

“Second Verse, Same as the First?” An Examination of the Evolution of Entertainment Management Academics

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Abstract

The purpose of this research project is to examine current trends in music, entertainment, and sport management academic curricula. Historically, many music and entertainment programs focused on music production and performance. Developing programs are placing greater emphasis on a broader entertainment model incorporating business management skills. A similar evolution is evident in sport management programs. Currently, sport management programs are incorporating a broader scope into their curricula and infusing entertainment management into their offerings. Information collected from academic websites, including course titles, descriptions, and program information, are examined to compare the curricular requirements. This investigation could lead to greater insight regarding the continued evolution of entertainment curricula. This broadened academic vision may benefit all stakeholders by infusing different thoughts and points of view to the academic development of programs.

Keywords: entertainment management, entertainment management education, curriculum development, best practices, entertainment industry, sport & entertainment management.

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Introduction

The academic discipline of entertainment management has evolved from a unique group of course offerings to a popular and influential discipline of study. From its early beginnings, the entertainment management discipline has recently experienced rapid growth in the university setting. Recent growth and expansion highlights the demand for the academic study of this industry. Prior to the current trend, many of the existing music and entertainment business programs focused specifically on the music industry and more specifically on performance and music production. Developing programs are placing greater emphasis on business management skills, rather than music performance and production.

A similar academic transformation is occurring in sport management academic programs. As the sport industry has broadened to encompass many different aspects of business, entertainment management has emerged as a seemingly natural component. Sport management programs no longer focus solely on events that happen on the field or courts but also on events that fill their arenas outside of athletic events. Additionally, the infusion of entertainment aspects into the management of athletics events has become a consumer expectation and as such, must be included in the effective education of future sport managers.

As such, it is postulated that Academic Stakeholder Alliances (ASA) such as this one between entertainment and sport management may offer the academy an effective strategy to advance, broaden, and enhance entertainment and sport management education. An ASA is an arrangement between two or more academic disciplines to share resources to undertake a specific, mutually beneficial objective. An ASA can be considered less binding than a joint venture, in which two or more disciplines typically pool resources to create a separate entity. In an Academic Stakeholder Al-

liance, each discipline may maintain its autonomy while maximizing resources, gaining additional insight, and generating new opportunities for innovation and growth (Gillentine and Shaomian 2018).

Using the development of sport management as a “roadmap” to chart the growth of entertainment management, the similarities among the trajectory as well as the desired academic components are striking. From this point in the evolution of both disciplines, it behooves academic professionals to examine the synergistic opportunities that may exist if Academic Stakeholder Alliances are built between the disciplines. The purpose of this paper is to examine entertainment and sport management academic programs and to identify and examine the commonalities and differences that may exist between the academic demands and industry expectations of these industries. Specifically, the research questions this investigation seeks to answer are:

1. Which academic programs have incorporated expansion of focus to include entertainment management?
2. What are the commonalities and differences between existing sport management and entertainment management programs and programs incorporating this expansion of focus?”
3. What are the potential advantages and/or challenges to incorporating this broadened model?

Literature Review

While the study of music and music business are well established academic disciplines, the recent growth and expansion of entertainment management has highlighted the demand for the academic study of this industry (Garfrerick 2006). Developing programs are placing greater emphasis on business management skills rather than music performance and production. The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) was founded in 1924 to establish national curricular standards “for music and music-related disciplines” but does not include entertainment management (or the term entertainment) in its stated organizational purpose or objectives (NASM 2019). The Music and Entertainment Industry Educators Association (MEIEA) was formed in 1979 with its stated purpose being to “bring together educators with leaders of the music and entertainment industries” (MEIEA 2018). The primary goal of MEIEA is identified as “to facilitate an exchange of information between educators and practitioners in order to prepare students for careers in the music and entertainment industries” (MEIEA 2018). To meet these purposes and goals, a continuous evaluation of program and curricular structure would seem necessary, yet, previous research into music business curricula has clearly identified the lack of, and the need for, continued

and systematic evaluation of curricular requirements (Dyce and Smernicki 2018; Ashdown 2016; Bruenger 2016; Sobel 2007; Beeching 2005; Marcone 2004; Hill 2003; McCain 2002). Dyce and Smernicki (2018) specifically identified “a lack of research specific to music business education (curricula) is apparent.” Hatschek (2016) stated, “There is no central body of common knowledge on music education industry studies curricula.”

