

Session: **Workshop: Improving university teaching in sport management II.**
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connecting American and European classrooms through online collaboration

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I. Background

Sport often serves as a bridge to unite people from different cultures and countries. Colleges and universities around the world are educating the future managers in the global sport industry. The trend toward globalization in the sports industry has prompted numerous programs to embrace the concept of study abroad and internationalization of sport management curricula (Miller and Seidler, 2010). The North American Society of Sport Management (NASSM) now includes internationalization as a recommended component of study in sport management programs (COSMA Accreditation Manual [Draft], n.d.). Study abroad is known to build competencies and personality traits such as independence, self-reliance, confidence, cross-cultural awareness, and global literacy (Emert and Pearson, 2007).

The American Council on Education (ACE) advocates that educational programs make use of technology to provide students with cross-cultural learning experiences (American Council on Education - Center for International Initiatives, 2010). The SUNY Center for Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) created the Cross National Project to develop internationally focused online coursework (COIL Center at SUNY Purchase, 2004). Using the COIL models for incorporating online learning into international education, this project intends to augment a study abroad experience in sport management with collaborative, online learning.

II. Objectives

This study intends to bring together American students returning from a study abroad experience in Europe with recently graduated German students who studied abroad in the United States. These students and recent graduates will interact in online group discussions to share ideas about their respective experiences studying sport management and working/interning in the sports industries in both the United States and Europe.

III. Methods

The subjects for this study will include 10-20 American students enrolled in Sport Management programs from the State University of New York (SUNY) College at Cortland and the University of Tampa. These students will travel abroad during the months of May and June, 2010. They will visit four European countries (France, Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands), participating

in lectures from sport executives and organizers in professional and Olympic sport in Europe. In addition, they will attend several elite level sporting events and visit places of cultural interest.

Immediately following their study abroad experience, these students will engage in guided online discussions with 2-5 recent graduates from the Deutsche Sporthochschule in Koln, Germany. At least 2 of the graduates will be full-time employees in the sport industry of Germany.

Guided discussions will include the following topics: challenges, interests, and motivations for studying sport management; ambitions and career goals in the sports industry; learning outcomes and benefits of the study abroad experience in sport management; plans for future travel, study, and/or work in the international sports landscape.

IV. Results

The study is pending and results will be available by July, 2010.

V. Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, the researchers plan to expand this project to include semester-long collaboration between American students and European students, sport managers, and sport management faculty. Future research will involve American sport management students studying international sport in a domestic setting and students preparing for study abroad experiences. The objective of this line of inquiry is to determine best practices and models for effective online collaboration for international study in the field of sport management.

Works Cited

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