

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES NEEDED IN
SPORT MANAGEMENT UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

by

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ABSTRACT

Colleges and universities are under increasing pressure from policymakers, business leaders, and the public at large to offer quality programs that prepare students for the workforce. Business leaders have expressed concerns that graduates lack necessary competencies to succeed in the workplace, including highly sought-after leadership competencies. Sport management is a growing academic field that could benefit from identification of the specific leadership competencies graduates need for careers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore leadership competencies that are needed in sport management programs from the perspectives of collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic directors serving in leadership capacities within two national organizations. The researcher believed this exploratory study could serve as a foundation for future studies focused on sport management program competencies and curriculum design. The data were collected using interviews and analyzed using qualitative methods.

Results of the study indicated further research in the area of sport management leadership competencies is necessary, along with research in areas of the identified skill deficits that exist. Future research could assist in sport management curriculum design

and redesign that addresses the needs of the sport industry and better prepares students for the workforce.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Higher education in the United States has grown since the inception of the first college in 1638, to become a “vast enterprise comprising some 4,500 different colleges and universities, more than 20 million students, 1.4 million faculty members, and aggregate annual expenditures exceeding 400 billion dollars” (Bok, 2013, p. 9). Several types of higher education institutions exist, including research universities, comprehensive universities, four-year colleges, community college, and for-profit institutions. “As research and education have come to be looked upon as vital ingredients of economic growth, countries with highly developed, knowledge-based economies are all being driven by a common desire to strengthen their universities” (Bok, 2013, p. 20). The United States is no exception. The performance of colleges and universities not only concerns students, but it impacts the entire society:

It is important for the economy that undergraduates develop the skills employers need whether or not students care deeply about acquiring them. It also matters to the public that undergraduates become engaged and informed citizens and ethically responsible human beings even if students do not attach much importance to these goals. (Bok, 2013, p. 25)

The purpose and goals of colleges in the United States have evolved. Until the Civil War, most colleges educated an elite group of young men for the “learned professions and positions of leadership in society” (Bok, 2013, p. 29). As time went on

and America became more industrialized, there was a growing need to prepare students for practical trainings and careers. An emphasis on research also grew, as did the movement for preparing graduates through a broad foundation of liberal arts. One of main goals of colleges and universities continues to be the preparation of graduates for the workforce (Suspitsyna, 2012). However, it is not solely a focus for higher education institutions. An interwoven relationship during the last third of the 20th century became a focus of the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education, business and industrial councils, education administrators, and public policy as America realized its future employees were not prepared to enter workplaces of the future (McNamara, 2009, p. 24).

According to Cleary and Van Noy (2014), “Higher education’s role in preparing students for the workforce is a mounting concern among policymakers and the public at large” (p. 1). Busser (2012) added:

Many two-year colleges are under scrutiny by state officials to make sure they are truly educating the future workforce. State governments are looking for better community college completion rates, as well as specialized and targeted curriculum that prepares graduates to truly contribute to the local economy. (para. 23)

Business leaders are also concerned about higher education’s impact on students. The literature indicates business leaders feel there is a gap between the skills they are looking for in graduates and what skills graduates actually possess. The 2013 Lumina study of the American Public’s Opinion on Higher Education and U.S. Business Leaders Poll on Higher Education found that “most business leaders feel that higher education institutions are not currently graduating students with skills and

competencies their businesses need, and few say they are currently collaborating with any institution on any level” (Gallup, 2014, p. 23). The poll “revealed that only 14 percent of Americans—and only 11 percent of business leaders—strongly agree that graduates have the necessary skills and competencies to succeed in the workplace” (Alssid, 2014, para. 1). Bok (2013) agreed, saying

The National Alliance for Business has complained that the majority of [college] students is severely lacking in flexible skills and attributes, such as leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, time-management, adaptability, analytical thinking, global consciousness, and basic communications, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. (p. 171)

What are the skills the business leaders are referring to?

There is a growing consensus among members of the corporate community, university professors, and informed educators regarding the skills needed for success in college and in the marketplace. According to the Business-Higher Education Forum, "today's high-performance job market requires graduates to be proficient in such cross-functional skills and attributes as leadership, teamwork, problem solving, and communication," as well as time management, self-management, adaptability, analytical thinking, and global consciousness. (Bassett, 2005, para. 2)

Miller and Slocombe (2012) noted the increased competition in the workforce will affect graduates’ ability to get hired and remained employed. They suggest students’ success will depend upon their “ability to understand complex problems, persuasively communicate orally and in writing, and use mathematics and information systems” (p. 18).

Students do not tend to share the same concerns as policy makers and business leaders regarding skill deficiencies and a lack of preparation for the job market. This may be due to students overestimating their skill level and preparation or not understanding the needs of the industry. The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU)

surveyed 400 employers and 613 college students regarding career preparation and found that students consistently ranked themselves as more prepared than employers thought they were. The findings showed students were more than twice as likely as employers to think they are well-prepared in the key areas of oral communication, written communication, critical thinking, and creativity (Jaschik, 2015, para. 3).

Sport Management Field

One area in which skills may be lacking is in the field of sport management. It is estimated that the North American professional and intercollegiate sport market “will grow at a compound annual rate of 4.5 percent across the segments of gate revenues, media rights, sponsorship and merchandising, from \$56.9 billion in 2013 to \$70.7 billion in 2018” (PwC Sport Outlook, 2014, p. 1). As the sport industry grows and expands, the need for well-trained employees, including skilled managers, increases. “The business of sport has become more and more focused on management skills, economic decision-making, budgeting, and leadership of small and large sport entities” (Gentile, 2010, p. 2). Professionals in the sport industry are looking to higher education institutions to provide well-qualified graduates for hiring. Many of these graduates are products of sport management undergraduate programs.

Where Does the Program Belong?

Gentile (2010) noted, “From an academic standpoint, sport management educators—now more than ever—are preparing sport management students for a dynamic industry filled with change, problems, opportunities, and challenges” (p. xiv).

Universities and colleges are adding sport management programs because of the increased need of the sport industry, as well as their popularity among students. Sport management is a relatively new academic field that has experienced tremendous growth and interest over the past 30 years (Gentile, 2010, p. xiv).

Sport management as an academic program originated in physical education departments within universities. The curriculum was an extension of physical education preparatory models that were slightly modified. As athletics and the sport industry grew, there was an increasing demand to have more specialized courses that would prepare students in the field of administration. To meet the needs of the industry, business and management courses became part of the curriculum. The added emphasis on business and management led some universities to move their sport management programs away from physical education departments and into their business departments. According to Gentile (2010), "The question of sport management as a stand-alone major or embedded within schools of business has been an ongoing debate since sport management's inception and ultimate popularity on college campuses" (p. xv). Business and physical education departments are not the only options for housing sport management programs. Sport management programs can also be found within education, tourism, recreation and health profession departments within colleges.

The literature appears to agree concerning the importance of sport management specialization. Sport is considered a unique product compared to other industries (Humphreys & Ruseski, 2010). Therefore, there is a greater need to educate and prepare "qualified individuals who possess the skills of business executives along with the key

awareness of sport as a unique product and the understanding of sport fans as a profitable consumer group” (Gentile, 2010, p. xiv). Gentile also stated, “From an economic standpoint, the value of educated sport professionals has increased in importance since the inception of the first sport management program in the 1960s” (p. xiv). Not only has the value of educated sport professionals increased, but student demand for the program has risen as well.

What Should Be Included in the Program?

Perspectives on which department should offer sport management programs are varied, and thoughts regarding the types of courses and content to be included within the program to prepare students are also diverse. As Chapter 2 explains in more detail, the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA), the only sport management discipline specific accreditation organization, was developed in 2008 to “promote and recognize excellence in sport management programs worldwide” (COSMA, n.d., para. 2). COSMA created a voluntary, specialized accreditation to guide institutions toward implementing best practices in their sport management programs. According to COSMA’s website, the commission evaluates how well sport management programs are educating students and preparing them for careers in the sport management industry. Although COSMA has made suggestions regarding courses and content areas, the majority of programs have not sought voluntary accreditation or received approval status. Gentile (2010) argued that quality programs are necessary and colleges should provide them. “The responsibility of faculty members and academic

administrators to deliver quality sport management education has never been so important” (Gentile, 2010, p. xiv):

As these programs of study flourish, courses and course content need to reflect the dynamic and innovative industry that is sport business. All sport management programs of study, as we move into a new era of accreditation, should take the time to review, create and reflect on their courses and the effectiveness of the embedded course content, along with evaluating the teaching and learning that occurs throughout a student’s academic career. (p. 1)

Direct assessment of employer perceptions of skill alignment can provide specific, valuable information. However, Cleary and Van Noy (2014) noted that few studies have attempted to directly “measure the extent to which a given program or set of programs aligns with the skill expectations for needs of employers or other stakeholders” (p. 16).

Bok (2013) states: “Nothing reveals the educational goals of a faculty as clearly as the curriculum or conveys as much about the means by which these ends are meant to be achieved” (p. 166). Baker and Esherick (2013) asserted that sport management programs with comprehensive curriculum that meets or exceeds COSMA curricular content guidelines is one key element of maximizing students’ employment prospect (p. 28). Gentile (2010) concurred, adding that sport management programs need to continue to change and adapt to satisfy industry and academic standards. Exploring job postings is one way to gain insights into the type of employee that organizations are looking to hire. Job postings typically provide a list of qualifications and desired traits. Recent sport management job postings included the following desired qualifications:

- “The Assistant AD, Business Strategy and Ticket Operations must be able to lead persuasively, develop the skills of staff, and create a strong culture of excellence in their units” (Stanford University, 2015).

- The Coordinator of Intramurals and Club Sports: “Applicants must be dedicated, motivated, and self-directed individuals with a strong work ethic, strong decision making skills, and outstanding leadership skills” (American International College, 2015).
- Director of Athletics and Recreation/Head Women’s Basketball Coach: “Excellent leadership, interpersonal, organizational, oral and written communication skills are essential” (College of Mount Saint Vincent, 2015).

Along with focusing on leadership skills, other common desired traits were interpersonal, organizational, and oral and written communication skills, and applicants that are motivated, self-directed, persuasive, and have strong decision-making skills.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this exploratory study is to determine if more research is needed regarding specific leadership competencies that should be incorporated into sport management curriculum to prepare graduates for the careers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics. Sport management is a relatively new academic program in which specific competencies that should be included in the course content are not clear. The sport industry continues to change, thus it is important to continually evaluate how to best prepare graduates for careers. Busser (2012) stressed fundamental shifts that occur in the workplace, including a movement from management principles to leadership values (p. 45). Although leadership may be considered a function of a manager, little information exists that defines the leadership skills students should acquire while earning an undergraduate degree in sport management. Through interviews with current collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic professionals, this study explores specific leadership competencies that may need to be further researched

and incorporated into undergraduate programs. The findings of this study will serve as a foundation for future studies regarding leadership competencies in sport management programs. More recent research is also needed to add to the body of knowledge about this academic field.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

After a review of research methods, the researcher determined a qualitative methodology using in-depth interviews was most appropriate for this exploratory study. Qualitative data were collected from collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic directors serving in a leadership capacity within professional organizations.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To explore the issue more in-depth, the researcher selected the following research questions, which are designed to offer insight and develop a better understanding of the competencies sport management professionals need to be successful working in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic programs. The following questions were examined through a qualitative research study:

1. Are there specific leadership competencies that should be included in undergraduate sport management programs?
2. What leadership competencies do sport management graduates need to be prepared for jobs/careers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics?
3. What leadership learning outcomes should sport management faculty include in their program curriculum?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Competency framework was selected by the researcher as a foundation to guide the exploratory study. According to the Charter Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), a competency framework is a structure that defines each individual competency required for individuals working in an organization (CIPD, 2015). The researcher focused on exploring the competency of leadership by interviewing collegiate recreation and athletic directors. The goal was to discover leadership competencies the sport management professionals deem important for employees within their organizations and to identify leadership competencies they feel should be included in undergraduate sport management programs.

The researcher also selected the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL)'s *Model of Leader Competencies* to guide the study. The CCL's Model depicts 20 leadership competencies (Table 1 below) that are divided into three categories: Leading Yourself, Leading Others, and Leading the Organization. The researcher chose this model because the competencies listed have been derived by an organization that has worked with millions of leaders and the competencies are noted as being consistent among different types of organizations. The 20 competencies have also served as the basis of leadership development trainings worldwide (McCalley, 2006).

Table 1: *CCL's Model of Leadership Competencies*

LEADING YOURSELF	LEADING OTHERS	LEADING THE ORGANIZATION
Ethics and Integrity	Promoting Effective Teams and Work Groups	Managing Change
Drive and Purpose	Building and Maintaining Relationships	Problem Solving and Decision Making
Leadership Stature	Valuing Diversity and Differences	Managing Politics and Influencing
Learning Agility	Developing Others	Innovation and Risk Taking
Management of Self	Communicating Effectively	Setting Vision and Strategies
Self-Awareness		Managing the Work
Adaptability		Business Skills and Knowledge
		Understanding

(McCauley, 2006, p. 13)

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There is a greater emphasis today for higher education institutions to provide training and learning opportunities for students to gain desirable skills for the workplace. Business leaders who have recognized the importance of students acquiring skills that prepare them for the workforce have identified skill gaps that currently exist. Skill alignment is needed to match “skills, competencies, and credentials offered in higher education, with those most in demand in the labor market” (Cleary & Van Noy, 2014, p. 4). Some research exists that identifies desirable skills for sport administrators. However, a lack of published research identifying specific leadership competencies that should be embedded within sport management programs is evident. This study adds to

the body of knowledge related to sport management program curriculum by exploring leadership competencies that may be in demand within collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic programs. The study also yields actionable information that can guide future studies in the area of sport management leadership competencies.

LIMITATIONS

The study relied on data collected from interviews with six collegiate recreation and athletic directors serving in leadership roles within their respective national organizations. The sample was purposely chosen due to the researcher's past work experience in collegiate recreation and current membership in the NIRSA Leaders in Collegiate Recreation organization. A smaller sample size was appropriate due to the exploratory nature of the study. The lack of prior research studies on the topic of leadership competencies in sport management programs required an exploratory research design rather than an explanatory research design. The researcher acknowledges the self-reported data gathered from interviews is difficult to verify independently and may contain personal biases. In future research, a quantitative survey sent to a larger sample could clarify the level of importance and specific competencies needed at different leadership levels.

DELIMITATIONS

The study included only collegiate athletic directors and collegiate recreation directors that matched the following established selection criteria for the study:

1. Directors with 10 or more years of experience working in collegiate athletics or collegiate recreation programs.

2. Directors supervising a minimum of five employees.
3. Directors that serve in a leadership capacity for either NIRSA or NACDA.
4. Directors willing to participate in the study.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Sport management – Professional career path and academic program that prepares students for management roles within the sport industry. Also referred to as sport business, sports management, sport administration, and athletic administration.

