

Kinesiology Regents Academic Advisory Committee
“The Value of a Sport, Fitness, and Community Wellness Management Graduate”
November 2016

Georgia is a magnificent land of sporting, fitness, and community activities. It supports a vast array of athletic teams at the professional, collegiate, scholastic, amateur, and community levels; hosts a wide range of sporting events; and enjoys an extensive network of fitness facilities, parks, and recreational areas spanning every corner of the state. Graduates in sport, fitness, and community wellness management programs serve Georgia through the provision of activities that grow the economy, build community, and promote an active and healthful quality of life among all Georgians.

1. What is Sport, Fitness, and Community Wellness Management?

Sport Management, Fitness Management, and Community Wellness Management are independent but interrelated disciplines that have in common the study and practice of business principles applied to sport, fitness, or wellness organizations and settings. Sport Management examines how organizational, marketing, legal, and financial concepts are applied in youth, recreational, interscholastic, collegiate, and professional sport organizations and activities. Fitness Management encompasses the development, delivery, and evaluation of products and services intended to promote an active lifestyle.¹ Community Wellness Management focuses on enriching people’s lives through the creation of leisure programs and the management of parks and recreation facilities.² When combined, sport, fitness, and community wellness are among the top 15 largest industries in the United States.^{3 & 4} In addition to their large scope, these industrial segments have distinctive attributes in their production, programming, and service processes, such as simultaneous production and consumption, high unpredictability, coexistent competition and cooperation, and strong social facilitation, all of which warrant specialized professional training and development.⁵

2. How does Undergraduate Training in Sport, Fitness, and Community Wellness Management Benefit Students?

Students who graduate from sport, fitness, and community wellness undergraduate degree programs in the state of Georgia develop well-rounded knowledge, comprehension, and application skills not only of the sport, fitness, and community wellness industries, but also of the

¹ Sport and Fitness Administration/Management. (2010). *National Center for Education Statistics: Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP)*. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/cipdetail.aspx?y=55&cid=88449#>

² Parks, Recreation and Leisure Facilities Management. (2010). *National Center for Education Statistics: Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP)*, Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/cipdetail.aspx?y=55&cid=88446>

³ Sports Industry Statistics and Market Size Overview. (2015). Plunkett Research, Ltd. Retrieved from <https://www.plunkettresearch.com/statistics/sports-industry/>

⁴ Pitts, B. G., & Stotlar, D. K. (2013). *Fundamentals of sport marketing*. Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology.

⁵ Mullin, B. J., Hardy, S., & Sutton, W. A.. (2007). Chapter 1: The special nature of sport marketing. In *Sport marketing* (3rd ed., pp. 1–26). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

greater business, entertainment, education, and health industries. Although the exact curriculum of these programs varies across the state, students enrolled in these programs can expect a general education base that is supplemented by a diverse collection of courses covering marketing, economics, finance, management, sociology, law, kinesiology, health science, and education, among others, and how those disciplines apply specifically to the field of sport, fitness, and community wellness management.⁶ In addition to in-class coursework, students in these programs participate in professional development activities by conducting guided undergraduate research and completing internship and practicum experiences in the field. This training emphasizes and develops critical thinking and analysis, innovative and creative problem-solving, and competence building to help students deal with an increasingly competitive and constantly changing work environment.

Sport, fitness, and community wellness management graduates are equipped with specialized knowledge, skills, and capability that prepare them well for a sustainable career in the sport, fitness, and wellness industries and beyond. A preliminary, state-wide survey reveals that the state of Georgia has more than 1,800 undergraduate students enrolled in sport, fitness, and community management programs, with more than 400 new professionals graduating annually. A large percentage of students enrolled in these programs enter the workforce in areas including professional sport, intercollegiate sport, interscholastic sport, health and fitness, park and recreation, and community wellness. The interdisciplinary education undergraduate students in sport, fitness, and community wellness management receive also prepares them to enter graduate school in a diverse range of disciplines, such as sport management, kinesiology, education, health, business, and law.

3. How do Sport, Fitness, and Community Wellness Management Graduates Benefit the State of Georgia?

Sport, fitness, recreation and leisure, and wellness activities play prominent roles in the quality of life of Georgians and the state economy. From the perspective of sport, tourism, and events, Georgia is home to nearly 1,500 sporting and leisure activities,⁷ including a large number of major sporting and entertainment events occurring annually or as one-time occurrences. In fact, in 2020, Atlanta will become the only city in the United States to have hosted an Olympic and Paralympic Games, Super Bowl, NCAA College Football National Championship Game, and NCAA Men's and Women's Final Four basketball tournaments. Additionally, Georgia is home to six stadiums with seating capacities of 40,000 – 111,000. Sports teams and events account for hundreds of millions of dollars of consumer spending in Georgia each year.⁸ According to the 2016-17 Occupational Outlook Handbook from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the median national annual salary for an entry-level position in the field is \$30,640, for an agent or

