

SMART Responses

Jason Lee, PhD, Troy University

WELCOME

What are you doing to enhance sport management academia? Various Sport Management academicians were asked this question in hopes of eliciting responses that would provide insight into some happenings within Sport Management academia. The replies were solicited for a new regular feature in the *Sport Management and Related Topics (SMART) Journal* entitled *SMART Responses*. The name is appropriate because it is to serve as a sounding board in which Sport Management educators are able to provide some insight into various issues of relevance to the field of Sport Management. The initial offering in this series provides insight into various educational methods that are being used to facilitate the learning process.

A variety of viewpoints were requested in an effort to illustrate a wide spectrum of perspectives so that the provided information could be shared with SMART's readership. By detailing real life examples of current methods and activities that are being used to enhance sport management education to other educators, as well as students and practitioners, new perspectives or reinforcement of ideas may be established. The goal of this feature is to provide SMART's readership with a substantive reference that can be of value and interest, not only in this installment of *SMART Responses*—but future installments as well.

SMART RESPONSES

This issue's SMART Responses are as follows:



Since I began teaching my graduate Facilities and Event Management class 8 years ago, I have required my students to complete a hands-on experience with a local sports agency. Prior to the beginning of the semester, I send an email to all Baylor head coaches and sports leaders in the community asking them if they have any projects they need help on. Initially I had difficulty convincing some of the coaches that the students were capable of doing quality work. As word has spread about the great job my students have done, I now have the problem of too many requests and not enough students. In the past these experiences have included planning Big XII Conference and NCAA Cross Country meets, Futures Tennis tournaments, NIRSA Regional Flag Football Tournaments, Baylor volleyball and basketball tournaments. This year, my students are working with Texas Special

Olympics, the Waco Convention and Tourism Bureau, Baylor volleyball, Baylor equestrian, Baylor football, Baylor Men's and Women's basketball, Baylor Athletic Department's Ferrell Special Events center, and facility/event management with our baseball/softball/soccer complex. The students have to complete 100 clock hours with their project, produce a document and give an in-class presentation for their grade. In the past, some of these experiences have led to internships. They provide a great learning experience for the students because they have to apply some of the things we talk about in class in real-life settings.

*~Andy Pittman, PhD
Baylor University*

One of the objectives of my doctoral seminar in sport communication is for students to use their activities in the course to make a contribution to the academic literature. Throughout the semester they embrace the value of discovery by engaging in research that will add to the body of knowledge in our field. By the end of the course, students are expected to have conducted a scholarly investigation and submitted their manuscript to an

academic journal or conference. Because of the symbiotic nature of theory and practice, their research should be relevant to sport communication stakeholders. The students' findings should be rigorous and theory based (satisfying the academicians) as well as interesting, timely, and applicable (satisfying the practitioners). Therefore, their work throughout the course enhances both the study and practice of sport communication.

~Paul M. Pedersen, PhD

Indiana University, Bloomington

During the last year, in response to industry needs, we have developed a ticket operations class at Ohio University. The class incorporates a required "real-world" sales project selling season, group, and individual game tickets for Ohio Athletics and the Southern Ohio Copperheads collegiate summer league baseball team. In addition, the class provides a foundation in standard ticket operations functions such as customer service, ticket transfers, seat relocations, priority systems, staffing, etc.

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In forming the class, we partnered with ticketing software company TicketReturn, who donated their software to the program for educational purposes. After successfully completing the ticket operations class, qualifying students will receive a software training certificate from TicketReturn, who will then assist in placing students in internships with TicketReturn clients across the country.

Also, we have formed a partnership with the Sales Centre in the College of Business to create a Sales Certificate program for undergraduate Sport Management students. Ohio University is currently one of only 10 institutions in the nation offering a sales certificate. This partnership with the Sales Centre provides advanced sales classes for students as well as opportunities for role playing to better prepare them for sales careers.

We are excited about the direction of the program and the possibility for additional corporate partners in the future.

~Jim Reese, PhD

Ohio University

In my courses, I have created my own mini case scenarios. I do not have a scenario for each and every lesson yet, but I have about one for every two or three lessons. There are other courses where I have about one scenario per class. I usually develop and modify a few each semester. I allow them to get into groups for each scenario. These scenarios are things that I either encountered while working in the industry or I have witnessed over time as an academic. None of my case scenarios is particularly long (less than 2 pages). I just provide enough information for the students to get a clear picture. I always narrate the scenarios and explain the details before the students begin working on them. The other key is to walk around and interact with the groups as they attempt solutions. The idea is to get them thinking from an application standpoint when they learn material. Rather than just having one major application based project at the end, I spread out application throughout the semester. The technique has had positive results.

~Curt Laird, PhD

Winthrop University

Since I have been a faculty member at Grambling State University, I have made it a priority for my students to have practical experience in their classes. For example, my sport club/event management class is required to organize an actual sporting event. The students have organized a volleyball tournament and a 3 on 3-basketball tournament. The students love the experience and it allows them to build skills for the future. The students have also donated portions of their proceeds to the victims of Hurricane Katrina and to the Rick McCall Foundation (scholarship fund).

~Chevelle Hall, PhD

Grambling State University

I like to utilize “debates” in classes where there are numerous controversial topics. Sociological courses, Gender Issues, and Ethical Issues in Sport are all great courses to incorporate debates in. I have found debates get more class members involved as they are working in small groups, and the incorporation of “competition” with teams debating other teams has worked well to motivate students. Additionally, it seems to be very empowering for students, as they become the “experts” on any given topic for that day.

