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Analysis of COSMA Accredited Sport Management Curriculums

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Introduction

Over the last 20 years, Sports Management programs all throughout the country have been growing in both size and popularity (Helyar, 2006). These programs offer a variety of different classes that cover the wide range of the sporting industry, which includes areas like professional sports, college and amateur sports, sport marketing, sport psychology, and sport management, facility/event management to name a few (Jones, Brooks, & Mak, 2008). Some programs are suspect to teach certain areas of the sporting industry more heavily than other parts, which is leaving certain skill set unavailable to students wanting to go into those specific areas that are not getting that much attention (Jones, Brooks, & Mak, 2008). Many of these skills are not learned in the classroom, but through experiential learning by students participating in a practicum and internships (Young & Baker, 2004). Sport management programs generally require some sort of experiential field experience in order to graduate with a degree in Sport Management (NASPE-NASSM, 1993).

The area of interest in this paper will examine the course offerings of accredited sport management programs in the 11 accredited sport management schools in the United States, and what themes or differences can be found between the schools and their courses. The research question in this paper is what are the curricular similarities and/or differences between accredited sport management programs. The research done in the paper can show how accredited sport management schools use their courses to gain accreditation, and how these courses show that there are both similarities and differences in the sport management schools and what courses they offer.

Literature Review

Start of Sport Management

The Sport Management program was started back in the 1960s, which most of the credit goes to four gentlemen that helped launch the initial programs. These gentlemen go by the names Earle Zeigler, Guy Lewis, Stephen Hardy, and Lawrence Fielding (de Wilde, Seifried & Adelman, 2010). Each of these men contributed what business knowledge they had, and created a program that would help students be prepared for business of sports (de Wilde, Seifried & Adelman, 2010). In order to become a standardized curriculum, a set of standards have to be created, which a program has to meet before it can start teaching students. The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and the North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) joined together to form a task force that would create and monitor a curriculum for sport management programs to follow (NASPE-NASSM, 1993). These two groups also created a Sport Management Program Review Council, which determines if an institutes programs are meeting the guidelines and standards that are set for them. These standards and guidelines include submitting folios to the review board, twenty percent of classes have to be sport management classes, curriculum has to be able to change to the growing interests of students, relationships with other programs in the institution (marketing, communications, etc), and a way to review students for admission into the program (Letter, 2007). As mentioned before, it is mandatory that a sport management program's curriculum for the students be 20% sport management classes, with the classes developed and controlled by faculty who were or currently in the sporting industry, in order to be considered a valid sport management program (NASPE-NASSM, 1993). The classes in the curriculum of the program also have to cover 10 different areas of the industry, which includes behavioral dimensions,

management and organization, ethics, marketing, communication, finance, economics, legal aspects, governance, and field experience (NASPE-NASSM, 1993).

Accreditation

There is a process that colleges and universities can go through to promote the validity and quality of their sport management program, and this is through what is called Accreditation. Accreditation is a way to show the public that the school's Sport Management program and curriculum is of high quality, and that the program produces professional and quality graduates. Just like starting a program, a sport management program has to apply to be accredited, only it's not based on meeting pre-determined standards, but if the learning outcomes and missions are fulfilled (Jacobsen & Merckx, 2008). To have a Sport Management program accredited, a College or University will have to go through the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation council, which is commonly known as COSMA (Jacobsen & Merckx, 2008). A Philosophy of Accreditation was created by COSMA to indicate what Sport Management programs are accepting when they accept to take on the label of an accredited program. This goes on to list various standards which include focusing more on the quality of outputs than inputs, striving for instructors to produce excellence in the Sport Management education, and that programs should achieve principles so that they can measure the outputs that come from what the Sport Management programs give to these students. Schools also have to show how their courses in their sport management program are compatible with the requirements set forth by the COSMA handbook (COSMA, 2009).

Accreditation of a Sport Management program can do great things for a college and/or University, but there are both positives and negatives to Accrediting a Sport Management

program. Accreditation provides benefits to not just the Sport Management programs, but to the whole institution (Letter, 2007). According to Letter (2007), an accredited program helps to boost the prestige of an institution, the recruitment of new students to the program, show professionalism of the faculty, and shows the quality of the academics in the program and institution. Faculty can expect higher salaries, higher prestige of students in the program, and a higher professional image on themselves. Students can expect to earn a quality education, will become more qualified to enter the workplace, and will have more of a professional prestige when they graduate (Letter, 2007).