Sport industry – According to Baker and Esherick (2013), the sport industry is made up of a variety of jobs in the following settings:

- Academic institutions (e.g., scholastic and collegiate athletic programs)
- Major and minor league professional leagues and franchises
- Independent sport federations, including governing bodies, representative bodies, and not-for-profit and profit-based organizations
- Sporting goods companies
- Independent sport management and marketing firms
- Media groups
- Corporate entities with sport marketing departments
- Sport agencies that provide athletic representation
- Health and fitness facilities
- Golf courses and ski resorts
- Hall of Fame
- Community parks and recreation organizations
- Extreme and adventure sport providers
- Sponsors

- Special event management providers
- Venue and facility management providers
- Enterprise related to sport entertainment or sport tourism

Leadership – That which Influences, motivates, and inspires people to work together toward common goals.

Competencies – Skills, knowledge, and abilities required for specific roles.

Competency framework – A structure that defines each individual competency required for individuals working in an organization (CIPD, 2015).

Sport management program accreditation – Voluntary specialized accreditation based on a self-study and peer-review process that can be bestowed by the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA) accrediting body.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The organization of the study is constructed according to Roberts' (2010) design. Chapter 2 presents a review of related literature dealing with the history of how and when sport management academic programs were developed, current curriculum and accreditation practices, and where leadership fits within the curriculum. Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodology of the study. The instrument used to gather the data, the procedures followed, and determination of the selected sample for the study are described. Chapter 4 provides an analysis of the data and a discussion of the findings. Chapter 5 contains the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study. The study concludes with a bibliography and appendixes.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Sport management is a relatively new academic field that continues to grow in popularity with students and colleges alike. The field of sport management has undergone substantial changes over the past 50 years but may not have kept pace with the needs of an ever-changing sport industry. It is estimated that the North American professional and intercollegiate sport market “will grow at a compound annual rate of 4.5 percent across the segments of gate revenues, media rights, sponsorship and merchandising, from \$56.9 billion in 2013 to \$70.7 billion in 2018” (PwC Sport Outlook, 2014, p.1).

The multi-billion-dollar sport industry has become multi-faceted and complex. To keep up with this growing industry, sport management programs have also needed to change. The programs that originally emerged from physical education curriculum now more closely resemble the fields of business and management. Masteralexis, Barr, and Hums (2015) emphasize the concern of sport management educators regarding what constitutes a “solid sport management curriculum capable of producing students qualified to work as managers in the sport industry” (p. 21). It is imperative that a sport management curriculum trains students to be qualified and successful in the workforce.

If colleges are to prepare graduates for successful careers, they must first understand the essential skills students need. Because of the changes and growth within the sport industry, sport management programs should consult with industry professionals to identify the essential competencies required of graduates.

Henri Fayol, a French engineer in the early 20th century, has been recognized as a founding father of modern management (Parker & Ritson, 2005). Fayol developed 14 general principles of management that fit within the five categories of *planning*, *organizing*, *commanding*, *coordinating*, and *controlling*. Over time, Fayol's commanding and controlling categories merged into *leading*, and thus the categories became the four functions of management frequently referred to in management curriculum today (Conkright, 2015). The four functions of management can be summarized as these features:

- Planning: vision-casting, identifying goals, objectives, values, overall strategy;
- Organizing: resource allocation, functional impacts, multilevel factors, tactical actions;
- Leading: leadership competencies, strategic and tactical behaviors, motivational activities;
- Controlling: what and how to measure plans, interpreting qualitative and quantitative data, responding to feedback. (Conkright, 2015, p. 20)

The most recent standards for sport management curriculum and voluntary accreditation were created in the early 1990s by the North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) (NASPE-NASSM Task Force, 1993). Although Fayol identified leadership as one of the core functions of a manager, there appear to be inconsistent views as to the amount of emphasis that should be placed on leadership within the

sport management curricula. The topic of leadership might be touched on in some core sport management courses, but it is not necessarily included as a course in all sport management curricula.

Because it is important to understand the specific competencies sport management students need to be successful in the sport industry today, this research study focuses solely on the leadership component. This study examines whether specific leadership competencies should be included in sport management curricula based on interviews with sport industry managers working in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics. Those who administer sport management programs must understand the leadership competencies their graduates should possess to meet the demands of a large variety of sport-related careers.

The literature review focuses on the following areas: definition of sport management, brief history of how and when the academic program of sport management was developed, accreditation bodies for sport management academic programs, current sport management curriculum, leadership competencies, viewpoints about management versus leadership, and the need for curricular evaluation.

Researchers have acknowledged the importance of analyzing current sport management programs and the need for continuous improvement. Jones, Brooks, and Mak (2008) claimed, "Analysis of sport management programs is important for potential students as well as for the future development of sport management as academic program" (p. 77). In order to strengthen sport management programs and prepare students for future careers, it is important to understand the specific competencies

students need to be successful in the sport industry. Researchers recognize the need for further research in the field of sport management due to the scarcity of current literature (Liu & Lin, 2012). Further research focusing on curricula should be conducted to determine which courses and course content are needed to reflect the current sport business industry (Gentile, 2010). This study will contribute to the academic field of sport management by identifying leadership competencies that should be included in the curriculum based on interviews with industry leaders within collegiate athletics and collegiate recreation.

DEFINITION OF SPORT MANAGEMENT

Sport management is commonly referred to as sports management, sport business, sports administration, and athletic administration. According to Baker and Esherick (2013),

Sport management is both a professional career path and an academic content area. In the broadest sense, sport management includes all activities, individuals, and organizations—youth and adult, play and work, amateur and professional, for-profit and nonprofit, community and international, recreational and performance oriented, and public and private. The field also includes the management of sport as entertainment. (p. 4)

DeSensi, Kelley, Blanton, and Beitel (1990) broadly defined sport management as “any combination of skills related to planning, organizing, directing, controlling, budgeting, leading, and evaluating within the context of an organization or department whose primary product or service is related to sport and/or physical activity” (p. 33).

VanderZwaag (1998) identified other areas of sport to be included within the professional realm: recreational sport programs, industrial and military sport programs,

corporate-sponsored sporting events, sporting goods, developmental sport programs, sport news media, and sport management academic programs.

HISTORY OF SPORT MANAGEMENT

Sport management is a relatively new academic field that has originated in response to the needs identified by the sport industry (Baker & Esherick, 2013). Before the introduction of sport management as an academic field, collegiate athletic administration positions were given to individuals who had served as coaches with little or no professional administrative preparation. The idea of a formal sport management curriculum focused on preparing students for management positions in the sport industry has been credited to James G. Mason of Ohio University and Walter O'Malley, owner of the Los Angeles Dodgers (Masteralexis et al., 2015). In 1957, O'Malley wrote a letter to Mason inquiring where one would find a person who, by virtue of education, has been trained to administer a marina, race track, ski resort, auditorium, stadium, theater, convention or exhibit hall, or public camp complex, or a person to fill an executive position at a team or league level in junior athletics such as Little League baseball, football, scouting, CYO, or youth activities (Mason, Higgins, & Wilkinson, 1981, p. 44).

O'Malley's question was answered when the first master's degree program in sport management was established at Ohio University in 1966 (Masteralexis et al., 2015). According to Costa (2005), "The field defined itself as a discipline in the middle 1980s as signaled by the founding of the North American Society for Sport Management

(NASSM) in 1985 and the *Journal of Sport Management* in 1987 (Parks & Olafson, 1987)” (p. 117).

The number of university-based sport management programs has continued to increase, and now more than 400 sport management bachelor degree programs exist in the United States (DegreesInSports.com, n.d.). Masteralexis et al. (2015) suggested that the growth of sport management as an academic field has dual influences. They explained the growth of sport management programs was due primarily to the sport industry’s need for well-trained managers and also universities’ and colleges’ desire to attract students and increase enrollment (p. 21).

When a sport management curriculum was first established, it used a modified physical education preparatory model that was later questioned for not including specialized content. Cuneen (1992) contended the growth of athletics created a need for more job-related courses and specialized content to prepare individuals for athletic administration. Before a graduate-level specialty track was created, many institutions’ undergraduate and graduate sport management programs had dual-listed courses that could be applied to either level of degree (Cuneen, 1992). Parkhouse (1980) studied sport management graduate programs to determine if students were prepared adequately for job requirements. She investigated applicants, job demand, and job placement data, which led her to propose a stronger division between undergraduate and graduate programs and the need for programs to be multidimensional to prepare students for the variety of positions in the sport industry. Parkhouse noted that the data from her study showed a discrepancy between occupational needs and program

requirements. Respondents also indicated irrelevant courses existed that failed to meet sport management program needs.

Hay (1986) presented a theory and proposed a preparation model called the Sports Management Curriculum and Related Strategies at the first meeting of the North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM). The model was based on information from multiple sources, including the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, review of sport administrative competencies, and established program literature and sample curricula. Hay's model was interdisciplinary and contained two cores, sport and management. The sport core contained biomechanics, exercise physiology, sport history, sport economics, sport facilities, coaching, physical activity research, sport philosophy, and sport psychology. The courses were intended to provide students foundational knowledge of sport in relation to athletes, coaches, culture, economics, and facilities. The management core contained business production, marketing, finance, external environments of profit/non-profit business economics, law, accounting, personnel, communications, statistics, information systems, and strategy. The management courses were intended to provide students with foundational business and management knowledge and skills. Hay's model did not incorporate a field experience in sport, commonly known as an internship (Cuneen, 1992, p. 18). Hoyle and Deschaine (2016) noted,

Advantages of internships for students are increased career opportunities, higher salaries, quicker job offers, faster promotion rates, job satisfaction, ease of transition from college to work, better communication skills, and application of the knowledge gained from the classroom (Clark, 2003; Gault, Leach, & Duey, 2010; Gault, Redington, & Schlager, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978; Weible, 2010). (p. 4)

CURRICULUM AND ACCREDITATION

Although a variety of accreditation options for business and management programs exist in higher education, the researcher has chosen to focus solely on the only discipline-specific sport management accrediting organization. During the 1980s, sport management programs grew throughout North America. The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) and the North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) both examined the concept of providing curricular guidance to sport management programs. NASPE and NASSM created a joint task force to develop a competency-based body of knowledge for baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral-level sport management degrees. The final document containing the standards was approved in June 1992 and included the following core content areas and competencies for undergraduate programs (NASPE-NASSM, 1993):

Area 1: Behavioral Dimensions in Sport

- The student must identify and understand the internal and external factors that shape sport in a culture.
- The student must understand how sport mirrors the society in which it exists.
- The student must appreciate the contributions of recreational sport, as well as highly organized competitive programs in high school, college, and professional levels, to culture.
- The student must understand why business is involved in sport and how business interests in sport have served as a catalyst for growth.
- The student must gain appreciation of sport as a medium for integrating gender, ethnic, religious, and disabilities interests.
- The student must understand sociological phenomena and how they affect participation and behavior.

- The student must be able to define sport management and the scope of its interests.
- The student must understand the evolution of sport management as a profession.

Area 2: Management and Organizational Skills in Sport

- The student will be able to define and understand what constitutes management and what constitutes an organization.
- The student will be able to describe the various skills required in the management of organizations.
- The student will be able to describe the roles and functions of managers.
- The student will be able to apply the functions of planning, organizing, leading, and evaluating to the goals of a variety of sport organizations.
- The student will understand the concept of strategic planning and resource allocation.

Area 3: Ethics in Sport Management

- The student will understand the distinction between concepts of morality and ethics.
- The student will understand how relativism and rationalization affect the level of ethical behavior.
- The student will understand the levels of personal moral development and will be familiar with theories of ethics.
- The student will understand how personal ethics affect organizational responsibility.
- The student will understand why professional ethics are necessary for professions like sport management.
- The student will know how to establish a code of professional ethics and will apply a personal code of ethics to ethical issues in sport.

Area 4: Marketing in Sport

- The student will be able to apply fundamental marketing concepts to the sport industry. The student will understand sport as a product, the sport consumer markets, and the sport product markets.
- The student will know the historical development of marketing and sport marketing and will understand the concepts of marketing orientation and production orientation.
- The student will know processes of the sport marketing planning model and its components including research and information management, the segmentation process, the identification of target markets, the four P's of marketing, and the development of a sport marketing mix and strategies.

Area 5: Communication in Sport

- The student will know how interpersonal and mass communication differ in several important ways.
- The student will know the theoretical foundations of interpersonal communication including dyadic and small group communication and will understand the theoretical foundations of organizational communication.
- The student will understand the theoretical foundations of mass communication and the mass media industry including print media and electronic media.
- The student will understand how business decisions are made in the mass communication industry based on ratings and shares.

Area 6: Finance in Sport

- The student will learn the steps toward developing an organizational budget.
- The student will understand how accounting procedures may be used as a tool in finance and how sports organizations develop financial strategies including investments and player contracts.
- The student will learn how principles of fund raising are utilized with various constituencies.
- The student will be able to utilize financial indicators in developing a strategic plan.

Area 7: Economics in Sport

- The student will understand how an economic system works balancing the wants of producers and consumers.
- The student will understand how economic behavior results from equilibrium between producers and consumers.
- The student will be able to construct and analyze a demand curve, a supply curve, and a market equilibrium curve and determine how to shift in response to pricing and utility of a product or service.
- The student will learn how to maximize the residuals (profit) generated by production of products or services.
- The student will learn how to develop a budget by generating income strategies and allocating resources based on predetermined criteria and will understand how traditional economic and financial attitudes toward sport have changed as sport has become big business.

Area 8: Legal Aspects of Sport

- The student will be able to identify and apply various areas of law to the sport industry.
- The student will be familiar with state and federal legislation specific to sport and will have a fundamental understanding of the court system and how legal issues are decided.
- The student will become familiar with contract law and how it is utilized in sport.
- The student will better understand the principles of tort liability, especially in the area of negligence, and will be familiar with agency law.
- The student will understand how constitutional law impacts sport management decisions and will be informed about and sensitive to discrimination issues.
- The student will understand how antitrust laws protect the business sector through regulation to control private economic power.
- The student will understand collective bargaining agreements as a component of labor law that is pertinent to sport.

Area 9: Governance in Sport

- The student will become familiar with the various agencies that govern sport at the professional, collegiate, high school, and amateur levels.
- The student will understand the governing power each agency has assumed and how that power is derived.
- The student will understand how governmental agencies influence the roles of sport governing bodies and will study the conditions of membership in a governing body, the sanctions that can be levied against a member, and the route of appeal.

Area 10: Field Experience in Sport Management

- This area involves an application of core content appropriate to the setting in organizational practice.

