

Career Connections

Coaching

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

Athletic coaching is one of the most exciting and rewarding professions. Coaches are men and women who have an intense love of sport and who enjoy the challenge of working with their athletes to maximize individual and team performance. Coaches, more than many other professionals, have an opportunity to be mentors. Many of our youth are without positive adult role models. The coach has an opportunity to fill this void and to provide discipline and structure to an individual's life. Hard work, dedication, cooperation, competitive greatness, and ethical conduct are among many positive qualities that a coach can provide to his or her team members. In coaching one has the opportunity to achieve these and other goals by bringing together a diverse group of individuals and molding them into a group of people who care for and who can depend on one another. The relationships that develop in this setting are enduring and benefit the participants for a lifetime.

Coaching sports successfully requires expertise in a variety of areas. Certainly, you must have the knowledge of associated motor skill development and playing strategy. However, the successful coach also understands the psychology of coaching such as the best methods of communicating and motivating athletes. A successful coach also is aware of the major issues facing sport and the alternative methods of dealing with these issues.

The Institute for the Study of Sport estimates there are over 40 million youth who participate in sport annually. Title IX has increased the number of women participating in sport, and the abolishment of racial barriers has increased minority participation. Furthermore, a greater number of adults are continuing their organized sport careers. The elimination of age, race, and gender barriers has increased sport participation. However, there are many youth and adults who are left out because of their socioeconomic status. The financial cost of participating in sport has become prohibitive for many, thus making sport exclusive in nature.

The objective, therefore, of the Career Connections program in Sport Coaching at Hanover College is two-fold, practical and philosophical. When you complete the program, you should have an understanding of the necessary motor skills and theories for coaching sport and the philosophical commitment to creating sport opportunities for a greater number of people.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Exploring Options

Begin your exploration of the sport-coaching field in the Career Center. The staff there can provide opportunities for examining your personal interests, attitudes, and skills. You can also obtain information on job opportunities, qualifications for employment, and a listing of coaching associations. Some of these sport-coaching associations may have meetings in the area, and may be open for student membership. Additionally, the Career Center has a variety

of books and pamphlets in this area such as *Careers in Focus: Sports, A Guide to Careers in Sports*, *Sports Internships Book*, and *Career Opportunities in the Sports Industry*.

The Career Center can help you identify alumni who are working as coaches. Typically, they are very eager to share their knowledge and experiences, especially with current Hanover students. In addition to information interviews, alumni may also be able to provide job-shadowing opportunities.

It is strongly recommended the student meet with the Career Connections advisor in the athletic department. The student will then be directed toward a sport coach who can mentor the student in the Career Connections program.

Academics

The academic component of the Career Connections program should be developed around your specific interests. The following courses are recommended for those interested in coaching at the college level and as lay coaches in the community. For those individuals interested in becoming teacher certified you must major in an academic discipline and complete all of the courses required by the Education Department for teacher certification.

Introduction to Physical Education (HF 132)

Selected persistent problems traced historically and analyzed philosophically. Examination of changing concepts and challenges in the teaching and allied areas of physical education.

Psychology of Sport & Coaching (PE 360, Special Topics)

The successful coaches understand the psychology of coaching. They understand the psychological makeup of their players. They are good communicators and motivators. Following the humanistic philosophy the successful coach learns how to adapt to the individual needs of the participants. Understanding the psychology of coaching is a must for effectively teaching sport skills and competitive greatness.

Basic Athletic Training (PE 325)

Because people are in motion while participating in sport there is a chance for injury, particularly in a contact sport. It is important that coaches have knowledge about the care, prevention, and treatment of athletically related injuries.

Kinesiology /Biomechanics (PE 326)

Understanding human movement and how forces can affect movement are essential in developing strategies for maximizing sport skill performance.

Independent Study (EXS 471)

You along with a selected faculty member may want to design an independent study to address any of the above or other sport coaching related topics such as the development of appropriate practice plans, out of season conditioning programs, community relations, ethical issues, etc.

Cognate Courses:

Introduction to Psychology (PSY 111)

Childhood and Adolescence (PSY 244)

Co-Curricular Activities

On-Campus Activities

The physical education, intramural, and intercollegiate athletic programs are activities, which afford you the opportunity to participate in sport related skills. In physical education sport skill classes, you can learn the basic motor skill movement required for participation in a variety of physical activities. The intramural program affords you the chance to utilize these learned motor skills in a more competitive arena. Intercollegiate athletics is the forum for the most highly skilled athletes to participate with expert coaching in a highly competitive environment against other colleges. You may also decide to assist in the administration of these events as a student worker or volunteer.

In addition to participating in athletic programs, it is beneficial to get involved in campus organizations in which there are opportunities for leadership and for organizing and motivating people such as Student Senate or Peer Advising. LINK and College Mentors for Kids! are good ways to gain experience working with youth while coordinating a team of mentors and students. Additionally, volunteering with the Student Programming Board and the Homecoming Committee are great ways to gain organizational and planning skills.

Off-Campus Activities

Volunteering in the local community may allow you to explore the types of coaching in which you are interested as well as provide an opportunity to gain skills in working with a variety of people. The Boys and Girls Club of Madison is always looking for young adults to work with their youth, while the Big Brothers/ Big Sisters program provides you the opportunity to mentor a child.

Work Experience

On-Campus Jobs

There are many sport coaching opportunities. You may serve as a student coach with one of the Hanover College varsity sport teams, or work for a coach in the Horner Center and observe how an athletic department is run. Being a resident assistant (RA) will help you to learn to advise and counsel individuals, to organize and plan hall functions, and will give you experience in motivating people to participate.

Related Summer Jobs

Obtaining coaching jobs is often accomplished through professional connections. It is recommended you join a sport association(s), work at sports-related summer camps, and attend a sport clinic(s). Summer coaching opportunities are available with summer camps. The AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) sponsors state and national competition in many sports and for a variety of age groups. You could organize and coach an AAU team. Summer jobs are also available at the Boys and Girls Club and at the YMCA. Some of these opportunities could be developed into an internship.

Internships

Distinguished from typical summer jobs by the presence of activities that are specifically designed for your educational purposes, an internship can be another outstanding way to gain experience, particularly during the summer. The Internship Coordinator can assist you in developing your own internship and in taking steps to earn academic credit if you desire. Several students have gained experience working with sports teams such as the Philadelphia 76ers during full-semester internships at The Philadelphia Center. The Washington Center also offers opportunities for students to work with major and minor league teams. In the past, Hanover students have gained great skills related to coaching while interning with the Special Olympics, the Florida Marlins, and Nolan Fieldhouse.

Local high schools employ college students during the academic year as coaches of the junior high teams or as assistant coaches for the high school programs.

Further Training and Experience

The majority of permanent jobs in coaching are at the high school and college levels. Some of these positions may require an advanced degree. Some states require a master's degree for high school teachers after a certain period. The postgraduate degree would be in your teaching certification area of study. At the college level a master's degree is generally required for continued employment. Areas of possible study may be Exercise Science or Sport Management. Through your Career Connections advisor and the Career Center you may wish to consider applying for a Graduate Assistantship at several universities. Not only does an assistantship defer some of the costs of your master's degree, but it also may give you teaching and coaching experience in your chosen sport. Your coaching staff at Hanover may have connections at graduate school programs, which may help you get an assistantship.

Dr. Michael Beitzel
Men's Basketball Coach

(last revised 6/2008)