Christopher Moran, an accounting sophomore, rallied students to support the creation of the new sports management minor at the Eller College of Management.

**Eller looks to score with sports minor**

By: Ian Friedman  
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In today's faltering economy, sports are still big business. The Eller College of Management has plans to start teaching students how to "show me the money."

Management and Organizations Department Head Stephen Gilliland said starting this summer students would have the opportunity to minor in sports management.

"We are putting together a sports management minor, but until we get the final blessing from the (Arizona) Board of Regents we are calling it a management minor with a sports concentration," Gilliland said. "It will be six courses. It is open to non-business students … (who) can take one, two or all six classes this summer."

The idea for this new program came from students voicing their desire to get involved in the world of sports management, he said.

"We got to see just a huge outpouring of support for this," Gilliland said. "Within the last eight months, the budget situation has thrown some definite wrinkles our direction in terms of making this happen. But we have found a way to get people to develop these classes, put the curriculum together in spite of that, and at least we're going to be able to offer it initially this summer for the first time."

He said Christopher Moran, a business administration sophomore, was instrumental in raising student support for this new program.

"I got a lot of interest from people involved with sports and, surprisingly, I got a lot of interest from people who are not," Moran said. "On the student side, it is really exciting and I guess you could say on the university recruiting side it is also really exciting, because a lot of students are looking for specialized programs like this."

Moran said this would provide a great opportunity for UA students to get a start in the sporting industry.
"I personally came out to the UA because of the sports marketing association, and I am really passionate about getting involved with sports," Moran said. "I wrote a formal letter and I got it signed by over 500 students. I went on a big campaign to get this through."

UA Athletic Director Jim Livengood said this program fills a need at the university.

"I just felt it was really important; there are a lot of students here at the U of A (athletes and non-athletes) who are interested in sports administration," Livengood said. "There are a lot of students that come (here), that have an interest in sports that want to look at jobs that aren't going to be pro players or anything like that."

The minor would include three new classes: sports administration and planning, sports marketing and management, and sports communication, Gilliland said.

"We are trying to get donor support to expand the course set," Gilliland said. "In order to get up to the six or seven course that we would like to develop, we are trying to get donor support for that."

Victor Piscitello, an adjunct lecturer in the department of marketing, will be teaching one of the new classes. Piscitello served seven years on the board of directors for the Fiesta Bowl, which holds an NCAA basketball tournament in Tucson as well as the NCAA national football championship.

"I am going to try and bring a real-life perspective," Piscitello said. "I am going to bring guest speakers in to come in and talk about sports marketing, and I am going to look at doing a project where we investigate the different aspects of sports marketing, e.g. the agents, the teams, the players, the advertisers."

UA Athletics will also work, within NCAA regulations, to provide members of the sports management program with different opportunities at the university, Livengood said.

"They might want to be in a college athletic administration, they might want to be in one of the professional sports administration and so on," Livengood said. "There are a lot of things going on across the country in that area; it just seemed like a needed field for us."

The new program would provide UA students with the skills to move to the forefront of the sports management world, Moran said.

"This will just be a leg up because the sports industry is getting cutthroat, and it is getting more popular as more people get interested," he said. "I know a lot of my friends are just stoked for it because they get to apply what they are learning in school to the sports industry."

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