While there are only a few, the negatives of accreditation must be presented in association with the positives. With an accredited program, institutions will have to deal with more barriers budget wise, and the loss of students to other inexpensive Sport Management programs. Faculty will have to put more of a time commitment into their courses and they won't have much flexibility in the way they design their courses in the curriculum that has been accredited. Students will have less time to explore electives, and will have more of a commitment towards the accredited courses (Letter, 2007). Accreditation has both its benefits, hindrances, and is very time consuming, but the attention it brings to an institute and the Sport Management program itself is something that cannot be matched (Jacobsen & Merckx, 2008).

Growth of Sport Management Programs

In the many years since the first Sport Management program was created, both the sporting industry and sport management programs have changed in many ways. In 1970, the only colleges that offered sport management programs were Ohio University and the University of Massachusetts, with today's number showing over 300 universities having a program in their

school (Helyar, 2006). The Sport Management programs across the country have been gaining a lot of attention from students interested in the sporting industry, and that is affecting the way the curriculum is being taught. Sport management programs today have such a diverse variety of sports-related jobs that programs can't cover every aspect of the sporting industry (Jones, Brooks, & Mak, 2008). The determination of what a successful and appropriate undergraduate curriculum has been debated by educator for a while now, each asking which type of curriculum can help students become prepared and gain the skills they need to be ready for the professional world (Peterson & Pierce, 2009). The first courses that the initial sport management programs gained when they started out had to deal with the educational side of recreational programs, along with physical education programs and how to manage each of these programs. Sport management programs today have a more diverse and broad variety of course topics' ranging from professional and amateur sports, health/fitness/wellness, to marketing and event management (Danylchuk, 2003).

The future of sport management depends on a lot of factors, but there are changes and moves towards other methods of study ahead of these programs. Experts are saying that programs will look to be more diverse and specialized, grow more globally and internationally, while focusing more of the business courses and decentralizing the physical education courses (Danylchuk, 2003). Sport management programs are also going to become more researched based, with there being a wider array of questions being brought up in the industry, it will be beneficial to students to go out and answer these questions through different methods and approaches they learn in class (Amis & Silk, 2005; Doherty, 2013). Programs will also have to draw theories and practices from other disciplines, combining them with sport management theories in order to give a more diverse and view of the industry today while giving the students

a larger skill set (Chalip, 2006). The biggest struggles programs will have to deal with while growing is that the program itself is not very credible, it hasn't been a solid profession as long as other programs have been, and that could bring down the credibility of sport management programs. They also have to deal with lack of support from other programs in their schools, along with low salary jobs right when students come out of college (Danylchuk, 2003). The sport management program in a whole is taking great strides to better the program, and the quality of students it produces, but will be faced with multiple challenges on the way to improvement.

Globalization of Sport Management

The sports industry is growing bigger and bigger every year, so big that the popularity of sports management is becoming a global trend. According to Ratten (2011), people all around the world follow sports, athletes, and teams in all different ways; by radio, television, newspaper, internet, and word of mouth. Professional sports leagues like the NBA, MLB, and NHL are trying to break into global markets to increase the brand awareness around the world (Li, Hofacre, & Mahony 2001, as cited in Li, Ammon, & Kanters, 2002). You can see NFL slowly branching out their brand by having games be played in both Canada and London. NASCAR, while it is known as just an American sport, is also trying to expand their brand into other countries by streaming races online, and having their websites in different languages (Ratten, 2011). This trend is also shown with the rise of popularity in the Olympic Games, FIFA World Cup, and Rugby World Cup. These organizations bring together all the great athletes around the world to play in one location, to showcase the sport and their skills. The London Olympic games of 2012 was the highest viewed US TV event ever, recording more than 219.4 million viewers, with an average of 31.1 million viewers watching NBC (Etkin, 2012). With the popularity of sports growing all across the globe, the numbers of jobs that are being created is growing also. A

substantial part of the population of the United States, Japan, and Canada rely on the sporting industry as their daily job and source of income (Ratten, 2011). Jobs are being created by big name brands sponsoring teams in different countries, which you can see a lot of in the Olympic Games (Taylor, 2012). The Olympic provides a large stage for a company's brand and product to reach the eyes of millions of viewers, which in turn could lead to expansions into new areas of the world (Taylor, 2012). Globalization of the sporting industry is growing more and more every day, and with the result of it more jobs are being created, businesses are finding new markets, and people are getting to see athletes from all around the world.

