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Sportwissenschaftliche Fakultät / Sports Science Faculty

DESIGNING AN INTERNATIONAL SPORTS DEVELOPMENT GRADUATE COURSE ONLINE – A COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY PERSPECTIVE

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INTRODUCTION

- Online learning **is rapidly growing** due to the internet and social media.
- It is prevalent in various academic disciplines, including sport management higher education (SMHE).
- SMHE needs to **adapt to technological advancements** and **prepare students effectively** for their future careers.
- Online learning offers opportunities for SMHE to cater to **diverse learners' needs**.
- Online learning allows HEIs to reach a **global audience** and tap into **new markets**.
- Embracing online learning is crucial for HEIs and faculty to **remain competitive and relevant** in the educational market.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- **Potential of Online Learning** in Sport Management (Bennett et al., 2001; Bennett, 2002; Steir & Schneider, 2009)
- **Barriers to Online Learning Adoption** (Bennett et al., 2001; Bennett, 2002; Lebel et al., 2015; Steir & Schneider, 2009)
- Comparison of **Online and Face-to-Face Courses** (Shreffler et al., 2019)
- **Technology's Potential** in Sports Management Education (Edwards & Finger, 2007)
- Bridging the Gap: **Digital Pedagogies and Learner/Industry Expectations** (Kaiser & Beech, 2012; Wohlfart & Adam, 2019)
- Importance of **Learner Engagement** in Online Learning (Cuthbertson & Falcone, 2014; Song et al., 2004)
- **Call for more research on online learning** in sport management higher education and on the **application of the Community of Inquiry framework** (Martinez & Barnhill, 2017)

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To conduct a critical revisit concerning the **suitability of five exemplary modules for online learning** in a new **semi-virtual International Sports Development Master** using the **Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework**, a review of relevant literature and the experience of the author in face-to-face and online teaching environments.

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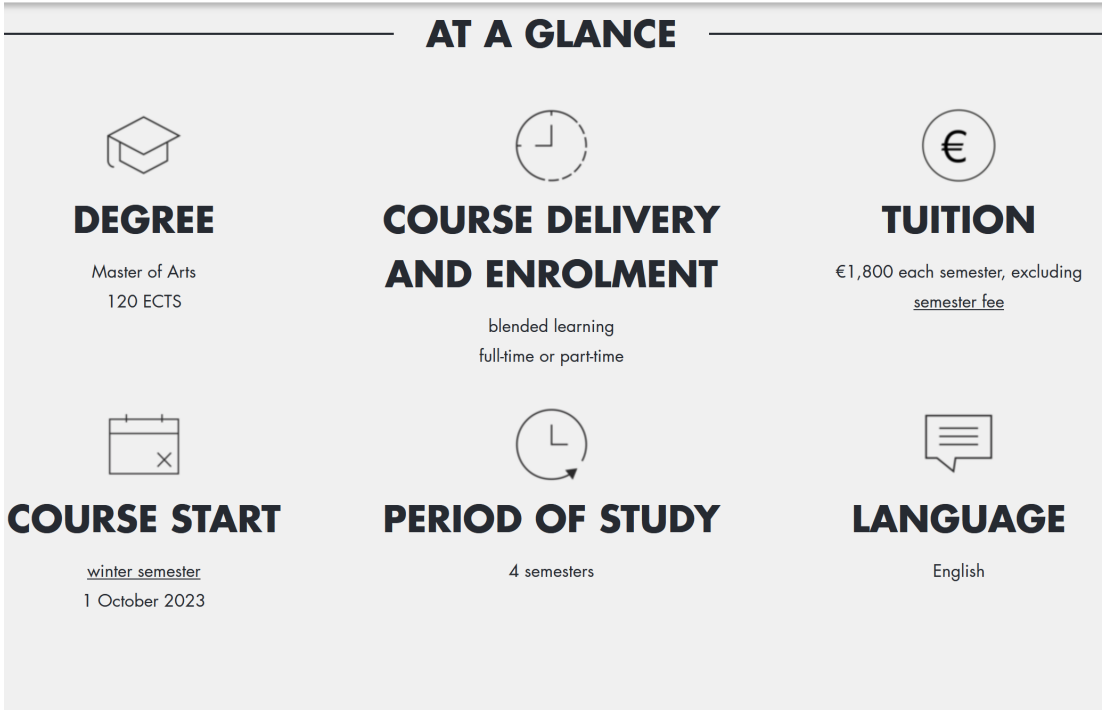

