



Sport Management Clubs and Their Relationship to Sport Management Student Success

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Networking

The networking that sport management clubs do is two-fold, among club members/majors and with industry executives. Networking is crucial in sport management, as it is a high demand industry, with many applicants for each available position, therefore forging relationships is a high priority.

MNSU: The weekly meetings provide opportunities for students to meet other students within the major. The group also engages in outings to build camaraderie, like spring break trips that have a sport focus, such as the Negro League Baseball Museum trip/tour. In terms of networking with people in the sport industry, board members are responsible for contacting and bringing in guest speakers.

EMU: The Club attended a Detroit Lions networking event. The event including a Q&A with Lions executives, a session on resumes and career preparation, and a ticket to a future game. The Club used the tickets for the Rams game which gave them an opportunity to network among themselves.

Fundraising

Acquiring the skills associated with fundraising are necessary for the future sport manager. Additionally, fundraising benefits the members by supplementing the cost of job fairs and other events.

EMU: Club members sold t-shirts and polos. That, along with a hockey ticket raffle, will subsidize the clubs spring 2019 networking event with the Toledo Mudhens.

AC: Club members sold t-shirts, hats, and polos. The money raised was used for club students to attend to the Michigan Statewide Sport Management Conference.

What Do Sport Management Clubs Do?

Participation in student-led sport management clubs can be beneficial for college students who are pursuing sport management careers. These clubs can help give students the development and networking tools needed for success in the sport industry.

The purpose of this presentation is to discuss the role and benefits of sport management clubs at three universities across three NCAA divisions, with a focus on networking, fundraising, event planning, and professional development.

Our discussion will also include specific events that our students have completed as well as how the clubs provide students with opportunities to develop the skills and abilities to succeed in the sport industry.



References (partial)

DeLuca, J. R., & Braunstein-Minkove, J. (2016). An evaluation of sport management student preparedness: Recommendations for adapting curriculum to meet industry needs. *Sport Management Education Journal*, 10(1), 1-12.

Jowdy, E., McDonald, M., & Spence, K. (2004). An integral approach to sport management internships. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 4(4), 215-233.

Sotiriadou, P. (2011). Improving the practicum experience in sport management: A case study. *European Sport Management Quarterly*, 11(5), 525-546.

Professional Development

MNSU: Sport management clubs can lead allow students opportunities to develop professionally in a low stakes environment. For example, the sport management association at MNSU has an executive board (elected positions) comprised of students which includes roles like president, director of finance, director of community relations which provides leadership opportunities. In addition, the group meets weekly and has two students lead each meeting that have specific focuses like helping student members to improve their online presence through LinkedIn, or peer review of resumes. This includes a presentation from the students on their topics and some organized activities for members to engage in related to that. Thus, board members have additional opportunities to develop communication skills via their presentation where they lead activities and discussions.

Event Planning

Learning how to plan an event is a frequently used skill in the sport industry. Scheduling, budget, coordinating with venues, and marketing are key components to an event's success.

EMU: The Club reached out to the Detroit Pistons about creating a meet and greet event combined with attending a game. Three executives with ties to EMU did a one-hour session, combined with a tour of the new Little Caesar's Arena, and a game. The event was marketed to sport management majors and resulted in membership growth.

AC: The Club reached out to a Major League Baseball Umpire for a one-hour guest speaking event that included lunch. There were over 100 AC students and others in attendance.

The Future

Sport management research has often been focused on internships and practica as ways for students to gain experience and improve skills (Jowdy, McDonald & Spence, 2004; Sotiriadou, 2011).

Some research, however, indicates that students needed opportunities for professional development and skill development prior to their internship (DeLuca and Braunstein-Minkove, 2016).

Thus sport management clubs could provide those opportunities and should be a viable area of research. In addition, future research could examine the relationship between sport management clubs and hires along with the perception of industry professionals about the role of clubs.