# A G E N D A

National Collegiate Athletic Association

Division I Academic Cabinet

Hyatt Regency
Indianapolis, Indiana

February 2-3, 2009

1. Welcome and announcements. [Supplement No. 1]

2. Update from the NCAA Division I Working Group to Review At-Risk Student-Athlete Issues. [Supplement Nos. 2a and 2b] (Julie Cromer and President McPhee)

3. Updates from the Division I governance structure.

   a. Update from the NCAA Division I Communications and Coordination Committee. [Supplement No. 3] (Beth DeBauche)

   b. Update regarding the NCAA Division I Board of Directors and NCAA Division I Leadership Council meetings. [Supplement No. 4] (DeBauche)

   c. NCAA Division I Basketball Academic Enhancement Group update. [Supplement No. 5] (Cromer)

   d. NCAA Football Academic Working Group update. [Supplement No. 6 to be distributed at the meeting.] (Cromer)

   e. Update from the NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance. [Supplement No. 7] (Diane Dickman)

   f. Update from other Division I cabinets. [Supplement No. 8] (Matt Burgemeister)

   g. Update from the NCAA Executive Committee - New conflict of interest policy and process. [Supplement No. 9] (Burgemeister)

4. Review of legislation and interpretations. (Burgemeister)

   a. Review draft guiding principles document. [Supplement No. 10a]

b. Update on legislation referred to the cabinet in the 2008-09 legislative cycle, NCAA Proposal Nos. 2008-21, 2008-36, 2008-37 and 2008-39. [Supplement No. 10b to be distributed at the meeting.]

c. Update on legislation sponsored by the NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet and NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet amendments, if applicable, Proposal Nos. 2008-32, 2008-33, 2008-34, 2008-35 and 2008-38. [Supplement No. 10b to be distributed at the meeting.]

d. Other legislation the cabinet provided comment regarding, Proposal Nos. 2008-47, 2008-48 and 2008-60. [Supplement No. 10b to be distributed at the meeting.]

e. Update regarding noncontroversial proposal, early academic qualifier transcripts. [Supplement No. 10b to be distributed at the meeting.]

f. Update on actions taken by NCAA Division I Legislative Review and Interpretations Committee. [Supplement No. 10c]

(1) "Plus one" recommendation.

(2) Optional minors issue.

5. Review cabinet priorities and draft schedule. [Supplement No. 11] (Cromer)

6. Consider academic requirements throughout the recruiting process. [Supplement No. 12] (Burgemeister)

- Note: The NCAA Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet is also considering this item.

7. Discuss waiver outcomes and potential policy implications.

a. Initial eligibility.

(1) Update on initial-eligibility waiver statistics. [Supplement No. 13a] (Bob Chichester and Steve Clar)

(2) Update on prospective student-athlete review statistics. [Supplement No. 13b] (Chichester and Clar)

(3) Policy discussion.

b. Progress toward degree.

(1) Update on progress-toward-degree waiver statistics. [Supplement No. 14a] (Bill Regan and Katy Yurk)

(2) Update on waiver research analysis and related policy issues. [Supplement No. 14b] (Regan and Yurk)

(3) Review of waivers based on new baseball specific legislation. [Supplement No. 14c] (Regan and Yurk)

8. Two-four transfer discussion. (Burgemeister, Cromer and Todd Petr)

a. Review of available data. [Supplement No. 15]

b. Review of Committee on Academic Performance recommendation regarding additional data collection. [Supplement No. 16 and for additional information, please refer to Supplement No. 7] (Burgemeister)

**Anticipated Action Item:**

- **The cabinet will provide comment on the draft list of 2-4 transfer data items.**

c. Discuss next steps.

9. Review of current appeal processes, including transfer issues. [Supplement Nos. 17a and 17b] (Cromer)

**Anticipated Action Item:**

- **Consider legislation to amend initial-eligibility and progress-toward-degree waivers appeal process.**

10. Report from the National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics (N4A) president. (Cromer, Shukie and N4A representatives)

11. Discuss nontraditional courses with a focus on college courses. [Supplement No. 18] (Cromer and Shukie)

    a. Review N4A best practices.

    b. Discuss next steps.

12. Discuss impact of academic reform on academic support services/personnel. [Supplement No. 19] (Cromer)

    a. Perspective of N4A representative.

    b. Review survey draft.

    c. Discuss next steps.

13. Discuss time demands on student-athletes. (Tom Paskus, Petr and Brianna Scott)

    a. Review available data from GOALS/SCORE studies. [Supplement No. 20a]

    b. Review final exam research findings. [Supplement No. 20b]

    c. Discuss next steps.

14. Review of IA FARA comments on "good academic standing." [Supplement Nos. 21a, 21b and 21c] (Cromer)

15. Updates from committees reporting to the cabinet.

    a. NCAA Foreign Student Records Committee. [Supplement No. 22] (Frank Arredondo and Jobrina Perez)

**Anticipated Action Item:**

- **Consider legislation to amend composition of the Foreign Student Records Committee. Note: This item also requires action by the NCAA Division II Academic Requirements Committee.**

b. NCAA High School Review Committee. [Supplement No. 23] (Chichester and Jennifer Lane)

**Anticipated Action Item:**

- **Consider policy change to grant the High School Review Committee the authority to serve as the appellate body for core-course matters. Note: This item also requires action by the Academic Requirements Committee.**

16. Updates on communications/outreach plans. [Supplement No. 24] (Cromer)

    a. List of groups.

    b. Updates from identified contacts.

    c. Summary from this meeting.

17. Articles of interest. [Supplement No. 25]

18. Review dates and sites of future cabinet meetings.

    a. June 29-30; Portland, Oregon.

    - June 28 - Travel anytime.
    - June 29 - Meeting from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
    - June 30 - Meeting from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
      Committee dinner at local restaurant.
    - July 1 - Return travel.

    b. September 14-15; Indianapolis.

    - September 13 - Travel anytime.
    - September 14 - Meeting from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
    - September 15 - Meeting from 8 to 1 p.m.
      Return travel after 3 p.m.

c. Discuss possible February 2010 meeting locations and dates. [Supplement No. 26]

Note: If the February meeting is conducted outside Indianapolis, the June meeting will be in Indianapolis.

19. Other business.

20. Adjournment.

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# Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation

## An Overview Prepared for the NCAA Division I Board of Directors

January 2009

### BACKGROUND

In response to *The Second-Century Imperatives*, a report issued in October 2006 by The NCAA Presidential Task Force on the Future of Division I Intercollegiate Athletics, a working group was appointed to examine issues pertaining to the academic risk of student-athletes. Specifically, the working group was charged to: (a) Identify factors and characteristics that may cause a student-athlete to be "at-risk" of not graduating from his or her institution; (b) Establish a data-based definition of "at risk" that allows for local differences among the diverse NCAA Division I membership; (c) Develop a tool for campuses to use to examine special admissions of scholarship student-athletes and to measure whether campus systems can adequately support the number of student-athletes admitted via special admissions review each year; (d) Identify model practices in academic and life-skill programs to support "at-risk" student-athletes in their academic endeavors; and (e) Develop mechanisms to assist institutions in evaluating the level of academic and life-skill support provided to "at-risk" student-athletes and in determining if changes or enhancements are necessary.

To fulfill its charge, the working group met four times from February 2008 to January 2009 and created a management system designed to assist campuses in identifying, assessing and mitigating risk for all student-athletes. An overview of the results of these efforts is provided in this summary document. A formal report will be presented to the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet in February.

### DEFINING "RISK"

The group began its work by conceptualizing "risk" to include all the factors that can reduce a student-athlete's chances of graduating from the institution, rather than limiting its review to academic-risk factors. Further, the group noted that every student has some degree of risk of not graduating until the time that he or she actually completes all requirements for a degree. As a result, throughout their collegiate careers student-athletes are on a risk continuum determined by factors that often fall into three main categories:

a. Factors that may be inherent to the student at the time of entry into a member institution (e.g., academic preparation, two- or four-year transfer status, academic motivation and effort, socioeconomic status, first-generation college student);

b. Factors that may be inherent to the student-athlete's institution, program or sports team (e.g., sport time demands, academic support programming); and

c. Factors that arise during a student-athlete's collegiate career (e.g., academic ineligibility, personal issues, actual or perceived opportunities to pursue a professional sports career, coaching change, exhaustion of athletics eligibility).

Consistent with this approach, a student-athlete's individual risk level may fluctuate from low risk to high risk due to the development or mitigation of various risk factors. The working group acknowledges the paradigm shift presented within its work, as "at risk" often is used to categorize a group of students who are academically underprepared at the point of entry into the collegiate environment. However, research regarding student-athlete graduation success indicates that other nonacademic factors, some of which develop after the student-athlete has enrolled in college, present significant threats to a student-athlete's likelihood of persistence to graduation. Further, the group acknowledged the stigma that can sometimes be attached to students labeled "at risk" and emphasized that care should be taken when assigning labels or categories. It is the working group's assertion that a system that assesses and recommends support for each student-athlete, regardless of his or her level of risk, will facilitate the success of all student-athletes, while helping to minimize negative perceptions regarding student-athletes who present a higher risk of not graduating.

## FACILITATING LEARNING AND ACHIEVING GRADUATION

The working group recommends the development of a system to assist institutions with assessing and supporting all student-athletes in their pursuit of college degrees. This electronic program will be called "FLAG", which stands for Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation. FLAG has been designed to help institutions optimize their respective campus environments to leverage opportunities for graduation success. In so doing, FLAG will provide tools for institutions to increase the efficiency of their current services--including academic support and life-skills programs--and to make informed decisions regarding recruiting, admissions and program resources (e.g., staffing and budget). The working group believes implementation of the FLAG system will address each of the points of its charge by providing three modules: one for assessing individual student-athlete risk; one for assigning suggested support services, based on the student-athlete's specific risk factors; and, one for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the institution’s student-athlete support services.

FLAG will be a Web-based system integrated into an existing NCAA platform [e.g., NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program (APP) or Compliance Assistant internet (CA*i*)] to provide accessibility and familiarity for campus users. In addition, the program will use as many existing data sources as possible in order to minimize the need for additional data entry. For example, student-athlete academic profiles should be able to migrate from the APP into FLAG so campuses only have to enter basic data one time.

## GRADUATION RISK OVERVIEW

The Graduation Risk Overview (GRO) is a scored model that provides a dynamic quantification of an individual student-athlete's potential barriers to graduation. GRO includes a weighted scoring system for a number of factors that have the greatest impact on a student-athlete's likelihood of graduation success. When incoming and continuing student-athletes are evaluated against the identified factors, a statistical measure of individual risk is calculated. In addition, GRO allows for institutions to factor in local differences and to incorporate risk factors applicable to their respective student populations. It will be useful for all campuses, regardless of institutional mission, student demographics, geographical location or levels of resources available.

GRO is a data-driven model that was developed after an examination of over 50 academic and nonacademic risk variables identified for testing by the working group. Based on a thorough review, the risk factors were narrowed to include variables within five categories, including: (a) Academic; (b) Role of academics (in the student-athlete's life); (c) Transfer status; (d) Personal history; and (e) Sport. Please see the Appendix to this report for a list of the weighted variables within each category. A student-athlete's risk can be classified as low, medium, or high based on the number and nature of risk factors presented. For optimal results, each individual student-athlete should be evaluated first as a recruit or incoming freshman, and then at least once per academic year throughout his or her collegiate career.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

Early identification of risk and early intervention with appropriate support services are crucial to improving each student-athlete's opportunity to graduate. Using the GRO module within FLAG, institutions can complete an individual assessment of each student-athlete's risk, which will generate a list of suggested support services for the particular risk factors presented. The system will be programmed for flexibility to tailor the service list generated to match institutional programs and resources. Further, institutions will be strongly encouraged to take advantage of existing campus resources to the greatest possible extent, rather than replicating services within the athletic department.

Over time, "best" and "model" support practices that have a demonstrated history of success will be identified via FLAG's evaluation module and will be used to populate the suggested services field. These services and programs also will be maintained for the membership via a searchable database available within FLAG.

## EVALUATION

FLAG will include an evaluation mechanism to assist institutions in assessing the overall level of risk presented by current student-athletes collectively, including the mitigating effects of support services provided. Assessing risk factors for all student-athletes will provide for a measure of the cumulative risk of a team or program and will produce useful information when campus decision makers and practitioners are planning and budgeting appropriate support services.

The FLAG reports will assess the aggregate level of risk assumed by the institution, along with the potential risk of each recruiting class, to inform recruiting and admissions decisions, including decisions regarding special or alternate admissions. The reporting feature will allow institutions to quantify outcomes and measure improvement (e.g., decreased risk) for individuals or groups of student-athletes based on the support provided. The reports also will be useful communication tools for discussions within the athletics department, across campus and with external constituents.

## CONCLUSION

The working group will submit its recommendations next month to the Academic Cabinet. If the working group's recommendations are approved, the group's final report will become a working document to guide the NCAA staff in developing and implementing the concepts.

In addition, the report will be shared with a number of constituent groups (e.g., academic advisors, faculty athletics representatives, student-athlete advisory committees, member conferences, coaches associations) in anticipation of their interest in the research findings provided in the report. The support of presidents and chancellors will be crucial in this endeavor as academic support professionals are asked to undertake more nuanced efforts to assess and support student-athletes. Support and "buy-in" from athletics directors, administrative staff and coaches also will be important to the successful implementation of FLAG on any campus. As a result, outreach efforts will be specifically tailored to each audience in order to communicate the program’s particular relevancy to each constituent group. For example, materials developed for the national coaching organizations will communicate the program's utility for head and assistant coaches in their efforts to support student-athlete eligibility, retention and, ultimately, graduation.

Student-athletes fall along a continuum of risk that is based on multiple factors, not all of which are academic. Institutional units must collaborate to identify student-athlete support needs and to provide quality services and programs to foster student-athlete graduation success. In addition, informed decision-making is essential to optimizing campus resources to mitigate student-athlete hurdles to graduation. To this end, FLAG is designed to address each of these principles and to support institutional endeavors to ensure graduation for every student-athlete.

# Graduation Risk Overview (GRO) Models

## Academic Risk for Student-Athletes at Entry

| Category | Weight | Variable(s) / Criteria | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | +2 | HS core GPA < 2.6 or<br>ACT/SAT < 820 or<br>core units < 16 or<br>academic nonqualifier or<br>number of HS > 2 or<br>educational disability diagnosed or<br>transfer GPA < 2.6 (for 2-4 or 4-4 transfers) | |
| Role of academics | +1 | Identifies strongly as athlete, not as student | |
| | +2 | Academic effort lacking (historical or contemporary) | |
| Transfer | +1 | Transferred into current institution (2-4 or 4-4) | |
| Personal history | +1 | First-generation college student or<br>student has low financial resources or<br>student is homesick | |
| Sport | +1 | Student in high profile sport at your school | |
| | +1 | Poor coach attitude toward academics or<br>coach in first year | |
| Total | | 0-1 = low risk; 2-3 = moderate; 4+ = high | |

## Academic Risk for Student-Athletes Post-Entry

| Category | Weight | Variable(s) / Criteria | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | +2 | Current cumulative GPA < 2.6 or<br>current term GPA < 2.6 or<br>educational disability diagnosed or<br>academically ineligible within the past year or<br>other locally identifiable academic red flag | |
| Role of academics | +1 | Identifies strongly as athlete, not as student or<br>professional sports opportunity presents | |
| | +2 | Academic effort lacking (historical or contemporary) | |
| | +1 | Negative attitude toward major | |
| Transfer | +1 | Transferred into current institution (2-4 or 4-4) | |
| Personal history | +1 | First-generation college student or<br>student has low financial resources or<br>student is homesick | |
| | +1 | Health, family, mental health or substance abuse issue | |
| Sport | +1 | Student in high profile sport at your school | |
| | +2 | Exhausted eligibility prior to graduation | |
| | +1 | Poor coach attitude toward academics or<br>coaching change occurred or<br>dissatisfied with athletics experience | |
| Total | | 0-2 = low risk; 3-4 = moderate; 5+ = high | |

# Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation

A Preview from the Working Group Examining Issues related to Academic Risk

## History and Process Overview

- Presidential Task Force Report noted need to focus on support for "at-risk" student-athletes.
- In response, a working group was formed to examine issues pertaining to academic "risk" of student-athletes.
- Working group's report will be formally presented to the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet in February.

## Working Group Charge

- Identify factors and characteristics that may cause a student-athlete to be at risk of not graduating from his or her institution.
- Establish a data-based definition of at risk that allows for local differences among the diverse Division I membership.
- Develop a tool for campuses to use to examine special admissions of scholarship student-athletes and to measure whether campus systems can adequately support the number of student-athletes admitted via special admissions review each year.

## Working Group Charge

- Identify model practices in academic and life-skills programs to support at-risk student-athletes in their academic endeavors.
- Develop mechanisms to assist institutions in evaluating the level of academic and life-skills support provided to at-risk student-athletes and in determining if enhancements or changes are necessary.

## Defining "At Risk"

- Determined to be at risk of not graduating from a four-year institution.
- Working group was mindful of negative connotations of at-risk label, as well as traditional view of at-risk students as those who are academically underprepared as they enter college.
- At the urging of the NCAA Division I Board of Directors and the Oversight and Monitoring Group, a new paradigm was developed.

## Nature of "Risk"

- Any student-athlete can be at risk of not graduating.
- Risk can take a variety of forms, including nonacademic factors (e.g., first-generation status, financial hardship, time demands of sport).
- Risk factors can be specific to the student-athlete or can be presented by team culture or campus environment.

## Nature of "Risk"

- A student-athlete's level of risk may fluctuate throughout the course of his or her collegiate enrollment.
- As a result, risk assessments should not be limited to the point of student-athlete entry. Rather, they should continue throughout a student-athlete's career.
- In order to best support student-athlete success, institutions need a management system to identify and mitigate student-athlete risk of not graduating.

## FLAG Program

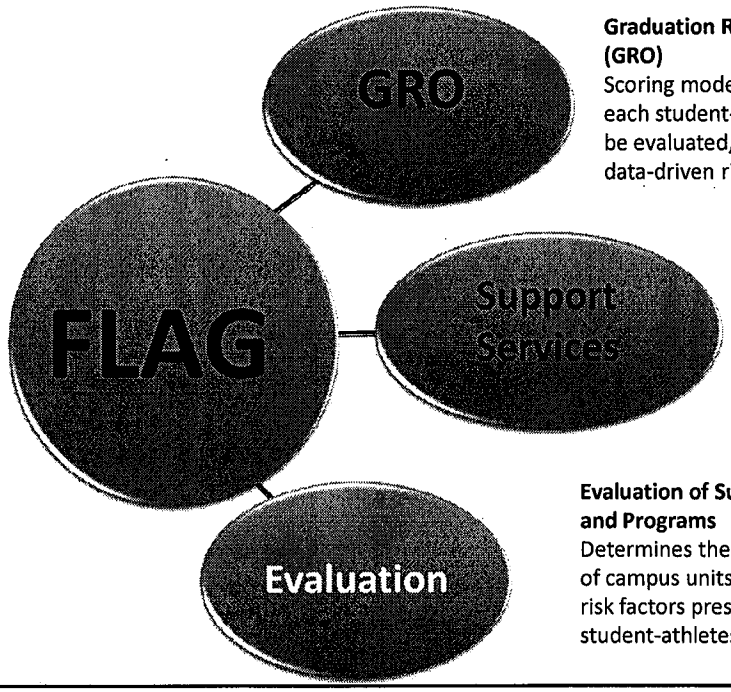
*Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation*

- Program's purposes:
  - To optimize campus environment to leverage opportunities for graduation success.
  - To increase efficiency of current services, including academic support and life skills programs.
  - To inform decision-making regarding recruiting, admissions and program resources (e.g., staffing and budget).

# FLAG Program

*Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation*

- Primary components will…
  - Determine an individual student-athlete's hurdles to graduation.
  - Match support services for an individual student-athlete to mitigate hurdles.
  - Evaluate the level and effectiveness of services provided.




**Graduation Risk Overview (GRO)**
Scoring model by which each student-athlete can be evaluated, based on data-driven risk factors.

**Support Services**
Activities designed to counter the risk factors presented by each student-athlete.

**Evaluation of Support Services and Programs**
Determines the effectiveness of campus units in mitigating risk factors presented by student-athletes collectively.

## FLAG Structure

*Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation*

- A current NCAA Web-based program (e.g., APP, CA*i*) would be expanded to include a FLAG module.
- The FLAG module would be programmed to:
  - Compute a GRO score for each student-athlete.
  - Match suggested services to factors identified for each student-athlete.
  - Provide summary reports regarding the effectiveness of programs and services and the potential impact of recruiting and admissions decisions on service provision.

## Next Steps

- Board update during Convention.
- Academic Cabinet review in February.
  - Academic Cabinet could approve program and recommend an implementation time line to begin as early as Fall 2009.
  - If Academic Cabinet approves program in February, education and training will begin Spring 2009 with NCAA Regional Seminars and various constituent meetings (e.g., professional development conferences).

# Final Thoughts…

- Student-athletes fall along a continuum of risk that is based on multiple factors – not all of which are academic.
- Institutional units must collaborate to identify student-athlete support needs and to provide quality services and programs to foster student-athlete graduation success.
- Informed decision-making is essential to optimizing campus resources to mitigate student-athlete hurdles to graduation.
- To this end, FLAG is designed to support institutional endeavors to ensure graduation for every student-athlete.

**SUPPLEMENT NO. 3**

REPORT OF

THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

DIVISION I COMMUNICATIONS AND COORDINATION COMMITTEE

CONFERENCE CALL

Participants: October 15, 2008

Grace Calhoun, Indiana University – (Awards, Benefits and Financial Aid Cabinet)
Carolyn Callahan, University of Virginia – (Academics Cabinet)
Joseph D'Antonio, Big East Conference – (Legislative Council)
Damon Evans, University of Georgia – (Leadership Council)
Rob Halvaks, Big West Conference – (Administration Cabinet)
Kerry Kenny, Patriot League – (SAAC)
Petrina Long, UCLA – (Recruiting Cabinet)
Mike Rogers, Baylor University – (Amateurism Cabinet)
Jeff Schemmel, San Diego State University – (Championships/Sports Management Cabinet)
Beth DeBauche, NCAA – recording secretary

NCAA staff: Wayne Burrow, Megan Coyne, Angie Cretors, Diane Dickman, Lynn Holzman, Michelle Hosick, Brad Hostetter, Amy Huchthausen, Kevin Lennon, Steve Mallonee, Delise O'Meally, Carol Reep, Geoff Silver, Jackie Thurnes, Sharon Tufano, and Leeland Zeller also participated on the call.

The conference call was called to order by the chair, Damon Evans, at 2:05 p.m.

**1.** **Welcome and opening remarks**. Damon Evans welcomed new Legislative Council chair Joseph D'Antonio to the call and thanked the group for their participation. He reminded the group that the purpose of the call is to identify the big issues on the Division I agenda that are of interest to other governance bodies to ensure a higher level of coordination in consideration of the issues.

**2.** **Reports from September Cabinet meetings**.

**a. Academic Cabinet.**

(1) Nonlegislative matters. Academic Cabinet chair, Carolyn Callahan reported that, during its first meeting, the Academic Cabinet focused on identifying big issues on the Division I agenda and on taking a proactive approach. She reported that the cabinet has identified a number of priority topics to examine, including:

(a) The academic success of transfer students, especially two-year college transfer students. As part of this examination, the cabinet has asked the Division I Board of Directors and the Committee on Academic Performance to collect more data with regard to the academic performance of two-year college students.

(b) Nontraditional course work. [Note: Committee members noted the membership seems to have a number of questions regarding nontraditional course work generally and Proposal Nos. 2008-32 and 2008-35 more specifically. It was reported that the faculty, especially, seem to have questions regarding these proposals and the group suggested not only would education regarding these proposals be important, but faculty athletics representatives should be encouraged to take the lead on this issue.]

(c) The impact of academic reform on academic support personnel.

(d) Time demands on student-athletes.

(2) Legislative matters. Carolyn Callahan mentioned that, from a legislative standpoint, the cabinet:

(a) Recommends the Legislative Council adopt noncontroversial legislation to specify that institutions are required to submit a final high school transcript for student-athletes who were certified as early academic qualifiers; and that these transcripts must be submitted by November 15 following the individual's initial full-time collegiate enrollment.

(b) Supports Proposal No. 2008-48, which would reduce, in baseball, the maximum number of contests from 56 to 52. The cabinet believes this proposal would likely result in less missed class time.

**b. Administration Cabinet**.

(1) Nonlegislative matters. Administration Cabinet chair, Rob Halvaks reported that, during its first meeting, the cabinet developed some value-based guiding principles to direct its committee appointment process. The cabinet also identified issues for its agenda and plans to:

(a) Work with the Leadership Council to seek to identify ways to develop a broader and more diverse pool of representatives to serve in the governance structure. [Note: Committee members discussed the fact that diversity is more than ethnic and gender diversity and must include

positional diversity as well. The group discussed the fact that while there are a number of FARs serving in the structure, their service is not distributed well throughout the structure. Identifying ways to achieve more positional balance in the structure must be part of the broader diversity conversation.]

(b) Begin developing an assessment tool for the new Division I governance structure.

(c) Start examining, along with the Championships/Sports Management Cabinet, the current number and structure of sport committee regions.

(d) Assign individual cabinet members to review the progress of reclassifying institutions to determine whether it is appropriate to advance the institution to the next year of the reclassification process.

(2) Legislative Matters. Rob Halvaks reported that, from a legislative standpoint, the cabinet:

(a) Supports Proposal No. 2008-59, which adds sand volleyball as an emerging sport for women and removes archery, badminton, synchronized swimming and team handball as emerging sports for women, but recommends that the proposal be divided to permit the Legislative Council to take one action to include sand volleyball as an emerging sport and one action to eliminate the other sports listed as emerging sports.

(b) Took no position on Proposal Nos. 2008-64, 2008-70 and 2008-71, which are intended to address membership-related issues; recommending that the Division I Legislative Council refer the proposals to the Division I Leadership Council to be considered as part of its broader discussion of Division I membership issues during the moratorium.

**c. Amateurism Cabinet.**

(1) Nonlegislative Matters. Mike Rogers, chair of the Amateurism Cabinet, reported that the cabinet received a great deal of background education during its first meeting to ensure the members had the requisite understanding of the issues pertaining to amateurism and identified the following matters for future examination:

(a) The issue of agents and advisors interaction with prospective student-athletes and student-athletes and the potential impact on eligibility.

(b) The challenges facing institutions and the Eligibility Center with regard to amateurism certification.

(c) The definition of a professional team and whether the current broad definition unfairly penalizes prospective student-athletes who never intended to professionalize themselves.

(2) Legislative Matters. Mike Rogers also explained that the cabinet supports Proposal No. 2008-13, which is intended, in an individual sport, to permit a student-athlete to accept prize money based on his/her place, finish or performance in an open event during any official vacation period, provided the prize money does not exceed actual and necessary expenses. He explained as this proposal would allow student-athletes participating in individual sports the same opportunity as is currently provided to prospective student-athletes.

**d. Awards, Benefits, Expenses and Financial Aid Cabinet.**

(1) Nonlegislative matters. Chair, Grace Calhoun reported that the cabinet, in seeking to address its charge, made the determination to face the big issues impacting the division head on rather than take a reactive approach. Based on that determination, the cabinet identified the following issues for thorough consideration over the course of the next few years:

(a) Examination of maximum grant-in-aid limitations, including individual and team limits along with equivalency versus head count designations. Grace noted the time appears right to focus on these important issues separate from competitive equity concerns. She also indicated that it may be helpful to gage the Leadership Council's level of interest in this examination.

(b) Multiyear scholarships/presumption of renewal concept.

(c) Educational outreach to financial aid administrators.

(2) Legislative Matters. From a legislative standpoint, Grace Calhoun noted the cabinet:

(a) Offered an alternative to Proposal 2008-25A. This alternative, Proposal No. 2008-25B, specifies that an institution shall not provide a high school, prepatory school or transfer prospective student-athlete a written offer of athletically related financial aid until he or she has completed the amateurism certification questionnaire administered by the NCAA Eligibility Center. Grace explained this modification eliminated the

reference in Proposal No. 2008-25A to official visits out of concern that requiring the amateurism certification questionnaire to be completed prior to an official visit is cumbersome and could result in a delay of a visit.

(b) Recommends that Proposal Nos. 2008-40 and 2008-41, which calls for an increase in the grant-in-aid limits in women's volleyball and baseball, respectively, be tabled by the Legislative Council to allow for time for the cabinet to conduct a broader examination of maximum grant-in-aid limitations for all sports.

**e. Championships/Sports Management Cabinet**.

(1) Nonlegislative Matters. Cabinet chair, Jeff Schemmel reported that the cabinet:

(a) Received information on both the increase in travel costs for NCAA championships travel costs and the decrease in flight availability, which impacts the ability to transport teams and individual student-athletes to their championship destinations in a timely and efficient manner. He explained that the cabinet reviewed three tiers of recommendations designed to help address these problems. The first tier of recommendations did not require cabinet approval and are being implemented by staff. The cabinet approved the single recommendation in the second tier, which calls for an increase in the travel policy mileage limitation threshold and an increase in the policy regarding the ground commute from the nearest airport to the championships site. This tier-two recommendation was for fall sports only due to their immanency and the cabinet agreed to consider implementing the change for winter and spring championships after assessing the impact. The cabinet also received a summary of tier-three recommendations and agreed that additional discussion by the membership was needed. The cabinet agreed to solicit feedback from institutions, conferences and sports committees. Jeff noted that the cabinet members are mindful that, as a result of the suggested tier-three changes, cabinet members do not want to impede the progress that has been made in the areas of bracketing and seeding.

(b) In Men's and Women's Track and Field, the cabinet agreed to replace the current regional qualifying system with a two-site, three-day format effective with the 2010 championships.

(2) Legislative Matters. From a legislative standpoint, Jeff Schemmel noted the cabinet:

(a) Recommends the Legislative Council sponsor noncontroversial/emergency legislation to amend NCAA Bylaw 13.02.11 and 13.11.1.1., to specify that in the sport of men's basketball, for purposes of applying recruiting legislation, an individual becomes a prospective student-athlete when the individual begins classes for grade seven.

(b) Supports Proposal No. 2008–48, which, in baseball, reduces the maximum number of contests from 56 to 52. The cabinet believes this proposal will help reduce the challenges related to the compression of baseball schedules and would most likely result in less missed class time.

**f. Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Cabinet.**

(1) Nonlegislative Matters. Chair, Petrina Long reported that the cabinet, using its guiding principles, successfully reviewed a number of legislative proposals in the 2008-09 cycle. Additionally, she reported the cabinet plans to examine the following issues pertaining to recruiting:

(a) Coaching limits and the number of noncoaching staff members.

(b) Early offers of athletics aid. [Note: The committee discussed the fact the Leadership Council had also expressed concern regarding the issue of early offers. This is an issue that may involve a number of bodies in the Division I governance structure.]

(c) The need to stay abreast with technology due to its impact on recruiting and a willingness to review legislation to ensure it is current with advances in technology.

(2) Legislative Matters. From a legislative standpoint, Petrina expressed concern that a legislative concept originating from the Men's Basketball Issues Committee, which specifies in the sport of men's basketball, for purposes of applying recruiting regulations, an individual becomes a prospective student-athlete when the individual begins classes for grade seven, was only reviewed by the Championships/Sports Management Cabinet and not also by the Recruiting/Athletics Personnel Cabinet.

**3. Lessons learned. What worked well under the new structure and where did you experience challenges**? The chairs all reported they had successful and productive first meetings, hallmarked by enthusiasm and a willingness to address the big issues facing Division I. Committee members indicated a desire to share successful practices in the future and noted that some cabinets had success using a round table discussion format. The

chairs noted that together they, along with staff, must strive to identify issues and legislative proposals of interest to more than one governance body.

4. **Preview of the Legislative Council meeting**. Joe D'Antonio reminded the chairs that, under the new governance structure, the Legislative Council has more limited jurisdiction than the former Management Council, as its charge is specifically limited to the examination of legislation. This change in jurisdiction was purposeful as it was designed to bring a higher level of legislative expertise to the division's review of legislation. Joe explained that, at this meeting, the council hopes to provide the membership with more legislative direction in advance of the formal consideration of legislation in January and that as part of this process, the cabinets' positions on legislation will be vetted out. He also mentioned that the council hopes to have a new, simplified reporting format.

5. **Preview of the Leadership Council and Board meeting**. Leadership Council chair, Damon Evan reported that the council, at its meeting on November 5, is scheduled to focus its efforts on beginning its examination of Division I membership standards and continue its discussion regarding ways to enhance the level of diversity serving within the Division I governance structure.

   Board of Directors staff liaison Beth DeBauche reported that, while there are a number of big issues on the Division I agenda, such as the work of the Men's Basketball Academic Enhancement Working Group and the Task Force on Commercial Activity in Intercollegiate Athletics, none of the issues are ripe for immediate determination by the Board. She reported the Board is expected to enter into a value–based discussion, receive a report from the Committee on Infractions and Infractions Appeals Committee and receive an update on the work of the Committee on Academic Performance.

6. **Communication and membership outreach efforts**. The group discussed the importance of communication to the ultimate success of the new structure. The chairs discussed the fact there can be a legitimate expectation that those in the membership will read cabinet and Council reports, but that every effort should be made to make the volume and type of information shared with the membership more manageable. The chairs shared communication ideas, including more uniformity in report writing and listing the names of the cabinet and Council members with each report. Beth DeBauche requested that the staff be given time to work together to seek to identify ways to streamline the report writing process, with the goal of having more uniform and succinct Division I governance reports. The results of the staff work will be shared with the chairs in advance of the February cabinet meetings. Additionally, the Division I governance staff agreed to work with the multisport conferences and affiliate groups to seek to identify communication strategies that best meet their needs.

7. **Updated cabinet and Council meeting schedule**. The cabinet chairs and staff liaisons were encouraged to work with Shorts Travel to identify meeting dates for 2009 and beyond.

8. **Future calls and meeting dates**. The committee members recommended that they have their next conference call in November/December after the Legislative and Leadership Council meetings, but before the NCAA Convention. Additionally, it was confirmed that the Communications and Coordination Committee would meet on January 16 at the NCAA Convention. Specifically, the chairs' schedule will be as follows:

   a. Board of Directors, Legislative and Leadership Council luncheon 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

   b. Division I Forum 1 – 3 p.m.

   c. Meeting and reception 4 – 6 p.m.

9. **Adjournment.** Communications and Coordination Committee chair Damon Evans adjourned the call at 3:15 p.m.

## Excerpts from the Report of the October 29-30, 2008, Division I Board of Directors and the November 6, 2008, Leadership Council Meetings

### Report of the NCAA Division I Board of Directors meeting October 29-30, 2008

**9. Report of the Committee on Academic Performance (CAP).** [Reference BD Supplement No. 7.]

**BOARD ACTIONS:** Received an update from the Division I Committee on Academic Performance, and as part of that presentation:

a. Reviewed Graduation Success Rate (GSR) data, which shows student-athletes continue to perform well in the classroom, with more student-athletes graduating from college. The GSR data indicates that 79 percent of student-athletes in the 2001 cohort graduated within six years.

b. Learned that of the 270 institutions that have initiated APR data submission, the preliminary information appears to be positive as estimates indicate approximately half of the teams subject to historical penalties appear to have improved enough to reduce or avoid penalties this year. The Board discussed the importance of trying to share this good news broadly.

**c. Discussed the value of gaining a better understanding of the high school academic profiles of 2-4 transfers in order to develop sound policy and legislative requirements and used its authority to sponsor Proposal No. 2008-77 in the 2008-09 legislative cycle. This proposal will require a two-year college transfer to have his/her initial academic eligibility certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center prior to the end of the student-athlete's first regular academic term of full-time enrollment at a Division I institution.** (Effective Date: August 1, 2010, for those enrolling in a Division I institution on or after August 1, 2010.) (Unanimous Voice Vote.)

[Note: This recommendation is the second of two initiatives to obtain additional academic data on 2-4 transfers, as requested by four separate NCAA governance groups currently studying the academic progress of this student-athlete subgroup. The CAP has also agreed to update its own data collection requirement to collect information regarding the academic performance of 2-4 transfers while enrolled at the two-year institution.]

**d. Approved amendments to the committee's policies and procedures to incorporate a conflict of interest policy for committee members and to reflect revisions drafted since the August 2008 Board meeting.** (Unanimous Voice Vote.)

**e. Agreed to grant the Committee on Academic Performance time to fully develop the particulars of the mechanism to track the academic performance of head coaches and to engage various coaches associations regarding the reporting format. In discussing such a rate, Board members noted this information would serve as a helpful tool for presidents in their leadership role and the Board suggested the development of a detailed reporting mechanism to be used by institutions and a more general tool for public dissemination. Board members also mentioned that they would appreciate easy and quick access to such information and suggested the possible inclusion of GSR information.**

f. Discussed the fact that while academic reform is an institutional responsibility, some coaches may be slow in adapting to the cultural changes brought on by academic reform, and as a result, there is potential for academic support personnel to experience undue pressure to ensure student-athletes succeed. Mindful of institutional autonomy the members discussed whether there was optimum structure for academic support units for student-athletes.

g. Asked that the issues of professional development and certification for academic support personnel, along with frequency of external reviews of academic support units, be placed on a future agenda for discussion.

**10. Update on the work of the Division I Men's Basketball Academic Enhancement Group.**

**BOARD ACTIONS:**

a. Received a progress report on the work of the Men's Basketball Academic Enhancement Group, which was charged by the Board with offering recommendations to enhance the academic progress and graduation rates of men's basketball student-athletes;

b. Learned that the group is scheduled to meet on December 3, at which time it is expected to examine playing and practices season recommendations and to continue its discussion regarding summer school and transfer issues; and

c. Noted that while this examination has taken longer than originally anticipated due to the complexity of the issues, the membership must be clear that the Board has a genuine commitment to academic reform and changing the culture in men's basketball. The Board noted that while the group should work expeditiously it is important that the group also take the necessary time to develop a meaningful response.

**11. News from the Division I Governance Structure.**

**(d) Used its authority at the request of the Legislative Council to sponsor the following proposal in the 2008-09 legislative cycle: Proposal No. 2008-75—Eligibility – Freshman Academic Requirements – Eligibility for Financial Aid, Practice and Competition – Qualifier – Exception – Early Academic Certification – Submission of Transcript.** Intent: To specify that if a student-athlete is certified as a qualifier pursuant to the early academic certification exception and his or her initial full-time collegiate enrollment occurs at the certifying institution, the institution shall ensure submission of his or her final high school transcript (official or unofficial) to the NCAA Eligibility Center by November 15 following the student-athlete's initial full-time enrollment; further, to specify that a violation of this provision shall be considered an institutional violation, however, the student-athlete's eligibility shall not be affected. (Unanimous Voice Vote.)

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**Action taken on items considered by the Leadership Council on November 6 , 2008**

**3. Governance Update.**

a. Division I matters.

**(1) Report from the August 6 Leadership Council**. [Reference LDC Supplement No. 3.]

**LDC ACTIONS:**

(a) Approved the report as distributed. (Unanimous Voice Vote.)

