8-2010

Establishing the Best Practices Related to Effective Student Development in Campus Recreation Student Employees

Lauren Toperzer
Clemson University, toperze@clemson.edu

ESTABLISHING THE BEST PRACTICES RELATED TO EFFECTIVE STUDENT
DEVELOPMENT IN CAMPUS RECREATION STUDENT EMPLOYEES

_____

A Thesis
Presented to
The Graduate School of
Clemson University

_____

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management

_____

By
Lauren Toperzer
August 2010

_____

Accepted by:
Dr. Robert Barcelona, Committee Chair
Dr. Denise Anderson
Dr. Robert Brookover

ABSTRACT

Students play a vital role in the leadership and delivery of campus recreation programs. The purpose of this study was to investigate best practices related to effective student development techniques in high quality campus recreation programs affiliated with NIRSA (National Intramural Recreational Sports Association). NIRSA , in collaboration with CAS (Council for the Advancement of Standards), educates collegiate recreational sports professionals on the importance of providing a rich learning environment for student employees (nirsa.org, 2010). A campus recreation professional can put student development theory to practice and the student employee can gain effective professional development.

Data were collected through a Delphi study, using both qualitative and quantitative methods in all four rounds. A panel of experts consisting of the six 2009 Regional Vice Presidents of the NIRSA organization were asked to participate, as well as five Campus Recreation professionals from each region chosen by the Regional Vice Presidents. Thirty of those thirty six people agreed to participate (N=30). Data were collected through a web based survey created through Snap 9 Professional. Delphi panel members advocated five general best practices and 21 specific best practices. The five general best practices are; leadership opportunities, performance assessment, training and orientation, personal relationships and professional development. The results of this study provide a framework of best practices that campus recreation professionals can implement in their departments to enhance student development of their student employees.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate my work to my mother. Without the strength she gives me each day I would not be able to succeed. One day I wish to be the amazing woman she once was. Remember to Smile.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am especially grateful for my advisor Dr. Bob Barcelona. He did nothing but support my passion for student development and campus recreation. He gave me hope that I could complete this process.

This would not have been possible without my committee members Dr. Denise Anderson and Dr. Robert Brookover. Thank you for all of the great feedback and suggestions.

My passion for student development and campus recreation began with my undergraduate experience as a student employee for the Department of Campus Recreation at Montclair State University. Without the relationships and experiences I had with my fellow peers and supervisors my undergraduate experience would not have been as memorable as it was.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<div align="right">Page</div>

Table of Contents (Continued)

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Student development has become a popular subject within the recreational sports industry, specifically campus recreation departments. Students play a vital role in the leadership and delivery of campus recreation programs. A student's total environment is educational and should be used to help the student achieve full developmental potential, including in the classroom and at work. The National Intramural and Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) along with Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) provides momentum for recreational sports professionals to collaborate with educators in providing a learning rich environment to educate the whole student (nirsa.org, 2010).

There is limited research on student development of campus recreation student employees. Research focuses on the development of the student participants and the effectiveness of campus recreation programs (Weese, 1997). The quality of campus recreation programs has become an important subject to measure according to Weese (1997). Yet, it is just as important to measure the quality of campus recreation departments with respect to how they benefit the student employee. Campus recreation programs are managed by professional staff members but run by student employees. The focus of this study is to provide a list of best practices that campus recreation professionals can utilize to promote student development with their student employees.

NIRSA is the leading resource for professional and student development, education, and research in collegiate recreational sports. NIRSA members, comprised of campus recreation professionals and student employees, are actively engaged in many

areas of campus life, including student leadership, development, and personnel management; wellness and fitness programs; intramural sports; sport clubs; recreation facility operations; outdoor recreation; informal recreation; and aquatic programs (nirsa.org, 2010). For the purpose of this study members of NIRSA were chosen as participants.

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education has set standards and guidelines based on student development (nirsa.org, 2010). Their mission statement is: The mission of Recreational Sports Programs (RSP) must be to enhance the mind, body and spirit of students and other eligible individuals by providing programs, services and facilities that are responsive to the physical, social, recreational and lifelong educational needs of the campus community as they relate to health, fitness and learning. In order to accomplish this mission, one of the things RSP should do is provide participation, employment and leadership opportunities designed to enhance learning, growth and development (CAS, p285, 2009).

Student development for campus recreation employees is shaped by the dynamic between maturation and learning to best prepare them for their professional lives (Creamer, 1980). Along with other duties the campus recreation professional is responsible for helping the student employee develop transferable skills that will benefit them throughout their career. This research will serve to better educate our current and future recreation professionals on the best practices to promote student development.

<u>Purpose of Study</u>

This research is an exploratory study to investigate best practices related to effective student development techniques in campus recreation student employees. The goal is to enhance learning, growth and development in student employees. The term best practice is a common management term used to describe the process of developing and following a standard way of doing things that multiple organizations can use for management and policy (Pollard, 2010). A best practice is a tactic, technique, method or process that is believed to be more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other tactic, technique, method or process when applied to a particular condition or circumstance (Pollard, 2010).

Student development is concerned with all aspects of the student's being; physical, emotional, social and spiritual – all in addition to the traditional emphasis on the intellectual. The developmental approach to education thus functions to integrate cognitive development with all other aspects of the student's personality, with the goal of educating the "whole student" (Creamer, 1980). Student development relates directly to recreational sports programs because of the influence student employees have on the success of the campus recreation department.

Recreational sports programs share universal goals with the campus community. "Campus recreation programs and facilities exist for education purposes, enhancing the quality of student life and preparing people for the future which are all common goals of the university (Weese, 265, 1997)." Campus Recreation departments are known for promoting Student Affairs as 70% of NIRSA affiliated universities are organizationally

structured under Student Affairs Division (Bryant, Anderson & Dunn, 1994; Butch, 2008).

Despite the strong relationship between student affairs and campus recreation departments, there is little emphasis on practices that campus recreation professionals can utilize in their departments to enhance student development in their student employees. The interest in student development is growing within the NIRSA organization as evidenced by an increase in activities, sessions, research and journal articles that focus on student development.

<center>Theoretical Background</center>

The theoretical background of this research is the theories of student development (Chickering & Reisser, 1993) and involvement (Astin, 1984). Student development theory is most concerned with human growth and environmental influences that provide environments to promote students' learning and maturation, both in and outside of the classroom (Creamer, 1980). Student affairs professionals utilize the student development theory to enhance undergraduate student involvement, persistence, and learning (Pascarella, Ernst & Terenzini, 1991). The theory of involvement encourages students to become actively engaged in their studies and at work because they will gain beneficial psychological and behavioral outcomes (Astin, 1999).

Students working in campus recreation are critical in the performance of tasks associated with the daily operations of facilities and programs. DuBord, Jordan and Turner (2005) mention how student employees often assume supervisory roles and are

<center>4</center>

responsible for monitoring and directing their peers. This example represents student development theory and the theory of involvement.

Campus recreation professionals can gain an understanding of student development theory and apply it to their student employees to describe, explain and predict the changes that may occur in their student employees so that they may control and intervene as needed.   Student development theory has four main phases: psychosocial, cognitive, environmental and humanistic (Creamer, 1990). This research mostly relates to psychosocial theory which focuses on the student's behavior. The most common psychosocial development model is Chickering and Reisser's seven vectors (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). It outlines seven vectors that a traditional undergraduate student will go through during their time in college. The seven developmental vectors are: 1) developing competence, 2) managing emotions, 3) developing autonomy, 4) establishing identity, 5) freeing interpersonal relationships, 6) developing purpose and 7) establishing integrity (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). Campus recreation professionals can put this theory into practice when they structure their individual department.

Chickering and Reisser's psychosocial development model can be utilized in student employee training at the beginning of the semester. Positions can be created for students to excel in or build competence. For example; a front desk worker can be promoted to building supervisor, then to lead building supervisor, then to facilities area supervisor. By giving them a chance to show leadership and excel in the department they will be more motivated to do their best. The student employee training can be used as an example of enhancing vectors 1,2,3, and 5(Chickering & Reisser, 1993). After

5

completing the training the goal would be for the students to articulate and utilize their knowledge with their job. The student leadership positions would be an example of utilizing all seven vectors reflecting the student's development as an employee for campus recreation (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

There has been little research on student development in campus recreation employees; however there is research to measure the effectiveness in campus recreation programs and facilities and student employee satisfaction (Weese, 1997). Weese (1997) stated that, "campus recreation programs note contributions in: promoting school spirit and a feeling of affiliation with other students and the institution, providing a socially accepted outlet for students to combat the pressures of higher education, contributing to student retention, and enhancing the quality of student life (p 264)."

The NIRSA organization has included student development as a suggested research topic for the Recreational Sports Journal (nirsa.org, 2010). It is an important topic where little research has been done. The purpose of this study is to create a list of best practices related to student development in the student employees of campus recreation departments. The goal is to identify the best practices so they can be easily and readily implemented by campus recreation professionals.

This study includes some delimitations, creating some boundaries for the data collection. It only involves NIRSA members, and does not consider recreation professionals that are non members. The focus is on the development of student employees rather than student participants of our recreation programs and facilities. The professional's perspective was considered as opposed to the student's perspective on the

importance of certain student development practices. The student may have good input

on how these practices influence their lives. Some limitations to this study are the

methodology, (Delphi Method), as it limits data to the judgment of the participants;

researcher can only intervene through data analysis and intervention between rounds;

very individualized and is hard to compare to other Delphi studies; and Region I of the

NIRSA organization chose not to participate.

<div align="center">Definition of Terms</div>

The following terms were identified as being pertinent to this study:

1. Student Development: the application of human development concepts in
    postsecondary settings so that everyone involved can master increasingly complex
    developmental tasks, achieve self-direction, and become interdependent (Miller &
    Prince, 1976).

2. Best Practice: a tactic, technique, method or process that is believed to be more
    effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other tactic, technique,
    method or process when applied to a particular condition or circumstance
    (Pollard, 2010).

3. Consensus: agreement in the judgment or opinion reached by a group as a whole
    (Merriam-webster.com, 2010)

4. Student Affairs: promotes recruitment, retention and development of students in
    higher education by providing opportunities through educational, social, and
    cultural experiences (Cress et. al, 2001).

5. Recreational Sports: independent organization (not affiliated with academics or athletics) within the campus community focused on the holistic needs of students with a balance between service and learning (Bryant et. al., 1994)

6. NIRSA (National Intramural Recreational Sports Association): an organization that is the leading resource for professional and student development, education, and research in collegiate recreational sports (nirsa.org, 2010)

7. CAS (Council for the Advancement of Standards): The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) has been the pre-eminent force for promoting standards in student affairs, student services, and student development programs since its inception in 1979. For the ultimate purpose of fostering and enhancing student learning, development, and achievement and in general to promote good citizenship, CAS continues to create and deliver a dynamic and credible Book of Professional Standards and Guidelines and Self-Assessment Guides that are designed to lead to a host of quality-controlled programs and services. These standards respond to real-time student needs, the requirements of sound pedagogy, and the effective management of more than 30 functional areas, consistent with institutional missions. (CAS, 2009).

8. NSC (NIRSA Services Corporation):   the branch of NIRSA that secures more relevant sponsors that support the NIRSA mission, enhance student experience, and provide more resources for campus recreation departments (nirsa.org, 2010).

9. Delphi Method: a systematic, interactive forecasting method which relies on a panel of independent experts (Rowe and Wright, 1999)

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was for a panel of campus recreation experts to come to a consensus on a list of best practices related to effective student development that campus recreation professionals can utilize in their departments. This chapter provides relevant information on recreational sports and the significance of student employees in campus recreation departments. The theories of student development and involvement directly relate to these best practices and the guidance these professionals can to give to student employees. The flow of the information begins with a description of recreational sports, the NIRSA organization, the importance of standards, specifically CAS standards and campus recreation. It then ties in the student development theory, applications of the theory to campus recreation departments, theory of involvement and the division of student affairs, and its affiliation with recreational sports.