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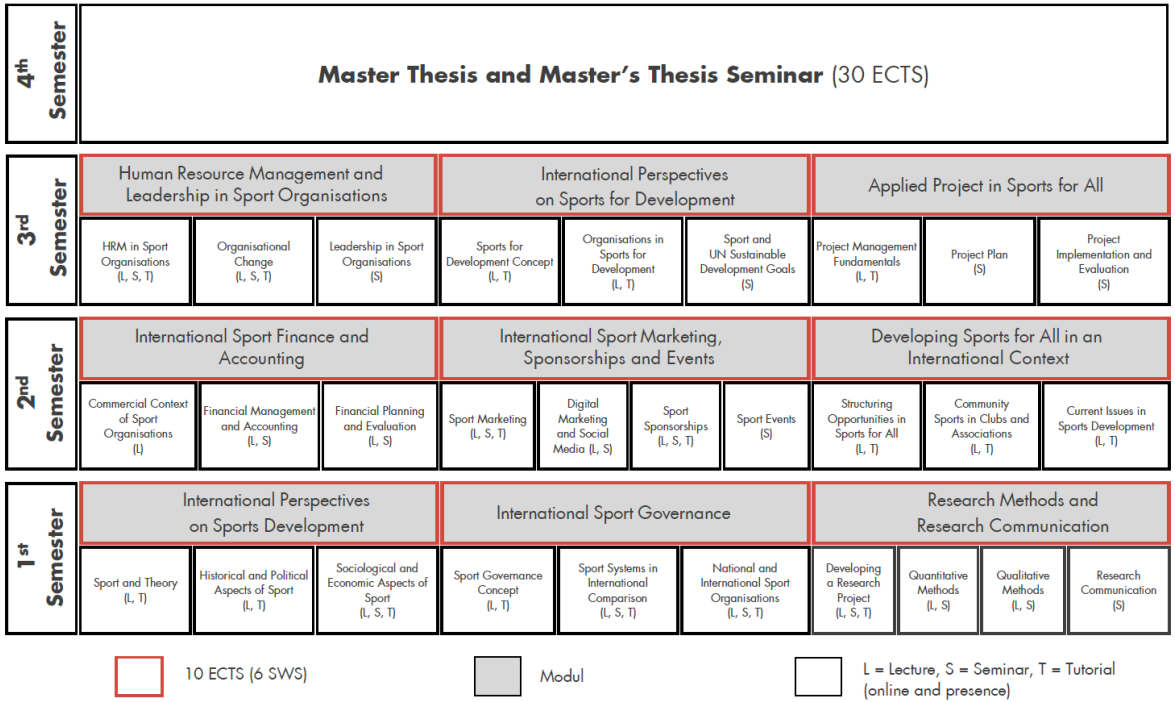
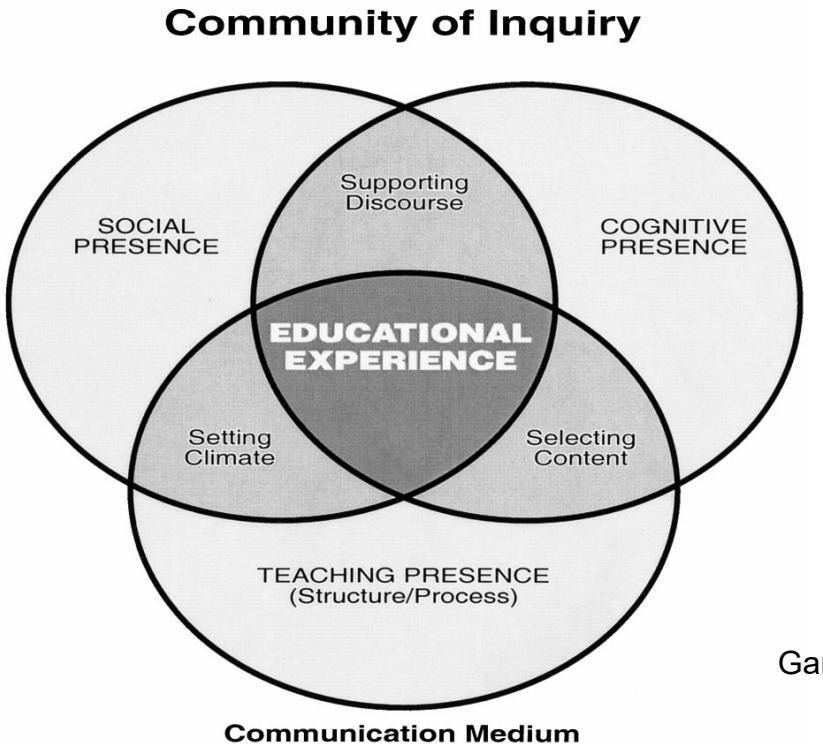


COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY FRAMEWORK (COI)



Garrison et al., 1999

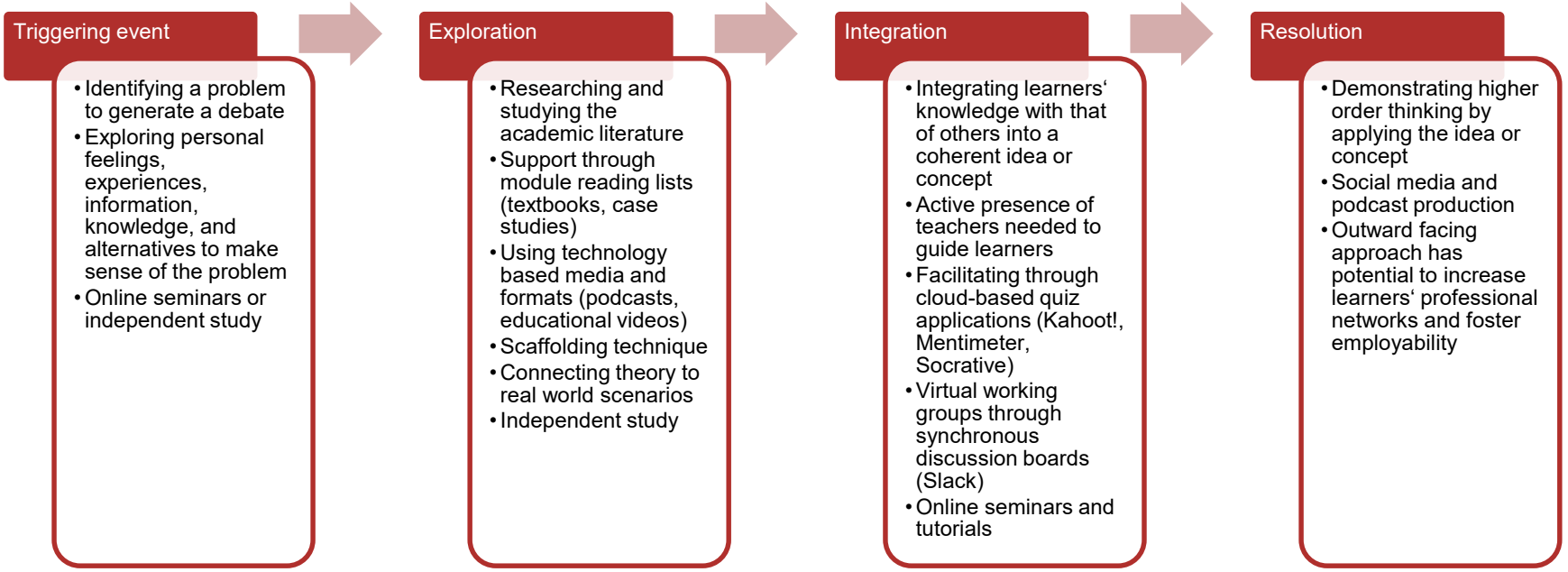
COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY FRAMEWORK (COI)
COGNITIVE PRESENCE

- **Cognitive presence** refers to the **actual learning process** and the extent to which a student is able to **construct meaning** through “sustained communication” (Garrison et al., 2000, 89) and “sustained reflection and discourse” (Garrison et al., 2001, 161).