(b) Reviewed the issues identified by the Council in August as possible items for the Division I agenda as set forth below:

- The issues of ethics in sports and how Division I and the Association as a whole can assist coaches associations and other constituent groups in having meaningful conversations regarding ethics and professionalism.

- A broad examination of time demands on student-athletes based on recent research findings, including consideration of restructuring or eliminating the non-championship segment.

- Hiring practices in intercollegiate athletics and whether there is adequate transparency in the process, consistent with typical hiring practices on campus.

- The need for additional professional development for coaches and the possible need for a coaching certification program whereby coaches receive education on a wide array of issues that are designed to assist coaches in focusing on the overall well-being of student-athletes.

- The problem of early recruitment and commitments.

(c) Affirmed their interest in having these referenced issues explored by the Division I governance structure and added the following issues to the list:

- The structure of championships in trying financial times.

- The financial landscape.

**(4) Division I Cabinet reports.**

**LDC ACTION:** Reviewed reports from the six Division I cabinets and noted the agenda items prioritized by the cabinets as follows:

**(a) Academic Cabinet.** [Reference LDC Supplement No. 6.]

**LDC ACTION:** Future agenda items identified by the Academic Cabinet include: The academic success of transfer students, especially two-year college transfer students; nontraditional course work; the impact of academic reform on academic support personnel; and time demands on student-athletes.

**Division I Men's Basketball Academic Enhancement Group**
**Executive Summary**
**(December 3, 2008, meeting)**

The following information provides a summary of the discussion that occurred at the Division I Basketball Academic Enhancement Group's December 3, 2008, meeting in Chicago, Illinois. This summary will provide an update of the positions previously supported by the group as reflected in its September 15, 2008, progress report.

**1. Academic Progress Rate Policies.**

a. The group agreed not to make any recommendations at this time to the Committee on Athletic Performance regarding potential changes in the calculation of the academic progress rates in men's basketball.

b. The group received feedback from several conferences and academic associations expressing concern regarding preliminary recommendations to the current policies set forth in the group's September 15th progress report as they may dilute the original intent of the academic performance program. * The group agreed that the historical sanctions currently being imposed by the Committee on Athletics Performance would likely facilitate change in the academic performance and /or profile of Division I men's basketball student-athletes.

c. The group noted that the Committee on Academic Performance continues to examine these issues in consultation with the group's "0 for 2 Phenomenon" subcommittee and that the group would delay further discussion on this issue until its April meeting to allow those groups to discuss and determine if there is merit to any further policy changes or adjustment in the academic progress rate calculation for Division I men's basketball student-athletes.

**2. Mandatory Summer School.**

a. The group noted concerns rose by many conferences regarding a strict two-year mandatory summer school attendance requirement and moved away from support of such a concept. The group expressed support for mandatory summer school attendance based on the academic profile and academic performance of individual student-athletes and institutional men's basketball teams.

b. The group expressed some preliminary support for a model that would require mandatory summer school attendance for those entering student-athletes who were

determined by the institution to be "at risk" students as defined by the institution. Mandatory summer school attendance for continuing students the summer immediately following their initial year of regular enrollment would be based on the men's basketball team/or individuals meeting benchmark academic progress rate standards. The group agreed to continue to review the data related to benchmark standards as it continues to discuss the merits of this new approach.

c. The group continued to support the greater "access" concept as well the continuing eligibility requirements previously set forth in the September 15 progress report. However, it noted issues/concerns regarding the appearance of being rewarded for achieving a lower academic progress rate as those required to attend summer school for failure to meet required academic benchmarks would in essence have greater access to work with their coaches. The group agreed to continue further discussion of a more equitable access concept at its next meeting.

**3. Playing and Practice Seasons.**

a. The group expressed support for a more staggered concept for the beginning of on-court preseason basketball practice that would begin October 1 and provide for gradual increase in on-court practice between October 1 through October 15 (with two days off each week), at which time the current 20 hours per week of on-court practice (with one day off per week) would be applicable.

b. The group supported the implementation of institutional policies related missed class time due to athletics participation, including the required approval by the faculty athletic representative or faculty athletics committee of individual athletics participation schedules that specify the amount of missed class time due to athletics participation. The group also recommended modifications to preclude missed class time in conjunction with informal preseason practice scrimmages.

[Note: There is a proposal in the current legislative cycle to be voted on by the Division I Legislation Council in January 2009 to preclude missed class time in conjunction with informal preseason practice scrimmages.]

c. The group supported a recommendation to decrease the maximum number of contests by one, thus permitting institutions to engage in a maximum of 28 regular season

contests or 26 regular season contests and one qualifying regular-season multiple-team event. Such competition shall be conducted over a 15 week period.

d. The group agreed that as a best practice, institutions should be strongly encouraged to participate in no more than an average of two games per week (Monday through Sunday) while classes are in session, should not participate in any games during the week of final examinations as defined in the institution's catalog and should not participate in more than one away-from-home regular season conference game Monday through Friday of any given week. The group noted that these would not be legislative requirements, but agreed that conference offices should monitor these practices and require documentation from institutions not meeting them prior to the beginning of the season that provides an explanation as to noncompliance and a future plan to meet such practices.

**4. Academic Preparedness.**

a. The group continued to discuss the concept of a "year of readiness" for entering men's basketball student-athletes who may satisfy NCAA initial eligibility standards, but do not satisfy institutional admissions standards and are not predicted to succeed academically and graduate in a timely manner. Some recruiting equity concerns were raised if national standards are not established to determine those student-athletes who would be subject to the "year of readiness." It should be noted that student-athletes would be eligible for financial aid and to practice at home during such a year. The group directed the staff to continue to gather data for review at its next meeting to assist the group in examining potential standards as well as the composition of any impacted group.

b. The group also continued to discuss the concept of a "year of readiness" for two- year college transfer student-athletes. Discussion related to whether both qualifiers and nonqualifiers should be subject to the "year of readiness" and what requirements should be satisfied while in attendance at the two-year college in order to be eligible immediately on transfer to a Division I institution. It was agreed that staff should provide additional data to be reviewed by the group at its next meeting regarding how many two-year college transfers are nonqualifiers and how such individuals are performing academically at the Division I institution.

c. The group continued to support the concepts set forth in its September 15 progress report related to the collection of research data, the continued review of the use of nontraditional courses to meet transfer requirements and the limitations on the use of physical education activities courses to meet two-year college transfer requirements.

d. The group continued to discuss the appropriate mechanisms for academically unprepared student-athletes who enroll in two year colleges to remediate deficiencies in order to eventually graduate from a Division I institution.

**5. Timeline for Completion of Work.**

a. The group may meet at the 2009 NCAA Convention, but will definitely meet as a full group in conjunction with the Division I Men's Basketball Championship and anticipates completing its work by the conclusion of the academic year.

b. The group will forward recommendations to the Division I Board of Directors for consideration at its August or October 2009 meetings and legislative items will be included in the 2009-10 legislative cycle and voted on initially by the Legislative Council at its January 2010 meeting.

c. The group noted that conferences will continue to be provided updates and progress reports and ample opportunity to provide feedback related to the group's proposed recommendations.

To be distributed at the meeting.

# REPORT OF THE NCAA DIVISION I COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OCTOBER 27-28, 2008, MEETING

***ACTION ITEMS*.**

**1. Legislative Items.**

- **Initial-Eligibility Certification of Two-Year College Transfers.**

(1) Recommendation. The NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance recommends the NCAA Division I Board of Directors sponsor legislation for the 2008-09 legislative cycle to require a two-year college transfer to have his/her initial academic eligibility certified by the NCAA Eligibility Center prior to the end of the student-athlete's first regular academic term of full-time enrollment at a Division I institution.

(2) Effective Date. Applicable to two-year college student-athletes who enroll in a member institution on or after August 1, 2010.

(3) Rationale. Since June 2007 multiple governance groups within the NCAA (e.g., the NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet Transfer Issues Ad Hoc Group, NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Academic Enhancement Group, NCAA Football Academic Working Group and the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet) have initiated review of issues impacting the academic performance of 2-4 transfer student-athletes. Each group noted the need for additional academic research regarding two-year college transfers' academic performance. Most recently, the Academic Cabinet formally requested the Committee on Academic Performance begin to collect additional data on the academic performance of two-year college transfers. This recommendation is the first of two initiatives to obtain additional academic data on 2-4 transfers. Understanding the high school academic profiles of 2-4 transfers is important in developing sound policy and legislative requirements.

A two-year college transfer must meet transfer requirements based on his/her academic record at the two-year institution and must have his/her amateurism status certified by the Eligibility Center to be eligible to compete at a Division I institution. However, current transfer legislation does not require two-year college transfer student-athletes to obtain a final initial-eligibility academic certification through the Eligibility Center. As a result, specific information regarding academic profiles of these students has not been available for study. The collection of high school academic data would be helpful in understanding the academic profiles of two-year

transfers and will be beneficial for the membership, including various governance groups, as it considers policy and legislative changes for two-year college transfers.

(4) Estimated Budget Impact. Minimal.

(5) Impact on Student-Athlete Well-Being. None.

**2. Nonlegislative Items.**

- **None.**

***INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.***

**1. Data Collection on Two-Year College Transfers.** The committee amended its policies and procedures to require institutions to provide data on two-year college transfer student-athletes during the annual submission of its Academic Performance Census (APC) data. Since June 2007, four separate groups within the NCAA governance structure have initiated reviews of issues impacting the academic performance of two-year transfer student-athletes. Each group noted the need for additional research regarding the academic performance of two-year college transfer student-athletes, specifically their performance at their respective two-year institutions. However, there is limited data available on the two-year college academic performance of student-athletes. Without comprehensive data on two-year transfer student-athletes, the membership's ability to provide thorough analysis regarding the academic preparation and success of two-year transfers is limited. The collection of this data would be helpful in understanding the academic profiles of two-year college transfers. In addition, it would be beneficial for the membership and would provide reliable information to various governance groups as they consider policies and legislative changes regarding two-year college transfers. A list of proposed data to be collected will be sent to various constituents groups (e.g., NCAA Division I Basketball Academic Enhancement Working Group, NCAA Division I Football Academic Working Group, and the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet) for comment, with the intent to finalize the list at the committee's February 2009 meeting. This policy change is effective with the collection of the 2008-09 APC data (i.e., for student-athletes enrolled in the 2008-09 academic year). During the 2008-09 data collection, institutions will be required to provide data on all two-year college transfer student-athletes in the cohort. In subsequent years, data for only the most recent entering two-year college class would need to be provided.

**2. Consideration of Student-Athletes Who Graduate with Eligibility Remaining within the NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program (APP) – "3/2 Early Graduation Bonus" Concept.** The committee discussed several options addressing student-athletes who graduate with eligibility remaining within the APP. Currently the APP cohort does not include student-athletes who have exhausted eligibility and graduated. However, student-athletes who have graduated, but return to their institutions to compete, are part of their teams' APP cohorts. It is important to note that in the calculation of the NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate (APR), a student-athlete who has graduated is automatically awarded the retention ("R") point for each term in which they are part of the cohort after graduation. However, in order to earn the eligibility ("E") point, the student-athlete must meet academic requirements (e.g., pass six hours and be in good academic standing) during each regular academic term after graduation in which he or she is enrolled full time. Therefore, a postgraduate student-athlete cannot be awarded less than one out of two (i.e., "1/2") APR points in an academic term and cannot subject the team to contemporaneous penalties (i.e., they will not be "0/2"). The committee particularly considered a possible incentive that would involve the awarding of bonus APR points for student-athletes who graduate prior to exhausting eligibility. For example, for the fall term in which a student-athlete with eligibility remaining graduated, the student-athlete would receive an additional point for graduation and would be considered a "3/2." After completion of the spring term, if the student-athlete finished the term and earned the "E" point, the student-athlete would be considered a "2/2," resulting in a "5/4" for the academic year. If the student-athlete withdrew at the end of the playing season and, as a result, did not earn the "E" point for the spring term, the student-athlete would be considered a "1/2," but would be a "4/4" for the academic year.

The NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting reviewed data related to each option presented and agreed to maintain the current definition of the APR cohort, but to continue to review this issue. Data indicates the number of student-athletes who compete as postgraduates has increased, while the number of lost "E" points has decreased significantly for this group over the same time period. The data also indicates an increase in the number of postgraduate student-athletes who remain in the cohort for two terms following graduation. Within all sports except men's soccer, postgraduate student-athletes are earning almost all possible points and, as a result, are helping their teams' APR. In particular, men's basketball and football have shown strong improvement in the academic performance of postgraduates during the past three years. The data also indicates that if postgraduate student-athletes were removed from each team's cohort, 63 percent of squads would experience an APR decrease, and 29 percent would experience no change. Regarding the "3/2 graduation bonus" concept, the committee noted the awarding of bonus points (i.e., APR points added to the numerator) would have a much larger effect

in shifting the APR distribution and national mean than adjusting lost "E" points or removing these student-athletes from the APR.

An option that garnered significant discussion and will be explored further is providing an automatic adjustment for lost postgraduate eligibility points (i.e., "1/1" outcome). This option would lead to much smaller decreases in the APR validity coefficients and a much smaller increase in APRs than the "3/2" bonus option. Due to continued membership interest in this topic, the subcommittee agreed to continue to review this option and others during an upcoming meeting.

3. **Access to Archived APR Reports.** Institutions now may access archived APR reports for Division I institutions on NCAA.org. In addition, institutions may access archived Federal Graduation Rates data for all three divisions and Graduation Success Rates (GSR) data since 2005 on the NCAA's Web site. This resource will make it easier for institutions that are in the hiring process to research a coach's APR history, based on previous coaching jobs. It is anticipated that the archives will be updated each year following the public release of APR data.

4. **Coaches' APR Rate.** The committee received a report from a subgroup of the Board of Directors, which was formed in August to develop potential models for a coaches' APR rate. The subgroup supported the concept of publishing the head coach's name for each team by each APR year as part of each institution's APR report. To this end, the names of head coaches could be collected through the APP data collection system starting with the fall 2009 data collection. In instances in which team had multiple coaches in a given year, all names would be listed for that year. Further, the subgroup noted that prior to implementation, the committee should solicit feedback from various coaches associations, conferences and other groups on the report's format. When discussing this concept, the committee noted that while coaches play a critical role in academic success, many other campus personnel (e.g., director of athletics, faculty athletics representative, academic support personnel, president) also impact a team's APR. As a result, it may be appropriate for others to be identified on the report. The committee agreed to pursue this concept further in response to the Board of Directors' request.

5. **Annual Release of GSR and Federal Graduation Rate Information.** The committee reviewed a summary of the most recent GSR and Federal Graduation Rate data and noted Division I student-athletes continue to perform well in the classroom and more are increased in many sports from 1995 to 2001, including men's basketball, football and women's basketball. The GSR in men's basketball increased nine percentage points during that period, including a 12-percentage point increase for African-American men's basketball student-athletes. The GSR for all African-American males increased by six percentage points and the GSR for African-American females increased by eight percentage points from the 1995 to 2001 cohorts. The increased GSR has led to

approximately 1,100 more student-athletes earning their degrees in the 2001 cohort than in the 1995 cohort. The Federal Graduation Rate for student-athletes in the 2001 cohort was 64 percent, the highest rate in history for Division I student-athletes, and was two percentage points higher than the rate for the general student-body. The rate increased four percentage points since the 1995 cohort. The Federal Graduate Rate for African-American student-athletes is eight percentage points higher than the African-American student body (i.e., 53 percent vs. 45 percent) and the rates are higher for both African-American male and female student-athletes when compared to their counterparts in the general student-body.

**6.** **Review of NCAA Proposals in the 2008-09 Legislative Cycle.** The committee reviewed several proposals in the current legislative cycle and expressed its position on the following proposals:

**a.** **NCAA Proposal No. 2008-60 Division Membership – Provisional Membership Process and Requesting Reclassification – Institutions Subject to Academic Performance Program Penalties.** The committee supports this proposal, while acknowledging concerns expressed by a few committee members who noted the proposal's lack of specificity regarding the process that will be used by the NCAA Division I Administration Cabinet to determine which institutions might be prevented from advancing within the membership process and that this proposal will become effective for some institutions who already have started the reclassification process.

**b.** **Proposal No. 2008-48 Playing and Practice Seasons – Baseball – Maximum Number of Contests -- 52.** The committee opposed this proposal and noted the legislation that was adopted as part of the NCAA Baseball Academic Enhancement Working Group's package has only been in effect for one year, which is not sufficient to fully evaluate the package's impact in improving the academic performance of baseball student-athletes.

**7.** **Measuring APR Improvement within the APP Penalty Structure.** The committee approved two revisions to the historical-penalty determination process, which added a fifth comparison test (i.e., aggregate APR of years two, three and four versus the APR in year one) to the improvement determination process and established a minimum single-year APR benchmark of 900 in the most recent year in order for a team to be eligible for automatic improvement credit within the penalty structure. Currently, teams may meet the improvement standard on any one of four comparison tests with no minimum APR in the most recent year in order to demonstrate improvement and to receive relief from penalties. With the addition of these two changes, there will be a relatively small impact on the number of teams penalized and the changes in combination will yield a lower

number of false positives (e.g., institutions that meet the former test but have not demonstrated sustained improvement). The committee also agreed to permit the staff to use the six single-year tests to assess both positive and negative change as part of the penalty waiver process. These tests will assist in clearly identifying those teams with APRs that generally are trending up and those that generally are trending down. These changes will be effective in fall 2009 with the collection of 2008-09 APP data and penalty determination in order to allow time for appropriate notice and education to the membership.

**8. Occasion-Two Historical Penalty Practice Restriction in Football.** The committee considered a request from a member institution and the American Football Coaches Association to reconsider the practice-season element of the Occasion-Two Historical Penalty structure. Specific concerns were raised regarding the required day off during the playing and practice season for teams that do not demonstrate improvement, because of the punitive nature of the penalty and the perception that reduced in-season practice time might be dangerous for football student-athletes and might result in increased injuries due to lack of time to adequately prepare for an opponent. AFCA leadership indicated the replacement of practice time with mandatory academic activities is a legitimate and reasonable penalty; however, the committee was asked to consider modifying the practice restriction element of the penalty to specify minimum increments of practice time (e.g., a four-hour weekly practice-time reduction must be taken in two-hour increments) that must be replaced with academic time to ensure that student-athletes have a viable amount of time to work on their academics. In addition, the AFCA emphasized the obligation of the coaching staff to teach and prepare student-athletes to play safely and suggested that the required day off, more than the practice time reduction, will have a detrimental impact of the fulfillment of that obligation. The committee sought the input of the NCAA Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports and it concluded, based on 16 years of data collection (i.e., 1988-2004), that the recorded injury rates for games and practices have remained largely unchanged, even though coaching techniques and strength and conditioning programs have improved drastically. Further, the main mechanism of injury in football is player contact and, thus, eliminating a practice session could improve student-athlete well-being by reducing the number of overall injuries that occur in a season.

As a result of this feedback from the Committee on Competitive Safeguards and Medical Aspects of Sports, the Committee on Academic Performance agreed to maintain the current definition of historical penalties regarding in-season practice limitations, including hour and day limitations, noting that the penalties are meant to be a catalyst for change for teams that are underperforming academically. Further, the committee noted the penalty waiver process permits institutions to make any number of arguments as to why they should not have to take the prescribed penalty. The staff and the NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance Subcommittee on Appeals will consider

each institution's circumstances and the impact the institution believes the penalty will have.

**9. APP Penalty Waiver Policy and Procedure Changes.** The committee amended its policies and procedures regarding penalty appeals as follows:

a. Policy change regarding appeals involving committee members' institutions. The committee amended its policies and procedures regarding conflicts of interest in instances in which a committee member's own institution is requesting relief from any APP penalty. In such cases, a committee member who has recused himself or herself may not participate at an in-person hearing or teleconference appeal proceeding. However, he or she may participate in the preparation of the appeal (e.g., draft application, craft arguments, prepare waiver documentation). The committee noted a desire to minimize the perception of unfairness within the penalty appeal process, but did not want to disadvantage an institution or committee member by not permitting the member to contribute his or her APP knowledge and expertise in the preparation of the institution's appeal.

b. The committee also reviewed and approved clarifications of its policies and procedures for Occasion-Three and -Four Historical Penalty appeals as recommended by the Board of Directors. Specifically, the committee clarified the Board of Directors subcommittee's standard of review for penalty waivers, the process for review of new information, the involvement of NCAA staff members in the Board of Directors subcommittee hearing, and the factors that should be reviewed by the committee when deliberating a waiver request. In addition, the committee will provide a summary report of all hearing decisions to the Board of Directors on an annual basis.

**10. Multiyear Goals in APR Improvement Plans.** The committee approved an amendment to its policies and procedures and the APP Penalties Guide to require that APR Improvement Plans include a multiyear APR goal, developed as a series of single-year APR goals, to achieve an APR above the penalty benchmark(s). The committee noted that such goals are needed only if the team cannot raise its rate above the penalty benchmark in one year. Additionally, the committee noted many institutions currently are developing multiyear APR goals, but the information is not captured as part of the APR Improvement Plan. The committee observed that meaningful improvement may take longer than one year to achieve and that the process of developing a multiyear goal may provide the institution with the opportunity to develop meaningful and long-term solutions that result in significant systematic improvement and cultural change. Single-year APR goals can help verify immediate improvement, and will continue to be used for conditionally approved penalty waivers. Multiyear goals will assist the institution in the

development of its improvement plan and will outline the team's ultimate progression toward an APR above the penalty benchmark; but, they will not be cited as conditions in conditionally approved penalty waivers. Further, multiyear goals will enhance the staff's evaluation of the institution's APR Improvement Plan and will be used to help evaluate subsequent plans submitted by the institution. Finally, since institutions presently are developing and submitting plans for the 2008-09 year, this change is effective for APR Improvement Plans submitted or revised for submission during the 2009-10 academic year.

**11. Conditions Placed on Teams Receiving Conditionally Approved APP Penalty Waivers.** The committee approved a revision to its policies and procedures to specify that one or more of the following conditions may be used when a team is provided conditional relief from an APP penalty: (1) Single-year APR goal; (2) Single-year eligibility and retention goals; (3) Attendance at educational outreach sessions; and (4) Implementation of the institution's APR Improvement Plan. This revision is effective immediately and is applicable to APP penalty waivers filed during the 2008-09 academic year. The committee noted that institutions granted conditional relief from an APP penalty have received relief primarily based on the team achieving a single-year APR goal established by the institution and confirmed it is appropriate to continue to use the single-year APR goal as a condition. Secondly, although single-year eligibility and retention rates have been used only occasionally as conditions in waivers, the committee noted these metrics may be useful and appropriate when a particular team's circumstances reflect the need to address a specific eligibility or retention issue. Attendance at educational outreach sessions also has been used as a condition on an occasional basis and should continue to be used as appropriate. In addition, evaluating whether the most meaningful elements of an improvement plan have been implemented and whether the team is making progress toward the goal established in its plan ensures the continued academic improvement of the team. Finally, while the committee retained the use of the single-year APR goal for conditions and noted that the single-year goal should be evaluated as part of the review of the institution's APR Improvement Plan, it declined to identify a minimum required single-year APR goal.

**12. APR Improvement Plans.** The committee received an update on APR Improvement Plans and noted the staff currently is reviewing plans submitted by institutions that received conditionally approved penalty waivers during the 2007-08 academic year. This review is focused on the institution's implementation of its plan. Further, the committee codified the staff's authority to establish appropriate annual deadlines for the submission of APR Improvement Plans by those institutions required to submit a plan as a result of a multiyear APR below 900, those requesting an APP penalty waiver, those who previously received a conditionally approved APP waiver or those receiving grant monies through the NCAA Division I Academic Performance Supplemental Support Fund (SSF). Finally, the committee will require an institution's president or chancellor to approve an

APR Improvement Plan submitted by the institution and will notify an institution's president or chancellor directly if the institution fails to implement its plan.

**13. 2009 Public Release of APP Penalties.** The committee discussed the timing of the annual release of APP data and penalties in light of the timeline for review of Occasion-Three Historical Penalties in 2008-09 and Occasion-Four Historical Penalties in 2009-10. In the past data and penalties have been announced in early May. However, the addition of hearings for Occasion-Three and -Four Historical Penalties may extend the penalty process for some institutions beyond the traditional May release date. The committee elected to maintain the current release date for all APP data and for all APP penalty information that is complete at the time, while delaying the release of only the penalty information for those institutions that will not yet have completed the appeal process. The committee noted the current data release timeline has become an expectation for the membership, the media and other audiences. Further, the committee noted the outcome of the penalty waiver process does not impact APRs; therefore, all APR data can continue to be released in May. In addition, the majority of institutions will have completed the penalty waiver process by the May release date, and that information also can be released at that time. The remaining institutions that have not completed the APP process will be identified as pending appeal during the initial release of information and final penalty determinations for those institutions will be released separately.

**14. Proposed Amendment to the Calculation of the APR for Transfer Student-Athletes.** The Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting considered a request from a member institution to amend the criteria for the automatic adjustment for the retention point when a student-athlete transfers. The member institution proposed that the "R" point be automatically adjusted (i.e., "1/1") for a student-athlete who transfers, provided he or she leaves the institution after meeting all applicable requirements to be eligible in the following academic term. In addition, if such a student-athlete transfers to another Division I institution and later becomes academically ineligible, that institution would be "double penalized" for accepting the transfer student-athlete and APR points would be added to the denominator. For example, a student-athlete who withdraws over the summer would be "1/1" for the spring term at the initial institution, provided he or she earned the "E" point before departing. If the student-athlete transfers to another institution and subsequently fails to meet eligibility requirements and withdraws, he or she would earn "0/4" points, rather than "0/2" points for his or her final term. The member institution noted this proposal would require institutions to carefully consider whether to accept a transfer student-athlete at their respective institutions and would not penalize the first institution that ensured the student-athlete maintained eligibility. The Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting did not support any change to the current criteria for the automatic adjustment for the lost "R" point for transfer student-athletes and did not support a change to the calculation of the APR. In regard to the first issue, the data indicates that the 2.600 grade-point average benchmark is the appropriate

level for relief of the lost "R" point for student-athletes that transfer, because it indicates a similar likelihood of student-athlete academic success at the subsequent institution as the probability of graduation success for native students who meet progress-toward degree requirements. In addition, there is an adjustment process in place to review requests for student-athletes who do not satisfy the grade-point average requirement. Additionally, it was the intent of the committee that these adjustments have a high threshold of review. In regard to the concept of "double penalizing" schools that accept transfer student-athletes who subsequently fail academically, such a change would alter significantly the current calculation of the APR and the subcommittee agreed the current penalty structure is the more appropriate avenue to punish teams for poor academic performance.

15. **Removal of Recruited Student-Athletes from the APP Cohort for Non-Scholarship Programs When Standardized Test Scores are Invalidated.** The committee considered a request from a member institution to remove from the APR cohort a recruited student-athlete who was determined to be a nonqualifier as a result of an invalidated standardized test score following the team's first date of competition in the championship segment. In this case the institution sponsors nonscholarship football and uses recruited status to determine inclusion in the APR cohort. The committee determined that a recruited student-athlete whose standardized test score was invalidated following the team's first date of competition in the championship segment and who was subsequently determined to be a nonqualifier should not be included in the APP cohort for nonscholarship teams. This is consistent with the committee's previous decision to exclude student-athletes who received impermissible athletically related financial aid from the APR cohort.

16. **Requests for Corrections to APP Data from Academic Years Not Included in the Current Multiyear APR Calculation.** The committee amended its policies and procedures to allow institutions that discover corrections from prior academic years not included in the current multiyear APR calculation to appeal to the NCAA staff the specified data correction, provided the change would influence the team's current multiyear APR calculation (e.g., delayed-graduation point). Under such circumstances, an institution must submit a formal request to the staff and provide any necessary supporting documentation. The current policy allows institutions to request corrections, adjustments and delayed-graduation points to any academic year that makes up its multiyear APR. However, the policy does not permit changes to data outside the four-year window that may impact a team's current multiyear APR calculation. The committee recognizes there are instances when an institution may discover data entry errors or inadvertent omissions that may cause a team's current APP data to be inaccurate or incomplete. Permitting such changes will ensure that a team's data is accurate.

**17. APP Data Reviews.** The Subcommittee on Data Collection and Reporting received a progress report on the 25 institutions selected to have their APP data reviewed in the 2008-09 academic year. The subcommittee also was informed that the staff is completing the data reviews of three institutions for which part or all of the 2007-08 review was suspended. It is anticipated the subcommittee will complete all reviews and provide reports to all institutions by February 2009.

**18. APR and APC Data Collection.** The committee received a progress report on the APP data collection process for 2007-08 APP data. It was noted that most institutions are submitting their fifth year of APP data. The committee was reminded that APR data from the 2003-04 academic year no longer will be used in a team's multiyear APR calculation. APR/APC data from 391 institutions, including multidivisional institutions, will be submitted to the NCAA between September and November 2008.

**19. Supplemental Support Fund.** The committee received a report regarding the SSF, which is in its second year of existence. Thirty-three limited-resource institutions are eligible to apply for funding support during the 2008-09 academic year. In addition, the staff is in the process of placing the application online with ready access from the APR Improvement Plan portal. It is anticipated that notification of the availability of the application will be sent to eligible institutions in early November.

**20. Women's Basketball Summer Access Model.** The Committee on Academic Performance reviewed a report from the September 2008 meeting of the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Issues Committee, which noted several concepts in its summer academic access model. If this model is adopted, incoming freshman and transfers who have signed financial aid agreements to receive athletically related financial aid for the ensuing academic year would be required to attend the institution's summer term prior to initial full-time enrollment. During this summer term they could engage in a total of 10 hours of athletics skill instruction. In addition, these student-athletes would be required to satisfactorily complete a minimum of three hours of acceptable academic credit in order to be eligible in the fall, while participating in study skills/life skills education. An exception or waiver process would be available to those institutions that do not offer summer school and/or do not award athletics aid. Continuing women's basketball student-athletes would be permitted to engage in a total of 10 hours of skill instruction if they were enrolled in summer school. However, continuing student-athletes would not be required to attend summer school. It is important to note that these discussions are still in the preliminary stages and it is anticipated the Women's Basketball Issues Committee will continue its consideration of this model at its next meeting.

**21. Wrestling Coaches APR Review.** The committee received an update regarding the work of an informal group of wrestling coaches and administrators focusing on

improving APR scores in wrestling. It was noted that the group has implemented several strategies to improve APRs of individual wrestling teams, which include retaining the services of consultants to work with coaches of academically underperforming programs. The committee also learned that over the next three years the group will develop a comprehensive coaches' academy to strengthen the alignment of intercollegiate wrestling programs with educational values. In the future, the group will continue to monitor the APR status of teams below 940, to reinforce to coaches the importance of APR improvement, and to thoroughly investigate the potential benefits and unintended consequences of several legislative concepts. This planned approach will allow more time to objectively evaluate the impact of the improvement strategies over the course of the next year.

**22.** **NCAA Division I Football Academic Working Group Update.** The committee reviewed the executive summary of the July 18, 2008, meeting of the Football Academic Working Group and will provide feedback to the working group once the preliminary concepts are more fully developed.

**23.** **NCAA Division I Men's Basketball Academic Enhancement Group Update.** The committee reviewed the September 15, 2008, progress report of the Men's Basketball Academic Enhancement Group and noted the following feedback for the group:

a. The committee expressed interest in ensuring remedial hours could be applied to meet the proposed summer school requirements, in accordance with existing progress-toward-degree legislation.

b. While the committee applauds the intent behind the proposed "noncounter" option for student-athletes who elect to remain at the institution but depart from the team after a coaching change, it noted the practical application of this concept would not have the intended effect.

c. The committee discussed whether a reduction in the time allotted for student-athletes to explore professional basketball prospects prior to declaring for the National Basketball Association (NBA) draft would reduce time away from campus and missed class time and it encouraged the working group to consider this option.

d. Committee members had mixed reactions regarding flexibility in the "1/1" professional departure adjustment options outlined in the report, but they are willing to consider the final recommendation(s) of the working group.

e. The committee agreed to collect data regarding the academic profiles of 2-4 transfer student-athletes beginning with the collection of 2008-09 APR data.

**24. NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet Update.** The committee reviewed the report of the Academic Cabinet's September 2009 meeting and noted the cabinet's five identified priority topics for the coming years: (1) Two-year college transfer student-athletes; (2) Nontraditional courses; (3) Impact of academic reform on academic support personnel; (4) Time demands on student-athletes; and (5) Impact of progress-toward-degree requirements on degree program selection. The committee expressed support for all priorities, with a particular interest in working with the cabinet on the items related to academic support personnel and degree program selection.

*Committee Chair: Walter Harrison, University of Hartford, America East Conference*
*Committee Liaisons: Julie Cromer, Membership Services*
*Diane Dickman, Membership Services*
*Kevin Lennon, Membership Services*
*Todd Petr, Research*
*Bill Regan, Membership Services*

**Excerpts Regarding the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet from the Report of the NCAA Division I Awards, Benefits, Expenses and Financial Aid Cabinet September 18-19, 2008, Meeting**

**(3)** **Items Discussed but Not Prioritized.** The cabinet discussed but declined to prioritize discussion on the following topics:

(a) Athletics aid to nonqualifiers. [Reference Awards, Benefits, Expenses and Financial Aid Cabinet Supplement No. 12] The cabinet expressed concern that permitting athletics aid during the initial year in residence may take away an incentive for prospective student-athletes to become qualifiers. For this reason, the cabinet did not prioritize the issue but is willing to discuss it at a later date if the Academic Cabinet determines it to be a priority; and

(b) Participation awards limitations. [Reference Awards, Benefits, Expenses and Financial Aid Cabinet Supplement No. 13]

**Excerpt from the NCAA Division I Championships/Sports Management Cabinet September 16-17, 2008, Meeting Report**

**e. Comments on Proposals Currently in the 2008-09 Legislative Cycle.** The Championships/Sports Management Cabinet reviewed proposals assigned to it for review that will be considered by the Division I membership as part of the 2008-09 legislative cycle and offered the comments below. Proposals previously sponsored by the Championships/Sports Management Cabinet were provided for informational purposes.

(2) Proposal No. 2008-39 – Eligibility – Outside Competition, Effects on Eligibility – Exception – Conference All-Star Competition against U.S. National Team – Women's Ice Hockey. In women's ice hockey, to specify that a student-athlete may compete during the academic year as a member of a conference all-star team in up to two contests against the U.S. Women's National Ice Hockey Team in the 12 months prior to the Winter Olympic Games.

**Championships/Sports Management Cabinet Comment:** The Championships/Sports Management Cabinet opposed the proposal as drafted noting that it would support the proposal if modified to specify that the student-athlete must be academically eligible for intercollegiate competition at the time of the competition. If the sponsors do not support the suggested modification, the Championships/Sports Management Cabinet would support an alternative proposal that would be sponsored by the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet that would include the suggested modification.

(6) Proposal No. 2008-47 – Playing and Practice Seasons – Baseball – Maximum Number of Contests – 52 During the Championship Segment and Four During the Nonchampionship Segment. In baseball, to specify that an institution shall limit its total playing schedule with outside competition during the institution's playing season to 52 contests (games and scrimmages) during the championship segment and four contests (games and scrimmages) during the nonchampionship segment.

**Championships/Sports Management Cabinet Comment:** The Championships/Sports Management Cabinet opposed the proposal as written in favor of Proposal No. 2008-48.

(7) Proposal No. 2008-48 – Playing and Practice Seasons – Baseball – Maximum Number of Contests – 52 during the Championship

Segment. In baseball, to reduce the maximum number of contests from 56 to 52.

**Championships/Sports Management Cabinet Comment:** The Championships/Sports Management Cabinet supported the proposal as written noting that of the three proposals (Proposal Nos. 2008-46, 2008-47 and 2008-48), Proposal No. 2008-48 reduces the challenges related to the compression of baseball schedules and likely would result in less missed class time and time away from campus, which ultimately could improve academic performance. The Championships/Sports Management Cabinet considered combining Proposal Nos. 2008-46 and 2008-48 but did not believe Proposal No. 2008-46 would be consistent with the recent changes designed to enhance competitive equity between northern and sun belt institutions.

**Excerpt from the NCAA Division I Recruiting and Athletics Personnel Issues Cabinet September 18-19, 2008, Meeting Report**

**1. Legislative - Comments on Proposals to be Initially Considered by the NCAA Division I Legislative Council in January 2009.**

j. **Proposal No. 2008-21 – Recruiting – Admission and Graduation Data, Banned Drug List and Initial-Eligibility Standards – Reports and Notifications – Eligibility Center.** The cabinet took no position on Proposal No. 2008-21 which would specify that the NCAA Eligibility Center shall provide the information contained within the disclosure reports related to admission, graduation-rate data, academic progress rate data, graduation success rate, as well as notification of initial-eligibility standards, the NCAA banned drug list and information about nutritional supplements to a prospective student-athlete and his or her parents or legal guardians after he or she has registered with the Eligibility Center or after the Eligibility Center has received an institution's request list, whichever occurs first. The cabinet noted the NCAA Division I Academics Cabinet opposed this proposal, but recommended a modification to address its concerns.

**2. Nonlegislative.**

e. **Discussion of cabinet's guiding principles and future priorities.** The cabinet engaged in a discussion regarding its guiding principles and priorities. This discussion centered on the cabinet's charge and duties, the guiding principles established by the Subcommittee on Recruiting, transitional items from the subcommittee and the identification of priority issues. The cabinet agreed that the issue of coaching limits and the number of noncoaching staff members should be added to the list of cabinet priority issues to be addressed at future meetings which includes: early offers of athletics aid, recruiting and video services, recruiting materials and technology, scouting of opponents – film exchange and a review of “dated” legislation.

**National Collegiate Athletic Association**

**Executive Committee**

# CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

## Conflict of Interest Statement

NCAA committee service involves important ethical and moral obligations. Committee integrity is critical to the decision-making process and includes trust, confidentiality and honesty in all issues and aspects of service and representation. Committee decisions should advance the interests of the Association, the division, or the sport, and ultimately enhance the student-athlete experience.

NCAA committee members scrupulously shall avoid any conflict between their respective personal, professional or business interests and the interests of the Association, in any and all actions taken by them on behalf of the Association.

Committee members have a fiduciary duty to the Association not to use knowledge or information obtained solely due to service on that committee to the disadvantage of the Association during the term of committee service. Further, a Committee member shall not participate in the committee's discussion or vote on any action that might bring direct or indirect financial benefit to the member or any organization in which the member is financially interested (other than the member's institution or the conference of which it is a member). A violation of this rule by a member of the committee shall not invalidate the action taken by the committee if, following disclosure of the conflict of interest, the committee authorizes, ratifies or approves the action by a vote sufficient for the purpose, without counting the vote of the committee member with the conflict of interest, and the appropriate oversight body approves the action.

A committee member is responsible for advising the chair of potential conflicts of interest and should recuse himself or herself from participating in proceedings where a personal, professional or business interest would reasonably result in a conflict of interest. Abuse of one's position as a member of a committee may result in dismissal from that position. Where a conflict of interest appears evident, a committee member will be notified by the committee chair and will have the opportunity to present a rebuttal or details of the situation. (*August 2008 Executive Committee minutes)*

*Speaking Agent Policy*

The president of the Association and the chair of the Executive Committee are the only individuals authorized to speak on behalf of the Association except as outlined below.

