

## **Standards for Curriculum and Voluntary Accreditation of Sport Management Education Programs**

### ***NASPE-NASSM Joint Task Force on Sport Management Curriculum and Accreditation***

The sport business industry is among the largest industries in the United States. Sport management is the field of study offering the specialized training and education necessary for individuals seeking careers in any of the many segments of the industry. An increasing number of institutions offer sport management programs. Concern over the lack of an identified and recognized base of common knowledge for sport management resulted in the development of the NASPE-NASSM Joint Task Force on Sport Management Curriculum and Accreditation. The task force developed a competency-based minimum body of knowledge needed for baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. The work resulted from study of curricular research and consultation with academicians, practitioners, and professional associations. The final document was approved as standards by professionals in June 1992.

Sport, broadly interpreted, is an important and interesting aspect of our society. As a result, it provides numerous career and research opportunities for individuals interested in the administration of sport as it is pursued by all sectors of the population. This interest in sport management has resulted in a need for curricular programs that prepare sport managers, sport management researchers, and sport management professors. During the past 25 years the number of 4-year colleges that offer course work experiences in sport management has increased from 1 to approximately 120. The depth and breadth of sport management as an area of study warrant the acknowledgment of a minimum body of knowledge. This body of knowledge should then serve as the basis for professional preparation curriculum content in sport management.

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In 1986 NASPE established a sport management task force to begin the process of developing curricular guidelines. The guidelines were published in 1987. In 1989 the task force was expanded to include a joint committee composed of NASPE and NASSM members. After the committee sought support and input from the sport management community at three national conventions, the guidelines were changed significantly. The document now contains a comprehensive set of minimum competency areas that should exist within the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral sport management degree programs. In addition, the document includes standards on the critical mass of sport management offerings and faculty. The objectives of the critical mass guidelines are to provide students with a foundation of sport management course work taught by appropriate professionals.

The task force is currently developing the process to be used for accrediting programs in sport management. The steps used in the development have been the same as used in the development of the curriculum standards: the use of existing accreditation models, input from sport management educators and others, and continual refinement. The task force is very close to completing this project and is hoping to finalize an appropriate accreditation process by late 1993. Questions concerning the standards or accreditation should be directed to one of the task force co-chairs.

## ***Minimum Core Content for Undergraduate Programs***

### **Undergraduate Curriculum Critical Mass**

The NASPE-NASSM accreditation fosters the attainment and maintenance of excellence in undergraduate and graduate education for sport management. The NASPE-NASSM curriculum standards have been developed to meet the contemporary needs of the sport industry so that students studying sport management have the educational background to function effectively within a sport management setting. Therefore, those institutions meeting and maintaining the required level of quality for accreditation of sport management programs will be sound choices for students in search of quality professional preparation.

The content areas prescribed in the NASPE-NASSM standards provide students with a body of knowledge needed by those preparing for careers in sport management. Twenty percent, exclusive of the field experience credit, of the total number of credit hours required for a baccalaureate degree must be sport management course work offered in the home unit. For example, if the total number of credit hours required to complete a baccalaureate degree at University Central is 120 hr, 20% of 120, or 24 hr, must be sport management courses, exclusive of the field experience hours, offered in the home unit or department.

This critical mass may be covered in courses and through experiences provided by various departments on campus. The home unit for the program should be responsible, however, for a significant amount of this content coverage. These courses and experiences are integrated into a curriculum that is identified as the sport management program.

The curriculum in sport management should be created, developed, and controlled by faculty who are responsible for the sport management program. Therefore, these faculty should be intimately involved in the teaching of the

curriculum. The requirements pertaining to critical mass of faculty will ensure that sport management faculty assume these important roles and teach a significant portion of the curriculum.

### Faculty Critical Mass

The purpose for establishing a critical mass of faculty is to enhance the depth and breadth required for the development of a sound curriculum in sport management. The existence of a critical mass of faculty contributes to overall program quality by providing opportunities for instructional excellence, scholarly interaction and productivity, professional involvement, and service. Further, critical mass fosters institutional commitment to students, program development, and the expansion of the sport management body of knowledge.