In 1993, NASPE and NASSM responded to the need to provide greater oversight and accountability by creating the Sport Management Program Review Council (SMPRC), which assumed the responsibility to review sport management programs. Later, in 2005, NASPE and NASSM created the Accreditation Task Force and the Standards Task Force to investigate sport management accreditation. In 2007 the decision was made to form a specialized accrediting body, and in 2008 the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA) organization was officially launched (COSMA, n.d.). COSMA is the only organization that offers discipline-specific accreditation in sport management and uses a “unique peer review system of quality assurance” (COSMA, n.d.). For accreditation, sport management programs must voluntarily submit a self-study that is reviewed by sport industry experts and sport management faculty from other colleges. The self-study must meet the standards the eight COSMA Principles (COSMA, n.d.):

1. Outcomes Assessment

2. Strategic Planning
3. Curriculum
4. Faculty
5. Scholarly and Professional Activities
6. Resources
7. Internal and External Relationships
8. Educational Innovation

COSMA's Principle 3, Curriculum, suggests the following:

Excellence in sport management education requires curricula that are both relevant and current. The curricula-related characteristics of excellence in sport management education include the following:

- The curricula in the sport management programs reflect the mission of the institution and its academic unit/sport management program, and are consistent with current, acceptable sport management practices and the principles of the professionals in the academic and sport management communities.
- The curricula in the sport management programs ensure that students understand and are prepared to deal effectively with critical issues in a changing global environment.
- The academic unit/sport management program recognizes the role of practical and experiential learning as a relevant component of sport management curricula.
- The content of sport management courses is delivered in a manner that is appropriate, effective, and stimulates learning. (COSMA, 2010, p. 9)

COSMA considers programs to be "sport management programs" if 20% or more of total credit hours required for an undergraduate degree are in the traditional areas of sport management education. According to its website, COSMA defines traditional disciplinary areas of sport management education to include sport management, sport

administration, sport marketing, sport business, athletic administration, event management, sport finance, sport leadership, and sport law.

The Common Professional Component (CPC) topical areas COSMA (2010) recognizes as required content that must be included in sport management undergraduate degree programs are:

- A. Social, psychological, and international foundations of sport
- B. Management
 - 1. Sport management principles
 - 2. Sport leadership
 - 3. Sport operations management/event and venue management
 - 4. Sport governance
- C. Ethics in sport management
- D. Sport marketing and communication
- E. Finance/Accounting/Economics
 - 1. Principles of sport finance
 - 2. Accounting
 - 3. Economics of sport
- F. Legal aspects of sport
- G. Integrative experience, such as:
 - 1. Strategic management/policy
 - 2. Internship

3. Capstone experience (an experience that enables a student to demonstrate the capacity to synthesize and apply knowledge, such as a thesis, project, comprehensive examination or course, etc.) (p. 11)

COSMA's CPC topical areas include all of the core areas originally identified by the NASPE and NASSM joint task force in 1992, with the additional subcategories of sport operations management/event and venue management, and sport leadership. The required content areas recommended by COSMA do not include the additional list of specific competencies for each core area that the NASPE and NASSM joint task force identified, which allows faculty in sport management programs greater autonomy to develop their own specific competencies. The researcher notes that sport leadership is listed under the Management heading and is included as part of the required components.

Currently, 24 colleges have been fully accredited by the COSMA, including 27 bachelor degree programs (COSMA, n.d.). The researcher was able to access information from college websites that showed the courses required in each sport management program. A review of coursework from a random sample of 5 of the 24 colleges that offer sport management programs accredited by COSMA, as shown in Table 2, indicates that some courses are similar among institutions, but others, like leadership, are offered only at some colleges. Some common themes, such as foundations of sport management, marketing, finance, sport history, sport law, and sport administration, are also seen among the sample.

Table 2: *Sample Core Sport Management Courses*

COSMA ACCREDITED SPORT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM	CORE COURSES FOR MAJOR AND NUMBER OF CREDITS
Lasell College (2015)	Financial Accounting (4) Marketing (3) Organizational Behavior (3) Cross Cultural Management (3) Understanding Mass Media (3) Effective Speaking (3) Statistics (3) Psychological Perspectives (3) Contemporary Sport Management (3) Legal Aspects of Sports (3) Ethics in Sports (3) Pre- Practicum I (1) Sport Administration (3) Sport Facility & Event Management (3) Sport Marketing (3) Sport Finance (3) Sports Information & Communication (3) Pre-Practicum II (1) Sport Leadership (3) Research in Sport Industry (3) Globalization of Sport (4) Sport Management Internship I (4) Sport Management Capstone (3)
Bowling Green State University	Introduction to Sport Management (3) Introduction to Research (3) History & Philosophy of Sport (3) Sport and Event Management (3) Sport and Event Promotion (3) Practicum in Sport Management (3) Legal Aspects of Sport & Recreation (3) Managing Revenues & Expenditures in Sport Enterprise (3) Sport and Public Assembly Facilities (3) Internship in Sport Management (15) Sport or Exercise Psychology (3) Sport and Gender (3) Visual Communication Technology (3) Principles of Marketing (3) Business Communication (3) Principles of Organization and Management (3) Business Finance (3) Accounting Concepts (3)

COSMA ACCREDITED SPORT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM	CORE COURSES FOR MAJOR AND NUMBER OF CREDITS
Slippery Rock University (2015)	Practical Application (1) Introduction to Sport Management (3) Global Sport Management (3) American Sport in the 21 st Century (3) Sport Communication and Technology (3) Sport Management and Ethics (3) Diversity Issues in Sport Management (3) Sport Budgeting and Finance (3) Sport Marketing (3) Sport Sales and Fundraising (3) Sport Facility and Event Management (3) Sport Management Internship (3-12) Sport Law (3) Sport Management Senior Seminar (3) Sport Management Research Methods (3) Organizational Behavior (3)
Ohio University (2015)	Introduction to Sport Management (3) History of the Sport Industry (3) Practicum in Sport Management (1-3) Leadership and Sport Management (3) Ticket Operations and Sales (3) Marketing and Revenue Streams in Sport (3) Senior Seminar in Sport Management (3) Sport Facility and Event Management (3) Internship in Sport Management (1-15) Additional courses based on specialization
Western New England University (n.d.)	Managing Sport Organizations (3) Sport Facility Planning and Management (3) The Economics of Sports (3) Sport Marketing (3) Business Law for Sport Management (3) Labor Management Relations in Sport (3) International Sport Management (3) Seminar in Sport Management (3) First Year Business Seminar – and Sport Management Elective (3) – or Internship in Sport Management (3)

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM, 2008) describes leadership competencies as the “leadership skills and behaviors that contribute to

superior performance” (para. 2). SHRM supports the use of a competency-based leadership approach because it promotes better leadership and helps organizations to identify and develop future leaders. SHRM notes that research has defined essential leadership competencies, but that new leadership competencies should be developed with business strategy and future trends in mind. SHRM suggests using a competency model because “while some leadership competencies are essential to all firms, an organization should also define what leadership attributes are distinctive to the particular organization” (para. 2).

The Center for Creative Leadership (CCL, 2016) developed a list of essential leadership competencies deemed necessary for individuals at all levels within any type of organization. The essential competencies, known as the “Fundamental Four,” were “based on research and experience with over a million leaders” (para. 4). The Fundamental Four competencies are self-awareness, communication, learning agility, and influence (CCL, 2015, para. 2). While the fundamental are considered necessary for all individuals, the CCL describes additional leadership competencies needed specific to five different leadership levels (see Table 3).

Table 3: *CCL Leadership Levels and Competencies*

LEADERSHIP LEVEL	COMPETENCIES
Level 1: Leading Self – Individual contributors, professional staff, and emerging leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish credibility Leading with purpose Delivering results Doing whatever it takes Interpersonal savvy Embracing flexibility Tolerating ambiguity Understanding one’s own values and culture
Level 2: Leading Others – Leaders of individual contributors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaching and developing others Leading team achievement Building and maintaining relationships Resolving conflict Learning to delegate Innovative problem solving Adapting to cultural differences
Level 3: Leading Managers – Experienced leaders who lead other managers or senior professional staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate cross-functional perspectives in decisions Handle complexity Manage politics Sell ideas to senior leaders Select and lead managers for high performance
Level 4: Leading the Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set vision and build toward the future Balance trade-offs between the short- and long-term Align the organization for strategy implementation
Level 5: Leading the Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set organizational direction Foster alignments across the organization Gain commitment for performance Refine and build strong executive persona

(CCL, 2016, para. 5)

Prior to the “Fundamental Four,” the CCL designed the “CCL’s Model of Leadership Competencies” (see Table 1 in Chapter 1), which depicted 20 leadership competencies divided into three categories: Leading Yourself, Leading Others, and

Leading the Organization (McCauley, 2006). The CCL provides resources and leadership development trainings for individuals and organizations.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, n.d.) lists leadership as one of the seven competencies associated with career readiness for new college graduates. NACE defines the competency of leadership as the ability to

leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work. (para. 7)

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2015) Job Outlook 2016 survey, more than 80% of employers reported they look for evidence of leadership skills on a new college graduate's resume. Leadership attributes were listed as the highest among the attributes employers seek on a candidate's resume at 80.1%, with the ability to work in a team following closely at 78.9% (NACE, 2015). The Job Outlook 2016 was conducted in the fall of 2015 among NACE employer members with a total of 201 members participating (20.1% response rate) (NACE, 2015). In NACE's (2014) Job Outlook 2015 survey, "When employers were asked which leadership attributes they look for on a candidate's resume, the biggest group of respondents (77.8%) chose both 'leadership' and 'the ability to work in a team structure' "(para. 2). The Job Outlook 2015 survey was collected during the fall of 2014 and had a total of 206 participants (25% response rate) (NACE, 2014).

Giles (2016) researched what leaders around the world considered to be the most important leadership competencies. The study included 195 leaders in 15 countries and over 30 organizations participated in a study where they were asked to

choose the 15 most important leadership competencies from a list of 74. The top 10 Leadership Competencies were (1) has high ethical and moral standards, (2) provides goals and objectives with loose guidelines/direction, (3) clearly communicates expectations, (4) has the flexibility to change opinions, (5) is committed to my ongoing training, (6) communicates often and openly, (7) is open to new ideas and approaches, (8) creates a feeling of succeeding and failing together, (9) helps me grow into a next-generation leader, and (10) provides safety for trial and error.

Zenker and Folkman (2014) compiled a dataset from 332,860 bosses, peers, and subordinates identifying what skills have the greatest impact on a leader's success in the position the respondents currently hold:

Each respondent selected the top four competencies out of a list of 16 that were provided. Results were compared for managers at different levels. The same competencies were selected as most important for the supervisors, middle managers and senior managers alike, and six out of the seven topped the list for top executives. (para. 3)

The top seven competencies that were voted the most important for all management positions, in order, were (1) inspires and motivates others, (2) displays high level of integrity and honesty, (3) solves problems and analyzes issues, (4) drives for results, (5) communicates powerfully and prolifically, (6) collaborates and promotes teamwork, and (7) builds relationships. The following nine leadership competencies were chosen only half as frequently as the top seven: (8) displays technical and professional expertise, (9) displays strategic perspective, (10) develops others, (11) takes initiative, (12) innovates, (13) champions change, (14) connects the group to the outside world, (15) establishes stretch goals, and (16) practices self-development.

Zenker and Folkman (2014) concluded,

This suggests to us that as people move up the organization, the fundamental skills they need will not dramatically change. Still, our data further indicate, the relative importance of the seven skills does change to some degree as people move up. With middle managers, problem solving moves ahead of everything else. Then for senior management, communicating powerfully and prolifically moves to the number two spot. Only for top executives does a new competency enter the mix, as the ability to develop a strategic perspective (which had been moving steadily up the lower ranks) moves into the number five position. (para. 5)

Leadership is commonly listed among the main functions of a manager, along with the ability to plan, organize, and evaluate (Conkright, 2015). Weese and Beard (2012) emphasized the importance of a leadership component in sport management programs and suggested colleges should focus on developing future leaders. One may assume that leadership is taught in all sport management programs because leadership is one of the four core functions of a manager (Chelladurai, 2009). However, not all undergraduate sport management programs include specific leadership components in their curriculum, perhaps because of the lack of research on the topic within sport management or the different viewpoints regarding leadership and management.

MANAGEMENT VERSUS LEADERSHIP

Perspectives regarding whether leadership and management are one and the same or different can be varied. One view suggests they are the same because it is difficult to distinguish between the two; another view proposes the two are intertwined, thus there is no reason to identify differences; a third view states that they are indeed different (Borland, Kane, & Burton, 2015). Mintzberg (1990) defined a manager and a leader as one and the same because he believed a manager could use authority to

develop relationships and gain information that leads to decision making and strategy development. Mintzberg considered a manager “the person in charge of the organization or one of its subunits” (p. 164).

Bass (2008) contended that leaders and managers are different. “Leaders manage and managers lead, but the two activities are not synonymous. . . . Management functions can potentially provide leadership; Leadership activities can contribute to managing. Nevertheless, some managers do not lead, and some leaders do not manage” (Bass, 1990, p. 383). Bass (2008) argued,

Leadership is path-finding; management is path-following. Leaders do the right things; managers do things right. Leaders develop; managers maintain. Leaders ask what and why; managers ask how and when. Leaders originate; managers imitate. Leaders challenge the status quo; managers accept it.... Leadership is concerned with constructive or adaptive change, establishing and changing direction, aligning people, and inspiring and motivating people.... They set the direction for organizations. They articulate a collective vision.... They sacrifice and take risks to further the vision. (p. 654)

The most prominent idea today is that leadership and management are distinct but still overlap (Borland et al., 2015, p. 25). Soucie (1994) expressed the importance of leadership research in the field of sport management. He identified management and leadership as different, but as complementary to one another:

It can readily be observed that even though they may be qualitatively different, management and leadership go hand in hand, and are certainly complementary. Zaleznick (1977) suggested that managers are concerned with how things get done while leaders are more concerned with what things mean to people. More recently, Bennis and Nanud (1985) proposed that “managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right things” (p. 21). (p. 3)

Northouse (2013) agreed:

Although there are clear differences between management and leadership, the two constructs overlap. When managers are involved in influencing a group to

meet its goals, they are involved in leadership. When leaders are involved in planning, organizing, staffing, and controlling, they are involved in management. Both processes involve influencing a group of individuals toward goal attainment. (p. 14)

Borland et al. (2015) suggest that organizations could be moving toward failure without the distinction between activities of management and leadership, and that distinguishing the two “allows scholars and practitioners to recognize various levels of competency” (p. 28). It is important to identify management and leadership competencies and skill sets so they can be properly taught and evaluated (Borland et al., 2015). Sport management programs must incorporate these competencies into their curriculum and prepare students for careers in the sport industry that require such skills:

Sport management is an occupation that requires excellence in leadership in order to perform the job successfully. There are several aspects involved in being a good sports manager that demand motivation, direction, organization, planning, patience, flexibility, vision, energy, integrity, and people skills. These traits are absolutely essential in becoming one of the best in the industry of sport management. (Ohio University, n.d., para. 1)

CAN LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES BE TAUGHT?