An individual representing a member institution or conference who speaks or opines on an Association issue only has the authority to express the view of that individual or the member institution or conference unless the individual has been designated by the Executive Committee of the Association as a speaking agent of the Association on that issue.

Committee chairs are hereby designated as speaking agents of their committees regarding issues within their committees' jurisdiction on which there is consensus, except that positions of advocacy on behalf of the committee or the Association to be communicated in writing or orally to persons or entities external to the Association must have prior approval by the NCAA Executive Committee or the president of the Association.

The president of the Association is hereby granted authority to designate additional speaking agents of the Association. *(April 2001 Executive Committee minutes)*

## NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet
## Guiding Principles

The NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet identified guiding principles (in order of significance) for consideration when considering academic issues, making legislative proposals, and reviewing legislative proposals submitted by others:

1. Adhere to the principle governing eligibility set forth in NCAA Constitution 2.12: Eligibility requirements shall be designed to assure proper emphasis on educational objectives, to promote competitive equity among institutions and to prevent exploitation of student-athletes.

2. Adhere to the principle of sound academic standards set forth in NCAA Constitution 2.5: Intercollegiate athletics programs shall be maintained as a vital component of the educational program, and student-athletes shall be an integral part of the student-body. The admission, academic standing and academic progress of student-athletes shall be consistent with the policies and standards adopted by the institution for the student-body in general.

3. Maintain and support graduation as the primary measure of student-athlete success; preserve the "seamless" academic eligibility model and promote graduation within five years.

4. Increase student-athletes' responsibility for academic success.

5. Increase institutional responsibility to facilitate the academic success of student-athletes.

6. Commit to student-athlete well-being issues, including minimizing missed class time and balancing self-identification as students with identity as athletes.

7. Promote student-athletes' options to select from a wide range of academic degree programs and to integrate fully into the university and student-body.

8. Minimize disparate impact on low-income and minority student-athletes and prospective student-athletes.

9. Ensure legislation is written in a simple, clear and direct manner.

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10. Consider the amount of time legislation has been in effect in order to assess the full impact before supporting a legislative change to the same bylaws.

11. Remain cognizant of the impact of proposals on institutional resources, including budgets, academic support professionals and other institutional staff members, including coaches.

12. When appropriate, ensure feedback has been solicited from appropriate external groups (e.g., faculty groups, academic support personnel) on issues, particularly when reviewing legislative proposals that are sport specific.

13. Consider whether or not sport-specific legislation is warranted or whether a proposed legislation can/should be expanded to other sports.

14. Examine potential unintended consequences when reviewing legislation, particularly proposals designated as noncontroversial or emergency.

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To be distributed at the meeting.

## Official Interpretation

**Title:** Completion of One Additional Core Course After High School Graduation (I)

**Date Issued:** October 22, 2008

**Date Published:** October 24, 2008

**Type:** Official Interpretation

**Item Ref:** 1

The committee determined that it is not permissible for a prospective student-athlete to use a core course, including an online course, completed after high school graduation to satisfy initial-eligibility requirements if the prospective student-athlete is enrolled in the course while concurrently receiving athletically related financial aid to attend an institution's summer term. Further, the committee determined that it is permissible to use a core course completed after high school graduation provided the prospective student-athlete either completes the course prior to receiving athletically related financial aid to attend an institution's summer term or does not enroll in the core course until after he or she completes the institution's summer term for which he or she is receiving athletically related financial aid.

[References: NCAA Division I Bylaw 14.3.1.2.1.1 and an 8/27/08 official interpretation, Item Ref. 1-b, which has been archived]

## References

### Legislative References

| Div. | Number | Title |
|---|---|---|
| I | 14.3.1.2.1.1 | Exception -- One Core Course after High School Graduation. |

## Official Interpretation

**Title:** Use of Credits Earned in a Minor to Satisfy Progress-Toward-Degree Requirements (I)

**Date Issued:** September 17, 2008

**Date Published:** September 25, 2008

**Type:** Official Interpretation

**Item Ref:** 1

The committee confirmed that a voluntary or optional minor is a minor that is not a required element of the original baccalaureate degree program for all students; therefore, credits earned toward a voluntary or optional minor may not be used to satisfy credit-hour requirements after the first two years of enrollment or percentage of degree requirements even if the student-athlete must complete the requirements for the voluntary or optional minor in order to graduate. A student-athlete may use credits earned in a minor only if the minor is a required element for all students to obtain the original baccalaureate degree.

[References: NCAA Bylaws 14.4.3.1.6.1 (documentation of degree program designation), 14.4.3.1.7 (hours earned or accepted for degree credit) and an 8/14/85 official interpretation (8/14/85, Item No. 6-e-(3)-(c)]

## References

### Legislative References

| Div. | Number | Title |
|---|---|---|
| I | 14.4.3.1.6.1 | Documentation of Degree Program Designation. |
| I | 14.4.3.1.7 | Hours Earned or Accepted for Degree Credit. |

**NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet**
**Tentative Schedule for Review of Key Items**

| **NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet's Prioritized Goals.** |
|---|
| 1. Two-year college transfer student-athletes; |
| 2. Nontraditional courses; |
| 3. Impact of academic reform on academic support personnel; |
| 4. Time demands on student-athletes; and |
| 5. Impact of progress-toward-degree requirements on degree program selection. |

| **Academic Cabinet Schedule for Review of Key Items.** | | **Priority Number** |
|---|---|---|
| In-Person Meeting<br>February 2-3, 2009<br>Indianapolis, Indiana | 1. 2-4 transfers, review existing research.<br>2. Initial discussion nontraditional courses and best practices review (college course focus).<br>3. Initial discussion academic support per N4A comments and draft survey review.<br>4. Initial discussion regarding time demands.<br><br>Each February:<br>1. Report from N4A president.<br>2. Review IEW and PTD waiver statistics, outcomes and potential policy issues. | 1<br>2<br><br>3<br><br>4 |
| In-Person Meeting<br>June 29-30, 2009<br>TBD | 1. Initial discussion regarding degree selection.<br>2. Early academic certification standards - review data.<br>3. Nontraditional courses (initial-eligibility focus).<br>4. PTD background, legislative history (dual degrees, double majors, etc.).<br><br>Each June:<br>1. Review latest research on existing academic standards.<br>2. HSRC annual report.<br>3. Annual academic update (GSR, Federal Graduation Rate, APR, penalties). | 5<br>-<br>2<br>5 |
| In-Person Meeting<br>September 14-15, 2009<br>Indianapolis, Indiana | Each September:<br>• Annual update from the Eligibility Center president.<br>• Review and comment on legislation in the current cycle. | |
| In-Person Meeting<br>February 2010<br>Location - TBD | Each February:<br>1. Report from N4A president.<br>2. Review IEW and PTD waiver outcomes. | |

## Academic Requirements During the Recruiting Process

**Purpose.**

The purpose of this document is to describe existing academic requirements applicable to prospective student-athletes and institutions during the recruiting process and their associated goals, and to identify potential recommendations to address outcomes not achieved by previous legislation.

**Background.**

Among the many important elements of the recruiting process are the opportunities for prospective student-athletes to identify institutions that match their academic and athletics interests, for prospective student-athletes to learn about NCAA initial-eligibility requirements and for institutions to evaluate the academic preparedness of the prospective student-athlete that the institution is recruiting. Central to these objectives is communication and the exchange of information between prospective student-athletes and institutions.

The recruiting process also provides an opportunity for the NCAA Eligibility Center to begin collecting academic and amateurism information about prospective student-athletes and to educate prospective student-athletes regarding eligibility standards. Earlier collection of information allows an earlier start to the eligibility certification process; earlier certification creates efficiencies and can reduce the bottleneck of certifications that typically occur at the beginning of each academic year.

In April 2007, the Division I membership adopted NCAA Division I Proposal No. 2006-46-A, which was intended to accelerate the process of prospective student-athletes registering with the Eligibility Center and to improve the information shared between prospective student-athletes, institutions, and the Eligibility Center. Proposal No. 2006-46-A specified that an institution may not provide an official visit or a written offer of athletically related financial aid to a high school or preparatory school prospective student-athlete until he or she has registered with the Eligibility Center and is placed on the institution's Institutional Request List (IRL). Legislation already in existence requires that a prospective student-athlete must provide an institution with an academic transcript and standardized test score prior to taking an official visit. Proposal No. 2006-46-A noted that prospective student-athletes are best served by early notification of their eligibility status and that late registration with the Eligibility Center leads to an inability to properly advise student-athletes.

Recent data from the Eligibility Center indicates that the legislation may not be having its intended impact. For example:

1. More than 40,000 prospective student-athletes are added to an IRL for the first time after June 1 following their senior year in high school.

2. Thousands of National Letters of Intent (NLI) are signed after prospective student-athletes have graduated from high school during the summer before their initial college enrollment.

3. Each year, initial-eligibility waivers are submitted asserting that the prospective student-athlete, particularly those who were not recruited or are from a country other than the United States, was not aware of initial-eligibility requirements prior to their arrival at a Division I institution.

In addition, recent media reports suggest that some prospective student-athletes are receiving verbal offers of athletically related financial aid and are verbally committing to participate for a particular institution at an early point in their educational career – occasionally before beginning the ninth grade – before the institution can evaluate the academic profile and qualifications of the prospective student-athlete.

Late registration with the Eligibility Center and late exchange of information between prospective student-athletes, institutions and the Eligibility Center, in addition to early commitments by prospective student-athletes and institutions, can result in uninformed recruiting decisions where both the prospective student-athlete and institution are not fully aware of the prospective student-athlete's eligibility status until just before the prospective student-athlete's initial-collegiate enrollment.

**Objectives of Potential Recommendations.**

The Division I membership has recently adopted legislation to encourage earlier registration and improve the exchange of information between prospective student-athletes, institutions, and the Eligibility Center. Since the official visit and written offer of aid/NLI may not occur early enough in the recruiting process to begin collecting information about prospective student-athletes, it is appropriate to identify other alternatives to achieve the desired outcomes. A number of earlier communication points are presented below for consideration by the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet; additional recommendations are then identified in the following section.

**Opportunities for Communication.**

Current legislation requires that registration with the Eligibility Center and placement on the IRL must occur before a prospective student-athlete takes an official visit or is provided a written offer of athletically related financial aid from the institution. A prospective student-athlete also must submit a transcript and test score to the institution before an official visit. However, the official visit and signing of an offer of aid may occur too close to the prospective student-athlete's initial enrollment for the registration and IRL requirements to have a significant impact on the ability to properly advise a prospective student-athlete. When these events occur during the prospective student-athlete's senior year of high school, it may be difficult or impossible for a prospective student-athlete to modify his or her class schedule to satisfy NCAA initial-eligibility requirements.

The staff reviewed the current recruiting calendar and identified additional opportunities available for communication between the prospective student-athlete, institution and Eligibility Center. There are several initial-contact points to which requirements could be attached, which are identified below with discussion points for the cabinet's consideration.

1. *Institution's first written correspondence (e-mail/letter) to a prospective student-athlete* – Current legislation for most sports allows for written correspondence to begin September 1 at the beginning of the prospective student-athlete's junior year in high school. Requiring submission of six-semester academic records is not possible until subsequent to a prospective student-athlete's junior year in high school. Further, a requirement for Eligibility Center registration at this point could potentially cast a wider net then desired and require prospective student-athletea to register that do not have a legitimate probability of participating at a Division I institution. Many prospective student-athletes receive correspondence from institutions who do not subsequently participate at the Division I level. Additionally, such a recommendation would significantly increase the monitoring burden on institutional staff members.

2. *Institution's first phone call to a prospective student-athlete* – Phone calls are generally permitted beginning July 1 after the completion of the prospective student-athlete's junior year in high school. A requirement for registration with the Eligibility Center prior to the first phone call would more closely align with the prospective student-athlete's completion of six semesters of high school coursework. The concept would likely result in increased monitoring and capturing more prospects than intended. In addition, contact with a prospective student-athlete could be delayed due to the timing of high school grades from the spring term being reported and the vacation schedules of high school staff.

3. *Verbal Offer of Aid* – Requiring registration with the Eligibility Center and/or submission of academic transcript(s) prior to a verbal offer of aid would serve a dual purpose of both: (1) Setting a specific date for the first opportunity for an institution to make a verbal offer of financial aid; and (2) Allowing coaches a longer opportunity to evaluate a prospective student-athlete's academic history prior to making a verbal offer of aid. Currently, there is no legislation regulating the verbal offer of aid at any time. The ability to evaluate a prospective student-athlete's academic record would provide institutions with the opportunity for more informed recruiting decisions before making a verbal commitment.

4. *Official Visit* – Current legislation requires an institution to have on file a high school transcript and test score (SAT/ACT) prior to providing a prospective student-athlete with an official visit. A prospective student-athlete who does not take an official visit until the spring semester of his or her senior year is too late in their academic career to make appropriate changes if he or she is not meeting initial-eligibility requirements. In addition, many prospective student-athletes have not taken a standardized test before the early (fall) signing period for the National Letter of Intent.

5. *National Letter of Intent/Written Offer of Aid* – Based on Eligibility Center data, thousands of prospective student-athletes sign their written offer of aid in the summer prior to matriculation at the institution. At this time, high school coursework has already been completed, and education and advising will have minimal effect. Therefore, requiring registration with the Eligibility Center and placement on the IRL at this time does not have the effect intended by Proposal No. 2006-46-A.

**Concepts.**

The following concepts are potential additions or amendments to the current academic requirements during the recruiting process. They are presented along with points for the cabinet's consideration.

Legislative Proposals.

1. Require prospective student-athletes to submit high school transcripts and test scores to the Eligibility Center before the institution can provide an official visit and/or a written offer of aid. [Note: Current legislation requires that the transcript and test score be submitted to the institution, not to the Eligibility Center.]

   *Points to Consider.*

   a. This concept was previously recommended in Proposal No. 2006-46-B, which was defeated by the former NCAA Division I Management Council in January 2007.

   b. The NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet comment on Proposal No. 2006-46 before Proposal No. 2006-46-B was sponsored: The cabinet supports the principles contained in the current proposal, but believes that the receipt of the official high school transcript or transcripts should be an added element. Early academic evaluation is vital to the NCAA initial-eligibility process. The registration and IRL submission will start the process at the clearinghouse, but these steps do not provide for an academic analysis, which is a vital step in determining a prospective student-athlete's preliminary initial-eligibility status and readiness for collegiate academic work.

   c. Concern about turn-around time/delays for Eligibility Center to process and acknowledge receipt of transcripts and test scores.

   d. Many high school students, not just prospective student-athletes, have not taken a standardized test before the start of the senior year (when official visits are first permissible) or the early (fall) signing period.

e. Alternative: Require submission of high school transcripts and test scores to the institution before a written offer of aid.

2. Prospective student-athlete must register with the Eligibility Center and submit academic record and test scores to Eligibility Center before the institution can make a verbal offer of athletically related financial aid.

*Points to Consider.*

a. Moves required activities earlier in the recruiting process.

b. Potential difficulty monitoring verbal offers of aid and enforcing legislation.

c. Many high school students, not just prospective student-athletes, have not taken a standardized test before the early (fall) signing period.

3. Prospective student-athletes must register with the Eligibility Center and submit academic record and test scores to Eligibility Center before enrollment in an institution's summer term prior to initial full-time enrollment.

*Points to Consider.*

a. Likely occurs too late in the recruiting process for prospective student-athletes to modify high school class schedule to satisfy initial-eligibility requirements.

b. Could be strengthened by requiring initial-eligibility certification prior to the prospective student-athlete's enrollment in summer school prior to initial full-time enrollment. However, may be difficult if summer term begins shortly after high school graduation.

4. Require a **fifth** semester academic record (either to institution or Eligibility Center) before verbal or written offer of aid.

*Points to Consider.*

a. Allows information to be submitted and preliminary evaluations to occur during spring of the junior year in high school rather than fall of the senior year.

b. Consider asking Eligibility Center to evaluate whether five-semester academic records will be sufficient for preliminary certifications and whether timing would be beneficial.

5. Prohibit further recruiting communication if a prospective student-athlete has not registered with the Eligibility Center by a certain date.

   *Points to Consider.*

   a. Prohibition might hamper institution's efforts to encourage the prospective student-athlete to register.

   b. Ability to be recruited may be the best incentive to promote registration with the Eligibility Center.

Operational Policies and Changes.

1. Continue to enhance educational efforts through ncaa.org/eligibility center, ncaastudent.org and the National Federation of State High School Associations and individual state activities associations.

2. Ask the Eligibility Center to evaluate a tiered fee structure or late registration fee to provide a financial incentive for earlier registration.

3. Establish an NCAA or Eligibility Center recruiting service or database.

**Summary.**

The preceding concepts are intended to initiate the cabinet's consideration of academic requirements during the recruiting process. Implementation of additional requirements, at the appropriate time in the recruiting process, will help prospective student-athletes and member institutions make more informed recruiting decisions. The staff looks forward to receiving feedback from the cabinet regarding the alternatives that should be further developed and evaluated for possible recommendation at the June 2009 meeting.

# Division I 2008-09 Initial-Eligibility Waiver Statistics

## June 1, 2008 – January 9, 2009

| Decision Type | Core-Course | EID | GPA | International | Proof of Grad. | Test Score | Transcript Change | **TOTALS** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Approved | 203 | 44 | 28 | 38 | 0 | 2 | 1 | **316** |
| Denied | 21 | 5 | 4 | 22 | 0 | 1 | 0 | **53** |
| Denied w/ Retest | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | **3** |
| E.C. | 11 | 2 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **23** |
| Partially Approved | 45 | 28 | 28 | 11 | 0 | 2 | 2 | **116** |
| Partially Approved w/ Retest | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **2** |
| Closed | 6 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | **15** |
| Withdrawn | 7 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 | **19** |
| **TOTALS** | **293** | **86** | **71** | **85** | **0** | **7** | **5** | **547** |

## Division I Initial-Eligibility Waiver Statistics

## Three-Year Comparison

| Waiver Category | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | 2008-09 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Core Course | 121 | 128 | 293 |
| EID | 113 | 90 | 86 |
| GPA | 64 | 64 | 71 |
| International | 81 | 56 | 85 |
| Proof of Grad. | 3 | 5 | 0 |
| Test Score | 4 | 9 | 7 |
| Transcript Change | 30 | 8 | 5 |
| **Total Waivers** | **416** | **360** | **547** |

# Division I PSA Review Case Summary for 2008-09
# (June 1 – December 1, 2008)

| Total PSA Reviews | Validated | Invalidated | Pending | Withdrawn/Suspended |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 99 | 46 | 9 | 4 | 40 |

## *Men's Sports*

| Sport | Baseball | Basketball | Football | Ice Hockey | Golf | Gymnastics | Lacrosse | Swimming | Cross Country | Soccer | Tennis | Wrestling | Track | Totals |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Validated** | 2 | 24 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 41 |
| **Invalidated** | 1 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| **Withdrawn** | 2 | 4 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 22 |
| **Pending** | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| **Suspended** | 0 | 3 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 |
| **Totals** | **5** | **35** | **42** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **1** | **0** | **0** | **1** | **0** | **0** | **1** | **85** |

## *Women's Sports*

| Sport | Basketball | Crew/Rowing | Softball | Golf | Track | Skiing | Tennis | Soccer | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Validated** | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | **5** |
| **Invalidated** | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| **Withdrawn** | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | **7** |
| **Pending** | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | **1** |
| **Totals** | **3** | **2** | **1** | **1** | **3** | **1** | **1** | **2** | **14** |

## Three Year Comparison of Division I PSA Review Statistics

| | Total PSA Reviews | Validated | Invalidated | Pending | Withdrawn/Suspended |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2006-07 | 371 | 288 | 37 | 0 | 46 |
| 2007-08 | 376 | 183 | 24 | 0 | 169 |
| 2008-09* | 99 | 46 | 9 | 4 | 40 |

*As of December 1, 2008.

# REPORT OF THE NCAA DIVISION I

# PROGRESS-TOWARD-DEGREE WAIVERS COMMITTEE

# 2008-09

1. The NCAA academic and membership affairs staff received a total of 485 Division I progress-toward-degree waiver requests for the period of June 1, 2008, through January 7, 2009. These requests could be for one or multiple bylaw deficiencies. This represents a 26 percent increase in the number of progress-toward-degree waivers filed thus far in the 2008-09 academic year compared to the same time period in 2007-08 academic year (i.e., 386 waiver requests were filed for the period June 1, 2007, through January 7, 2008).

2. During this time, the staff decided 428 waivers, of which 17 were appealed. Specifically, the NCAA Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Committee decided 17 waivers on appeal and the NCAA Division I Academic Compliance Cabinet Subcommittee on Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Appeals (the NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/ Compliance Cabinet Subcommittee on Continuing Eligibility prior to September 1, 2008) decided four waivers through appeal. The subcommittee heard 21 additional waiver requests that are legislated to go directly to that group.

3. Details of the actions of the staff, the Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Committee, and the Subcommittee on Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Appeals from June 1, 2008, through January 7, 2009, are as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Total number of cases reviewed -- | 485 | |
| Total number approved -- | 344 | 70.93% |
| Total number of conditionally approved -- | 24 | 4.94% |
| Total number denied -- | 60 | 12.37% |
| Number reviewed by staff | 464 | |
| Number approved by staff | 320 | 68.99% |
| Number denied by staff | 55 | 11.85% |
| Number appealed | 17 | 29.09% of those denied |
| Number of appeals approved or conditionally approved by the PTD waiver committee | 8 | 47.06% |
| Number of appeals denied by the committee | 9 | 52.94% |
| Number of cases appealed to the subcommittee | 4 | 44.44% of those denied |
| Number of appealed cases approved by the subcommittee | 0 | |
| Number of appealed cases denied by the subcommittee | 4 | 100% |
| Number of subcommittee cases (not appeals) | 21 | |
| Number of cabinet cases approved | 16 | |
| Number of cabinet cases denied | 5 | |

*The NCAA Division I Academic/Compliance/Eligibility Cabinet granted the staff the authority to review and approve or deny waivers at its September 2003 meeting. As a result, the NCAA Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Committee considered a total of only 17 waivers on appeal. The Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Committee serves as the appellate body to staff decisions and reviews all staff decisions.*

4. Summary of progress-toward-degree waivers processed by the staff, the Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Committee and the Academic Cabinet Subcommittee on Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Appeals by bylaw:

| Bylaw | Description | Approvals | Denials | Other | Totals | % Approved | % of Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14.4.3.1(a) | 24/36-hour requirement | 10 | 1 | 4 | 15 | 67% | 2.46% |
| 14.4.3.1(b) | 18/27-hour requirement | 121 | 23 | 24 | 168 | 72% | 27.54% |
| 14.4.3.1(c) | six-hour requirement | 62 | 8 | 12 | 82 | 76% | 13.44% |
| 14.4.3.1.2 | Transfer credit requirements | 6 | 1 | 5 | 12 | 50% | 1.97% |
| 14.4.3.1(b) pre 2003-04 | 12/24-hour requirement | | | 3 | 3 | 0% | .49% |
| 14.4.3.1.5 | Designation of Degree | 2 | | 1 | 3 | 67% | .49% |
| 14.4.3.2 | Percentage-of- degree requirement | 166 | 28 | 50 | 244 | 68% | 40% |
| 14.4.3.3.1 | GPA requirement | 6 | 11 | 4 | 21 | 29% | 3.44% |
| 14.4.3.6 | Medical absence/ international competition waiver | 1 | | | 1 | 100% | .16% |
| 14.4.3.4.3 | Correspondence and extension courses from another institution | | | 1 | 1 | 0% | .16% |
| 14.1.8.2.7.2 | Olympic, Pan American, World Championships, World Cup, World University or World Youth Championships | 4 | 3 | | 7 | 57% | 1.15% |
| 14.1.8.2.7.3 | Full-time enrollment requirement (LD) | 29 | | 1 | 30 | 97% | 4.92% |
| 14.1.8.2.7.4 | Full-time enrollment (other) | 16 | 2 | 1 | 19 | 84% | 3.11% |
| 14.1.10.2 | Six hours post season | 1 | 3 | | 4 | 25% | .67% |
| **Totals *** | | 424 | 80 | 106 | 610 | | 100% |

*The total represents multiple bylaw requests for some of the student-athletes.

## Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Decision Analysis

**Background.**

In September 2003, the NCAA Division I Academic/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet granted the NCAA staff permission to review and decide all progress-toward-degree waivers as a means to implement a less bureaucratic process of deciding waivers. Since that time, the staff has made all preliminary decision in progress-toward-degree waiver requests based on a waiver directive approved by the cabinet each year. The NCAA Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Committee serves as the first level of appeal of staff denials, and the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet Subcommittee on Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Appeals serves as the final avenue of appeal for cases denied by both the staff and the Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers Committee.

As outlined in the Directive Regarding the Standard of Review of Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers [Attachment], institutions seeking a progress-toward-degree waiver on behalf of a student-athlete for relief of NCAA Bylaws 14.4.3.1-(a) (24/36 credit hours), 14.4.3.1-(b) (18/27 hours earned during regular academic year), 14.4.3.1-(c) (six hours earned per academic term), 14.4.3.2 (40/60/80 percentage of degree), 14.4.3.2.1 (33/50/67 percentage of five-year degree), 14.4.3.3.1 (90/95/100 grade-point average), and/or 14.1.10.2 (eligibility for postseason competition-between terms) must present evidence of compelling mitigating circumstances along with a reasonable expectation for the student-athlete to recover academically for the waiver request to be granted. Such waivers are reviewed under the presumption of a good-faith effort on the part of the student-athlete and his or her institution toward completion of the student-athlete's collegiate degree within five years of the student-athlete's full-time enrollment, unless and until circumstances surrounding the waiver request indicate otherwise.

At this time, the staff uses the following analysis in deciding progress-toward-degree waivers:

1. How close the student-athlete is to meeting the progress-toward-degree requirement;

2. The likelihood of the student-athlete to graduate within five years of initial full-time collegiate enrollment (as indicated by the quality-point analysis);

3. The student-athlete's overall academic record;

4. The documented mitigation that led the student-athlete to be deficient; and

5. In most cases, the inclusion of a reasonable academic recovery plan, signed by both the student-athlete and an institutional representative, that will not only guide the student-athlete to graduation within five years, but also will demonstrate how the student-athlete will meet future progress-toward-degree benchmarks.

A student-athlete is evaluated only on his or her academic record created as a college student, with no reference to any other waivers filed on the student-athlete's behalf or to any review of the student-athlete's high school record.

The NCAA is in the process of developing an integrated waiver system that will allow the membership to file all waivers electronically and will permit the staff to have immediate access to all waiver activity related to a student-athlete. The staff asks the cabinet to consider whether the staff should use this additional information in the progress-toward-degree waiver analysis; specifically, should the staff consider the student-athlete's entering academic profile?

**Additional Analysis Options.**

With the development of an interfacing waiver system, the staff will have access to additional information about student-athletes who may have had an initial-eligibility waiver filed on their behalf or may have been part of the prospective student-athlete review process. There are a number of options that could be included in analysis of progress-toward-degree waivers:

1. The high school academic record as recoded by the NCAA Eligibility Center. This would include the core-course grade-point average and the student-athlete's standardized test scores.

    - Points to Consider:

        (1) High school grade-point average is considered a very strong indicator of college graduation. This information combined with the quality-point analysis could lead to a better predictor of the likelihood of graduation.

        (2) The consideration of the high school record could detract from the college record either positively or negatively, depending on the case. Out performing a poor high school record could be positive for the student-athlete, but it could also detract from other necessary analysis elements, such as the need for documented mitigation. In either case, this information could create bias in the review.

2. The outcome of any initial-eligibility waiver filed on behalf of the student-athlete.

    - Points to Consider:

        (1) This may bias the staff because of the perception that the student-athlete may have already received a waiver of the academic legislation, or the perception resulting from the student-athlete not receiving such a waiver.

        (2) It may be appropriate for the staff to consider that a student-athlete already has had a waiver filed on his or her behalf, the mitigation for the request and the outcome.

(3) If the student-athlete previously received an initial-eligibility waiver due to an education-impacting disability, a subsequent progress-toward-degree waiver could lead to an assessment of the student-athlete and the institution's accountability in obtaining appropriate accommodations and using them as needed.

**Conclusion.**

The analysis elements currently used in the review of progress-toward-degree waivers have been effective. However, the access to additional information could offer a greater academic profile of a student-athlete. The staff's knowledge of this "background" information also could lead to a real or perceived bias in the review of the student-athlete's waiver or could potentially distract the staff from the analysis model they currently use, which focuses primarily on the collegiate academic record.

**ATTACHMENT**
**SUPPLEMENT NO. 14b**

# NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet Directive Regarding the Standard of Review of Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers

1. Background.

Effective fall 2003 and thereafter, NCAA Division I student-athletes enrolling in his or her first full-time term of collegiate attendance are required to complete increased minimum progress-toward-degree requirements to earn eligibility for competition. In anticipation of waiver requests seeking relief from these standards, the NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet Subcommittee on Continuing Eligibility drafted this directive to provide guidance to the NCAA membership services staff and the NCAA Division I Committee on Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers as outlined below, with the understanding that both entities may use discretion in the application of this directive. Further, exceptions to this directive may be applied by the staff, the committee and/or the cabinet when warranted by the circumstances of a specific case.

2. Guiding Principle.

Institutions seeking a progress-toward-degree waiver on behalf of a student-athlete for relief of NCAA Bylaws 14.4.3.1-(a) (24/36 credit hours), 14.4.3.2 (40/60/80 percentage of degree), 14.4.3.2.1 (33/50/67 percentage of five-year degree), 14.4.3.3.1 (90/95/100 grade-point average), 14.4.3.1-(b) (18/27 hours earned during regular academic year), 14.4.3.1-(c) (six hours earned per academic term) and/or 14.1.10.2 (eligibility for postseason competition—between terms) must present evidence of compelling mitigating circumstances along with a reasonable expectation for the student-athlete to recover academically for the waiver request to be granted. Such waivers will be reviewed under the presumption of a good-faith effort on the part of the student-athlete and his or her institution toward completion of the student-athlete's collegiate degree within five years of the student-athlete's full-time enrollment, unless and until circumstances surrounding the waiver request indicate otherwise.

Additionally, institutions seeking a waiver of full-time enrollment for a student-athlete pursuant to Bylaws 14.1.8.1.8 (12-hour requirement for practice) and 14.1.8.2.7 (12-hour requirement for competition) must present evidence of specific mitigating circumstances as outlined by the legislation along with a reasonable expectation for the student-athlete to maintain appropriate academic progress as dictated by progress-toward-degree legislation for the waiver request to be granted. Such waivers will be reviewed under the presumption of a good-faith effort on the part of the student-athlete and his or her institution toward completion of the student-athlete's collegiate degree within five years of the student-athlete's full-time enrollment, unless and until circumstances surrounding the waiver request indicate otherwise.

3. Threshold for Review.

The student-athlete's academic record, including any deficiencies, in existence at the time of the waiver shall be reviewed through analysis of the student-athlete's cumulative total of quality points (as determined by the multiplication of grades and credits earned). If the analysis of the student-athlete's quality-point total predicts he or she has less than 25-percent chance of graduating, then the waiver shall be denied by staff for failure to meet the threshold for review of a progress-toward-degree waiver case.

4. Staff Approvals.

The staff is granted the authority to approve waivers of the progress-toward-degree requirement(s) based on a review of some or all of the following information:

a. A quality-point analysis indicating the student-athlete has a greater than 50-percent chance of graduating within five years of initial full-time collegiate enrollment;

b. A reasonable academic-recovery plan, signed by both the student-athlete and an institutional representative; and

c. Documented compelling mitigating circumstances surrounding the waiver request (Section No. 7).

The staff is granted the authority to approve requests for less than full-time enrollment based on a review of some or all of the following information:

a. A quality-point analysis indicating the student-athlete has a greater than 50-percent chance of graduating within five years of initial full-time collegiate enrollment;

b. Documented compelling mitigating circumstances surrounding the waiver request (Section Nos. 7 and 9); and

c. Case precedent as established by the Subcommittee on Continuing Eligibility.

5. Staff Denials.

The staff is granted the authority to deny waivers of the progress-toward-degree requirement(s) based on a review of the following information:

a. A 25-percent (or lower) chance of graduation, based on the student-athlete's quality-point analysis;

b. The absence of mitigating circumstances (Section No. 7);

c. Any previous reviews of the student-athlete's academic progress through the progress-toward-degree waiver process; and

d. Clear case precedent warranting denial of the appeal.

6. Documentation.

Institutions are encouraged (and in some cases, may be required) to provide the following supporting documentation with waiver requests:

a. Standard documentation (to be provided unless staff indicates otherwise):

(1) A completed progress-toward-degree waiver application;

(2) Letters or statements from the institution and student-athlete explaining the reasons for the deficiency;

(3) Evidence of the compelling mitigating circumstance(s) supporting the waiver request; and

(4) A copy of the student-athlete's current official transcript and transcripts from any previous institutions (print-screen transcripts will not be accepted).

b. To be provided if needed (or if requested by NCAA staff) to support waiver request:

(1) Description of the degree major as found in the academic catalog;

(2) Degree audit;

(3) Current course enrollment list;

An academic-recovery plan, designed by the institution, that demonstrates how the student-athlete's individual efforts, course schedule planning (including consideration of academic- and athletics-related time demands)

and use of academic resources will correct his or her academic eligibility deficiencies. An acceptable academic-recovery plan also will demonstrate that the student-athlete is able to graduate within five years of full-time enrollment, and the plan must be signed by both the student-athlete and an institutional representative with academic oversight for the student-athlete;

(4) An institutional-recovery plan in cases of misadvisement or lack of advisement (Section No. 8); and

(5) Documentation of an education-impacting disability impacting the student-athlete's academic performance (Section No. 9).

7. Mitigating Circumstances.

a. Circumstances which may be considered as compelling mitigating circumstances and supported by objective documentation shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Hardship;

(a) Situations clearly supported by contemporaneous documentation, which indicate that the student-athlete was unable to complete the progress-toward-degree requirement as a result of significant physical or mental circumstances suffered by the student-athlete, family member or others on whom the student-athlete is dependent;

(b) Extreme financial difficulties as a result of a specific event (e.g., layoff, death in the family) experienced by the student-athlete or by an individual on whom the student-athlete is legally dependent, which prohibit the student-athlete from completing the progress-toward-degree requirement(s). The circumstances must be clearly supported by objective documentation (e.g., decree of bankruptcy, proof of termination) and must be beyond the control of the student-athlete or the individual on whom the student-athlete is legally dependent; and

(c) Natural disasters (e.g., earthquakes, floods);

(2) Restrictive degree programs;

(3) Restrictive transfers;

(4) Military service, Peace Corps or selective service commission or foreign equivalent, official church mission or pregnancy;

(5) Participation in athletics activities as defined by Bylaw 14.2.1.5 (Pan American, World Championships, World Cup, etc.); or

(6) Other unforeseen events and/or circumstances beyond the student-athlete's control.

b. Circumstances that will not be considered as compelling mitigating circumstances may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Unreasonable reliance by a student-athlete on misinformation from an institutional staff member (e.g., misadvisement); or

(2) Failure to follow an academic-recovery plan submitted with a previously approved waiver of the progress-toward-degree requirements (which left the student-athlete deficient for the next eligibility certification).

8. Misadvisement.

a. Staff approvals.

The staff is granted the authority to approve waivers of the progress-toward-degree requirement(s) that involve the assertion of misadvisement, lack of advisement or misapplication of progress-toward-degree rules based on review of some or all of the following information:

(1) Documented misadvisement;

(2) Reasonable reliance by the student-athlete on the misadvisement;

(3) The student-athlete's deficiency was the result of his or her reliance on the misadvisement;

(4) Reasonable academic-recovery plan for the student-athlete; and

(5) Reasonable institutional-recovery plan.

b. Documentation of misadvisement.

(1) A written statement of explanation from the person or persons responsible for providing erroneous information or the individual's supervisor. This statement needs to summarize the information given to the student-athlete. In the event the responsible individual is unavailable to submit a statement, the institution must indicate the reason the individual is unavailable (e.g., no longer employed, etc.).

(2) If available, contemporaneous documentation demonstrating misadvice (e.g., notes, phone logs).

(3) A written statement from the student-athlete in question demonstrating whether the student-athlete, in good faith, relied on the erroneous information to his or her detriment. The statement should include a chronology of events.

(4) A written statement from the institution regarding its actions to educate the student-athlete about the progress-toward-degree requirements.

c. Institutional-recovery plan.

(1) Educational initiatives to be conducted by the institution relative to the student-athlete and personnel who have a role in providing academic advisement to student-athletes.

(2) Development of corrective actions to ensure that a student-athlete will receive proper academic advisement relative to the evaluation of the student-athlete’s degree program and course selection and the evaluation of the student-athlete's transcript to ensure courses are acceptable for satisfying the progress-toward-degree requirements.

(3) The plan must be signed by the athletics representative with academic oversight for student-athletes, the director of athletics and the faculty athletics representative.

9. Education-Impacting Disabilities.

a. If requesting a less than full-time enrollment waiver for a student-athlete with an education-impacting disability, written documentation from an appropriate institutional academic authority (e.g., registrar) that the institution has defined the

student-athlete's full-time enrollment to be less than 12 hours to compensate for the student-athlete's disability.

b. A written copy of the institution's policies and curriculum guidelines applicable to all students with education-impacting disabilities. (Note: The Committee on Progress-Toward-Degree Waivers will not consider appeals in cases in which the institution does not have an established written policy.)

c. A summary of support services and other accommodations provided by the applicant institution designed to assist student-athletes with education-impacting disabilities, in general, and the student-athlete for whom the waiver is being sought, in particular. This summary normally would be expected to include accommodations provided by the institution with respect to the student-athlete's athletics responsibilities, as well as academic and other support services provided and any institutional accommodations related to adjustments of minimum performance requirements.

d. Full and complete documentation of the student-athlete's education-impacting disability including:

(1) A current diagnosis of the disability, including the results of specific measures or tests that formed the basis of the diagnoses. If specific circumstances of the case indicate that this requirement is unnecessary, a prior diagnosis may be acceptable. (Note: The NCAA staff, committee or subcommittee reserves the right to request a second opinion or diagnosis.); and

(2) A copy of the student-athlete's individual education plan, if applicable.

e. Contemporaneous medical documentation provided by an individual who is qualified and licensed to diagnose and treat the particular illness (e.g., psychiatrist, psychologist) must be submitted on behalf of student-athletes with psychological or mental health issues (e.g. depression, bipolar disorder).

f. An institution filing a progress-toward-degree waiver for a student-athlete with an education-impacting disability must identify if it previously filed a disability initial-eligibility waiver request for the same student-athlete.

- If the institution previously submitted a disability initial-eligibility waiver request for the student-athlete, the institution must provide a summary of the support services and/or accommodations that the student-athlete has

used at the institution. If the support services and/or accommodations provided differ from the support services and/or accommodations that were described in the student-athlete's initial-eligibility waiver request, the institution must provide a written statement explaining why the support services and/or accommodations changed. If the student-athlete did not use any support services and/or accommodations, the institution must provide a statement explaining why the student-athlete did not use available support services and/or accommodations.

