

Making Green a Sport: A Resource Guide for Teaching Sustainability in Sport Facilities

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There is compelling evidence that the topic of sustainability has gained widespread acceptance in many areas of society, with significant claims of benefits of adopting the principles of sustainability as an integral part of development strategies, with facilities being a particular focus. According to the U.S. Department of Energy (2008), over 76 million residential and 5 million commercial buildings in the U.S. consume 37% of all energy used in the U.S., 68% of all electricity, 88% of all portable water, and 40% of raw materials. In addition, these buildings generate 36% of total Co2 emissions, 46% of sulfur dioxide emissions, and 19% of nitrogen oxide emissions. Within this larger picture, sport and entertainment facilities account for almost 4,000 of the total buildings and expand over 4,000,000,000 square feet (Energy Information Administration, 2003).

Sustainability is the ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland, 1987). Sustainability is often referred to as "sustainable development" and frequently adopts a discourse of social, environmental and economic parity between developing and developed countries. Sustainable development as an integrated concept for facilities seeks to reverse the trends in the architectural and engineering communities that focus on first costs and treat each discipline's contribution to the whole building as separate, independent efforts. Instead, sustainable development, integrates all of the design disciplines so that limited resources are efficiently directed toward the goal of meeting user needs without setting one program need against another. Sustainability and sustainable development must be considered a multi-dimensional, plural concept that cannot be translated into fixed, predictable goals. Instead, it is part of the multi-dimensional theory that incorporates economic, environment, and social elements of sustainability. Found within the notions of corporate social responsibility (CSR), the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) (1998), believes that the benefits of incorporating CSR can not only be felt by the business, but by their stakeholders as well. While several authors in sport have looked at CSR (Babiak & Wolfe, 2006; Babiak, Bradish, Wolfe, Kent, & Johnson, 2007), they have not looked at the social responsibility in terms of the green initiative. Since sport and entertainment events and facilities, along with their stakeholders, realize their facilities create large quantities of waste through aluminum cans, plastic cups, discarded game programs, waste water associated with sewage disposal, extensive kilowatt hours required for heating and lighting; there has been a trend in facility design, construction and maintenance to "go green."

Over the last decade, the sport and entertainment industry has begun to focus on the idea of sustainability and sustainable facility management. They have begun to realize, that for many projects there is a viable sustainable development alternative or enhancement. Sustainable development may include more recycled material contents, require less energy or water usage, reduce construction waste, increase natural lighting, or include other opportunities that contribute to an optimal facility. In the last year, the International Association of Assembly Managers (IAAM) has held five international and national conferences that highlighted not only the need to create and maintain sustainable facilities, but have also illustrated the lack of industry professionals that have the knowledge to take on this new role. At the recent Sport Entertainment and Venues Tomorrow (SEVT) conference, several industry professionals spoke about the need for future Sport Management graduates to have a background in sustainability in order to be competitive in the facility industry. The panelists also encouraged educators to make this area part of their curriculum. COSMA guidelines stipulate that sport management curriculum at both the undergraduate and graduate levels cover "key content areas of the sport management field". The guidelines establish Common Professional Component (CPC) themes that are to be covered within the content of proposed sport management curriculum. COSMA mentions seven curricular components and under the "management" component Sport operations management/event & venue management is listed as a specific topical area. Thus, not only will the proposed presentation provide a detailed examination of a huge trend in the sport facility management industry, but the information will add to the body of knowledge to be assimilated for programs contemplating accreditation.

From an analysis of existing models and other sustainable guides, the presentation will provide an introduction to the fundamentals of sustainability, coherence, and integration within the sport and entertainment facility industry. These concepts or principles would then represent the underlying philosophy for the way sustainable facilities should be considered, embody a vision and overall direction, which must be accessible and realistic. The presentation should enable the instructors to incorporate the alleviation of the impacts of the life cycles of these buildings and how to incorporate achievable improvements to the economic, environment, and social elements of sustainability into new and existing curriculums. Finally, the presentation will provide instructors with various tools to incorporate this topic into their classrooms, which will include some of the following: specific case studies, instruction modules, and experiential learning ideas.