A full-time faculty member with at least one-half work load in sport management over the academic year is defined as one unit of faculty critical mass. A NASPE–NASSM-approved undergraduate program must have a minimum of two units of critical mass faculty (i.e., at least two full-time faculty assigned at least one-half work load in sport management) (see Table 1). Examples of assigned sport management responsibilities are administration, teaching, research, and supervision of practica and internships.

### Core Content

The core content areas that follow provide undergraduate students with the essential common body of knowledge in sport management. Programs in sport management shall include the following areas comprised of the following content. Examples of courses in which the content may be found are included for each area. The lists of courses are not meant to be exhaustive. Areas of specialization with appropriate content may be developed as an adjunct to this core.

**Area 1: Behavioral Dimensions in Sport.** The student must identify and understand the internal and external factors that shape sport in a culture. The student must understand how sport mirrors the society in which it exists.

Table 1

### Critical Mass Faculty Minimums for Sport Management Programs

| Program(s)                            | No. faculty units required |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Undergraduate                         | 2                          |
| Master's                              | 2                          |
| Undergraduate and master's            | 3                          |
| Doctoral                              | 3                          |
| Doctoral and master's                 | 3                          |
| Doctoral, master's, and undergraduate | 5                          |

*Note.* A full-time faculty member with at least one-half work load in sport management over the academic year is defined as one unit of faculty critical mass. The table shows the minimum number required for each program situation.

The student must appreciate the contributions of recreational sport, as well as highly organized competitive programs in high school, college, and professional levels, to a culture. The student must understand why business is involved in sport and how business interests in sport have served as a catalyst for growth. The student must gain an appreciation of sport as a medium for integrating gender, ethnic, religious, and disabilities interests. The student must understand sociological phenomena and how they affect participation and behavior. The student must be able to define sport management and the scope of its interests. The student must understand the evolution of sport management as a profession.

Examples of courses where this content may be found include history of sport, history of sport management, sociology of sport, psychology of sport, women in sport, the disabled in sport, philosophy of sport, business ethics, ethics in sport, legal aspects of sport, and business law.

**Area 2: Management and Organizational Skills in Sport.** The student will be able to define and understand what constitutes management and what constitutes an organization. The student will be able to describe the various skills required in the management of organizations. The student will be able to describe the roles and functions expected of managers. The student will be able to apply the functions of *planning, organizing, leading, and evaluating* to the goals of a variety of sport organizations. The student will understand the concept of strategic planning and resource allocation.

Examples of courses where this content may be found include management of sport, sport administration, organization and administration of sport, facility and event management, organizational behavior, business applications to sport, computers in business, business statistics, and resource allocation.

**Area 3: Ethics in Sport Management.** The student will understand the distinction between concepts of morality and ethics. The student will understand how relativism and rationalization affect the level of ethical behavior. The student will understand the levels of personal moral development and will be familiar with theories of ethics. The student will understand how personal ethics affect organizational responsibility. The student will understand why professional ethics are necessary for professions like sport management. The student will know how to establish a code of professional ethics and will apply a personal code of ethics to ethical issues in sport.

Examples of courses where this content may be found include business ethics, ethics in sport management, and administration of sport.

**Area 4: Marketing in Sport.** The student will be able to apply fundamental marketing concepts to the sport industry. The student will understand sport as a product, the sport consumer markets, and the sport product markets. The student will know the historical development of marketing and sport marketing and will understand the concepts of marketing orientation and production orientation. The student will know processes of the sport marketing planning model and its components including research and information management, the segmentation process, the identification of target markets, the four Ps of marketing, and the development of a sport marketing mix and strategies.

Examples of courses where this content may be found include marketing, sport marketing, sales communications, advertising, sponsorship in sport, non-profit marketing, entrepreneurship, fund raising, computer applications, legal

aspects, broadcast administration in sport, marketing/sales negotiations, and persuasion.