## Review of 2008-09 Progress-Toward-Degree Baseball Cases

### Background.

In June 2007 the NCAA Division I membership adopted NCAA Division I Proposal No. 2007-07 to establish that baseball student-athletes must be in good academic standing and meeting all progress-toward-degree requirements at the beginning of the fall term of an institution's academic year in order to be academically eligible for competition that occurs at any point in the academic year. In other words, a baseball student-athlete cannot be declared eligible to compete in the spring term of an academic year if he was not meeting all academic requirements at the start of the fall term of that same academic year. The progress-toward-degree requirements that must be met include credit-hour, percentage-of-degree, grade-point-average and designation-of-degree requirements, as well as any academic good standing requirements established by the institution. In addition to meeting all requirements in the fall term, the student-athlete has to meet any requirements that are specific to subsequent terms of the academic year, such as the term-by-term cumulative grade-point-average review in order to be certified as academically eligible to compete.

This proposal was effective August 1, 2008, and the NCAA staff began processing progress-toward-degree waivers resulting from this change in legislation fall 2008. This document will summarize the requests received and the decisions made. The staff requests feedback from the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet as to the appropriateness of these decisions.

### Summary of 2008-09 Baseball Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Cases.

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of cases received -- | 27 |
| Number approved -- | 3 |
| Number of conditionally approved -- | 19 |
| Number denied -- | 4 |
| Number withdrawn -- | 1 |

### Waiver Analysis.

When analyzing any progress-toward-degree waiver case, the staff considers several factors including the likelihood of graduation within five years of enrollment (as indicated by the quality-point analysis), the student-athlete's overall academic record, the size of the deficiency, a reasonable academic-recovery plan and the mitigation that led the student-athlete to be deficient. With the baseball cases, the staff began with this analysis and, when considering the mitigation, focused only on what had prevented the student-athlete from being eligible at the start of the academic year. For example, in a number of cases misadvisement was presented as the mitigation. When reviewing such a case, the staff asks the question, "if not for the misadvisement, would the student-athlete have been eligible at the start of the academic year?"

In most of the cases reviewed, a conditional approval was granted. Staff generally granted the conditional waiver if there was a strong chance of graduation (above 50 percent), and legitimate mitigation that prevented the student-athlete from meeting the requirement. The student-athlete's academic-recovery plans had to be designed in order to avoid future deficiencies. The condition was the same for all of the cases – the waiver was approved contingent on the student-athlete following the established academic-recovery plan for the fall term. This meant the student-athlete had to pass all of the fall courses with grades that would allow the courses to be degree-applicable. So if a "C" was required to count the course toward the degree, then a "D" would not fulfill the condition. Academic-recovery plans are always signed by institutional representatives as well as the student-athlete, so the student-athlete is aware that the plan must be followed. Final transcripts were requested so the staff could verify that the condition had been met. The staff adopted this conditional approval approach after a case that was denied by staff was appealed to the NCAA Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Committee. The committee elected to provide a conditional approval in that case and the staff took that as precedent that it could use in processing future cases.

**Conclusion.**

At this point, with the support of the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet, the staff intends to continue to use the conditional approval, where appropriate, for baseball cases. In most cases, the student-athletes have met their conditions. No institution has appealed because a condition was not met, but if that occurs, the staff intends to consider mitigation that caused the student-athlete to fail to meet the condition. Should an institution delay filing a waiver request until the spring term for a student-athlete who was ineligible at the start of the fall term but managed to rectify the deficiency or "get well" during the fall, the staff will continue to look at the mitigation that impacted the student-athlete's ability to meet the progress-toward-degree requirement as of the fall, in addition to the other criteria. While a conditional waiver cannot be granted to a student-athlete when the waiver is requested for the spring term, the staff will try to use the same analysis in cases that come in after the fall term.

The staff welcomes cabinet comment on this approach.

**Applicable Proposals and Legislation.**

2007-7 ELIGIBILITY -- PROGRESS-TOWARD-DEGREE AND TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS -- MIDYEAR CERTIFICATION AND MIDYEAR TWO-YEAR TRANSFERS -- BASEBALL
Status: Adopted - Final

Intent: To specify that a baseball student-athlete who is not in good academic standing or fails to meet any progress-toward-degree requirement at the beginning of an institution's fall term shall not be eligible during the remainder of the academic year (e.g., no certification at the beginning of a subsequent academic term); further, to specify that a 2-4 or 4-2-4 baseball transfer student-athlete who initially enrolls at the certifying institution as a full-time student after the conclusion of the institution's first term of the academic year and satisfies the applicable transfer requirements shall not be eligible for competition until the ensuing academic year.

A. Bylaws: Amend 14.01.2.1, as follows:

14.01.2.1 Good Academic Standing. To be eligible to represent an institution in intercollegiate athletics competition, a student-athlete shall be in good academic standing as determined by the academic authorities who determine the meaning of such phrases for all students of the institution, subject to controlling legislation of the conference(s) or similar association of which the institution is a member. (Note: The restrictions, exceptions and waivers set forth in Bylaws 14.4.3.4, 14.4.3.5 and 14.4.3.6 also apply to the general requirement for good academic standing and progress toward degree.)

**14.01.2.1.1 Additional Application -- Baseball. In baseball, a student-athlete who fails to meet the requirements of good academic standing at the beginning of an institution's fall term shall not be eligible for competition during the remainder of the academic year.**

B. Bylaws: Amend 14.4.3.1, as follows:

14.4.3.1 Fulfillment of Credit-Hour Requirements. Eligibility for competition shall be determined based on satisfactory completion of at least:

[14.4.3.1-(a) through 14.4.3.1-(c) unchanged.]

[14.4.3.1.1 through 14.4.3.1.2 unchanged.]

14.4.3.1.3 Regaining Eligibility. For purposes of Bylaw 14.4.3.1-(a), a student-athlete who does not meet the 24-semester or 36-quarter credit-hour requirement prior to the start of his or her second year of collegiate enrollment (i.e., third semester, fourth quarter), may become eligible at the beginning of the next academic term by successfully completing 24-semester or 36-quarter hours during the previous two semesters or three quarters.

**14.4.3.1.3.1 Exception -- Baseball. In baseball, a student-athlete who is subject to the 24-semester or 36-quarter credit-hour requirement at the beginning of an institution's fall term and fails to meet the requirement based on the student-athlete's academic record in existence at that time shall not be eligible during the remainder of the academic year.**

14.4.3.1.4 Application of Rule. For purposes of Bylaw 14.4.3.1-(b), once a student-athlete initially enrolls as a full-time student, he or she must meet the 18-semester/27-quarter hour requirement prior to the start of the institution's third semester or fourth quarter following the student-athlete's initial full-time enrollment. Further, the 18-semester/27-quarter hour requirement applies to each academic year in which a student-athlete is enrolled as a full-time student during any term of that academic year.

**14.4.3.1.4.1 Additional Application -- Baseball. In baseball, a student-athlete who is subject to the 18-semester/27-quarter hour requirement at the beginning of an institution's fall term and fails to meet the requirement based on the student-athlete's academic record in existence at that time shall not be eligible during the remainder of the academic year.**

**14.4.3.1.5 Additional Application of Six-Hour and Transfer Rules -- Baseball. In baseball, a student-athlete who fails to meet the requirements of Bylaws 14.4.3.1-(c) or 14.4.3.1.2, or both, to be eligible for an institution's fall term shall not be eligible during the remainder of the academic year.**

[14.4.3.1.5 through 14.4.3.1.6 renumbered as 14.14.3.1.6 through 14.4.3.1.7 unchanged.]

C. Bylaws: Amend 14.4.3.2, as follows:

14.4.3.2 Fulfillment of Percentage of Degree Requirements. A student-athlete who is entering his or her third year of collegiate enrollment shall have completed successfully at least 40 percent of the course requirements in the student's specific degree program. A student-athlete who is entering his or her fourth year of collegiate enrollment shall have completed successfully at least 60 percent of the course requirements in the student's specific degree program. A student-athlete who is entering his or her fifth year of collegiate enrollment shall have completed successfully at least 80 percent of the course requirements in the student's specific degree program. The course requirements must be in the student's specific degree program (as opposed to the student's major).

[14.4.3.2.1 through 14.4.3.2.2 unchanged.]

14.4.3.2.3 Timing of Certification. A student-athlete's eligibility under this provision shall be determined on the basis of the student's academic record in existence at the beginning of that student's third or subsequent academic year (i.e., fifth semester or seventh quarter) of full-time enrollment. If the student-athlete is ineligible under the provisions of the progress-toward-degree legislation at the beginning of that term, eligibility may be reinstated at the beginning of

any other regular term of that student's specific academic year, based on the student's subsequent fulfillment of the necessary degree requirements.

**14.4.3.2.3.1 Exception -- Baseball. In baseball, a student-athlete who is ineligible under this provision at the beginning of an institution's fall term shall not be eligible during the remainder of the academic year.**

[Remainder of 14.4.3.2 unchanged.]

D. Bylaws: Amend 14.4.3.3, as follows:

14.4.3.3 Fulfillment of Minimum Grade-Point Average Requirements. A student-athlete shall meet the "satisfactory completion" provision of this requirement by maintaining a grade-point average that places the individual in good academic standing, as established by the institution for all students who are at an equivalent stage of progress toward a degree.

[14.4.3.3.1 unchanged.]

[14.4.3.3.1.1 unchanged.]

14.4.3.3.1.2 Timing of Certification. A student-athlete's eligibility under this provision shall be determined on the basis of the student's academic record in existence by the first date of competition or contest of each regular term of an academic year beginning with that student's second or subsequent academic year (i.e., third semester or fourth quarter) of full-time enrollment. If the student-athlete is ineligible under the provisions of the progress-toward-degree legislation at the beginning of that term, eligibility may be reinstated at the beginning of any other regular term of that student's specific academic year, based on the student's subsequent fulfillment of the minimum grade-point average requirement.

**14.4.3.3.1.2.1 Exception -- Baseball. In baseball, a student-athlete who is ineligible under this provision at the beginning of an institution's fall term shall not be eligible during the remainder of the academic year.**

[Remainder of 14.4.3.3 unchanged.]

E. Bylaws: Amend 14.5.4, as follows:

14.5.4 Two-Year College Transfers. A student who transfers to a member institution from a two-year college or from a branch school that conducts an intercollegiate athletics program must complete an academic year of residence unless the student meets the following eligibility requirements applicable to the division of which the certifying institution is a member. Further, a transfer student-athlete admitted after the 12th class day may not use that semester or quarter for the purpose of establishing residency.

[14.5.4.1 unchanged.]

14.5.4.1.1 **Baseball and** Basketball -- Midyear Enrollee. In **baseball and** basketball, a qualifier who satisfies the provisions of Bylaw 14.5.4.1, but initially enrolls at the certifying institution as a full-time student subsequent to the conclusion of the institution's first term of the academic year, shall not be eligible for competition until the ensuing academic year.

[14.5.4.2 unchanged.]

[14.5.4.2.1 through 14.5.4.2.2 unchanged.]

14.5.4.2.3 **Baseball and** Basketball -- Midyear Enrollee. In **baseball and** basketball, a student who was not a qualifier (per Bylaw 14.3.1.1) who satisfies the provisions of Bylaw 14.5.4.2, but initially enrolls at a certifying institution as a full-time student subsequent to the conclusion of the institution's first term of the academic year, shall not be eligible for competition until the ensuing academic year.

[Remainder of 14.5.4 unchanged.]

F. Bylaws: Amend 14.5.6, as follows:

14.5.6 4-2-4 College Transfers. A student who transfers from a four-year college to a two-year college and then to the certifying institution shall complete one academic year of residence at the certifying institution prior to engaging in intercollegiate competition, unless the student has:

[14.5.6-(a) through 14.5.6-(c) unchanged.]

[14.5.6.1 unchanged.]

14.5.6.2 **Baseball and** Basketball -- Midyear Enrollee. In **baseball and** basketball, a student who satisfies the provisions of Bylaw 14.5.6, but initially enrolls at a certifying institution as a full-time student subsequent to the conclusion of the institution's first term of the academic year, shall not be eligible for competition until the ensuing academic year.

Source: NCAA Division I Board of Directors.

Effective Date: August 1, 2008

Proposal Category: Amendment

Topical Area: Eligibility

Rationale: This proposal addresses key findings related to credit-hour production during the spring (competition) term, summer school enrollment data and research related to fall term eligibility. Student-athletes currently using the fall term to "get well" academically will adjust to this new requirement by either earning enough credit hours during the previous spring term or enrolling in summer school courses. In either case, the student-athlete stays on track to graduate within an appropriate timeframe and earns an NCAA Division I Academic Progress Rate (APR) eligibility point for the previous term. Student-athletes not certified as eligible for competition at the start of the fall term will still be eligible to practice and receive athletics aid (subject to applicable rules). While student-athletes may still transfer from two-year colleges at midyear, they will not be eligible for competition immediately on transfer. This provision will help minimize the impact of two-year college student-athletes that transfer to Division I programs midyear, compete during the spring term without a serious academic commitment, and then depart the institution (usually for professional baseball), thereby creating an "0-for-2" in the institution's APR calculation.

Estimated Budget Impact: None.

Impact on Student-Athlete's Time: None.

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History

Apr 25, 2007: Submit; Submitted for consideration.

Apr 26, 2007: Board Consideration, Adopted

Apr 27, 2007: Adopted, Override Period; Start of Override Period

Jun 25, 2007: Adopted, Override Period; End of Override Period; (Number of Override Request = 20)

Jun 25, 2007: Adopted; Adopted - Final

# Academic Issues Related to Two-Year Transfer Student-Athletes in Division I Athletics

December 2008

# Student-Athlete Transfers into Division I Institutions

# Overall Transfers Into Division I (Division I APP)

| | Overall | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
| Non-Transfers | 86.6% | 86.8% | 87.2% | 87.6% |
| 2-year transfers | 6.1% | 5.9% | 5.6% | 5.2% |
| 4-year transfers | 7.3% | 7.3% | 7.2% | 7.2% |

Note: Student-athletes may be counted twice if they participate in more than one sport. These are "instances" of transfers, not number of transfer students.

# 2006-07 Transfers Into Division I (by Sport Group)

| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | Men's Other | Women's Basketball | Women's Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Transfers | 73.7% | 72.0% | 87.1% | 88.2% | 84.0% | 91.2% |
| 2-4 | 17.8% | 17.5% | 7.2% | 3.0% | 9.0% | 2.5% |
| 4-4 | 8.5% | 10.5% | 5.6% | 8.8% | 6.9% | 6.3% |

Note: All schools included in analysis.

## Trends of Transfers Into Division I: Men's Baseball

| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Transfers | 72.5% | 72.7% | 72.8% | 74.1% |
| 2-4 | 19.4% | 18.8% | 18.2% | 17.5% |
| 4-4 | 8.1% | 8.5% | 9.0% | 8.4% |

## Trends of Transfers Into Division I: Men's Basketball

| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Transfers | 73.9% | 72.5% | 72.0% | 72.0% |
| 2-4 | 16.6% | 17.5% | 18.0% | 17.4% |
| 4-4 | 9.5% | 10.0% | 10.0% | 10.6% |

## Trends of Transfers Into Division I: Men's Football

| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Transfers | 86.5% | 86.8% | 87.2% | 87.2% |
| 2-4 | 8.1% | 7.9% | 7.4% | 7.2% |
| 4-4 | 5.4% | 5.3% | 5.4% | 5.6% |

## Trends of Transfers Into Division I: Men's Other

| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Transfers | 87.1% | 87.2% | 87.9% | 88.3% |
| 2-4 | 3.8% | 3.5% | 3.2% | 2.9% |
| 4-4 | 9.1% | 9.3% | 8.9% | 8.8% |

## Trends of Transfers Into Division I: Women's Basketball

| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Transfers | 82.5% | 83.0% | 84.3% | 83.9% |
| 2-4 | 9.9% | 9.7% | 9.0% | 9.0% |
| 4-4 | 7.6% | 7.3% | 6.7% | 7.0% |

## Trends of Transfers Into Division I: Women's Other

| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Transfers | 90.4% | 90.8% | 90.9% | 91.3% |
| 2-4 | 3.1% | 2.9% | 2.8% | 2.4% |
| 4-4 | 6.5% | 6.3% | 6.3% | 6.3% |

## Findings Regarding Incoming Transfer Students

- Overall, transfers into Division I have decreased slightly over the past four years. The decrease has come mainly from a decrease in the number of 2-4 transfers.
- There are large between-conference differences in the number of student-athlete transfers coming into Division I athletics programs. Numbers and trends in the number of 2-4 transfers appear to have a strong relationship with conference APRs and their trends.
- Men's basketball and baseball teams are comprised of roughly 18% 2-4 transfer students, much higher than in other sports. Previous research has shown that two-year transfers perform less well academically in college than other student-athletes.

# High School Academic Characteristics

NCAA Research

## High School Academic Performance of 2004-05 College Freshmen for Selected Sport Groups

| SPORT | Average High School Core GPA | Average Best Test (SAT-units) |
|---|---|---|
| Men's Basketball | 2.99 | 963 |
| Football | 3.06 | 990 |
| Wrestling | 3.19 | 1060 |
| Men's Track (O) | 3.26 | 1074 |
| Baseball | 3.32 | 1063 |
| Men's Other | 3.38 | 1127 |
| Women's Sports | 3.55 | 1077 |

## High School Academic Performance for all Two-Year Transfers into Division I in Selected Sport Groups (APP 2004-05 Data)

| SPORT | N | % with IEC Data | High School Core GPA | Best Test (SAT-units) | Div. I Qualifier out of HS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Men's Basketball | 736 | 44% | 2.73 | 893 | 61% |
| Football | 1,515 | 56% | 2.73 | 899 | 62% |
| Wrestling | 50 | 52% | 2.74 | 911 | 50% |
| Men's Track (O) | 288 | 49% | 2.84 | 922 | 61% |
| Men's Other | 415 | 50% | 3.01 | 994 | 82% |
| Baseball | 1,454 | 73% | 3.12 | 989 | 85% |
| Women's Sports | 1,505 | 55% | 3.22 | 940 | 76% |

## Comparison of High School Academic Performance of 2004-05 College Freshmen versus Transfers in Men's Basketball

| Student Category | Average High School Core GPA | Average Best Test (SAT-units) |
|---|---|---|
| Non-Transfers | 2.99 | 963 |
| Two-Year Transfers | 2.73 | 893 |
| Four-Year Transfers | 2.94 | 960 |

## Comparison of High School Academic Performance of 2004-05 College Freshmen versus Transfers in Football

| Student Category | Average High School Core GPA | Average Best Test (SAT-units) |
|---|---|---|
| Non-Transfers | 3.06 | 990 |
| Two-Year Transfers | 2.73 | 899 |
| Four-Year Transfers | 2.96 | 966 |

## Findings Regarding High School Academic Preparation of Men's Basketball and Football Student-Athletes

- The incoming freshmen in men's basketball have the lowest average high school grades and test scores of any sport group.
- Two-year transfers tend to have lower high school academic scores than the non-transfer population in both football and men's basketball, and those averages are lower than other sport groups.
- Four-year transfers are similar to non-transfers in terms of their high school academic profiles.

## College Academic Performance

NCAA Research

## College Academic Performance of 2004-05 Freshmen for Selected Sport Groups

| SPORT | N | Cumulative GPA | Credits Earned | Percentage of Degree Reqs. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Football | 4,133 | 2.46 | 27.9 | 23.2% |
| Wrestling | 438 | 2.51 | 27.5 | 22.3% |
| Men's Basketball | 902 | 2.51 | 29.2 | 25.6% |
| Men's Track (O) | 1,463 | 2.68 | 28.3 | 24.0% |
| Baseball | 1,812 | 2.71 | 27.9 | 23.7% |
| Men's Other | 3,343 | 2.82 | 29.0 | 24.6% |
| Women's Sports | 10,145 | 3.00 | 29.8 | 25.4% |

## College Academic Performance for all Two-Year Transfers into Division I in Selected Sport Groups (APP 2004-05 Data)

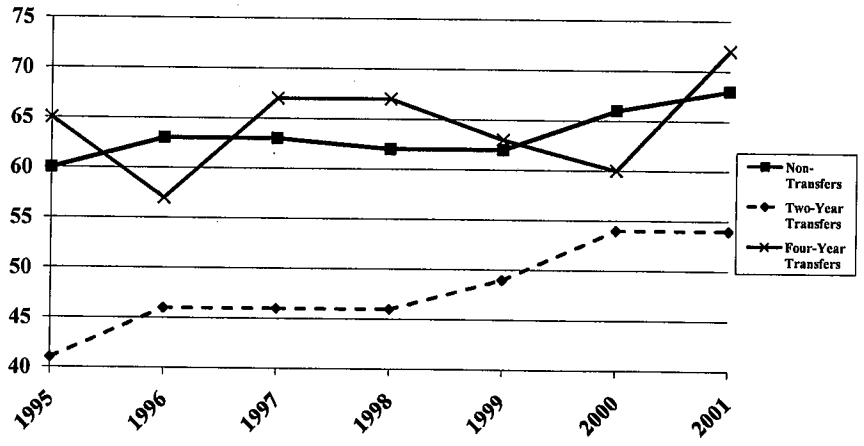
| SPORT | N | Cumulative GPA | Credits Earned |
|---|---|---|---|
| Men's Basketball | 736 | 2.38 | 26.7 |
| Football | 1,515 | 2.40 | 22.6 |
| Wrestling | 50 | 2.42 | 22.6 |
| Men's Track (O) | 288 | 2.55 | 25.2 |
| Baseball | 1,454 | 2.69 | 24.9 |
| Men's Other | 415 | 2.73 | 26.2 |
| Women's Sports | 1,505 | 2.86 | 27.5 |

## College Academic Performance for all Four-Year Transfers into Division I in Selected Sport Groups (APP 2004-05 Data)

| SPORT | N | Cumulative GPA | Credits Earned |
|---|---|---|---|
| Football | 1,024 | 2.51 | 23.6 |
| Men's Basketball | 425 | 2.52 | 26.9 |
| Wrestling | 97 | 2.73 | 25.3 |
| Baseball | 665 | 2.76 | 25.4 |
| Men's Track (O) | 642 | 2.78 | 25.8 |
| Men's Other | 1,275 | 2.90 | 27.0 |
| Women's Sports | 2,569 | 3.06 | 28.4 |

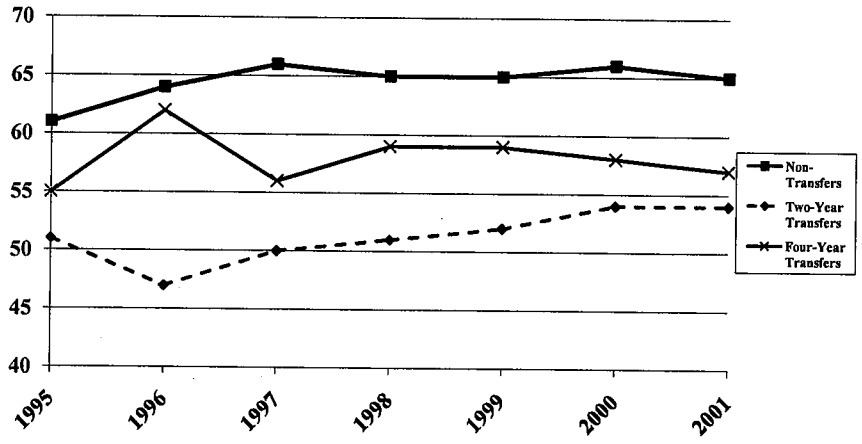
## Graduation Success Rates of Men's Basketball Student-Athletes

Transfers vs. Non-Transfers



## Graduation Success Rates of Football Student-Athletes

Transfers vs. Non-Transfers




## Findings Regarding College Academic Performance

- Freshmen in men's basketball and football are at the low end of average GPAs among Division I sport groups. However, men's basketball student-athletes have the highest number of credits earned of any of the men's sport groups. This may be due, in part, to the summer bridge program that has been available for several years to men's basketball student-athletes. Football student-athletes are lower in both GPA and credits earned than other sport groups.
- Two-year transfers have lower first-year academic performances (for both GPA and credits) than the non-transfer group. Four-year transfers have similar GPAs to the non-transfers, but earn fewer credits.
- Graduation Success Rates of two-year transfers are increasing over time, but continue to lag behind both the non-transfers and the four-year transfers in both men's basketball and football.

# Trends in Number of "0 for 2s"

## Trends in Number of "0 for 2s"-- Student-Athletes Leaving School While Academically Ineligible

| SPORT | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baseball | 443 (5.9%) | 389 (5.0%) | 352 (4.5%) | 310 (4.0%) |
| Basketball | 327 (7.9%) | 322 (7.7%) | 315 (7.4%) | 256 (6.1%) |
| Football | 1,325 (7.0%) | 1,285 (6.7%) | 1,158 (6.0%) | 1,057 (5.5%) |

Notes:
(1) Analyses based on 281 baseball squads, 325 men's basketball squads and 233 football squads that sponsored the sport within Division I during all four years.
(2) N = Number of student-athletes leaving school while ineligible ("0 for 2s") during that academic year (includes SAs who left ineligible after exhausting their eligibility).
(3) % = Percentage of individuals in that sport who were 0 for 2s in that academic year.

Interpretation: (1) Baseball and football 0/2s decreased substantially for the second consecutive year; the number of 0/2s in men's basketball showed its first major decrease in 2006-07.
(2) Cohort sizes generally increased in 2004-05 and 2005-06 before stabilizing in 2006-07 (reason why a stable N may correspond to a % decrease in 0/2s).

# Trends in Number of 0/2s by Transfer Status

| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Non-Transfer** | 2,864 (3.1%) | 2,922 (3.1%) | 2,732 (2.8%) | 2,488 (2.5%) |
| **2-Year Transfer** | 660 (10.1%) | 604 (9.3%) | 581 (9.3%) | 438 (7.4%) |
| **4-Year Transfer** | 402 (5.2%) | 404 (5.1%) | 410 (5.1%) | 371 (4.6%) |

Note: % = Percentage of individuals in transfer status grouping who were 0/2s in that academic year.

# Trends in Number of 0/2s by Transfer Status: Men's Baseball

| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Non-Transfer** | 235 (4.3%) | 215 (3.8%) | 174 (3.0%) | 174 (3.0%) |
| **2-Year Transfer** | 159 (10.9%) | 135 (9.3%) | 121 (8.4%) | 100 (7.3%) |
| **4-Year Transfer** | 49 (8.0%) | 39 (5.9%) | 57 (8.0%) | 36 (5.4%) |

Note: % = Percentage of individuals in transfer status grouping who were 0/2s in that academic year.

# Trends in Number of 0/2s by Transfer Status: Men's Basketball

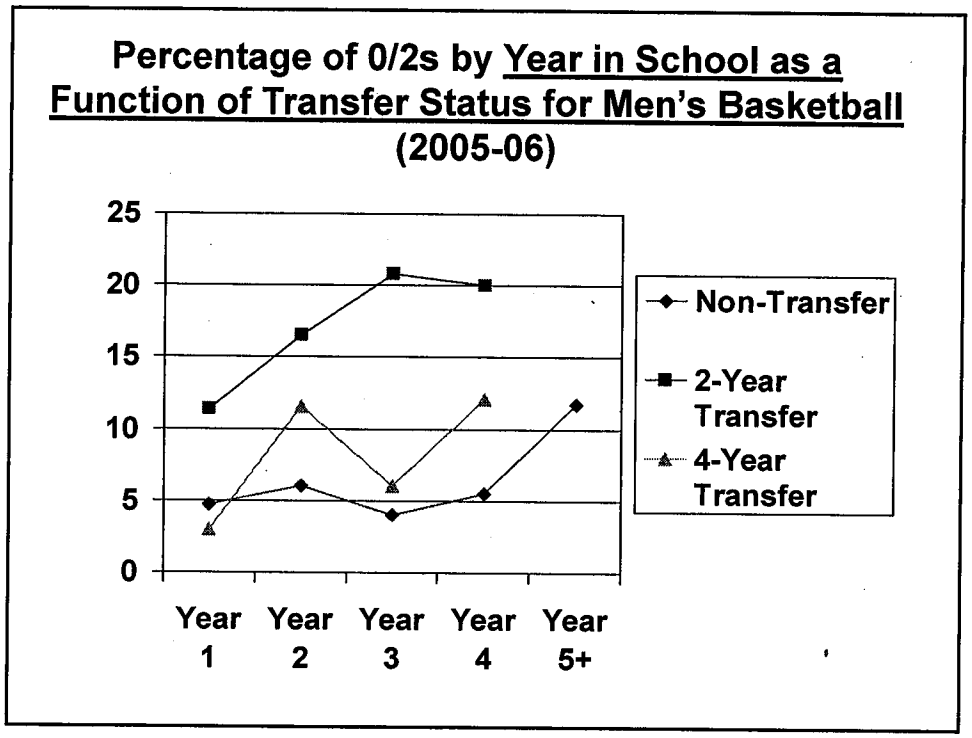
| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Transfer | 172 (5.6%) | 177 (5.8%) | 171 (5.6%) | 132 (4.4%) |
| 2-Year Transfer | 113 (16.4%) | 103 (14.0%) | 112 (14.7%) | 85 (11.6%) |
| 4-Year Transfer | 42 (10.7%) | 42 (10.0%) | 32 (7.5%) | 39 (8.7%) |

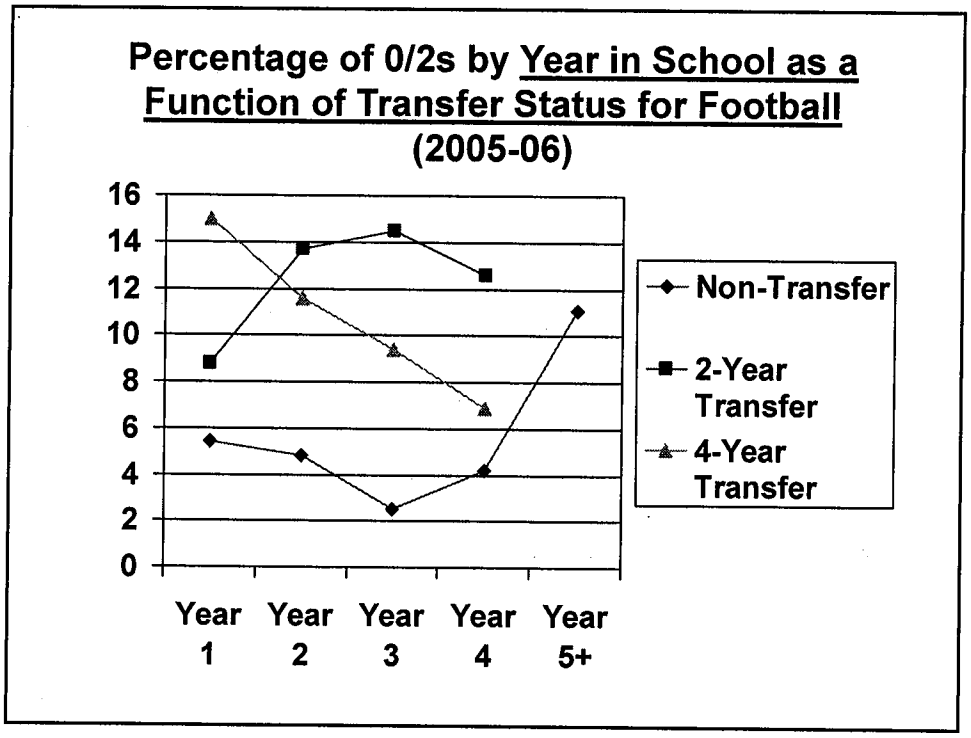
Note: % = Percentage of individuals in transfer status grouping who were 0/2s in that academic year.

# Trends in Number of 0/2s by Transfer Status: Men's Football

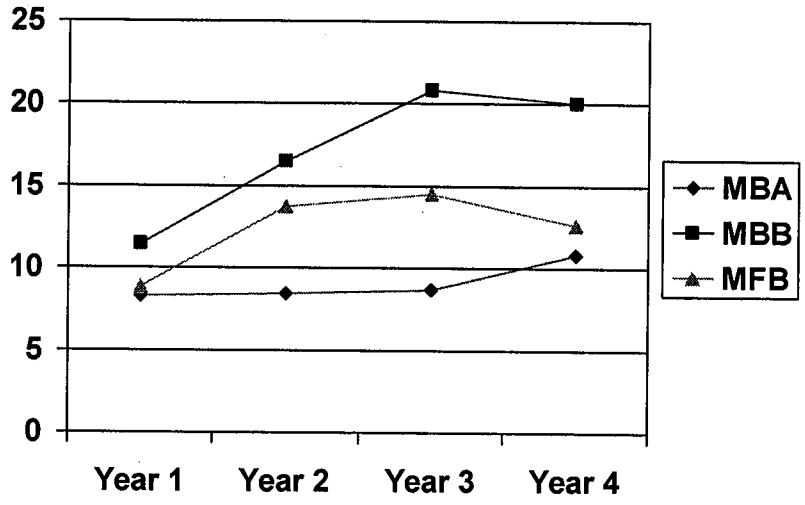
| | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-Transfer | 999 (6.1%) | 995 (6.0%) | 868 (5.2%) | 817 (4.9%) |
| 2-Year Transfer | 212 (13.9%) | 197 (12.9%) | 171 (12.1%) | 150 (10.9%) |
| 4-Year Transfer | 114 (11.1%) | 93 (9.1%) | 119 (11.4%) | 90 (8.4%) |

Note: % = Percentage of individuals in transfer status grouping who were 0/2s in that academic year.


Percentage of 0/2s by Year in School as a Function of Transfer Status for Men's Basketball (2005-06)
25
20
15
10
5
0
Year 1
Year 2
Year 3
Year 4
Year 5+
Non-Transfer
2-Year Transfer
4-Year Transfer


Percentage of 0/2s by Year in School as a Function of Transfer Status for Football (2005-06)
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
Year 1
Year 2
Year 3
Year 4
Year 5+
Non-Transfer
2-Year Transfer
4-Year Transfer

## Percentage of 0/2s by Year in School for 2-Year Transfers – Sport Comparison for 2005-06




## Percentage of 0/2 Departures Among Student-Athletes Exhausting their Athletics Eligibility in 2005-06

| SPORT | Overall | Non-Transfers Only | 2-Year Transfers | 4-Year Transfers |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baseball | 6.4% | 3.6% | 9.2% | 10.0% |
| Men's Basketball | 11.9% | 8.2% | 18.7% | 12.6% |
| Football | 11.9% | 9.8% | 19.3% | 19.6% |
| Men's Ice Hockey | 5.8% | 6.4% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Men's Soccer | 5.3% | 4.1% | 8.6% | 8.6% |
| Men's Track (Outdoor) | 2.6% | 2.1% | 4.4% | 4.0% |
| Wrestling | 6.0% | 5.0% | 15.0% | 7.1% |
| Women's Basketball | 3.5% | 2.3% | 8.4% | 4.4% |

## Percentage of 0/2 Departures Among Minority Student-Athletes Exhausting their Athletics Eligibility in 2005-06

| SPORT | Overall | Non-Transfers Only | 2-Year Transfers | 4-Year Transfers |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baseball | 12.7% | 8.6% | 18.6% | 12.5% |
| Men's Basketball | 15.3% | 10.9% | 21.7% | 16.3% |
| Football | 15.9% | 13.4% | 22.8% | 25.4% |
| Men's Track (Outdoor) | 3.6% | 2.7% | 4.7% | 5.6% |
| Women's Basketball | 5.1% | 3.4% | 10.7% | 3.6% |

Men's basketball percentages based on N=740 (396 non-transfers, 258 two-year transfers, 86 four-year transfers)

## Percentage of 0/2 Departures Among White Student-Athletes Exhausting their Athletics Eligibility in 2005-06

| SPORT | Overall | Non-Transfers Only | 2-Year Transfers | 4-Year Transfers |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baseball | 5.2% | 2.8% | 7.3% | 9.8% |
| Men's Basketball | 1.7% | 2.3% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Football | 5.7% | 4.7% | 10.4% | 9.9% |
| Men's Track (Outdoor) | 1.9% | 1.8% | 3.6% | 1.4% |
| Women's Basketball | 1.5% | 1.1% | 2.1% | 5.9% |

Men's basketball percentages based on N=241 (175 non-transfers, 41 two-year transfers, 25 four-year transfers)

## Number of 0-for-2s in a Sport as a Function of Academic and Demographic Characteristics

- Statistical analysis shows that the following variables are independently predictive of eventual 0/2 status:
  - Lower HS grades
  - Lower HS test score
  - Having transferred from either a 2-year or a 4-year school.
  - Being male
  - Being from a racial / ethnic minority group
- This analysis indicates that even after we control for academic characteristics and a limited set of demographic variables, transfers into a school are more likely to leave the new school as 0/2s. This effect is similar for 2-4 and 4-4 transfers.
- The analysis shows that the high number of 0/2s in men's basketball are expected given the academic backgrounds, transfer frequency and demographics of the student-athletes in the sport. These 0/2 rates are slightly higher in baseball and football than expected after controlling for these factors.

## Findings Regarding "0 for 2" Trends

- The trend in the number of 0 for 2s in men's basketball has begun to drop in the fourth year of data collection. This is in contrast to decreases in the number of 0 for 2s in both football and baseball across the entire time period.
- Two-year transfers are more than twice as likely to leave as 0 for 2s than non-transfer students. The rates for four-year transfers fall in between the other groups.
- Men's basketball and football student-athletes are most vulnerable to becoming 0 for 2s as they exhaust their athletics eligibility. This is most true for two-year transfer student-athletes, as approximately 19% of two-year transfers leave ineligible upon exhausting athletics eligibility in both sports.
- The act of transferring increases the likelihood of becoming an 0 for 2. This effect is independent of a student-athlete's incoming academic characteristics.

# Timing of Eligibility and Retention Losses

NCAA Research

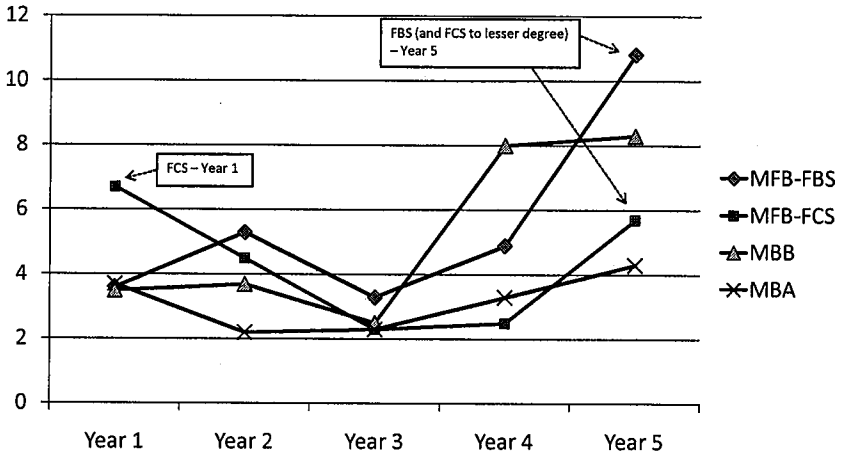
## Methods

- Examined timing of 0/2s and general retention losses (including 0/2 retention losses) as a function of year in school.
- Percentage on the vertical axis is the risk of academic failure or retention loss in that particular year among students in school at that point. In early years, risk of academic failure or retention loss (also called the "statistical hazard") may be lower as a percentage compared to later years but greater in raw numbers of students impacted.
- Year in school for transfer students defined as year in their new school rather than "degree-progress year." This confounds student-athletes entering as transfers with, for example, one year of eligibility vs. three years of eligibility. However, this display does allow one to see the relative risk of academic failure or retention loss as a function of when they are present in your school. Additional analyses can be performed later to disentangle the hazard curves for these groups.