Recreational Sports

Bryant et. al. (1994) suggest recreational sports programs should be independent organizations (organizations separate from academics or athletics) within the campus community and should be focused on the holistic needs of students with a balance between service and learning. In 1994, NIRSA published *A Rationale for Independent Administration of Collegiate Recreational Sports Programs: A Position Paper* (Bryant, Anderson & Dunn, 1994). The authors recognized that recreational sports programs have grown to a point where they can no longer be considered part of an academic or athletic program but should be considered an independent organization.

The profession's affiliation with student affairs and the focus on student development fulfills recreational sports professional expectations "to be educators of and for life…to be accepted as a vital, undeniable and irrevocable component of the educational process" (Smith, 1995, p. 24). The growth in recreational sport departments created a need and desire to grow professionally. The earliest recognition of recreational sports was when intramural sports programs became popular in the 1960s (McGuire, 1969). McGuire (1969) suggested intramural sports needed to meet the required criteria for a profession, including possessing a distinct and permanent social function of using sport as a means to an end, having a specialized body of knowledge requiring formal or professional preparation, develop standards, a code of ethics, and a professional organization. The most recognized organization is NIRSA (National Intramural Recreational Sports Association).

NIRSA (National Intramural Recreational Sports Association)

NIRSA, the National Intramural Recreational Sports Association, is the most recognized organization affiliated with campus recreation departments. NIRSA is the leading resource for professional and student development, education, and research in collegiate recreational sports. NIRSA members and Campus Recreation student employees and professionals are actively engaged in many areas of campus life: student leadership, development, and personnel management; wellness and fitness programs; intramural sports; sport clubs; recreation facility operations; outdoor recreation; informal recreation; and aquatic programs. This organization is now increasing its focus on student employee development. The organization serves to unite and prepare student and professional staff members to run the most effective campus recreation programs (nirsa.org, 2010).

NIRSA allows students to gain leadership skills by running for student representative positions, volunteering at conferences, presenting at conferences and being assigned a mentor at a conference. The organization gives students the opportunity to attend the same sessions as professionals which sets their mindset to start thinking like a professional. They also have the opportunity to compete in national and regional intramural competitions where they can win awards and scholarships for their achievements. One of the best developmental opportunities is the position of a graduate assistant at a university. These students are exposed to the life of professional staff and gain knowledge, experience, and tangible skills that will prepare them for their professional lives.

NIRSA has become a large contributor to higher education. According to several studies, 70% of NIRSA affiliated universities are organizationally structured under student affairs departments (Bryant, Anderson & Dunn, 1994; Butch, 2008). CAS promotes standards in student affairs, student services, and student development programs (nirsa.org, 2010). NIRSA's Standards Committee works with a NIRSA Member representative to the CAS Board to periodically review and update the standards relating to collegiate recreational sports (nirsa.org, 2010). The publication of standards provides a comprehensive way to judge program quality and effectiveness in recreational sports.

CAS standards outline multiple outcomes in higher education through recreational sports programs: leadership development, effective communication, healthy behaviors, enhanced self-esteem, collaboration, appreciation of diversity, meaningful interpersonal

relationships, satisfying and productive lifestyles, intellectual growth, social

responsibility, achievement of personal and educational goals, realistic self-appraisal,

clarified values, independence, career choices, and spiritual awareness (CAS, 2009).

This study will show how campus recreation professionals perceive student development.

A list of best practices will provide professionals with standards related to CAS,

outcomes that facilitate student development among employees.

<u>Council for the Advancement of Standards</u>

NIRSA collaborates with the CAS, Council for the Advancement of Standards, on

trends in higher education and recreational sports. In 1996, NIRSA participated in the

development of CAS Standards for recreational sports. There have been two revisions

already done by the standards committee, where they are in progress to consolidate the

NIRSA General Standards and the CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education for

recreational sports (Bayless, 2005).

The CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education suggests recreational sports

programs conforms to the organizational structure which consists of 13 parts including:

mission; program; leadership; human resources; financial resources; facilities, technology

and equipment; legal responsibilities; equity and access; campus and external relations;

diversity; ethics; and assessment and evaluation (Dean, 2006). In the CAS standards

contextual statement it is stated that recreational sports programs are viewed as essential

components of higher education, supplementing the educational process through

enhancement of standards of physical and mental development (CAS Professional Standards

for Higher Education, 2009).

The current standards most relevant to this study are as follow:

Part 1: Mission – The Recreational Sports Program (RSP) must incorporate student learning and student development in its mission. The program must enhance overall educational experiences (p. 249).

Part 2: Program – The formal education of students consists of the curriculum and the co-curriculum, and must promote student learning and development that is purposeful and holistic. The RSP must identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes and provide programs and services that encourage the achievement of those outcomes (p.249).

Part 3: Leadership – Effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations. RSP leaders must be selected on the basis of formal education and training, relevant work experience, personal skills and competencies, relevant professional credentials, as well as potential for promoting learning and development in students, applying effective practices to educational processes, and enhancing institutional effectiveness. RSP leaders must promote student learning and development (p. 251).

Part 4: Organization and Management – Guided by an overarching intent to ensure student learning and development, the RSP must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve stated goals (p. 252).

Part 5: The RSP must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals. RSP professional staff members must hold an earned graduate degree in a field relevant to the field of study and relevant experience. Student employees and volunteers must be carefully selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated (p.252) (CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education, 2009).

Reports from the chair of the NIRSA standards committee reveals only 33% of the memberships are aware of the standards (Bayless, 2005). Without the knowledge of these standards, many professionals may neglect to utilize these resources when structuring their department. Therefore, the importance of student development within student employees may fail to be recognized adequately.

<u>Campus Recreation</u>

Campus recreation programs offer a wide variety of activities and services, including intramural sports, club sports, group fitness classes (e.g. yoga, kickboxing, Pilates), personal enhancement programs (e.g. fitness assessment, personal training, nutritional counseling), and outdoor recreation and aquatic services (e.g. water aerobics, life guarding classes, swim lessons). The mission statement of most campus recreation departments focus on personal development in enjoyable recreation settings. A good example is Clemson University's Department of Campus Recreation's mission: The Department of Campus Recreation strives to provide quality recreation experiences to the students, faculty, and staff of Clemson University through its programs and facilities. These experiences afford the diverse campus community opportunities to interact while participating in a wide variety of instructional and competitive activities that promote the development of the mind and body (Clemson.edu, 2010). It is most beneficial when programs and facilities are effectively developed and strategically set up in order to be most effective.

The department of campus recreation is managed by professional staff but driven by student workers. Student employee positions include: intramural sports officials, front

desk attendants, building supervisors, outdoor adventure trip leaders, lifeguards, personal trainers, group fitness instructors and club sports supervisors. Most jobs are designed with entry level positions and the student is given the opportunity to excel to a leadership position with more responsibilities and increased pay. Student employees with leadership positions are expected to maintain efficient programs and facilities when the professional staff is not present.

Students are attracted to the convenience of working on campus and working flexible hours. The majority of future recreation professionals begin their professional development as student employees for the department of campus recreation (Bower, Hums & Keedy, 2005). With this in mind, it is important to give the most beneficial experience to guide their professional development. Even students who do not wish to pursue careers in recreation may gain transferable skills they can use in their careers.

Recreation centers are one of the most prominent recruiting factors for prospective students. Student Recreation Centers (SRC) have evolved from being a place to lift weights and attend fitness classes to a high powered recruitment tool showing the level of importance of the programs and facilities (Zizzi et. al., 2004). Recreational sports departments are an important part of student life on college campuses. The programs and facilities offered are intended to enhance the student experience (Pack, Jordan, Turner & Haines, 2007).

Campus recreation is one of the largest growing interests for undergraduate students. It is developed to refine the recreational skills and interests of students so they can continue to enjoy and accrue the benefits of recreational sports involvement even in

15

their post graduation years (YongJae & Pastore, 2007). Campus recreation departments

continually network with other departments on campus such as: Health and Wellness

centers, Student Affairs, Greek life, Athletics and Student Government. The more the

department networks, the more of an opportunity the students have to network. In order

to reach the university and student's expectations, the department must run effectively

and efficiently.

Campus recreation programs and facilities exist for education purposes,

enhancing the quality of student life and preparing students for the future, which are all

common goals of the university (Weese, 1997). Weese (1997) also notes other

contributions campus recreation programs have such as, "promoting school spirit and a

feeling of affiliation with other students and the institution, providing a socially accepted

outlet for students to combat the pressures of higher education, contributing to student

retention, and enhancing the quality of student life (p 264)."

<center>Student Development Theory</center>

Student development theory is most concerned with human growth and

environmental influences that promote students' learning and maturation, both in and

outside of the classroom (Creamer, 1980). Development is shaped by the dynamic

between maturation and learning and involves purposive change (Astin, 1996). Miller

and Prince (1976) suggest that student development is "the application of human

development concepts in postsecondary settings so that everyone involved can master

increasingly complex developmental tasks, achieve self-direction, and become

interdependent" (p.3).   A student's total environment is educational and it is critical for

<center>16</center>

university professionals to help the student achieve full developmental potential, whether it is in the classroom or at a job (Passcarella, 1989).

The relevance of student developmental theory for campus recreation professionals is to describe, explain and predict the changes that may occur in their student employees so they may control and intervene as needed. There are five basic frameworks that are part of student development theory: psychosocial, cognitive, person-environment, humanistic-existential, and student development process models. Psychosocial development examines individuals' personal and interpersonal lives. Cognitive development refers to how a student perceives, organizes and reasons the experiences they go through. Looking at behavior as a social function and relating the person with the environment is an example of person-environment theory. Humanistic-existential focuses on how humans are free, responsible and self-aware. This theory is mostly used in counseling.

For the purpose of this study, the research most closely relates to psychosocial theory. Erikson (1968) described psychosocial development as a sequence of developmental tasks or stages confronted by adults when their biology and psychology converge. This theory also guides human development and examines how adults change their thinking, feeling, behaving, valuing and relating to others and oneself (Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). The objective is for campus recreation professionals to be able to gain an understanding of psychosocial development and be able to evaluate and assess their student staff effectively.

This research closely relates to one of the most widely cited psychosocial development models, Chickering's seven vector model. The model was developed in 1969, with the idea that students will face developmental stages during their undergraduate years at college. These stages are influenced with exposure to a developmental environment (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). The content of development for this research is the nature of developmental issues students are likely to encounter while working for campus recreation. The publication of Chickering's model of psychosocial development brought attention to student affairs professionals to a theory that is applicable to their profession (Upcraft, 1994).

A second edition of the model was created by Chickering and Reisser (1993) that incorporated seven psychosocial stages that contribute to the formation of identity with most college students (Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). The seven stages of development are: 1) developing competence, 2) managing emotions, 3) developing autonomy, 4) establishing identity, 5) freeing interpersonal relationships, 6) developing purpose and 7) establishing integrity (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). These stages are not accomplished suddenly, a student progresses through them and over time some students may relate more to one stage than another (Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito, 1998).

<u>Applications of Student Development Theory</u>

Chickering's model is particularly effective in developing overall programs at a university through recreational sports programs (Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). In previous research, Chickering (1993) has discussed ways in which college programs affect various aspects of development, particularly competence, autonomy, interpersonal

18

relationships, and humanitarian concern. Todaro (1993) outlined how a recreational sports program can encourage development along each vector.

Development occurs when students are challenged, pushed to take risks and given leadership opportunities (Reisser, 1995). Two major examples of how a campus recreation professional can utilize Chickering's theory are through employee training and offering promotional leadership roles within the department. A natural value for their job is created when the student employee is challenged during staff training and being held accountable for their responsibilities (Reisser, 1995). It is ideal to provide a beneficial amount of challenge in the student employee's job.