**Area 5: Communication in Sport.** The student will know how interpersonal and mass communication differ in several important ways. The student will know the theoretical foundations of interpersonal communication including dyadic and small group communication and will understand the theoretical foundations of organizational communication. The student will understand the theoretical foundations of mass communication and the mass media industry including the print media and electronic media. The student will understand how business decisions are made in the mass communication industry based on ratings and shares.

Examples of courses where this content may be found include interpersonal communication, organizational communication, public relations, sport public relations, sport and media relations, principles of sport management, English, composition, business writing, journalism, graphics and publications, computer applications, publishing, legal aspects in communications, and information management.

**Area 6: Finance in Sport.** The student will learn the steps toward developing an organizational budget. The student will understand how accounting procedures may be used as a tool in finance and how sports organizations develop financial strategies including investments and player contracts. The student will learn how principles of fund raising are utilized with various constituencies. The student will be able to utilize financial indicators in developing a strategic plan.

Examples of courses where this content may be found include budgeting, principles of sport management, accounting, sport finance, computer applications, finance, and strategic planning and forecasting.

**Area 7: Economics in Sport.** The student will understand how an economic system works balancing the wants of producers and consumers. The student will understand how economic behavior results from equilibrium between producers and consumers. The student will be able to construct and analyze a demand curve, a supply curve, and a market equilibrium curve and determine how these shift in response to pricing and utility of a product or service. The student will learn how to maximize the residuals (profit) generated by production of products or services. The student will learn how to develop a budget by generating income strategies and allocating resources based upon predetermined criteria and will understand how traditional economic and financial attitudes toward sport have changed as sport has become big business.

Examples of courses where this content may be found include economics, labor relations, legal aspects, computer applications, the economics of sport, and the sport enterprise.

**Area 8: Legal Aspects of Sport.** The student will be able to identify and apply various areas of law to the sport industry. The student will be familiar with state and federal legislation specific to sport and will have a fundamental understanding of the court system and how legal issues are decided. The student will become familiar with contract law and how it is utilized in sport. The student will understand the principles of tort liability, especially in the area of negligence, and will be familiar with agency law. The student will understand how constitutional law impacts sport management decisions and will be informed about and sensitive to discrimination issues. The student will understand how antitrust laws

protect the business sector through regulation to control private economic power. The student will understand collective bargaining agreements as a component of labor law that is pertinent to sport.

Examples of courses where this content may be found include legal aspects of sport, labor relations, contract law, tort law, corporate/business law, taxation, sport labor relations, and risk management.

**Area 9: Governance in Sport.** The student will become familiar with the various agencies that govern sport at the professional, collegiate, high school, and amateur levels. The student will understand the governing powers each agency has assumed and how that power is derived. The student will understand how governmental agencies influence the roles of sport governing bodies and will study the conditions of membership in a governing body, the sanctions that can be levied against a member, and the route of appeal.

Examples of courses where this content may be found include administration of sport, governance in sport, and sport law.

**Area 10: Field Experience in Sport Management.** This area involves an application of core content appropriate to the setting in organizational practice. This competency can be satisfied through two experiences: practica and internships.

Practica may take a variety of forms. Some may be extensions of a course, whereas others may be self-contained. Some may be offered for academic credit; others may not. Typically, these are done on a part-time basis while the student is involved in course work, and they require less of a time commitment than internships. Practica are often performed in proximity to the campus and usually involve observing and providing assistance to another professional. They must be directed and evaluated by a qualified faculty member with appropriate supervision by an on-site professional.

Internships are self-contained for academic credit. They involve actual work in a sport management setting subsequent to the junior year, in which management practices are applied. Final arrangement for the internship are completed by a member of the faculty. The internship is a full-time (40 hr/week) work experience for a minimum of 400 hr. It must be directed and evaluated by a qualified faculty member with appropriate supervision by an on-site professional.

## ***Minimum Core Content for Master's Programs***

### **Faculty for Master's Programs Only**

The purpose of establishing a critical mass of faculty is to enhance the depth and breadth required for the development of a sound curriculum and a focus on scholarship in sport management. The existence of a critical mass of faculty contributes to overall program quality by providing opportunities for curriculum development, improving instructional effectiveness, advancing scholarship of both students and faculty, and encouraging professional involvement and service. Furthermore, critical mass fosters institutional commitment to students, program development, and expansion of the sport management body of knowledge.

