Year One: Reflections of First-year Doctoral Students on the Protégé/Mentor Relationship

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Mentoring is defined by Weaver and Chelladurai (1999) as “a process in which a more experienced person (i.e., mentor) serves as a role model, provides guidance and support to a developing novice (i.e., the protégé), and sponsors that individual’s career process” (p. 25). This topic is of importance, especially to the field of sport management, because it aids in building future professionals. In the inaugural Zeigler Award lecture, Dr. Earle Zeigler (1992) indicated that “we should search for young people with all the attributes needed for success in this field. We should help them develop lifelong commitments so that our profession can achieve it’s democratically agreed upon goals” (p. 213). Dr. Donna Pastore (2003) echoed these remarks during her Zeigler Award lecture, stressing that mentoring keeps our field moving forward. Therefore, the purpose of this interactive panel presentation is two fold. Doctoral students representing programs throughout North America will discuss their experiences with mentoring during the first year of their Ph.D. education process and second, each panelist will discuss how their experience has helped to shape his/her perception of the profession and sport management as a discipline.

The NASSM constitution states the purpose of the organization is, “to promote, stimulate, and encourage study, research, scholarly writing, and professional development in the area of sport management” (North American Society for Sport Management, 2008). Many of the original visionaries of the field have stressed the need to foster the importance of this purpose to the future generation of sport management professionals (Zeigler, 1992; DeSensi, 1994; Weese, 2002; Pastore, 2003; Cuneen, 2004). For example, Dr. W. James Weese stated in his 2001 Zeigler Lecture, “We must prepare future professors through quality educational and mentoring experiences. These students must be sufficiently prepared to make meaningful contributions in the areas of teaching, research, and service” (Weese, 2002, p. 11). To date these challenges have not been answered directly. Thus, the question remains, are future professors receiving effective mentoring to help make meaningful contributions to the field? The panel for this presentation was purposefully selected to represent the diversity of the discipline. Topics to be discussed include: a) Influence of the mentor in the decision making process relative to selection of a doctoral program, b) the benefits of the mentor/protégé relationship, c) suggestions for development of a mutually beneficial protégé/mentor relationship and d) ideas for improving mentoring within NASSM’s professional organization.

By discussing the protégé/mentor relationship in a collaborative forum setting, we hope to gain a better understanding of this relationship and the impact it will have on the future of sport management.

References:


