

**Expanding Classroom Learning: The "Sport, Recreation and Education" Cooperative**

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The nature of the sport management discipline continually opens up new doors for innovative and creative collaboration with external practitioners and organizations. It is through this collaboration that meaningful relationships are formed and excellence in sport management can be maximized. The high level of interdependence between the sporting industry and academia can result in a "win-win" situation for all those involved. On the academic side, faculty are able to participate in scholarship of engagement which can provide new experiential learning opportunities for students (Kone, 2000; Ward, 2003; Pauline & Pauline, 2008). The sport organizations partnering with the university will realize benefits by having access to faculty expertise as well as reduced labor expenditures through the use of student interns and volunteers. Although the use of the traditional classroom lecture continues to serve a purpose, there have been recent shifts in classrooms that give way to teaching and learning that are more experiential and collaborative. Sport management faculty have the opportunity to apply innovative teaching methods in the classroom where students can actively engage in learning. For example, problem-based learning (PBL), although predominately used within the context of medical education, is being used among a broad range of subject areas today in higher education (Camp, 1996; Duncan & Al-Nakeeb, 2006). PBL encourages students to learn the fundamental principles of a subject by offering opportunities to practice, use, and even develop key skills such as problem solving, interpersonal, group and team skills (Duncan & Al-Nakeeb, 2006). These skills are invaluable for sport management students as they graduate and enter the highly competitive industry.

This session presents a proposal developed by sport management faculty known as the "Sport, Recreation and Education" cooperative between the faculty's University and adjacent County. The cooperative includes the development of a 78-acre multi-purpose sports facility. The stages of developing such a facility requires exploration into several sport management courses being taught, including: facility and event management, sport marketing, legal issues of sport, sport finance, sport economics, organization and administration of sport, and governance of sport. This session will primarily focus on the initial approaches taken to develop such a cooperative and the benefits received by all those involved including the University, Parks and Recreation Department, Redevelopment Authority, faculty and students. In addition, special attention will be given to the facility and event management course where students were assigned problem sets throughout the semester regarding the actual stages of facility development.