UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS
ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT PLAN

Requirements

1. *Submit with New Program Proposal*
    a. *Programs are encouraged to consult with the Office of University Assessment.*
    b. *Contact information assessment@uca.edu*
2. *Send copy of Assessment Plan to the Office of University Assessment, Wingo 215.*
3. *Update the Program Assessment Plan based upon EAPR or Accreditation Cycles.*

Basic Information

Program Name: **Sport Management**

College: **College of Health and Behavioral Sciences**

Department: **Exercise and Sport Science**

Program Level (check all that apply)

- ☐ Associate's
- ☐ Bachelor's
- ☐ Undergraduate Certificate
- ✓ **Master's**
- ☐ Doctoral
- ☐ Graduate Certificate

Date Plan Submitted:

College Dean & email: **Dr. Nancy B. Reese (Nancyr@uca.edu)**
College Curriculum Committee Chairperson & Email: **Melissa Allen (mallen@uca.edu)**
Department Chairperson & email: **Kim Eskola (keskola@uca.edu)**
Department Curriculum Committee Chairperson & email: **Adam Bruenger (abruenger@uca.edu)**

1. Introduction (identify college, unit, and degree programs)

- Master of Art in Sport Management (MASM) Program
    - Program Purpose:
      The purpose of the MASM program is aimed to enhance the knowledge base of sport management through an online learning environment. This aim will support students who are currently working and possess the desire to achieve an advanced degree in the hopes of advancing their careers in the sport industry. The purpose is to have students engage in the broad topics within the sport management discipline in an intense program to inform students a deep level of understanding within each topic. As a result, each student will obtain knowledge in the advanced workings of the management, marketing, leadership, legal, and financial aspects of the sport industry. The program is housed within the

Exercise and Sport Science Department, which is part of the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences.

- Program Goals
  Upon completion of the program, students will be able to:
  - Apply effective leadership principles within the field of sport management.
  - Demonstrate proficiency in oral and written communication appropriate for business and professional contexts.
  - Uphold ethical principles and adhere to professional codes of conduct in the workplace.
  - Demonstrate competency in conducting research, analyzing data, and interpreting findings to address and resolve current issues and challenges in the sport management environment.
  - Engage as sport management professionals who foster academic, social, ethical, and professional growth.
  - Understand and value individual differences while recognizing and respecting all dimensions of diversity, including ethnicity, gender, age, physical ability, sexual orientation, race, and religion.

- Program Mission Statement
  The MASM program serves as a catalyst for student success to achieve professional advancement within the sport industry. This is achieved through curriculum built on practical application of theoretical and experiential knowledge. Graduates of the program will be prepared to advance in their careers to higher-level management positions in sport organizations, or to begin their career path anew in the sport industry.

2. Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

- MASM Program

  - **SLO 1: Research and Analysis**
    Students will demonstrate the ability to research, interpret, and synthesize sport studies to effectively discuss current issues and challenges and employ professional practices and successful strategies in sport environments. **(a)** Critical Analysis: Students should analyze key trends, challenges, and best practices within the sport industry, applying theoretical frameworks to real-world contexts. **(b)** Application: Students should apply their research findings to practical scenarios, demonstrating the ability to formulate informed, evidence-based strategies that address contemporary sport management issues. **(c)** Research and Interpretation: Students should be able to locate, evaluate, and interpret scholarly and industry-specific literature related to sport management. This includes demonstrating familiarity with research methods and data interpretation techniques relevant to the discipline.

  - **SLO 2: Professional Communication**
    Students will produce a variety of oral and written business and professional communication forms appropriate for diverse audiences within the sport industry. **(a)** Written Communication: Students should demonstrate proficiency in developing professional reports, proposals, and correspondence that reflect clarity, organization, and purpose. **(b)** Oral Communication: Students should effectively deliver presentations and verbal messages tailored to audiences such as colleagues, clients, and stakeholders in

sport organizations. **(c)** Professionalism: Students should exhibit professional etiquette and communication ethics in all business and academic interactions, demonstrating leadership and credibility in their communication style.

