

**Notice of Intent to Plan Master of Science in Sports Leadership
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis
University of Wisconsin - Madison**

Proposed Degree

Master of Science in Sports Leadership (MSL)

Home Department/ School

The program will be housed in the School of Education's Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (ELPA).

Mode of Delivery

The MSL is fully online. On-campus activities and resources will be available for those interested.

Primary Faculty Contacts

Peter Miller, Professor, ELPA; Chair, UW-Madison Athletic Board
Julie Mead, Professor, ELPA; Associate Dean, School of Education

Program Description / Learning Outcomes

The purpose of this notice is to describe the intent to offer a Master of Science in Sports Leadership (MSL) in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis (ELPA) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. ELPA has a long history of providing high quality programs for educational leadership in K-12 schools and colleges and universities. In fact, the Department has long offered courses on the administration of athletics in higher education settings. The experience in delivering these courses, the increasing academic attention paid to sport,¹ the recognition of the role sports play in child development,² the popularity of youth sports,³ and the regular inquiries about programming for sports leadership across types of educational institutions led the Department, under the leadership of Professor Peter Miller, to explore and ultimately develop the MSL. The UW-Madison Division of Continuing Studies assisted the Department in the exploration of the market demand for the program (discussed later in this document). The MSL responds to the need to train leaders to understand the particular demands associated with sports programs, a growing field within educational leadership.⁴ The MSL is unique in that it leverages both the practical and scholarly insights about leadership in athletics, provides an avenue to develop and transmit academic knowledge about sports leadership, and permits students to explore multiple careers associated with sports leadership. The MSL addresses key areas for sports leadership including athletic administration, coaching, justice in sport, legal and financial issues, and sports psychology. Graduates will be prepared for leadership positions within sports programs across levels of play, spanning K-12 and youth programs, colleges and universities, semi-professional, and professional teams. The MSL will also bring the University of Wisconsin-Madison into parity with other Big Ten institutions that already provide an opportunity to study sports leadership.

Upon completion of the MSL students will:

1. Articulate, critique, or elaborate the theories, research methods, and approaches to scholarly inquiry or practice in educational settings.
2. Identify sources and assemble evidence pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of sports leadership.
3. Demonstrate understanding of sports leadership in a historical, social, or global context.
4. Identify and address social inequalities in educational opportunities and outcomes in sports leadership.

5. Select and/or utilize the most appropriate methodologies and practices.
6. Evaluate or synthesize information pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of sports leadership.
7. Communicate clearly in ways appropriate to the field of sports leadership.

The proposed MSL program is comprised of 30 credits, which will include a 3-credit field experience and up to four courses (12 credits) of electives selected from a curated list. The typical pattern for full-time student enrollment will begin in summer and conclude at the end of the second summer (for a total of 15 months) as follows:

Summer I - 6 credits

Fall - 9 credits

Spring - 9 credits

Summer II - 6 credits

Students enrolled part-time would be expected to complete the program in 2-3 years.

ELPA consistently ranks among the best programs nationally for educational leadership and is currently named by US News and World Report as 4th in the nation for programs in educational administration and supervision.⁵ The MSL builds on that expertise and will add a new degree to the complement of other ELPA master's degrees, which include current named options in: K-12 Leadership, Higher Education Leadership, Educational Policy Analysis and Evaluation, Global Higher Education, a Collaborative Program with UW-Whitewater, and the Wisconsin Idea Principal Preparation Program. Like all ELPA programs, an emphasis on equity, diversity, and social justice drives program design.

ELPA also offers a PhD program with named options in K-12 Leadership, Higher Education, Educational Policy Analysis and Evaluation, and the Wisconsin Idea Executive PhD Program. Students interested in doctoral study of sports leadership will continue to be served in existing ELPA programs. The MSL Program will also provide a mechanism to recruit students to those programs of advanced graduate study.

Resources and Resource Allocation

The innovative online format of the courses will maximize student access and lend rich experiential learning opportunities for students. Current faculty and staff will deliver the majority of courses, while full-time practitioners in athletic leadership positions may serve as instructors or be invited to address classes as guest speakers. Faculty in ELPA have expertise and offer courses in sports leadership, and existing courses can be transitioned to be offered in the online modality. Consistent with existing program offerings, departmental faculty will advise students. The Department also plans to hire a full-time academic staff member to coordinate and market the program and recruit students. The program also anticipates hiring a graduate student from the ELPA doctoral program to serve as a teaching assistant to support program instructors. As a proposed academic program with non-pooled tuition (Fund 131), paid tuition will allow the full costs of program delivery to be sustained by student tuition.

The MSL will not seek program-specific accreditation and will adhere to institutional accreditation and program review processes.

Overview and Alignment with Mission

ELPA's departmental mission seeks "to create, evaluate, exchange, and apply knowledge about leadership, learning, and organizational performance to prepare scholars and scholar practitioners who cultivate equity and educational opportunity in a diverse and changing world."⁶ The MSL will contribute to this mission by preparing students to lead athletic activities with a particular focus on how sport leadership relates to equitable opportunities and justice for students.⁷ The program will be a complement to the existing departmental programs available to students interested in the study of leadership.