Globalization isn't all good though; there are some drawbacks to having a sporting industry grow across the globe. Big sporting goods stores are sending their labor to poor countries in order to make their products cheaper, so they can maximize their profits. Athletes are migrating from country to country, looking for financial resources and also getting recruited by these countries' sports leaders (Thibault, 2009). In the Olympic Games, the normal procedure is for an athlete to compete for their home country, and some countries are going out and recruit athletes from other countries to compete on their national teams (Thibault, 2009). All the traveling these athletes, sports media members, and companies are making because of the increased interest in sport globally is harming the environment because of the carbon footprint they are leaving behind. Also, waste at these sporting events reach into the millions of pounds, which is harmful to the environment, which only 1% of this waste was recycled (Thibault, 2009). The Sport Management industry is growing not only in the United States, but in countries all around the world. There are both benefits and downfalls to the globalization of sport, but it's a trend that can't be ignore and could grant a lot of opportunities to the people in the sporting industry.

Globalization of Sport Management Curriculum

Sports have expanded throughout the world, which means there are jobs all throughout the world in sports and schools need to realize that. Li, Ammon, & Kanters (2002), state that there is an increase in demand of people who can work in international business markets, and that universities should make sure educators know that their courses have to start becoming not just domestic based, but have both examples and information about international events in the sporting industry. The curriculum, the approach to the curriculum, and offering of new courses that deal with internationalization of sport management is a great way to broaden the opportunities that a sport management program can offer and student, and help them increase their skills not to just domestic jobs but internationally also (Li, Ammon, & Kanters, 2002). To help strengthen the curriculum to fit with the growing trend of globalization, many programs are encouraging students to look at internship opportunities abroad, take foreign language courses to strengthen the understanding of another culture, and to look into an international studies minor to go along with the sport management degree (Li, Ammon, & Kanters, 2002). Sport management curriculums are traditionally domestic oriented, so their content has a lot to do with the country they are based out of. Professors are trying to intertwine international studies and current events into their lessons to keep up with the growth of sport globally (Li, Ammon, & Kanters, 2002). It's hard to teach a topic that is not well known by domestic professors who have received minimal to no training at all on this topic, which if the professor don't know that much about it, it's hard to put international courses into a curriculum when people know so little about the topic (Li, Ammon, & Kanters, 2002). Globalization of sport, as unknown and confusing as it is, shouldn't be ignored, but researched more so that slowly educators can develop classes that teach

these international strategies to students who are interested in the growing industry of international sport.

Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is increasing in popularity in colleges and universities for the benefits and experiences that it brings to students who participate in them (Bennett, Henson, & Drane, 2003; Weible & McClure, 2011). Experiential learning can be anything that a student does to learn more about the industry and the different skills that go along with that specific aspect of the industry. A lot of theory is learned in class, and students need to somehow make the connection from the classroom to the real world, and that is what experiential learning does for them. These are ways for students to test out their knowledge of sport management, getting real world experience, and finding out what sections of the industry they like and what they don't (Young & Baker, 2004). The most important factor that students seem to get out of these experiential learning programs is the concept of real world experience, a sense of how the workplace really is, not just the theory you learn about in classes (Cook, Parker, & Pettijohn, 2004). According to Cunningham and Sherman (2008), a successful internship has the ability to expand and deepen the educational experience and leadership a student possesses. Students that participate in experiential learning have come to say that they have gained more confidence from their experiences, feel more prepared for the real world, felt an increase in their social skills, helped them work towards which career goals they wanted to go after, and lessened the reality shock of what a job in the professional world is like (Bennett, Henson, & Drane, 2003; Taylor, 1988).

Universities and colleges are usually in favor of students participating in internships, because it is a way for them to get their name out into the community, create relationships with the school and businesses around the area, and provide their students with an experience that will help them in their future career goals (Cook, Parker, & Pettijohn, 2004; Divine, et al., 2007; Moghaddam, 2011; Stratta, 2004; Weible & McClure, 2011). Relationships are also made between the intern and the people at the company, allowing students to network and put together a group of people that the student can go back to in the future for help with a job, recommendation, or just some advice on the industry. Ross and Beggs (2007) discuss how an intern and their supervisor should be on the same page with what the internship means, what values are important to learn, and the importance of developing that relationship the student can use in the future. Students also have to feel comfortable in these internships, not just gain experience and work for companies, and a lot goes into choosing an internship from a student's perspective. Students look at the structures of internships, the demographics of the area around the internship location, how this internship relates to what their future career goals are, and if it is paid or not (Hergert, 2009). Some students travel across the country to get internships, and all these factors are important to consider when making such a large risk. This information shows that experiential learning has benefits not to just the students and the program, but also the institutions as well. Networking, developing relationships, and gaining valuable experience are what the main goals of an internship should be. A lot of factors go into choosing an internship, and students must be aware of these before deciding to participate in one.