- **SLO 3: Ethical Practice**
  Students will apply ethical principles and professional conduct to enhance effectiveness in the workplace, drawing upon the preparation provided by the academic program. **(a)** Professional Conduct: Students should model ethical leadership behaviors, maintaining accountability and professionalism in their workplace practices. **(b)** Ethical Awareness: Students should recognize and evaluate ethical dilemmas within sport management contexts, demonstrating an understanding of professional codes of conduct and organizational integrity.
  (c) Decision-Making: Students should make ethical decisions grounded in fairness, transparency, and respect for diversity and inclusion when operating within the sport industry.

3. Assessment Cycle

- The assessment schedule will be finalized in consultation with the Office of Assessment. The MASM program requires students to complete 30 graduate credit hours through a non-thesis course sequence spanning approximately 20 months. Assessment will follow a three-year cycle, with one SLO and its subcomponents assessed each year. All three SLOs will therefore be assessed within each three-year cycle.

4. Curriculum Map

- See Appendix A.

5. Assessment Methods and Measures (Formative and Summative recommended)

Identify Each Student Learning Outcome and Measurement Tool(s)	Identify the Benchmark	Total number of Students Observed	Data for each tool or rubric category	% of Students Meeting Expectations or Higher	Assessment Results: 1. Exceeds expectations 2. Meets expectations 3. Falls below expectation 4. Insufficient data	Indirect Student/ Course Evaluations
SLO 1: Research and Analysis Research, interpret, and synthesize sport studies to effectively discuss current issues and challenges and employ professional practices and successful strategies in sport environments.						
(a) Critical Analysis: Students should analyze key trends, challenges, and best practices within the sport industry, applying theoretical frameworks to real-world contexts.						
Measurement SLO 1 (a): EXSS 5305 Sport Management Introduction and Governance – Final exam	At least 80% of sport management students will demonstrate proficiency by scoring 70% or higher on the final exam, which assesses their retention and application of course materials.					
(b) Application: Students should apply their research findings to practical scenarios, demonstrating the ability to formulate informed, evidence-based strategies that address contemporary sport management issues.						
Measurement SLO 1 (b): EXSS 5335 Sport Marketing Principles and Strategy – Marketing strategy project	At least 80% of sport management students will demonstrate proficiency by scoring 70% or higher on the marketing strategy project, which requires developing a comprehensive sport marketing strategy for a sport organization.					

(c) Research and Interpretation: Students should be able to locate, evaluate, and interpret scholarly and industry-specific literature related to sport management. This includes demonstrating familiarity with research methods and data interpretation techniques relevant to the discipline.						
Measurement SLO 1 (c): EXSS 6316 Data Analysis – Final research proposal project	At least 80% of sport management students will demonstrate proficiency by scoring 70% or higher on the final research proposal project, a written paper that develops a comprehensive research proposal.					
SLO 2: Professional Communication Produce a variety of oral and written business and professional communication forms.						
(a) Written Communication: Students should demonstrate proficiency in developing professional reports, proposals, and correspondence that reflect clarity, organization, and purpose.						
Measurement SLO 2 (a): EXSS 5325 Financial Principles in Sport Management – Final applied financial project	At least 80% of sport management students will demonstrate proficiency by scoring 70% or higher on the final applied financial project, which requires developing a comprehensive financial operations plan for a sport organization.					
(b) Oral Communication: Students should effectively deliver presentations and verbal messages tailored to audiences such as colleagues, clients, and stakeholders in sport organizations.						

Measurement SLO 2 (b): EXSS 5345 Sport Public Relations, Communication, and Crisis Management – Final crisis communication plan report	At least 80% of sport management students will demonstrate proficiency by scoring 70% or higher on the final crisis communication plan report, which requires developing a comprehensive crisis communication plan for a sport organization and presenting their findings.					
(c) Professionalism: Students should exhibit professional etiquette and communication ethics in all business and academic interactions, demonstrating leadership and credibility in their communication style.						
Measurement SLO 2 (c): EXSS 6305 Sport Organization Communication – Final sport communication project	At least 80% of sport management students will demonstrate proficiency by scoring 70% or higher on the final sport communication project, which requires researching and analyzing a selected communication topic.					
SLO 3: Ethical Practice. Apply ethical principles and professional conduct to enhance perceived future effectiveness in the workplace, drawing upon the preparation provided by the academic program.						
(a) Professional Conduct: Students should model ethical leadership behaviors, maintaining accountability and professionalism in their workplace practices.						
Measurement SLO 3 (a): EXSS 5315 Leadership in Sport Management – Strengths based sport leader profile project	At least 80% of Sport Management students will demonstrate proficiency by earning a score of 70% or higher on the final Leadership in Sport leadership project, which requires them to complete the Leadership Assessment and develop a written action plan.					