The MSL will contribute directly to the mission of the UW System by providing students with "heightened intellectual, cultural, and humane sensitivities, scientific, professional and technological expertise" related to sports leadership. Moreover, as a leader in NCAA Division I sports for both men and women,⁸ UW-Madison has considerable expertise – both academic and practical – in sports leadership. By leveraging the expertise of UW-Madison, this program will help to disseminate this knowledge beyond the boundaries of campus.

The UW-Madison mission⁹ states that it seeks to provide learning environments that permit students to "discover, examine critically, preserve and transmit the knowledge, wisdom and values that will help ensure the survival of this and future generations and improve the quality of life for all." Relatedly, "[t]he university seeks to help students to develop an understanding and appreciation for the complex and physical worlds in which they live and to realize their highest potential of intellectual, physical, and human development." The proposed MSL program supports the institutional mission of UW-Madison by contributing to the development and dissemination of knowledge around sports leadership and by developing students who understand the complex nature of the athletic leadership and the role sports play in the quality of life for both participants and spectators.

The MSL also supports each of the five major themes in UW-Madison's Strategic Plan.¹⁰ The MSL directly relates to these strategic goals as it will provide a world-class experience in the study of sports leadership for students to pursue careers in the field, through high-quality online offerings. The MSL will contribute to Excellence in Teaching and Educational Achievement as well as Research and Scholarship. The MSL Program connects to the Wisconsin Idea by providing a means to extend what is known and learned on campus about sports leadership to other colleges, schools, clubs, and teams within and beyond Wisconsin. By helping students understand the role sports play in the quality of life for individuals and the ways in which athletics builds community for an organization, the MSL will contribute to building A Vibrant Campus Community. The MSL Program also contributes to the goal of A High-Performing Organization by providing a revenue generating program that serves the interests of students who wish to assume any of the important roles in sports leadership.

Program Need

The importance of and demand for inquiry and coursework on sport is widely recognized.¹¹ As sports participation and interest in the U.S. have reached peak levels, many universities and private enterprises have developed programming to advance research, teaching, and outreach relating to sports. In fact, the UW-Madison is one of only two Big Ten institutions that lack systematic academic programming in sport. All other Big Ten institutions offer graduate degrees in sports leadership and/or management. In addition to the role that sports plays in colleges and universities, athletic leadership is also needed in elementary and secondary schools. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction requires that anyone serving as an athletic director for a public school or school district be licensed as an

administrator, a process that requires a master's degree.¹² Currently the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) lists over 500 member schools,¹³ all of which require leaders to ensure safe athletic opportunities and compliance with WIAA rules and policies.¹⁴ In addition to leadership positions in schools, colleges, and universities, youth club sports, semi-professional, and professional sport groups also need strong leaders to manage their programs. The MSL will also allow students to study various aspects of sports leadership, including both administration and coaching.

To gauge student demand, the UW-Madison Division of Continuing Studies conducted a market analysis¹⁵ in 2018, which found that there is considerable student interest in sports leadership and the potential to attract large numbers of students. Specifically, the report indicated that similar programs conferred between 74 and 528 master's degrees in 2017. The majority of these programs deliver curriculum through in-person modalities of instruction. As the MSL Program is designed to deliver course work remotely through high quality online courses, it may be possible to serve a higher number of students and also may be attractive to part-time students who wish to combine graduate study with current job responsibilities.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects increased need for appropriately trained leaders in a number of categories. The job outlook for coaches is expected to increase by 12%.¹⁶ The outlook for athletic administrators in elementary, middle, and high schools projects a 4% increase,¹⁷ as does the need for leaders in post-secondary institutions.¹⁸ The projected job growth for coaches and both higher education and K-12 administrators suggests that there is enough demand to support the development of the MSL at UW-Madison in addition to existing and developing programs among UW System institutions.

Other Offerings

The MSL will be the only sports leadership program at UW-Madison. The Department of Kinesiology offers a Master of Science in Athletic Training. Students in the MSL may be interested in taking some Kinesiology courses as electives in this program. The departments, both in the School of Education, are collaborating on the MSL.

Master's degree programs related to sports leadership are currently offered at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater (Master of Science in Higher Education Athletic Administration) and the University of Wisconsin-Parkside (Master of Science in Sport Management), and an NOI has been circulated for a new program at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville (Master of Science in Sport Administration). Like programs at other UW institutions, students will have opportunities to study college athletic administration. However, the MSL will complement and expand opportunities for those wishing to study sports leadership in Wisconsin in five distinct ways. First, students in the MSL program will learn about policy and competitive matters that are unique to the Division I, Big Ten context. Second, the MSL will uniquely offer students an opportunity to study coaching, and will leverage the UW-Madison's status as an NCAA Division I institution to prepare coaches for the particular demands of Division I collegiate athletics. The program's classes will also cover teaching and leadership methods used by coaches, as well as the role that coaches have in working in concert within their school or organization. Third, the MSL examines coaching and leadership across school, university, and community settings. In particular, with the increasing presence of club sports in Wisconsin's communities, the MSL presents a new opportunity to learn how to successfully lead safe, productive sporting experiences. Fourth, the program incorporates a focus on social inequalities, opportunity, and justice in sport, true to the ELPA Department's expertise. For example, in ELPA 751: Leadership and Justice in Sports, students examine race, poverty, and activism related to youth sports, college sports reform, and leadership. This

emphasis on diversity, inclusion, and social justice is central to the MSL's design and distinguishes this program from others in Wisconsin. Finally, the program intends to recruit students already part of UW-Madison, including former student athletes and undergraduates interested in sports leadership. For example, the MSL will provide a new possible academic home for student athletes who have completed undergraduate degrees and have remaining NCAA eligibility.

