

# Guest Editors' Introduction: Special Issue on Innovations in Engaged Learning in Sport, Tourism, and Live Entertainment Education

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Innovative learning strategies are frequently adopted in sport, tourism, and live entertainment education, often through engaged learning practices. Engaged learning is an active process by which knowledge and understanding are acquired through participation, inquiry, involvement, and direct experiences (IGA Global, n.d.). Engaged learning requires students to participate in their own learning actively and intentionally, not only in discrete moments but also as an ongoing, lifelong activity (Moore, 2022).

Learning environments that provide students with opportunities to be active, creative, and critical in the pursuit, creation, application, and dissemination of knowledge stem from designing experiences for students in the classroom, on campus, and in the community. Engaged learning experiences require a commitment on the part of students, faculty, and the institution to create practices beyond traditional methods of classroom delivery. Focusing on content

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that involves exploration, relevance through real-world applications, reflection, feedback, and public demonstration of competence on assignments requires a significant investment of time and effort, including expectations that must be set at an appropriately high level. In sum, students involved in engaged learning practices have the opportunity to be active participants in their learning process, with an enhanced focus on developing critical thinking skills as they approach real-world problems, cases, and simulations.

Engaged learning tactics vary; however, in an attempt to broaden both the scope and impact of these practices, the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) has developed and promoted the value of 11 defined high-impact practices (HIPs; AAC&U, n.d.; Kuh, 2008; Watson et al., 2016). Using data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Kuh (2008) found that HIPs such as learning communities, capstone courses, and undergraduate research are effective for all students, but especially for those that have been traditionally underserved. While these practices increase graduation rates and promote equity by closing achievement gaps among first-generation and racial and ethnic minority groups, these underserved populations are also the least likely to participate in these engaged learning experiences (Zilvinskis, et al., 2022). This realization has amounted to a call to action for many in higher education, especially for those institutions like public colleges and universities that value access, affordability, and genuine upward mobility.

The intention of this special issue of *Sports Innovation Journal* is to support academic discourse regarding engaged learning practices in sport, tourism, and live entertainment education. As a result, this work encourages thought and dialogue related to innovative practices, academic investigation, and conversations around both theory and practice to better serve all students and move these fields forward. In this, our call generated robust interest from myriad individuals and, as a result, we are pleased to share 11 articles, presented by 34 scholars. This special issue presents articles that represent both academic commentary and empirical work, each with the goal of providing strategies and/or techniques that may be used by various types of teachers and learners throughout the curriculum. More specifically, commentaries are provided to address the application of academic techniques such as applied improvisation, student choice in engaged learning, mind mapping, the use of student stories/lived experiences to create class content, and the current—and potentially future—of the sport management internship. Further, empirical investigations address role play, service learning, collaborative online international learning, and trending topics (e.g., NIL) via project-based learning as engaged learning tools. Articles also provide insight into learning communities for both faculty and students, and the value that they play in the learning process. Therefore, with the breadth of topics covered, we

hope that this special issue provides a tool for innovation, creativity, and success for current and future academics alike.

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