There is evidence that leadership competencies can be taught and developed (Gardner, 1990; Kotter, 1990; Soucie, 1994). Leadership courses and programs are already offered at many schools, and managers working in the field have opportunities to participate in leadership trainings as part of their professional development. Although leadership theories can be taught, Bennis and Thomas (2007) believe leadership qualities are developed during “crucible experiences” that help test and shape a leader’s character and life. Jones and George (2009) agreed that leaders need to have

conceptual skills gained from experience, education, and reflection. This supports the importance of students gaining experience through practical internship opportunities in the field as part of their program requirements. According to Kelley (2004), “The internship continues to be recognized as one of the most important aspects of education for sport management students. Internships provide a culminating experience for students and serve as a transition between academic training and the workplace” (p. 29).

In order to teach leadership competencies in sport management programs, it is important to properly define leadership. Borland et al. (2015) suggested, “Leadership is an influence relationship aimed at moving organizations or groups of people towards an imagined future that depends upon alignment of values and establishment of mutual purposes” (p. 36). This supports Weese and Beard’s (2012) observation that effective sport management leaders must be team members that are able to focus, empower, and inspire others to move toward a common goal. Soucie (1994) maintained, “Skills needed in a managerial leadership role include a mixture of formal authority, skills, knowledge, information, intelligence, courage, tenacity, instinct and hard work” (p. 3). These elements may go beyond the traditional leadership theories as they are presently being taught.

LEADERSHIP IN SPORT MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Leaders need to be able to clearly define a shared vision and understand what it takes to achieve the vision (Weese & Beard, 2012). Along with a clearly defined vision, communication, both formal and informal, is another key for leadership effectiveness

(Weese & Beard, 2012). Leadership has many facets, and others propose it goes beyond having a vision and good communication. Tichy and Cohen (2001) noted ideas, values, energy, edge, the ability to teach, and the ability to learn as the six characteristics needed for successful leadership. Conger (1992) and Goldsmith (2007) pointed out that improving leadership competencies should be a continuous process. It is important to understanding leadership and focus on continued development to be an effective leader (Conger, 1992). Goldsmith insisted that reading leadership literature, attending conferences, and trying new ways of doing things are needed for leadership success. Weese and Beard reiterated that effective leaders must use a team approach, ensure a shared clear vision, effectively communicate formally and informally, have high levels of emotional intelligence, and have conceptual skills developed from education, experience, and reflection.

Previous studies have been conducted focusing on leadership competencies and skills that could contribute to sport management programs. In one such study, Bennis and Thomas (2007) sought to distinguish specific leadership qualities. They interviewed 43 American leaders between the ages of 21 and 93 years and found that four leadership qualities consistently emerged: (a) adaptive capacity, (b) the ability to engage others through shared meaning, (c) distinctive voice, and (d) unshakable integrity. All of the leaders interviewed were seen by others as honest and trustworthy.

Quarterman (1998) studied the perception of time and effort used in skills associated with management and leadership by intercollegiate athletics conference commissioners (p. 151). After reviewing literature for his study, he concluded:

Currently, no scientific studies exist in the sport management literature in which leadership and management skills of intercollegiate athletic administrators have been examined. Previous research studies have focused on a two-dimensional approach to leadership that identifies behaviors of a leader and the effects of leadership on work performance. (p. 147)

Quarterman's (1998) descriptive survey collected data from 75 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I, II, and III commissioners. The population consisted of 94 intercollegiate athletic directors listed in the 1992-93 NCAA Directory. The survey instrument consisted of a two-part questionnaire. Section I addressed personal demographics, and Section II measured the commissioners' perceptions of how often they used 12 management and leadership skills. The management competencies were identified as human relations skills, conceptual skills, political skills, technical skills, negotiation skills and analytical skills. The leadership competencies were identified as empowerment skills, visionary skills, intuitive skills, anticipatory skills, self-understanding skills, and value congruence skills (p. 156). A 5-point Likert scale with ordinal weights allowed the commissioners to respond with perception intensity (p. 152).

Quarterman's (1998) results showed there was a statistically significant difference in the group of skills associated with management and those associated with leadership. The skills associated with management were rated higher on time and effort than those associated with leadership. Commissioners rated both groups of skills above the midpoint, showing evidence that both management and leadership skills were needed in job performance (p. 157).

In another study, Cuneen (1992) surveyed NCAA Division I and II athletic directors about which courses they felt should be used to develop a graduate sport management curriculum to prepare collegiate athletic directors. The survey instrument included a composite of 41 courses based on Hay's (1986) model, *A Proposed Sports Management Curriculum and Related Strategies*. The survey, which used a 5-point Likert scale to rate courses on their importance, was mailed to 569 NCAA Division I and II athletic directors. Of the 569 surveys, 307 questionnaires were returned. Seventeen courses out of 40 were rated *very important* based on a mean of 3.5 or greater acceptance criteria. The courses, in order of highest to lowest mean score, were Personnel Management, Practicum Experience, College Business Management, Strategic Planning, Sports Marketing, Management Processes in Physical Education, Managerial Control, Decisions under Uncertainty, Sports Facilities, Focal Points–Management, Focal Points–Marketing, Sports Law, Higher Education Finance, Accounting Systems, Marketing Administration, Organizational Theory/Analysis, and Financial Accounting Theory/Practice (p. 19). The study neglected to consider leadership as a specific course, although Personnel Management received the highest overall score and was described as covering “(a) methods and theories of leading and motivating individuals whose work behavior is influenced by technology, and (b) organization and management styles as they affect the individual and work groups” (Cuneen, 1992, p. 20).

Ross and Young (1998) studied the status of sport management programs in North America and investigated the curriculum, employment, and placement trends in

1998: "A review of the literature revealed a lack of research and a need for more studies that define the current status and future direction for sport management curriculum."

Li and Cotton (1996) studied introductory sport management course offerings by looking at course titles at 69 institutions in the United States. They noted that a variety of sport management educator opinions existed regarding what should be included in introductory courses. They also observed that textbooks written for introductory sport management courses varied in the range of topics and objectives. The variety of opinions and views supports the need for further research about competencies that educators and students should be focusing on.

Ball, Simpson, Ardovino, and Skemp-Arlt (2008) studied leadership competencies of university recreational directors in Wisconsin. According to Ball et al.:

There have been a few studies about leadership competencies in campus recreation. A summary of leadership research in related fields provides a starting point for campus recreation, and although very broad, suggests that competencies fall into four major categories. These four are (1) an understanding of the expectations of the leader's specific job and organization, (2) development of positive relationships with coworkers and clientele, (3) the ability to be a positive role model, and (4) the ability to adapt to change. (pp. 4-5)

Ball et al. implemented a three-round Delphi model of research to identify leadership competencies most important to University of Wisconsin system recreational directors who were considered experts in the field. A panel of university recreation directors from 10 four-year institutions in the University of Wisconsin system participated in the study. Round 1 of the study asked panel members via email to "list all of the leadership competencies necessary to be successful in their position" (p. 5). The lists were compiled and 12 leadership competencies were identified and returned to participants

in Round 2. Each participant was asked to comment on the competencies and use a Likert scale to rate each competency as *very important, important, moderately important, minimally important, or not important* in their profession (p. 6). The competencies were narrowed from 12 to 6 in the second round. In Round 3, the participants rated the remaining six competencies that in Round 2 were rated as *very important* or *important* (p. 6). The final results found *Commitment and integrity, Communication skills, Skills in managing the budget, Personnel management, and Adaptability to change* to be the five leadership competencies needed to succeed in collegiate recreation. The researchers' findings were consistent with previously reviewed leadership literature, except *Skills in budget management* was an outlier from the review of literature about leadership competencies (p. 9). Ball et al. suggested the results would be similar to the general competencies needed by leaders in other service professions. The researchers recommended further research "to discern greater detail about the general competencies derived from this study" (p. 9).

Transformational leadership and its effect on culture was also previously studied. Weese (1995) investigated "the linkage between transformational leadership and the development and penetration (throughout the organizational hierarchy) of organizational culture within the campus recreation programs from the Big Ten and Mid-American Athletic Conferences" (p. 123). The Leadership Behavior Questionnaire (LBQ) quantitatively measured transformational leadership, and the Culture Strength Assessment (CSA) and Culture Building Activities (CBA) instruments were used to measure organizational culture (Weese, 1995, p. 119). Out of 19 original programs, 8

campus recreation programs were chosen based on transformational leadership scores of campus recreation directors. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected via the CSA and CBA instruments and 15 interviews on each campus over a six-week period (Weese, 1995, p. 124). Weese discovered campus recreational directors who were identified as high transformational leaders had significantly stronger, more positive cultures than directors who scored lower on transformational leadership. The Mid-American Conference programs had significantly stronger cultures when compared to the Big Ten Conference programs, which Weese suggested may have resulted from more frequent interactions within the programs due to everyone being housed in the same building and having a younger staff (p. 128). Weese found high transformational leaders also carried out the “culture-building activities to a greater degree than programs administered by low transformational leaders” (p. 130).

DeSensi et al. (1990) evaluated sport management curriculum using a multifaceted approach study. The study included a needs assessment from 1,000 employees in 14 occupational categories of businesses and agencies that employ sport managers:

The study specifically determined (a) employer expectations of sport managers, (b) employer evaluations of educational sport management programs and curricula from diverse, sport related, occupational perspectives, (c) college/university faculty identification and evaluation of existing components of sport management programs and curricula, (d) student career objectives and program evaluation, and (e) the interrelationships among these components. (p. 36)

Within criteria for the hiring portion of the needs assessment, respondents rated eight criteria for hiring and job success using a 5-point Likert scale. More than 60% of

respondents identified all eight criteria as important for hiring sport management personnel. Communication skills and personality were identified as important for five of the six professional settings represented. Leadership was considered an important criterion for intramural/sport clubs, college/university athletics, local government, and voluntary agencies (DeSensi et al., 1990, p. 37).

Communication skills were identified as important for on-the-job success by five of the six business/agency categories and 98% of voluntary agencies. Major result distinctions were seen in the areas of academic/experiential requirements, employee needs, workload distributions, and job evaluation criteria (DeSensi et al., 1990, p. 31). “Differences were apparent between the curricular evaluations of college/university faculty and business/agency personnel, suggesting the need to evaluate curricular content and determine where changes should/should not be made” (DeSensi et al, 1990, p. 31). Arum and Roska (2011) pointed out,

As employment opportunities in manufacturing continue to grow scarcer in the United States, both individual and national global economic competitiveness requires mastery of what many commentators have termed “21st century skills.” These skills, generally thought uniformly taught at U.S. colleges and universities, are defined as including critical thinking, complex reasoning, and written communication. (p. 203)

THE NEED FOR CURRICULAR EVALUATION

Knowlton (2003) suggested, “A formal education should prepare students for participation in the workplace, educate students in the liberal arts tradition, and help students learn about themselves” (p. 5). Poropat (2011) reiterated, “Modern educational systems serve many goals, one of the foremost being to enhance student

employability (Curtis & McKenzie, 2002) [and] the likelihood of students gaining and keeping various types of employment (Brown & Hesketh, 2004)” (p. 499). To make students job-ready, however, requires good educational programs (Betta, 2016, p. 69). Baker and Henson (2010) emphasized that in order to be successful and credible, any initiative to promote employability skills should be grounded in the latest findings of pedagogical research. Daud, Abidin, Sapuan, and Rajadurai (2010) recognized higher education as an asset that creates positive outcomes for society and stressed that colleges need to ensure they are producing graduates that are employable and can compete in the employment market. They contended, “Resource allocation in higher education demands that curricula be relevant and that the needs of higher education and industry be served by course offerings (Moreau & Leathwood, 2006)” (p. 1). Oliver and Hyun (2011) claimed,

Curriculum is a fundamental matter for the “well-being and effectiveness of higher education” (Barnett & Coate, 2005, p. 7). No matter how you define curriculum (e.g., learning experiences, contents, objectives, courses, etc.) (Hyun, 2006), it is one of the most significant matters in higher education; however, little attention has been given to the evolution of curriculum and its review and transformation in the institutions. (p. 2)

The National Academy for Academic Leadership (n.d.) insists the curriculum is at the center of a student's college experience and is the college's or university's primary means of changing students in directions valued by the faculty. “Curricula should be reviewed and, if necessary, revised on a regular basis, better to serve the changing needs of both students and society broadly” (para. 1). Dehghani, Pakmehr, and Jafari sani (2011) indicated the need for curricular revisions to meet the need of the current age. They highlighted curriculum design as the element needed for higher education

quality enhancement. Gentile (2010) and Liu and Lin (2012) recognized the need for further research focusing on curricula in the field of sport management due to the lack of current literature and necessity of course content that reflects the sport business industry.

SUMMARY

The literature suggests that academic curriculum should align with industry needs in order to prepare undergraduate students to enter the workforce after graduation. Sport management is a relatively new academic field and more information is needed from sport industry professionals regarding competencies that should be included in the program curriculum. Research is incomplete in the area of leadership skills students should acquire while earning an undergraduate degree in sport management. The primary goal of this study is to identify leadership competencies that should be included in the curriculum based on interviews with industry leaders within collegiate athletics and collegiate recreation. The qualitative data contributes to the academic field of sport management by identifying competencies to be included in sport management programs that help prepare students for the workforce.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to identify leadership competencies that should be incorporated into sport management programs in order to prepare graduates for careers in the sport industry. Cleary and Van Noy (2014) noted that few studies have attempted to directly “measure the extent to which a given program or set of programs aligns with the skill expectations for needs of employers or other stakeholders” (p. 16). Literature also indicates that business leaders have identified a gap between the skills they desire in graduates and the skills the graduates actually possess. Specifically, little research has been conducted on the leadership competencies needed for sport management graduates to be successful in the sport industry.

According to PwC Sport Outlook (2014), the North American professional and intercollegiate sport market “will grow at a compound annual rate of 4.5 percent across the segments of gate revenues, media rights, sponsorship and merchandising, from \$56.9 billion in 2013 to \$70.7 billion in 2018” (p. 1). The need for well-trained employees, including managers, increases as the sport industry grows. “The business of sport has become more and more focused on management skills, economic decision-making, budgeting, and leadership of small and large sport entities” (Gentile, 2010, p. 2).

Professionals in the sport industry are looking to higher education institutions to provide well-qualified graduates to hire. Many of these graduates are products of sport management undergraduate programs, so it is imperative that these programs are preparing students to meet the needs of the industry.