Experiential Learning in Sport Management

Colleges and Universities offer many different majors, some of which require experiential learning and some that don't. Sport Management is one of those majors that require

you to have a certain number of hours devoted to experiential learning (NASPE-NASSM, 1993). Experiential learning through internships is where students learn skills about the industry that they probably wouldn't get out of a classroom, which is why each program requires a certain amount of field experience outside the classroom that totals approximately 15% of the curriculum (Kelley, et al., 1994). Social interaction is an important aspect to have in the preparation of a sport management student, and internships are a great method of linking social interaction and classroom theory together (Bennett, Henson, & Drane, 2003; Irwin & Ryan, 2013). In order for students to get all they can out of an internship, Young and Baker (2004) suggest to have students record and log their experiences at their internships, which at the end will be compiled into a final paper of all their experiences. This will help the student reflect on their experiences and really see what experiential learning can do to increase their preparation for their future career (Young & Baker, 2004). It is important that interns set goals for themselves in their internships, so that they have something to work towards and their guidelines and goals are set out in front of them (Charlton, 2007). One of the biggest factors of a sport management internship is to relate what you learn in class to the experiences you will meet in the professional world. Students can learn all they want from classrooms, but it won't be anything unless they practice the skills they learned in an environment that will test those skills (Irwin & Ryan, 2013).

Having classes that stress experiential learning is also an important aspect to have in a sport management curriculum. Classes that have their students do experiential learning in the classroom; sales, event management, sponsorship classes for example, are increasing in numbers because it's a way of getting these students experience outside the classroom without having to go through the internship process (McKelvey & Southall, 2008; Pauline & Pauline, 2008; Pierce & Peterson, 2010; Peterson, 2011). Students who took these courses felt more comfortable when

they entered an internship, because they were already exposed to real world experience and felt more comfortable doing the tasks they were assigned in their internships (Pierce, Peterson, & Meadows, 2011). This research shows that a mixture of experiential learning in sport management courses and internships conducted in the sporting industry are the best ways to prepare a sport management student for the professional workforce. It helps them to apply the theory in the class to their experience outside of school, and the internships allow students to network and develop relationships with their supervisors so that they can offer help, guidance, and advice to them in the near future. Experiential learning and internships in the sport management industry are both tools that help students transition from college to the professional world.

Methodology

Research Tradition

An exploratory type of research will be conducted with this research; since there is little to no prior knowledge of a study done that compares the offerings of accredited sport management programs (Gratton & Jones, 2010). The research tradition that is applied to the research will be from the interpretivist point of view. The reason interpretivism is the logical choice is because the way the research is being conducted and the type of results that come out of the research are more associated with the intangibles rather than dealing with a theory or scientific fact (Gratton & Jones, 2010). The data will also take into account the researchers own bias on how the data is sorted and analyzed (Gratton & Jones, 2010). The results will not provide the researcher with an absolute truth, but will be affected a small portion with the researcher's bias (Gratton & Jones, 2010). Since the results are of the researcher's bias, the results could be

different if tested again by another researcher, which shows that there isn't one universal reasoning for the topic at hand (Gratton Jones, 2010). The research is being done more to understand how accredited sport management schools are meeting the accreditation requirements, if there are themes in each of the content areas between all 11 schools, and if any of the schools are offering any unique courses in the content areas that no other school has.

Interpretivism is the best research tradition to be associated with this research because of the fact that there is bias that goes into the research, which the results will show, and the fact that it is searching not to disprove a theory, but to understand how schools meet the accreditation requirements and what aspects of the requirements the schools focus on the most.

