

REFLECTION, FRESH OBSERVATIONS, AND GAPS IN NONPROFIT MARKETING EDUCATION” A NEED AND OPPORTUNITY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION TO IMPROVE THE EVOLVING CURRICULA

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Abstract

The nonprofit sector is a large, growing, and essential part of the United States' economy. There is a fascinating history of influence and complexity that is critical for marketing educators and business school administrators to understand if they are to lead its continuing evolution. This manuscript includes a brief historical perspective, a selective review of literature from nonprofit management and marketing education, discussion of contemporary issues to consider, and mixed-method research results regarding the prevalence and nature of nonprofit marketing education. The research results reveal four distinct themes that contribute new information: undergraduate and graduate students require different curricula so each is focused and delivered based on their respective experience and outlook while complimenting business school realities; the general tone of curricula elements and project work is often altruistic and consequently not effective in preparing undergraduate and graduate students to meet the marketing challenges unique to the nonprofit sector – whether a student's future role is tactical or in a board leadership capacity; certification programs are few and represent a unique and untapped area of opportunity for business schools to leverage existing resources and provide a needed resource for existing nonprofit professionals with little or no marketing education; and lastly, nomenclature issues related to or associated with nonprofit marketing hamper the ability of faculty to reach educational objectives in nonprofit marketing. The manuscript concludes with concrete curricula and nomenclature strategies to guide and further evolve nonprofit marketing education in the United States.