Sport Management Programs in the United States: Variance in Program Composition and Potential for Future Changes

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Significance of Topic
Sport management is still a relatively young discipline. While there are some indications of programs as early as the 1950s (Isaacs, 1964; Pitts, 2001), most academics point to the establishment of the program at Ohio University in 1966 as the official beginning of sport management as a distinct discipline (Mason, Higgins, & Owen, 1981). However, significant growth did not take place until the 1980s, which is also when the North American Society of Sport Management was formed.

As a field, sport management continues to grow globally regarding the number of students and programs. At the same time, current academic trends in and outside of sport management reveal drastic changes in the status, ranking, hiring, and promotion of faculty. Recent studies indicate that over 70% of university faculty are not tenure-track, and universities are also relying heavily on part-time and adjunct faculty to fill teaching loads (Cross & Goldenberg, 2009). Many academics argue this trend not only indicates a lack of strategic planning regarding faculty, but will also lead to a reduction in the quality of student education and overall research productivity. It is therefore, important to examine the field of sport management in structure and status, and allow critical reflection and strategies for ensuring the successful future of the discipline.

Review of Literature
Since the first sport management program emerged at Ohio University the growth of the number of programs and the evolution of faculty development has been sparse in the literature. However, evidence exists to suggest there has been growth in both areas. Parkhouse and Pitts (2001) indicated the number of programs in North America grew from around 20 in 1980 to nearly 200 in 2000. In their Zeigler lectures, Pitts (2001), Weese (2002), and Mahony (2008) all discussed the rapid growth in sport management programs and the number of students in those programs, but also expressed concerns about the insufficient number of faculty to teach those students and the limited number of doctoral programs available to produce future faculty. In fact, Mahony, Mondello, Hums, and Judd (2004) found advertised faculty positions in sport management had increased from 48 in 1996-1997 to 112 in 2000-2001, while the number of doctoral graduates per year was only about 15. When researching the total number of faculty members in sport management, Mahony, Mondello, Hums, and Judd (2006) identified 427 in North America and Mahony (2008) indicated the number of advertised positions continued to rise to over 120. Floyd, Brooks, and Mak (2008) surveyed 137 programs and found 10.2% of the programs had 1 faculty member, 30.6% had 2-3, 34.7% had 4-5, and 24.4% had 6 or more. While prior research provides some insight into the growth of sport management, there has been little done in a number of years.

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of the current study was to examine the current state of sport management programs in the United States and the composition of faculty in those programs. There were a number of questions addressed:
1. How many universities in the United States currently have sport management programs and how many programs exist at each degree level?
2. How many full-time/part-time and tenure/non-tenured faculty are in these programs and how does the composition of the faculty vary?
3. Among the tenure-track faculty, what is the breakdown by rank?
4. What has been the recent trend in the number of advertised full-time faculty positions?
Method
A list of sport management programs in the United States was obtained from the North American Society for Sport Management web site. The websites for all of these programs were then reviewed to determine if the program currently existed and to obtain information about the current faculty. In addition, sport management faculty position advertisements from the Chronicle of Higher Education were reviewed for every year beginning in 2007-2008 through 2013-2014.

Results
After reviewing the websites it has become apparent the number of universities offering programs has more than doubled since 2000 increasing from about 200 to 432. At these universities, there are 367 undergraduate programs, 199 master programs and 29 doctoral programs. These clearly represent increases since 2000 as well.

The number of faculty has also increased since the Mahony et al. (2006) study to 815 total and 651 in tenure-track lines. It should be noted that 43 of the institutions did not list any faculty for their sport management program, so these numbers may be a slight underestimation. In addition, the remaining information only examines the 384 institutions that listed faculty.

A little over 20% of the faculty members are in non-tenure track positions. Of those in tenure-track positions, 42.86% are assistant professors, 36.25% are associate professors and 20.89% are full professors, indicating there are twice as many assistant professors as full professors. When looking at the professoriate as a group, over half (54.35%) are either non-tenure track or untenured assistant professors and only 16.69% are full professors.

The average number of faculty was 2.12, but variance existed across programs. Of the 384 programs that listed faculty, 208 had either zero (75) or one (101) full-time faculty member with sport management expertise. This represents 54.2% of the programs. These numbers are less positive than indicated in the sample examined by Floyd et al. (2008). The average number of faculty was higher at public universities (2.96) versus private institutions (1.45) and was largest at the Carnegie research very high universities (4.29). The largest number of programs (113) are at institutions that are classified as masters-larger programs, but there were programs across more than 10 different Carnegie classifications.

The number of positions advertised has declined considerably since the peak in 2006-07 cited by Mahony (2008). Over the last three years, the number of positions advertised in the United States averaged about 70. The number of these at the non-tenure track level was a little over 10 and the number at the assistant professor level was slightly less than 40.

Implications
The results of this study raise a number of issues for the profession and future research. The full-time faculty support appears to be troubling in many programs and the jobs advertised would not indicate the potential for change in the future. In addition, the professoriate is very bottom-heavy and future research should examine the path to tenure and associate professors, as well as to full professor.