Conceptual Framework

For the conceptual framework, readers will have to know the difference between what a standard sport management program is, and one that is an "accredited" program. An accredited program is a program that is recognized for its high quality of work and production of professionals in the work industry (Jacobsen & Merckx, 2008). The readers will also need to know what the specific requirements are for a sport management program to be accredited, which can be found in Appendix A. Other variables in this study will include the list of classes that are required in the program and the description of the courses offered at each of the schools. Schools with accredited sport management programs will meet the requirements, but they all do it in different ways. Some focus on a particular requirement more than another, which can be beneficial to someone who wants to go into a specific area of the sporting industry. The main focus in the research is to see how these schools used their courses to become accredited, and to see if there are any curricular similarities and/or differences between the schools sport management programs.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework will show the variables that are associated with the research at hand (Gratton & Jones, 2010). Schools are always competing to have the best programs in a specific field, and to gain more students. Accreditation helps put certain schools in the forefront of other programs because they are accredited by COSMA. This study will show how each school developed a sport management program in their own unique way to promote their level of academics, while showing what specific requirements of accreditation they focused on more. This would help students who are looking to get into specific areas of the industry, law or psychology for example, to find a school that has a program more suited to their career aspirations. This shows both a broad and narrow view of the school's programs; by showing how their programs are set up as a whole and if any specific areas are being highlighted in the program. Also, by looking at each of the content areas required by COSMA, you will be able to see if any themes of course offerings are seen widely throughout the content areas. This also will show if schools are offering courses that are unique to just their schools. While this study might not give the answer of why students choose a specific school, it will give us an understanding of what is being offered by the schools and different factors that could be deciding factors in a perspective student's mind. A school with more offerings in classes could potentially draw students closer to a certain school. In looking, no research was really found on this topic specifically, so this research could open doors to other research done in this area of academics and the offerings they possess for students (Gratton & Jones, 2010).

Design

A content analysis will be performed on all the sport management curriculums of schools that have the title of an accredited sport management program. A code will be developed that will cover all the different requirements that a program must meet in order to achieve accreditation. This will mostly involve qualitative data, but quantitative will present with measuring how many electives are offered in each curriculum. An analysis of every each school's sport management programs will occur, with each class being put under a specific code to see if the schools are meeting the accreditation requirements, and what requirements have more classes associated with that specific code. The results will be analyzed by observing where the classes fall into the code, if all the areas are covered, which areas are covered more, and how many electives are offered in each curriculum (Gratton & Jones, 2010). The research will deal with primary data, since no one else has created a code for this specific research, and will deal with qualitative data since there are few numbers or measurements in the data collection, just descriptions of the classes (Gratton & Jones, 2010).

Procedure

In order to do the content analysis, each of the accredited school's sport management major and allied course requirements will need to be examined to see what classes are offered. As mentioned above, a code will be made to sort these classes into categories based on what the requirements are for accreditation. The research will have all the course requirements present, and with the course descriptions in front of them, will be placed into a specific category based on what the class covers. This will done this for every school until this process is completed. A pilot test will be done by having three to five participants look one of the school's requirements and

have those participants use the code to sort the classes into what they think the classes fall under. This will show if a case of researcher bias will play a large effect in the results of the analysis. Once the analysis is done for all eleven schools, the results will be looked at for each school and it will be able to determine how the schools meet the accreditation requirements, if they focus on a certain requirement more, if there are any themes in the content areas between the 11 school's with the courses being offered, and if there are any unique classes that certain schools only offer to their students. The results from this research have the potential to help sport management students choose a school to attend that has both accreditation and classes geared towards their interest in the sporting industry.

Results

The sample being used for the research consists of the 11 accredited sport management schools listed by COSMA. Each schools sport management programs were sampled in this study by looking at all of their degree requirements for sport management majors. After conducting the analysis of the courses for each of the school's sport management programs, it has come to show that there are both similarities of course selections along with unique courses that each school offers that the other schools don't. Out of the 13 different content areas that a school must follow to become accredited, there were common themes in each of the 13 content areas of the 11 different accredited schools, as you see in Table 2.

Each of the content areas illustrates something different on what the schools are collectively trying to cover with these courses. With the sport management principles, the main focus of the schools are portraying with the courses are the foundations of sport management and the history of sports. Based on the themes present, it shows that the schools are presenting the students with a firm foundation to how sports have become what they are today, while building

the foundation of skills that the students will be prepared to learn and develop while they are in college. Sport leadership's main theme has to deal with the principals of management, or the basic knowledge of how to manage a company and run a business. Multiple classes in this content area focus on the management principles within a sporting organization which could include a minor league team, a sport marketing firm, athletic store, etc. This shows that the schools want to instill in their students how a successful company is managed and run, while instilling the idea that you should go out and be a leader with the skills learned in this content area. Sport Operations Management/Event and Venue Management is a content area that focuses on the management of live entertainment, the operation side of sporting events, and the operating of a sporting facility. The main themes associated with this content area are geared towards that of facility management, along with the process of managing a live event. Many of the schools are offering courses that combine facilities and events, so you can see that they are promoting the connection between event management and facility management. They want to show how the two work hand in hand; how an event is dependent on a facility and how the facility needs the event to keep running.