A full-time faculty member with at least one-half work load in sport management over the academic year is defined as one unit of faculty critical mass. A NASPE-NASSM-approved master's program must have a minimum of

two units of critical mass faculty (i.e., at least two full-time faculty assigned at least one-half work load in sport management over an academic year). Examples of sport management assignments that may be included in the work load definition are administration of the sport management program, teaching of sport management courses, research in sport management, and supervision of sport management practica and internships.

### **Faculty for Combined Undergraduate and Master's Programs**

A full-time faculty member with at least one-half work load in sport management over the academic year is defined as one unit of faculty critical mass. An institution offering both an undergraduate and a graduate program in sport management must have a minimum of three units of critical mass faculty to be approved at both levels by NASPE-NASSM. This is interpreted to mean that at least three full-time faculty are assigned at least one-half work load in sport management over an academic year. Examples of sport management assignments that may be included in the work load definition are administration of the sport management program, teaching of sport management, and supervision of sport management practica and internships.

### **Core Content**

The core content that follows provides graduate students with a body of knowledge that builds upon the core content presented in the undergraduate standards. The master's degree core is generic to all tracks or specializations in the graduate program. An institution may wish to establish areas of specialization with appropriate content as an adjunct to this core. All master's degree programs in sport management shall include the following generic areas comprised of the following content. Examples of courses in which the content may be found are included for each area. The lists of courses are not meant to be exhaustive.

**Area 1: Management Leadership and Organization in Sport.** The student will learn how to set organizational goals, motivate members of the organization toward those goals, and select and coordinate the activities that will efficiently achieve the specified goals. The student will understand how one coordinates the activities of members by clearly defining the tasks and grouping the tasks into units with supervisory personnel. The student will learn how to adapt leadership to the situational and task differences and to individual differences of the group members. The student will learn how to assess whether effort has resulted in the attainment of goals and whether the activities or goals need to be adjusted. The student will understand how the critical contingency factors of environmental conditions, organizational objectives, technologies employed, organizational structure, personnel, and management styles are aligned and consistent with each other. The student will understand that management is fundamentally a people business.

This content can be found in the following example courses: management theory, leadership theory, organizational theory, and problems and issues in sport management.

**Area 2: Research in Sport.** The student will be familiar with research methods appropriate to conducting descriptive, theoretical, and analytical sport management research. The student will be able to analyze and evaluate current

sport management research. The student will discover areas where additional sport management research needs to be conducted and will understand the need for integrating theory, research, and practice.

This content can be found in the following example courses: research methods, research design, statistics, independent study, and thesis.

**Area 3: Legal Aspects of Sport.** The student will understand and be able to apply the legal concepts involved in contract law and its application to sport operations. The student will understand the legal concepts around breach of contract and monetary damages and will be able to develop a sports contract utilizing appropriate format and clauses. The student will be able to assess risk in a sport operation and develop effective risk management strategies. The student will understand how to provide due process and equal protection clauses in sport. The student will be able to analyze cases that involve discrimination based upon gender, race, and age and will know how to protect those rights. The student will understand collective bargaining agreements as a component of labor law that pertains to professional sports and will understand variables in labor relations and methods of dispute resolution.

This content can be found in the following example courses: sport law, amateur sport law, professional sport law, commercial sport law, labor relations and arbitration, problems in sport management, school law, and sport labor relations.

**Area 4: Marketing in Sport.** The student will be able to construct and implement market research designs including segmentation and targeting. The student will be able to utilize market research in employing marketing strategies and will be able to devise a marketing plan utilizing product, price, public relations, promotion, sales, and advertising. The student will know how to acquire and sell broadcasting rights and will be able to establish a fund-raising campaign. The student will understand principles of consumer behavior. The student will develop a plan for public and media sport relations.

This content can be found in the following example courses: consumer behavior, sport marketing, market research, marketing, fund raising, sport fund raising, and public and media sport relations.