Campus recreation professionals play the role of managers to their student staff members. Some will let the student develop on his or her own, while others will play an active role in his or her development. If the students find satisfaction in their work, they will perform more effectively (Bolman & Deal, 2008). By giving them a chance to show leadership and excel in the department they will be more motivated to do their best. One style of management suggests, "The essential task of management is to arrange conditions so that people can achieve their own goals best by directing efforts toward organizational rewards (Bolman & Deal, 2008, p 252)." This relates to student development theory by getting the student to recognize the rewards they achieve by applying themselves and working for the department of campus recreation. The goal would be for a professional to help his or her student staff go through all seven vectors of Chickering and Reisser (1993) reflecting the student's development as an employee for Campus Recreation.

A more detailed look at Chickering and Reisser's seven vectors model (1993) shows in stage one, students will develop competence when they are given their job tasks and responsibilities and shown what is expected of them as an employee. They will be managing their emotions by learning discipline when dealing with high risk situations. They will gain a sense of autonomy by creating their own schedules and understanding time management. Their identity will be established once they relate directly with their job and feel like they are good at what they are doing. They will get to know themselves better, develop a purpose for being at this university and establish integrity by being proud for working for the department of campus recreation in front of their peers. A student may naturally go through these stages, however it is beneficial for a professional to understand these stages and guide them through their development. This theory application can be enhanced by understanding the student's motivation of involvement at the university (Chickering & Reisser, 1993).

<center>Theory of Involvement</center>

The basis of Astin's theory of involvement is that students learn more as they engage their academic and social lives in their collegiate experience. An involved student is one who devotes considerable energy to academics, spends much time on campus, participates actively in student organizations and activities, and interacts often with faculty (Astin, 1984). The theory suggests that the amount of involvement is up to the student, not the professors or university staff members. Environment plays a vital role in the involvement of a campus recreation student employee; therefore professional staff members have the same influence as a professor would.

Astin says the quality and quantity of the student's involvement influences several educational outcomes including cognitive learning, satisfaction with the entire college experience, and increased rates of student retention (Astin, 1984). Student retention will lead to employee retention, so campus recreation professionals need to find a way to keep their student employees active and involved in their jobs. Astin's theory says that in order for instructors and professionals to be effective in student involvement, they must be aware of how motivated their students are (Astin, 1999). Astin (1996) offers the following pedagogical practices for facilitating student involvement and engagement: student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, active learning, prompt feedback, time on task, high expectations for students, and respect for diverse talents and learning styles. These practices relate to Astin's outcome matrix (Table 1). Campus recreation programs feed off of the energy from the involvement of their student employees.

Table 1

Astin's Theory of Involvement Outcome Matrix (Astin, 1999)

Data	Affective	Cognitive
Psychological thinking	Self concept, values, beliefs, attitudes	Knowledge, critical, aptitudes
Behavioral	Habits, interpersonal relationships relationships, friendships citizenship	Career development, achievements

A study done by Cress et al (2001) was conducted to assess whether leadership education, training and involvement had a direct effect on college student's leadership ability and outcomes. Cress's quantitative study examined the effectiveness of leadership

programs at ten different universities. The study showed clear evidence of student gains

from participation in leadership development programs (Cress et al., 2001). Programs

such as volunteering, experiential activities and group work were the top programs for

initiating student involvement. A campus recreation department that encourages those

three aspects may assist in developing their student employees in a positive way.

<center>Student Affairs</center>

Bower, Hums and Keedy (2005) talk about the purpose of student affairs by

stating "it is to help promote retention through programs and promotions offered by many

offices within the division including Campus Recreation (59)." The Division of Student

Affairs promotes recruitment, retention and development of students in higher education

by providing opportunities through educational, social, and cultural experiences.

Recreation centers at a university are used as a means of retaining students through

programming that leads to a healthy lifestyle and provides students with a means of

socially identifying with other individuals (Bower, Hums and Keedy, 2005). The

opportunity to work for the recreation department provides students with a chance

enhance the quality of their student life by getting involved and staying active.

Developing leadership skills and abilities among students is a claim made by

many college and university mission statements as an important aspect of creating

educated individuals (Cress et al., 2001). Student Affairs practitioners are focused on

educating the whole person beyond the classroom and into other parts of student life

(Evans, et al. 1998). Gansemer-Topf et al. (2006) have mentioned that student affairs

professionals, who focus on the whole student, have developed programs and services to

<center>22</center>

promote students' emotional, social, and cognitive development. They help students move in the right direction in ethical orientation and assist in developing life-long transferable skills (Evans, et al. 1998). Understanding developmental theory provides a method of communication and understanding amongst student affairs practitioners (McEwen, 2003). Student Affairs professionals are similar to recreation professionals to where they provide standards on the way their department is structured, and most of those standards overlap (Bower, Hums and Keedy, 2005).

The essence of this study is based on the seven vectors of the student development theory. Dunn and Forney (2004) note that Chickering and Reisser state "environmental conditions such as an institution's size and type, articulation and adherence to mission, and teaching styles are also factors in psychosocial development (14)." It is important that campus recreation professionals recognize the significance in developing the whole student.

The challenge for student affairs professionals is to provide an optimal level of challenge versus support (Evans, Forney & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). Too much of either is not beneficial. A student employee's job in a campus recreation department is naturally challenging, which makes it vital for professionals to provide an adequate amount of support. Campus recreation programs are known for promoting what the Division of Student Affairs stands for, especially through the NIRSA organization which contributes to higher education (nirsa.org, 2010).

There is growing evidence for the need for student development and student learning components in the collegiate recreation curriculum. Much research has been done on the

evaluation of the development of student participants in recreational sports programs; however the focus should be shifted to the development of the student employees since they are critical in the delivery of recreational sports programs. Therefore the purpose of this study is to establish a list of best practices related to effective student development in campus recreation student employees.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

The methodology used in this study is the Delphi Method. This chapter will describe the data instrument and how it guided us in finding our results. It also includes an explanation on how the participants were chosen, the Delphi process, data collection procedures and how the data were analyzed for each round.

Data Instrument

The method used to conduct this research was the Delphi technique. The Delphi method is a systematic, interactive forecasting method which relies on a panel of independent experts (Rowe and Wright, 1999). The goal of the Delphi technique is to lead a targeted group of people to a predetermined outcome, while giving the illusion of taking public input and under the pretext of being accountable to the public (Rowe & Wright, 1999). The purpose of this study is to compile the knowledge of a panel of experts on practices related to student development in the student employees from their campus recreation departments.

The Delphi Method is a method of forecasting based on expert judgment. The Delphi method allows a panel of experts to debate a topic anonymously by having their opinions monitored by an intermediary researcher (Dalkey, 1967). Parker (1972) suggested that the Delphi method works especially well to gain knowledge based on group judgments when exact knowledge was unavailable, to gain understanding of problems, opportunities, solutions or to develop forecasts. Many recreation professionals are not aware of practices they can utilize in order to enhance student development in

their student employees. Therefore, this research provides knowledge for recreation professionals to improve their programs and facilities.

The Delphi method is an attractive method for graduate students completing masters and PhD level research (Hartman et. al., 2007). It is flexible, effective and efficient and can be very successful when used by graduate students to answer research questions (Hartman et. al, 2007). The Delphi method originated in the American business industry, which correlates to our study in search for a best practices model, a common business concept.

Rowe and Wright (1999) characterize the Delphi method by four key features: anonymity of Delphi participants, iteration, controlled feedback and statistical aggregation of group responses. However, there are arguments that not all Delphi studies need to meet these criteria. Many researchers have examined a variety of studies using the Delphi, and they quickly concluded that there is no typical Delphi (Rowe & Wright, 1999). The method can be modified to suit the circumstances and the research question.

For example, During the study, the participants remained anonymous which allowed them to freely express themselves. This study utilized 3 rounds of data collection while Young and Jamieson (2001) found that 3 rounds is the average for a Delphi study. Each subsequent round is developed based on the results of the previous round.   The first phase allows the expert to explore the subject matter and express his or her thoughts. The next phase examines in depth how a group views an issue. This phase shows where a group agrees and disagrees on a subject. The experts are encouraged to change their answers based on their peers' responses and be as critical as possible. The

third phase explores and evaluates differences in responses and the final phase evaluates

all responses.

During the Delphi, participants comment on their own and other's feedback as

well as responses from the panel as a whole. This provides an opportunity for open

ended feedback. To ensure group dynamics, the researcher is the one who reviews all

answers and filters out any information that is irrelevant or redundant. Hartmen et. al.

(2007) points out that researchers will modify their Delphi study to best answer the

research question using different types of questions (closed/open) and analysis

(qualitative/quantitative).

<div align="center">Participants</div>

The participants in this research were comprised of an expert panel of the 2009

Regional Vice President's of the NIRSA organization. In addition, each Regional Vice

President was asked to identify up to 5 additional campus recreation professionals who

demonstrate a passion for student development within their organizations.   Each

Regional Vice President named five professionals from their region, providing a sample

of 36 NIRSA professionals that were invited to participate in the study. Of those

selected, 30 (83%) agreed to participate.

The Regional Vice Presidents were chosen because they are the most informed on

the programs and facilities at each university in their region. They are heavily involved

with the NIRSA Services Corporation (NSC), who secures more relevant sponsors that

support the NIRSA mission, enhance student experience, and provide more resources for

campus recreation departments (nirsa.org, 2010). The duties of a Regional Vice

President include: commitment to serve a three year term; maintain NIRSA membership in good standing throughout the term; attend and participate in all meetings of the Board of Directors, regardless of type and medium; manage the requirements of a volunteer leader with the expectations associated with one's primary job responsibilities; represent the Board of Directors at various NSC functions, as appropriate; uphold the mission/vision of NIRSA Services Corporation and its parent organization (NIRSA); demonstrate a commitment to NSC's programs and services, and show interest in promotion and sponsoring of NSC programs and events (nirsa.org, 2010).

Qualifications for the Regional Vice President position include: current Professional, Professional Life, or Emeritus membership as well as at least five prior years of professional membership; five years in an administrative/management position with direct experience in: budget development and budget accountability, supervision of full-time staff and event management; service to NSC and/or NIRSA in a volunteer leadership capacity; proven interest in NSC's and NIRSA's respective missions; demonstrated commitment to NSC's and/or NIRSA's programs and services; and active interest in promotion and sponsoring of NSC programs and events (nirsa.org, 2010).

Preferred qualifications include: exceptional oral communication skills as demonstrated by NSC and/or NIRSA presentations; excellent written communication skills as demonstrated by responses to required questions; previous experience on a not-for-profit or for-profit board of directors; past experience in strategic planning; knowledge of current issues and trends in higher education; experience with enterprise

operations and/or corporate sponsorship programs; and entrepreneurial experience in a public or private sector (nirsa.org, 2010).

Potential participants were contacted by gaining their information from the NIRSA website. Some Regional Vice President's were approached at the national NIRSA conference in April 2009. The study was introduced to them and the importance of their involvement was expressed. Letters were mailed on May 21, 2009 to each of the Regional Vice Presidents asking them to state their willingness to participate in the study (see Appendix A). Upon their responses, they were asked to identify five professional staff members from their region that have taken the initiative to make a difference in student development at their university (see Appendix B). Those selected panel members received a letter to request their participation in the study in June 2009 (see Appendix C).

According to Babbie (2008), this type of sampling is purposive. That is a type of non probability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher's judgment about which ones will be the most useful (2008). In this case the units to be observed are the most effective student development practices and our panel of experts will help us identify them. Our participants were selected based on their knowledge and experience.