Sport Governance has multiple themes within its content area that focus on how a governing bodies in sports should work, how sports administrations should be managed and governed, and how to allocated resources in specific ways. Schools are offering courses that not only show how organizations, NCAA for example, are run but how they establish and enforce the rules throughout different platforms of sports. They also want to show students how certain sport companies are governed and run, and how the people who hold the power in those companies make decisions and allocate resources. Ethics in sports deals with a lot of the issues we are dealing with in sports today. The courses offered in this content area deal with both the

ethics of sports, but the ethics of business also. Schools want to produce professionals into the workforce, and having good ethical practices is part of being professional. Making decisions brings ethics into the picture a lot of the times, so it's no surprise that ethics is one of the most diverse content areas, since there are ethical decisions in a lot of the decisions we make. The schools are making sure they cover multiple aspects of the industry, and providing a class that guides their students in the right moral direction in not just the sporting world, but in the business world also. Sport Marketing and Communication courses deal with the promoting and publicity of a brand, event, or person through many different media routes. The schools are using this content area to teach students how to get a name or product out into the industry and with the public relations aspect to it, learning to maintain the image and reputation of the name or product.

The content area, Principles of sport finance, has courses that reflect how finance is used both in the sporting world along with the business world. Sport finance was the common theme throughout all the schools, showing that most of the schools are giving a general course of finance in the sporting world. Saint Leo (Finance for Managers) and York College of Pennsylvania (Financing Sport Operations) are the only ones who offer unique classes in the finance content area that are different from Sport Finance. This is showing that schools only really want to teach the basics of sport finance, with some schools adding in courses here and there to increase the opportunities in that content area. Accounting has courses that deal with the managing of money and finances that come in and out of a business. The courses in this content area consisted of the basic principles of accounting, along with courses that covered managerial accounting and financial accounting. Once again, this shows that schools just want to cover the basic principles of accounting so that the students have a general understanding of how it works

and how to manage money in both your personal life and in a business setting. Economics of Sports was a content area that had a theme of courses that didn't have anything to do with sports. The theme of the schools in this content area was to teach the principles of micro and macro economics. Once again, we see the schools only teaching the basic principles with the courses they offer. It can be seen that the schools only want to teach the basic principals through the three economically based content areas. They want to give their students an idea of how to manage money, finance projects, understand the market, etc for both the sporting and business industries, but not to dive to deep into it that it takes away from the sport management degree.

Legal aspects of sports is the content area where students learn the legal side of the sports industry; which includes aspects such as risk management, liabilities, negligence, etc. Between all the schools a theme of Sport Law/Legal Aspects of Sports kept coming up, so schools seem to be informing their students about the legal issues in the industry and how to deal with them. In Tables 2 you can see that two schools also offer risk management as a class in the legal aspects of sports content area, so there are certain schools diving deeper into the aspect of law, but for most schools only basic law is fine for them.

The last 3 content areas have to do with experiential learning, along with taking all the content areas and using the knowledge from them in a constructive way. Strategic Management and policy has to deal with how to make decisions in a company and how to use the resources you had in a way that would improve the business. The theme reflected this, because most of the schools had classes that dealt with decision making and statistical information. Schools want to produce the best students they can into the industry, and courses that bring in the aspect of decision making will only help in the creation of professionals out of school. The internship section was the most obvious of all the content areas, since all schools need to have an internship

requirement, so each school had a required internship class they had to take. Some schools had students taking practicum along with their internships, but the main reason is to get the students out into the real world and use what they learn in the classroom to gain experience that they couldn't get in a classroom. The capstone content area has to deal with everything that a student has learned in while they were in school, applying all their skills and lessons learned from the content areas. This was typically seen in the research as a senior seminar course, and had students do a project or conduct research which incorporated aspects of leadership, financing, event management, operations etc. These content areas were the most difficult to group courses into because of the similarities between strategic management and capstone classes, and the titles/descriptions of courses at points could go in either one of the categories. An example of this would include courses like Evaluation Procedures in Hospitality, Sport and Tourism Management, Professional Development, and Intermediate Business Computer Applications