This chapter describes the qualitative research methodology used in this study, including a rationale for why this method was selected. Merriam (2014) described qualitative research as research focused on meaning and understanding, with the researcher acting as the primary instrument of data collection (p. 266). According to Owens and Valesky (2007), qualitative research seeks “to understand human behavior and human experience from the point of view of those being studied rather than the point of view of the researcher” (p. 441). The researcher sought to identify if there were specific leadership competencies that needed to be further studied for possible inclusion in undergraduate sport management program curriculum based on interviews with collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic professionals. The researcher’s goal was to learn from the human experiences of sport management professionals; therefore, a qualitative research approach is appropriate for the study.

The principal strategy of the research design was to include in-depth interviews of sport management professionals working in collegiate athletics and collegiate recreation programs. The goal was to discover leadership competencies the sport management professionals deem important to their positions and to identify leadership competencies they feel should be included in undergraduate sport management programs. The researcher believes the findings can assist with future studies focusing on

academic program development and redesigns that are more closely aligned with the needs of collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics programs.

In addition to the research methodology used in this study, this chapter includes a description of the population, instrumentation, data collection procedure, data analysis, and limitations of the study.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study was undertaken to gain insights from sport management professionals for improving curriculum design in order to better prepare students for jobs in the sport industry. Qualitative research methodology was used to identify leadership competencies that collegiate sport management professionals recognize as important for sport management programs. This method was selected because qualitative research focuses on uncovering, interpreting, and understanding meaning. There is a lack of theory regarding leadership competencies in sport management programs; therefore, an inductive process needed to be undertaken. Merriam (2014) noted,

Often qualitative researchers undertake a qualitative study because there is a lack of theory or an existing theory fails to adequately explain a phenomenon. Therefore, another important characteristic of qualitative research is that the process is inductive; that is, researchers gather data to build concepts, hypotheses, or theories rather than deductively testing hypotheses as in positivist research. (p. 16)

Role of the Researcher

Qualitative research is inductive and the researcher is the primary instrument of data collection and analysis (Merriam, 2014, p. 38). The researcher chose interviews as

the primary means of data collection “to get at the essence or basic understanding structure of meaning of an experience” (Merriam, 2014, p. 25):

Since understanding is the goal of this research, the human instrument, which is able to be immediately responsive and adaptive, would seem to be the ideal means of collecting and analyzing data. Other advantages are that the researcher can expand his or her understanding through nonverbal as well as verbal communication, process information (data) immediately, clarify and summarize material, check with respondents for accuracy of interpretation, and explore unusual or unanticipated responses. (Merriam, 2014, p. 15)

According to Merriam (2014), it is important for the researcher to explore his or her own experiences and be aware of personal prejudices, viewpoints, and assumptions prior to interviewing: “The process is called *epoche*, a Greek word meaning to refrain from judgment” (p. 25). Any identified prejudices or assumptions must then be temporarily set aside or *bracketed* before starting the study (Merriam, 2014, p. 25).

The researcher is a sport management faculty member at Central Michigan University and a professional member of the NIRSA Leaders in Collegiate Recreation organization. She worked in collegiate recreation as an undergraduate and graduate student and has past experience as a manager in the sport industry. The researcher reflected on her experiences and bracketed her assumptions, prejudices, and viewpoints during the study.

POPULATION

The study used a purposeful nonrandom sample based on specific criteria. Merriam (2014) explained: “Sample selection in qualitative research is usually nonrandom, purposeful and small, as opposed to larger, more random sampling in quantitative research” (p.16). Purposeful sampling was selected due to the researcher’s

interest in understanding leadership competencies from the viewpoint of collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic directors serving in leadership roles within national organizations. According to Merriam, “Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 77).

The researcher’s general interest for this study centered on employment opportunities for sport management graduates at the collegiate level, including collegiate recreation and college athletic department positions. The original intent was to discover job outlook data regarding these positions and to select a population that focuses on specific positions that were in high demand and showed the highest rate of growth, but the researcher found it exceedingly difficult to locate this information. The researcher used various channels to locate information, such as *the Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook* (U.S. Department of Labor, 2015), but the specific categories of collegiate athletics and collegiate recreation were not listed, and additional sites did not contain information beyond degree requirement and salary ranges. Hence, identifying a purposeful sample proved most challenging and the above-mentioned strategies were aborted and alternative strategies were used.

In order to learn from collegiate sport management professionals, in-depth interviews were used to collect rich data. The researcher identified the NIRSA Leaders in Collegiate Recreation and the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) as respected national organizations in the field and approached the leadership of each organization and asked them to participate in the study via an interview.

Purposeful sampling was used to identify from the group of organization leaders those directors with multiple years of experience as a manager. The criteria for selection included these:

1. Directors with 10 or more years of experience working in collegiate athletics or collegiate recreation programs.
2. Directors supervising a minimum of five employees.
3. Directors that serve in a leadership capacity for either NIRSA or NACDA.
4. Directors willing to participate in the study.

INSTRUMENTATION

The researcher invited the 12 collegiate sport directors that met criteria 1, 2, and 3 for selection to participate in an interview by emailing each director using his or her institutional email address. The invitation included an explanation of the study's purpose and an informed consent document (see Appendix A for participation invitations). Interview participation was voluntary, and it was anticipated that potential participants might decline the invitation or not respond. Follow-up emails were sent if an emailed invitation was unacknowledged after five days. A confirmation email was sent within 24 hours after the date, time, and location of the interview were agreed upon. Participants could refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the interview process at any time.

Six interview meetings were conducted during the months of February and March 2016. Before each interview began, participants were asked to sign the informed consent (Appendix B) and were reminded the interview would be audio-recorded.

deMarrais (2004) defined an interview as “a process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study” (p. 55).

Patton (2002) explains,

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe. . . . We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviors that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things. The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective. (pp. 340–341)

In this study, a semi-structured interview process was used to allow for flexibility with a mix of specific data required for all respondents, such as years of experience, and additional open-ended questions. Merriam (2014) described semi-structured interviews as follows:

In this type of interview either all of the questions are more flexibly worded or the interview is a mix of more and less structured questions. Usually, specific information is desired from all the respondents, in which case there is a more structured section to the interview. But the largest part of the interview is guided by a list of questions or issues to be explored, and neither the exact wording nor the order of the questions is determined ahead of time. This format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic. (p. 90)

When necessary, a probing technique was used to help interviewees expand on and clarify answers. The probes used varied between each interview due to the individual responses interviewees gave to the main questions. Rubin and Rubin (2012) noted that probing questions encourage participants to offer details and examples they

might have not otherwise shared. Rubin and Rubin suggested three types of probes that can be used to keep the conversation flowing:

Attention probes (“Okay, I understand” and so forth) let the interviewee know the researcher is listening.

Conversation management probes keep the conversation focused on the research topic and help regulate the desired level of depth. Researchers use such probes to confirm answers or ask for better definition or clarification if they cannot follow the thread of the comments.

Credibility probes aim to find relevant evidence to support participants’ claims. (pp. 139-140)

All responses and information provided by the interviewees are confidential, and names are not used when data from the study are reported.

Interviews occurred on the interviewee’s college campus or online using Skype software. Each interview participant was allowed to choose a location for the interview based on his or her comfort level. Participants answered 11 questions and interviews were approximately 60 minutes long (see Appendix C for all interview questions). The researcher took notes and all individual interviews were audio-recorded, with participant permission, using a digital recording device.

DATA ANALYSIS

According to Merriam (2014), “Data analysis is a process of making sense out of the data... researchers extend analysis to developing categories, themes, or other taxonomic classes that interpret the meaning of the data” (p. 193). Roberts (2010) suggested that researchers need to take time to become familiar with the data in order to make sense of and integrate the responses. “Analyzing qualitative data requires the

researcher to read through all the interview notes and transcriptions from beginning to end, several times. Only then can you realistically generate categories, themes, and patterns that emerge from the data” (p. 172).

The researcher transcribed all interviews before analyzing the data and created password-protected Microsoft Word and Excel files for the interview data. These files were saved on the researcher’s laptop computer that only she could access. The researcher followed the step-by-step process of analysis described by Merriam (2014) for the creation of categories or themes:

Category Construction: The researcher read the interview transcripts and jotted down notes, comments, observations and queries in the margin. This process of making notations next to bits of data that strike the researcher as potentially relevant for answer the research questions is called coding (p. 178).

The researcher considered words, phrases, and overall content relevant if mentioned by more than one respondent, or identified as a respondent’s specific answer to the guiding research questions of the study. Codes were assigned to pieces of data and those codes were used to construct categories or themes:

Sorting Categories and Data: The data, or segments of text from the interview transcripts, were placed within the preliminary set of categories after they were refined and revised (p. 182).

Naming the Categories: The categories were named. The naming of the categories can come from at least three sources (or a mix of these sources): the researcher, the participants, or sources outside the study such as the literature (p. 184).

According to Merriam, the categories constructed during data analysis must be responsive to the research questions and meet the following criteria:

1. Be as sensitive to the data as possible.

2. Be exhaustive (enough categories to encompass all relevant data).
3. Be mutually exclusive (a relevant unit of data can be placed in only one category).
4. Be conceptually congruent (all categories are at the same conceptual level). (p. 186)

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Respondent validation is a process of soliciting feedback on the emerging findings from some of the participants that were interviewed. Maxwell (2005) described respondent validation as

the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on, as well as being an important way of identifying your own biases and misunderstanding of what you observed. (p. 111)

The researcher ensured internal validity through the process of member checks. The member checks requested feedback from respondents in order to correct possible errors of interpretation. The member checks did not alter the data.

Reliability could be impacted based on respondents interpreting questions in a different way.

LIMITATIONS

Members of the leadership team from two national organizations were selected for the study. Since only 6 of the 12 leadership team members invited were elected to participate in the study, the findings may not be generalizable, but the primary goal of this study was to explore the perspectives of collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic

directors regarding which competencies should be further studied for possible inclusion in undergraduate sport management programs.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

This exploratory study focused on identifying specific leadership competencies that need to be further researched and possibly incorporated into sport management curriculum to better prepare graduates for the employment in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics. The study addressed the following questions:

1. Are there specific leadership competencies that should be included in undergraduate sport management programs?
2. What leadership competencies do sport management graduates need to be prepared for jobs/careers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics?
3. What leadership learning outcomes should sport management faculty include in their program curriculum?

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

The researcher invited 12 collegiate athletic and collegiate recreation directors who served in a leadership capacity for NIRSA Leaders in Collegiate Recreation and the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) to participate in the study via an interview. Of the 12 directors who were contacted, 6 consented to be interviewed for a 50% participation rate. Each participant signed an informed consent form prior to being interviewed (see Appendix B), and each was asked the same set of interview questions (see Appendix C). The researcher recorded and transcribed each

interview. The interviews were conducted between February and April of 2016. Table 4 shows participant demographic information.

Table 4: *Participant Demographics*

RESPONDENT	TITLE	YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN DEPARTMENT	REGION OF THE UNITED STATES
Respondent #1	Collegiate Recreation Director	28	315	Midwest
Respondent #2	Collegiate Athletic Director	37	20	South
Respondent #3	Collegiate Recreation Director	23	300	Northeast
Respondent #4	Collegiate Recreation Director	24	125	South
Respondent #5	Collegiate Recreation Director	31	480	South
Respondent #6	Collegiate Recreation Director	25	80	West

SIGNIFICANT THEMES

The researcher followed the data analysis process described by Merriam (2014), which included (a) category construction and coding, (b) sorting categories, and (c) naming the categories. The researcher analyzed the interview transcripts using an inductive approach focused on identifying patterns and themes. “Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis” (Patton, 1980, p. 306). If two or more of the responses were similar in nature

the researcher organized the data into categories. Themes emerged from the sorted categories.

After examining the data from the interviews, the researcher identified three significant themes that emerged:

1. There is a need for students to have broad-based experiences outside of the classroom.
2. A variety of personal and professional development opportunities help build leadership skills.
3. A variety of skill deficits exists for sport management graduates.

Need for Broad-Based Experiences/Experiences Outside of the Classroom

The first significant theme indicated the importance of students gaining a variety of experiences outside of their coursework that would help to prepare and make them well-rounded. Respondents discussed the necessity for students to have diverse experiences and move beyond the theories they learn about in the classroom to practical application. Respondent 1 stressed the importance of experience as something that cannot be substituted, but warned that experiences need to be evaluated because not all experiences may be beneficial. The respondent referred to some students having negative experiences in organizations that lead to competitiveness, not teamwork. The students “see themselves as rivals for jobs, versus seeing themselves as potential colleagues.” Other examples were given of internship experiences where students do not learn anything or are getting paid for 20 hours a week but are expected to work 60 hours week. Respondent 1 stated:

Whenever I speak to a class and a student asks me how to be successful in a career starting off, I say there are 3 things: Experience, experience, experience.

That is what I believe, because I don't think there is any substitute for it. I use the analogy now that if you come out of the field house and you are getting ready to run a 100-meter race and you look up and all of the people you are going to run against are already at 50 meters and you are at the start line, can you catch up with them? Probably not! Unless you are world class or they fall down and die, you can't catch up with them. So, experience, experience, experience. So we preach that but unfortunately, in my opinion, we don't evaluate it. We say all experience is good experience, but I don't know about that. If you are getting bad experience, it gives you a perception that this is the way to do things, and this is the way things are done.

Respondent 2:

It has got to be a combination of hearing about leadership and how essential it is to your growth process and career development, but then you've got to live it. We have more than 600 student organizations, and we tell people, "If you can't find something to participate in, then you are either dead or sleeping." It doesn't make any sense at all. I do think you have to hear it, but it is co-curricular. Your activities have to be co-curricular to what you are hearing in the academic content.

I would like to see people who have done something. In other words, they spent time on something other than their coursework in their major. They've volunteered somewhere. You've put yourself in a position to use your discretionary time to do something else where you had to sacrifice, you had to pass up a night out with your friends on Saturday, or you had to travel to have that experience. You frame something out that maybe wasn't even in the interest area that you did, but you wanted to test the waters in something else. Just like upon admissions, admissions directors are looking for well-rounded people; that is what we are looking for, and you can tell when you interview somebody if they had an experience that challenged them, made them fit it in in their schedule, and they had to juggle a lot of tasks to do so.

Respondent 3:

I think, things get learned outside the classroom, but it can still happen while you are in college. I feel like the experiences we provide a lot of the students in campus recreation really helps students develop those leadership skills. So, for example, in your classroom you learn about diversity, communication, or risk management, but then to actually apply that before you leave campus, helps you be more well-rounded.

Respondent 6:

One of the things that in collegiate recreation that I've been really tickled to see is more internships available and short-term internships, and just being able to have exposure in schools. I would love the idea of a staff exchange program where students or staff, even professional staff, have the chance to go work at a neighboring university or fly somewhere and be housed for a week and see how things are done. I think that is still how many things are done in our industry, we learn from each other. Whether it is going and touring other facilities and hear about successes and challenges and bring that back to our own facility programs.

