with the W/E Power Plant to utilize the area near the plant as off-site parking, connecting the parking area to the waterpark with an ore car themed tram. The parking experience would become an attraction in itself, with opportunities to partner with the Marquette History Museum to enhance the experience with a local history lesson. Cost: $xxx,xxx.

With the increase in attendance, additional restroom facilities and changing rooms will be needed. Cost: $xxx,xxx.

Currently, we are studying the possibility of repurposing the waterslides to winter sledding or tubing flumes, as well as converting the Little ‘Cats Paddle Pool to an ice skating arena with a warming hut. During the winter, the Moosewood Café would serve hot cocoa and other warming foods through partnership with Dining Service and/or the Hospitality Management programs. The proposed changes will increase the opportunity for increased student employment. Cost: $xxx,xxx.

Character Count: 1087

*<<Specific projected costs/dollar amounts are included>>*