Not only do the results show that there are common themes in each content area, some content areas have more themes and courses than other content areas do. The most diverse content areas would be Sport Governance, Sport Marketing and Communication, Accounting, and Sport Operations/Event Management, which all have at least 1 or 2 more themes than the rest of the content areas. This shows that these content areas are more of an importance among the schools to teach, that these areas are so broad that multiple classes are needed to cover all of the information out there. While not all the schools have multiple classes in these specific sections on those content areas, these content areas showed the most themes throughout the research, which shows that it's a large segment of the industry and schools find it important for their students to take multiple courses in that specific content area.

It is to be noted that the courses listed in the tables are not titled exactly the same way; each school titles their courses different. The titles of the courses in the table are ones that are either titled the same way throughout the 11 different schools, or is one of the variations of titles used to describe the same class. For example, Public and Media Relations is listed there to show that throughout the 11 schools, in the content area of Sport Marketing and Communications, they have a course dedicated to public relations and media relations in sports. The information and content taught in the course is the same, the school just uses a different for labeling the course. As mentioned before, to become accredited a school must have courses that fit all the requirements set by COSMA, and the results show that there are themes within each of the 13 content areas across the 11 accredited schools. The results also show that some content areas have more themes than some of the other content areas.

The results also show that throughout the 11 accredited schools, 10 of the schools have 1 or more unique course offerings that are only found at 1 or 2 of the schools. These courses are within the content areas that COSMA requires for accreditation, but as said before the course can only be found at a limited number of schools. Table 3 illustrates how many unique courses each school has, and what the titles of the courses are. Winthrop University has the largest amount of unique classes at 4, and the University of Louisville has the lowest at 0. By looking at the results in the chart, it can be seen that it is common to have a school offering at least one of two unique courses in their requirements for their sport management programs.

Discussion

The 11 accredited schools have to design courses that will meet the 13 different content areas required for COSMA accreditation. The results show that even though each school offers

different courses within each of these content areas, that there was a common theme in the content areas throughout the 11 accredited schools. The courses are fulfilling the COSMA requirements, but they are also seen a high amount throughout the different schools. This makes sense since in order for all these accredited schools to have their accreditation, they will have to have similar classes, but the amount of classes that were the same throughout the schools was interesting. For example, the course titled "Sport Marketing" was found in 8 of the 11 schools, while Marketing Principles (or Principles of Marketing) was found in 6 of the 11 schools, and Sport Law (also referred to as Legal Aspects of Sport) was in 8 of the 11 schools. This shows that schools could possibly be modeling courses off of different courses from other schools to use with their programs. It could also be that these courses are the best ways to get the information to the students, which is why so many programs use them.

Another statement the results show is the fact that schools are finding ways to incorporate their own unique courses into their programs. As mentioned before, accredited schools have a lot of themes that are similar between their courses, so how are they going to set themselves apart and show that their program is the best there is? The unique courses that can only be found at one or two of the schools give the program a marketing tool to use perspective students when they are looking at programs. A student might want to go into the Law section of the sport industry, and could be choosing between these 11 schools. Of these 11 schools, Saint Leo University and Winthrop University offer a Risk Management course in their Legal Aspects of Sport content area that the remaining 9 schools don't have. This could be an influence for a student to go to one of those particular schools. Another way to look at it would be which school has the most unique offerings, for the student who comes in with no idea what they want to do in the sporting industry. That student would look at the 11 schools and see that a certain school like

Winthrop University and Slippery Rock University, who have the two highest offerings of unique courses, offer more unique and content specific classes than the other schools do. What the results are saying is that the courses that these accredited schools are offering have common themes throughout all of the 13 content areas dictated by COSMA, but each school has certain courses that make their school unique in a specific way so that they can differentiate their sport management program from the 10 other accredited sport management programs around the country.

The implications for the sport management departments in seeing these results would be to illustrate how common the courses are between these 11 schools, and how each one of them offers something a little different. This could cause a sport management department to review their own sport management program and see how much they have in common with other schools, while also seeing how they fair with their unique courses, if they have any, and if there is any room for improvement in their course offerings. This can also show sport management departments who are looking to become accredited how other schools reach accreditation, and how they can model their programs to stand out from the other schools.

