

SPORT MANAGEMENT IN THE NETHERLANDS – DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERNATIONAL CURRICULUM

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Synopsis:

The purpose of this contribution to the EASM workshop is to discuss the development of an internationally focused curriculum. In particular, the ISMB places an emphasis on intercultural communication, sport and culture/society and entrepreneurship in an international context. The programme also requires internships outside of a student's cultural "comfort zone" and requires applied learning experiences at Olympic organisations, such as the IOC, International Federations and Olympic games host sites. Lecturers from four different continents and students from 14 different nationalities further contribute to the international environment at the ISMB.

Abstract:

In 2011, the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS) launched a bachelor degree programme in International Sports, Management and Business (ISMB). This English language course was born of the Dutch Sport Management programme at the AUAS. Over the past four years, ISMB programme has drawn students from six continents and sent interns around the globe. The programme also requires internships outside of a student's cultural "comfort zone" and requires applied learning experiences at Olympic organisations, such as the IOC, International Federations and Olympic games host sites. Lecturers from four different continents and students from 14 different nationalities further contribute to the international environment at the ISMB.

The purpose of this contribution to the EASM workshop is to discuss the development of an internationally focused curriculum. In particular, the ISMB places an emphasis on intercultural communication, sport and culture/society, entrepreneurship and applied learning (through internships) in an international context. Extensive coursework in the first year focuses on the areas of

intercultural communication, sport and culture and event management. The first year curriculum also includes a variety of sport activity courses, including: football, basketball, cricket, hockey, swimming, ice skating, gymnastics, endurance sports and cycling. In the second year students, expand into more management coursework, such as project management, sport policy (at the national and international levels), and human resource management. They spend 10 weeks on an internship developing these skills in an applied setting off campus. The third year of the programme is centred on the concept of entrepreneurship and strategic management. Students are presented with two aspects of entrepreneurship; being a professional entrepreneur (business owner) and being an entrepreneurial professional (a mindset of constant innovation and independence). In the fall of the year, students work in groups to launch their own sport-related business. In the winter/spring, they once again go out for their second required internship position, this time for a longer period (18 weeks) and with a requirement for strategic level contributions to the host organization. In the fourth year of the programme, students select a “minor” to explore a chosen specialty. Internal minors include High Performance Sport and Sport Development. A third minor in Sport Commerce is also in development. For the second half of their fourth year, students go on their final Graduation Project internship placement (20 weeks) and develop a research project along with conducting on site management duties.

Challenges faced in the development of this programme vary from curriculum development to student orientation. For example, student selection, which includes an English language requirement, interview and physical test, is designed to generate a mix of nationalities while also remaining open to Dutch students with an interest in international sport. Recruitment and retention of lecturers from abroad has been another challenge, as scheduling available times to teach courses is difficult. In response, the programme now includes four Project Weeks, with courses taught from international lecturers in a one week, intensive focus format. The year-round lecture team also consists of multiple nationalities. Further challenges include orientating students to life in Amsterdam, developing partnerships with other universities, generating internship opportunities around the world and marketing the programme abroad.

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