# Hazard Curves for Academic Failure (0/2 Status) as an Outcome

## Academic Failure (0/2 Status) as a Function of Year in School among Students Entering Division I as Freshmen

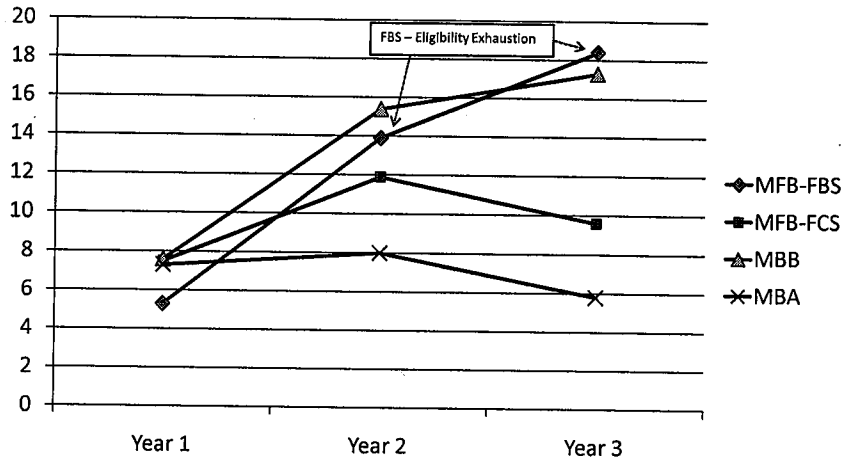
(2006-07 APR Data)




42

## Academic Failure (0/2 Status) as a Function of Year in School among Two-Year Transfers into Division I

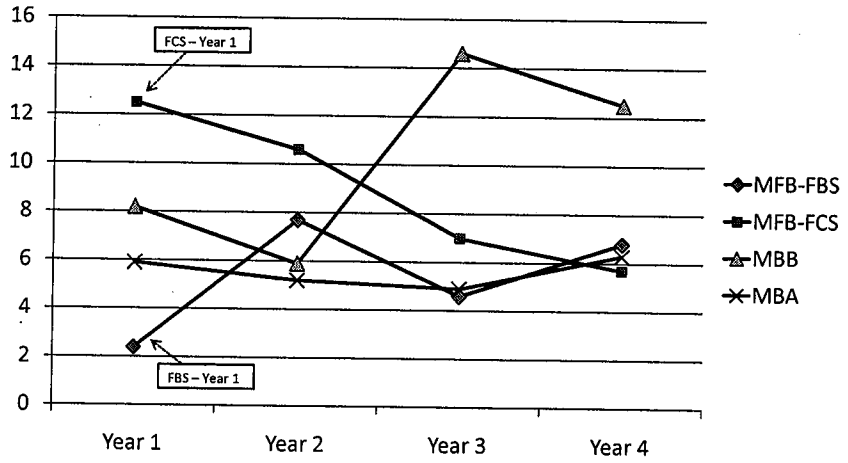
(2006-07 APR Data)




43

## Academic Failure (0/2 Status) as a Function of Year in School among Four-Year Transfers into Division I

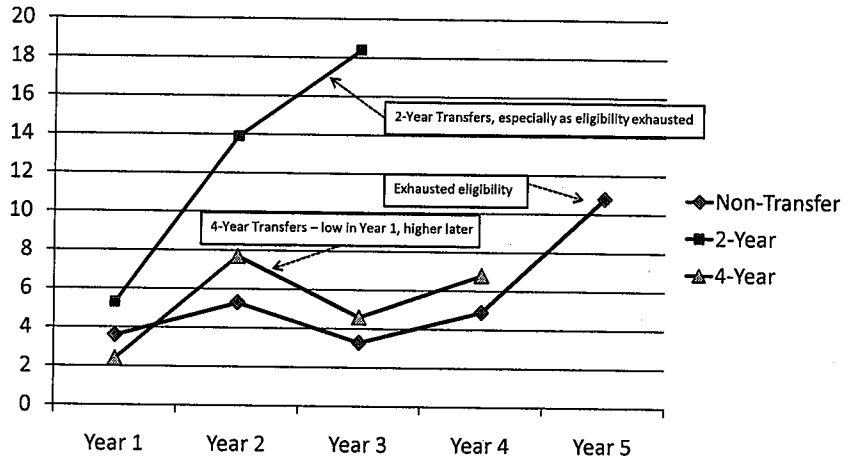
(2006-07 APR Data)




44

## Academic Failure (0/2 Status) as a Function of Year in School among Football Players at FBS schools

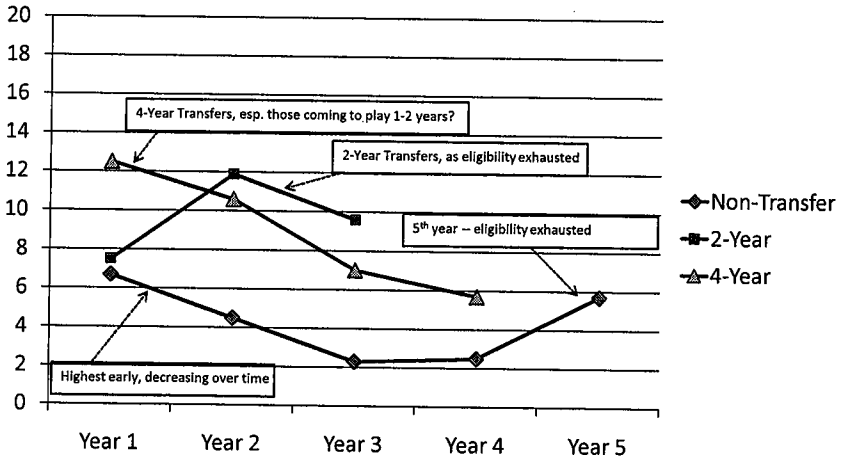
(2006-07 APR Data)




45

## Academic Failure (0/2 Status) as a Function of Year in School among Football Players at FCS schools

(2006-07 APR Data)




46

## Findings Regarding Academic Failure (0/2)

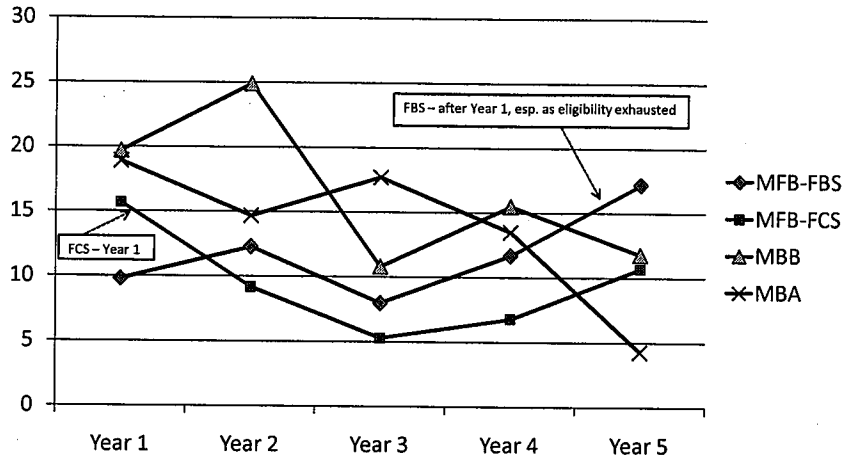
- Men's basketball and FBS football non-transfer student-athletes are most likely to become an 0-for-2 as they exhaust their athletics eligibility. In football in the FCS, the first year is the most likely time for students to leave, but there is also significant retention loss at the end of athletics eligibility.
- Two-year transfers are more likely to leave school as an 0-for-2 than other student-athletes. This is especially true at the exhaustion of athletics eligibility. Football players at FBS school are especially susceptible to this.

# Hazard Curves for Total Retention Loss (Including Academic Failure) as an Outcome

NCAA Research

## Total Retention Loss as a Function of Year in School among Students Entering Division I as Freshmen

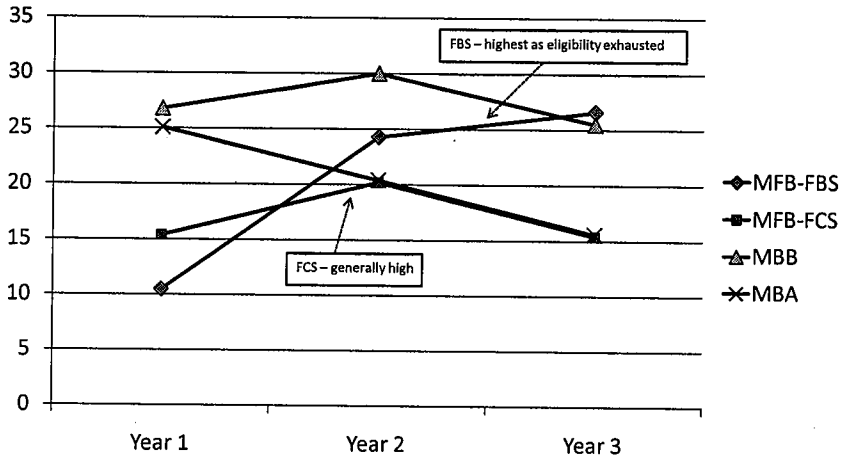
(2006-07 APR Data)




49

## Total Retention Loss as a Function of Year in School among Two-Year Transfers into Division I

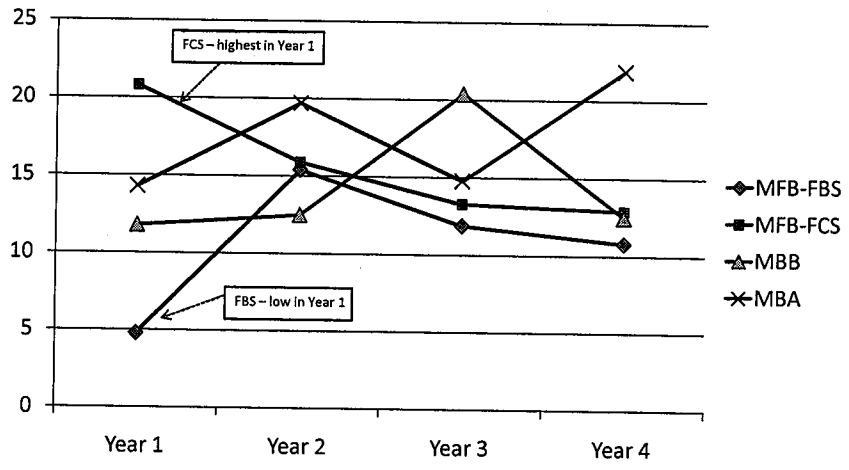
(2006-07 APR Data)




50

## Total Retention Loss as a Function of Year in School among Four-Year Transfers into Division I

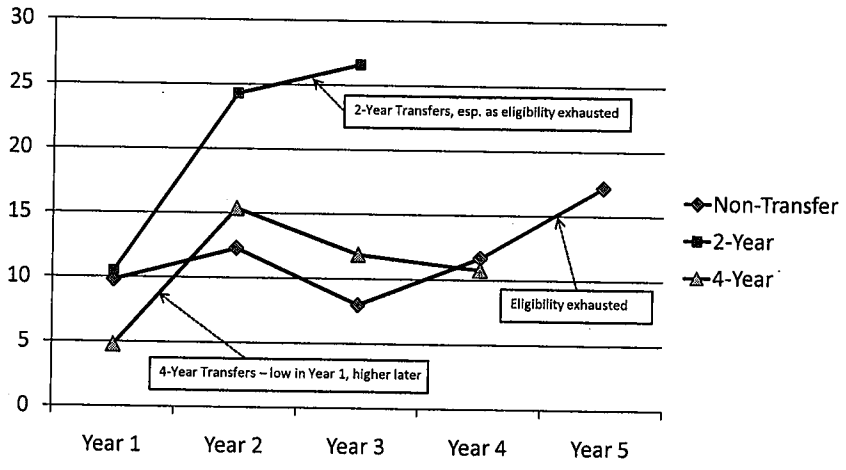
(2006-07 APR Data)




51

## Total Retention Loss as a Function of Year in School among Football Players at FBS schools

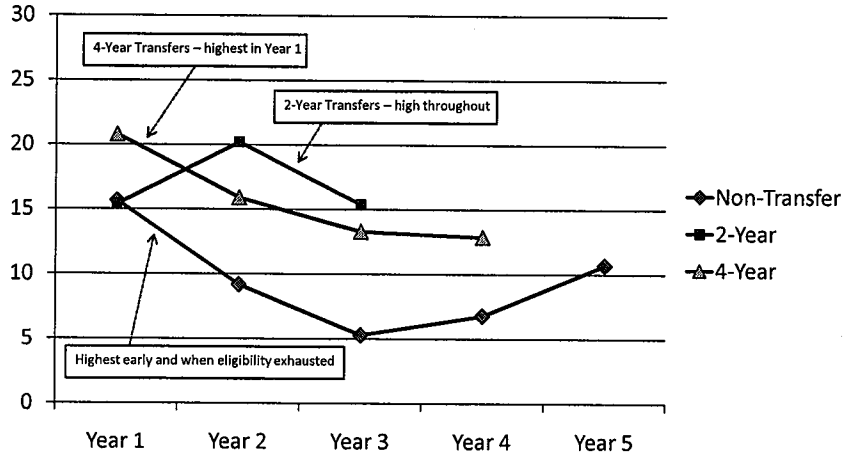
(2006-07 APR Data)




52

## Total Retention Loss as a Function of Year in School among Football Players at FCS schools

(2006-07 APR Data)

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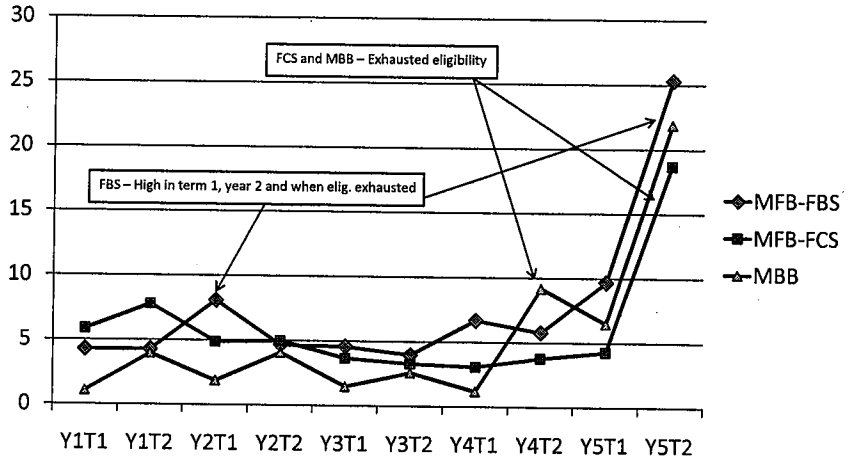
## Findings Regarding Overall Retention Loss

- FBS football non-transfer student-athletes are most likely to leave the institution (either as a 1-for-2 or 0-for-2) as they exhaust their athletics eligibility. In the FCS, the first year is the most likely time for students to leave, but there is also significant retention loss at the end of athletics eligibility. Men's basketball student-athletes leave institutions at high rates in both of the first two-years of enrollment.
- Two-year transfers are more likely to leave school without graduating than other student-athletes. Between 25 and 30 percent of two-year transfers in men's basketball leave the institution without graduating in the first, second and third years of enrollment.
- More than 20 percent of four-year transfers into FCS schools lose the retention point in their first year of attendance. This compares to only 5 percent of first year 4-4 transfers at FBS schools. However, the rate of retention loss among four-year transfers in the FBS schools increases to over 15 percent during the second year. Men's baseball 4-4 transfers leave at high rates across time.

# Hazard Curves for Total Eligibility Loss (Including Academic Failure) as an Outcome (Term-by-Term)

## Total Eligibility Loss as a Function of Year and Term in School among Students Entering Division I as Freshmen

(2006-07 APR Data)

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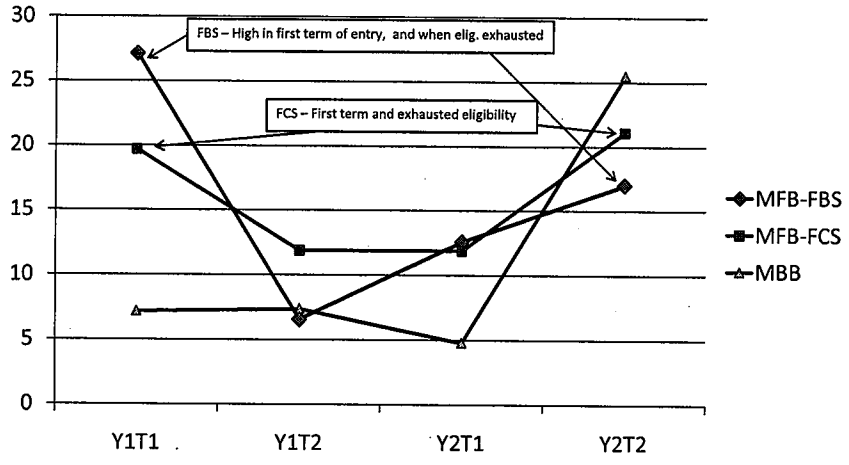
## Total Eligibility Loss as a Function of Year and Term in School among Two-Year Transfers into Division I

(2006-07 APR Data)

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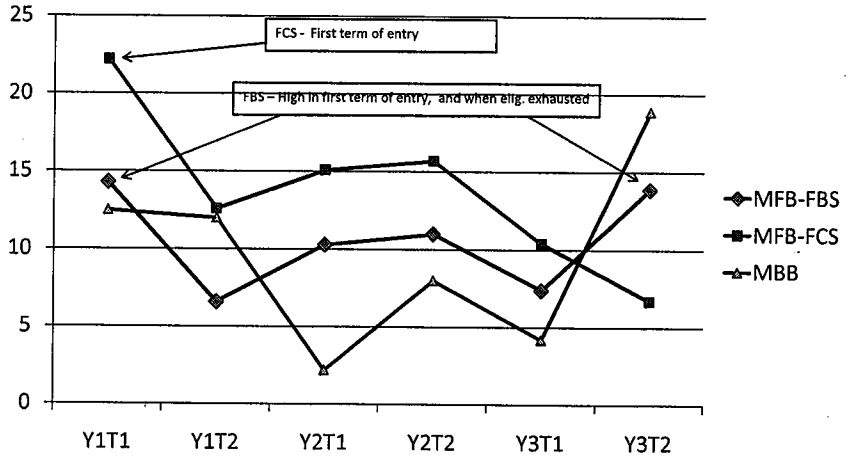
## Total Eligibility Loss as a Function of Year and Term in School among Four-Year Transfers into Division I

(2006-07 APR Data)

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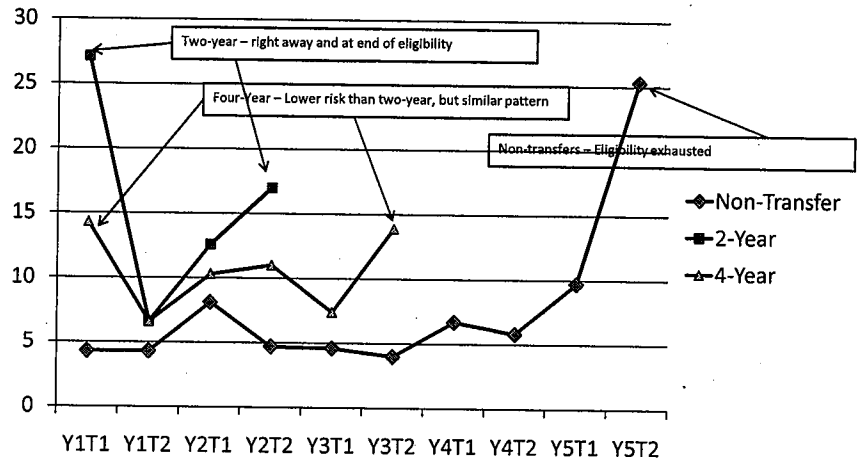
## Total Eligibility Loss as a Function of Year and Term in School among Football Players at FBS Schools

(2006-07 APR Data)

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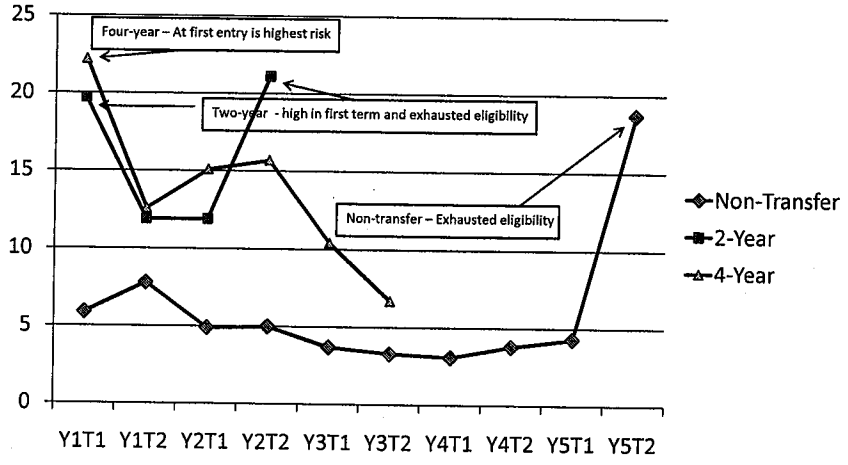
## Total Eligibility Loss as a Function of Year and Term in School among Football Players at FCS schools

(2006-07 APR Data)

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## Findings Regarding Eligibility Losses

- Non-transfer student-athletes are most likely to lose eligibility points as they exhaust their athletics eligibility. There is also a spike in first-term eligibility losses during the second year for FBS football student-athletes.

- Twenty-seven percent of two-year transfers into FBS institutions lose an eligibility point during their first term of enrollment at the four-year school. About 20 percent of FCS student-athletes do the same. Over a quarter of men's basketball two-year transfers lose an eligibility point at the end of their second year at the institution.

- Over 20 percent of four-year transfers into FCS schools lose an eligibility point after their first term of attendance. These transfers tend to continue to lose a high number of eligibility points as they move through the system.

## Academic Data Collection for Two-Year College Transfer Student-Athletes

The purpose of this document is to update and seek input from the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet on the collection of academic data for two-year college transfer student-athletes, which will be collected through the Academic Performance Census (APC) data collection system.

At its October 2008 meeting, the NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance approved an amendment to the committee's policies and procedures to require an institution to provide academic data on two-year college transfer student-athletes during the annual submission of its APC data. This policy change is effective with the collection of the 2008-09 APC data, to occur in summer/fall 2009.

The committee developed the following preliminary list of academic data items to be collected as part of the APC that will help to identify the academic profile of a successful two-year college transfer.

1. Total number of credits earned at two-year college.

2. Total number of English credits earned at two-year college and the number of these credits that were transferable to the four-year institution.

3. Total number of math credits earned at two-year college and the number of these credits that were transferable to the four-year institution.

4. Total number of science credits earned at two-year college and the number of these credits that were transferable to the four-year institution.

5. Total number of physical education activity credits earned at the two-year college.

6. Total number of transferable credit hours applicable toward the student-athletes declared degree program at the four-year institution at the time of transfer.

7. Total number of remedial credits the student-athlete is required to take at the entering four-year college.

8. Overall two-year college grade-point average.

9. Four-year college degree specific transfer credit grade-point average.

10. Number of two-year institutions attended.

11. Did the student-athlete earn an Associate of Arts degree?

12. Total number of terms of full-time enrollment by the student-athlete at the institution where he or she achieved the Associate of Arts degree.

13. Number of seasons of competition used at the student-athlete's two-year college(s) attended.

14. Total number of nontraditional (i.e., nonclassroom/correspondence) courses earned by the student-athlete immediately prior to transfer to the four-year institution.

The Committee on Academic Performance directed the NCAA staff to circulate the list of potential data collection items to interested bodies within the Division I governance structure for review and comment. The committee will finalize the list of data items to be collected at its February 2009 meeting.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

# NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet Waiver Appellate Processes
## - Discussion Document -

**Background.**

The purpose of this document is to provide background and facilitate discussion regarding the different appellate processes that exist for various NCAA academic and membership affairs waivers and decisions, and to determine if differences should continue to exist. Waiver appeals processes generally fall into one of two categories. The first category consists of those applications in which there are two opportunities to appeal a staff decision for the institution. The second contains those applications that offer only one opportunity for institutions to appeal a staff decision. The attachment also provides a pictorial summary of these processes.

**First Category: Two Appeal Opportunities.**

The two primary waivers that provide two appellate opportunities of a staff decision are: initial-eligibility waivers and progress-toward-degree waivers. Both waivers are processed by its respective staff members and then a decision is rendered. Once the decision is made, the institution can appeal the staff's decision through the waivers' committee. If the committee decides to uphold the staff's initial decision, there is one more remaining appellate opportunity. The institution may appeal the committee's decision to the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet per legislation. Once the Academic Cabinet renders a decision, that decision is final.

Based on staff research, it is not entirely clear why two appellate opportunities exist. The staff noted that these two specific waivers have been in existence longer than the waivers with only one appeal opportunity. That is relevant because more recently the membership has distinguished itself from years past by providing the NCAA staff with greater authority, resulting in a staff decision on every case prior to an appeal. Previously, cases were simply forwarded from the NCAA staff to the first appellate committee with no staff decision. An outcome of having a second appeal opportunity for the institution is that, in essence, institutions receive three opportunities. The institution receives a decision from the NCAA staff, then the first appeals committee and finally the Academic Cabinet. A clear con of this system is that cases take much longer to complete the process. This is extremely important when keeping the student-athlete's interests at the forefront of the case. For example, if a student-athlete is depending on the waiver decision to determine if he/she will receive financial aid for the upcoming year, having the institution state its case three times to three different bodies draws the procedure out. Furthermore, the institution's campus timeline for awarding financial aid and admitting students may not be flexible enough to wait for a third verdict.

**Second Category: One Appeal Opportunity.**

In contrast, there are three other academic and membership affairs processes that render decisions in which only one appellate opportunity exists for the institution. These include: student-athlete reinstatement; prospective student-athlete review; and subcommittee for

legislative relief. For each staff, cases are processed evaluating the bylaw violation or waiver request, the mitigation that is provided and case applicable precedent. Once the NCAA staff has rendered a decision, the institution can appeal the decision to each respective group's committee. Once the committee has rendered its decision, that decision is final and there is no opportunity for further appeal.

The category two waiver procedures were more recently adopted and implemented than category one and subsequently fall under the guise that the NCAA staff must render the first decision prior to an appeal committee hearing the case. The pros of having only one appeal include having a more manageable case procedure for the staff, institutions, committees and most importantly, the student-athlete who is waiting on the final decision. A con may be that there is one less opportunity for a favorable outcome. Finally, because the staff and institutions understand that there is only one opportunity to appeal, the institutions are encouraged to provide all relevant information in a timely manner, while the staff focuses on grasping all available mitigation that can be helpful in assessing the merits of the waiver request.

**Waiver Statistics.**

| | **Number of cases filed over most recent two-year period.** | **Number of cases appealed to waiver committee.** | **Number of cases appealed to cabinet subcommittee.** | **Number of cases in which cabinet subcommittee overturned waiver committee decision.** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Initial Eligibility | 913 | 116 (Approximately 30 cases overturned/ partially overturned staff decision.) | 8 | 1 |
| Progress Toward Degree | 1030 | 37 (18 overturned staff decision.) | 9 | 2 |

**Discussion Points.**

1. Should the Academic Cabinet consider changing the initial-eligibility waivers and progress-toward-degree waivers appeal process from two committees to one?

2. Are there compelling reasons to remain with two appeal processes?

**Options for Consideration.**

1. Status quo. Make no change to the process at this time.

2. Consider a legislative change that would eliminate one of the initial-eligibility and progress-toward-degree waiver appeals opportunities, either the waiver committee or the cabinet subcommittee appeal.

## Pictorial Summary of Various Waiver Processes

**Prospective Student-Athlete Reviews**

Staff Decision

Appeal to NCAA Student Records Review Committee

**END**

**Initial-Eligibility Waiver**

Staff Decision

Appeal to Division I Initial-Eligibility Waiver Committee

Second *appeal to Academic Cabinet* Initial-Eligibility Subcommittee

**END**

**Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver**

Staff Decision

Appeal to Division I Progress-Toward-Degree Waiver Committee

Second appeal to Academic Cabinet Progress-Toward-Degree Subcommittee

**END**

**Student-Athlete Reinstatement Request**

Staff Decision

Appeal to Division I Student-Athlete Reinstatement Committee

**END**

**Legislative Relief Request**

Staff Decision

Appeal to (Sub)Committee for Legislative Relief

**END**

# EXCERPT OF THE JUNE 2007 REPORT OF THE NCAA DIVISION I ACADEMICS/ELIGIBILITY/COMPLIANCE CABINET

*[NOTE: Original Report Format Has Been Retained for Ease of Reference.]*

***INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.***

**2. Nonlegislative.**

**b. Guidelines for Administrative Review Subcommittee Waivers Related to Bylaw 14.5.5.4 – Eligibility for Institutional Financial Aid.** The cabinet requests that the Administrative Review Subcommittee consider the following guidelines while reviewing waiver requests for Bylaw 14.5.5.4 (four-year college transfers – eligibility for institutional financial aid):

(1) Barring mitigation, student-athletes should remain engaged in academic activities and complete the final academic term of enrollment at the previous institution.

(2) Consideration should be given to the type of eligibility requirement not satisfied by the student-athlete (e.g., NCAA, conference, institutional).

(3) Mitigating circumstances asserted by the institution should correspond to the specific deficiency presented by the student-athlete.

(4) Mitigation cited in the waiver request should be outside the control of the student-athlete and the institution.

**e. Formation and Charge of the NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/ Compliance Cabinet Transfer Issues Ad Hoc Group.** The cabinet received a report regarding the formation and charge of the Transfer Issues Ad Hoc Group. The group was appointed by the NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/ Compliance Cabinet Administrative Committee and charged with responding to issues related to student-athlete transfers on behalf of the cabinet. The group will review and address transfer issues in order to:

(1) Follow-up academic reform efforts to determine the impact of the new progress-toward-degree requirements on transfer student-athletes;

(2) Address references to transfer issues in the report of the NCAA Presidential Task Force on the Future of Division I Intercollegiate Athletics; and

(3) Respond to requests from the two-year college community.

In addition, the cabinet recommended that the new governance structure include a component clearly assigning jurisdiction over issues related to transfer student-athletes, including oversight of waivers, appropriate review of research related to student-athlete transfer activity and the academic performance of transfer student-athletes.

## EXCERPT OF THE OCTOBER 2008 REPORT OF THE NCAA DIVISION I LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE FOR LEGISLATIVE RELIEF (FORMERLY THE NCAA DIVISION I MANAGEMENT COUNCIL ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE)

*[NOTE: Original Report Format Has Been Retained for Ease of Reference.]*

***INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.***

1. **Review of April 2007 Information Standards for Graduate Student Transfers.** During its April 13 in-person meeting, the NCAA Division I Management Council Administrative Review Subcommittee (now known as the NCAA Division I Legislative Council Subcommittee for Legislative Relief) reviewed and affirmed the April 2007 information standards related to graduate-student transfer requests (NCAA Bylaw 14.1.9). Specifically, the subcommittee agreed the information standards should continue to specify that graduate student transfers must be accepted into a specific graduate program at the institution he or she wishes to transfer to and documentation must be provided indicating whether the specific graduate degree is available at the previous institution.

   In addition, the subcommittee reviewed a request involving a graduate transfer student-athlete's acceptance into the certifying institution's graduate certificate program. The subcommittee discussed graduate certificate programs and noted relief should be provided on a case-by-case basis. Specifically, the subcommittee noted the admissions office classification of the student (e.g., full time graduate student), institutional policy regarding transfer students' admission to graduate certificate programs and whether the student-athlete will enter the actual graduate degree program on completion of the certificate program are some factors that should be considered in the analysis.

# Academic Performances of Student-Athletes Who Applied for ARS Transfer Waivers in 2005-06

## Contents

- Description of recent transfer waiver applications and decisions.
- Academic outcomes for student-athletes who applied for a transfer waiver.

## Number of Transfer Waiver Applications in Division I

| Waiver Decision | 2003-2004 (N=138) | 2004-05 (N=119) | 2005-06 (N=118) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Approved | 70 (50.7%) | 62 (52.1%) | 71 (60.2%) |
| Denied | 68 (49.3%) | 57 (47.9%) | 47 (48.3%) |

- Totals as of May 2008.
- May include student-athletes submitting multiple-waiver applications.

## Number of Transfer Waiver Applications in Division I by Transfer Type

| | 4-4 Transfer | 2-4 Transfer | 4-2-4 Transfer |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2003-04 | | | |
| Approved | 42 (46.2%) | 18 (64.3%) | 10 (52.6%) |
| Denied | 42 (46.2%) | 18 (64.3%) | 10 (52.6%) |
| 2004-05 | | | |
| Approved | 36 (46.8%) | 11 (73.3%) | 14 (56.0%) |
| Denied | 42 (53.2%) | 4 (3.4%) | 11 (44.0%) |
| 2005-06 | | | |
| Approved | 46 (56.8%) | 13 (68.4%) | 12 (66.7%) |
| Denied | 35 (43.2%) | 6 (31.6%) | 6 (33.3%) |

– Percentages calculated within transfer type.

## 2005-06 Transfer Waiver Applications Matched with APP Database for 2006-07 (N=54)

| | Transfer Waiver Decision | |
|---|---|---|
| **Transfer Type** | **Approved** | **Denied** |
| 4-4 Transfer | 21 (58.3%) | 15 (41.7%) |
| 2-4 Transfer | 6 (75.0%) | 2 (25.0%) |
| 4-2-4 Transfer | 7 (70.0%) | 3 (30.0%) |

- Percentages calculated within transfer type.

## 2005-06 Transfer Waiver Applications Matched with APP Database for AY 2006-07 (N=54)

| Sport | N (%) |
|---|---|
| Baseball | 8 (14.8%) |
| Men's Basketball | 5 (9.3%) |
| Football | 17 (31.5%) |
| Men's Track / Cross Country | 4 (7.4%) |
| Women's Basketball | 4 (7.4%) |
| Women's Soccer | 4 (7.4%) |

- All other sports had an N <= 3
- Percentages calculated within sport.

## Academic Outcomes for 2005-06 Transfer-Waiver Applicants Matched with APP Database for AY 2006-07 (N=52)*

Based on the last academic year for which we have data, **41 (79%)** transfer-waiver applicants both maintained eligibility and were retained to the next academic year.

| | **Academic Outcome** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Waiver Decision** | Eligible and Retained / Graduated | Eligible but not Retained | Not Eligible but Retained | Not Eligible and Not Retained |
| Approved | 27 (79.4%) | 3 (8.8%) | 1 (2.9%) | 3 (8.8%) |
| Denied | 14 (77.8%) | 3 (16.7%) | 0 ---- | 1 (5.6%) |

*Based on student-athletes who were retained to the final term.

# Hot Topics 2006 – NCAA Academic Reform

This is an annual survey given to the membership of the National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics on behalf of the research committee. The survey this year focuses on NCAA Academic Reform and issues related to the reform.

Special thanks to Dr. Marilyn Kaff and Dr. Teresa Miller for their assistance with the development of this survey.

The results are provided to you by:
**Dr. Adrienne Leslie-Toogood, Kansas State University**
**Cayce Crenshaw, James Madison University**

## Survey Respondents

*In order to present this data in a user-friendly fashion, percentages were provided (rather than actual number of participants). Whenever the percentages for any one question do not add up to 100%, this indicates that some participants chose not to respond to this item.*

A total of 132 people completed this survey. Respondents were primarily from Division I institutions (77% Division I, 11% I-AA and I-AAA). Current positions ranged from Advisors (42%), to Unit Directors (24%), to Learning Specialists (8%), and Life Skills Coordinators (5%). The majority of respondents were Full-time (89.4%), Female (65.9%), and White (77.3%) or African-American (12.1%). Years of related work experience for respondents was fairly even with 27% having 0-3 years of experience, 24% having 4-6 years, 20% having 7-10 years, and 21% having more than 11 years of experience.