I am just really happy to see these opportunities popping up because that work experience is really helpful in building those building blocks and exposure to other programs and exposure to different leadership styles as well. And then I think not only in collegiate recreation, but also as part of that wider view, being able to explore and dabble in some other things and see what can be pulled into our industry. So, it may be health promotions, or it may be corporate fitness, or it might be public health department. It might be somewhere you are working in something related, maybe pro sports. To see how things are done, and see if there are aspects of things that are going on in their field and seeing if you can bring those things back into growing our field. That type of approach and attitude around, you are not going to have all of your experience in collegiate recreation in order to be a collegiate recreation professional. You need to look at a much larger picture and bringing other aspects in, how other professionals are leading. I think that is a really important thing to expose our younger generations to.

There are a variety of applied experiences students can participate in while they are in college that will help prepare them for careers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics. Experiences outside of their chosen career field may help students understand the larger picture and give them an opportunity to learn from other leaders. Students need to be willing to take advantage of these opportunities.

Personal and Professional Development

Personal development is also considered personal growth, while professional development is described as “the process of obtaining the skills, qualifications, and experiences that allow you to make progress in your career” (“Professional

Development,” 2016, para. 1). All respondents described professional development opportunities that could assist in developing or enhancing leadership competencies. Opportunities ranged from participating in on-campus seminars, conferences, and workshops to joining professional organizations and traveling globally for staff-exchange programs. Respondent 4 defined a leader as someone who wants to learn and works to enhance his or her skills through professional development opportunities and doing his or her own research.

Respondent 2:

If you really want to know the truth, from the minute anyone steps on our campus, we should be talking to every student about personal development and leadership development. Life is life, and skills are skills, but what we are really trying to do is to transform young people into leaders. The competencies come along with every experience that an undergraduate or graduate students has in this setting.

You learn to be a leader by being around different people. You need to learn to lead people who don't just think like you or look like you, or talk like you. You are going to lead people that don't have anything to do with your background, so it takes training all along the way for young people to acquire those traits and to learn what leadership really is. You go back to being able to inspire, being able to be consistent, stepping out and daring to put yourself out of your comfort zone, and then being able motivate others on your team.

Respondent 3:

I think it is really important to be involved in your professional organizations. There are a handful of them out there. Whether it is being on the committees, or mentor program, or different projects, you learn from all of those different things and it also helps your network. I just gained so much through just watching others. You learn things that you don't want to do, and then you learn things that you definitely want to model in the future.

Skill Deficits

There was a consensus among participants that skill deficits do exist and are common. The respondents suggested the skill deficits they observe in employees could be addressed during their time as college students. The deficits they identified included both behavioral- and knowledge-based skills. Respondent 1 suggested integrity, respect, and civility discussions must be missing from sport management programs, because he has seen a lack of these characteristics in the workplace. Other concerns were the lack of work ethic and a “huge sense of entitlement” that lead to individuals not wanting to put their time in or thinking they are ready for a promotion before they have the skills to advance.

Respondent 2 identified a deficit in interpersonal skills in college students and believed it was due to students’ increased reliance on technology devices for communication:

I think that those derivations of that one-on-one experience and how really getting to know someone and being able to be responsive to them, being helpful to them, it takes training now because kids don’t spend a lot of time without devices to judge each other. That worries us. You have to put the devices away, and it really has to be talking to each other. Tell me 5 things about so-and-so that you didn’t know when you got here. You can’t do that through devices; you do that by talking and having conversations.

Respondent 4 noted a lack of preparation in the areas of risk management and personnel evaluations. A specific concern was the tendencies of managers to try to make everyone else think like them instead of adjusting their thoughts to help others grow.

Respondent 5 has observed a lack of budgeting and organizational communication skills:

We get a lot of folks in here that tell us they have never done a budget. So we do a lot of teaching of fiscal management. We have people that can't balance their checkbooks and they expect to come in and run a department. A multiple hundred-thousand-dollar budget. So that is one clearly in our field.

I think the other thing is organizational communication skills. They are either used to this kind of top-down mentality where they get something from above them or has been the person who has had to create the communication in the first place to keep people informed. That takes a really intentional process, you know; what do people need to know that work for you? And how timely do they need to know it, and in what format do they get it? I think effective organizational communication is a real deficit of a lot of our grads. When do you need to walk down the hall and talk to someone and when can you send out an email? I think we default to that way too much.

Respondent 6 explained the difficulty graduates have when they come out of school with little supervisory and human resource experience. Those who have that experience and understanding and had a chance to practice it have a huge advantage.

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS ANSWERED

The research questions addressed by this study were designed to explore the types of leadership competencies sport management graduates may need to be prepared for management positions within collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics. Discovering answers to these questions was the intention of this study in order to determine whether further exploration in the area of leadership competencies is needed that may lead to sport management program design and redesign.

Research Questions 1 and 2

The first two research questions sought to identify specific leadership competencies that may need further exploration in regard to possible inclusion in undergraduate sport management programs to prepare graduates for careers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics. Through six in-depth interviews of directors working in either collegiate recreation or collegiate athletics, the following leadership competencies emerged: (a) communication, (b) people skills and interpersonal skills, (c) vision and the ability to move toward a goal, (d) passion, (e) teamwork, (f) integrity, (g) critical thinking and decision-making, and (h) diversity and inclusion.

Communication

Communication is defined as “clearly conveying information and ideas through a variety of media to individuals or groups in a manner that engages the audience and helps them understand and retain the message” (Harvard University, n.d., p. 21). Five out of six respondents identified communication as an important skill that sport management graduates need. Both oral and written communication were considered essential, with an emphasis on the ability to be a good listener.

Respondent 1 explained emotional intelligence and the ability to be a good communicator and listener is a lost competency that needs to be developed more at the collegiate level:

A lost competency that I don't think we are doing a good job of developing at the collegiate level because we don't talk enough about it is emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is your ability to be a good listener, be a good thinker, be a good communicator.

Respondent 2 noted that communication is one of the most underrated traits for any job, and in order to be a great leader, one must be a great listener:

I think one of the most underrated traits for any job anywhere is communication. I don't just mean that in terms of writing and speaking or being able to put together a coaching presentation. I think part of communication is listening and being a great listener leads to great leadership.

Respondent 5 remarked about the importance of listening and communication skills and noted undergraduate sport management programs are not doing a good job at addressing those skills:

I think probably the first, most important skill is to be a good listener. Everyone says what they want from their leader is to be a good communicator, both listening and directing messages, and that is not something we usually take in our undergraduate sport management programs.

When I am interviewing candidates, I focus on if they are a good communicator. Do they seek to listen when I am talking to them? Do they seek to understand and listen, or are they patiently waiting until they get a chance to talk again? Those are the two, probably key things I look for in an interview, how well do they listen and comprehend. If I tell them something early in the morning, do they retain it when I meet with them last thing in the day? Are they really listening?

While five out of six respondents identified communication as an important leadership competency that workers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics need, three out of the five respondents focused specifically on the need to be a good listener. Two out of five noted that communication was underrated or a lost competency that needs to be addressed.

People Skills and Interpersonal Skills

People skills and interpersonal skills refer to the ability to relate to, work with, and interact with others in an effective and friendly way (“Interpersonal Skills,” 2015).

Two respondents specifically addressed the necessity of having the proper skills to effectively work with and connect with people. Respondent 2 noted that working with people is the most exciting, yet complex part of the athletic director’s world:

I think actually in an athletic director’s world, most of those real complicated things have little to do with operations, they have to do probably with the human nature of people; the most exciting part of our jobs is dealing with people and it is also the most complex.

Respondent 6 emphasized people skills are needed for creating positive interactions and connecting with others at the one-on-one and larger team levels:

I really do look for people skills. That is one of the main things. Be able to have interactions that are positive and make those connections, because this really is a people industry where we are trying to connect our students to our programs or the university and have a sense of community. It is really being able to connect with people and use those people skills. Part of it is, one-on-one skills. Almost like, almost being able to have those skills to sit and talk one-on-one and help the other person open up and share. That is important, but also those group facilitation skills, being able to work within a larger team.

People skills and interpersonal skills were considered very important by two of the respondents due to the people-centered nature of collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics.

Vision and Ability to Move Toward a Goal

Respondents noted the important leadership skills of being forward thinking and having the ability to move others toward the goal. Harvard University (n.d.) identifies a person who leads through vision as someone who does so by making the vision

meaningful and concrete to others. In order to move others to action, a leader must communicate the importance of the vision, translate the vision and values into day-to-day activities and behaviors, and guide and motivate others to take action (Harvard University, n.d.). Four out of six respondents discussed the importance of managers needing to have vision and ability to move people toward a goal.

Respondent 1:

Strategic thinking is another necessary skill. Everything we do today is centered on leadership and in terms of the board, and centered on strategic. It is centered no longer the low-hanging fruit; let's get down in the weeds; it now starts with why.

Respondent 2:

You outline a vision, and that vision comes across to the people you manage with clarity, in a way that will absolutely motivate them to come along. It is not a parade leader but it is pretty close, especially in our complex area of athletics we have 375 employees in [college] athletics, and that is a lot of leadership within those employees, a lot of divisional units that have to work together, but everybody has to understand ultimately what the key points are of the vision statement or the mission statement to move forward.

Respondent 5:

I think what people look for most in a leader is someone who is visionary, someone who has ability to see out and get to a 5- or 10-year view rather than just worry about tomorrow. Vision is more about reasonable extrapolations about where you are now and where you might be in the future, 10 years from now. I wish we would train more on being forward looking. Teaching folks to not just manage a program but to take programs to new places. To break the mold and redesign things. I think we too often we teach them some way to do it and these people go out and run it like the program they left. To think without barriers more and to be more visionary.

Respondent 6:

I think leadership is being a part of helping move an idea or team or something towards a particular goal, or something forward. It can be associated with the person who is leading that, but leadership can also be in a follower's role,

providing that push from behind. Helping to harness energy and moving something towards a goal.

A lot of the things that helped us be effective at that level of leadership is being very strategic and really taking the time to understand the big picture, but then also knowing that there is a lot of detail that goes into it. Just kind of the strategic look at things, and knowing that there is a either a specific or general direction that we want to go and then trying to keep our eye on the prize and trying to move things in that direction. Also, really to, in a really positive way, harness additional energy outside of the board of directors to help push things that direction. Whether it is other volunteer leaders, or higher education associations that we communicate with and we are letting them know we are going in a certain direction.

So, just harnessing other people, and spreading our ideas to create momentum moving in that direction. I think also, again, making sure that there are a lot of people you can bring along no matter what level they are at. Even letting our student staff or members know what is going on, so that it is not like it is exclusive leadership. To me the most successful leadership is one that really includes everyone and letting them be a part of it, and have some buy in to it, and have some ownership in it.

The respondents noted leaders needed not only to have the ability to see future possibilities but also to be able to communicate the goals clearly to people at all levels and motivate everyone to move in a certain direction. Respondent 5 suggested students can learn the skill of how to be forward thinking but noted those types of trainings need to be offered.

Passion

Three out of six respondents spoke about the importance of leaders having passion and the importance of intentionally hiring passionate people. Work passion is defined as

the positive emotional state of mind resulting from perceptions of worthwhile work, autonomy, collaboration, growth, fairness, recognition, connectedness to colleagues, and connectedness to leader, all of which lead to standards of behavior that include discretionary effort, long-term commitment to the

organization, peak performance, low turnover, and increased tenure with the organization. (Ken Blanchard Company, 2009, p. 2)

Respondent 1 recognized passion as a key leadership skill looked at in the hiring process:

In terms of leadership, I look for individuals, I look for vision. Individuals who have passion for what they do and people who know how to manage.

Respondent 2 explained that passion helps to show that leaders care. The respondent noted passion is considered important because workers, donors, customers, and fans all want to know they are cared about and are important:

Passion is underrated, you know, leaders don't have to do cartwheels in front of their employees, but when they see how much people care it matters to them, and they can get excited about their work. Remember, in college athletics we are actually working to inspire others to connect with us and to support us. So if I am a donor, or ticket buyer, or customer, or a fan, I want to know that those folks who are running the operation in athletics are paying attention to me as a giver of my time or discretionary income, and so if you don't have the interpersonal skills or the passion to take the time to get to know people and thank them for their participation at whatever level, you can lose that direct influence in making sure that they realize they are important to us on a day-to-day basis, and what they do for our students and our coaches helps us drive forward and succeed.

Respondent 5 acknowledged if a person in a leadership position is passionate, that passion will be transferred to their subordinates, but if a person is dispassionate, that is a negative trait that can also be transferred:

I find that passion translates very powerfully to folks who are leading. You know, if they have some poor individual skills, like in supervisory skills, say, they are not good at writing evaluations, I can teach that. But if they don't have passion for what they are doing, that passion and energy can't possibly transfer to their subordinates, so I know no matter what else I am going to have a dispassionate person reporting to another dispassionate person.

The respondents suggested passion is an important leadership trait that is sometimes underrated and cannot be taught. It was noted that passion is something that can be transferred to subordinates and can help them get excited about their work.

Teamwork

Teamwork is described as the “process of working collaboratively with a group of people in order to achieve a goal” (“Teamwork,” 2016, para. 1).

Four of the six respondents discussed the ability to work in a team setting as a leadership competency that sport management graduates need in order to be prepared for careers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics. The respondents also explained it is one of the skills they look for when hiring.

Respondent 1 discussed the importance not only of someone being able to lead a team, but the ability of the person to be led while also understanding the different roles and responsibilities in an organization:

It starts with the ability to understand the roles and responsibilities. It starts with the ability to work with a team. The ability to be a good teammate. That is what I look for when I look to hire someone, a person who is going to be a great teammate. A person who is going to put themselves within the team, not above the team.

I talked about the teammate, because to lead others you need to know how to be led. This is something we need to start preparing, young people don't realize they are going to become the middle-aged people, the veteran people, and they are often not prepared for that. You think you are going to be this young person all the time. Your relevance changes.

Respondent 4 observed team-building skills as a leadership competency that sport management graduates need. Respondent 6 commented that when hiring individuals, it is important to listen for the word *we*.

Respondent 6:

I always look for people that talk about we, rather than I. "We did this as a group," or "We did this project," or "We helped this organization achieve their fundraising goal." So the word *we*, it goes back to the old adage that there is no I in team. I think the we-ness, the team-ness, if you will, is very, very important.

