Intersections between Sport Management and Youth Development

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The pedagogical emphasis of the majority of Sport Management programs in the United States is to prepare students for employment in various facets of the professional and elite amateur sport industry. While this focus helps students develop skills and gain experience necessary for careers in for-profit sport settings, it does not sufficiently expose students to key concepts and complexities involved in managing non-profit agencies for youth in underserved communities. The purpose of this presentation is to provide conceptual strategies for better preparing sport management students to administer sport and physical activity-based organizations in underserved communities. These strategies include: understanding the social, political, and economic context of inner city experiences; developing multicultural proficiency; utilizing approaches informed by critical pedagogy in sport management curricula and classrooms; and creating inclusive and holistic youth development programs. Research and practice in youth development (i.e. Hellison, 2003; Walsh, 2008), critical pedagogy (Giroux, 2000), and sport management (DeSensi, 1994; Frisby, 2005; Zeigler, 2007) inform these strategies and provide the theoretical and philosophical basis for working in underserved communities from which courses, program emphases, and degree programs can be created. By expanding the scope of sport management in this manner, the field can attract greater numbers of students, develop a more engaged citizenry of future sport management leaders and youth development practitioners, and better serve the surrounding communities of its universities.