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| Pages 9-10 | Academic Reform Impact |
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| Pages 14 | Model Practices |

# APR

**Involvement with APR**

Do you enter APR data directly into the APP website?
Yes (18.9%)
No (70.5%)

If so, how many other people on your campus enter data directly into the APP?
1 (10.6%)
2 (3.0%)
3 (1.5%)
8 (1.5%)
9 (1.5%)

If not, do you submit APR data for your teams to someone else on your campus?
Yes (33.3%)
No (34.8%)

Do you know who does enter the APR data?
Yes (62.9%)
No (6.1%)

Does the person entering APR data consult with advisors to make sure they are entering correct information?
Yes (51.5%)
No (6.8%)
Not Sure (10.6%)

Were you given a copy of the APR report for your institution last year?
Yes (65.9%)
No (12.9%)

Did you download a copy of the APR report from the NCAA website?
Yes (23.5%)
No (54.5%)

Who communicates with coaches about their APR?
Advisor (2.3%)
Director of Academic Support Unit (10.6%)
Compliance Officer (11.4%)
Administrator other than academics or compliance (.8%)
Athletic Director (1.5%)
Advisor/Administrator/Compliance/Combination (3.8%)
University Employee Outside of Athletics (0%)
Other (.8%)
More than one of the above (44.7%)

Do you understand how the APR is calculated?
I don't have a clue (2.3%)
I understand the basics (28%)
Yes (48.5%)

How have you received instructional information about the APR?
NCAA Regional Seminar (2.3%)
NCAA representative at N4A national or regional convention (8.3%)
Conference Seminar (2.3%)
Compliance Officer (20.5%)
Other (6.1%)
More than 1 of above (32.6%)

**APR Perceptions/Beliefs**

Do you believe that the APR is a more accurate picture of a team's academic culture than the Federal Graduation Rate?
Yes (59.1%)
No (19.7%)
Comments:

- To some extent, though I think neither is a particularly good measure
- Rock bottom eligibility, not picture of culture
- In theory, it is a more accurate measure of a team's academic performances than graduation rates; However, there are many problems with the APR that have yet to be worked out and many schools are suffering consequences that seem unfair; The NCAA needs to re-evaluate the factors that are calculated in to the APR
- No longer accurate since relief for professionals
- There are so many variables that need to be taken into account; It is a fairly decent picture, but by mo means explains the reality of your institution
- Yes, but APR is now more a measure of eligibility that of graduation rates
- It's a snap shot of the academics of a team in the current time with the current coach
- Yes, the APR takes more factors in to consideration which makes it a more comprehensive measure of academic success
- The APR provides concise and correct data for the coaching staffs and academic support personnel

Have you been asked to explain a team's APR?
Yes (41.7%)
No (37.1%)

Have you been asked a team's APR by a recruit?
Yes (6.8%)
No (72%)

Has your academic support unit received more financial support based on the NCAA's academic reform package?
Yes (6.8%)
No (72%)
Comments:

- The coaches have received a potential bonus linked to their team's APR; The academic staff did not receive an incentive like this
- I'm actually not sure about this but we do seem to be getting more attention and resources that seem to be related to the new NCAA academic reforms
- Eligibility Coordinator is now housed in our unit
- I have communicated to my AD that with the reporting of APR and GSR, there's so much more work involved that takes me away from direct contact with student-athletes; I'd like to add more staff due to this, which requires more funding; There just isn't any
- Please, we are the last place that money is spent
- We have been given more money this year, although I can not confirm that it was BECAUSE OF the academic reform package
- I anticipate additional funding from our department for the 2006-07 academic year; The Academic Enhancement Fund from the NCAA no longer covers our expenses (now that we have 2 full-time employees)
- This is a most critical issue as a DIAAA institution who still competes against DIA in specific sports without the same type of funding to meet the same rules

Do you feel like your coaches are less likely to "encourage" a student-athlete to leave now that APR exists?
Yes (39.4%)
No (39.4%)
Comments:

- Our coaches are good about retention and they understand the commitment made to student-athletes during the recruiting process
- Coaches are now coming to the realization that this (APR) could really affect them and that they need to concentrate 1. on recruiting kids they won't likely 'weed-out' of the program; and 2. doing their best to keep those in, in
- I have had more students asked to leave this past year than in the previous year; The coaches, with the help of the compliance officer, forecast the possibility of asking a student to leave
- I think that some coaches now try to play the numbers and it almost gives them permission to encourage one or two a year to leave

Do you feel that your coaches are trying harder to recruit student-athletes who they think will be ACADEMICALLY successful at your institution?
Yes (18.9%)
Somewhat (32.6%)
No (27.3%)
Comments:

- They are watching small scholarship students; They are coming in more as walk-ons and having to prove they deserve money
- I think coaches always want to avoid bringing in students who don't have the ability to be successful; There is still pressure to bring in those 'impact' players who may be less academically prepared
- Maybe in the second tier of recruiting... but when it comes to the top athletes academics is not a consideration
- They believe they are, but in reality are ignorant to the facts as to what someone needs to be academically successful coming in
- We have very high academic admissions requirements that do not change for our recruited athletes
- Now that they are allowed to recruit weaker students, they do - and expect us to work magic once they get on campus
- The 'marketplace' mentality of competition dictates that more academic risks will continue to be taken in order to get athletes who will help the program win; Coaches win and move on - the school is stuck with the bad APR
- Our coaches are very aware of the APR and its potential impact on their programs; They're more careful about awarding small amounts of money to walk-ons for fear the student-athletes might transfer, etc.

Do your coaches talk about their APR to recruits?
Yes (23.5%)
No (55.3%)

## Other Academic Reform

How do you find that degree options have been impacted for your student-athletes with the new PTD Standards (that is, how many degree options do they have now)?
Less (35.6%)
The Same (32.6%)
More (3.8%)
Comments:

- The new standards along with our university's enrollment management policies have made it extremely difficult for students to get into certain majors
- Far less options now, and this leads to student-athletes getting stuck in majors they do not want to study, and no option to change
- They have to pick quicker and have less chance to explore their options; It limits students from looking a 2 totally different majors and makes them pick sooner or in some cases makes them pick the safest route not necessarily the one that will challenge them
- More students will take 'eligibility' majors rather than what they really want to do
- Big Problem!!! Many student-athletes are unable to major in their first or even second choice of majors

How have your numbers of exceptions/special admits been impacted with the new initial eligibility standards (that is, how many exceptions do you have now)?
Decreased (7.6%)
Stayed the Same (57.6%)
Increased (6.8%)
Comments:

- The academic profiles of our special admits have gotten worse in both test scores and GPAs last year due to decreasing standards for initial eligibility
- About the same at this point
- We don't make exceptions or have special admits
- Enhanced competition (move to another conference) has generated greater risk taking regardless of potential eligibility issues; Eligibility is seen as an academic staff problem rather than a recruiting mistake; Academic staffs are expected to shoulder the blame when poorly prepared recruits fail academically

How has the admission of transfer students from 4-year schools been impacted by PTD standards (that is, how many transfer students do you have now)?
Less (9.8%)
The Same (59.1%)
More (3.0%)
Comments:

- We have the same amount, they are just more limited with major selection when they come to campus
- Made it harder for transfer student-athletes to have a choice of major; Very limited now which is a negative for the student-athletes in their educational endeavors
- We've had to turn away some transfer student-athletes who were very solid students academically; however, because of their choice of major, they were unable to meet the 40% or 60% rule

Do the majority (i.e., 70% or more) of your transfers from 4-year institutions have the choice of:
Most majors at your school (22%)
About half the majors at your school (22.7%)
About 25% of majors at your school (12.9%)
Very few (1-5) majors at your school (14.4%)

How has the admission of transfer students from 2-year schools been impacted by PTD standards (that is, how many transfer students do you have now)?
Less (15.9%)
The Same (50%)
More (6.1%)
Comments:

- The number of credits frequently not accepted by our school makes transferring (especially from a junior college) impossible given the progress guidelines
- We have the same amount, they are just more limited with major selection when they come to campus
- This will become an issue in the future as major requirements are changing; We will only have a selective number of majors that they can choose to enter

Do the majority (i.e., 70% or more) of your transfers from 2-year institutions have the choice of:
Most majors at your school (19.7%)
About half the majors at your school (22%)
About 25% of majors at your school (14.4%)
Very few (1-5) majors at your school (15.9%)

## Advisor Self-Care

Since the implementation of the NCAA Academic Reform Package, do you work:
Less hours than before (0%)
The same number of hours (38.6%)
1-5 more hours per week (14.4%)
5-10 more hours per week (11.4%)
More than 10 hours per week (4.5%)

How has your number of vacation days been impacted? That is, do you take:
Less (19.7%)
The Same (49.2%)
More (0%)
Comments:

- Vacation? What is that?!?
- Summer school for freshman cut in to the summer vacation
- Much harder to take vacation and almost impossible to take a week at a time, much less two
- I was never permitted to be gone very much before the new rules; Nothing has changed; Plus we have a winter-session and 2 summer sessions that the kids take now
- After the adoption of 2 children, I changed to a 4-day work week; however, due to the demands of APR and GSR, I've had to work on my 'off days' many, many times!
- I demand that the staff take vacation days to mitigate 'burn out'
- I usually am contacted while on vacation regarding academics

How has your level of stress been impacted?
Feel less stress (0%)
Feel the same amount of stress (29.5%)
Feel more stress (39.4%)

How are you changing your advising due to new academic reforms?
No change (15.9%)
Some change (42.4%)
Significant change (10.6%)

## Academic Reform Impact

*All of the remaining questions were open-ended. In order to enable you to get a feel for all of the comments that were made, we provided a sample of the responses to each of these questions below.*

What positive impact(s) do you feel NCAA new academic reforms are having on your athletes?

- Puts more pressure on them to get on the right track immediately with class work, major search, career path
- Bright students who may have done 'just enough to get by' are now forced to take academics more seriously
- For the % of s-a's who are truly undecided, it is forcing them to spend more time, more quality time, researching possibilities to declare
- We are more intrusive and involved in the major selection process so that I believe students are making more informed decisions
- Increased awareness, using old methods (Fed grad rate data) had reached their peak of usefulness
- Coaches are getting the message that a student-athlete is a student
- Students are more aware of their responsibility to meet eligibility standards
- Students are becoming more knowledgeable about reforms and more conscientious about academic expectations
- I believe the combination of higher standards at this institution and the academic reforms implemented at the NCAA are providing an excellent education with good support for these young people
- More accurate picture of program success
- My juniors are closer to graduating in 4yrs. Also students can lose eligibility mid-year so students (hopefully) pay more attention to academics through out the yr.
- They are much closer to graduation if they can make it to complete their eligibility
- They need to have a sense of responsibility in going to class and getting the work done. It also shows the reward to those that do work hard

What negative impact(s) do you feel NCAA new academic reforms are having on your athletes?

- Feel more pressure to advise them for just for eligibility, PTD takes some flexibility away from them in searching for a major, if they apply to competitive colleges and don't get admitted sophomore year, they could be in trouble
- More often than before, many of my student-athletes are looking for the 'easy' major so that they can remain eligible
- Less flexibility to sample majors and find a good fit
- 6 credit rule punishes student who might have one terrible semester with an otherwise adequate academic record
- Transfer of athletes in good academic standing impacts our scores; APR is not a real measure of academic progress; Much more stress on all to meet the magic number
- Less choice of what classes to take and when to take them - more impact on students with LD issues who need to plan out balanced class schedules to ensure success
- The problems are with recruiting students who are not capable of competing academically with the regular student population; The best athletes are typically the most under-prepared
- Students are getting stuck in majors they are not interested in, and then they do not have the choice to change their major due to the PTD; I think this is an educational disservice to these students
- Extra pressure academically but no break in the demands of the sport, etc.
- We are admitting some students who are more skill deficient than prior to the reforms
- Students who transfer or need remedial are under a tremendous amount of pressure and stress to complete additional units in their first year at our institution
- Very few majors on our campus work for high risk students/transfers; Athletes have to choose majors that they don't like and then have problems meeting PTD requirements because they hate the major
- Freshmen and transfer students are much less likely to major in their first choice in order to meet NCAA eligibility; Also, more must take summer school to be eligible, at great cost to them

## Ideas to Ensure Success of Academic Reform

IDEALLY, what support do you need from **coaches** to be successful under new academic reforms?

- Coaches are more influential than academic advisors; Coaches need to emphasize the importance of academics and the role of their advisors so that students will value their educations
- Recruit prospects who are good fits for a competitive university; Have a consistently supportive message with players; Sit players who are not performing academically
- Coaches need to support academic function of our job, need to discipline students and hold them accountable
- Excellent and frequent communication
- I believe that more and more we need coaches to leave the advising to academic support units; It can cost a student their eligibility where in the past, it mainly caused frustration
- They need to stress academics more during recruiting and once enrolled; Encourage more communication with academic advisors, faculty and tutors
- Summer school support, better scholarship allocation so students can take more than 12 hours per term, general support of importance of academics
- I need for them to understand I can't control a student's behavior; I can't be responsible for success or failure; My coaches are supportive that way
- To pay attention to their kids; To read the reports; To make it as important as we make it to their kids
- Give the student-athletes adequate time to study; Academics can not be placed on the back burner and scheduled in around practice and weights; They have to be more involved academically
- They need to be more aware of the procedure, paper work required, and time necessary to process athlete eligibility
- Coaches should lobby for more assistance in our office, and support our efforts to assist student athletes through their language, rules, and behaviors; Thus far, our coaches have been supportive
- Coaches can't promise recruits unrealistic majors; Most of the male recruits want to major in business
- Coaches need to understand/care about the possible impact of APR to the school
- Holding their student-athletes as accountable for academics as they do for athletics.
- Staying involved in their athletes' academic worlds (# of hours they're taking, etc.) and the willingness to penalize an student-athletes ATHLETICALLY if they don't comply (missed games, etc.)
- Coaches need to require that all s-a attend all academic support programs; Coaches need to assure enough funding to provide necessary academic support.
- Realistic expectations of academic achievements for at-risk student-athletes

IDEALLY, what support do you need from **athletic administration** to be successful under new academic reforms?

- Education of coaches about rules, their current APR's and how to manage the system
- Funding for new programs and better facilities
- Our administration is very supportive; They provide me with the budget necessary for student-athletes to be successful; Also are supportive with coaching problems that interfere with student-athlete welfare
- Stop allowing coaches to make excuses... for their recruiting, for their student-athlete's once they arrive on campus, etc.; ACCOUNTABILITY
- Better understanding of need for more intensive attention to each individual student; More staff
- Very simple. . .Our budget must continue to increase if we are to provide the appropriate support to reach 40/60/80 and the increased GPA requirements
- We have it already and that was money to pay for a person that can be on top of the APR and all that it relates to
- I need a large budget to support this type of reform; The administration expect staff to work miracles without pouring the resources into the program to make it successful
- Financial/Personnel; The APP has brought on new duties and responsibilities that are time consuming and mentally straining; More staff to do this and continue to service the student-athletes is vital
- Realize that we have a greater impact and responsibility and pay us like it matters
- A learning specialist to provide adequate time to preparing learning-challenged and under-prepared students
- True understanding of the differences since academic reform (more stress, skill deficient student-athletes); Hold coaches accountable for their recruiting choices
- Understanding and acceptance of what the NCAA is trying to do; It just can't be all about winning and it always is - like oil and water
- Financial - More advisors and more money for current advisors
- Need the resources to help the walk-on Olympic sport athlete in the same manner as the full-scholarship high profile sport athlete
- To get their hands out of the academic piece of the pie; Let the advising unit advise the students; Do not have the administration attempt to advise students academically
- Greater rewards for academic success versus athletic success

IDEALLY, what support do you need from **university administration** to be successful under new academic reforms?

- An understanding by university deans and others on the stringent requirements student-athletes must meet, some flexibility with the delineation of degree applicable credits for students who change majors
- Funding for new programs and better facilities
- Recognize validity of support services
- More flexibility in majors would help all students not just athletes
- More choices of certain required classes at times student-athletes are available (avoid afternoons) and more flexibility on providing study skill building opportunities
- The University administration should not admit athletes with special exceptions if there is a high probability that these students will not succeed academically
- Need to look at institutional policies that may be barriers for all students on campus that are also impacting student athletes
- The faculty needs to be educated on the academic reforms and understand why the academic support staff inquires about student grades
- Although we report to academics, the vice provost knows nothing about this field; At some point, he/she must be thoroughly educated about the reforms
- Priority registration
- New degree programs that allow flexibility
- Excused absence policy; Less GPA restrictions on majors; The ability to sign up for classes in departments (i.e., electives) without being declared with a major or minor in that area.
- Professors who recognize that not all students have the same academic background and don't come from the same high level high schools as the majority of students here
- The willingness to say no when we believe a SA does not meet the profile of successful students
- Understanding by faculty advisors about APR and graduation requirements
- Hold athletic administration accountable
- Understanding that student-athletes are being restricted more and more and that athletics is not asking for special favors or requests, but the requests are because of the NCAA
- Setting realistic standards for recruiting of high profile athletes

## Model Practices

The NCAA and N4A are partnering to develop "research-based" model practices as a response to academic reform.

How do you know what a model practice is?

- I'm pragmatic; If it works, it's a model practice
- 'Research-based' model practices? Everything is changing and we're developing programs; We see what seem to be significant results but don't have time to tool instruments to statistically document it
- The published research; Our own practice/experience/research/programming
- One that demonstrates success in meeting its goals
- We are trying to create a model practice, but we don't have a lot to go on
- Depends on your definition of a 'model practice'; We strive for excellence, we see what others are doing, we figure out what 'our' student-athletes need, and we execute daily
- Based on administration's (both athletic and academic) opinion of what the university should be
- If there has been a positive impact after a program has been instituted which can be measured; This can be as simple as there were 10 students coming in the office prior to the program and now we have 30
- Discussions with advisors utilizing it to see if it really works
- When a program is analyzed using sound research methods to prove the model is the reason for improvement
- A program or service that has proven through reliable research that it is successful in assisting student-athletes
- Researched based or best practices as demonstrated by institutions with high retention and graduation rates
- By learning from others in N4A

Where do you get the information?

- Currently, from N4A
- From specialists or others who've learned from experience - bits and pieces here, bits and pieces there
- From N4A conferences
- Colleagues, publications
- General knowledge
- Websites, presentations
- Research on retention of student-athletes
- College administration publications
- By working with 'my' academic unit and networking to see what others are doing
- Administration and outside sources, such as N4A
- I would probably consult NACADA
- Research articles, NACADA & N4A conferences, development of programs
- Via phone and e-mail exchanges

# Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation

## An Overview Prepared for the NCAA Division I Board of Directors

January 2009

### BACKGROUND

In response to *The Second-Century Imperatives*, a report issued in October 2006 by The NCAA Presidential Task Force on the Future of Division I Intercollegiate Athletics, a working group was appointed to examine issues pertaining to the academic risk of student-athletes. Specifically, the working group was charged to: (a) Identify factors and characteristics that may cause a student-athlete to be "at-risk" of not graduating from his or her institution; (b) Establish a data-based definition of "at risk" that allows for local differences among the diverse NCAA Division I membership; (c) Develop a tool for campuses to use to examine special admissions of scholarship student-athletes and to measure whether campus systems can adequately support the number of student-athletes admitted via special admissions review each year; (d) Identify model practices in academic and life-skill programs to support "at-risk" student-athletes in their academic endeavors; and (e) Develop mechanisms to assist institutions in evaluating the level of academic and life-skill support provided to "at-risk" student-athletes and in determining if changes or enhancements are necessary.

To fulfill its charge, the working group met four times from February 2008 to January 2009 and created a management system designed to assist campuses in identifying, assessing and mitigating risk for all student-athletes. An overview of the results of these efforts is provided in this summary document. A formal report will be presented to the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet in February.

### DEFINING "RISK"

The group began its work by conceptualizing "risk" to include all the factors that can reduce a student-athlete's chances of graduating from the institution, rather than limiting its review to academic-risk factors. Further, the group noted that every student has some degree of risk of not graduating until the time that he or she actually completes all requirements for a degree. As a result, throughout their collegiate careers student-athletes are on a risk continuum determined by factors that often fall into three main categories:

a. Factors that may be inherent to the student at the time of entry into a member institution (e.g., academic preparation, two- or four-year transfer status, academic motivation and effort, socioeconomic status, first-generation college student);

b. Factors that may be inherent to the student-athlete's institution, program or sports team (e.g., sport time demands, academic support programming); and

c. Factors that arise during a student-athlete's collegiate career (e.g., academic ineligibility, personal issues, actual or perceived opportunities to pursue a professional sports career, coaching change, exhaustion of athletics eligibility).

Consistent with this approach, a student-athlete's individual risk level may fluctuate from low risk to high risk due to the development or mitigation of various risk factors. The working group acknowledges the paradigm shift presented within its work, as "at risk" often is used to categorize a group of students who are academically underprepared at the point of entry into the collegiate environment. However, research regarding student-athlete graduation success indicates that other nonacademic factors, some of which develop after the student-athlete has enrolled in college, present significant threats to a student-athlete's likelihood of persistence to graduation. Further, the group acknowledged the stigma that can sometimes be attached to students labeled "at risk" and emphasized that care should be taken when assigning labels or categories. It is the working group's assertion that a system that assesses and recommends support for each student-athlete, regardless of his or her level of risk, will facilitate the success of all student-athletes, while helping to minimize negative perceptions regarding student-athletes who present a higher risk of not graduating.

## FACILITATING LEARNING AND ACHIEVING GRADUATION

The working group recommends the development of a system to assist institutions with assessing and supporting all student-athletes in their pursuit of college degrees. This electronic program will be called "FLAG", which stands for Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation. FLAG has been designed to help institutions optimize their respective campus environments to leverage opportunities for graduation success. In so doing, FLAG will provide tools for institutions to increase the efficiency of their current services--including academic support and life-skills programs--and to make informed decisions regarding recruiting, admissions and program resources (e.g., staffing and budget). The working group believes implementation of the FLAG system will address each of the points of its charge by providing three modules: one for assessing individual student-athlete risk; one for assigning suggested support services, based on the student-athlete's specific risk factors; and, one for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the institution’s student-athlete support services.

FLAG will be a Web-based system integrated into an existing NCAA platform [e.g., NCAA Division I Academic Performance Program (APP) or Compliance Assistant internet (CA*i*)] to provide accessibility and familiarity for campus users. In addition, the program will use as many existing data sources as possible in order to minimize the need for additional data entry. For example, student-athlete academic profiles should be able to migrate from the APP into FLAG so campuses only have to enter basic data one time.

## GRADUATION RISK OVERVIEW

The Graduation Risk Overview (GRO) is a scored model that provides a dynamic quantification of an individual student-athlete's potential barriers to graduation. GRO includes a weighted scoring system for a number of factors that have the greatest impact on a student-athlete's likelihood of graduation success. When incoming and continuing student-athletes are evaluated against the identified factors, a statistical measure of individual risk is calculated. In addition, GRO allows for institutions to factor in local differences and to incorporate risk factors applicable to their respective student populations. It will be useful for all campuses, regardless of institutional mission, student demographics, geographical location or levels of resources available.

GRO is a data-driven model that was developed after an examination of over 50 academic and nonacademic risk variables identified for testing by the working group. Based on a thorough review, the risk factors were narrowed to include variables within five categories, including: (a) Academic; (b) Role of academics (in the student-athlete's life); (c) Transfer status; (d) Personal history; and (e) Sport. Please see the Appendix to this report for a list of the weighted variables within each category. A student-athlete's risk can be classified as low, medium, or high based on the number and nature of risk factors presented. For optimal results, each individual student-athlete should be evaluated first as a recruit or incoming freshman, and then at least once per academic year throughout his or her collegiate career.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

Early identification of risk and early intervention with appropriate support services are crucial to improving each student-athlete's opportunity to graduate. Using the GRO module within FLAG, institutions can complete an individual assessment of each student-athlete's risk, which will generate a list of suggested support services for the particular risk factors presented. The system will be programmed for flexibility to tailor the service list generated to match institutional programs and resources. Further, institutions will be strongly encouraged to take advantage of existing campus resources to the greatest possible extent, rather than replicating services within the athletic department.

Over time, "best" and "model" support practices that have a demonstrated history of success will be identified via FLAG's evaluation module and will be used to populate the suggested services field. These services and programs also will be maintained for the membership via a searchable database available within FLAG.

## EVALUATION

FLAG will include an evaluation mechanism to assist institutions in assessing the overall level of risk presented by current student-athletes collectively, including the mitigating effects of support services provided. Assessing risk factors for all student-athletes will provide for a measure of the cumulative risk of a team or program and will produce useful information when campus decision makers and practitioners are planning and budgeting appropriate support services.

The FLAG reports will assess the aggregate level of risk assumed by the institution, along with the potential risk of each recruiting class, to inform recruiting and admissions decisions, including decisions regarding special or alternate admissions. The reporting feature will allow institutions to quantify outcomes and measure improvement (e.g., decreased risk) for individuals or groups of student-athletes based on the support provided. The reports also will be useful communication tools for discussions within the athletics department, across campus and with external constituents.

## CONCLUSION

The working group will submit its recommendations next month to the Academic Cabinet. If the working group's recommendations are approved, the group's final report will become a working document to guide the NCAA staff in developing and implementing the concepts.

In addition, the report will be shared with a number of constituent groups (e.g., academic advisors, faculty athletics representatives, student-athlete advisory committees, member conferences, coaches associations) in anticipation of their interest in the research findings provided in the report. The support of presidents and chancellors will be crucial in this endeavor as academic support professionals are asked to undertake more nuanced efforts to assess and support student-athletes. Support and "buy-in" from athletics directors, administrative staff and coaches also will be important to the successful implementation of FLAG on any campus. As a result, outreach efforts will be specifically tailored to each audience in order to communicate the program’s particular relevancy to each constituent group. For example, materials developed for the national coaching organizations will communicate the program's utility for head and assistant coaches in their efforts to support student-athlete eligibility, retention and, ultimately, graduation.

Student-athletes fall along a continuum of risk that is based on multiple factors, not all of which are academic. Institutional units must collaborate to identify student-athlete support needs and to provide quality services and programs to foster student-athlete graduation success. In addition, informed decision-making is essential to optimizing campus resources to mitigate student-athlete hurdles to graduation. To this end, FLAG is designed to address each of these principles and to support institutional endeavors to ensure graduation for every student-athlete.

# Graduation Risk Overview (GRO) Models

## Academic Risk for Student-Athletes at Entry

| Category | Weight | Variable(s) / Criteria | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | +2 | HS core GPA < 2.6 or<br>ACT/SAT < 820 or<br>core units < 16 or<br>academic nonqualifier or<br>number of HS > 2 or<br>educational disability diagnosed or<br>transfer GPA < 2.6 (for 2-4 or 4-4 transfers) | |
| Role of academics | +1 | Identifies strongly as athlete, not as student | |
| | +2 | Academic effort lacking (historical or contemporary) | |
| Transfer | +1 | Transferred into current institution (2-4 or 4-4) | |
| Personal history | +1 | First-generation college student or<br>student has low financial resources or<br>student is homesick | |
| Sport | +1 | Student in high profile sport at your school | |
| | +1 | Poor coach attitude toward academics or<br>coach in first year | |
| Total | | 0-1 = low risk; 2-3 = moderate; 4+ = high | |

## Academic Risk for Student-Athletes Post-Entry

| Category | Weight | Variable(s) / Criteria | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Academic | +2 | Current cumulative GPA < 2.6 or<br>current term GPA < 2.6 or<br>educational disability diagnosed or<br>academically ineligible within the past year or<br>other locally identifiable academic red flag | |
| Role of academics | +1 | Identifies strongly as athlete, not as student or<br>professional sports opportunity presents | |
| | +2 | Academic effort lacking (historical or contemporary) | |
| | +1 | Negative attitude toward major | |
| Transfer | +1 | Transferred into current institution (2-4 or 4-4) | |
| Personal history | +1 | First-generation college student or<br>student has low financial resources or<br>student is homesick | |
| | +1 | Health, family, mental health or substance abuse issue | |
| Sport | +1 | Student in high profile sport at your school | |
| | +2 | Exhausted eligibility prior to graduation | |
| | +1 | Poor coach attitude toward academics or<br>coaching change occurred or<br>dissatisfied with athletics experience | |
| Total | | 0-2 = low risk; 3-4 = moderate; 5+ = high | |

# Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation

A Preview from the Working Group Examining Issues related to Academic Risk

## History and Process Overview

- Presidential Task Force Report noted need to focus on support for "at-risk" student-athletes.
- In response, a working group was formed to examine issues pertaining to academic "risk" of student-athletes.
- Working group's report will be formally presented to the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet in February.

## Working Group Charge

- Identify factors and characteristics that may cause a student-athlete to be at risk of not graduating from his or her institution.
- Establish a data-based definition of at risk that allows for local differences among the diverse Division I membership.
- Develop a tool for campuses to use to examine special admissions of scholarship student-athletes and to measure whether campus systems can adequately support the number of student-athletes admitted via special admissions review each year.

## Working Group Charge

- Identify model practices in academic and life-skills programs to support at-risk student-athletes in their academic endeavors.
- Develop mechanisms to assist institutions in evaluating the level of academic and life-skills support provided to at-risk student-athletes and in determining if enhancements or changes are necessary.

## Defining "At Risk"

- Determined to be at risk of not graduating from a four-year institution.
- Working group was mindful of negative connotations of at-risk label, as well as traditional view of at-risk students as those who are academically underprepared as they enter college.
- At the urging of the NCAA Division I Board of Directors and the Oversight and Monitoring Group, a new paradigm was developed.

## Nature of "Risk"

- Any student-athlete can be at risk of not graduating.
- Risk can take a variety of forms, including nonacademic factors (e.g., first-generation status, financial hardship, time demands of sport).
- Risk factors can be specific to the student-athlete or can be presented by team culture or campus environment.

## Nature of "Risk"

- A student-athlete's level of risk may fluctuate throughout the course of his or her collegiate enrollment.
- As a result, risk assessments should not be limited to the point of student-athlete entry. Rather, they should continue throughout a student-athlete's career.
- In order to best support student-athlete success, institutions need a management system to identify and mitigate student-athlete risk of not graduating.

## FLAG Program

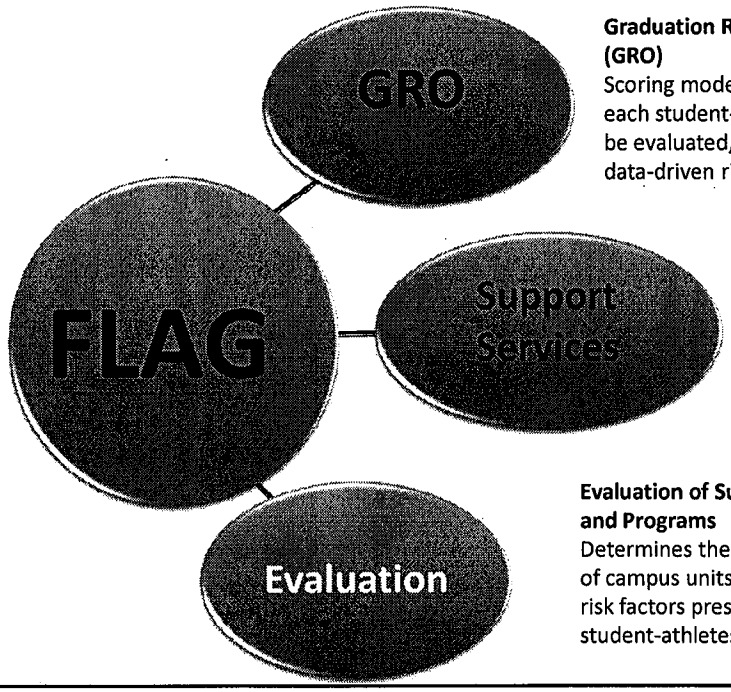
*Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation*

- Program's purposes:
  - To optimize campus environment to leverage opportunities for graduation success.
  - To increase efficiency of current services, including academic support and life skills programs.
  - To inform decision-making regarding recruiting, admissions and program resources (e.g., staffing and budget).

# FLAG Program

*Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation*

- Primary components will…
  - Determine an individual student-athlete's hurdles to graduation.
  - Match support services for an individual student-athlete to mitigate hurdles.
  - Evaluate the level and effectiveness of services provided.




**Graduation Risk Overview (GRO)**
Scoring model by which each student-athlete can be evaluated, based on data-driven risk factors.

**Support Services**
Activities designed to counter the risk factors presented by each student-athlete.

**Evaluation of Support Services and Programs**
Determines the effectiveness of campus units in mitigating risk factors presented by student-athletes collectively.

## FLAG Structure

*Facilitating Learning and Achieving Graduation*

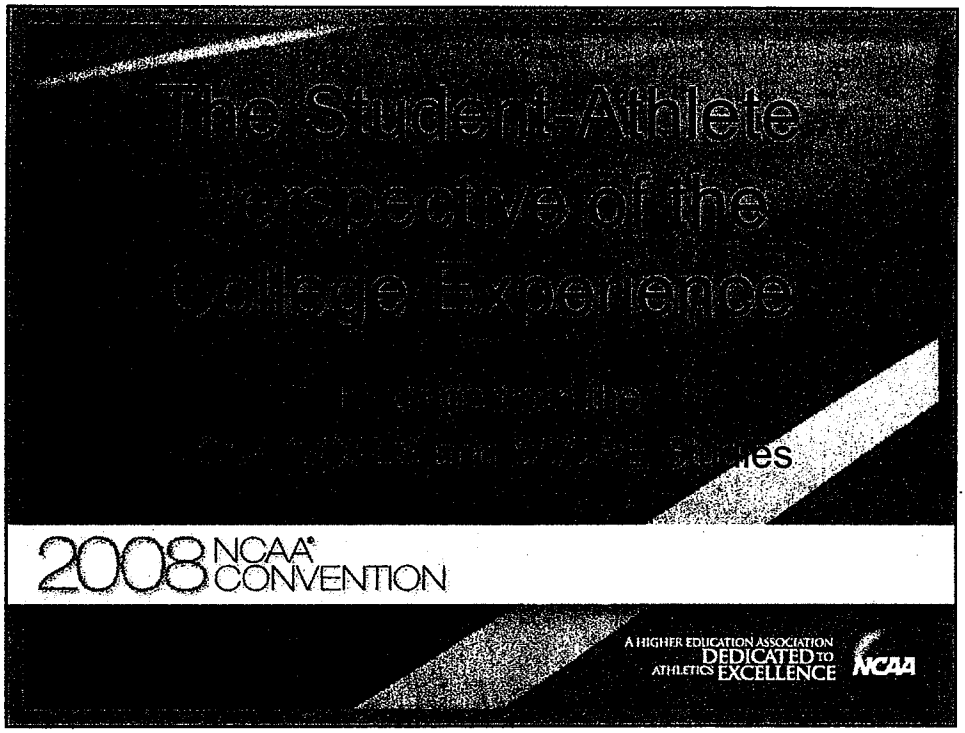
- A current NCAA Web-based program (e.g., APP, CA*i*) would be expanded to include a FLAG module.
- The FLAG module would be programmed to:
  - Compute a GRO score for each student-athlete.
  - Match suggested services to factors identified for each student-athlete.
  - Provide summary reports regarding the effectiveness of programs and services and the potential impact of recruiting and admissions decisions on service provision.

## Next Steps

- Board update during Convention.
- Academic Cabinet review in February.
  - Academic Cabinet could approve program and recommend an implementation time line to begin as early as Fall 2009.
  - If Academic Cabinet approves program in February, education and training will begin Spring 2009 with NCAA Regional Seminars and various constituent meetings (e.g., professional development conferences).

# Final Thoughts…

- Student-athletes fall along a continuum of risk that is based on multiple factors – not all of which are academic.
- Institutional units must collaborate to identify student-athlete support needs and to provide quality services and programs to foster student-athlete graduation success.
- Informed decision-making is essential to optimizing campus resources to mitigate student-athlete hurdles to graduation.
- To this end, FLAG is designed to support institutional endeavors to ensure graduation for every student-athlete.




## Challenges of Athletics Participation

- *Even though managing my time as a student-athlete and student was exhausting, I am glad that I had the opportunity to do so and will encourage my children to be involved in sports when they get older. There were times when my grades suffered because there just wasn't enough time in the day for both practice and studying, but my memories from swimming matter more now than the fact that I didn't always get straight A's.*

*Division I Women's Swimmer (SCORE)*

# Overview

- **GOALS – Growth, Opportunities, Aspirations and Learning of Students in college**
  - 21,000 current student-athletes at 627 Division I, II and III schools.
  - Institutional response rate was 66% in Divisions I and II, 54% in Division III.
  - Surveyed about their college academic, athletic, and social experiences; time demands; team and campus climate; health and well-being; post-college aspirations.
- **SCORE – Study of College Outcomes and Recent Experiences**
  - 8,500 former student-athletes who graduated HS in 1994.
  - Mostly former Division I and II student-athletes or recruits
  - Surveyed about their college experiences; current education, career, and well-being.
- Mnemonic: Set GOALS in college, check the SCORE later.

# GOALS Sampling Plan

- Surveys were sent to the Faculty Athletics Representative (FAR) at 1,026 NCAA institutions.
- Each FAR was asked to survey all student-athletes on one to three teams at that school (2,026 teams across NCAA) chosen by NCAA Research to provide representative samples within each division.
- Most students completed paper versions of the survey, but electronic versions were administered on a few campuses.
- A few schools opted to distribute to a wider group of student-athletes at their school.

# Number of GOALS Student-Athlete Respondents

| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | All Other Men's Sports | Women's Basketball | All Other Women's Sports |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Division I (Institutional Response Rate = 66%** | | | | | | |
| N | 655 | 417 | 1,658 | 2,107 | 423 | 2,719 |
| **Division II (Institutional Response Rate = 66%)** | | | | | | |
| N | 826 | 360 | 1,563 | 1,009 | 373 | 1,534 |
| **Division III (Institutional Response Rate = 54%)** | | | | | | |
| N | 810 | 463 | 561 | 1,763 | 426 | 2,726 |

# SCORE Sampling Plan

- A cohort of over 28,000 former student-athletes who graduated from high school in 1994 were mailed surveys in 2005.
- Sampling base:
  - SAs known to have been Division I freshmen in Fall 1994..
  - Other recruits of Division I or II institutions (including academic nonqualifiers) who applied to the Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse (IEC) in 1994.
- The survey included questions about their
  - College sports experiences
  - College educational experiences
  - Current career and work experience
  - Health and well-being
  - Daily life experiences
- Received 8,500 responses (30% response rate). Division I data were weighted to produce optimal population estimates.

# KEY FINDINGS FROM THE GOALS and SCORE STUDIES

Finding #1: Student-athletes report being actively engaged in their academic experience – both in and out of the classroom.

# Academic Engagement

- Student-athletes major in a variety of fields. The four most popular majors are Business, Education, Kinesiology and the Social Sciences. The most often cited reason for choosing a major was "Preparation for a Career".
- Within the classroom, over 70% of student-athletes report that they participate in class Always or Often and 87% report coming to class prepared Always or Most of the Time.
- Student-athletes also report high levels of engagement in academic activities that are in addition to what is required of them within the classroom, including participation in collaborative research with faculty, participation in an internship or practicum experience and completion of a senior thesis.

## Relationship Between Class Participation and Perception of Effort Put Forth in Class

| | How do you feel about the efforts you've made in your classes? | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Participate Actively in Class… | Positive | Neutral | Negative |
| Always | 94% | 4% | 2% |
| Often | 88% | 7% | 5% |
| Sometimes | 76% | 14% | 10% |
| Rarely | 61% | 20% | 19% |
| Never | 52% | 18% | 30% |

## Relationship Between Class Participation and Feelings about Academic Experience

| | How do you feel about your overall college academic experience to this point? | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Participate Actively in Class… | Positive | Neutral | Negative |
| Always | 94% | 4% | 2% |
| Often | 89% | 7% | 4% |
| Sometimes | 81% | 13% | 6% |
| Rarely | 67% | 20% | 13% |
| Never | 57% | 20% | 23% |

Finding #2: The majority of student-athletes report both having access to and using academic support services offered through their campus athletics departments.

## Which of the following academic or career support services does the athletic department at your school provide for athletes?

| | |
|---|---|
| **Question** | a. Academic advisors who assist with course selection, scheduling, and registration<br>b. Academic advisors who monitor your degree progress and help you understand you career options<br>d. Tutors who review class material and/or help you study for exams<br>e. Tutors who assist you in writing assignments or papers<br>f. Study hall<br>g. Faculty mentors |
| **Scale** | Have Access / Use Frequently<br>Have Access / Use Occasionally<br>Have Access / Do not Use<br>I'm not sure we have this service<br>Do not have access to this service |

# Availability of Academic Support Services Offered Through the Athletics Department

## Awareness of Access to Academic Support Services – Varies by Division

| | Division I | Division II | Division III |
|---|---|---|---|
| Academic Advisors – Course Selection | 96% | 91% | 76% |
| Academic Advisors – Degree Progress | 93% | 86% | 74% |
| Tutors to Review Course Material | 86% | 76% | 66% |
| Tutors for Writing Assignments | 77% | 71% | 63% |
| Study Hall | 90% | 80% | 53% |
| Faculty Mentors | 75% | 68% | 57% |

All divisional differences statistically significant at $p < .01$.