⁶ Commission on Sport Management Accreditation. (2016). *Accreditation principles manual & guidelines for self-study preparation*. Retrieved from <http://www.cosmaweb.org/accreditation-manuals.html>

⁷ Georgia Department of Economic Development. (2016). *Official Georgia tourism & travel site*. Retrieved from <http://www.exploregeorgia.org/things-to-do>

⁸ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2016-17 Edition; Coaches and Scouts; Agents and Business Managers of Artists, Performers and Athletes; Marketing Managers

business manager, \$64,200 and for a sports marketing manager, \$127,130. Actual salaries may vary greatly based on specialization within the field, location, years of experience and a variety of other factors. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that job growth in sports and fitness management will grow faster than average through 2024 (5-9% range) because of expansion due to multi-billion dollar profits from the sports industry. The state remains extremely competitive both for job placement and annual salaries in the field.

When they are not attending the wide array of amateur, collegiate, or professional sporting events taking place across the state, Georgians may be actively participating in sport, fitness, recreation, or community wellness activities. Georgia State Parks and Recreation Areas receive more than 9.7 million visitors annually and generate more than \$30 million in annual revenue (the ninth highest total in the U.S. in 2010).⁹ An additional 7.5 million Georgians visit the state's 11 parks managed by the National Park Service.¹⁰ In 2010, 15.2% of Georgians were active health-fitness club participants.¹¹ Finally, at the interscholastic level, 197,537 boys and girls participated in athletics (ranked 12th nationally).¹²

Despite the evidence that *some* Georgians are actively participating in sport, fitness, recreation, and wellness programming, there is a marked need for expanding services that improve inclusion and healthy outcomes. For example, Georgia ranks last nationally in gender equity in high school athletics programming.¹³ The state's high obesity rate, around 30.7%¹⁴, can have devastating effects on the quality of life of Georgians young (e.g., poor physical health, poor social and emotional well-being, poor self-esteem, poor academic performance, lower quality of life experienced by the child¹⁵) and old (e.g., mortality, hypertension, Type 2 diabetes¹⁶). These

⁹ United States Department of Commerce. (2012). *Statistical abstract of the United States*. (Section 26: Arts, Recreation, and Travel; pp. 767–778). Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

¹⁰ National Park Service. (n.d.). Working with Georgia: By the numbers. Retrieved from <https://www.nps.gov/state/customcf/bythenumbers/ga.pdf>

¹¹ International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association. (2011). *U.S. health club membership exceeds 50 million, up 10.8%; Industry revenue up 4% as new members fuel growth*. Retrieved from <http://www.ihrsa.org/news/2011/4/5/us-health-club-membership-exceeds-50-million-up-108-industry.html>

¹² National Federation of State High School Associations. (2015). *2014–15 high school athletics participation survey*. Retrieved from http://www.nfhs.org/ParticipationStatics/PDF/2014-15_Participation_Survey_Results.pdf

¹³ National Women's Law Center. (2015). *State ranking of gender equity in high school sports*. Retrieved from <https://img.washingtonpost.com/news/local/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/06/Screen-Shot-2015-06-23-at-10.01.17-AM.png>

¹⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *Adult obesity prevalence maps*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/prevalence-maps.html>

¹⁵ Sahoo, K., Sahoo, B., Choudhury, A.K., Sofi, N. Y., Kumar, R. S., & Bhadoria, A. S. (2015). Childhood obesity: Causes and consequences. *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care*, 4, 187–192.

¹⁶ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2015). *The health effects of overweight and obesity*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/effects/index.html>

negative consequences are also economically: According to estimates, the annual cost attributable to obesity among full-time employees nationwide is \$73.1 billion.¹⁷

Conclusion

Sport, fitness, and community wellness management graduates work to directly reverse the unhealthy statewide and national trends highlighted above by developing inclusive programming that promotes physical literacy and makes physical activity accessible to all Georgians (regardless of age, ability, or socioeconomic status among others). Complemented by the management of parks and recreation services that protect the natural environment and connect communities; the creation of sporting activities that emphasize fun, safety, and fair play; and the delivery of sport and entertainment events that drive the state economy, sport, fitness, and community wellness management graduates can create and maintain natural and social environments that instill in Georgia and their families a lifelong appreciation for sport, fitness, and community wellness activities.

¹⁷ Finkelstein, E. A., DiBonaventura, M. D., Burgess, S. M., & Hale, B.C. (2010). The costs of obesity in the workplace. *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 52, 971–976.