

**The risk management exercise: A practical teaching tool for courses in sport management**

*Michael Carroll, University of Florida*

*Dan Connaughton, University of Florida*

*John O. Spengler, University of Florida*

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Abstract 335**

In a society with little tolerance for inappropriate behavior or unsafe conditions, litigation in the United States is a reoccurring fact of life (Ammon & Brown, 2007). For sport and recreation managers, learning to develop an awareness of risks and what measures to take is crucial to limiting liability and financial loss. Risk management is a formal process by which businesses and organizations use operational policies and practices to reduce exposure to risk (van der Smissen, 1990). A sound risk management program should identify and reduce the potential occurrence of losses as well as plan steps for minimizing the impact of losses that are unpreventable (Dougherty, Goldberger, & Carpenter, 2007). Proper risk management can not only serve to protect an organization from liability, but can also fulfill a moral and ethical responsibility to provide a fun and reasonably safe experience for spectators and participants.

Developing a risk management plan is a multi-step process. Once a plan is developed, it should be implemented, constantly managed, and evaluated. It is important for students and professionals entering the sport management field to learn and be able to apply the principles of risk management (Connaughton & Spengler, 2006). However, teaching the practical aspects of risk management can often be a challenging task, as many students display an apprehension to legal subject matter and terminology.

The objective of this presentation is to introduce Sport Management educators to a creative learning assignment that introduces students to the risk management process and actively engages them in developing a hypothetical risk management plan. It is a creative, hands-on assignment that allows students to apply classroom knowledge to real-world sport and recreation facilities of their choosing. While completing the Risk Management Exercise, students choose a sport or recreation setting, identify potential risks, attempt to classify those risks based on frequency and severity, discuss potential methods of treating those risks, and identify methods for implementing their risk management plan. Finally, students present their risk management project to the class. The Risk Management Exercise is a fun and enjoyable learning activity that can be adapted by instructors to fit their specific needs.

This assignment not only helps students learn the fundamentals of risk management but also provides the following benefits: (1) student development of public speaking skills through in-class presentation, (2) students learn to research and identify the relevant industry standards and guidelines for the particular risks they have chosen, thus increasing research skills and knowledge of standards and guidelines, and (3) students have a tangible research project that they take away from class to add to their academic portfolio.

**OUTLINE:**

- 1.Introduction to the Risk Management Exercise.
- 2.Illustration using sport management examples.
- 3.Discussion of learning outcomes.