While conducting the research, there were a few limitations that came up that could have altered the results. First off, the results aren't going to be 100% accurate, since the results were based on how I thought the schools organized their courses to meet all of the COSMA requirements. A second limitation was that certain courses had to be forced into content area, since there wasn't a clear content area to put it in. For example, Evaluation Procedures in Hospitality, Sport and Tourism Management, Intermediate Business Computer Applications, Business Information Systems Nonmajor, and Professional Development were all placed in the Strategic Management/Policy content area, because either the description sounded like what the

definition of Strategic Management was or the fact that the school didn't put the descriptions with the course titles. This leads to my third and final limitation, which was not being able to get all the courses that were out there. Some of the schools didn't list all their courses, or listed them but with no description. I contacted the school's multiple times, and was either referred to the course listing again, or never getting a response back.

If this research was to be done again in the future, I would work a lot closer with the actual accredited schools to see how specifically they organized their courses to fit the COSMA requirements. When the research began, there were only 11 schools that were accredited, but as of now 3 more schools have had their programs accredited, so analyzing the 3 schools that were added in could possibly give us new results, or help to strengthen the existing results. Lastly, if the research was to be done in the future, I would look up the number of students enrolled into the sport management programs at each school to see if that number was impacted at all by the program becoming accredited.

Appendix

Table 1

Excellence in sport management education at the undergraduate level requires coverage of the key content areas of the sport management field. Thus the Common Professional Component (CPC) topical areas, as outlined below, should be adequately covered within the content of undergraduate sport management degree programs.

- A) Social, psychological and international foundations of sport management
 - 1) Sport management principles
 - 2) Sport leadership
 - 3) Sport operations management/event & venue management
 - 4) Sport Governance
- B) Ethics in sport management
- C) Sport Marketing & Communication
- D) Finance/Accounting/Economics
 - 1) Principles of sport finance
 - 2) Accounting
 - 3) Economics of sport
- E) Legal aspects of sport
- F) Integrative Experience, such as:
 - 1) Strategic Management/Policy
 - 2) Internship
 - 3) Capstone experience (an experience that enables a student to demonstrate the capacity to synthesize and apply knowledge, such as a thesis, project, comprehensive examination or course, etc.)

Table 2

Common Courses in each Content Area*	
Sport Management Principles	Introduction to Sport Management
Sport Leadership	Principles of Management
Sport Operations Management/Event and Venue Management	Sport Event and Facility Management, Sport Facility Management
Sport Governance	Resource Management, Sports Governance, Sport Administration
Ethics in Sport Management	Issues and Ethics in Sport
Sport Marketing and Communication	Sport Marketing, Principles of Marketing, Public and Media Relations in Sport
Principles of Sport Finance	Sports Finance
Accounting	Principles of Accounting I, Principles of Accounting II, Financial Accounting, Managerial Accounting
Economics of Sport	Principles of Macroeconomics, Principles of Microeconomics
Legal Aspects of Sport	Legal Aspects of Sport/Sport Law
Strategic Management/Policy	Statistical Inference and Decision Making
Internship	Internship
Capstone Experience	Senior Seminar in Sport Management

*Each school titles their courses different; results in the chart have titled that are used generally by most schools or are listed in there to give an example of what the common courses are.

Table 3

Listing/Number of Unique Courses at Each School*	
Liberty University	Introduction to Sport Ministry Outreach Total:1
Neumann University	Sport and Spirituality Total: 1
Ohio University	Fundamentals of Public Speaking Total: 1
Saint Leo University	Finance for Managers, Risk Management in Sport Total: 2
Slippery Rock University	Global Sport Management, Sport Communication and Technology, Sport Sales and Fundraising Total:3
Thomas College	Public Speaking, Sport Management Proficiency Exam Total: 2
Troy University	Governing Agencies, Revenue Generation in Hospitality, Sport and Tourism Management Total: 2
University of Louisville	Total: 0
Wichita State University	Sport Tournament and Event Management Total: 1
Winthrop University	Global & Behavior Perspective in Sport, Sales & Relationship Marketing, Risk Management In Physical Activity & Sport, Sport Management Portfolio Total: 4
York College of Pennsylvania	Ticket Operations/Negotiation and Arbitration in Sport, Financing Sport Operations Total: 2

*Unique is meant to indicate a course that fits into the requirements of COSMA, but that exact course is found in only one or two schools.

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