Program Faculty and Staff / Planning Team

The MSL will draw predominantly on current faculty and staff to provide instruction and leadership in the program.

Planning Team

Peter Miller, Professor

Julie Mead, Professor

Jerlando Jackson, Professor and Department Chair

Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis Graduate Faculty

Brian Burt, Assistant Professor

Clif Conrad, Professor

Elton Crim, Clinical Professor

John Diamond, Professor

Peter Goff, Assistant Professor

Richard Halverson, Professor

Kevin Henry, Assistant Professor

Nicholas Hillman, Associate Professor

Carolyn Kelley, Professor

Mollie McQuillan, Assistant Professor

Tina Salzman, Clinical Professor

Barbara Sramek, Clinical Professor

Xueli Wang, Professor

Anjalé Welton, Professor

Rachelle Winkle-Wagner, Professor

Affiliate Faculty

LaVar Charleston, Associate Dean for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion and Clinical Affiliate Professor

Letters of Support

Letters of support are attached from:

Barry Alvarez, Athletic Director for UW-Madison

Jeremy Schlitz, Athletic Director for Madison Metropolitan School District

Mark Nelson, Boys Director, Wisconsin Academy Basketball Program

Gary Diffie, Department Chair, Kinesiology

References

¹ See, e.g.: Sturges, A.J., Huysmans, Z., Way, W., & Goodson, A. (2020). Examining the role of high school athletic directors in promoting leadership development in high school student-athletes. *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, 14 (1), 58-81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19357397.2020.1736485>; Northington, M. (2016).

Transformational leadership behaviors of winning college athletic program directors: A qualitative exploratory study. <https://thesportjournal.org/article/transformational-leadership-behaviors-of-winning-college-athletic-program-directors-a-qualitative-exploratory-study/>; Li, M.-H., Kim Wai Sum, R., Wallhead, T., Sau Ching Ha, A., Hui Ping Sit, C., Li, Ru. (2019). Influence of perceived physical literacy on coaching efficacy and leadership behavior: A cross-sectional study. *Journal of Sports Science & Medicine*, 18 (1), 82-90.

² See, e.g., Yeung, R. (2015). Athletics, athletic leadership, and academic achievement. *Education & Urban Society*, 47(3), 361-387.

³ Aspen Institute, Project Play, <https://www.aspenprojectplay.org/youth-sports-facts/participation-rates>

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- ⁴ Several academic journals exist to address sports and education. See, e.g.: *Sport, Education, and Society*, <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cses20/current>; *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education*, <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/yssa20>; *The Journal of Physical Education and Sport*, <https://efsupit.ro/>; *The Sport Journal*, <https://thesportjournal.org/>; *Sport Management Education Journal*, <https://www.nassm.com/Journals/SMEJ>; *Journal of Sport Management*, <https://idrottsforum.org/tag/journal-of-sport-management/>
- ⁵ U.S. News and World Report, <https://www.usnews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-education-schools/education-administration-rankings>
- ⁶ UW-Madison, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis, <https://elpa.education.wisc.edu/about/>
- ⁷ See e.g., Pennamon, Tiffany (2018). Building the athletics bridge. *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, 34(26), 10.
- ⁸ Next College Student Athlete, <https://www.ncsasports.org/best-colleges/best-division-1-colleges>; Niche, <https://www.niche.com/colleges/search/best-college-athletics/?page=2>
- ⁹ UW-Madison Mission, <https://www.wisc.edu/about/mission/>
- ¹⁰ UW-Madison Strategic Framework, <https://strategicframework.wisc.edu/>
- ¹¹ See notes 1-4.
- ¹² Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, <https://dpi.wi.gov/licensing/general/administrators>
- ¹³ Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, <https://www.wiaawi.org/About-WIAA>
- ¹⁴ Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, Senior High School Handbook, <https://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Publications/2020-21handbook.pdf>
- ¹⁵ School of Education, Sports Leadership Master's Program Analysis (November 2018). Burning Glass. Labor Insights.
- ¹⁶ US Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/entertainment-and-sports/coaches-and-scouts.htm>
- ¹⁷ US Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/elementary-middle-and-high-school-principals.htm> [Note - the BLS includes athletic administrators in the category with school principals.]
- ¹⁸ US Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/management/postsecondary-education-administrators.htm> [Note - the BLS includes athletic administrators in the category with other higher education administrators.]