<div align="center">The Delphi Process</div>

This study utilized Adler and Ziglio's (1996) Delphi process model (see Figure 1). The first step of the study is from experience and review of the research in order to create the research question. The second step is to select the sample. Selecting the panel of experts is critical as their expert opinion influences the results of the study (Adler and

<div align="center">29</div>

Ziglio, 1996). It is important to justify the decision for selecting the panel. Adler and

Ziglio (1996) point out four requirements for the panel of experts: i) knowledge and

experience; ii) willingness to participate; iii) sufficient time to participate; iv) effective

communication skills.

Figure 1.

The Delphi Process

Functionlust.com (2010)

```
                          ┌──────────┐
                          │  Start   │
                          └────┬─────┘
                               ▼
                       ┌──────────────────┐
                       │ Problem Definition│
                       └────────┬─────────┘
                                ▼
                      ┌──────────────────┐
                      │ Select Panel Members│
                      │  Based on Expertise │
                      │     Required        │
                      └────────┬───────────┘
                               ▼
              ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
              │ Prepare and Distribute Questionnaire│◄─────┐
              └────────────────┬───────────────────┘       │
                               ▼                            │
                  ┌──────────────────────────┐              │
                  │ Analyze Questionnaire Responses│         │
                  └───────────┬────────────────┘            │
                              ▼                             │
                         ◇ Has a                           │
              (Yes)◄─────  Consensus                        │
                           Been                             │
                           Reached?  ◇                      │
                              │                             │
                            (No)                            │
                              ▼                             │
              ┌──────────────────────────────────┐         │
              │ Provide Requested Information and │─────────┘
              │      Tabulated Responses          │
              └──────────────────────────────────┘
              ┌──────────────────┐
      └──────►│ Develop Final Report│
              └──────────────────┘
```
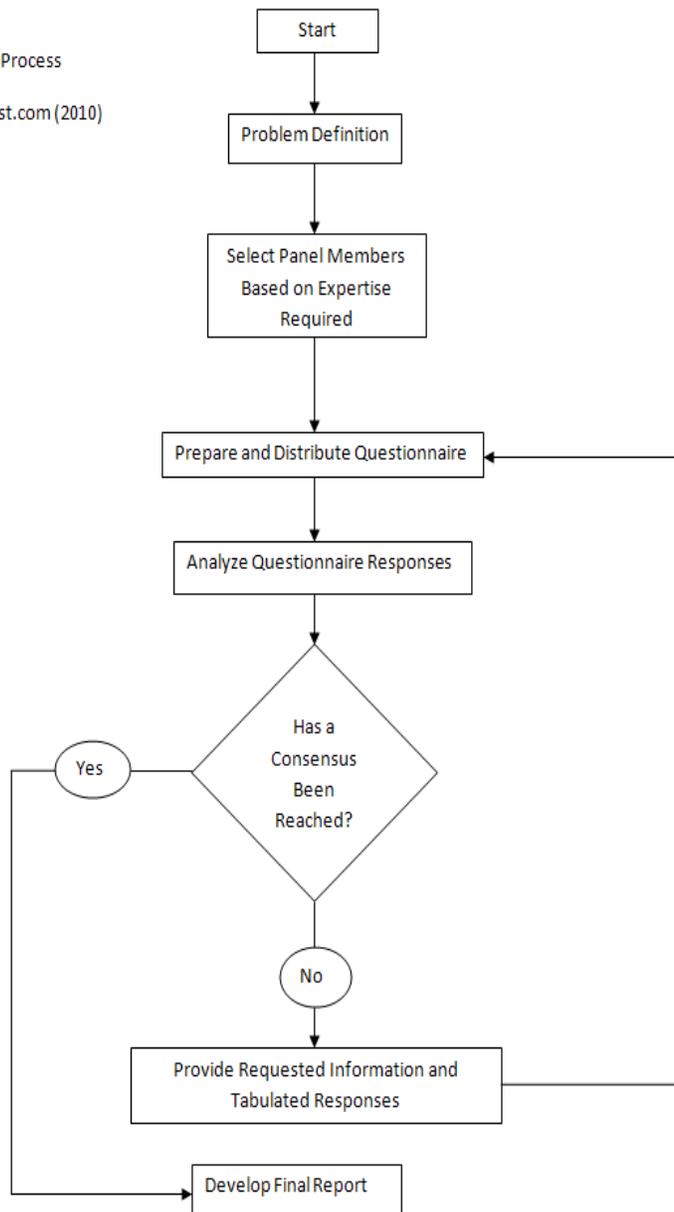
The next step is to design the research. During this time the researcher can decide how to collect the data. For the purpose of this study, a pilot study was developed with an open ended question that asked participants to create a list of best practices they used in their recreation departments relating to student development in their student staff. The purpose of the pilot study was to ensure our participants understood what was being asked. Much attention needs to be devoted to the development of the initial broad question, because if respondents do not understand the question, they may provide inadequate information or become frustrated (Delbeq et al., 1975).

Once it was certain that this method was ideal for the research, the questionnaire for round 1 was prepared and distributed. For the purpose of this Delphi study, the purpose of round 1 was to brainstorm, which is common amongst Delphi studies (Schmidt, 1997). Upon receiving their responses, data were analyzed and the next round was created. This process continued until a consensus was reached.

<center>Data Collection Procedures</center>

Communication with the panel of 30 members was done electronically through email. To make it as simple as possible data were collected through a web based survey using Snap 9 Professional. The survey was given out every two weeks to complete each round. The rounds ended as soon as data saturation was reached and there was agreement on the top most effective student development techniques.

Development of Round 1

Round One had an open ended format to elicit individual judgments about best practices in student development. It was an exploratory round that asked the panel of

<center>31</center>

experts to list best practices they felt were essential for student development in campus

recreation programs.   In addition they were also asked to complete a demographic profile

that was used to compare the respondents from each round.

The first round was sent to the participants via email on September 14, 2009 (see

Appendix D). The email included a link to the survey and was expected to take about 20-

25 minutes to complete.   Directions were provided along with a brief description of our

definition of student development. Participants were asked to have this round completed

by September 28, 2009. A reminder email was sent to the entire panel on September 21,

2009.

After the responses were received from jurors, they were compiled and all

duplications were removed. Through data analysis, themes emerged and the practices

were listed under the appropriate themes.

Development of Round 2

The second round was designed to begin to move toward consensus among the

group. Once the list of best practices from Round 1 were assembled, they were sent to the

panel with the task of ranking the best practices based on their perception of its

importance as a best practice in student development in campus recreation departments.

A five point Likert scale was used to rank each individual best practice. The scale is as

follows:

1= No Importance   This best practice has no importance. It should not be

                            considered a best practice related to student development in

                            campus recreation departments.

2= Slight Importance	This best practice has slight importance. It may be considered as a best practice related to student development in campus recreation departments.
3= Moderate Importance	This best practice has moderate importance. It is suggested that it be considered a best practice related to student development in campus recreation departments.
4= Significant Importance	This best practice has significant impact. It is highly recommended that it be included as a best practice related to student development in campus recreation departments.
5= Extreme Importance	This best practice has extreme impact. It should be required as a best practice related to student development in campus recreation departments.

An open ended space was provided for comments or suggestions about any of the best practices.

Round 2 was sent to the panel via email on October 21, 2009 (see Appendix E). The panel was given a deadline date of November 4, 2009 by which to respond. A reminder notice was sent on October 28, 2009 to the entire panel. In addition they were also asked to complete a demographic profile that was used to compare the respondents from each round.

Development of Round 3

The purpose of round three was to further refine the best practices based on the judgment and consensus of the panel. Once the responses were received from Round 2,

descriptive statistics were calculated and the practices with a mean of 3.0 and above were listed for Round 3. The task of the panel was to review the group rankings and assess their levels of agreement or disagreement with the group ratings. The practices were not categorized into themes for this round. An open ended space was provided after every tenth practice to add any comments or suggestions about any of the practices.

Round 3 was sent to the panel via email on November 23, 2009 (see Appendix F). The panel was given a deadline date of December 11, 2009 by which to respond. A reminder notice was sent on December 7, 2009 to the entire panel. In addition they were also asked to complete a demographic profile that was used to compare the respondents from each round.

Development of Round 4

The purpose of the fourth round of data collection was to serve as verification that the group agrees that the list of best practices accurately represents effective best practices related to student development in campus recreation student employees. Once the responses were received from Round 3, descriptive statistics were calculated and the practices with a mean of 3.5 and above were listed for Round 4. They were listed under the appropriate themes that emerged from these best practices.

The task of the panel was to simply respond with "yes" or "no" after reviewing the list of best practices. An open ended space was provided for any comments or suggestions about the study.

Round 4 was sent to the panel via email on January 28, 2010 (see Appendix G). The panel was given a deadline date of February 11, 2010 by which to respond. A

reminder notice was sent on February 4, 2010 to the entire panel. In addition they were

also asked to complete a demographic profile that was used to compare the respondents

from each round.

Brooks (1979) suggested that the Delphi process ends once either consensus or

stability is reached. This is achieved when there is minimal divergence from the median

or when it is apparent that very little shifting of positions will occur. In this study, this

occurred after four rounds.

<center>Data Analysis</center>

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The qualitative data

analysis was done by coding the information into themes.   Once descriptive themes were

assigned and data were grouped according to descriptive themes, interpretive themes

were assigned. The interpretive themes were more specific and allowed the researcher to

more specifically categorize the data within the descriptive theme. The interpretive

themes were the basis for forming the list of best practices in Round 2.

The quantitative data analysis was done by running descriptive statistics utilizing

SPSS. The data were received through the Snap 9 Professional program and recorded

into an SPSS file. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the demographic

information and find the mean score of each practice.   The generated best practices were

organized by mean ranking in rounds 2, 3 and 4 based on the rating they received from

the 5 point Likert scale.

The Delphi method is a consensus-building process, so it is necessary to establish

criteria for removing items from subsequent rounds. The literature states that the Delphi

<center>35</center>

is a very flexible method and there is no set benchmark recommended for removing items based on mean ranking (Hurd & McLean, 2004). For example, in a study done by Ramirez et. al (2006) to observe regular physical activity in American adults, a mean ranking of 3.5 was used in round 2 and 2.5 in round 3.

The benchmark we used was established and interpreted based on the Likert scale values: a) no importance as a best practice ($M = 1.00-1.49$), b) slight importance as a best practice ($M= 1.50-1.99$), c) moderate importance as a best practice ($M=2.00-2.99$), d) significant importance as a best practice ($M=3.00 – 3.99$), d) extreme importance as a best practice ($M=4.00-5.00$). For Round 2 we used a mean ranking of 3.0 and above and for Round 3 we used a mean ranking of 3.5 and above.

During data analysis, the researcher made sure to not throw away any useful material during the rounds. A standard was set on what information is relevant. This qualitative data analysis can be done by writing about the findings or coding the information.

For the purpose of this research, themes emerged from the data and were related to techniques on structuring a campus recreation department. In the first round of the Delphi Method themes emerged from the responses from the open ended question. Richards and Morse(2007) describe the term topic coding as a "very analytical activity; it entails creating a category or recognizing one from earlier, reflecting on where it belongs among your growing ideas, and reflecting on the data you are referring to and how they fit with the other data coded there (p139)."

Initially a "start list" was developed based on the literature from student development theory (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This list included items that would most likely be generated by the respondents, again, based on literature from student development theory. Topic coding was used to identify all 78 best practices generated by the panel of experts and categorize them into topics related to student development in campus recreation student employees. The 10 topics that emerged included: training and orientation, professional development, providing adequate knowledge and information, performance assessment, mentor relationships, continuing education, university involvement, personal relationships, providing progressive leadership opportunities and providing awards and incentives.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Results were collected in four rounds of this Delphi study. The most data were

collected in Round 1. Round 4 served as verification that the results from Round 3 were

accurate. The panel of experts came to a consensus that a list of 5 general and 21 specific

best practices was the final result of this study.