(b) Ethical Awareness: Students should recognize and evaluate ethical dilemmas within sport management contexts, demonstrating an understanding of professional codes of conduct and organizational integrity.						
Measurement SLO 3 (b): EXSS 6325 Sport Law Aspects – Final NIL project	At least 80% of sport management students will demonstrate proficiency by scoring 70% or higher on the final organizational education plan report, which requires developing a comprehensive NIL compliance and education program for a collegiate athletic department.					
(c) Decision-Making: Students should make ethical decisions grounded in fairness, transparency, and respect for diversity and inclusion when operating within the sport industry.						
Measurement SLO 3 (c): EXSS 6605 Sport Management Capstone Course – Business simulation	At least 80% of sport management students will demonstrate proficiency by scoring 70% or higher on the business simulation, which requires successfully managing a simulated business.					

6. Data Collection and Review

- Data will be collected by each course instructor and reported to the Director of the MASM Program at the end of each academic year. The Director will compile and incorporate the student learning outcome data into the program assessment report.
- Data will be gathered primarily through course-embedded assessments and related materials, with assistance from the Office of Assessment when necessary.
- The 70% benchmark was established based on the average-to-above-average performance expectations of current students within the Department of Exercise and Sport Science.
- As students progress through the program, their skills, proficiency, and sport management knowledge are expected to develop accordingly. If students fail to meet established benchmarks, both faculty and the student(s) will engage in proactive intervention measures—such as meetings, virtual consultations, or referrals to university academic support services—to facilitate improvement.
- The Department Chair and/or the director will oversee the data collection process and ensure the integrity and accuracy of all submitted materials.

7. Participation in Assessment Process

- The faculty and the Department of Exercise and Sport Science are committed to implementing the assessment plan and collecting data annually on at least one Student Learning Outcome (SLO), in coordination with the Curriculum Committee.
- Specific roles and responsibilities:
    - Department Chair: Oversees the collection, review, and analysis of assessment data.
    - Program Director and/or Curriculum Committee: Reviews and interprets assessment results and, when appropriate, recommends actions for program improvement.
    - Department Chair, Program Director, and Faculty: Disseminate assessment findings, communicate improvement strategies, and consult with the Office of Assessment as needed to ensure alignment with institutional standards and support continuous program improvement.

8. Data Analysis

- Assessment data will be reviewed and discussed annually by the Program Director during Sport Management Program meetings and EXSS Leadership Council meetings.
- The Department Chair and/or designee, in consultation with the Office of Assessment as needed, will oversee the analysis and interpretation of assessment data.
- Assessment results will be evaluated in relation to established program goals. Both the results and goals will be reviewed annually to ensure the continued use of valid, meaningful, and appropriate outcome measures for continuous program improvement.

9. Plan for Using Assessment Results to Improve Program

- Assessment results will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of student learning and to guide continuous program improvement.
- The Program Director will review and analyze assessment data to identify trends, areas of strength, and opportunities for improvement.
- Historical benchmarking will be used to compare the performance of current students with that of previous cohorts.
- Throughout the assessment process, data and findings will be shared with the Department Chair for review and feedback.
- If fewer than 60% of students meet the established benchmarks in two consecutive assessments conducted over six years, Sport Management Program faculty and the Department Chair will convene to review the findings, consider potential curriculum revisions, and determine appropriate corrective actions.

10. What are the plans to evaluate students' post-graduate success?

- At the request of the Program Director, the Office of Institutional Research will administer an annual exit survey for graduating students to collect information regarding their immediate post-graduation plans.
- One year after graduation, the Program Director, in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research, will conduct follow-up tracking of alumni through email and professional networking platforms (e.g., LinkedIn and Instagram) to gather information on employment status, career advancement, and professional achievements.

11. What are the plans to evaluate teaching effectiveness?

- The Department Chair will conduct an annual review of faculty performance, with particular attention to teaching effectiveness and instructional quality.
- Both peer evaluations and student course evaluations will be utilized to assess teaching effectiveness and to identify areas for professional growth and pedagogical improvement.