Furthering these observations and concerns, is a noticeable dearth of academic studies specifically examining entertainment management as a standalone field of study or as a curricular component. As proposed by Bruenger (2016), it is important for academic programs to be adaptive in order to keep pace with changes in the industry and marketplace. As such, the evolution and emergence of entertainment management would merit closer examination in order for existing curricula to remain current with industry demands and expectations (Wald 2011; Weissman 2004).

Sport management emerged as an academic field of study in 1966 as a result of industry growth and expansion. The need for trained professionals skilled in management and operations grew dramatically with increased consumer consumption of the sport product (Gillentine, Crow, and Harris 2015). Today, over 350 undergraduate programs in sports management exist in the United States alone, and a large number of well-established and notable programs exist in Europe, Australia, and Asia. Other notable programs can be found around the globe and new programs are constantly emerging.

Initial research examining the curricula of sport management programs identified fragmented growth and widely diverse course offerings and requirements (Gillentine 1998). While the original curricular offerings were varied across programs, current academic standards are more consistent among programs as a result of the development of professional programs designed to encourage academic consistency of quality and to encourage academic collaboration. Additional studies urged for the standardization of curricular requirements and the development of program accreditation (Gladden and Williams 2012).

The North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) was established in 1986, The European Association for Sport Management (EASM) in 1993, and the Sport Management Association of Australia and New Zealand (SMAANZ) was founded in 1995. In recent years, the Asian Association for Sport Management (AASM) in 2002, the African Sport Management Association (ASMA) in 2010, and the Asociación Latinoamericana de Gerencia Deportiva (ALGEDE) in 2009 have been organized. Most recently the World Association for Sport Management (WASM) held its first meeting in 2012 as a central organization for all sport management academic organizations. In the history of each

organization the formal name given to the disciplines show a similar path of development. Initially sport management academic programs were frequently referred to as sport administration programs but slowly and steadily changed to sport management as the preferred discipline title (Gillentine, Crow, and Harris 2014). An evolving trend among sport management programs has been for the formal inclusion of entertainment management. Several programs have changed the name of the programs and/or departments to include entertainment management. The University of South Carolina was the first U.S. program to formally change the name to Sport and Entertainment Management in 2003 and to offer an emphasis in live entertainment management for students. Today several programs in the United States have followed this trend to include entertainment in its name and course offerings.

Missing from sport management curricula research, as it was in music business curricular studies, was any specific investigation into the emergence of entertainment management and related courses. NASSM also does not include mention of entertainment management in its organizational mission or goals nor do the other identified sport management governing bodies (NASSM 2019).

Methodology

In order to exam entertainment management curricular offerings, specific parameters were utilized within this study. Specifically, only programs that included the terminology Entertainment Management in its title were included. While it must be acknowledged that programs that do not include “entertainment management” in their titles may include entertainment management academic content, it was the intent of this study to specifically study those programs that have taken the initiative to formally adopt and implement entertainment management into its core identification.

To further facilitate the identification of entertainment programs, the following operational definitions were utilized:

- Entertainment Management: a field concerned with knowledge and skills leading to management careers within the entertainment sector, managing facilities..., theme parks, theaters, live music venues, museums, art galleries, broadcast media companies and night clubs (Gillentine and Shaomian 2018)
- Music Business: academic study of creating and selling live music performances, sound recordings, and music videos
- Music Industry: any degree program that has a goal of preparing students for careers in any of the non-performance areas of the music and entertainment industry (Hatschek 2011)
- Sport Management: a field concerned with the co-

ordination of limited human and material resources, relevant technologies, and situational contingencies for the efficient production and exchange of sport services (Chelladurai 1994, 15)

- Sports Entertainment: a type of spectacle which presents an ostensibly competitive event using a high level of theatrical flourish and extravagant presentation. Unlike typical sports and games, which are conducted for competition, sportsmanship, physical exercise, or personal recreation, the primary product of sports entertainment is performance for an audience’s benefit.

In order to gather information about academic programs offering entertainment management, the websites of sport management and entertainment management programs were reviewed to identify the focus and curricular content of the academic programs. Two researchers experienced in content coding and following established procedures, analyzed the websites from each of the institutions. In order to confirm reliability, each coder worked independently to code specific components.

In order to identify the emergence of key themes from the data extracted from the websites, a hybrid approach was utilized by the investigators (Podlog and Dionigi 2010). The initial analysis concerned intratextual (i.e., within-text) and intertextual (i.e., cross case) using the constant comparative method of analysis (Miller et al. 2019; Maykut and Morehouse 1994). Intratextual analysis of the data was introduced by recording notes regarding the curricular components of the entertainment management programs. Curricular requirements specifically relevant to entertainment management were categorized into raw data themes. The intertextual analysis further identified the raw data themes that were common across the programs. Raw data themes that appeared to be similar were merged to form higher-order themes.

From this data collection, the findings were separated into three general curricular categories: Commonalities, Differences, and Emerging Issues. Commonalities referred to curriculum inclusions that were identified among many of the programs. Differences identified those curricular components that were evident only in a minority of the programs. Emerging issues was developed to identify unique curricular components as identified by the coders.

Results

The results from this investigation, identified 24 universities and/or colleges offering degrees specifically identified as entertainment management. Of the universities and/or colleges, 15 were private institutions and 9 were public. Further analysis of the programs offered by these universi-

ties identified that 19 of the degrees were bachelor degrees, 13 were masters degrees, and one was a doctoral program (Figure 1).

A cursory review of curricular commonalities between sport and entertainment programs identified the following as similarities in offerings among programs: 1) Marketing Strategy, 2) Strategic Management, 3) Contracts and Negotiations, 4) Ticketing Methods and Data Analysis, 5) Global Influence, 6) Facility and Event Planning/Management, 7) Common Business Core and 8) Practicum/Internship.

Initial reviews identified specific differences between programs including: 1) Entertainment Law, 2) Technology Advances, 3) Digital Technologies, 4) Concert Production and Touring, 4) Fundamentals and Philanthropy, 5) Relationship Marketing, 6) Special Event Protocol, 7) Safety, Security, and Risk Management, 8) International Exhibitions, 9) Food and Beverage Operations, 10) Intellectual Properties, 11) Entertainment Finance and Business Models, 12) Artist/Agent Management, and 12) Sociological Aspects.

Additionally, the preliminary review of online curricular materials identified several emerging curricular issues among the programs investigated: 1) esport, 2) Digital Distribution, 3) Risk considerations, 4) Ticketing, 5) Ancillary Revenues Streams 6) Non-Profit Management, and 7) Advanced Funding Raising.

Entertainment Management Programs		
United States (NASSM)	MEIEA	Europe (n=32)
Univ. of California Los Angeles	American Univ.	Gillon Leisure Management School
Johnson & Wales (Denver)	Belmont Univ.	
Univ. Of Colorado Denver	Drexel Univ.	Canada (n=16)
Southern Connecticut State University	Missouri State Univ.	
Full Sail University	St. Joseph's Univ.	Asia (n=19)
Johnson & Wales (Miami)	Univ. of Miami	
Northwood University	Univ. of North Alabama	Africa (n=1)
Univ. of South Florida	William Paterson Univ. (NJ)	
Hofstra Univ.		India (n=1)
Johnson & Wales (Charlotte)	AUS/NZ	Latin America (n=5)
Newman Univ. (PA)	Australian Univ. of the Arts	
Point Park Univ. (PA)		
Johnson & Wales Univ. (RI)		
University of South Carolina		
19 – BA; 13-MS; 1-Doc 15 – Private , 9 Public		

Figure 1. Entertainment Management Programs.

Discussion

The results of this initial investigation confirmed the emergence of entertainment management in both music and sport management academic programs. The number of programs identified in this study (n = 24) was relatively low in comparison with the overall total number of programs as identified by MEIEA and NASSM (n = 400+). It must be noted that this low number is reflective only of the programs that have formally incorporated entertainment management into the program's title. It is likely that many more programs in both disciplines, offer entertainment management curric-

ular components but have not incorporated entertainment management into the program's title and subsequently were not utilized in this initial study. It must also be noted that fifteen of the programs identified as entertainment management were located at private universities. On the surface, this seems to support the perception that private universities and colleges are more proactive in their curricular evolution than are their public university counterparts. Public institutions must be cognizant of this perception and should be open and receptive to curricular enhancements that would reflect industry and student demands.

The initial analysis of curricular components revealed similarities among programs that were reflective of previous research inquiries into music and sport management. Previous research in both areas had investigated the need for a common core of business-related components and the commonalities in existing entertainment programs seem to reflect this school of thought. The courses identified as commonalities among programs represent established business curricular standards.

The differences among programs also seemed to support previous challenges from academics investigating the curricular offerings in music and sport management, which challenged both academic disciplines to be flexible and nimble in order to meet industry and student needs. The differences between programs tended to reflect coursework that could be considered more dynamic in response to current demands and changes within the industry.

The emerging issues identified in a few of the programs, tended to represent innovative and cutting-edge areas within entertainment management. The areas identified by the coders were reflective of the rapidly changing environment surrounding entertainment management. These findings are consistent with what Jenkins (2006) described as entertainment that “unfolds across multiple media platforms...making a distinctive and valuable contribution to the whole” as transmedia (Ashdown 2016, 13). It should be noted that although these curricular inclusions are of importance at the time of this investigation, they may cease to be of major concern in the immediate future due to continual change. This potential for rapid change within curricular offerings often causes restraint in academic programs to develop and offer curricular offerings that could be considered outdated quickly. Academic programs must develop curricular strategies that allow for such dynamic shifts in the industry to be adequately addressed as they become evident. The answer to this academic planning challenge may be to incorporate flexible topic course offerings and the inclusion of non-typical course hour requirements. Typical university course offerings are available in three-hours blocks frequently to conform to scheduling concerns. Academic programs should consider one- and two-hour specialty courses as a

possible solution to specialty curricular needs. Programs should also consider offering short format courses (four to eight weeks) as a way to make curricular adjustments to current industry needs.

The potential for curricular barriers imposed by accrediting bodies as well as university curricular requirements must also be addressed. In attempts to assist the consistency in curricular offerings both of the bodies may in fact create additional layers of “challenges” for programs to navigate in order to institute curricular change.

Recommendations

The results of this investigation substantiate the growth of entertainment management as an area of curricular growth in established academic fields of study. Evidence of curricular expansion and development was identified within music business and sport management programs. This growth is reflective of the growing interest by students, faculty, and industry leaders. The evidence also supports that this field of study will be a continuing trend across many academic disciplines and as such, the commonalities between programs should be emphasized which could lead to stronger academic offerings and program enrichment. The potential linking of entertainment management programs could help broadened the investigation into this academic area and allow academics from music and sport management to share ideas and concepts. This collaborative approach could lead to the identification and development of innovative and improved management practices in entertainment management. This collaboration could also lead to the enhancement not only in the academic preparation of students but also in the management of the industry itself.

Further expansion and investigation of entertainment management could also lead itself to the development of innovative funding models and opportunities. A collaborative investigation between programs could help identify funding models currently utilized in other areas of study (and industries) that are not currently utilized in entertainment management. It may also lend itself to the creation of new industry-specific models that will enhance the financial viability of entertainment management opportunities.

Each of the aforementioned areas could lead to an increased number of employment opportunities through the development of industry positions driven by the creation and implementation of these new areas. This could be a benefit to current and future entertainment management professionals (Gillentine and Crow 2015).

In order to further advance this as an academic field of study, it was important that focus be given to the development of specifically trained entertainment management faculty. The current investigation identified only one university currently developing entertainment management faculty.

This will not meet current academy needs much less the demands of the academy if the current growth continues. The development of faculty will take time to develop but should be considered by existing terminal degree programs.

To further the advancement of entertainment academic study and to provide opportunities for newly minted entertainment faculty members, it will be important to establish stronger and specific entertainment industry relationships. These relationships must be developed in addition to existing relationships (music business and sport) and broadened to include industry professionals who previously may not have been included. The development of these new relationships and the expansion of existing ones will only further strengthen the relationship and consequently the need for entertainment management trained professionals (current and future). This relationship will also help identify specific needs from within the entertainment management industry that academic programs can support through a variety of options specifically, internships and research. The expansion of research and the identification of entertainment management academics as sources for the industry will go far in supporting and quantifying the need for the academic study of entertainment management and the development of entertainment management academic programs.

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