**Area 5: Sport Business in the Social Context.** The student will understand the political, sociological, economic, and historical parameters that influence sport and will be able to analyze these factors in a given environment and evaluate the strategic plan for a sport organization. The student will analyze trends in these parameters and make futuristic predictions for a sport organization. The student will be familiar with computer programs that may be used in business forecasting.

This content can be found in the following example courses: sport in society, problems in sport management, and organization and administration in sport.

**Area 6: Financial Management in Sport.** The student will understand the application of tax law to sport business practices. The student will be able to perform a statistical analysis of the business operation and will be familiar with statistical packages for financial management. The student will be able to prepare a total budget from identification to implementation. The student will understand player compensation strategies.



This content can be found in the following example courses: financial aspects of sport, sport finance, accounting, and finance.

**Area 7: Ethics in Sport Management.** The student will be able to differentiate between morals and ethics and how they are related. The student will understand theoretical models of moral development. The student will analyze the teleological and deontological theories of ethics and how ethics influences sport. The student will understand models for ethical analysis. The student will examine a variety of codes of ethics and analyze their impact. The student will examine case studies in sport and apply decisions based upon ethical principles.

This content can be found in the following example courses: business ethics, sport ethics, sport philosophy, problems in sport management, leadership theory, research methods, sport law, sport marketing, public and media sport relations, and sport finance.

**Area 8: Field Experience in Sport Management.** The student will be able to perform, under supervision, management duties assigned by a practicing sport manager. These experiences may be categorized as practica or internships. For the purposes of these standards, the following distinction is made.

Practica may take a variety of forms. Some may be extensions of a course whereas others may be self-contained. Some may be offered for academic credit; others may not. Typically, these are done on a part-time basis while the student is involved in course work, and they require less of a time commitment than internships. Practica are often performed in proximity to the campus and usually involve observing and providing assistance to another professional. They must be directed and evaluated by a qualified faculty member with appropriate supervision of an on-site professional.

Internships are self-contained for academic credit. They involve actual work in a sport management setting subsequent to the junior year, in which management practices are applied. Final agreements for the internship are completed by a member of the faculty. The internship is a full-time (40 hr/week) work experience for a minimum of 400 hr. It must be directed and evaluated by a qualified faculty member with appropriate supervision by an on-site professional.

### ***Minimum Core Content for Doctoral Programs***

The doctoral degree is granted in recognition of proficiency in research, breadth and soundness of scholarship, and thorough acquaintance with a specific field of study. Evidence of such attainment must be provided by the student in sport management.

The doctoral degree serves to build upon previous graduate experiences as the student's individual program of study is planned. Therefore, the area of study, the content that comprises that area, and the courses that present that content are highly specific and may vary considerably from one student to another.

### **Faculty for Combined Master's and Doctoral Programs**

The purpose of establishing a critical mass of faculty is to enhance the depth and breadth required for the development of a sound curriculum and a focus on scholarship in sport management. The existence of a critical mass of faculty contributes to overall program quality by providing opportunities for curriculum development, improving instructional effectiveness, advancing scholarship of

both students and faculty, and encouraging professional involvement and service. Furthermore, a critical mass fosters institutional commitment to students, program development, and expansion of the sport management body of knowledge.

A full-time faculty member with at least one-half work load in sport management over the academic year is defined as one unit of faculty critical mass. A NASPE-NASSM-approved doctoral program must have a minimum of three units of critical mass faculty if combined with a master's degree program (i.e., at least three full-time faculty assigned at least one-half work load in sport management over an academic year). Examples of sport management assignments that may be included in the work load definition are administration of the sport management program, teaching of sport management courses, research in sport management, doctoral advising, and supervision of sport management practica and internships.

### **Faculty for Combined Undergraduate, Master's, and Doctoral Programs**

A full-time faculty member with at least one-half work load in sport management over the academic year is defined as one unit of faculty critical mass. A NASPE-NASSM-approved combined undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degree program must have a minimum of five units of critical mass faculty (i.e., at least five full-time faculty assigned at least one-half work load in sport management over an academic year). Examples of sport management assignments that may be included in the work load definition are administration of the sport management program, teaching of sport management courses, research in sport management, doctoral advising, and supervision of sport management practica and internships.

