Going Green in Sport Management: Adding Environmental Sustainability Content into the Sport Management Curriculum

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Relevance/significance to sport management instructors

The addition of a Going Green in Sport Management course would bring depth and value to a Sport Management Department (Mallen & Chard, 2011). Over the last decade, we have seen an increase in green sport facility development as facility developers and managers react to social pressures by investing in environmentally friendly projects. These new sport facilities are being designed and built in accordance with green certification guidelines such as LEED (McCarron, 2001) and B3 (Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines, 2012). With the growth of environmental sustainability (ES) in facilities, students striving to be sport managers will be required to have knowledge on ES initiatives and this course would help fulfill this requirement.

The Going Green in Sport Management course will benefit Sport Management students in several learning areas.

First, the proposed course will help to define and create a better understanding of general green terms such as LEED, B3, and ES. Next, marketing strategies of CSR, CRM, green marketing, green alliances, and sport sponsorship solicitation will be examined. These green marketing strategies entail a unique and innovative focus on ES as a social issue. Appreciation theory will be applied to the idea of a sport organization going green.

Students will have the opportunity to investigate an ES certified sport facility to determine potential methods for incorporating green marketing strategies into their own marketing plan to impress both members (fans) and sponsors. A sport facility manager, who recognizes the opportunity to use their green facility as a marketing tool and has a solid understanding of both CSR and CRM, may be able to successfully link these into the solicitation process. Application of the exchange theory, branding perspectives and target marketing methods will be incorporated into the green marketing lectures. Examining this issue from the managers’ point-of-view will contribute knowledge to sport management professional field explicitly for facility management and marketing teams.

Review of relevant literature

Over the past few decades, the concepts of green design and environmental sustainability have evolved into a mechanism for facility managers to deal with shrinking resources and to reduce their overall environmental impact (Kessenides, 2005). Dick (2007) defined a green facility as a structure designed, built, renovated, or operated in an ecologically and resource efficient manner. Furthermore, sustainable facilities are defined as being designed using a holistic approach which protects the environment by incorporating design practices and materials that use energy most efficiently (Fried, 2005). Calhoun and Cortese (2006) further clarified the idea of sustainability as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of meeting the needs of future generations.

Environmentally sustainable (ES) buildings offer facility managers both benefits and challenges. Green facilities are designed to use resources more efficiently when compared to conventional buildings built simply to code and lead to substantial operational savings. Green buildings often provide healthier work and living environments, which contributes to higher productivity and improved employee health and comfort. These are just a few of the benefits listed by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC), benefits which range from improving air and water quality to reducing solid waste, benefiting owners, occupiers, and society as a whole (U. S. Green Building Council, 2012).

Clarity of course purpose/objectives

Course Overview: This course is designed to provide students with knowledge pertaining to the various aspects of environmental sustainability including B3 and LEED certification guidelines. The role of environmental sustainability as a social issue and its impact on the field of sport management will be examined. In addition, students will apply their new knowledge through class exercises and by an in-depth investigation of a green sport facility. This investigation will include the history behind the facility development and will look at the green initiatives as well as
green marketing strategies used by the facility management to solicit members and sponsorships. A specific focus on green marketing will include the topics of green alliances, cause-related marketing and corporate social responsibility. Specific objectives are as follows:

- To introduce and discuss general green terms and green initiatives.
- To investigate Minnesota State B3 standards and international LEED certification guidelines and conduct research into the strengths and weaknesses of each.
- To examine the role of environmental sustainability as a social issue and its impact on sport management and marketing.
- To explore green marketing strategies, green alliances, cause-related marketing and corporate social responsibility.
- To investigate in-depth a green sport facility, including the history behind the facility development and inclusion of green initiatives, as well as green marketing strategies used by the facility management to solicit members (fans) and sponsorships.

Potential for impact on teaching quality

Originality of teaching innovations suggested. A detailed course outline and syllabus will be shared in the poster presentation and copies will be available at the conference. The materials provide the opportunity to add an entire Going Green in Sport Management course or the resources can be embedded into an existing sport marketing course. By sharing the latest information on green initiatives in sport facilities, other faculty members will be able to easily implement these ideas into their own sport management department and/or courses.

Originality of teaching innovations suggested

The addition of a Going Green in Sport Management course brings a new curriculum area to our sport management teachings. The use of recent research articles, a variety of teaching methods, and in-class discussions and presentations create an innovative teaching opportunity. All of these materials are unique to this course offering a new and relevant sport management topic for our students.