

Teaching international sport management: Current status, challenges, and best practices

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Today's citizens need to be world-minded in order to use their global knowledge and intercultural skills to make informed decisions in our interconnected world (Mudimbi-Boyi, 2002). In turn, it is important that our students are prepared to participate in societies that are no longer defined by nations and geographical borders. Consequently, institutions of higher education have in recent years realized the need to prepare graduates to live and participate as global citizens through the internationalization of their campuses. The internationalization of higher education involves incorporating an international or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education (Knight, 2003, p. 19). That is, the integration of an international and intercultural dimension in content, materials, activities, and understanding should be incorporated in the teaching, research, and public service functions of universities to enhance the relevance in an interdependent world. Internationalization is a very relevant topic on university campuses around the world and has become an organizational priority. It has even attracted the attention of governments and groups such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2005).

Sport is international and its increased globalization makes sport management a particularly pertinent site to consider issues of internationalization. The internationalization of sport has been well articulated by Fairley, Lizandra, and Gladden (2009) as being viewed in many spheres. It may merely involve the introduction of sport into new countries where the sport has not been traditionally played. From a team and/or league perspective, internationalization may entail countries competing against each other in international competition; the expansion of established national leagues to include teams that are based in different countries; teams touring foreign countries to generate interest and awareness of their sport or league; individuals competing alongside players from different countries in organized leagues; and even travel to sport events in different countries as a spectator, official, or volunteer. From another perspective, it may involve the international broadcasting of sport competition and events, and international coverage of sport events and competition

through various forms of news and print media. And finally, internationalization may encompass the availability of licensed merchandise outside of the country of the team or player; global companies sponsoring international sport events; and the use of sport as a social and political tool.

What has become apparent is that all students need to be made aware that they live in a world in which all aspects of management relate directly or indirectly to the internationalization of the sport business. Of particular note is that the digital age, which has just begun, provides opportunities as well as challenges that have made international sport management education essential for the administrators of tomorrow.

For those academicians interested in international sport and/or for those who may not have a background or experience working internationally in sport, this workshop will provide ideas regarding how international sport management education can be incorporated into the curriculum, as a singular course, infused throughout the curriculum, or through faculty-led study abroad courses or programs.

Internationalizing the sport management curriculum presents many challenges. Beyond the fact that many faculty have not had the opportunity to work in sport outside their home country, the diverse cultures in which sport business operates can be quite challenging. Developing knowledge and an appreciation of how professional sport, international governing bodies, marketing in the digital world, and the legal arena is essential to the educated sport manager.

This workshop will address the following questions: (1) what does it mean to "internationalize" sport management education from a curriculum perspective, and how do we do it? (2) what are the challenges of internationalizing the programs? (3) what are the "best practices" in international sport management education (i.e., problem based learning, experiential learning, web research sources, international sport course collaboration using Web CT, and study abroad programs)? and (4) how might the recently formed World Association for Sport Management (WASM) contribute to the internationalization of sport management? After short facilitator presentations, the participants will have an opportunity to share and learn about the modes of delivery (i.e., best practices) and the challenges.

References:

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