Integrity

Integrity is described as strictly adhering to a moral code and transparent honesty and actions that align with what one thinks and says ("Integrity," 2016). Four out of six respondents noted the importance of integrity as it related to necessary leadership skills. Respondent 1 explained integrity should be at the center of everything a person does, but that discussions about integrity, respect, and civility are missing in sport management programs. The respondent shared examples of times when students were gaining internship experiences in organizations whose cultures lacked integrity and how those experiences can have a negative effect because they see bad behaviors modeled. Respondent 1 described watching former "good students who were good people" get lost in a bad culture and being disappointed in what they've become:

If we are setting up structures where people have to sell their souls to have a job, then those individuals are going to be bad citizens.

They are still good people, they have just gotten lost, but you allow yourself to get lost. If you have integrity, and you put it at the center of everything that you do, then you'll be ok.

Respondent 2 emphasized leaders need to always do the fair, right thing:

Shortly put, great leaders do the right thing all the time. The fair, right thing, even when no one is watching

Respondent 3 explained that for leaders to be successful, they must be consistent and fair, and Respondent 4 expressed that true leadership is leading by

example. Respondent 5 talked about the importance of teaching on the subject of integrity and not just assuming people know what integrity looks like. Examples were given of times when employees did things that lacked integrity but didn't realize it because they came from a place where those things were acceptable.

Respondent 5:

Integrity is one of the things everyone says what they want most in their supervisor that always comes out in the first four things out of their mouth. And, what integrity means isn't just being honest; it is doing what you say you are going to do, honoring your commitments. Sometimes teaching that and examples of what that means is important to do, yet, there are a lot of times we don't do that, we just say, for whatever reason or another, we just say you should know that. You should know what integrity is.

Four out of six respondents identified integrity as a key leadership skill that graduates needed. Respondents described integrity in a variety of ways, including good citizenship, honoring commitments, being consistent, and being fair. Respondents shared accounts of issues that arise when integrity is lacking and the importance of teaching about integrity instead of just assuming students already have the knowledge and understanding.

Critical Thinking and Decision-Making

Critical thinking and decision-making are described as the process of using clear, rational, open-minded, disciplined thinking to make evidence-based decisions ("Critical Thinking," n.d.). Three of the six respondents recognized critical thinking and decision-making as important skills that leaders need to exercise in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic management positions. Respondent 3 noted that a successful leader is patient and skilled in listening, and will take the time needed to make good decisions.

Respondent 2 discussed the importance of learning to ask the right questions, being sure to get the truth and accuracy, and being able to put a disparate group of details together and think critically about them before making a decision. In addition,

Respondent 2 emphasized a person must also be fearless when making decisions:

Leaders have to be consistent, communicative, passionate, fair, and, I think for some people, you have to be tough, but I don't think it is tough externally; I think it is being fearless in making complex decisions to move the greater good forward.

Respondent 6 noted the importance of being able to assess data and make decisions based on evidence while also harnessing others' energy and moving an idea or team forward toward a goal:

I think leadership is being a part helping move an idea or team or something towards a particular goal or something forward. It can be associated with the person who is leading that, but leadership can also be in a follower's role, providing that push from behind. Helping to harness energy and moving something towards a goal.

Diversity and Inclusion

Respondents 1 and 2 specifically focused on the importance of valuing inclusion and diversity. The respondents identified valuing diversity and inclusion as essential and noted it should be emphasized more when students are in college. Diversity can be defined as "the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs" (Ferris State University, n.d., para. 1). Inclusion can be defined as "involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized" (Ferris State University, n.d., para. 2).

Respondent 1:

It is less to me today about diversity, because we are diverse, we are just not inclusive. We say, oh yeah, look around, our campus has all of these different people from all of these different worlds. We then get thrown into this environment where we make a connection. That is diversity, But if I don't accept the fact that you may have a different perspective than I have about religion, about values, about honesty and integrity, or whatever by virtue of your upbringing and mine and I have a different one, then that is not being inclusive. Yet we say we are diverse. Diversity can be measured numerically, quantitatively, inclusion is developed qualitatively. There is a big difference between the two. That is a big competency too, when we talk about competencies. I think we forget that because we tried to move on from diversity. In America diversity equals race, I don't care how you cut it, how you slice it, that is the biggest piece of our pie. It is just who we are. If you are in the UK, diversity equals class. It is very, very different in these other countries. In some of these Middle Eastern countries it is about religion. It is a major piece of that inclusive pie, and the other piece is class. It is not about race, because they don't define themselves by race. They define themselves by religion and class. Isn't that interesting? So, people have to understand that, especially in an environment like this. If you are in the sport world today, such as working in professional sports, and all of a sudden you look up and half of the team is from outside the United States. So, if you are a sports administrator, whether it is facilities, or whether it is operations, or marketing, you are in community relations, and you have an athlete who is from Serbia into a U.S. environment, just for that athlete to market the team, you have to have a lens of EDI, equity, diversity, and inclusion, in order to be effective.

Respondent 2:

Universities are such dynamic places for exchange; they are supposed to teach you about something you've never experienced, they are supposed to teach you how to open your mind and to become more diverse and more tolerant. I think this whole notion of diversity and what diversity really means, and how it should be embraced early, in other words, expect differences, expect non-conventional and be patient with it, and learn how to be tolerant and open. Don't drift into a comfort zone. Taking the time to put yourself into the non-conventional and the different, I think would solve a lot of problems. You look at the whole subject of race across our country, and not just race but religious beliefs, sexual preference, how so many things spiral out of control because people just can't manage differences. I think it would have certainly helped throughout my career, having a little bit more training early in that area. I learned it through my job, getting put into a job where it was upon me.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 sought to explore leadership learning outcomes that collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic directors felt should be included in undergraduate sport management program curriculum. When interviewees were asked about specific competencies that should be included within the outcomes in undergraduate programs, a variety of responses were given. Respondent 1 suggested programs should focus on helping students understand and demonstrate inclusion, integrity, respect, trust, and civility. Respondent 2 suggested focusing on the human factor:

I think actually in an athletic director's world most of those real complicated things have little to do with operations; they have to do probably with the human nature of people. The most exciting part of our jobs is dealing with people and it is also the most complex.

Respondent 3 suggested students understand leadership identity development models and what it takes to move from level to level and help coach others. The respondent also suggested implementing intentional reflection exercises and emphasized that students need opportunities to improve their budgeting and proposal writing skills.

Respondent 4 highlighted risk management, research methods, and organizational theory, along with students needing to be able to identify their own personal learning and management style.

Respondent 5 stressed that sport management programs need to focus more on fiscal management and soft skills and should include a leadership course in their curriculum. The example was given that a specific sport management leadership course

that included the term *leadership* in the title could talk about leadership theories and competencies in a direct way and be based on what followers want most in their leaders. Respondent 5 commented:

I will start with one of the things we may do the weakest in our majors, one is that we didn't do a good job preparing folks for fiscal responsibilities. You know, we don't tend to be very math or budget savvy, and for most intermediate level leaders it is a skill you have to call on often. So I would say one of the things they really need to get is a good fiscal basis on how to focus resources where they are needed.

I would say if you are developing a curriculum we should spend less time on the hard skills and more time on the soft skills if we are trying to develop leaders. It is so funny when we see a position description for a job, for a campus rec director, whatever it is. It says must have good budgeting skills, supervisory skills, knows a lot about college sports, negotiator, all that stuff. But all of the things that followers say they want in leaders are not listed. Until we start putting them into job descriptions and having course work addressing that stuff, we are still missing the boat. All of those people are qualified for those jobs because that is where the course work is. Right, they took a course in budgeting, how to do a bracket, they took a course in all the things to run the sport, risk management, legal. Yet, when people talk about great work environments, they talk about someone who is caring, passionate, who listens, who has integrity, all those things that are not in the position. Getting more soft skills into the classroom will help those folks go from programmers and entry-level people who run the programs to effective leaders. My senior vice president here said very succinctly, "Management is about stuff, leadership is about people. Spend your time on people." I think that is the problem with many of our sport management preparations, we spend time on stuff.

Respondent 6 emphasized the need for sport management programs to have good business sense and understand sustainable business practices:

Today we have multi-million-dollar facilities, comprehensive programming and services, and multi-million-dollar budgets and reserves, so really understanding the business side of things is essential these days. Having a business sense, knowing how the business world is evolving and keeping up with that, and bringing those concepts into the management of our facilities and programs. I also, one of the things I try to encourage people to do is to think about not just business as business itself, but what are some of the external factors that are affecting how we deliver our programs and what we do. If you are thinking about

competencies, it is really about being able to understand that larger picture and a lot of these different aspects about figuring out how to incorporate those into what we do.

I almost think there should not be any type of business program that does not also include sustainable business. That should just be how the business aspects are taught. Sustainable business practices can be anything from purchasing, and financial decisions, making sure that there is good balance in that people are not removed from that equation, what people are paying or how our investments are affecting the people. There is the whole economic thing but also decision around how we deliver our programs and services as people and how we manage our buildings and facilities. So there is a lot that ties into those business practices that I think should just be sustainable business practices.

When asked about specific outcomes that respondents felt should be included in sport management undergraduate programs, a variety of outcomes were mentioned. Some of the above-mentioned outcomes, such as inclusion, integrity, respect, trust, and civility, can be categorized as core values. Other outcomes were centered on applied business practices, such as fiscal management, budgeting, proposal writing, risk management, and personnel management. There were also knowledge-based outcomes, such as research methods, understanding leadership and organizational theories, sustainable business practices, leadership identity development models, and personal learning and management styles.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

An exploratory study was conducted to determine if future research is needed regarding leadership competencies sport management undergraduates need to be prepared for management careers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic programs. The researcher interviewed six collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic directors to discover specific leadership competencies and emerging themes that could

be the topic of future studies. The three themes that emerged from the interviews were the following:

1. There is a need for students to have broad-based experiences outside of the classroom.
2. There are a variety of personal and professional development opportunities that help build leadership skills
3. A variety of skill deficits exists for sport management graduates.

The eight specific leadership competencies identified by the six respondents were (a) communication, (b) people or interpersonal skills, (c) vision and the ability to move toward a goal, (d) passion, (e) teamwork, (f) integrity, (g) critical thinking and decision-making, and (h) diversity and inclusion. Chapter 5 will discuss the importance of the themes and leadership competencies that emerged and make recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of the exploratory study and conclusions that were drawn from the data presented in Chapter 4. The major findings of the exploratory study are discussed, accompanied by recommendations for further research.

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Colleges and universities are under increasing pressure from policymakers, business leaders, and the public at large to offer quality programs that prepare students for the workforce. Business leaders have expressed concerns that graduates lack necessary competencies to succeed in the workplace, including highly sought-after leadership competencies. Sport management is a growing academic program that could benefit from research that helps identify the specific leadership competencies graduates need in order to design or redesign curriculum that better prepares graduates. The purpose of this research study was to explore leadership competencies that may need to be included in sport management programs to better prepare graduates for careers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic departments. The Charter Institute of Personnel and Development's (CIPD) competency framework was chosen to guide the study. A competency framework requires that each individual competency be defined

and described by organizations so that specific needs may be identified (CIPD, 2015).

Due to the lack of literature on leadership competencies in undergraduate sport management programs, the researcher undertook an exploratory study to serve as a framework for future research in the area of sport management leadership competencies. Understanding the competencies sport management graduates need is critical for the quality and relevance of undergraduate sport management programs. The researcher used a qualitative approach to conduct this study in which data were collected from six in-depth interviews of collegiate athletic and collegiate recreation directors serving in leadership roles within two national professional organizations. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed using the step-by-step process described by Merriam (2014), which includes (1) assigning codes to pieces of data, (2) using codes to construct categories, (3) sorting categories, and (4) naming categories. The following research questions guided the study:

1. Are there specific leadership competencies that should be included in undergraduate sport management programs?
2. What leadership competencies do sport management graduates need to be prepared for jobs/careers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics?
3. What leadership learning outcomes should sport management faculty include in their program curriculum?

The answers that emerged from the findings indicated that leadership competencies are needed in sport management programs in order to prepare graduates for work in the collegiate recreation and athletic field. Along with the leadership competency-need discovery, three significant themes emerged from the data:

1. There is a need for students to have broad-based experiences outside of the classroom.
2. A variety of personal and professional development opportunities help build leadership skills.
3. A variety of skill deficits exist for sport management graduates.

Through the six in-depth interviews of directors working in either collegiate recreation or collegiate athletics, the following eight leadership competencies emerged: (a) communication, (b) people skills and interpersonal skills, (c) vision and the ability to move toward a goal, (d) passion, (e) teamwork, (f) integrity, (g) critical thinking and decision-making, and (h) diversity and inclusion.

The specific outcomes that respondents felt should be included in undergraduate sport management programs included the core values of inclusion, integrity, respect, trust, and civility; the applied business practices of fiscal management, budgeting, proposal writing, risk management, and personnel management; and the knowledge-based outcomes of research methods, understanding leadership and organizational theories, sustainable business practices, leadership identity development models, and personal learning and management styles.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The previous chapter presented findings from the three research questions that guided the study. Based on these findings, the researcher was able to develop several conclusions and recommendations for further research. The following is a discussion of conclusions drawn from the research questions and literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of the study and author recommendations.

The first two research questions sought to identify specific leadership competencies that may need to be explored further to determine if they should be included in sport management programs. Not only were specific leadership competencies from the study recognized as essential, but the competencies are the same as essential leadership competencies recognized in previous research. The leadership competencies identified by the collegiate recreation and athletic directors were consistent with those included within the *Center for Creative Leadership's (CCL) Model of Leadership Competencies* (McCauley, 2006), which the researcher selected as the leadership competency standards for the study. The eight specific leadership competencies that arose from the findings fit into the following CCL Leadership Competency Areas:

<i>Leadership Competencies Identified</i>	<i>CCL Leadership Competency Areas</i>
1. Passion	Leading Yourself
2. Integrity	Leading Yourself
3. Communication	Leading Others
4. People skills and interpersonal skills	Leading Others
5. Teamwork	Leading Others
6. Diversity and inclusion	Leading Others
7. Vision and the ability to move toward a goal	Leading the Organization
8. Critical thinking and decision-making	Leading the Organization

Leadership Competencies for All Undergraduates

The identified leadership competencies are not limited to collegiate recreation and athletic work environments. Based on previous research and findings from the

exploratory study, leadership competencies are vital for all young professionals. Employers are looking to hire candidates with leadership competencies. The NACE *Job Outlook 2015* and *Job Outlook 2016* surveys identified leadership and teamwork skills as the top skills employers look for on candidates' resumes (NACE, 2014, 2015). It is likely that all students could benefit from curriculum that develops their leadership competencies and better prepares them for the workforce. Leadership competencies do not need to be course-specific, although if they are not focused on in other courses, a leadership course could provide students the opportunity to develop the sought-after leadership competencies. Unlike other competencies, individuals, no matter the career field, can use the leadership competencies every day. A student who takes a marketing class and learns the different stages of developing a marketing plan may not use that skill or knowledge in every job or every day, but essential leadership competencies can be used daily and in almost any job setting. The identified leadership competencies—passion, integrity, communication, interpersonal and people skills, teamwork, diversity and inclusion, vision and working toward a goal, critical thinking and decision-making—are all skills that can be used daily. Based on the study, the researcher recommends further research to understand if all undergraduate students could benefit from required leadership competencies incorporated into their programs.