12. Appendices-Required….Curriculum Maps by Program, Assessment Tools (examples: Rubrics, Surveys, Tests, etc.), any other important materials/documentation

- See Appendices

13. Submit Assessment Plan

- Send completed form electronically to assessment@uca.edu

For questions or concerns please contact:
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Appendix A. Curriculum Maps

- **MASM without the GC in SMC**

  Fall
  EXSS 5305 Sport Management Introduction and Governance (3)
  EXSS 5315 Leadership in Sport Management (3)
  EXSS 6316 Data Analysis (3)
  EXSS 6305 Sport Organization Communication (3)

  Spring
  EXSS 5325 Financial Principles in Sport Management (3)
  EXSS 5335 Sport Marketing Principles and Strategy (3)
  EXSS 6605 Sport Management Capstone Course: Business Simulation (6)

  Summer
  EXSS 5345 Sport Public Relations, Communication, and Crisis Management (3)
  EXSS 6325 Sport Law Aspects (3)

Appendix B. Course descriptions

- **MASM courses**

  EXSS 5305 Sport Management Introduction and Governance
  This course introduces students to the broad concepts of management and governance as they pertain to the sport management discipline. Students will learn of various sport organizations and governance structures of these organizations from around the world and all levels of sport—amateur, scholastic, intercollegiate, professional, and international.

  EXSS 5315 Leadership in Sport Management
  This course will provide students with both theoretical and practical information on leadership in sport. Pertinent leadership theories (transactional, transformational, authentic, and servant) will be studied along with case studies on how these are applied by practitioners to inform decision-making in sport. Students will gain a further understanding of the importance of leadership in sport organizations as well as how to recognize their own leadership style and the leadership style of those around them.

  EXSS 5325 Financial Principles in Sport Management
  A course designed to engage students in financial practices that sport organizations typically undertake. Students will learn budgeting practices and financial operations pertaining to sport organizations and how to apply this information to the financial decisions faced by sport managers.

  EXSS 5335 Sport Marketing Principles and Strategy
  This course is structured in order to inform students about the broad spectrum of sport marketing practices. Best sport marketing theories and applications will be disseminated. Students will learn how to engage in rightful sport marketing practices and learn about emerging trends with the goal of applying them to sport organizations.

EXSS 5345 Sport Public Relations, Communication, and Crisis Management
This course is structured to inform students about sport organization communication practices and principles. The course entails information on managing both a public relations communication avenue and a stakeholder relations communication avenue. Through this course students will become versed in principles sport organizations have used and future trends, while also seeing the principles implemented.

EXSS 6305 Sport Organization Communication
This course aims to teach students about how sport organizations communicate internally and externally. Students will learn how to decipher and interpret data concerning media, analytics, and trends. The information will then be used to explore how current sport organizations use data in the daily communication procedures through various media outlets for both intra-organization and inter-organization relations.

EXSS 6316 Data Analysis
This course provides coverage of data analysis techniques that have specific applications for health and the applied sciences. An applied, conceptual approach will be used to facilitate the practical use of those techniques using SPSSPC+.

EXSS 6325 Sport Law Aspects
This course informs students about the most common legal aspects of sport organizations. Students will learn to be aware of legal issues facing sport organizations today, and how sport managers must remain informed about laws and regulations pertaining to sport. Information from this course will aid future sport managers in their decision-making process based on legal foundations.

EXSS 6605 Sport Management Capstone Course: Business Simulation This course uses a business operations software program to test student knowledge from throughout the program. Students will run their own business and make decisions pertaining to various functions covered throughout the program: leadership, governance, finance, marketing, legal, statistical, communication, and public relations.

Appendix C. Example of Assignment and Rubric

- **SLO 1: Research and Analysis.** Research, interpret, and synthesize sport studies to effectively discuss current issues and challenges and employ professional practices and successful strategies in sport environments. **(c) Research and Interpretation:** Students should be able to locate, evaluate, and interpret scholarly and industry-specific literature related to sport management. This includes demonstrating familiarity with research methods and data interpretation techniques relevant to the discipline.

- **Measurement SLO 1 (c):** EXSS 6316 Data Analysis – Final research proposal project
  At least 80% of sport management students will demonstrate proficiency by scoring 70% or higher on the final research proposal project, a written paper that develops a comprehensive research proposal.

- Research Proposal Project in Syllabus
  Students will develop a research proposal that applies data analysis techniques to a sport management problem. The project requires identifying a research question, reviewing

relevant literature, proposing appropriate analytical methods, and discussing anticipated implications. Additional guidelines and evaluation criteria are provided in the assignment rubric.

- Research Proposal Project Rubric

	Exemplary (90–100%)	**Acceptable (70–89%)**	**Developing (Below 70%)**
Introduction			
Problem statement / rationale / purpose	Clearly defines the research problem and purpose; presents a compelling rationale supported by relevant evidence and references.	Identifies the research problem and purpose; provides a reasonable rationale supported by some relevant evidence, although minor clarification or elaboration is needed.	Presents an unclear or incomplete research problem or purpose; the rationale needs stronger explanation and supporting evidence.
Research question(s)	Clearly states focused, empirically researchable questions that identify key variables or concepts and align closely with the study's purpose.	States empirically researchable questions that generally align with the study's purpose; minor revisions to wording, scope, or specificity are needed.	Presents questions that need substantial clarification, a more appropriate scope, or stronger alignment with the study's purpose to guide empirical research.
Significance / importance	Clearly explains the study's significance and potential contributions to research, theory, policy, or practice, with specific and convincing connections.	Explains the study's significance and identifies potential contributions to research, theory, policy, or practice, although some connections need further development.	Provides a limited or general explanation of the study's significance; potential contributions need clearer identification and explanation.
Literature Review			
Relevance of reviewed literature	Reviews literature directly relevant to the research questions and clearly explains how prior studies inform the proposed research.	Reviews literature generally relevant to the research questions; some relevant studies or connections need further attention.	Includes literature with limited or unclear relevance to the research questions; important studies or connections need further development.
Nature of reviewed literature	Relies predominantly on primary, scholarly, peer-reviewed sources; uses other credible sources selectively and	Uses an adequate foundation of scholarly, peer-reviewed sources; some reliance on secondary or nonacademic sources	Relies heavily on secondary or nonacademic sources; additional primary, scholarly, peer-reviewed literature is needed to

	appropriately to support the study.	could be reduced or better justified.	establish an adequate foundation.
Establishment of literature gap	Clearly identifies and supports a specific research gap, such as unanswered questions, inconsistent findings, or a justified need for replication; explains how the proposed study addresses it.	Identifies a plausible research gap and generally connects it to the proposed study, although supporting evidence or explanation needs further development.	Suggests a research gap, but its basis or connection to the proposed study is unclear; further review and explanation are needed.
Method			
Research design	Clearly identifies and justifies a specific quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods design that aligns closely with the research questions.	Identifies an appropriate research design that generally aligns with the research questions; minor details or justification need clarification.	Provides an incomplete or unclear research design; its appropriateness or alignment with the research questions needs further development.
Sampling	Clearly describes and justifies an appropriate sampling method, target population, anticipated sample size, and relevant participant characteristics; explains recruitment and site access, when applicable.	Describes an appropriate sampling method, target population, anticipated sample size, and relevant participant characteristics; recruitment or site-access details may require minor clarification.	Provides limited or unclear information about sampling, sample size, participant characteristics, or recruitment; the sampling approach needs further explanation or revision.
Procedure	Clearly describes the sequence of research and data collection procedures in sufficient detail for a reader to understand how the study will be conducted; fully explains any intervention or experimental manipulation, when applicable.	Describes the main research and data collection procedures in a logical sequence; minor details about implementation, interventions, or experimental manipulations need clarification.	Provides an incomplete or unclear description of research and data collection procedures; additional detail is needed to understand how the study will be conducted.

Appendix D. Examples of student work (Measurement SLO 1 (c): EXSS 6316 Data Analysis)

- **Exemplary Case: Grade 55/60**
- **Title: Social Media Content and Fan Engagement in Collegiate Athletics**

Introduction

General Idea & Background Information

The use of social media has changed the way athletic departments at colleges communicate, market, and develop relationships with their fan bases. Platforms like Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and TikTok enable athletic departments to market events, showcase athletes, and foster stronger emotional connections with fans through real-time communication. In the modern digital world, fan engagement is not limited to in-person attendance but also encompasses likes, comments, sharing, and participation in online campaigns. Colleges are turning to such engagement metrics to evaluate the success of their marketing plans and improve fan loyalty. Nonetheless, online attention competition has rendered it necessary to learn what kind of content best captures and maintains audience engagement in collegiate sports.

Brief Literature Review

Past research has revealed that the content in social media plays an important role in fan engagement and team recognition. According to Cortes (2025), content that is student-focused, like videos of the behind-the-scenes and storytelling by players, makes college fans more emotionally connected and loyal. On the same note, Gdovka and Chen (2021) found that social media is the prevailing communication tool in collegiate sports marketing, especially among younger fans who use Instagram and Twitter as opposed to traditional media. Annamalai et al. (2021) found that the type of content and its vividness influence fan engagement, and photos and videos attract the most significant reactions. Romero-Jara et al. (2024) also demonstrated that, in the major sports leagues, quality is the cause of online interaction, as opposed to frequency. Together, these results imply that the level of engagement is strongly determined by the strategic content design, the level of interactivity, and the choice of the platform.

Research Problem, Importance of the Study, and Purpose

Despite increasing use of social media for fan engagement, there is a lack of empirical studies that compare the performance of content categories for collegiate athletics. Most of the previous research has been conducted on professional teams or fan behavior in general, which leaves a gap in understanding specific to the behavior of university athletic departments (Lee et al., 2025). This gap is important because collegiate sports fans are unique because they are often made up of students, alumni, and local fans whose involvement directly affects ticket sales and brand image. As such, the proposed research intends to examine the social media analytics data of collegiate athletics departments in order to find out which types of content, including game highlights, athlete profiles, promotional campaigns, and interactive posts, have the highest levels of fan engagement. The results will provide applicable information to sport marketers who aim to maximize digital engagement and return on investment.

Research Question and Hypotheses

The current study seeks to answer the following question: What type of social media content most effectively drives engagement (likes, shares, comments) among collegiate athletic fans?
H_0: There is no statistically significant difference in engagement levels across different types of social media content posted by collegiate athletic departments.
H_1: There is a statistically significant difference in engagement levels across different types of social media content posted by collegiate athletic departments.

Literature Review

Social media is becoming increasingly significant in fan involvement in collegiate athletics. Athletic department leverages these platforms to engage directly with the students, alumni, and community supporters. Fan engagement can be defined as the emotional, behavioral, and cognitive participation of fans in sports organizations and can be quantified in terms of likes, comments, shares, and attendance (Cortes, 2025). Social media offers instant access to players, events, and games and replaces official websites as a source of information (Gdovka & Chen, 2021). The results presented by Cortes (2025) demonstrated that Instagram and Tik Tok posts that contain humor, behind the scenes information, and athlete narratives lead to a greater reaction in emotions and student engagement. Annamalai et al. (2021) also noted that photos receive more likes and comments, whereas video encourages more shares, indicating that the form of posts and vividness affect the reaction of a user. Such results indicate that athletic departments should draw particular attention to authentic and diverse content to enhance engagement and loyalty.

Prior research has been consistent in showing the relationship between content quality, interactivity, timing, and engagement outcomes. Romero-Jara et al. (2024), in analyzing posts from various football leagues, found that high-quality content was outperforming frequent posts that were less engaging. The study by Yadav et al. (2023) also established interaction, identification, and interface design as key determinants of the sustained fan participation online. Lee et al. (2025) found that the NCAA Division I football fans were more engaged in important events and announcements, which implied that strategic timing was of great importance. Collectively, the studies indicate that the success of social media in sports communication can be attributed to the nature of the content, the quality of the content, and the schedule of posting. Therefore, based upon this evidence, the current study investigates whether levels of engagement are significantly different among content types in collegiate athletic departments.

Research Method

Procedures

Quantitative data will be gathered by conducting a secondary analysis of social media analytics of official collegiate athletic department accounts. Data will include post-level engagement metrics such as likes, comments, shares, and views from platforms like Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), and TikTok. Content will be split into predefined content categories: game highlights, athlete profiles, promotional campaigns, and interactive posts.

Participants

The study will examine engagement data collected from verified collegiate athletic programs at institutions in the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I. The audience that is reflected in the data includes students, alumni, and local fans who follow or interact with these official social media pages. No direct human involvement will take place because the dataset is based on publicly available engagement statistics.

Measures

Measurement items will be adapted from established engagement indicators used in prior studies. Cortes (2025) and Gdovka and Chen (2021) found likes, shares, and comments to be reliable indicators of fan engagement. Annamalai et al. (2021) identified content type and vividness (photo vs. video) as predictors of engagement behavior, while Yadav et al. (2023) associated interaction and identification with prolonged online participation. Each post will be coded based on these content and engagement variables so that they will allow for comparative analysis across categories. Engagement indicators (likes, shares, and comments) will be recorded as frequency counts, and content type and vividness will be coded on nominal scales for quantitative analysis.

Data Analysis

SPSS 26.0 will be used to compute descriptive statistics to summarize the engagement patterns across content types. One-way ANOVA will be used to test for statistically significant differences in levels of engagement at the four categories of posts. Regression analysis will also be used to further examine relationships between content characteristics (e.g., vividness, interactivity) and engagement outcomes. In the analyses, it will be established whether specific content strategies generate greater fan engagement across collegiate athletic departments.

Discussion and Implications

It is anticipated that the study results will reveal considerable variations in engagement rates between various social media content posted by collegiate athletics departments. More immersive and engaging material, including videos, behind-the-scenes content, and athlete-focused content, is anticipated to create greater engagement than traditional promotional or informational material. The results can be used to explain the factors that drive engagement. For example, the different content may have varying appeal, timing and even authenticity. This can be a great lesson to athletic departments in colleges on how to refine their social media operations. For example, if they were using conventional informational posting, they can change to more appealing and interactive one. Importantly, this study will add to the existing studies. As seen earlier, the existing studies focus mainly on professional clubs and do not dive much into comparing the content engagement. This will be a great addition to scholarly work.

References

Annamalai, B., Yoshida, M., Varshney, S., Pathak, A. A., & Venugopal, P. (2021). Social media content strategy for sports clubs to drive fan engagement. Journal of retailing and consumer services, 62, 102648. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0969698921002149

Cortés, L. K. (2025). The Impact of Social Media on Fan Engagement in College Sports: A Focus on Student Fan Interaction. https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/university_honors_program/377/

Gdovka, A. K., & Chen, S. (2021). Collegiate athletic fans perception of the use of social media in marketing. Kentucky Journal of Undergraduate Scholarship, 5(1), 8. https://encompass.eku.edu/kjus/vol5/iss1/8/

Lee, S., Kang, M., Lim, W., Choe, J. P., & Berg, B. K. (2025). Sport Media Consumption in NCAA Division I FBS Subdivision: A Panel Regression Model Using X/Twitter. Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics, 18(1), 19. https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/jiia/vol18/iss1/19/

Romero-Jara, E., Solanellas, F., López-Carril, S., Kolyperas, D., & Anagnostopoulos, C. (2024). The more we post, the better? A comparative analysis of fan engagement on social media profiles of football leagues. International Journal of Sports Marketing and Sponsorship, 25(3), 578-599. https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJSMS-12-2023-0252/full/html

Yadav, J., Yadav, R., Sahore, N., & Mendiratta, A. (2023). Digital social engagements and knowledge sharing among sports fans: Role of interaction, identification, and interface. Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 195, 122792. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0040162523004778

- **Developing Case: Grade 40/60**
- **Title: Research Proposal**

Research Proposal

Introduction:
The relationship between nutrition and athletic performance is a critical area of study that has garnered significant attention in sports science. As athletes strive for peak performance, understanding how dietary choices impact their physical capabilities is paramount. This research will delve into the influence of nutrition on athletic performance across various sports, aiming to provide insights that can guide training programs and dietary recommendations for athletes.

Brief Literature Review:
Previous research has highlighted the vital role of nutrition in enhancing athletic performance, with studies indicating that optimal dietary intake can improve endurance, strength, and recovery. For instance, studies by Jeukendrup (2017) and Maughan et al. (2012) emphasize the importance of macronutrients and hydration strategies in maximizing performance. However, gaps still exist in understanding specific dietary patterns and their direct impact on various athletic outcomes, indicating a need for further exploration.

Problem, Importance of the Study, & Purpose of the Research:
The primary research problem this study addresses is: How do nutritional intake and dietary practices influence athletic performance during competitions? This research is essential as it seeks to bridge the gap between nutritional science and practical applications in sports, providing coaches, athletes, and nutritionists with evidence-based guidelines to optimize performance. The purpose of the study is to analyze the relationship between specific dietary habits and athletic performance metrics, such as endurance, strength, and recovery.