Round 1

A total of 78 specific best practices were generated from round 1. The 78 best

practices clustered around 10 themes relating to student development in campus

recreation student employees. A total of 14 people participated in this round, giving a

response rate of 46%. There were no additional comments from round 1.

The themes that emerged were training and orientation, providing adequate

knowledge and information, performance assessment, mentor relationships, continuing

education, university involvement, personal relationships, progressive leadership

opportunities and providing awards and incentives. The final results have a similar list of

themes to categorize the best practices, however it is noticeable how they changed during

the study. A list of round 1 results can be found in Appendix H.

Round 2

A total of 63 best practices were generated from round 2. All of these best

practices received a mean of 3.0 or above. A total of 19 people participated, giving us a

response rate of 63% for this round. There were two open ended comments expressing

concern with applying particular best practices; for example, opening a meeting with

prayer was a suggested best practice however a comment was made with concern about applying that to their particular campus recreation department since they do not work at a religious university.

Examples of some best practices that received a mean of 4.5 and above are: encourage students to get to know patrons/participants, provide leadership opportunities when professional staff is not present, provide opportunities for students to lead special events, get to know students personally, provide opportunities for student supervisors to supervise their peers, and provide feedback and suggestions. A complete list of round 2 results can be found in Appendix I.

<u>Round 3</u>

A total of 21 specific best practices were generated from round 3. The 21 best practices clustered around five themes relating to student development in campus recreation student employees. A total of 20 people participated in this round, giving us a response rate of 67%.

There were 14 open ended comments from round 3. These comments provided explanations as to why the participants gave certain best practices a certain ranking. The open ended comments are listed in Appendix K.

Round 3 had the most open ended comments. A response from an anonymous panel member on the best practice about hosting professional development seminars stated: "we used to do this and with limited luck and we were preaching to the choir. The students who did attend were our best employees." This shows that not all best practices will work effectively with every campus recreation department. Many had

39

positive feedback including, "These are all excellent suggestions and we do all of the above." A response to #37, Create a mentorship and development culture in your campus recreation department was, "we find this an essential element throughout many levels of student and professional staff."

The list of themes was condensed from the first round from 10 to five general themes relating to student development. They include: leadership opportunities, performance assessment, training and orientation, personal relationships and professional development. A complete list of round 3 results can be found in Appendix J.

<div align="center">Round 4</div>

Round 4 served as a verification round. By round 4, the panel of experts generated a list of five general best practices and 21 specific best practices. The first theme, leadership opportunities had nine specific best practices. The second theme, performance assessment had three specific best practices. The third theme, training and orientation had four specific best practices. The fourth theme, personal relationships had three specific best practices and the fifth theme, professional development had two specific best practices.

The researchers wanted to verify that a consensus was reached that this list accurately represented a list of best practices related to student development in campus recreation student employees. A total of 20 people participated in this round giving a response rate of 67%. All 20 participants agreed that this was an accurate list.

There were 2 positive open ended comments from round 4. One comment brought up a very good point; "When I read through this list as a snapshot, and without other best practices to choose from, it is a very good list. I wonder how quickly you feel this list will evolve over time. I liked the methods you used for this study, and I believe that within 3-5 years, the list may need updating." It is more than likely that this list will need to be updated and future research can help develop this list of best practices. Another positive comment left by an anonymous panel member was "Nice work. I look forward to seeing more down the road." Many of the participants were very satisfied with the results.

<p style="text-align:center">Demographics</p>

The participants were asked to fill out demographic information in rounds 2, 3 and 4, listed in Table 4. The table displays each question, N (the sample number) and the percentage of the responses. Demographic results show that the northeastern part of the United States and Canada did not participate in our study.

The largest amount of participants from rounds 2 and 4 were from Region IV. Round 3 had an even amount of participants from each region with the exception of Region I. Most participants are 50 and above, reiterating the experience and knowledge of the participants. A total of 43% of our participants are female. A very important demographic is that 46% of the campus recreation department's administrative home is organizationally structured under Student Affairs. The division of Student Affairs will expect all departments within the division to follow their mission statement which highlights student development. Half of the participants hold Administrative positions

within their campus recreation departments, highlighting their level of experience.

Demographic information is listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Demographics

	Round 2		Round 3		Round 4	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
What Region is your school located?						
Region I	0	0%	0	0%	0	0 %
Region II	4	21%	4	20%	3	15%
Region III	4	21%	4	20%	4	20%
Region IV	5	26%	4	20%	6	30%
Region V	3	15%	4	20%	2	10%
Region VI	3	15%	4	20%	5	25%
What age group are you in?						
Under 22	0	0%	0	0 %	0	0 %
22-25	1	5.2%	0	0 %	1	5%
26-34	4	21%	5	25%	4	20%
35-49	7	36%	7	35%	6	30%
50 and above	7	36%	8	40%	9	45%
What is your gender?						
Male	6	31%	7	35%	7	35%
Female	13	68%	13	65%	13	65%
What is your campus recreation department's administrative Home?						
Student Affairs	14	73%	14	70%	14	70%
Athletics	1	5.2%	2	10%	1	5%
Academic Affairs	0	0%	1	5%	0	0%
Other	3	15%	3	15%	4	20%
The following best describes the program area you work in your campus recreation department						
Administration	14	73%	1	5%	15	75%
Health/Wellness	2	10%	1	5%	1	5%
Intramurals	4	21%	3	15%	3	15%
Club Sports	2	10%	2	10%	2	10%
Facilities	6	31%	2	10%	2	10%
Aquatics	2	10%	1	5%	1	5%
Outdoor Recreation	1	5.2%	1	5%	1	5%

Thirty universities were involved with this study across the five regions that participated. There is a diverse group of universities across Regions I, II, III, IV, V and VI. They range from small liberal arts schools such as Wartburg College in Iowa to Division 1 athletic schools such as University of Florida. The universities are listed by state or providence they are located in (see Appendix L).

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Students play a vital role in the delivery of campus recreation facilities and programs. This study was done to not only signify the importance of student development, but to give campus recreation professionals a guideline on how to implement it in their departments. This chapter discusses the reliability and validity of the methods used, assumptions and limitations of the study, and future recommendations for further research. It also summarizes how the final results directly relate to the theoretical background.

Findings

The final list of best practices directly relates to Chickering's 7 vectors of the student development theory. The five general themes included terms such as personal relationships, leadership opportunities and professional development which are all major contributors to student development. Of Chickering's 7 vectors, creating interpersonal relationships, developing competence, developing purpose and developing autonomy really stand out in the results. All of those factors have to do with the student's total environment which directly affects the student's human growth. Campus Recreation professionals can chose what specific best practices would work best with their department. The five general themes are universal and can be implemented into any campus recreation department.

The standards created by CAS also directly relate to the results of this study. Particularly in part 2, Programming; it states that recreational sports programs must

44

identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes and must promote student learning and development that is purposeful and holistic (Council for the Advancement of Standards, 2009). The standards also point out leadership, organization and management. A key point is made in part 5 of the CAS, recreational sports programs must be staffed adequately by individuals qualified to accomplish its mission and goals (Council for the Advancement of Standards, 2009). It would be most beneficial if campus recreation professionals recognize this list of best practices and relate it to the mission and vision of their department.

The list demonstrates the key aspect of challenge versus support. It provides an adequate amount of challenge by providing opportunities for student involvement within the campus recreation program followed by support by creating personal relationships and providing opportunities for professional development. The five general themes are universal and can be implemented into many campus recreation departments with the passion from the professional staff and time.

<div align="center">Reliability and Validity</div>

The Delphi method is a widely accepted forecasting tool and has been successful for many studies (Brooks, 1979). However there are some disadvantages to the methodology. Researchers must be considerate on how they choose the panel of experts because the results depend on them (Murray & Hammons, 1995). The Delphi is a time consuming process and should not be used when immediate results are needed (Brooks, 1979). The average amount of time for a Delphi study is six months (Young & Jamieson,

2001). This study took five months to complete. For the purpose of this study immediate results were not necessary.

Uhl (1983) outlined several reasons for using the Delphi Technique. He reasoned it was a viable methodology when any or all of the following conditions are met including, a) the resolution of a problem can be facilitated by the collective judgments of one or more groups, b) those groups providing judgments are unlikely to communicate adequately without an intervening process, c) the solution is more likely to be accepted if more people are involved in its development than would be possible in a face-to-face meeting; d) frequent group meetings are not practical because of time, distance, and so forth; and e) one or more groups of participants are more dominant than another (p. 84). Student development is a growing research topic within collegiate recreational professionals, so the Delphi method was a useful way to expose the topic to them and gain an understanding of its importance.

There is no consensus among researchers on how large a panel of experts should be, making the Delphi method a very individualized methodology. Uhl (1983) found that the more people on the panel, the greater the reliability and the more error was reduced. The selection process used in this study was extremely subjective, with the exception of the six 2009 Regional Vice Presidents. A total of 30 recognized leaders in the NIRSA organization were on our panel of experts and each gave much insight into the topic of student development of our student employees.

The 2009 NIRSA Regional Vice Presidents were chosen based on their responsibilities and qualifications. NIRSA.org (2010) lists the minimum and preferred

qualifications of a Regional Vice President (see Appendix M). The campus recreation professionals they chose are recognized leaders; they have won awards and scholarships, presented sessions, volunteered at conferences, are committee members and are past members of the Board of Directors for the NIRSA organization. Their commitment to the organization provided confidence to the researcher on their commitment to this study.

Neuendorf (2002) suggests that when human coders are used, reliability translates to inter-coder reliability which is the amount of agreement or correspondence among two or more coders. Round 1 involved the topic coding process mentioned in the previous chapter. The researcher was the main facilitator and the Director of Programs at Clemson University helped in finding codes in the first round of responses. Two coders were involved in the data analysis which overcame the intrinsic biases of single-observer research.

Content analysis of open ended data involved inter-coder reliability for validating conclusions drawn from open ended interview data. Kurasaki (2000) suggests inter-coder reliability is a measure of agreement among multiple coders for how they apply codes to text data and it can be used as a proxy for the validity of constructs that emerge from the data. Popular methods for establishing inter-coder reliability involve presenting predetermined text segments to coders (Kurasaki, 2000).   When the facilitator and the second coder got together, terms related to student development emerged from the open ended answers, creating the text for the codes.

<center>Assumptions and Limitations</center>

<center>47</center>

Hill and Fowles (1975) suggest that expertise implies having more knowledge about the subject matter than most others, that they possess certain work experience, or that they are members of a relevant profession. It is assumed that these professional staff members acknowledge what student development techniques are based on their background and experience and their commitment to student development. Campus recreation professionals may utilize these techniques but not realize they are assisting in the development of their student employees. This assumption was avoided by providing the participants with a definition of student development.

The Delphi method is extremely individualized and is often critiqued for that reason. The individualization makes it extremely flexible for the researcher to choose his or her sample and mean cut-off rate for each round. Even though it is beneficial to choose a panel of experts, limitations are to their judgments. The researcher cannot give his or her opinion; they can only intervene through data analysis. The method is extremely cost effective, especially with the use of the internet.

Campus recreation departments and the programs and facilities they run are increasing in popularity each year. Some universities have had a campus recreation department since the NIRSA organization began, and others were just created five years ago. This difference in development creates a unique diversity among the collegiate recreational field. There are differences in departmental philosophies, mission statements, goals, involvement and culture. That makes it difficult to facilitate a best practices model amongst every single department. That is why the final list of results is organized into five general best practices and 21 specific best practices. The general best

practices can be facilitated into most campus recreation programs and they can choose which specific best practices would work best in their department.

Future Recommendations

This study can help develop the professional practice in the collegiate recreational sports program. Professionals can take ideas from the list of best practices and create guidelines for student employee training, evaluations, recruitment tools, etc. Future research can be done to investigate the student employee's experience, expectations, motivation and environment. The student development theory focuses on the student's environment, so it would be beneficial to investigate how the student's total environment affects their job experience. Another research topic is if the student perceives these best practices as important to their job experience. Research can be conducted to evaluate how important it is to the student to be mentored by a campus recreation staff member.

