Teaching Contemporary Issues in Athletics: An Investigative, Problem Solving Approach

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Teaching

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20-minute oral presentation (including questions)

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When conceptualizing the content for this session, the presenters reflected on their personal experience as students in Sport Administration/Sport Studies Master's Programs, their experience teaching in departments like these and their experience working in athletics administration at both the high school and intercollegiate levels. They also conducted informal, website analysis of sport administration curriculum from over twenty-five master's degree programs across the nation. They discovered that most sport administration programs focus on courses in human resources, marketing, facility management, media relations, ethics, sport law, financial management, and sport psychology. However, as the presenters can attest, there are numerous topics that are not covered in the curriculum that impact athletic administrators on a routine basis.

In an effort to introduce and address some of the most pressing issues in athletics, the presenters have designed a course about contemporary issues in athletics administration. The student learning outcomes are reflected in the following ideas:

1. Examining, analyzing, and applying academic research to practice
   - Utilizing library resources, search engines, databases, and journals
   - Understanding results of academic studies
   - Applying research to practice in athletics

2. Change and change techniques in athletic administration
   - Facilitating planned change
   - Vision, mission, and strategic planning

3. Academic reform and legislation
   - Comprehending how and why academic reform legislation is generated, implemented, and managed
   - Understanding the role of the NCAA, state associations, conference, school, and department

4. Components of team management
   - Supervision, staff and student recruitment, team budgeting, performance evaluation, etc.
   - Student athlete well-being

5. Cultivating relationships
   - External to the university or school (community and corporate)
   - Internal to the university or school (president, principal, faculty, parents, alumni, etc.)

6. Communication skill development
   - Public speaking, negotiation skills, conflict management and resolution

7. Pathways to becoming an athletic director,
   - Understanding the data on who matriculates to the athletic director position
   - Preparing for the next step, fit and environment

The presenters will share their syllabus, discuss elements of the course in more detail, as well as introduce instructional methods that include case study investigations and problem solving methods to advance student learning of contemporary issues in sport.