## Awareness of Access to Academic Support Services – Varies by Sport Group

| | MBA | MBB | MFB | Men's Other | WBB | Women's Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Division I | | | | | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 92% | 95% | 95% | 92% | 95% | 92% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 80% | 86% | 88% | 84% | 90% | 88% |
| Division II | | | | | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 90% | 89% | 90% | 84% | 82% | 81% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 76% | 80% | 81% | 71% | 72% | 74% |
| Division III | | | | | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 82% | 80% | 86% | 76% | 77% | 67% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 72% | 67% | 77% | 65% | 65% | 61% |

## Awareness of Access to Academic Support Services – Varies by Class Year

| | Freshman | Senior |
|---|---|---|
| **Division I** | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 94% | 91% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 88% | 86% |
| **Division II** | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 87% | 84% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 79% | 71% |
| **Di vision III** | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 80% | 69% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 71% | 59% |

*Highlighted items denote statistically significant differences between class year at $p < .01$.

## Access to Academic Support Services - Summary

- Across divisions, student-athletes in the sports of Football and Men's Basketball were most likely to report access to academic support services offered through the athletics departments.
- Within Division I, Women's Basketball S-As were as likely to report access to services as the Football and Men's Basketball S-As. This same trend was not seen in Divisions II and III.
- Within Division III, there are strong differences in the class year of student-athletes reporting access to services. Moderate differences are seen in Division II. Underclassmen, particularly freshmen, report greater access.
- Division I student-athletes who are on scholarship are more aware of access to services than non-scholarship athletes. This is particularly true of access to tutors and study hall.

# Use of Academic Support Services Offered Through the Athletics Department

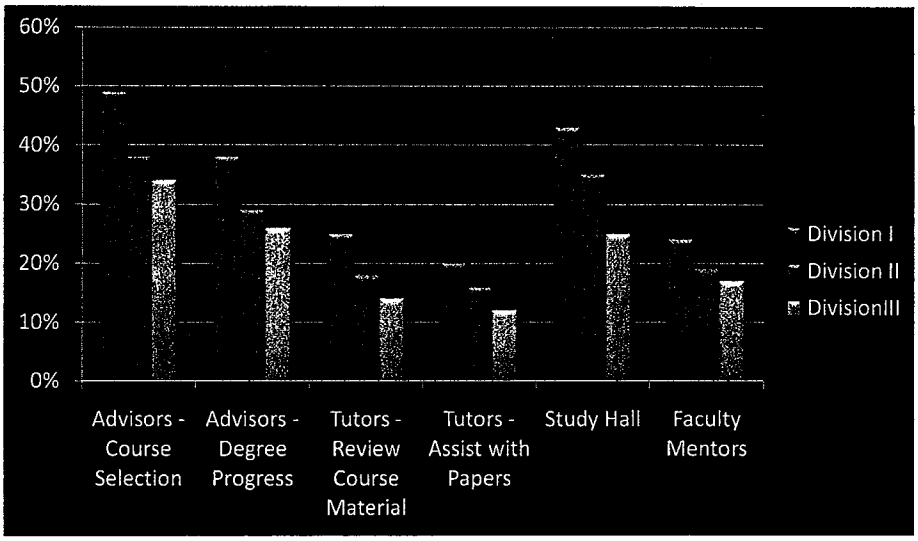
## Use of Academic Support Services – Varies by Division

Of those who reported having access to a service, the following reported using the service...

| | Division I | Division II | Division III |
|---|---|---|---|
| Academic Advisors – Course Selection | 87% | 82% | 72% |
| Academic Advisors – Degree Progress | 79% | 72% | 65% |
| Tutors to Review Course Material | 59% | 49% | 45% |
| Tutors for Writing Assignments | 50% | 45% | 42% |
| Study Hall | 69% | 64% | 57% |
| Faculty Mentors | 51% | 45% | 40% |

All divisional differences statistically significant at $p < .01$.

## Use of Academic Support Services – Varies by Division (Percent "Use Frequently")




## Use of Academic Support Services – Varies by Sport Group

Of those who are aware of access to services…

| | MBA | MBB | MFB | Men's Other | WBB | Women's Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Division I** | | | | | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 82% | 77% | 83% | 75% | 86% | 79% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 63% | 67% | 67% | 54% | 59% | 56% |
| **Division II** | | | | | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 77% | 75% | 75% | 67% | 75% | 70% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 51% | 55% | 58% | 42% | 51% | 39% |
| **Division III** | | | | | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 65% | 72% | 72% | 64% | 73% | 62% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 45% | 53% | 52% | 45% | 43% | 41% |

## Use of Academic Support Services – Varies by Class Year

Of those who are aware of access to services...

| | Freshman | Senior |
|---|---|---|
| **Division I** | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 81% | 76% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 62% | 50% |
| **Division II** | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 71% | 70% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 54% | 40% |
| **Di vision III** | | |
| Advisors – Degree Progress | 66% | 61% |
| Tutors – Review Course Material | 50% | 33% |

*Highlighted items denote statistically significant differences between class year at $p < .01$.

## Use of Academic Support Services - Summary

- When student-athletes are aware of available support services, the majority take advantage of them to some degree. The extent to which they use the services, however, does vary as a function of Division, class year, sport group and scholarship status.
- Division I student-athletes were more likely to report using the services and using them "frequently" as opposed to "occasionally" than student-athletes in the other divisions.
- In general, student-athletes in Olympic sports across division were less likely to report use than their peers.
- First year student-athletes were more likely to report use of available services.

## Influence of Athletics and Advisors on Academics

- Overall, almost two-thirds of Division I student-athletes believe their GPA would be higher if they had not participated in a sport, compared with about one-half of Division II S-As and 40% of Division III.
- The majority of student-athletes in all sport groups believe their coaches have had a positive influence on their academic careers. There was a significant relationship between perception of coach's influence and division with Division I student-athletes reporting greater levels of positive influence.
- The majority of student-athletes in all sport groups believe their academic advisors in their athletics department have had a positive influence on their academic careers. Here too, the relationship between perception of influence and division was significant.

## Finding #3: The majority of student-athletes report that they view themselves more as athletes than as students.

## I view myself as more of an athlete than as a student....

| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | All Other Men's Sports | Women's Basketball | All Other Women's Sports |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Division I** | | | | | | |
| More Athlete | 81% | 76% | 70% | 72% | 66% | 64% |
| **Division II** | | | | | | |
| More Athlete | 80% | 70% | 73% | 64% | 61% | 61% |
| **Division III** | | | | | | |
| More Athlete | 63% | 60% | 57% | 55% | 61% | 45% |

## I view myself as more of an athlete than as a student.... (cont.)

| | Mean: Identify More as Student | Mean: Identify More as Athlete |
|---|---|---|
| Self-Reported Average GPA | 3.22 | 2.90 |
| Average Weekly Athletic Commitments | 30 hours | 35 hours |
| Average Weekly Academic Commitments | 40 hours | 36 hours |
| Missed Class Time per Week | 1.3 classes | 1.7 classes |

All mean differences statistically significant (independent sample t-tests, $p<.01$).

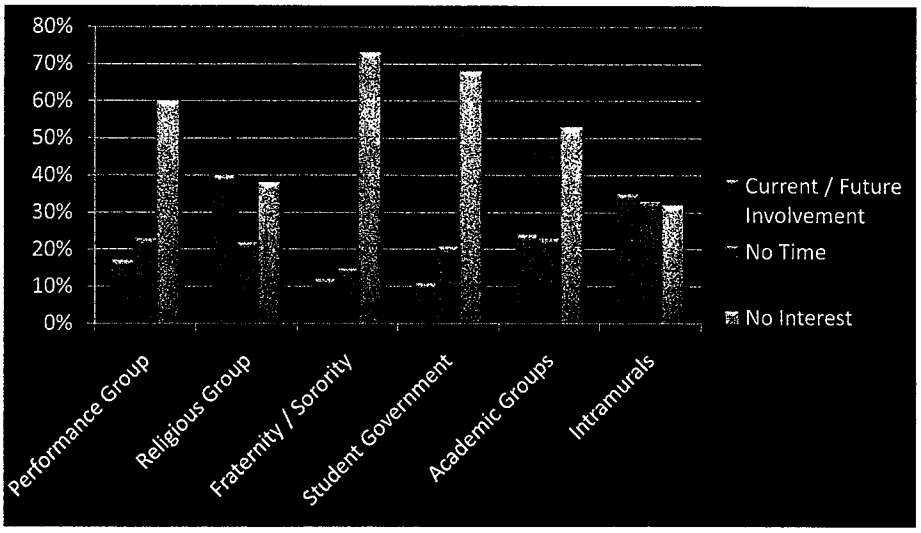
## I view myself as more of an athlete than as a student.... (cont.)

| | Mean: Identify More as Student | Mean: Identify More as Athlete |
|---|---|---|
| Participate in Class* | 4.11 | 3.86 |
| Complete Written Assignments on Time* | 4.53 | 4.21 |
| Discuss course content w/ others* | 3.37 | 3.09 |
| Discuss course content w/ profs* | 3.28 | 3.17 |
| Participate in group projects* | 3.42 | 3.30 |
| Feel about effort in class** | 5.81 | 5.32 |

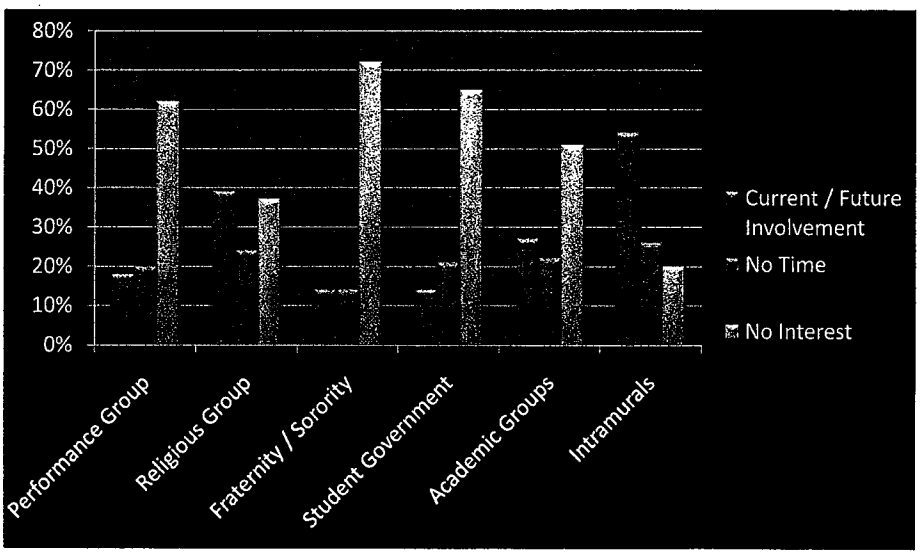
* Questions answered on a 5 point scale: 5 = Always; 1 = Never.
** Questions answered on a 7 point scale: 7 = Very positive; 1 = Very negative.
Those who identify more as students than as athletes report higher mean scores on every variable.
All mean differences statistically significant (independent sample t-tests, $p<.01$).

Finding #4: The majority of student-athletes report that they are actively involved in their campus community outside of athletics and believe that their athletics participation has benefited them socially.

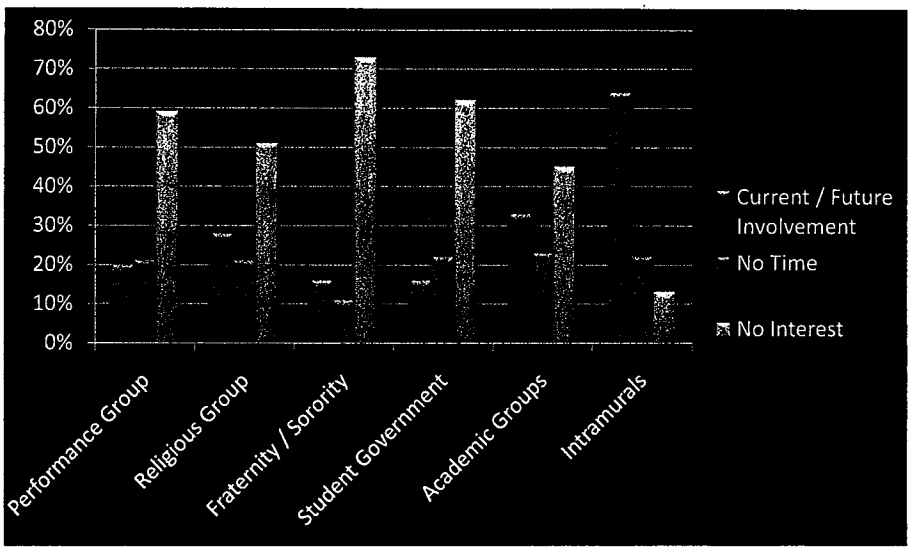
## Participation in Extracurricular Activities Among Division I Student-Athletes




## Participation in Extracurricular Activities Among Division II Student-Athletes



## Participation in Extracurricular Activities Among Division III Student-Athletes




## Campus Integration

| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | All Other Men's Sports | Women's Basketball | All Other Women's Sports |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Division I** | | | | | | |
| All / Many friends are teammates | 72% | 57% | 64% | 71% | 61% | 67% |
| Athletics positively impacted social life | 87% | 81% | 79% | 82% | 75% | 80% |
| **Division II** | | | | | | |
| All / Many friends are teammates | 72% | 58% | 66% | 64% | 61% | 63% |
| Athletics positively impacted social life | 90% | 89% | 86% | 82% | 84% | 84% |
| **Division III** | | | | | | |
| All / Many friends are teammates | 66% | 67% | 73% | 64% | 62% | 59% |
| Athletics positively impacted social life | 89% | 89% | 88% | 83% | 88% | 86% |

Finding #5: Over one-half of Division I and II student-athletes report their primary reason for choosing their current institution was athletics, and the majority of all student-athletes report that if they had to make the decision over again, they still would attend their current institution.

**What was your primary reason for attending your current college?**

| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | All Other Men's Sports | Women's Basketball | All Other Women's Sports |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Division I** | | | | | | |
| **Academics** | 14% | 18% | 24% | 27% | 21% | 28% |
| **Athletics** | 79% | 68% | 59% | 59% | 67% | 57% |
| **Division II** | | | | | | |
| **Academics** | 12% | 13% | 14% | 25% | 17% | 21% |
| **Athletics** | 77% | 74% | 67% | 56% | 69% | 57% |
| **Division III** | | | | | | |
| **Academics** | 37% | 32% | 43% | 45% | 38% | 56% |
| **Athletics** | 47% | 53% | 45% | 37% | 43% | 27% |

## If I could start over again, I still would attend this school....

| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | All Other Men's Sports | Women's Basketball | All Other Women's Sports |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Division I** | | | | | | |
| Strongly Agree / Agree | 64% | 52% | 52% | 62% | 54% | 63% |
| **Division II** | | | | | | |
| Strongly Agree / Agree | 53% | 48% | 46% | 51% | 44% | 57% |
| **Division III** | | | | | | |
| Strongly Agree / Agree | 52% | 54% | 58% | 59% | 63% | 69% |

## Overall Means for Likelihood of Choosing Institution Again

**Likelihood of choosing institution again by athletic identity...**

| Item | Mean: Identify More as Athlete | Mean: Identify More as Student |
|---|---|---|
| a. Division I | 5.38 | 5.45 |
| b. Division II* | 4.98 | 5.15 |
| c. Division III* | 5.29 | 5.71 |

**Likelihood of choosing institution again by reason for college choice...**

| Item | Mean: Chose College for Athletics | Mean: Chose College for Academics |
|---|---|---|
| a. Division I* | 5.33 | 5.76 |
| b. Division II* | 4.95 | 5.56 |
| c. Division III | 5.20 | 5.87 |

- Questions were answered on a 7-point scale: 7=strongly agree, 1=strongly disagree
- Statistical significance indicated by *. Determined using independent sample t-tests.

## Overall Satisfaction with Athletics and Academics
### (% Feeling Positive or Very Positive)

| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | All Other Men's Sports | Women's Basketball | All Other Women's Sports |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Division I** | | | | | | |
| Athletic Experience | 70% | 62% | 61% | 66% | 56% | 65% |
| Academic Experience | 59% | 59% | 56% | 60% | 68% | 68% |
| **Division II** | | | | | | |
| Athletic Experience | 74% | 62% | 66% | 65% | 63% | 68% |
| Academic Experience | 63% | 64% | 59% | 59% | 70% | 70% |
| **Division III** | | | | | | |
| Athletic Experience | 67% | 57% | 66% | 67% | 61% | 74% |
| Academic Experience | 63% | 59% | 59% | 67% | 67% | 76% |

## College Choice

- Over one-half of student-athletes in all sport groups in Division I and II cite "Athletics" as their primary reason for choosing their current institution. Responses in Division III are divided more evenly between Athletics and Academics as the primary reason for choosing their institution.
- Between 50-60% of student-athletes Strongly Agree or Agree that if they were to start over again, they still would attend their current institution.

## College Choice (cont.)

- Across the three divisions, student-athletes are more likely to respond that they would choose their current institution again if:
  - They express positive feelings about their major;
  - Feel that their expectations of the academic, athletic, and social experiences were accurate, and
  - Express positive feelings about their relationships with faculty and their overall academic experience.
- Relationships with their coaches also impacted their motivation to choose their current institution. Student-athletes were more likely to choose their current institution again if they believed their coach had a positive impact on their academic career and was not negatively influencing choice of major, classes, or the ability to participate in other extracurricular activities.

## College Choice (cont.)

- The one item where the largest difference could be seen between those who would choose their current institution and those who would not was how satisfied the respondent was with their overall athletic experience.
- Other significant contributors increasing S-As' likelihood of choosing their current institution indicate the importance of a well-rounded college experience.

# Finding #6: Both former and current student-athletes believe their participation in college athletics has had a positive influence on their health.

## Physical Health

- Overall, 95% of current student-athletes have indicated that they have sought care for physical health issues from health care professionals on campus. Of those, 78% were satisfied with the care they received.
- In spite of seeking care for issues, 85% of current student-athletes believe that athletics participation has had a positive influence on their physical health, and an additional 6% believe it has had no influence – positive or negative.
- Overall, 90% of former student-athletes believe that college athletics had a positive impact on their current physical health.

Finding #7: Although there is substantial variation across sport, student-athletes in all sports generally commit large amounts of time to both athletics and academic endeavors.

## Definitions

- **Athletic Hours**: Sum of hours reported on physical (practicing, training, competing, training room, etc.) and non-physical (meetings, team functions, film study, etc.) activities related to competing in their sport.
- **Academic Hours**: Sum of hours reported attending class activities (including labs, discussion groups, etc.) and studying or academic work done outside of class.
- Students self-reported hours spent in these activities and others on their typical in-season weekday and typical in-season weekend. It is believed that these questions provide better estimates than asking students for weekly estimates of time spent on academic or athletics.
- Students were not asked to do any accounting toward the 20-hour rule.
- We expect some degree of error involved with a self-reported retrospective assessment of time commitments. However, we generally expect that any inconsistencies will be present across sport, division, etc. Therefore, between-sport or between-division comparisons should give us a good relative understanding of student-athlete time commitments.

Average Hours Spent Per Week In-Season on Athletic Activities by Student-Athletes in Men's Sports (Self-Report)

| SPORT | Division I | Division II | Division III | National Collegiate Champ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baseball | 40.0 | 37.6 | 33.5 | |
| Basketball | 36.8 | 35.0 | 30.6 | |
| Football (FBS / FCS) | 44.8 / 35.3 | 37.1 | 34.4 | |
| Golf | 40.8 | 28.9 | 26.7 | |
| Ice Hockey | 37.6 | | 35.1 | |
| Lacrosse | 34.8 | 31.1 | 31.6 | |
| Skiing | | | | 33.8 |
| Soccer | 33.6 | 29.9 | 28.5 | |
| Swimming | 33.6 | 33.6 | 27.5 | |
| Tennis | 33.9 | 31.7 | 27.7 | |
| Track / XC | 30.7 | 28.6 | 27.0 | |
| Volleyball | | | | 31.8 |
| Water Polo | | | | 30.9 |
| Wrestling | 32.4 | 31.4 | 33.6 | |

Average Hours Spent Per Week In-Season on Athletic Activities by Student-Athletes in Women's Sports (Self-Report)

| SPORT | Division I | Division II | Division III | National Collegiate Champ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Basketball | 36.1 | 32.3 | 30.0 | |
| Bowling | | | | 29.8 |
| Field Hockey | 34.3 | 28.5 | 28.6 | |
| Golf | 32.4 | 24.9 | 23.9 | |
| Gymnastics | | | | 34.2 |
| Ice Hockey | 34.6 | | 31.1 | |
| Lacrosse | 32.0 | 29.5 | 26.4 | |
| Skiing | | | | 30.1 |
| Soccer | 34.1 | 27.2 | 29.2 | |
| Softball | 37.1 | 34.8 | 29.1 | |
| Swimming | 32.6 | 34.3 | 29.5 | |
| Tennis | 30.2 | 26.7 | 26.2 | |
| Track / XC | 29.3 | 27.6 | 25.9 | |
| Volleyball | 35.4 | 30.8 | 31.7 | |
| Water Polo | | | | 30.9 |

Average Hours Spent Per Week In-Season on Academic Activities by Student-Athletes in Men's Sports (Self-Report)

| SPORT | Division I | Division II | Division III | National Collegiate Champ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baseball | 32.0 | 31.8 | 35.0 | |
| Basketball | 33.9 | 35.0 | 35.2 | |
| Football (FBS / FCS) | 39.5 / 37.2 | 35.4 | 37.9 | |
| Golf | 33.3 | 34.0 | 36.1 | |
| Ice Hockey | 31.3 | | 34.2 | |
| Lacrosse | 36.1 | 32.6 | 38.7 | |
| Skiing | | | | 36.9 |
| Soccer | 39.1 | 35.5 | 37.3 | |
| Swimming | 35.9 | 36.8 | 41.9 | |
| Tennis | 34.4 | 39.5 | 36.5 | |
| Track / XC | 38.5 | 36.3 | 39.8 | |
| Volleyball | | | | 37.5 |
| Water Polo | | | | 34.5 |
| Wrestling | 35.4 | 32.4 | 37.3 | |

Average Hours Spent Per Week In-Season on Academic Activities by Student-Athletes in Women's Sports (Self-Report)

| SPORT | Division I | Division II | Division III | National Collegiate Champ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Basketball | 37.4 | 37.4 | 37.3 | |
| Bowling | | | | 40.3 |
| Field Hockey | 40.4 | 34.1 | 41.4 | |
| Golf | 38.0 | 38.9 | 41.2 | |
| Gymnastics | | | | 36.9 |
| Ice Hockey | 38.6 | | 35.8 | |
| Lacrosse | 39.3 | 41.9 | 42.9 | |
| Skiing | | | | 38.2 |
| Soccer | 39.6 | 36.2 | 43.0 | |
| Softball | 38.5 | 36.2 | 40.3 | |
| Swimming | 37.2 | 43.6 | 46.3 | |
| Tennis | 38.3 | 42.6 | 42.9 | |
| Track / XC | 42.3 | 40.1 | 44.1 | |
| Volleyball | 38.5 | 39.2 | 41.7 | |
| Water Polo | | | | 38.4 |

Comparison of Weekly Academic Hours Reported In-Season vs. Athletic Time Commitments (Men's Sports)
[Positive Numbers = More Time on Academics]

| SPORT | Division I | Division II | Division III | National Collegiate Champ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baseball | - 8.0 | - 5.9 | 1.5 | |
| Basketball | - 2.9 | 0.0 | 4.6 | |
| Football (FBS / FCS) | - 5.3 / 1.8 | - 1.7 | 3.4 | |
| Golf | - 7.5 | 5.1 | 9.5 | |
| Ice Hockey | - 6.4 | | - 0.9 | |
| Lacrosse | 1.3 | 1.5 | 7.1 | |
| Skiing | | | | 3.1 |
| Soccer | 5.5 | 5.6 | 8.9 | |
| Swimming | 2.3 | 3.3 | 14.4 | |
| Tennis | 0.4 | 7.8 | 8.8 | |
| Track / XC | 7.8 | 7.6 | 12.8 | |
| Volleyball | | | | 5.7 |
| Water Polo | | | | 3.5 |
| Wrestling | 2.9 | 1.0 | 3.7 | |

Comparison of Weekly Academic Hours Reported In-Season vs. Athletic Time Commitments (Women's Sports)
[Positive Numbers = More Time on Academics]

| SPORT | Division I | Division II | Division III | Nat'l. Collegiate Champ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Basketball | 1.3 | 5.1 | 7.3 | |
| Bowling | | | | 10.5 |
| Field Hockey | 6.1 | 5.6 | 12.8 | |
| Golf | 5.5 | 14.0 | 17.3 | |
| Gymnastics | | | | 2.7 |
| Ice Hockey | 4.1 | | 4.6 | |
| Lacrosse | 7.3 | 12.4 | 16.5 | |
| Skiing | | | | 8.1 |
| Soccer | 5.4 | 9.0 | 13.7 | |
| Softball | 1.5 | 1.4 | 11.2 | |
| Swimming | 4.6 | 9.4 | 16.8 | |
| Tennis | 8.1 | 15.9 | 16.7 | |
| Track / XC | 13.0 | 12.5 | 18.2 | |
| Volleyball | 3.1 | 8.4 | 10.0 | |
| Water Polo | | | | 7.5 |

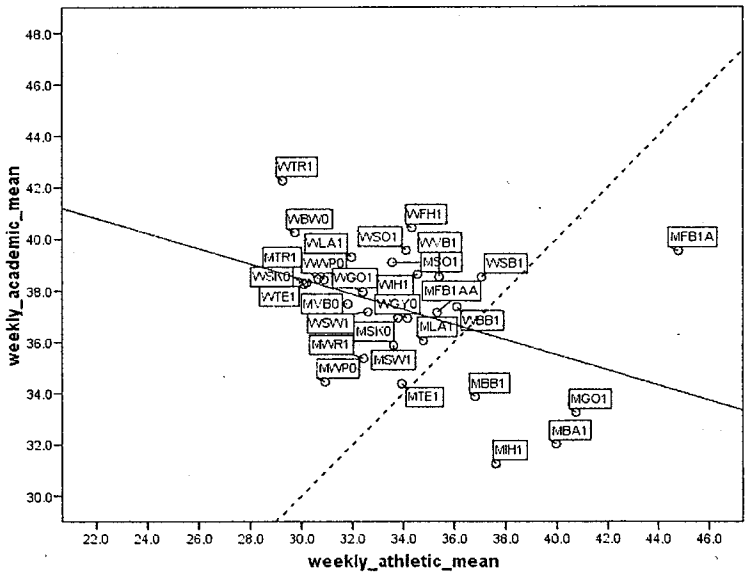
Finding #8: Divisional differences are present in the distributions of time spent on athletics and academics. However, within sport, these divisional differences are more pronounced in terms of time committed to athletics. In addition, some sports showed much less variation across division.

Finding #9: Within each division there is a relationship between athletic and academic time commitments. In several sports, student-athletes in aggregate reported spending more time on athletics than academics.

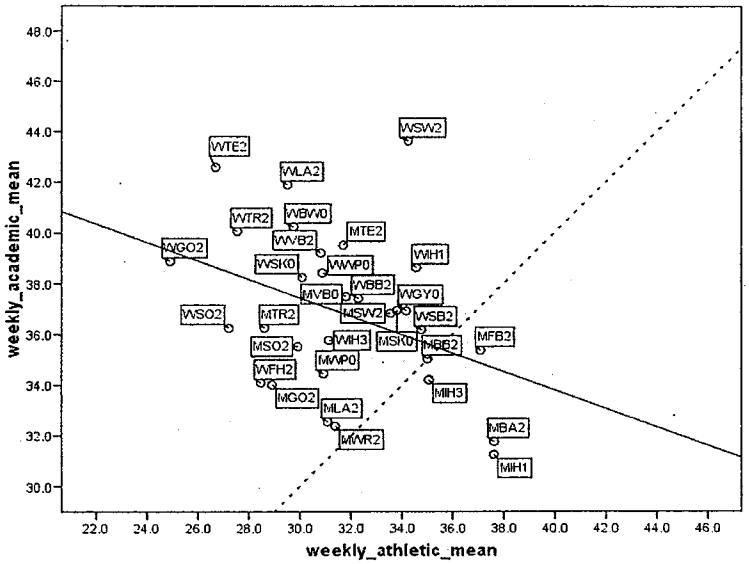
## Notes on Graphs of Athletic vs. Academic Hours

- The solid line (calculated separately within each NCAA division) on each graph represents the statistical expectation for weekly academic hours given the average athletic time commitments in the sport. The downward slope of the line indicates that academic time spent tends to be lower when athletic time commitments are higher.
- Sports above the solid line tend to have students spending more time on academics than expected given their athletic commitments (below the line = less time on academics than expected given their athletic commitments). In Division I, with few exceptions (e.g., football), the squads above this line (more time on academics than expected) are women's squads.
- The dashed line on the graph represents equal time reported on athletics and academics in-season. Sports to the right of the dashed line on average report more time spent on athletics (to the left of the dashed line = more time on academics).

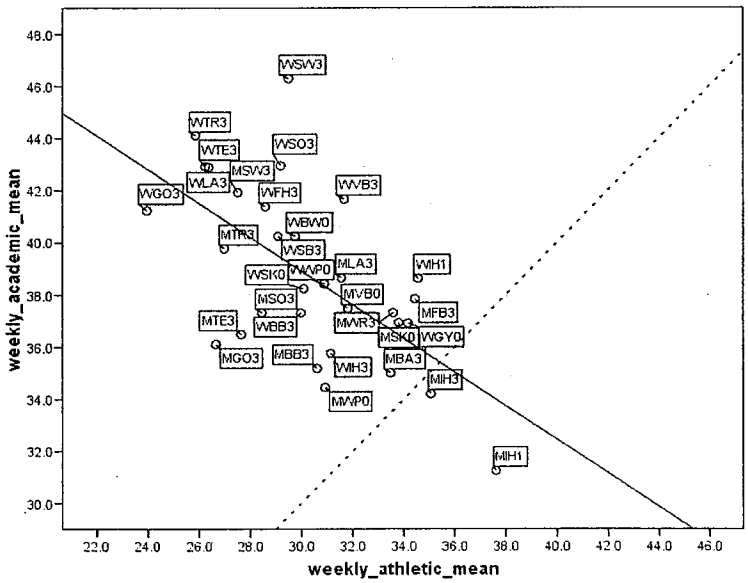
**Comparison of Weekly Academic Hours Reported In-Season as a Function of Athletic Time Commitments (Division I)**



**Comparison of Weekly Academic Hours Reported In-Season as a Function of Athletic Time Commitments (Division II)**




**Comparison of Weekly Academic Hours Reported In-Season as a Function of Athletic Time Commitments (Division III)**



# Finding #10: Between-sport and between-division differences in travel and missed-class time were evident.

During the season, how much time in a typical week (including weekends) do you spend away from campus due to athletics competition or training?

| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | All Other Men's Sports | Women's Basketball | All Other Women's Sports |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Division I** | | | | | | |
| Average Time in Days | 2.3 | 1.8 | 1.2 | 1.5 | 2.3 | 1.9 |
| % Reporting Away 3+ Days/Week | 45% | 22% | 8% | 15% | 38% | 27% |
| **Division II** | | | | | | |
| Average Time in Days | 1.9 | 1.6 | 1.1 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| % Reporting Away 3+ Days/Week | 27% | 19% | 9% | 12% | 28% | 26% |
| **Division III** | | | | | | |
| Average Time in Days | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 1.3 | 1.6 | 1.6 |
| % Reporting Away 3+ Days/Week | 19% | 7% | 5% | 8% | 15% | 14% |

During the season, how many classes do you miss on average each week?

| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | All Other Men's Sports | Women's Basketball | All Other Women's Sports |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Division I** | | | | | | |
| Average Classes Missed | 1.8 | 2.2 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 2.3 | 1.9 |
| % Reporting >3 Classes Missed/Wk | 11% | 20% | 10% | 12% | 22% | 14% |
| **Division II** | | | | | | |
| Average Classes Missed | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.8 | 1.8 |
| % Reporting >3 Classes Missed/Wk | 11% | 14% | 10% | 10% | 11% | 12% |
| **Division III** | | | | | | |
| Average Classes Missed | 1.4 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 1.2 |
| % Reporting >3 Classes Missed/Wk | 9% | 7% | 10% | 8% | 3% | 5% |

Finding #11: A majority of student-athletes report spending as much or more time on sport out-of-season as they do in-season.

Percentage of Student-Athletes who Say They Spend About the Same or More Time in the Off-Season than In-Season on...

| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | All Other Men's Sports | Women's Basketball | All Other Women's Sports |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Division I** | | | | | | |
| Athletic Training or Competition | 73% | 70% | 70% | 65% | 48% | 59% |
| Other Athletic (Meetings, Study) | 76% | 56% | 57% | 65% | 48% | 64% |
| **Division II** | | | | | | |
| Athletic Training or Competition | 79% | 71% | 78% | 63% | 58% | 56% |
| Other Athletic (Meetings, Study) | 78% | 60% | 71% | 65% | 51% | 62% |
| **Division III** | | | | | | |
| Athletic Training or Competition | 67% | 63% | 65% | 54% | 43% | 37% |
| Other Athletic (Meetings, Study) | 68% | 51% | 58% | 58% | 41% | 50% |

Finding #12: Given more time, many student-athletes reported that they would devote that extra time to sports rather than academics or extracurricular activities.

**If you had one extra hour each day during the school year that you could use any way that you wanted, on what one activity (other than sleeping) would you most want to spend it?**

| Division I | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | All Other Men's Sports | Women's Basketball | All Other Women's Sports |
| Classwork / Education | 12% | 17% | 18% | 18% | 16% | 20% |
| Sport | 24% | 24% | 17% | 19% | 8% | 8% |
| Extracurricular Activity | 4% | 5% | 6% | 5% | 5% | 6% |
| Time with Family | 10% | 13% | 11% | 6% | 18% | 9% |
| Job | 4% | 3% | 3% | 4% | 4% | 4% |
| Socializing | 23% | 13% | 15% | 22% | 20% | 26% |
| Relaxing by Myself | 23% | 25% | 30% | 26% | 29% | 27% |

If you had one extra hour each day during the school year that you could use any way that you wanted, on what one activity (other than sleeping) would you most want to spend it?

| Division I | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Baseball | Men's Basketball | Football | All Other Men's Sports | Women's Basketball | All Other Women's Sports |
| Classwork / Education | 12% | 17% | 18% | 18% | 16% | 20% |
| Sport | 24% | 24% | 17% | 19% | 8% | 8% |
| **Division II** | | | | | | |
| Classwork / Education | 13% | 15% | 19% | 20% | 23% | 16% |
| Sport | 29% | 24% | 24% | 23% | 10% | 12% |
| **Division III** | | | | | | |
| Classwork / Education | 19% | 17% | 23% | 19% | 16% | 18% |
| Sport | 24% | 23% | 20% | 23% | 12% | 15% |

Finding #13: Overall, in comparison to their schools, NCAA student-athletes see their teams as:

-being a more inclusive environment;
- more accepting of differing viewpoints and cultures;
- a more comfortable place to express social, political or religious views;
- more respectful of members of the opposite sex;
- more respectful of persons from other racial/ethnic groups, **but**
- having fewer opportunities to learn about or discuss other cultures/viewpoints.

**Items on Campus / Team Climate from GOALS Study**

| College / University | Team |
|---|---|
| 3-6a. This college has created an inclusive environment for all students | 3-7a. My coaches have created an inclusive environment for all members of the team |
| 3-6b. This campus community is accepting of differing viewpoints and cultures | 3-7b. My coaches and teammates are accepting of differing viewpoints and cultures |
| 3-6c. This college makes a genuine effort to recruit a diverse student body | 3-7c. My coaches make a genuine effort to recruit a diverse group of student-athletes |
| 3-6d. There are many opportunities at this school to learn about or discuss other cultures or viewpoints | 3-7d. There are many opportunities on this team to learn about or discuss other cultures or viewpoints |
| 3-6e. I always feel comfortable expressing my social and political views on this campus | 3-7e. I always feel comfortable expressing my social and political views on this team |
| 3-6f. I always feel comfortable expressing my religious views on this campus | 3-7f. I always feel comfortable expressing my religious views on this team |
| 3-6g. Members of the campus community are always respectful of members of the opposite sex | 3-7g. My coaches and teammates are always respectful of members of the opposite sex |
| 3-6h. Members of the campus community are always respectful of persons from other racial/ethnic groups | 3-7h. My coaches and teammates are always respectful of persons from other racial/ethnic groups |

Questions were answered on a 6-point scale: 6=strongly agree, 1=strongly disagree

## Atmosphere on Team vs. School

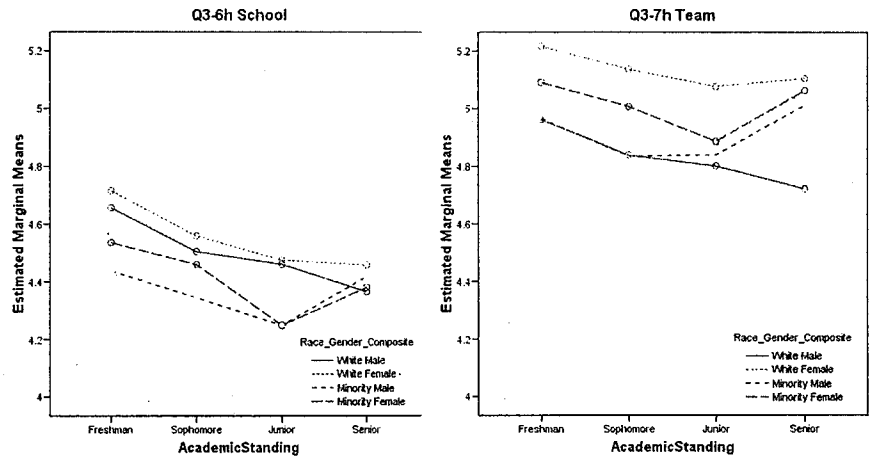
- Overall, in comparison to their schools, NCAA student-athletes see their teams as:
  - being a more inclusive environment
  - more accepting of differing viewpoints and cultures
  - a more comfortable place to express social, political or religious views
  - more respectful of members of the opposite sex
  - more respectful of persons from other racial/ethnic groups
- However, in comparison to opportunities available generally on campus, student-athletes see the team setting as having fewer opportunities to learn about or discuss other cultures/viewpoints.