A survey can be sent to a random sample of NIRSA affiliated institutions to evaluate the use of these best practices. The survey would help to uncover how well student development is being implemented with the student employees of campus recreation programs across the country.

Conclusion

This research study sought to obtain information from a group of experts on effective student development techniques in campus recreation programs. The results of this study have both theoretical and practical utility to the recreational sports field. The list is practical and recognizes the important role that student development plays in a campus recreation department and how much campus recreation professionals influence

their student employee's lives. The idea is that NIRSA leaders came to the conclusion

that this is a list of best practices related to student development that can be implemented

into any campus recreation department. This study provides a basis for future research in

the areas of student development, best practices, and practical implications as applied in

campus recreation departments.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Letter to Regional Vice Presidents of NIRSA

Dear_____,
My name is Lauren Toperzer and I am a graduate student at Clemson University. I have been the Facilities graduate assistant for the past nine months and am interested in conducting research on best practices in student development within campus recreational sports departments. My experience working for campus recreation since I was an undergraduate student has been an incredible journey and I have realized my passion for student development in campus recreation employees.

As you know, students play a vital role in the leadership and delivery of campus recreation services. To the best of our knowledge, a research-based best practices model for effective student development in campus recreation departments does not yet exist. Along with my advisor (Dr. Bob Barcelona), I would like to invite you to participate in this research project to help us identify the best practices related to effective student development in student employees from campus recreation programs affiliated with NIRSA.

As regional vice president you have gained much knowledge, experience and involvement in many different campus recreation departments. Your involvement, along with the five other regional vice presidents, will comprise our panel of experts for this research project. If you choose to participate, we would ask you to take part in a short Delphi study. As you may know, a Delphi study consists of four rounds of data collection. Each round should only take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time and you will be given two weeks to complete it. To make this as easy as possible, we will conduct the data collection through a web-based survey. The purpose of the initial Delphi study will be to identify a list of best practices that campus recreation professionals can use to facilitate student development with their student employees.

If you are interested in participating in the study, I can send you additional instructions shortly. Please send me a short email stating your willingness to participate in the study at toperze@clemson.edu. I recognize that your time is valuable. However, your insight and experience is important in helping to develop the initial stages of this research project. Thank you for your consideration in participating in this research project. I believe that the completed study has the potential to be of value to both students and professionals in campus recreation. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 732-406-1306. I look forward to possibly working with you in the near future.

Sincerely,
Lauren Toperzer   Dr. Bob Barcelona
Graduate Student   Faculty Advisor

APPENDIX B

Request for professionals to serve on panel

Dear _____,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study. In order to receive quality information we would also like to invite representatives from your region to comprise our panel of experts. To do this we would like to take in consideration your recommendations of five professional staff members from your region that you feel have taken the initiative to make a difference in student development at their universities. Your input is extremely appreciated and please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,
Lauren Toperzer

APPENDIX C

Letter to chosen professionals

Dear _____,

I hope the beginning of the semester has been going well for you! My name is Lauren
Toperzer and I am the facilities graduate assistant at Clemson University. I will be
conducting a study, along with my advisor Dr. Robert Barcelona, on a best practices
model for effective student development in campus recreation departments. We have
asked each of the Regional Vice Presidents to acknowledge 5 professionals from their
region that demonstrate effective student development techniques at their university and
you were chosen!

I recognize that your time is valuable, however your insight in this research will benefit
the NIRSA organization and fellow campus recreation colleagues.   If you choose to
participate, we would ask you to take part in a short Delphi study. As you may know, a
Delphi study consists of four rounds of data collection. Each round should only take
approximately 15-20 minutes of your time and you will be given two weeks to complete
it. To make this as easy as possible, we will conduct the data collection through a web-
based survey. The purpose of the initial Delphi study will be to identify a list of best
practices that campus recreation professionals can use to facilitate student development
with their student employees.

The study is planned to begin on Monday September 14, 2009. You will receive an email
with directions on how to complete the web-based survey. If you have any further
questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 864-656-0557 or
toperze@clemson.edu. I look forward to possibly working with you in the near future.

Thank you,
Lauren Toperzer

APPENDIX D

Email/reminder for Round 1

<u>Round 1 September 14, 200</u>
Hello NIRSA professional,
Thank you for your willingness to participate in our study on a "best practices model" for effective student development in Campus Recreation Departments. This research is going to consist of a short Delphi study. As you may know, a Delphi study consists of four rounds of data collection. Each round should only take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time and you will be given two weeks to complete it. The purpose of the initial Delphi study, being distributed today, is to identify a list of best practices that campus recreation professionals can use to facilitate student development with their undergraduate student employees. Once we have received everyone's input, we will compile that list for the second round of the Delphi study. In the second round, you will be able to view the compiled list and see what other campus recreation professionals are doing at their university.
To begin round one please click on the following link:
http://snaponline.snapsurveys.com/surveylogin.asp?k=125233974289
Directions are provided on the website, along with a brief description of student development and how it relates to your profession. Please complete the survey by Monday September 28, 2009. The second round of data collection will begin 1-2 weeks after September 28th. I know your time is valuable and I truly appreciate your input. If you have any questions or problems with the survey, please do not hesitate to contact me at 864-656-0557 or toperze@clemson.edu. I look forward to your thoughts! Have a great day, Lauren Toperzer

<u>Reminder round 1 (9/21/09)</u>
Recently you were sent a web-based survey regarding a study that examines best practices in student development in campus recreation departments. If you have already completed and returned the first round of the Delphi process, please accept my sincere thanks. If you have not returned the study, and you still wish to participate, please fill out the survey as soon as possible, by clicking on this link:
http://snaponline.snapsurveys.com/surveylogin.asp?k=125233974289
You are in luck, you have until **Monday September 28, 2009** to complete it! While your participation is voluntary, your input is extremely important. The first round of the process is the most difficult and time consuming. However, it is necessary to gather the information in this format. I assure you the subsequent rounds will focus on your opinion about what the group determined about best practices in student development and will move quickly. I need to gather as much data as possible before moving to the next round. If you have any questions about the study or by some chance you cannot view the link to the survey, please feel free to contact me at Clemson University Department of Campus Recreation, 864-656-0557 or toperze@clemson.edu.

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX E

Email/reminder for Round 2

<u>Round 2 (10/21/09)</u>
Hello NIRSA Professional!
Thank you for your response to Round 1 of our Delphi Study on best practices in Student Development in Campus Recreation Programs. If you were unable to give us your response, you are still encouraged to participate in the rest of the study. We are now ready to begin Round 2. The group generated a total of 78 best practices. They are divided into 10 different categories/themes. The next task is to review the entire list and then rate each best practice based on your perception of its importance as a best practice in student development in campus recreation departments. The survey should take approximately **10-20 minutes** to complete.
Please click on the following link to complete the survey:
http://snaponline.snapsurveys.com/surveylogin.asp?k=125596650573
Your continued participation in this study is very important, and I sincerely appreciate you taking the time to complete this round. In order to compile all of the results and proceed to Round 3, I would appreciate receiving your responses by **Wednesday November 4, 2009**.
Thank you again for your participation in this study. If you have any questions please contact me at (toperze@clemson.edu; 864-656-0557).
Have a wonderful day!Lauren Toperzer

<u>Reminder round 2 (11/2/09)</u>

Hello NIRSA Professional!
This is just a reminder that if you haven't completed Round 2 of our Delphi Study, you have until **Wednesday November 4, 2009** to complete it. If you were unable to complete Round 1, you are still encouraged to participate in the rest of the study.

The group generated a total of 78 best practices. They are divided into 10 different categories/themes. The next task is to review the entire list and then rate each best practice based on your perception of its importance as a best practice in student development in campus recreation departments. The survey should take approximately **10-20 minutes** to complete.

Please click on the following link to complete the survey:
http://snaponline.snapsurveys.com/surveylogin.asp?k=125596650573

Your continued participation in this study is very important, and I sincerely appreciate you taking the time to complete this round.

Thank you again for your participation in this study. If you have any questions please contact me at (toperze@clemson.edu; 864-656-0557)

Email/reminder for Round 3

Round 3 (11/23/09)

Dear NIRSA professional,

Thank you for your response to Round 2 of our Delphi Study. If you were unable to give us your response in any of the previous rounds, you are still encouraged to participate in the rest of the study. We are now ready to begin Round 3. In this step of the Delphi process you will be reviewing the ratings and assessing your level of agreement or disagreement with the group ratings. The best practices will be listed in order based on the average mean score they received in Round 2. We encourage you to be as critical as possible in this round. The purpose of this Delphi study is to come to a consensus on the best practices in student development in campus recreation programs.

To start Round 3 please click on the link below:

http://snaponline.snapsurveys.com/surveylogin.asp?k=125899695110

Round 3 will take about 15-20 minutes. Your continued participation in this study is very important, and I sincerely appreciate you taking the time to complete this round. In order to compile all of the results and proceed to Round 4, if necessary, I would appreciate receiving your responses by **Friday December 11, 2009**. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at toperze@clemson.edu or (864) 656-0557.

I hope y'all have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,

Lauren Toperzer

Reminder round 3(12/7/09)

Hello NIRSA Professional! This is just a reminder that if you haven't completed Round 3 of our Delphi Study, you have until **Friday December 11, 2009** to complete it. If you were unable to complete any of the previous rounds, you are still encouraged to participate in the rest of the study. In this step of the Delphi process you will be reviewing the ratings and assessing your level of agreement or disagreement with the group ratings. The best practices will be listed in order based on the average mean score they received in Round 2. We encourage you to be as critical as possible in this round. The purpose of this Delphi study is to come to a consensus on the best practices in student development in campus recreation programs.

To start Round 3 please click on the link below:

http://snaponline.snapsurveys.com/surveylogin.asp?k=125899695110

Round 3 will take about 15-20 minutes. Your continued participation in this study is very important, and I sincerely appreciate you taking the time to complete this round. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at toperze@clemson.edu or (864) 656-0557.

Sincerely,

Lauren Toperzer

APPENDIX G

Round 4 (1/28/2010)

Hello NIRSA Professional!

After analyzing round 3, the panel of experts have advocated a list of 5 general best practices and 21 specific best practices with a mean greater than 3.5. With the completion of round 1, round 2 consisted of 10 general best practices and 78 specific best practices. As you can see, you and the other members of the panel have come a long way in reaching a consensus.

In this round of the Delphi, we would like you to review the results from round 3 and let us know if you agree that this list accurately represents best practices in student development in campus recreation programs.

Please click on the following link:

http://snaponline.snapsurveys.com/surveylogin.asp?k=126469879259

This round should only take about 5 minutes and is the final round of our study! It serves as a verification that you agree or disagree with the final list of best practices. Thank you so much for your continued cooperation and appreciation for student development in our student employees. We appreciate your time and effort you put into this study more than you know.

If you have any questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at Toperze@clemson.edu or (864) 656-0557. I look forward to meeting you in Anaheim!

Sincerely,

Lauren Toperzer

APPENDIX H

Round 1 results

Round 1 results

Theme - Training and Orientation

Specific Best Practices
1. Semester orientation/training sessions
2. Monthly in-service program training
3. Cross training student supervisors/employees
4. Have current student employees train new hires
5. Risk management training: CPR/AED, first aid certifications, audits, scenarios
6. Customer service training from an outside personnel
7. Spending an extensive amount of time on comprehensive practical training for a leadership position
8. Students in leadership position develop staff trainings
9. Provide training by modeling behaviors such as communication, conflict resolution, scheduling and personnel management
10. Pre-requisites for employment; attending sessions/certifications

Theme – Professional Development

Specific Best Practices
11. Present at NIRSA conference
12. Host NIRSA conference
13. Attend NIRSA conference
14. Host/participate in intramural and extramural events
15. Host professional development seminars
16. Attend leader summit for students with leadership roles
17. Attend retreats for planning/programming

Theme – Providing Adequate Knowledge and Information

Specific Best Practices
18. Provide information so students are familiar with professional staff members within the entire department
19. Discuss "social networking" issues and how to act professionally
20. Describe professional development do's and don'ts
21. Newsletter/memo book for student employees to keep them informed
22. TACOS T=take time to listen A=apologize C=care O=ownership of the problem S=solution, offer one! – create acronyms to make it easier for student employees to administer the skills you expect of them.
23. Encourage employees to work in more than one department of campus recreation
24. Provide a Graduation checklist to prepare them on how to enter the professional world
25. Provide feedback and suggestions to student employees

26. Give employee list of professional staff members and have them get it signed by each one so they meet each professional staff member
27. Prepare staff on how to become a GA
28. Create a culture in your campus recreation department based on mentoring and developing each other
29. Create games for students to remember information about the department
30. Let the student employees know the department's "philosophy" and how they can live by it at work

Theme – Performance Assessment

Specific Best Practices

31. Peer evaluations
32. Re-evaluate student employee positions every 2-3 years
33. Re-evaluate evaluation forms
34. Provide feedback and suggestions
35. Exit interviews/surveys
36. Student employees can fill out reflection surveys to get their opinion on the events

Theme – Mentor Relationships

Specific Best Practices

37. Assist with course scheduling/advisor
38. Mentor/mentee program
39. Role model/ lead by example
40. Open meetings with prayer

Theme – Continuing Education

Specific Best Practices

41. Resume and interviewing workshops
42. Practicum and internship opportunities
43. Student work room/computer lab in facility
44. Nominate for scholarships

Theme – University Involvement

Specific Best Practices

45. Utilize different departments on campus to assist students
46. Encourage students and professionals to get involved with student government
47. Encourage students to join organizations and get involved
48. Integrated and collaborative training with other student services on campus; Res life, wellness center

Theme – Personal Relationships

Specific Best Practices

49. Get to know student employee's personality
50. Let them get to know you as a person and act as a role model
51. Team building activities done by an outside professional consultant
52. Team building activities done by campus recreation professional staff members
53. Encourage students to get to know the patrons/participants

Theme – Progressive Leadership Opportunities

Specific Best Practices

54. Seek ways to challenge them
55. Hold them accountable for their behavior
56. Chance to run facility/programs when professional staff is not there
57. Fail forward. Give them opportunity to fail so they learn from it
58. Lead special events
59. Include them with program planning
60. Include student staff in interviewing potential student staff and professional staff
61. Merit exams – students get opportunity for wage increase by taking an exam at 4,8 and 12 month mark of employment
62. Provide opportunity for reflection and feedback from them
63. Promotions
64. Advisory boards, student council
65. Create a points system to give out points when an employee does something well
66. Student staff present about their program/job to other student staff members.
67. Student staff research and present to a larger group on a topic not in their area (ex. Wellness)
68. Student staff sharing responsibility for hosting visiting colleagues for tours and interviewing
69. Provide opportunity for student supervisors to supervise their peers
70. Give each student a role at staff meetings and a chance to speak

Theme – Providing Awards and Incentives

Specific Best Practices

71. Awards/ monthly and yearly given at meetings and end of the semester parties
72. Incentive programs/paid incentive programs
73. Graduation recognition programs
74. Student discounts for programs/memberships/services
75. Employee of the month
76. Quarterly student functions; tailgates, movie nights, BBQ
77. "On the spot" awards given daily/weekly; unplanned recognition
78. Provide food at staff gatherings

APPENDIX I

Round 2 results

Round 2 Results

Mean	Best Practices
4.67	Encourage students to get to know the patrons/participants
4.61	Provide leadership opportunities to student employees when professional staff are not present (i.e. chances to run the facility or programs)
4.56	Provide opportunities for students to lead special events
4.56	Make an effort to get to know student employees personally
4.56	Provide opportunities for students to lead special events
4.50	Provide opportunities for students to supervise their peers
4.50	Provide feedback and suggestions to student employees related to job performance and professional development
4.50	Provide frequent feedback and suggestions to student employees
4.47	Provide opportunities for risk management training: CPR/AED, first aid certifications, audits, scenarios
4.44	Include students in the program planning process
4.39	Inform student employees about the campus recreation department's "philosophy" and how they can put it into practice at work
4.39	Provide information so students are familiar with professional staff members within the entire department
4.33	Encourage and support students in attending leadership workshops
4.33	Utilize current student employees in training new hires

4.33	Provide frequent (every semester) orientation/training sessions
4.28	Provide the opportunity for student involvement on department advisory boards or student leadership councils
4.28	Include student staff in the interview process for new student and professional positions
4.22	Actively seek methods of challenging student employees
4.22	Discuss "social networking" issues and how to act professionally
4.11	Provide opportunities for promotions and progressive leadership responsibility
4.06	Encourage professional staff to nominate qualified employees for awards or scholarships
4.06	Encourage and incentivize professional staff to serve as role models and lead by example
4.06	Describe professional development dos and don'ts
4.06	Provide opportunities for students to "fail forward" – allow students to learn through failure and opportunities to try again
4.00	Conduct frequent re-evaluation of student employee positions
3.94	Provide monthly in-service program training
3.94	students in leadership positions design and develop staff trainings
3.89	Provide team building activities for student activities offered by campus recreation professional staff

3.89	Encourage and support student attendance at professional conferences (e.g. NIRSA)
3.89	Provide recognition programs for graduating student staff
3.83	Provide team building activities led by campus recreation professional staff members
3.83	Conduct frequent re-evaluation of performance appraisal methods
3.83	opportunities for cross training student supervisors/employees
3.83	Utilize different departments on campus to assist students
3.83	Conduct exit interviews/surveys for student employees when they leave the department
3.78	Provide structured opportunities for reflection and feedback by student employees
3.78	Create a "mentorship and development" culture in your campus recreation department
3.72	Provide opportunities for student staff to present about their program/job to other student staff members.
3.71	Provide an extensive amount of time on comprehensive practical training for leadership positions
3.71	During training have professional staff model behaviors such as communication, conflict resolution, and scheduling and personnel management

3.67	Involve student staff in hosting visiting colleagues for tours and interviewing
3.65	Encourage students to join campus organizations and get involved
3.65	Host professional development seminars
3.61	Provide opportunities to receive academic credit through offering practicum and/or internship opportunities
3.59	Provide social opportunities for student staff (e.g. tailgates, movie nights, and barbeques)
3.56	Have student employees complete peer evaluations
3.50	Create incentive systems (e.g. a points system) to recognize student achievement
3.50	Offer frequent (daily/weekly) opportunities for unplanned recognition or "On the Spot" awards to deserving student staff
3.44	Provide professional development workshops on job search topics (e.g. resume writing, interviewing)
3.44	Provide frequent opportunities for awards at staff meetings and end of the semester events
3.44	Give each student a role at staff meetings and a chance to speak
3.39	Encourage and support students to present at professional conferences (e.g. NIRSA)
3.35	Invite students to attend staff retreats for planning/programming
3.33	Provide opportunities for "employee of the month" recognition

3.33	Integrate and collaborate with other student services on campus for student staff training and leadership development (e.g. residence life, student activities, Greek life)
3.33	Provide a mechanism for student employees to meet all professional staff members (i.e. scavenger hunts, having staff members sign their names on a student employee's list, etc.)
3.28	Provide a graduation checklist to prepare students on how to enter the professional world
3.28	Offer opportunities to take part in staff incentive programs that have value (e.g. money, discounts, gear)
3.28	Encourage employees to work in more than one area
3.22	Provide food at staff meetings and gatherings
3.22	Have the campus recreation department host/participate in intramural and extramural events
3.11	Provide workshops for undergraduate student staff on graduate assistantships in campus recreation
3.11	Have the campus recreation department actively seek to host professional conferences (e.g. NIRSA)

Round 3 Results

Theme – Leadership Opportunities
Specific Best Practices
1. Provide leadership opportunities when professional staff is not present
2. Provide opportunities for student supervisors to supervise peers
3. Provide opportunities for students to lead special events
4. Provide opportunities for promotions
5. Include student staff in interview process for professional staff candidates
6. Actively seek methods to challenge student employees
7. Utilize current student employees in training new hires
8. Provide opportunities for students to "fail forward"
9. Include students in the programming and planning process for programs and special events

Theme – Performance Assessment
Specific Best Practices
10. Provide feedback and suggestions related to job performance and professional development
11. Provide frequent feedback and suggestions to student employees daily or weekly
12. Provide structured opportunities for reflection and feedback by student employees

Theme – Training and Orientation
Specific Best Practices
13. Provide opportunities for frequent risk management training
14. Provide frequent orientation and training sessions
15. Provide opportunities for cross training student supervisors
16. Inform employees about campus recreation philosophy

Theme – Personal Relationships
Specific Best Practices
17. Encourage students to get to know patrons and participants
18. Make an effort to get to know student employees personally
19. Encourage professional staff to serve as a role model and lead by example

Theme – Professional Development
Specific Best Practices
20. Encourage and support students to attend conferences and workshops
21. Discuss social networking issues and how to act professionally in the workplace

APPENDIX K

Round 3 open ended responses

Round 3 Open Ended Responses

Number	Comments on Best Practices
1	Not a big believer in Employee of the Month. We are too large with too many varying positions to be able to single out one employee. This may work better at a unit level.
2	Conduct exit interviews/surveys for student employees when they leave the department; we wanted to do but have not done. We sometimes never know who is leaving us.
3	Host professional development seminars; we use to do this and with limited luck we were preaching to them. The students who did attend were our best employees. Provide professional development workshops on job search topics (e.g. resume writing, interviewing); this is the job of our career center, so we promote them in our student employee newsletter.
4	With a staff of 48 full time staff members, this is almost impossible to do. I do agree that student employees should get to know other full time staff members besides their supervisor but getting familiar with the entire department is impossible. Training is important but don't think its

necessary EVERY semester, at least not extremely

important EVERY semester.

5   "Incentive" is why I marked this as slight importance.

Don't think there needs to be an incentive for a full time

staff member to act as a role model.

6   Extensive amount of time on practical training; just don't

know what this means exactly. An extensive amount of

time makes me lean towards slight importance; don't know

if the amount of time is as important and the actual training.

7   Provide social opportunities; I think these happen on their

own. I don't believe that the department should have to

provide the opportunity to do so.

8   I chose moderate for many of these largely due to a belief

that the value varies dramatically depending on the level of

responsibility and "investment" in the particular individual

(essentially, their current role and perceived potential).

9   Professional staff should be leading by example and

modeling. They should not need incentives and

encouragement to do this. Hopefully this comes from their

heart and inner desire to do this.

10   I don't believe it should be necessary to provide incentives

for professional staff to serve as role models. It should be

part of their values. Team building is good, I don't think it needs to be facilitated by campus recreation professional staff.

11	We allow students significant involvement in our planning processes here because they hold high level responsibility positions and we feel this is essential to their buy-in, development, and overall understanding of departmental philosophy and decisions made.
12	This is integral to our student development model, and we try to hire students who will want to advance so that they continue to grow and contribute.
13	We try to recognize graduating student staff, but I admit we do not have a great, formalized program. They receive graduation cords to wear at graduation.
14	This really turns our employees into valued employees when they have a much broader understanding of our department and philosophy, and it helps broaden their development as well.

Universities affiliated with this study

Universities Affiliated with this Study

University	Location
University of Florida	Florida, United States
Western Kentucky University	Kentucky, United States
Belmont University	Tennessee, United States
University of Miami	Florida, United States
Virginia Tech	Virginia, United States
Eastern Carolina University	North Carolina, United States
Valparaiso University	Indiana, United States
University of Notre Dame	Indiana, United States
Indiana State University	Indiana, United States
University of Southern Indiana	Indiana, United States
Wayne State University	Michigan, United States
Marquette University	Wisconsin, United States
Southeast Missouri State University	Missouri, United States
University of Texas @ Austin	Texas, United States
Tulane University	Louisiana, United States
Stephen F. Austin University	Texas, United States
University of Oklahoma	Oklahoma, United States

University of Minnesota, Duluth	Minnesota, United States
St. Cloud State University	Minnesota, United States
Augustana College	Illinois, United States
University of Edmonton	Alberta, Canada
University of Nebraska Lincoln	Nebraska, United States
Wartburg College	Iowa, United States
University of Wyoming	Wyoming, United States
University of California, Davis	California, United States
University of California, Los Angeles	California, United States
Washington State	Washington, United States
Boise State	Idaho, United States
Sonoma State	California, United States
Oregon State	Oregon, United States

APPENDIX M

Requirements to become a Regional VP for NIRSA

Board of Directors Application Information

Overview

The NIRSA Services Corporation (NSC) was incorporated June 1, 1999 as a wholly owned for-profit subsidiary of the National Intramural Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA). To stay compliant with IRS rules about unrelated business income (UBI), sponsored and endorsed programs and the sale of products with an advertising component were transferred from NIRSA to NSC. To protect the assets of the Association in the event of possible litigation directed against the Association due to its sponsorship or execution of a sport event, all sport events were also transferred to NSC.

Over the past 10 years NSC has operated three divisions: sponsorships, the National Campus Championship Series (NCCS), and a few member services (Recreational Sports Directory, Bluefishjobs.com and NIRSA Passport). The business of NSC is largely enterprise, and is supported by its for-profit structure. However, NSC is also unique in that its sole shareholder is a not-for-profit trade association who expects its subsidiary to operate consistent with the mission, vision and values of the parent organization.

As such, the Directors of the Corporation are expected to be knowledgeable about enterprise, sponsorship, current issues in collegiate recreation, and the mission and values of the NIRSA Services Corporation at its parent organization (NIRSA). Directors are expected to be strategic-thinking team members, who can lend their expertise to grow enterprise operations of NSC consistent with the mission and values of NIRSA.

All corporate powers of the Corporation shall be exercised by or under the authority of the Board of Directors. The NSC Board is comprised of seven (7) members serving staggered three (3) year terms. Annually the NSC Board elects its own officers, including President, Vice-President (non-voting), and Secretary/Treasurer (non-voting).

NSC Board Member Expectations

All NSC Directors have the following duties and functions but are not limited to:

Commitment to serve a three (3) year term

Maintain NIRSA membership in good standing throughout the term

Attend and participate in all meetings of the Board of Directors, regardless of type and medium

Manage the requirements of a volunteer leader with the expectations associated with one's primary job responsibilities

Represent the Board of Directors at various NSC functions, as appropriate

Uphold the mission/vision of NIRSA Services Corporation and its parent organization (NIRSA)

Demonstrate a commitment to NSC's programs and services.

Active interest in promotion and sponsoring of NSC programs and events.

To accomplish the duties and functions of a Director, appropriate funding within the NSC annual operating budget will be available.

NSC Board Member Qualifications

Minimum Qualifications necessary for an NSC Director:

1. Current Professional, Professional Life, or Emeritus membership as well as at least five (5) prior years of professional membership.
2. Five (5) years in an administrative/management position with direct experience in:
    1. budget development and budget accountability
    2. supervision of full-time staff
    3. event management
3. Service to NSC and/or NIRSA in a volunteer leadership capacity.
4. Proven interest in NSC's and NIRSA's respective missions.
5. Demonstrated commitment to NSC's and/or NIRSA's programs and services.
6. Active interest in promotion and sponsoring of NSC programs and events.

Preferred Qualifications for an NSC Director:

1. Exceptional oral communication skills as demonstrated by NSC and/or NIRSA presentations.
2. Excellent written communication skills as demonstrated by responses to required questions.
3. Previous experience on a not-for-profit or for-profit board of directors.
4. Past experience in strategic planning.
5. Knowledge of current issues and trends in higher education.
6. Experience with enterprise operations and/or corporate sponsorship programs.
7. Entrepreneurial experience in public or private sector.

APPENDIX N

Schedule

We utilized approximately an hour of our panel of experts' time over five months.

The study was done electronically, and the data will be analyzed with software that is

available through the Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management Graduate school at

Clemson University.

October 2008 – established interest and advisor for research

March 2009 – established committee

April 2009 – spoke with some Regional Vice Presidents about their involvement in

research at the national NIRSA conference in Charlotte, NC

May 2009 – IRB approval

July 2009 – proposal presentation and approval by committee

August 2009 – Pilot study done with 3 campus recreation professionals at Clemson

University

September 2009 – Round 1 web survey created and distributed; data analysis

October 2009 – Round 2 web survey created and distributed; data analysis

December 2009 – Round 3 web survey created and distributed; data analysis

February 2010 – Round 4 web survey created and distributed; data analysis

REFERENCES

Adler, M., & Ziglio, E. (1996). *Gazing into the oracle: The Delphi Method and its application to social policy and public health.* London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, *25*, 297-808.

Astin, A. W. (1996). Involvement in learning revisited: Lessons we have learned. *Journal of College Student Development*, *37*, 123-134.

Astin, A. W. (1999). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Development, 40*(5), 518-29.

Babbie, E. (2008). *The basics of social research* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Bayless, K. (2005). NIRSA standards research report. Unpublished committee report. Corvallis, OR: National Intramural and Recreational Sports Association.

Bolman, L.G., & Deal, T.E. (2008*). Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership, 4th Edition.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Bower, G., Hums, M., and Keedy. J. (2005). Factors influencing the willingness to mentor students within campus recreation, *Recreational Sports Journal, 29*(1), 59-77.

Brooks, K.W. (1979). Delphi technique: Expanding application. *North Central Association Quarterly, 53*(3), 377-385.

Bryant, J., Anderson, B., & Dunn, M. (1994). Rationale for independent administration of collegiate recreational sports programs: A position paper. National Intramural and Recreational Sports Association, Corvallis, OR.

Consensus. (2010). In *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*. Retrieved May 10, 2010, from http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/consensus

Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) (2009). 7th Edition: *CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education.*

Chickering, A.W., & Reisser, L. (1993) Education and Identity (2nd edition). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Clemson University (2010). Retrieved February 2010, from Clemson University web site: http://www.clemson.edu

Creamer, D. G. (1980) Student development in higher education: Theories, practices, and future directions. Cincinnati, OH: ACPA.

Creamer, D. G. (1990). *College student development: Theory and practice for the ACPA media publication no. 49*. Alexandria, VA: American College Personnel Association.

Cress, C., Astin, A. W., Zimmerman-Oster, K., Burkhardt, J. (2001). Developmental outcomes of college students' involvement in leadership activities. *Journal of College Student Development*, *27*(4), 401-418.

Dalkey, N.C. (1969). *The Delphi method: An experimental study of group opinion*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corp.

Dean, L.A. (2006). CAS Professional Standards for Higher Education. 6th edition, Washington DC: Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education.

Delbecqu, N., Van de Ven, A., & Gustafson, D.H. (1975). *Group techniques for program planning: A guide to nominal group and Delphi processes*. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman & Company.

DuBord, R.R., Jordan, J.S., & Turner, B.A. (2005) Retaining student workers: The importance of organizational commitment. *Recreational Sports Journal, 29*(2), 108-116.

Dunn, M. S., & Forney, D. S. (2004). Using entertainment media to inform student affairs teaching and practice related to student development theory. *New Directions for Student Services, 108,* 13-23.

Erikson, E.H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and Crisis.* New York: Norton.

Evans, N. J., Forney, D. S., & Guido-DiBrito, F. (1998). *Student development in college: Theory, research, and practice.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Gansemer-Topf, A., Ross, L. E., & Johnson, R. M. (2006). Graduate and professional student development and student affairs. *New Directions for Student Services, 115*, 19-30.

Hartman, F., Krahn, J. & Skulmoski, G. (2007). The Delphi method for graduate research. *Journal of Information Technology Education*, *6*, 1-21.

Higbee, J. L. (1988). Student Development Theory: A foundation for the individualized instruction of high-risk freshman. *Journal of Educational Opportunity*, *3*(1), 42-47.

Hill, K.M. & Fowles, J. (1975). The methodological worth of the Delphi Forecasting Technique. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 7*, 179-192.

Hurd, A. & McLean, D. (2004). An analysis of the perceived competencies of CEOs in public park and recreation agencies. *Managing Leisure*, *9*, 96-110.

Kurasaki, K. (2000). Inter-coder reliability for validating conclusions drawn from open-ended interview data. *Field Methods*, *12*(3), 179-194.

McEwen, M. K. (2003). The nature and uses of theory. *Student Services: A handbook for the profession*, *4ᵗʰ ed.*, 153-178. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

McGuire, R. J. (1969). The achievement of true professional status for intramurals. In *National Intramural Association Proceedings 1982 National Conference*, 199-206 as cited in Mull, R. (1982). Professional development: Toward a philosophical basis.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary. (April 2010). *Definition of consensus.* Retrieved from website: http://www.merriam-webster.com.

Miles & Huberman. (1994). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Miller, T. K. & Prince, J. S. (1976). *The future of student affairs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Murray, J.W. & Hammons, J.O. (1995). Delphi: A versatile methodology for conducting qualitative research. *The Review of Higher Education, 18*(4), 423-436.

Neuendorf, Kimberly A. (2002). *The content analysis guidebook.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

National Intramural Recreational Sports Association (2009). Web site: http://www.nirsa.org

Parker, J.D. (1972). *Prediction in the social sciences: An application of the Delphi technique to public personnel administration.* Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International.

Pascarella, E. (1989). The development of critical thinking: Does college make a difference? *Journal of College Student Development, 30*(1), 19-26.

Pascarella, Ernest T. & Terenzini, Patrick T. (1991). *How College affects students: findings and insights from twenty years of research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Pollard, S. (2010, February 1). *Best practice versus what works: Let the data decide*. Retrieved from website: http://www.clickz.com.

Ramirez, L. et al. (2006). Indicators of activity-friendly communities an evidence-based consensus process. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine. 31*(6), 515-524.

Reisser, L. (1995). Revisiting the seven vectors. *Journal of College Student Development*, *36*, 505-511.

Richards, L. & Morse, J. (2007). *User's Guide to Qualitative Methods*. Second Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rowe and Wright (1999): The Delphi technique as a forecasting tool: issues and analysis. *International Journal of Forecasting*, *15*(4), 353-375.

Schmidt, R. (1997). Managing Delphi surveys using nonparametric statistical techniques. *Decision Sciences*, *28*(3), 763-775.

Smith, G. (1995). We must live our dream. *NIRSA Journal*, *20*(3), 24-25.

Todaro, E. (1993). The impact of recreational sports on student development: A theoretical model. *NIRSA Journal*, *17(*3), 23-26.

Uhl, N. (1983). *Using research for strategic planning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Upcraft, M. L. (1994). The dilemmas of translating theory to practice. *Journal of College Student Development, 35*(6), 438-43.

Weese, W. J. (1997). The development of an instrument to measure effectiveness in campus recreation programs. *Journal of Sport Management, 11*(3), 263-274.

Young, S. & Jamieson, L. (2001). Delivery methodology of the Delphi: A comparison of two approaches. *Journal of Parks and Recreation Administration*, *19*(1), 42-58.

Zizzi, S., Ayers, S., Watson, J. & Keeler, L. (2004). Assessing the impact of new student recreation centers. *NASPA Journal, 41*(4), 588-630.