- Cognitive presence is central to **critical thinking**, which is one of the main intended outcomes of higher education.

- Richardson and Ice (2010) suggest that **debate-based** and **case-based learning approaches** stimulate thought and facilitate open-ended discussions, which are essential for the applied field of sport development.

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY FRAMEWORK (COI)
COGNITIVE PRESENCE



COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY FRAMEWORK (COI)
COGNITIVE PRESENCE

Module	Triggering event
International Perspectives on Sports Development	As a consequence of a stagnating participation in sports clubs, should the government support elite sport or grassroots sports?
International Sport Marketing, Sponsorships and Events	What are the benefits and challenges for associated with the available sport and cultural infrastructure in Leipzig for the potential bid to host the TAFISA World Sport for all Games in 2024?
International Sport Finance and Accounting	What are the potential influences of the current energy crisis on the financial situation of grassroots sport organisations in your country?
International Perspectives on Sport for Development	What activities and programmes in your sport organisation could help to achieve gender equality in your country?
Human Resource Management and Leadership in Sport Organisations	What importance on the perspective of leadership and its practices do you have for your sport organisation?

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY FRAMEWORK (COI)
SOCIAL PRESENCE

- **Social presence** is the ability of participants to **identify with the online learning community**, **communicate** purposefully, and **develop interpersonal relationships** (Garrison, 2009).
- Establishing social presence is crucial for promoting **teamwork and networking** in online learning modules (Wohlfart & Adam, 2019).
- Absence of verbal and visual cues in **text-based communication** can lead to learners' feelings of isolation or disconnect (Dixson, 2015).
- Emerging virtual classrooms and **video-conferencing platforms** (e.g., Adobe Connect and Zoom) simulate face-to-face settings, **fostering social and emotional interaction** (Manning et al., 2017).
- For interaction in the online classroom to be meaningful and effective, a range of **open and easy-to-use communication channels** is needed for learners to make **affective, interactive and cohesive contributions** to course activity (Rourke et al., 1999).
- Learners are encouraged to create their own **blogs**, share **personal stories**, and engage in **in-class and out-of-class activities** to foster social presence and credibility with faculty (Martinez & Barnhill, 2017).

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY FRAMEWORK (COI)
SOCIAL PRESENCE

Module	Category	Strategies
International Perspectives on Sports Development	Affective	Students engage in interactive quizzes to test their knowledge on various aspects of grassroots sport funding using fictitious names.
	Interactive	Students engage on a moderated debate regarding the preferred funding of elite or grassroots sport.
	Cohesive	Students address themselves with their real or fictitious names in the moderated debate.
International Sport Marketing, Sponsorships and Events	Affective	Students express their emotions and use humour in tweets they create regarding the potential bid of Leipzig to host the TAFISA Sport for all Games 2024.
	Interactive	Through their tweets, students encourage their peers, faculty and persons external to the course to comment and retweet.
	Cohesive	Through their tweets, students encourage their peers, faculty and persons external to the course to comment and retweet.

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY FRAMEWORK (COI)
TEACHING PRESENCE

- **Proper course** design is crucial for enhancing learner interaction, discourse, and critical thinking (Arbaugh & Hwang, 2006).
- **Clear communication** and various strategies, such as meetings, video messages, and personalisation, can build relationships and foster a comfortable learning environment (Aragon, 2003).
- Moodle as the major **communication platform** for sharing information and interaction between learners and teachers.
- **Videoconferencing platforms** to facilitate real-time interaction and immediate responses to questions, breakout sessions for sustained brainstorming and dialogue and **social media** use for enhancing social presence (Garrison et al., 2000).
- Most **written assessments** can be easily adapted to an online teaching format.
- To address challenges with **oral presentations**, video or podcast submissions and live-presentations via video-conferencing platforms can be utilized effectively.
- Consideration of various **learning styles** to achieve teaching presence (Coker, 2013).
- Facilitation of discourse and enhancement of learners' critical thinking skills through the **narrative and episodic teaching method** (Kebritchi, 2014).

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY FRAMEWORK (COI)
TEACHING PRESENCE

Module / Strategy	International Perspectives on Sport Development	International Sport Marketing, Sponsorships, and Events	International Sport Finance and Accounting	International Perspectives on Sport for Development	Human Resource Management and Leadership in Sport Organisations
Course Design and Structure	Course design and structure explicitly outlined Course activities explicitly outlined on Moodle and in introductory sessions (using videoconferencing platforms, video briefs) Assessment procedures explicitly outlined on Moodle and in introductory sessions (using videoconferencing platforms, video briefs)				
Facilitating discourse and encouraging student participation	Interactive lectures and seminar More narrative method • Case studies • Debates	Interactive lectures and seminar More episodic method • Harvard Case Study Method • Pitch Presentations • Creating a Twitter presence	Interactive lectures and seminar Narrative and episodic method • Simulation exercises • Case studies • Financial reports	Interactive lectures and seminar More narrative method • Case studies • Debates	Interactive lectures and seminar Narrative and episodic method • Role Plays • Debates • Creating podcasts
Providing in-depth feedback using the scaffolding technique	Regular tutor feedback on course activities in lectures, seminars and tutorials using various media, such as videoconferencing platforms, audio feedback, online discussion boards, social media, quiz applications Specific individual and group feedback on module-specific assessment tasks Regular direction of students to reading materials and digital media content for independent study				
		Peer feedback		Peer feedback	Peer feedback

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY FRAMEWORK (COI)
EVALUATION – COI INSTRUMENT

1. The instructor clearly communicated important course topics.
2. The instructor clearly communicated important course goals.
3. The instructor provided clear instructions on how to participate in course learning activities.
4. The instructor clearly communicated important due dates/time frames for learning activities.
5. The instructor was helpful in identifying areas of agreement and disagreement on course topics that helped me to learn.
6. The instructor was helpful in guiding the class toward understanding course topics in a way that helped me clarify my thinking.
7. The instructor helped to keep course participants engaged and participating in constructive dialog.
8. The instructor helped keep the course participants on task in a way that helped me to learn.
9. The instructor encouraged course participants to explore new concepts in this course.
10. Instructor actions reinforced the development of a sense of community among course participants.
11. The instructor helped to focus discussion on relevant issues in a way that helped me to learn.
12. The instructor provided feedback that helped me understand my strengths and weaknesses.
13. The instructor provided feedback in a timely fashion.
14. Getting to know other course participants gave me a sense of belonging in the course.
15. I was able to form distinct impressions of some course participants.
16. Online or web-based communication is an excellent medium for social interaction.
17. I felt comfortable conversing through the online medium.

Shea & Bidgerano, 2009

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY FRAMEWORK (COI)
EVALUATION – COI INSTRUMENT

18. I felt comfortable participating in the course discussions.
19. I felt comfortable interacting with other course participants.
20. I felt comfortable disagreeing with other course participants while still maintaining a sense of trust.
21. I felt that my point of view was acknowledged by other course participants.
22. Online discussions helped me to develop a sense of collaboration.
23. Problems posed increased my interest in course topics.
24. Course activities piqued my curiosity.
25. I felt motivated to explore course related questions.
26. I utilized a variety of information sources to explore problems exposed in this course.
27. Brainstorming and finding relevant information helped me resolve content related questions.
28. Online discussions were valuable in helping me appreciate different perspectives.
29. Combining new information helped me answer questions raised in course activities.
30. Learning activities helped me construct explanations/solutions.
31. Reflection on course content and discussions helped me understand fundamental concepts in this class.
32. I can describe ways to test and apply the knowledge created in this course.
33. I have developed solutions to course problems that can be applied in practice.
34. I can apply the knowledge created in this course to my work or other non-class related activities.

Shea & Bidgerano, 2009

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY FRAMEWORK (COI)
CONCLUSION

- Effective online learning requires achieving cognitive, social, and teaching presence to establish a strong Community of Inquiry (CoI) between learners and teachers.
- Online learning can lead to the same educational outcomes as face-to-face settings, especially in business-related courses, with the potential for critical thinking and higher-order analysis.
- Challenges of participation and interaction can be addressed with video-conferencing platforms like Zoom, although early research indicates potential issues with cognitive load.
- However, the scalability of online learning might pose challenges with large enrollment numbers.
- Appropriate training and sharing of best practices and knowledge crucial
- Constant evaluation using the CoI instrument to monitor effectiveness of course delivery

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