I create teams of 3-5, and assign them a topic with a “for” or “against” position. They do not get a chance to choose the side they are on, so often students may totally disagree with the position they get. However, the point is to get them looking at current research, and often times students will embrace the position they were assigned. Students are given the debate format, which includes a 5 minute introduction for each team, a 3 minute slot for each team, a one minute rebuttal for each team, another one minute rebuttal, and finally, a one minute closing for each team. Over the years, students have indicated they prefer the more back and forth interactions, and thus the shorter time slots. I really emphasize being prepared, organized, and working as a team. I use a timer, and students are stopped if they are going over the allotted minutes allowed. Students are told they must provide an outline of their main points, as well as an outline of the anticipated points of the other team (this forces them to really think through the arguments for each side). Students must also turn in a reference list of all research they plan on using in the debate.

On the day of the debate, I put a table in between the two teams that are facing each other. We flip a coin for who goes first, and the debate begins. Teams cannot talk to their other teammates during the debate, they can only write notes, so they must be very organized. At the end, the entire class points out and we summarize the strong points for each team, as well as statistics or facts they felt were particularly informative. The entire class then votes on who they think won the debate. The enthusiasm and increased involvement of all students have really made this a worthwhile project over the years.

~Heidi Grappendorf, PhD
Texas Tech University

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In our program, at SUNY Brockport, I have been involved in creating 75 case studies [each dealing with a different situation or problem or challenge facing an administrator or a manager] in which students at the graduate level are asked to review and react to. I feel fortunate since I have written the book in which the 75 cases appear and the book, in addition to the cases, has five chapters dealing specifically with the challenges facing administrators and managers as they attempt to PREVENT, RESOLVE, AND SOLVE PROBLEMS (and the aftermath of such difficulties). Students are thus introduced to the problem solving process (through the five chapters) and then are asked to put this newly acquired knowledge to good use in reviewing the various cases via the case study method.

The students are asked to respond in writing to some 15-18 questions pertaining to a particular case and then in small groups (involving 4-6 students) they discuss the ramifications of the case - in general as well as various specific elements of the case.

In this advance graduate class (the last class before the culminating internship experience and graduation) the students can elect to study specific cases which might interest them or they are assigned various cases by me. The students have indicated that they really benefit from the combination of traditional textbook learning coupled with an active case study discussion-type approach to learning.

~William F. Stier, Jr., EdD
State University of New York

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I will explain two different programs with which I have had success:

During the fall semesters, I teach socio-cultural issues courses on the both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Due the topics addressed in these courses, I have found that the use of film as a learning tool has been an extremely valuable. For these classes, I select a sampling of sport-themed films that provide be a valuable compliment to my traditional classroom methods. I also ensure that students are given ample opportunity to discuss themes of the film and provide feedback regarding the relevant issues covered by these works. Thus far, students have thoroughly enjoyed this added dimension and have expressed appreciation for me taking the time to utilize this underused medium.

Additionally, for the last several years, I have had my sport marketing classes take part in intercollegiate sport promotions projects. The joint effort between the sport marketing courses and the university's intercollegiate athletic department has led to a mutually beneficial relationship as the students are able to provide valuable human resources to the athletic department, while being able to take part in a hands on learning experience. This "real world" experience provides a means for enhancing the traditional classroom learning methods, while enhancing the students' professional skills and adding a quality work experience to be included in their resumes. These projects have been extremely successful and have served as a springboard for the career progression for some of my students.

*~Jason W. Lee, PhD
Troy University*

We try to offer students as much "hands-on" application of sport management concepts as possible. These experiences can be through internship/practicum activities and through simulation activities. One such simulation we utilize is the "Board Room" concept. Our second year graduate students are required to enroll in Contemporary Issues in Sport. Rather than offer this course in a standard classroom lecture format, we treat the once a week meeting as a "staff meeting". The class is held in a conference or "Board" room and students are seated around a large conference table rather than in desks in a classroom. Students are required to dress appropriately for the meeting (business casual) on non-presentation days and to dress more formally on presentation days. Definitions of both of these types of dress are distributed to students PRIOR to the first class.

Each class session has a specific topic or theme for discussion. Two students are required to present articles from the current issue of the Sport Business Journal that are related to the topic. These students are required to distribute a summary of the article and action points for its potential use to the group. PowerPoint slides are required to augment the presentation. The entire board discusses the pros and cons of the information and proposed action points. As "Chairman" the professor is often required to serve as "Devil's Advocate" to prompt students to probe deeper into the content.

Two additional students are responsible for the formal presentation of the topic for the Staff meeting. Their presentation should be between 25-30 minutes followed by questions and answers. Students are evaluated on the thoroughness of their presentation and the support they have collected. Presenters are also required to identify actions points that sport administrators can use to deal with the particular topic. Each presenter is required to distribute an article to the staff that they feel best represents the topic they have presented.

The added formality of this setting seems to have had a positive affect on our students and their preparedness for the "Real World." At worse, it offers the student and the instructor a welcome change of pace from the traditional class room environment.

*~Andy Gillentine, PhD
University of Miami*

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SMART Responses

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The next installment of SMART Responses will provide the opportunity for Sport Management educators to share some insight into an issue that should prove to be of immense interest to educators and students alike. Any interested educators in the field of sport management can reply to the following: "What is the strangest (most bizarre) occurrence that you have ever encountered in a class environment?" We are looking for personal recollections pertaining to:

- ⑥ An unusual occurrence that have taken place in the classroom
- ⑥ A unique happening during a presentation
- ⑥ Student excuses
- ⑥ Problems encountered
- ⑥ And so forth.

*What is the strangest
(most bizarre) occurrence
that you have ever
encountered in a class
environment?*

To submit a reply to "SMART Responses," please send the information via email to Jason W. Lee, Editor at jwlee@troy.edu.