### **Core Content**

**Background Requirements.** The doctoral degree in sport management builds upon background acquired in the baccalaureate and master's degrees. This background includes familiarity with the behavioral dimensions of sport, management and organizational skills, marketing and sales in sport, communication in sport, research in sport, ethics in sport, and field experience in sport. A student seeking admission into a doctoral program with neither an undergraduate nor master's degree preparation in sport management should be expected to acquire background in areas for which the student has no previous exposure. The department is to identify the areas necessary for the entry level that are consistent with the undergraduate and master's degree program standards.

**Research Foundations.** Research methodology includes techniques of gathering, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting data. Research methodology and research analysis are the foundation for the dissertation, which is a culminating research experience based upon independent research.

Research analysis involves specific tools used to evaluate quantitative and/or qualitative research data for the purpose of interpreting and reporting results. The doctoral degree serves to build upon the previous graduate experience as the student's program of study is planned. Many research methods and tools acquired by a student as part of a master's degree may meet part of the research foundation requirements for a specific student.

The doctoral dissertation is an in-depth scholarly investigation of a subject connected with the major field of study. It must represent originality in research, independent thinking, scholarly ability, and technical mastery of the problem.

**Sport Management Theory in an Area of Specialization.** An area of specialization is at the heart of the doctoral experience. The doctoral student acquires the knowledge and understanding to become a contributing scholar in the field. Eight areas of specialized study have been identified as examples. Each faculty must determine which specific areas of specialization it wishes to sponsor. Three areas of specialization are required to ensure that there is an adequate content base for a legitimate doctoral program. Two courses for each area of specialization must be identified.

Because the doctoral degree builds upon the master's degree, doctoral students may have completed some of the advanced courses in an area of specialization as part of a master's degree. The program of study for such a student should build upon that previous experience.

A minimum of three areas of specialization should be developed in an institution's doctoral program. Each area of specialization is composed of a minimum of two graduate-level courses offered by the sport management faculty, at least one of which must be offered exclusively to graduate-level students. Some areas of specialization that may be offered include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Sport marketing
- Organizational theory in sport
- Sport foundations
- Sport finance
- Information management
- Managerial accounting
- Sport law
- Sport economics
- Human resource management in sport

Doctoral seminars include reviews of literature, critiques of research, and exploration of new ideas and research problems. Advanced graduate seminars designed for doctoral students provide an arena for in-depth study. These seminars challenge the students at the highest levels of scholarship.

**Advanced Cognate Area.** This consists of a minimum of two courses outside the department (program) essential to and corresponding to the areas of specialization cited in the preceding list. For each area of specialization cited, two cognate courses outside the department should be listed which are taught by scholars in other disciplines that relate to, or support, the area of specialization. These courses may be found in business programs, law programs, journalism, physical education, and other areas.

**Internship.** The internship experience should be designed to support the goals of the doctoral student. For the student preparing for college teaching, the internship may include teaching lower level sport management courses, supervising undergraduate or master's degree interns, conducting research for a sport management enterprise, or providing service to the department. The internship experience for the practitioner is a self-contained experience for academic credit in the sport industry. The internship may be minimally supervised, with more independent work than the undergraduate and master's degree internships.

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## *Acknowledgments*

The members of the NASPE-NASSM Joint Task Force on Sport Management Curriculum and Accreditation would like to acknowledge the help and input of the many members of NASPE and NASSM and other individuals. Suggestions, analysis, and criticisms were critical throughout the development of the curriculum standards.

The co-chairs of the task force would like to acknowledge the dedication, work, and time of the members of the task force. The work of Terry Haggerty, Charles Higgins, Sug Inglis, Guy Lewis, Bonnie Parkhouse, Janet Parks, Peter Farmer, and Roxanne Albertson was significant over the years and especially during the final steps in the development and refinement of the curriculum standards.

The work of Steve Horton, Mike Peterson, Robin Monskey, and Carl Schraibman during the early years of the task force was valuable.

The co-chairs wish to express their gratitude to all members.

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