The Need for Curricular Evaluation

The third research question sought to understand which leadership learning outcomes collegiate recreation and athletic directors thought should be included in

sport management programs. The findings can be separated into the following categories:

Core values: Inclusion, Integrity, Respect, Trust, Civility

Applied Practices: Fiscal Management, Budgeting, Proposal Writing, Risk Management, and Personnel Management

Knowledge-Based: Research Methods, Understanding Leadership and Organizational Theories, Sustainable Business Practices, Leadership Identity Development Models, Personal Learning and Management Styles

Identifying the leadership competencies and outcomes sport management graduates need to be prepared for the workplace is the first step in curricular evaluation. It is also necessary to use curriculum mapping to evaluate programs to determine if and where the identified competencies are being met. At the course level, students' assessment data can be used to determine their level of competency.

Skill Deficits and Quality Programs

The findings suggest sport management graduates need to possess leadership competencies to be successful working in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic programs, but there was consensus among respondents that leadership skill deficits exist due to graduates not developing the necessary leadership skills during their time in college. Respondents identified 11 deficit areas: (1) integrity, (2) respect, (3) civility, (4) work ethic, (5) interpersonal skills, (6) risk management, (7) personnel evaluations, (8) budgeting, (9) organizational communication skills, (10) supervisor experience, and

(11) human resource experience. These findings may not be specific only to sport management graduates.

A 2013 Lumina Study of the American Public's Opinion on Higher Education and U.S. Business Leaders Poll on Higher Education (Gallup, 2014) found the majority of business leaders felt higher education institutions are not graduating students with the competencies and skills their businesses need. The National Alliance for Business has indicated "the majority of [college] students is severely lacking in flexible skills and attributes, such as leadership, teamwork, problem-solving, time-management, adaptability, analytical thinking, global consciousness, and basic communications, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Bok, 2013, p. 171).

Clearny and Van Noy (2014) noted that few studies have attempted to measure the extent to which programs align with employer skill expectations. This is an issue that needs to be addressed, and Gentile (2010) argued it is the responsibility of faculty and academic administrators to deliver quality sport management education. In order to address the leadership skill deficit issue, further research needs to be conducted to better inform curriculum design and redesign that will prepare students for employment in collegiate recreation and athletic programs. If the desired competencies and current deficits are not identified and addressed in sport management curricula, graduates will continue to be underprepared. Based on the study, the researcher recommends further research to determine if all academic programs should undergo program- and course-level evaluations to determine alignment with industry competencies and address identified deficits.

Updated Curriculum and Accreditation Core Content Areas

Currently, the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation (COSMA) is the only accrediting body specific to sport management programs. Baker and Esherick (2013) asserted sport management program curriculum needs to meet or exceed COSMA's curricular content guidelines to maximize students' employment prospects (p. 28). While COSMA does list Common Professional Component (CPC) topical areas that sport management programs need to include in their programs, there is very little emphasis on leadership competencies (COSMA, 2010). It is likely that sport management programs seeking accreditation will align their curriculum to COSMA's standards and will not focus on including leadership competencies that students need to be prepared for sport management careers at the collegiate level.

While the term *leadership* is listed as one of the core functions under the topical area management within COSMA's core content areas, specific leadership competencies are not described (COSMA, 2010). The literature indicated there are differing views regarding management and leadership, so it is possible that the leadership content students are learning about is at the discretion of the faculty teaching the sport management courses. If faculty are unaware of the specific leadership competency needs within different areas of the sport industry, it is possible they may not be addressing them in the courses they teach. COSMA's Common Professional Component (CPC) topical areas are recognized as required content areas for accredited sport management programs or sport management programs seeking accreditation status. According to the literature, the CPC topical areas were developed based on research by

a NASPE and NASSM joint task force in 1992 (COSMA, 2010). Based on the study, the author recommends further research to determine if COSMA should develop an updated list of topical areas based on input from those working in the sport industry and from academic content area experts. It is possible updated content areas would better reflect the needs of the industry. If necessary, updated content areas might encourage greater alignment between sport management curricula and the sport industry, leading to better-prepared graduates entering the workforce.

The Competency Framework

The competency framework can help guide define and describe the competencies that need to be embedded within academic curricula. The competency framework gives organizations the opportunity to define the specific competencies it deems necessary for the success of its employees and overall organization. It appears that the leadership competencies described by the collegiate directors are not unlike the leadership competencies needed in other work environments. The collegiate recreation and athletic directors' description of leadership was consistent with the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) (n.d.) definition of leadership competency. Both groups referenced achieving common goals through people utilizing emotional intelligence skills, such as motivation, empathy, interpersonal skills, and managing emotions. Both groups also mentioned the need for managerial skills, such as being able to prioritize and being organized. During the interview process, all of the collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic directors discussed the need for leadership skills, and four out of the six respondents referred to the importance of teamwork skills.

Those comments aligned with NACE's most recent job outlook surveys, which reported that the top two skills employers are looking on a new college graduate's resume are leadership and teamwork skills. When comparing Giles' (2016) top 10 Leadership Competencies list, compiled from leaders around the world, to the exploratory research data, many similarities were present. Giles' list and the data both described competencies like high ethical and moral standards, providing goals and direction, good communicating, teamwork, commitment to training, open to new ideas and approaches, and empowering others. Giles' list did mention having a safe environment for trial and error, which was not a specific item described by the collegiate recreation and athletic directors.

The findings were also consistent with the 2008 leadership competency research completed by Ball, Simpson, Ardovino, and Skemp-Arlt. The study looked specifically at leadership competencies in collegiate recreation. The five leadership competencies identified as those needed to succeed in collegiate recreation, based on a three-round Delphi model study were commitment and integrity, communication skills, skills in managing the budget, personnel management, and adaptability to change. Although almost a decade old, the five leadership competencies are still consistent with the findings from the current research. Based on the study, the researcher recommends further research in the area of using the competency framework to define specific competencies graduates need to gain from academic programs.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION

The findings from this exploratory study help demonstrate the leadership competencies needed by sport management graduates seeking employment in collegiate recreation and athletic programs. The findings also indicate there are specific skill gaps between the competencies graduates possessed and those deemed necessary for careers in collegiate recreation and athletics. Sport management programs and students could benefit from the knowledge of the leadership competencies needed to be successful working at collegiate level. The findings from this exploratory study could serve as a foundation for further research in the area of leadership competencies in sport management academic programs. Due to the newness of sport management as an academic field and the lack of literature surrounding it, there is an abundance of further research that could occur. Future findings could be used for curriculum design and redesign at the course- and program-level that would more closely align with the needs of the different areas of the sport industry.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While this study focused solely on a small population of collegiate recreation and collegiate athletic directors, future research could compare these findings to competency needs in other populations within the sport industry. The competency framework could be used with a variety of different organizations to better define the leadership competencies that cut across more than one sector of the industry. Individual competencies other than leadership could also be the focus of future research in order to better understand the abilities graduates need to be successful in the

workplace. Additional research methods, such as a quantitative survey asking participants to rank competencies, could be used with a variety of populations. The findings could assist sport management programs in understanding if they are meeting the needs of the industry they are preparing graduates for.

Within sport management academic programs, studies could be conducted to determine how well competencies are being met at the program level and at the individual course level. A required leadership course could be developed that incorporates the topics and competencies identified by the respondents in the study. Student outcomes could be assessed to determine if the previous gaps in leadership competencies are narrowed due to the leadership course content. Studies involving sport management alumni could also assist in determining curriculum gaps that need to be addressed.

Perhaps a specific leadership course is not actually necessary. Future research could determine if the leadership competencies that emerged are actually being met in other classes within sport management programs. Course syllabi documents could be reviewed to determine if leadership topics are being covered. Insights from faculty teaching within sport management undergraduate programs could be gathered and compared to the data collected from collegiate recreation and athletic directors or other areas within the sport industry. Those findings could determine if a specific leadership course is actually needed.

Future studies could compare curricula and competencies in sport business programs to sport management programs housed in other departments, such as

physical education and sport, recreation, or hospitality. The COSMA program outcomes are also an area that could benefit from further research. The COSMA accreditation outcomes could be compared to program outcomes of other accreditation agencies to determine the similarities and differences that exist and how that may affect sport management curriculums. The COSMA outcomes that sport management programs seeking accreditation must adhere to are based on research that is decades old.

CONCLUSION

The primary goal of this exploratory study was to determine if more research is needed regarding specific leadership competencies that should be incorporated into sport management curriculum to prepare graduates for careers in collegiate recreation and collegiate athletics. If, as the literature suggests, employers are looking to hire graduates who possess leadership competencies, it is vital for colleges and universities to provide curriculum that helps students gain those competencies. Understanding the leadership competencies needed is the first step in creating a quality sport management curriculum. This study can serve as a foundation for further research to help identify the specific competencies graduates need and can lead to a decrease in existing skill deficits.

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APPENDIX A: EMAIL INVITATION FOR COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC INTERVIEWS

Dear [Name]:

My name is Jennifer Sieszputowski, a Physical Education and Sport faculty member at Central Michigan University, and doctoral student at Ferris State University. I am preparing to conduct my dissertation research on the topic of sport management leadership competencies, and am requesting your help

I am hoping to learn more about the leadership competencies sport management graduates need to be successful working in collegiate athletics by interviewing leaders in the industry. My goal is to use the findings from my research to inform sport management curriculum design and redesigns.

Would you be willing to spend an hour with me in an interview, sharing your thoughts and insights on this topic?

All responses and information you provide will be confidential, and I will not use any names when reporting data in my dissertation. In addition, you will have an opportunity to review your responses after the interview, before they are included in my research.

If you are interested in participating, the interviews will be held either at the college of the participant or online at a date/time that is acceptable to the participant and researcher – ideally within 4 weeks. I would really appreciate your participation, and am looking forward to learning more from you.

If you have any questions please feel free to reach me at my office (989-774-4389), on my cell phone (989-826-1919) or email me at sideb1jl@cmich.edu. Please let me know if you are willing to participate as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Sieszputowski

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT—INTERVIEWS

PROJECT TITLE: Leadership Competencies in Sport Management Programs (Working Title)

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Jennifer Sieszputowski, Ferris State University Doctoral Candidate

EMAIL: sieszpj@ferris.edu

PHONE: (989) 826-1919

FACULTY ADVISOR: Dr. Noreen Thomas

EMAIL:

You are invited to participate in this research project conducted by Jennifer Sieszputowski, a student in the Ferris State University Doctorate in Community College Leadership Program. The purpose of this study is to identify leadership competencies sport management graduates need to be successful working in collegiate athletics and recreation.

As a participant in this research, you will be asked to participate in one interview via Skype that will take no more than one hour.

There are no foreseeable risks to participate in this study. However, if you should feel uncomfortable with your participation, please alert the investigator immediately and you may discontinue participation.

There is no direct benefit to you in participating in this research. The information you provide may benefit educators by better preparing future collegiate athletic and recreation professionals.

Your interview responses will be anonymous, as pseudonyms will be used; no person will be specifically identified in any portion of the study. The interviews will be audiotaped and transcripts will be securely maintained and password protected.

Participation is voluntary. You may decide not to participate in this study and if you begin participation you may still decide to stop and withdraw at any time.

You have the right to ask, and have answered, any questions you may have about this research. If you have questions about this study, please contact the Principal Investigator: Jennifer Sieszputowski, Ferris State University Doctoral Candidate or the Faculty Advisor, Dr. Noreen Thomas, listed above. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Ferris State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Participants at: 1201 S. State St. - CSS 310, Big Rapids, MI 49307 (231) 591-2553 or IRB@ferris.edu.

Engaging with me to arrange a time, date and location for the interview and then

subsequently presenting for the interview will constitute your voluntary consent to participate. You will be asked to sign an informed consent form prior to the onset of the interview.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Sieszputowski

Doctoral Candidate

Ferris State University

Doctorate of Community College Leadership Program

APPENDIX C: LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your job title? How many years have you been in a collegiate management position? How many employees are under your direct supervision?
2. How do you define leadership?
3. What specific skills do you feel are necessary to be a successful leader?
4. What leadership competencies do sport management graduates need to be prepared for careers in the sport industry?
5. When hiring, what do you look for in terms of leadership?
6. Are there specific leadership competencies that you feel should be included in undergraduate sport management programs? If so, please describe them.
7. Do you feel some leadership skills cannot be learned in an academic setting and can only be developed on the job? If so, please describe them.
8. What leadership skill deficits have you observed in others that you feel should be addressed during their time in college?
9. What type of problems or issues have you observed that higher levels of leadership skills could have prevented?
10. Is there anything you wish would have been emphasized more when you were in college that would have made your role as a leader easier?
11. Are there any types of professional development opportunities that you feel develop or enhance leadership competencies? If so, please describe them.

APPENDIX D: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects in Research

Office of Research & Sponsored Programs, 220 Ferris Drive, PHR 308 · Big Rapids, MI 49307

Date: February 11, 2016

To: Dr. Sandy Balkema and Ms. Jennifer Sieszputowski

From: Dr. Gregory Wellman, IRB Chair

Re: IRB Application #160105 (*Leadership Competencies in Sport Management Programs*)

The Ferris State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application for using human subjects in the study, "*Leadership Competencies in Sport Management Programs*" (#160105) and determined that it meets Federal Regulations *Expedited-category 2F/2G*. This approval has an expiration of one year from the date of this letter. **As such, you may collect data according to the procedures outlined in your application until February 11, 2017.** Should additional time be needed to conduct your approved study, a request for extension must be submitted to the IRB a month prior to its expiration.

Your protocol has been assigned project number (#160105), which you should refer to in future correspondence involving this same research procedure. Approval mandates that you follow all University policy and procedures, in addition to applicable governmental regulations. Approval applies only to the activities described in the protocol submission; should revisions need to be made, all materials must be approved by the IRB prior to initiation. In addition, the IRB must be made aware of any serious and unexpected and/or unanticipated adverse events as well as complaints and non-compliance issues.

Understand that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and participant rights with assurance of participant understanding, followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document and investigators maintain consent records for a minimum of three years.

As mandated by Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46 (45 CFR 46) the IRB requires submission of annual reviews during the life of the research project and a Final Report Form upon study completion. Thank you for your compliance with these guidelines and best wishes for a successful research endeavor. Please let us know if the IRB can be of any future assistance.

Regards,



Ferris State University Institutional Review Board
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs