“Changing the Game:” Implementing Experiential Learning and Reacting to the Past's Pedagogies in the Sports Management Classroom and Curriculum

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Teaching/Learning - Teaching Pedagogy (College Sport)
20-minute oral presentation (including questions)
Session: Teaching Pedagogy

This proposed presentation will point Sport Management educators towards the emerging pedagogy of gamification in higher education, specifically examining Reacting to the Past (RTTP) for Sport Management faculty members. RTTP is a series of historical role-playing games in which students are given elaborate game books that place them in moments of historical significance and/or controversy, that forces them to think critically and act accordingly in real time scenarios in order that that their faction or team can win the game by achieving their daily objectives and overall maximum points. In doing so, the classroom becomes a public forum; and students take their learning outside the four walls of a classroom as they seek to work with their teams and factions in thinking through ways to craft and advance a policy, lobby for an agenda, persuade others to join their cause, and achieve their victory objectives. To do so, they will read selections from primary and relevant sources, undertake research, write and deliver speeches, research and write position papers; and participate in informal debates and negotiations, in order to win the game.

Our presentation will introduce the RTTP’s Changing the Game: Title IX, Gender and Athletics in American Universities as an example of experiential learning for the Sports Management classroom. Set at a fictional university (Upper New England University) in the mid-1990s, a debate comes about over the role of athletics in higher education. Demands that women’s sports and athletes receive more resources and opportunities encompass the campus as administrators, faculty, staff, and students seek to have their voices heard and new policies looking to equity implemented. The result is a firestorm of controversy on and off campus. Drawing on testimonies from the Title IX hearings, student-athletes advance their positions via student government meetings, talk radio shows, town meetings, and impromptu rallies. As the entirety of the campus wrestles with questions of gender parity and the place of athletics in higher education, they learn about the implementation—and implications—of legal change in the United States. The RTTP’s Changing the Game: Title IX, Gender and Athletics in American Universities, is a pedagogy for consideration in the following courses: Intro to Sport Management, Intercollegiate Athletics, Sociology of Sport, and Sport Law, and for any Sports Management Department that is looking to take part in the general education requirement or core studies program.