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Professionalism, Golf Coaching and a Master of Science Degree:
A Commentary

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INTRODUCTION
I am going to focus on a single theme in this commentary. It stems from the central thesis of Jenkins’ paper, which is that a Master of Science degree would facilitate the development of ‘professionalism’ in golf coaches (p. 693). Importantly, I want to offer an alternative, additional perspective on what a Master’s degree might do for golf coaches, by considering a further notion; Professionality. In an internet search, using the search term ‘extended professionality’ will ensure access to many of these older sources. This is not because I agree - nor disagree - with Jenkins’ central idea, it’s just that another perspective might catalyse thinking about delivery, as opposed to content. To my mind, it makes sense to keep putting delivery style front-and-centre in all planning (and reviewing) activities, to ensure a good ‘fit’ to the learning preferences and dispositions of recruits.

PROFESSIONALITY
As a concept, Professionality has a long history, emerging first out of the work of an Education professor at the University of Bristol, Eric Hoyle [1]. This work has recently been revisited by academics in Leeds (e.g., [2]), which gives nice symmetry to my account, since I’ve worked at the University of Bristol (and knew Eric Hoyle) and I now work in Leeds, where I work with Simon Jenkins. In Hoyle’s writing, Professionality describes the way in which any individual approaches working in a profession and how they go about practicing that profession. Professionality, therefore, can be seen as a half-sister to professionalism. It certainly subsumes a host of the other key terms that Jenkins uses to summarise his account. It is also important to recognise that Hoyle’s notions of Professionality, while heuristic when he was writing about them, have subsequently been shown to have real relevance to teachers. For that reason, I’d suggest they have a similar standing among coaches - whose work is also centred on learning - and to those designing courses that purport to generate learning.

With two main forms - restricted and extended – Professionality can be conceptualised as existing on a continuum. In the context of the current account, it could be used to locate different golf coaches; some coaches lean more toward a restricted approach while others favour the extended form. Any individuals’ position on the continuum identifies their ‘Professionality orientation’ [2]. Therefore, it does not represent a fixed perspective on their character or personality, but shows how they approach professional life. This extends to their learning life too.
EXTENDED PROFESSIONALITY

Individuals with an extended professionality often delve deeply into the nuances of theory, epistemology, ontology and axiology. It is easy to see that these individuals willingly embed themselves in the debates of the day (but do not assume that they are willing to talk about their thinking), to learn about underlying concepts and philosophies. They take an intellectual approach to their work so they will be equally interested in delivery that improves not only what they know but also how they came to know it. These individuals may prefer ‘knowing that’ over ‘knowing how’, leaving them, potentially, less motivated by practically-based learning.

RESTRICTED PROFESSIONALITY

In contrast, individuals with a restricted professionality favour learning from experience and day-to-day realities. Relying on ‘book learning’ doesn’t really float their boat, whereas learning how to do things better in their immediate working spaces will. They respond to activities that centre on the ‘doing’ of daily life; they want practical experiences that link to, and that can enhance, their daily professional practice so the people they work with do better in those instances. Much of their learning challenge is to realise that what they’ve learned may not be the best way to help their clients; unlearning of longstanding habits is tough. It’s no accident that the old adage is ‘old habits die hard’!

CONCLUSION

Even allowing for its shortcomings, such as not depicting the intensity of commitment that any individual demonstrates within their orientation, Professionality allows us to think about recruits in ways that we might not using other approaches. Just as each of these sets of recruits come with their own preferences for learning, they will experience the same challenges as any who are asked/required to learn in ways that cycle and recycle between familiar and unfamiliar. Sustaining the learning of individuals occupying different positions on the Restricted-Extended Professionality continuum shows all degree design teams that there is much to both learn and to unlearn. After all, just as there will be variation in the ‘Professionality orientation’ of students, the planners will include people on different points on the continuum too.

REFERENCES

EDITOR’S NOTE

Jim McKenna is Professor of Physical Activity and Health and head of the Active Lifestyles research centre in the Carnegie Faculty at Leeds Beckett University (soon to be renamed Leeds Beckett University). Jim came from University of Bristol, where he completed both M. Phil. and Ph. D. degrees; he ended his 20 years of service as Head of the Department of Exercise and Health Sciences. He has an extensive portfolio of peer-reviewed publications and grants focused on behaviour change, all delivered and assessed on a range of scales. One intensive intervention addresses outcomes of staged recovery intervention targeted on wounded injured and sick service personnel, based on inclusive sport and adventure
education. A larger project quantitatively evaluated the outcomes of health promotion campaigns delivered through 16 professional English football clubs to hard-to-reach men. He reviews extensively both for peer-reviewed journals and for respected funding agencies. He has also won an array of prizes for high quality teaching and research and his current workload involves teaching both PG supervisors and Ph.D. students; he is Director of Studies for a range of funded Ph.D. students.
A Master of Science (Latin: Magister Scientiae; abbreviated MS, M.S., MSc, M.Sc., SM, S.M., ScM or Sc.M.) is a master's degree in the field of science awarded by universities in many countries or a person holding such a degree. In contrast to the Master of Arts degree, the Master of Science degree is typically granted for studies in sciences, engineering and medicine and is usually for programs that are more focused on scientific and mathematical subjects; however, different universities have Masterâ€™s programme in Governance of Science, Technology and Innovations is among HSEâ€™s numerous English-taught programmes that are open to international students who can enrol full-time or take a semester or two as part of a study-abroad experience. HSE News Service has talked to some of the programmeâ€™s students about their decision to apply to HSE and their studies. Then when I started to choose a masterâ€™s programme, I took HSE into account and put it as my priority. Whatâ€™s more, HSE offers the opportunity of a Double Degree Programme with one of their partner school around the world, which immediately convinced and attracted me when I was choosing where to do my Masterâ€™s. Hereâ€™s why earning a masterâ€™s degree can be the right choice for you. Check this box to connect with an enrollment coach and receive personalized advice. Request Information. By submitting the form, you agree to receive details from Northeastern University about our degree programs and certificates via phone, email and/or text message. You can unsubscribe at any time. A masterâ€™s degree can make it easier to transition into more senior positions, such as management and leadership. Many organizations not only recognize the benefits of a masterâ€™s degree, but even prefer their employees to have one. In fact, 74 percent of employers have raised educational standards over the last several years, with many companies looking to hire those with advanced degrees. Master of Science Degree: A Commentary. Bryan McCullick. The University of Georgia. Department of Kinesiology. Sport Instruction Research Laboratory. 355 Ramsey Center. Athens, GA 30602. E-mail: bamcull@uga.edu. The article written by Simon Jenkins argues that “provision of a Master of Science degree in golf teaching/coaching would facilitate the development of â€œprofessionalismâ€ in golf coachesâ€. (p. 693). My response to this proposal, in short, is that I agree and would be an advocate for such a program. Using the example of Sean Foley, Jenkins has provided a relatively sound rationale for the need and how the establishment of such an academic degree could improve the golf teaching/coaching profession, industry, and, ultimately, benefit those students. Some professional masterâ€™s degrees start with the word Professional in the title, such as the Professional Science Masterâ€™s Degree (PSM), a hands-on degree with a heavy practical component giving students the skills and knowledge needed to work professionally in their chosen field. As ever, classifications and course details will differ depending on the country and institution. Finally, masterâ€™s degrees also vary in terms of the entry requirements applicants need to meet. To meet the requirements of a masterâ€™s degrees itâ€™s usually necessary to have graduated with a bachelorâ€™s degree (though not always), and some programs require a certain amount of professional experience. See below for the most common requirements for different types of masterâ€™s degrees.