

Oklahoma Academic Study Gains Traction Following Thunder's Historic NBA Title Win

This groundbreaking research examines how Coach Deion Sanders has transformed sports leadership and media influence.

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK, UNITED STATES, June 27, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ --

Riding the wave of Oklahoma City's first NBA Championship since 1979, a new academic study now resonates more than ever. Dr. Daryl D. Green, Dean at Langston University, applies scholarly rigor to the meteoric success of both the championship-winning Oklahoma City Thunder and the media mastery of Deion "Coach Prime" Sanders—exploring parallels in leadership, culture, and digital branding.



Deion Sanders

Published in the American Research Journal of Business and Management, Dr. Green's research, "Winning Beyond the Field: A Case Study of Deion Sanders' Change Management in Football," examines how elite minds on the court and sidelines harness public engagement to drive organizational success.

"Oklahoma City's championship is a real-life case study of strategic leadership and culture-building," notes Dr. Green. "It lends new urgency to analyzing Coach Prime's media and branding strategies."

The timing couldn't be better:

- Thunder's championship parade downtown drew massive crowds, spotlighting the power of communal identity [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)+[9news9.com](https://www.9news9.com)+[9talksport.com](https://www.9talksport.com)+9.
- Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, who earned 2025 NBA MVP honors, exemplifies how standout leadership fuels team success

Now, a timely and groundbreaking academic study—led by students at Oklahoma Baptist

University under the mentorship of Dr. Green—offers the first serious academic exploration of Sanders’ strategic influence in sports, branding, and cultural change.

Titled “Winning Beyond the Field: A Case Study of Deion Sanders’ Change Management in Football,” the research was recently published and is already drawing attention from scholars, sports marketers, and media analysts. The full article is available online at: <https://arjonline.org/papers/arjbm/v11-i1/3.pdf>.

“Very little academic literature existed on Deion Sanders despite his enormous cultural impact,” said Dr. Green, now Dean of the Langston University School of Business. “I knew this was a moment that would matter for years to come — and we were first to capture it. As a dean, I also understand how cultural influencers like Sanders can shape how organizations and leaders operate.”

The research was conducted by a dynamic team of Oklahoma Baptist University MBA students, including Caitlyn Stickney and Matthew Walkingstick, along with faculty members Dr. Tracy Dunn, Dr. Jack McCann, and Dr. Heidi O’Donnell, under the leadership of Dr. Green.

What’s more, the study dives into how Coach Sanders’ use of his son Deion Jr.’s social media enterprise, created a new blueprint for college football branding — one that resonates with Gen Z and drives engagement like never before.

“Coach Prime’s strategic use of media has disrupted the way fans, athletes, and institutions connect. It’s not just football — it’s leadership in a digital era,” said Dr. Green.

As the NBA Championship draws attention to the Oklahoma City Thunder’s deep playoff run, and with the NFL now entering summer camps, this is a rare moment when Oklahoma sits at the center of the sports world — and this new academic spotlight adds to the state’s growing influence.

About the Research

Citation: Green, D. D., Dunn, T., McCann, J., O’Donnell, H., Stickney, C., & Walkingstick, M. (2025). Winning Beyond the Field: A Case Study of Deion Sanders’ Change Management in Football. American Research Journal of Business and Management, 10(2), 85–95.

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Dr. Daryl D. Green is available for media interviews and expert commentary on leadership, sports influence, and cultural branding. With a deep background in business education and strategic foresight, Dr. Green offers powerful insights into what today’s leaders can learn from Coach Prime’s approach. Media professionals or community leaders interested in interviews or expert commentary on this article can contact Dr. Green directly at advice@darylgreen.org or (865) 719-7239.

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AGSM Consulting LLC provides consulting, guidance, and management training for today's small businesses. Estraletta Green and Dr. Daryl D. Green formed their consultancy in Tennessee. Additionally, Dr. Green is the Dickinson Chair of Business in the Paul Dickinson College of Business at Oklahoma Baptist University. AGSM LLC offers comprehensive services tailored to the needs of business owners. This includes, but is not limited to, business and marketing plan preparation, audit/management evaluations, general business consulting services, leadership development training, professional seminars/workshops, speaker services, and personal advisement. The company focuses on new and start-up businesses, preferably in the earlier stages of operation. For more information, please visit www.agsmconsulting.com.

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