Research Questions & Hypothesis:
- Research Question: How does the nutritional intake of athletes affect their performance during competitions?
- Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relationship between the nutritional intake of athletes and their performance outcomes during competitions.
- Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant relationship between the nutritional intake of athletes and their performance outcomes during competitions.

Literature Review/Details of Key Concepts:
Key concepts in this research include macronutrients (carbohydrates, proteins, and fats), micronutrients (vitamins and minerals), hydration, and their respective roles in athletic performance. Macronutrients provide the energy required for physical activities, while micronutrients play crucial roles in metabolic processes and recovery. Research indicates that a balanced intake of these nutrients can lead to enhanced performance and reduced risk of injury (Phillips, 2014). Furthermore, hydration is critical for maintaining physiological functions and optimizing performance during prolonged exercise (Baker et al., 2015).

Relationships Between Key Concepts:
The interplay between macronutrients and performance outcomes is significant; for example, carbohydrates are essential for endurance athletes, as they provide readily available energy during prolonged activities. Proteins are vital for muscle repair and recovery, influencing strength performance. Hydration status can also directly impact an athlete's performance; dehydration can lead to decreased endurance and increased fatigue. Understanding these relationships will allow for tailored nutritional strategies that align with specific athletic requirements.

Research Method/Procedures:
This study will adopt a quantitative research design, employing surveys and performance assessments to gather data on athletes' dietary habits and performance metrics.

Participants:
The participants will include a diverse group of athletes from various sports disciplines, ensuring a comprehensive analysis of nutritional impacts across different performance contexts.

Measure:
Performance outcomes will be measured using standardized tests relevant to each sport (e.g., sprint times for track athletes, strength assessments for weightlifters) alongside dietary intake

assessments through food frequency questionnaires. This dual measurement approach will enable a correlation between nutritional practices and performance metrics.

Data Analysis:
Data will be analyzed using statistical methods, including correlation and regression analyses, to determine the strength and significance of the relationships between nutritional intake and performance outcomes. This analysis will provide insights into how various dietary practices can be optimized for athletic success.

Discussion & Implications:
The findings of this study are expected to contribute valuable knowledge to the field of sports nutrition, offering practical guidelines for athletes and coaches. By elucidating the relationship between nutrition and performance, this research can inform dietary recommendations, potentially leading to improved athletic outcomes and enhanced training programs.

References:

Baker, L. B., Rollo, I., & Stein, S. (2015). Hydration and recovery in athletes: A review. Journal of Sports Sciences, 33(15), 1611-1621.

Jeukendrup, A. E. (2017). Periodized nutrition for athletes. Sports Medicine, 47(1), 1-14.

Maughan, R. J., Burke, L. M., & Williams, C. (2012). Diet and the athlete. In Nutrition for Sport and Exercise (pp. 3-20). Elsevier.

Phillips, S. M. (2014). Dietary protein for athletes: From requirements to metabolic advantage. Applied Physiology, Nutrition, and Metabolism, 39(5), 655-663.

Appendix E. Examples of Assessment (Measurement SLO 1 (c): EXSS 6316 Data Analysis)

Identify Each Student Learning Outcome and Measurement Tool(s)	Identify the Benchmark	Total number of Students Observed	Data for each tool or rubric category	% of Students Meeting Expectations or Higher	Assessment Results: 1. Exceeds expectations 2. Meets expectations 3. Falls below expectation 4. Insufficient data	Indirect Student/ Course Evaluations
SLO 1: Research and Analysis Research, interpret, and synthesize sport studies to effectively discuss current issues and challenges and employ professional practices and successful strategies in sport environments.						
(c) Research and Interpretation: Students should be able to locate, evaluate, and interpret scholarly and industry-specific literature related to sport management. This includes demonstrating familiarity with research methods and data interpretation techniques relevant to the discipline.						
Measurement SLO 1 (c): EXSS 6316 Data Analysis – Final research proposal project	At least 80% of sport management students will demonstrate proficiency by scoring 70% or higher on the final research proposal project, a written paper that develops a comprehensive research proposal.	**21**	**Assignment Rubric (60 Point total):** **Exemplary (54~60)** **Acceptable (42~53)** **Developing (Below 42)**	**90.4% (19/21)**	**2. Meets expectations**	**4.67/5**