

## Civic Engagement: Educating Citizens through Sport Management

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### Teaching

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75-minute symposium

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Institutions of higher education have called for the renewal of civic missions across academia, committing themselves, and urging their peers, to become leaders in advancing the public good and deepening civic engagement (e.g., Friedman, Gutnick, & Danzberger, 1999). Across North America, universities have responded to this call by reexamining their institutional missions. Research is shifting more toward public scholarship, teaching is focusing on civic learning, and outreach proceeds through community partnerships. Boyer (1990) has additionally challenged educators to think more creatively about scholarship as an integrated whole (teaching, research AND service) in ways that incorporate discovery and application. He suggests that academics engage themselves and their students in the world around them as "the work of the academy must relate to the world beyond the campus" (Boyer, p. 75). As such, civic engagement is understood as an individual and institutional commitment to public purposes and responsibilities intended to strengthen communities (Boyte, 2004).

Sport management leaders have also called for increased civic engagement for many years. Frisby (2005) challenged us to critically examine the structures and the cultures of sport while Chalip (2006) urged us to identify areas for change in sport. Inglis (2007) explored the creative tensions of academic life and leading others through these tensions by "understanding the right things to do" (Inglis, p. 9). In addition to the sport management professoriate, leaders in the sport industry have acknowledged the need for increased civic engagement (Schoenfeld, 2007). But, as Boyer identified, the academic community has struggled to meet these challenges. For example, where does an educator or administrator find time to integrate civic engagement into their work, life, or classroom when faced with ever increasing teaching, research, and service expectations? Where does one find time to make the world a better place? But if we believe that the aim of a sport management education is to not simply to prepare students for jobs in the sport industry, but to prepare them for lives with "purpose" and to "channel [their] knowledge . . . to promote the public good" (Boyer, 1990, p. 78), if we want to experience more of the "good" and not the "bad and the ugly" (Frisby, 2005) in sport, then we must think more creatively (Boyer, 1990) about scholarship. We must foster discovery on the part of ourselves and our students, integration of the campus and the community, and application of theory to practice.

Various theoretical perspectives have been used to frame the important role of civic engagement in higher education scholarship. Public achievement (PA) theory focuses on the "citizen-professional" as an individual who understands the basic concepts of citizenship, democracy, and public work (Center for Citizenship and Democracy, 2008). They then use that understanding to further study political structures and community organizing. As a result, they learn to be co-creators of democracy through carrying out public work projects on issues of their choosing (Boyte, 2004, 2008). Social capital theory (Putnam, 2000) also provides a relevant framework for examining initiatives promoting civic engagement, as non-material social effects, such as norms of reciprocity and trust, are generated from relationships among individuals and groups. A basic premise of this theory is that social networks have value as people work together toward positive collective action (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock, 1998). Additionally, social identity theory examines networks, explaining that "despite the freedom and agency that many actors feel in their lives, most have only limited influence over the organizations, institutions and associations within which they act" (Piliavin, Callero, & Grube, 2002, p. 472). People tend to associate with in-group members and categorize out-group members as "others." So while Boyte states that students have choice in issues and Putnam states that reciprocity and trust are results of social relationships, social identity theorists contend that we are often shaped by existing social arrangements and power structures. As such, civic engagement becomes challenging as different social contexts may prompt individuals to think, feel and act on the basis of their personal (e.g., racial, gendered), family or national "selves" (Turner, 1982).

The purpose of the proposed symposium is to offer, discuss, and examine 1) theoretical bases related to civic engagement on university campuses and in their surrounding communities; 2) examples of civic engagement application (e.g. CHAMPS/Life Skills program participants following a public achievement curriculum; sport management students planning and operating

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events for athletes with disabilities, interdisciplinary students in a sport management course working in a youth mentorship program); 3) evaluation of various research designs in civic engagement as well as data analysis from the examples of civic engagement applications highlighted in the presentation; and 4) consequent challenges of civic engagement and action in our communities. We aim to shed light on the complexities of both the successes and the struggles of civic engagement in sport management. Lastly, as the symposium will provide an introduction for some, and alternative perspectives of civic engagement through sport for others, the presenters will provide substantial time for discussion of ideas and concerns. We plan to share not only our syllabi, program information, and online resources, but to encourage the active exchange of planning, implementation, and sustainability strategies.