**Overall Means for Racial/Ethnic Minority Students on Campus / Team Climate Items**

| Item | School Mean | Team Mean | p<.01 |
|---|---|---|---|
| a. Inclusive environment | 4.50 | 4.79 | * |
| b. Accepting differing viewpoints | 4.54 | 4.83 | * |
| c. Diversity | 4.41 | 4.66 | * |
| d. Opportunities to learn about other cultures | 4.50 | 4.42 | * |
| e. Comfortable expressing social and political views | 4.33 | 4.58 | * |
| f. Comfortable expressing religious views | 4.46 | 4.63 | * |
| g. Respectful of opposite sex | 4.38 | 4.85 | * |
| h. Respectful of other racial/ethnic groups | 4.38 | 4.94 | * |

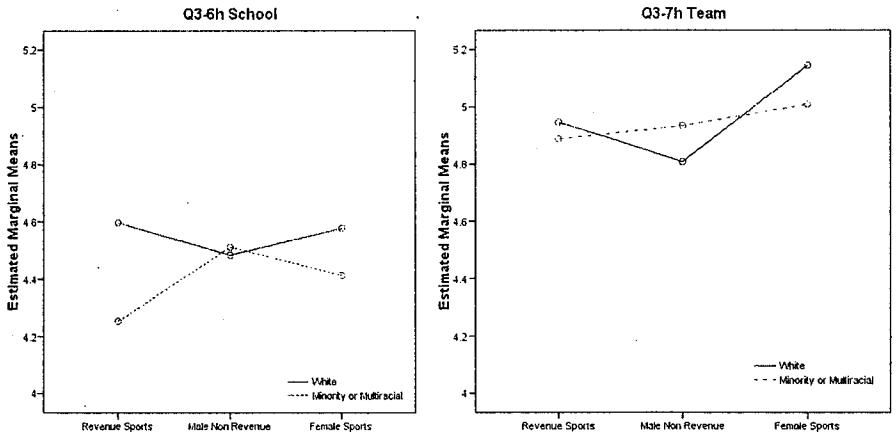
- Questions were answered on a 6-point scale: 6=strongly agree, 1=strongly disagree
- Statistical significance determined using paired-sample t-tests.

## Members of the community [My coaches and teammates] are always respectful of persons from other racial/ethnic groups.




Questions were answered on a 6-point scale: 6 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree

## Members of the community [My coaches and teammates] are always respectful of persons from other racial/ethnic groups.




Questions were answered on a 6-point scale: 6 = strongly agree, 1 = strongly disagree

Finding #14: Ten-year degree attainment of bachelor's and/or graduate degrees is predictable from high school and college academic performance. However, perceived academic work ethic and self-identifying as a student rather than as an athlete in college are also strong predictors of eventual graduation. Professional/Olympic aspirations are negatively related to graduate degree attainment only.

Finding #15: Life satisfaction, job satisfaction and satisfaction with standard of living at age 30 were shown to be related to perceived academic work ethic and degree attainment (generally, an additive benefit for BA and graduate degrees).

Finding #16:After controlling for academic success / degree attainment, demographics, physical and mental health, social support, etc. it was shown that self-esteem of former Division I student-athletes at age 30 was related to exercise level and collegiate academic satisfaction, but NOT athletic achievement.

## Statistical Modeling of Long-Term Outcomes

- Data from SCORE in conjunction with available HS and college academic data have been used to model a number of personal outcomes. Among the findings (all models controlled for HS academic variables and various demographics):
  - What factors predict 10-year degree attainment (bachelor's / grad degrees)?
    - Perceived academic work ethic, identifying more as a student than as an athlete in college, professional / Olympic aspirations (graduate degree attainment only)
  - What factors predict current level of overall life satisfaction?
    - Perceived academic work ethic, degree attainment (additive benefit for BA, grad degrees)
  - What factors predict current job satisfaction?
    - Perceived academic work ethic, graduate degree attainment
  - What factors predict satisfaction with current standing of living?
    - Perceived academic work ethic, BA attainment
  - What factors predict current self-esteem (Jaime Clark, U. Denver)?
    - Controlled for academic success / degree attainment, demographics, physical and mental health, social support, etc.
    - Exercise level, collegiate academic satisfaction, NOT athletic achievement

# Finding #17: Open-ended comments shed light on how former and current student-athletes feel about their college athletics experience.

## Tone of Comments

- A few themes emerged in the comments:
  1. Positive comments touching on how participation in athletics has benefited them academically and socially as well as lasting health benefits
  2. Some comments noted concerns regarding the academic-athletic tug-of-war and noted sacrifices that were made in order to participate in college athletics.
  3. Comments related to finances and the doors of opportunity athletics opened.
  4. Comments specifically related to coaching staffs and relationships with coaches.

## Benefits of Athletics Participation

- *If it weren't for the opportunity to participate in college athletics, I know I wouldn't be the person I am today. You learn so much about sports, yourself and mostly about life when you compete at that level. What an unbelievable experience!!*

  *Division I Baseball (SCORE)*

- *Because of my college athletics experience (coaching staff, team, competition) my experience in college has been extremely positive . It taught be about time management, work ethic and teamwork, while helping keep my grades up.*

  *Division I Women's Field Hockey (GOALS)*

## Challenges of Athletics Participation

- *Time commitment with athletics participation and academics doesn't allow much opportunity to have a job and make money to support yourself independently from your parents. Need more opportunities to be provided financial help.*

  *Division I Women's Basketball (GOALS)*

## Comments Regarding Coaching Staff / Athletics Personnel

- *I am glad that I participated in athletics in college but the coaches and faculty dealing with athletics in my opinion did not care about the students at all. The people in charge of the athletic program were concerned only with their own career and showed very little to no interest in helping the student-athlete.*

*Division I Men's Swimmer (SCORE)*

## Comments Regarding Coaching Staff / Athletics Personnel

- *College athletics and athletics in general have allowed me to excel in life. My college wrestling coach still e-mails / calls me often to see how things are going. I am a strong (very) believer in athletics making a student better. If it were not for wrestling and the NCAA, I don't know if I would have earned a degree or a Master's degree.*

*Division I Men's Wrestler (SCORE)*

# What Have We Learned?

- Lives of student-athletes are complex. The issue of a balance between athletics and academics appears to be a very important ingredient for success as a student-athlete.
- Many positive outcomes from the student-athlete experience:
  - High levels of engagement in academics, athletics and community service.
  - Higher academic success rates (88% graduation rate) than previously reported.
  - Very positive responses to feelings about their overall athletics and academic experiences.
  - Many life skills gained from participation in intercollegiate athletics (e.g. time management, teamwork, commitment, etc.)
  - Team climate is seen as understanding of people from different backgrounds and perspectives.

# What Have We Learned?

- Some challenges:
  - Self-identity that leans too much toward identifying solely as an athlete can lead to poorer academic performance and lower self-esteem in later life.
  - Understanding attitudes and motivations could be very important in helping student-athletes to succeed.
  - Coach/player relationship is very important and can have a powerful impact on student-athletes (either positively or negatively).
  - Athletic time commitments for student-athletes can be very high and there is little down-time, even in the off-season. However, there is evidence that athletes might want to spend even more time on athletics pursuits. This issue is crucial to developing the balance that should be a goal for student-athletes.

# Where Do We Go From Here? Research on "Academic Pathways" of Former Student-Athletes

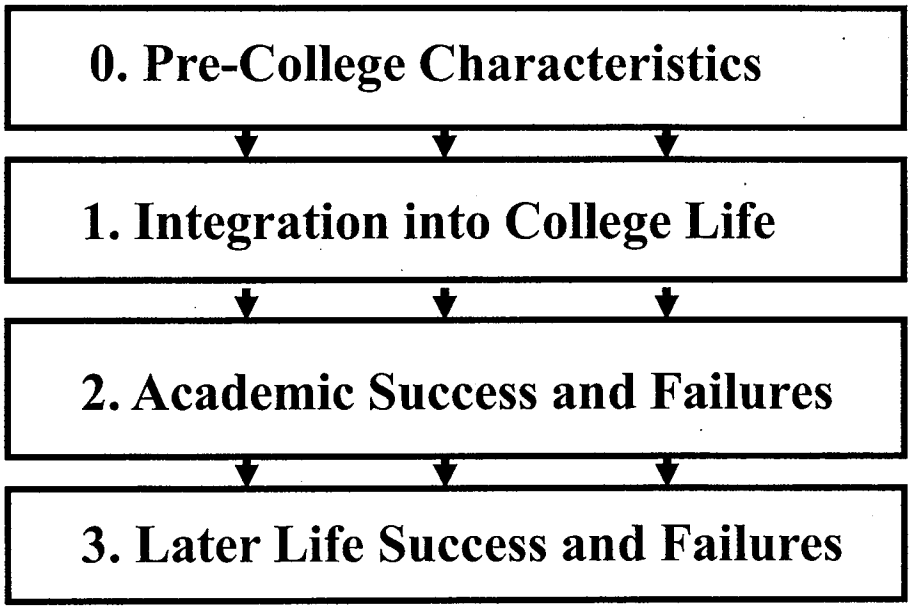
## The Basis of NCAA Eligibility Research

Pre-College Characteristics

↓

Academic Success and Failures

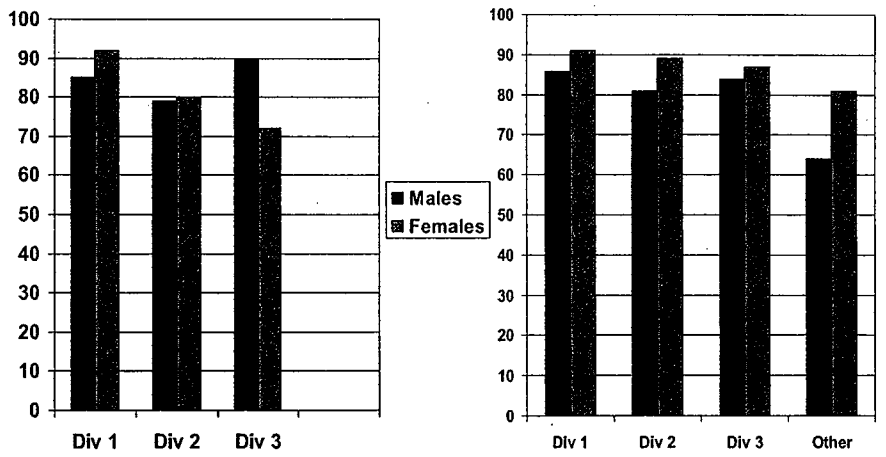
## The Theoretical Basis of SCORE




## Adjusting Initial Sampling Biases

- The 8,250 responded (30%), but these respondents were not fully representative of the intended population.
- From the available IEC and APC data on all 28,000 students, we found both sub-samples (D1 freshman and others) both had an under-representation of:
  - Male SA
  - African-American SA
  - Lower HS Academic Profiles (HS Core GPA, ACT/SAT scores)
- A model of the probability of response was created and used to form sampling weights ($R^2$=11%). These sampling weights were then used in all analyses to overcome the positive biases of participants who actually responded (above).

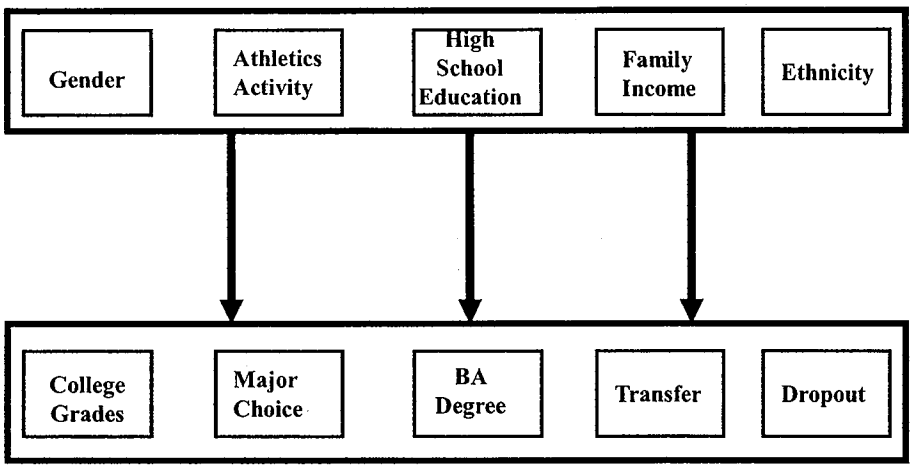
# Eventual BA Degree Completion




Started in Division 1

Not Started in Division 1

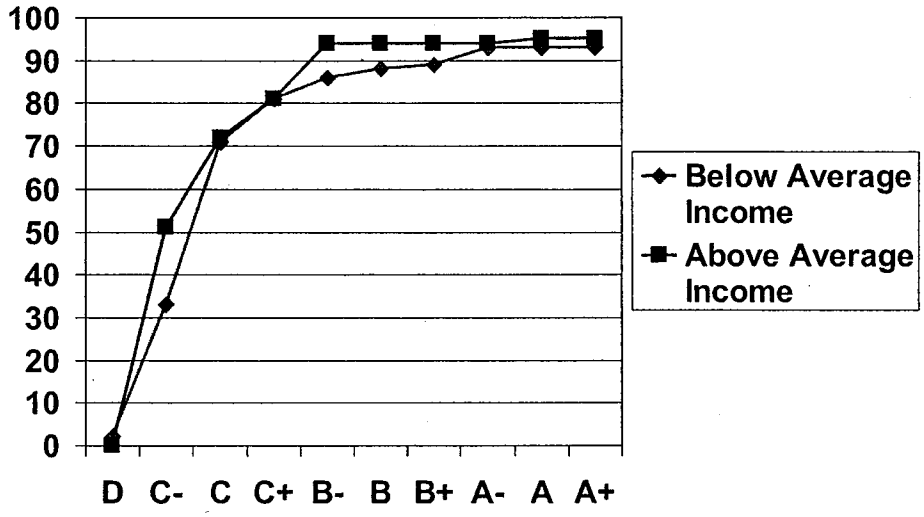
# Measures in NCAA Eligibility Research



## Table 1: Impacts (z) of Pre-College Variables on Academic Success (N=8,277)

| Pre-College Variables | College GPA $R^2$= .29 | Not Ever Dropout $R^2$= .17 | Not Ever Transfer $R^2$= .08 | Eventual BA Degree $R^2$= .20/.46 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender (F) | +14 | 0 | +3 | 0 |
| Ethnicity (W) | +10 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fam.Income | 0 | +5 | +5 | +5 |
| Division (I) | -3 | +3 | +4 | +3 |
| Revenue (Y) | -3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| HS GPA | +24 | +9 | +7 | +8 |
| ACTSAT | +13 | +3 | +8 | +4 |
| HS Units | 0 | +3 | +3 | +3 |
| Coll. GPA | -- | +11 | +7 | +15 |

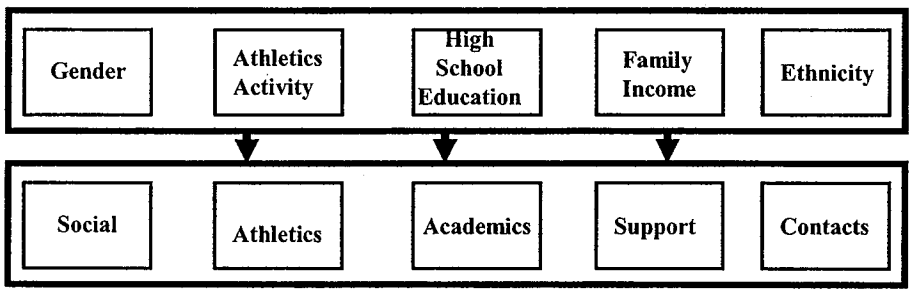
## Eventual BA Degree, College GPA, and Family Income



# Prediction of Academic Success

- The SCORE data were used to better understand the variation in measures of academic success from the HS variables ($R^2$% from linear/logistic regression).
- *College GPA* (25%) – significantly higher grades for higher HSCGPA and ACT/SAT and for females, Whites, non-Div I, and non-revenue SA.
- *Dropout* (20%) – significantly higher chance for lower college GPA, HSCGPA, ACT/SAT, and HS units.
- *Transfer* (8%) – significantly higher chance for lower ACT/SAT, college GPA, HSCGPA, and Division I.
- *BA Degree* (20%) – significantly higher chance for higher college GPA, HSCGPA, and ACT/SAT. College dropout typically precludes the BA degree (46%).

# The Measurements in SCORE



## In-College Reports #1

- The SCORE items were used to create composite measures of in-college success. All scores range from +3 (most positive) to -3 (most negative):
- *Coach/Advising* (3 items) – Average above +1 indicates overall "somewhat positive influences of coaches."
- *Athletic Participation* (7 items) – Average of +2 indicates overall "positive influences of athletics."
- 
- *Athlete vs Student* (5 items) – Average above 0 indicates overall wide-spread of responses.
- *Athletic Time* (5 items) – Average above 0 indicates overall wide-spread of responses.

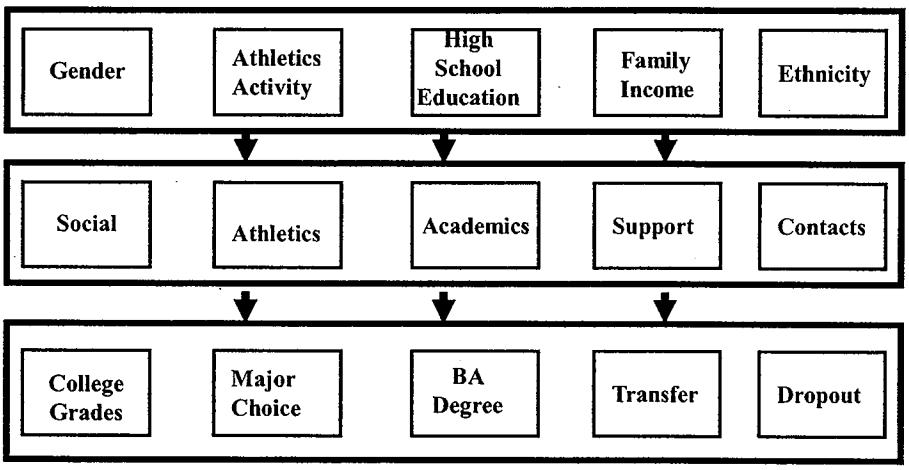
## In-College Reports #2

- The SCORE items were used to create composite measures of in-college success. All scores range from +3 (most positive) to -3 (most negative):
- *Academic Effort* (4 items) – Average above +1 indicates overall "somewhat positive academic effort."
- *BA Degree Goals* (6 items) – Average of +2 indicates overall "BA is an important goal."
- *Social Support* (7 items) – Average above +1 indicates overall "somewhat positive support."
- *Major Choice* (1 item) – Average above +2 indicates overall "satisfaction with choice of major."

## Table 2: Impacts (z) of Pre-College Variables on In-College Reports (N=8,277)

| Pre-College Variables | Athletic Identity $R^2$= .15 | Academic Effort $R^2$= .04 | BA as a Goal $R^2$= .06 | Satisfied Major $R^2$= .02 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender (F) | -6 | +4 | +11 | 0 |
| Ethnicity (W) | +8 | -6 | 0 | 0 |
| Fam.Income | 0 | 0 | +4 | +3 |
| Division (I) | +16 | -4 | +9 | -4 |
| Revenue (Y) | +7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| HS GPA | -16 | +14 | +5 | +6 |
| ACTSAT | -8 | -3 | +7 | +4 |
| HS Units | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

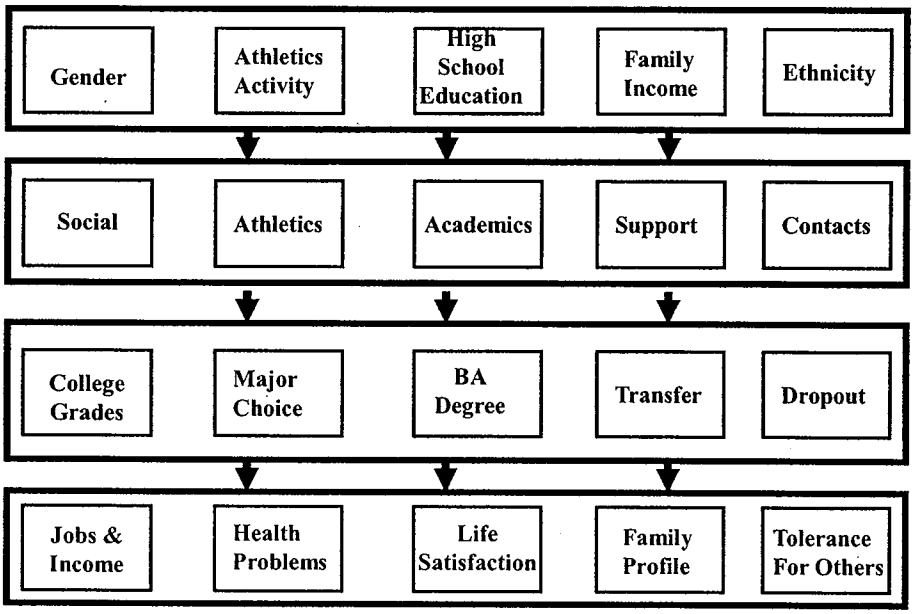
## The Measurements in SCORE



## Table 4: Additional Impacts (z) of In-College Variables on Academic Success

| Pre-College + In-College Variables | College GPA $R^2$= .41 | Not Ever Dropout $R^2$= .28 | Not Ever Transfer $R^2$= .13 | Eventual BA Degree $R^2$= .27/.47 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coaches | -2 | 0 | 0 | -4 |
| Pos. Particip. | 0 | +7 | +4 | +4 |
| Athletic ID | -2 | -5 | -6 | -3 |
| Athletic Time | +2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Acad. Efforts | +5 | +7 | +3 | +7 |
| BA Goals | 0 | +10 | +10 | +10 |
| Pos. Support | 0 | +4 | 0 | +4 |
| Pos. Major | +2 | 0 | 0 | +3 |

## The Practical Measurements in SCORE



# Later-Life Post-College Reports

- The SCORE items were used to create composite measures of post-college success. All scores range from in different ways for different indices:
- *Work and Income* (2 items) – >90% SA with full time jobs with average >$53k in past year indicating an overall "reasonable level of current income."
- *Life Satisfaction* (8 items) – Average of +2 indicates overall "positive satisfaction with current life."
- *Health Problems* (8 items) – Average of 6% of "days with health problems" indicates relatively low frequency of common health problems.
- *Athletics on Health* (1 items) – Average of +2 indicates overall "positive influence of athletic on current physical health."

## Table 4a: Impacts (z) of Pre-College Variables on Later-Life Success (N=8,277)

| Pre-College Variables | Current Income $R^2$= .12 | **Life Satisfaction $R^2$= .23** | No Health Problems $R^2$= .06 | Athletics As Positive $R^2$= .18 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender (F) | -21 | **0** | -8 | 0 |
| Ethnicity (W) | +7 | **+14** | 0 | -5 |
| Fam.Income | +12 | **+4** | 0 | 0 |
| Division (I) | +3 | **0** | +3 | -7 |
| Revenue (Y) | +3 | **0** | 0 | 0 |
| HS GPA | 0 | **0** | 0 | 0 |
| ACTSAT | +8 | **0** | 0 | 0 |
| HS Units | 0 | **0** | 0 | 0 |

## Table 5b: Additional Impacts (z) of In-College Variables on Later-Life Success

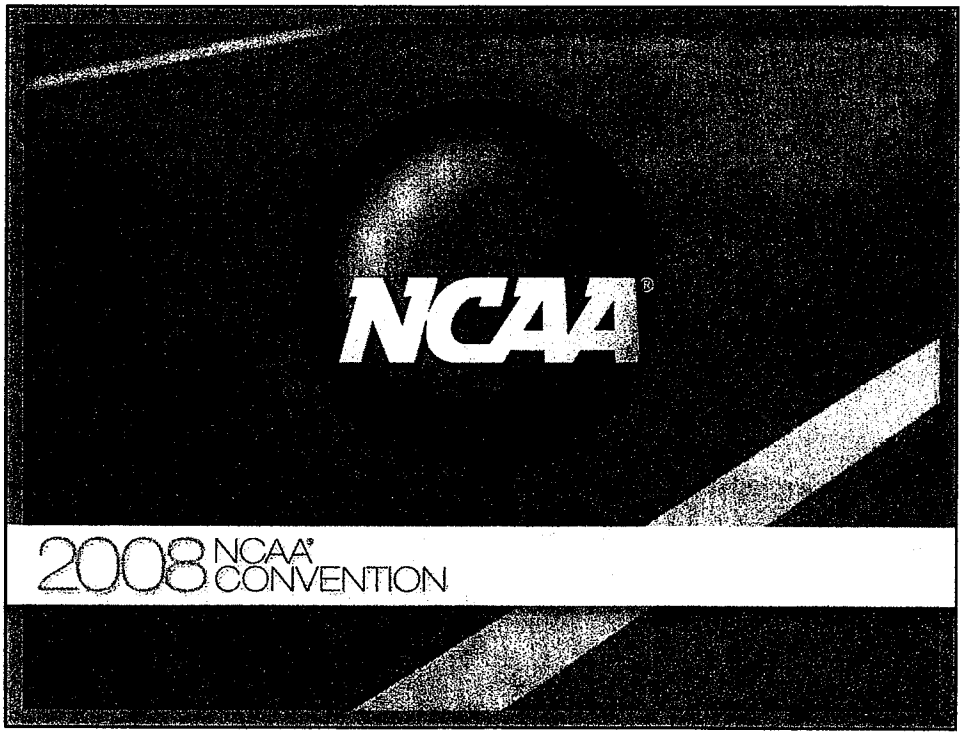
| Pre-College + In-College Variables | Current Income $R^2$= .12 | Life Satisfaction $R^2$= .23 | No Health Problems $R^2$= .06 | Athletics Positive $R^2$= .18 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coaches | -4 | +3 | 0 | +10 |
| Pos. Particip. | +6 | +7 | +5 | +19 |
| Athletic ID | 0 | 0 | -6 | 0 |
| Athletic Time | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Acad. Efforts | 0 | +9 | +4 | +2 |
| BA Goals | +3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pos. Support | 0 | +11 | +3 | +4 |
| Pos. Major | +8 | +22 | +7 | +5 |

## Table 5c: Additional Impacts (z) of Post-College Variables on Later-Life Success

| Pre-College + In-College + Academic Success | Current Income $R^2$= .12 | Life Satisfaction $R^2$= .24 | No Health Problems $R^2$= .06 | Athletics Positive $R^2$= .18 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| College GPA | +3 | 0 | +3 | 0 |
| Transfer/ Dropout | -6 | -4 | 0 | 0 |
| BA Degree | +3 | +5 | 0 | 0 |

# Summary & Conclusions

- The SCORE items can be used to create composite measures of pre-college characteristics, in-college integration, college academic success, and later-life outcomes.
- *Pre-College Variables* – The SCORE sample is positively biased but the use of IEC/APC data allow adjustments to create a more representative dataset.
- *In-College Variables* – The SCORE survey includes many items representing the in-college integration of SA, and these improve the prediction of later outcomes.
- *Academic Success in College* – SCORE is unique in tracing student's academic career past the first college. The indices show strong academic success, and the variation can be understood in terms of pre-college and in-college variables.
- *Later-Life Outcomes* – SCORE is unique in tracing student's life-outcomes for 10 years after starting their first college. These outcomes can be better understood by including all pre-college, in-college, and academic success.



# Academic Impact of Competition before and during Final Exams

## Introduction

The Oversight and Monitoring Group (OMG) produced a report on July, 12th 2007 stating that the NCAA needs to increase their efforts to work collaboratively with other higher education associations and faculty. Specifically OMG stated that "athletics needs to serve the educational mission of the institution." One of the faculty associations is the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) which is comprised of faculty at 55 D1-A NCAA member institutions. On June 15th, 2007 COIA produced a report outlining what they felt was wrong within intercollegiate athletics. Within this report was a statement that "at times athletics clashes with the educational goals and mission of our institutions."

Based on the NCAA's review of this report there have been a few specific areas that the NCAA has decided to investigate more in-depth. Article 2.2 of the COIA report specifically pointed out as being something that the NCAA could affect through policy changes. Article 2.2 deals with the competition and practice scheduling of student-athletes. It is important to understand the possible impacts of scheduling competitions during intense academic sessions. Thus, the NCAA intern group and research staff compiled data on the competition schedules of Division I teams two weeks prior to and during final exams.

## Study Methodology

The NCAA interns and the NCAA research staff worked to determine the 2006 final exam schedules at each college or university with Division I sports. The number of games played and one-way distances traveled two-weeks before and during final exam periods were recorded. Also, conference level documented policies on competing prior to or during final

exam periods were also collected, which were split into three groups: no policy, standard policy, and strict policy. Only a subset of sports was examined due to the difficulties inherent in compiling historic scheduling information in certain sports. The sports that were included in the analysis were men's baseball, basketball, ice hockey, football, and women's softball, basketball, and ice hockey. There were thirty nine sport conferences represented in the data. The resultant cohort was quite similar to the overall student-athlete population. The cohort had slightly lower APR scores (952), high school grade point averages (3.20), and high school test scores (1012) compared to the national average (960, 3.37, 1066, respectively).

**Results**

**I. Two-thirds of Conferences have No Policy related to Competition Prior to and During Final Exam Periods**

An examination of conference policies indicated that only 13 out of 33 conferences have documented policies regarding teams competing prior to or during final exam periods. Note that no policy data was collected on six conferences because they were single sport conferences only. Nine conferences had at least one documented standard policy related to competition during this time period. A standard policy was defined as a policy with language that permitted the possibility of competing during this time period. Three conferences had strict policies that used strong language banning competitions during this time period. Schools were split into three groups based on type of conference policy, and we found that teams with a strict policy played fewer games during finals week than those with a standard or no policy. There were no

differences in number of games played during finals week found between schools with a standard policy and schools with no policy.

## II. Low Resource Schools and HBCUs More Likely to be a part of a Conference with No Policy

Some differences were found in the characteristics of schools as a function of conference policy presence. Of lower resource teams (N=153), 83% of them were a part of a conference with no policy in contrast with 66% of higher resourced teams (N=1310). Twelve percent of teams at higher resourced schools were part of a conference with a strict policy. However, no low resource teams were part of a conference with a strict policy.

A similar pattern emerged for HBCUs (N=103 teams). No HBCU was part of a conference with a policy on competing prior to or during final exam periods. Also, a higher percentage of FBS schools (23%) were part of a conference with a strict policy compared to FCS (10%) and Division I non-football (0%) schools.

## III. Many Teams Still Competing during Final Exam Periods

Nearly all teams, except for men's football, participated in relatively full schedules in the two weeks prior to their respective final exam periods. Overall, the data suggest that most teams cut their travel and competition schedules for exam periods. However, there were still a number of teams competing during final exam periods (see Table 1). A majority of men's baseball (71%) and women's softball (58%) teams are still competing during finals week. Also, close to 50% of men's basketball teams are still competing during this critical time period, along with almost

40% of women's basketball teams. A very similar pattern emerged for schools on a quarter academic calendar.

Table 1. Percentage of semester teams competing 2 weeks before and during final exam periods

| | Men's Baseball (spring) | Men's Basketball (fall) | Men's Ice Hockey (fall) | Men's Football (fall) | Women's Softball (spring) | Women's Basketball (fall) | Women's Ice Hockey (fall) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| % of teams competing 2 weeks before exam period | 99% | 100% | 100% | 30% | 100% | 100% | 97% |
| % of teams competing during exam period | 71% | 47% | 28% | 1% | 58% | 39% | 3% |

## IV. Schools in Low Resource Conferences tend to Play More Games and Travel Farther Distances

When examining the teams with the most games played two weeks before and during finals, there is an overrepresentation of low resource schools in some sports. The same pattern is found in the farthest distances traveled during those time periods (See Table 2).

Table 2. Percentage of Low Resource Teams Games Played and Distances Traveled

| Sport | Games 2 weeks before | Games during finals | Distance 2 weeks before | Distance during finals |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baseball | 15% | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| Men's Basketball | 5% | 25% | 15% | 35% |
| Football | 20% | 20% | 10% | N/A |
| Women's Basketball | 5% | 15% | 10% | 35% |
| Softball | 5% | 15% | 5% | 0% |

Note. % for games and distances traveled based on top 20 teams in each category

As can be seen from the table, all sport groups except baseball show an over representation of low resource schools for games played during final exams. Baseball is probably not showing the same pattern because 71% of the teams overall are still playing during finals week. Men's and women's basketball both show an even greater overrepresentation of low resource schools for travel during finals. For example, only 5% of the men's basketball teams playing two weeks before finals week are from lower resourced schools. However, during finals week, 25% of the men's basketball teams are from lower resourced schools. These discrepancies show that teams from lower resourced schools tend to compete more during final exam periods than those from higher resourced schools.

## V. No Major Impact of Competing Two Weeks before and during Final Exams on Team-Level Academic Outcomes

We were interested in examining whether the number of games that teams played and the distances they traveled for those games prior to and during final exam periods were related to academic outcomes, such as team GPA and APR. Initial analyses indicated that after controlling

for high school GPA and institutional resource level, no relationship was found between the number of games played or distances traveled and team-level GPA or APR.

Also, we were interested in whether conference policy related to team-level academic outcomes. After controlling for high school GPA and institutional resource level, there was again no relationship between policy and team-level GPA or APR. These results are not surprising, however. That is, we did not expect any strong global effect because there are so many factors that go into students' academic success. Nevertheless, competing during this time period could be a significant risk factor for borderline students, but team-level outcomes are not sensitive enough measures to assess the outcome for at-risk student-athletes.

**Conclusions**

The careful balance between academics and athletics is at the forefront of the Association's policy decisions. However, many people inside and outside of college athletics believe that this balance is not being regulated carefully enough. The Oversight and Monitoring Group wrote that sometimes athletics "clashes with the educational goals" of the membership. Competition during final exam periods is one example of the possible mismatch between athletic and academic goals.

Although research at the team level does not indicate any negative academic impact of competition or traveling during these intense academic sessions, the overrepresentation of low resource schools among those traveling during exam periods is troubling. More low resource schools than expected are playing more games and traveling the longest distance during final

exam periods. In fact, low resource institutions are more likely to have no policy controlling competition during these time periods than other institutions. With the already large academic discrepancy between low resource and other institutions, adding another burden to the student-athletes attending low resource institutions could have negative consequences. Further research at the individual level would provide more clarity on the potential impact of competition and travel on specific sub-groups of student-athletes, such as those with lower academic preparation.

November 30, 2008

Dr. Carolyn Callahan, Chair
Division I Academic Cabinet
National Collegiate Athletic Association

Dear Dr. Callahan,

We are writing in order to draw the attention of the Division I Academic Cabinet to a problem that has troubled each of us for as long as we have been Faculty Athletics Representatives and for which we have found no effective resolution. It concerns the "good academic standing" rules, and the problem has two dimensions: (1) these rules are not currently being enforced as they are written, and they are applied by different institutions in different ways; and (2) the confusion over how the rules should be applied has resulted in a significant competitive advantage for some institutions. It takes a little bit of time to explain the problem, and we beg your indulgence in bearing with us through to the end of this memo.

I. The Rules

The NCAA has several bylaws that specify that a student must be in "good academic standing" in order to be eligible to compete. Perhaps the clearest is 14.4.3.3:

> **14.4.3.3 Fulfillment of Minimum Grade-Point Average Requirements**. A student-athlete shall meet the "satisfactory completion" provision of this requirement by maintaining a grade-point average that places the individual in good academic standing, as established by the institution for all students who are at an equivalent stage of progress toward a degree.

Two other rules phrase the same requirement slightly differently:

> **14.01.2.1 Good Academic Standing.** To be eligible to represent an institution in intercollegiate athletics competition, a student-athlete shall be in good academic standing as determined by the academic authorities who determine the meaning of such phrases for all students of the institution, subject to controlling legislation of the conference(s) or similar association of which the institution is a member.

> **14.02.5 Good Academic Standing and Progress Toward Degree.** The phrases "good academic standing" and "progress toward degree" are to be interpreted at each member institution by the academic officials who determine the meaning and application of such phrases for all students, subject to the controlling regulations of the institution; the conference(s) (or similar associations), if any, of which the institution is a member, and applicable NCAA legislation (see Bylaw 14.4).

And as evidence that the concept is still alive and well, the term was also included in the new rules for Baseball that became effective in August 2008:

> **14.01.2.1.1 Additional Application—Baseball.** In baseball, a student-athlete who fails to meet the requirements of good academic standing at the beginning of an institution's fall term shall not be eligible for competition during the remainder of the academic year.

Not every institution uses the term "good academic standing." Some use alternative terms, and some have no equivalent designation at all. But among the institutions that do use the term, for the vast majority it means either not on probation or suspension or having a specific minimum GPA, usually 2.0 but sometimes varying according to the number of credits completed.

Here are some real and typical examples, extracted from the catalogs of Division IA (FBS) institutions:

> An undergraduate student is considered by the University to be in good standing when his or her cumulative GPA is 2.0 or higher. An undergraduate student whose cumulative GPA is less than a 2.0 is placed on academic warning or academic probation, based on the student's class rank and the cumulative GPA.

> Students must maintain a cumulative QPA of at least 2.00 to be in good academic standing. At the end of each fall and spring term, the associate vice president for academic affairs reviews all students' records and notifies those students whose cumulative QPAs are below 2.00 that they are on probation for the next full term.

> **Academic Standing for Undergraduate Students**. Students are considered to be in good academic standing when they have a cumulative grade-point average of 2.00 or higher.

According to the bylaws that we have cited, each of these institutions would seem to be obliged to require a minimum GPA of 2.0 for eligibility to compete.

II. The Interpretation

In fact, none of these three institutions does require a 2.0 (and that's why we haven't identified them): they ignore their own definitions of "good academic standing" and instead set their minimum GPA for competition by using the 90-95-100% formula in bylaw 14.4.3.3.1. And we don't mean to single out these three schools alone. Based on our informal survey, it appears that about half of the schools that have clear definitions of "good academic standing" for undergraduates apply them strictly and in good faith in determining eligibility, and the other half do not.

The only justification for not applying their own definition (and the justification that is cited by the NCAA enforcement staff in not strictly enforcing the "good academic standing" rules) is provided by a 1995 interpretation that one may consult on the LSDBi:

> **Definition of Good Academic Standing:** The Academic Requirements Committee recommended that the Council issue an interpretation of Bylaws 14.01.1 and 14.02.5 to specify that the definition of good academic standing applied to student-athletes shall be a standard at least as demanding as the minimum standard applied to all students in order to participate in extracurricular activities at that institution.
>
> It was VOTED
>
> "That the Council issue an interpretation consistent with the committee's recommendation."

We haven't found anyone who was able to give us any insight into the history of this interpretation, but simply reading it closely, it appears to have been an attempt to define the minimum GPA that would be acceptable in the interpretation of "good academic standing." Perhaps the committee that made the proposal had in mind the schools that don't actually use the term "good academic standing" at all. In that case, the minimum would be the same as that used to determine eligibility to participate in such activities as the band and intramural or club sports. Looking at it from the Council's point of view, it is difficult to believe that they thought that in approving this recommendation, they were in any way *lowering* the required standard.

But what has happened is that "shall be a standard *at least as demanding as*" has been taken to mean "*need not be any higher than.*" What was intended as a minimum has been turned into an acceptable maximum. It is as if the statement read "shall be a standard *only* as least as demanding," but the *only* is not there. One of our own schools, upon requesting an interpretation from the NCAA Membership Services staff, was told that since we did not have a minimum GPA requirement for participation in such activities as the band, then we did not have to set an institutional minimum GPA requirement for eligibility to compete, no matter how we defined "good academic standing" for undergraduates generally. And this is what has apparently happened nationwide. Schools have been told that they can ignore their own definition of "good academic standing" and substitute the minimum GPA requirement for participation in extracurricular activities instead, even if it's lower.

While it may be necessary to go back and take a closer look, both at precisely what it does say and at what it doesn't, we are sure that you will agree that this is a misreading of the interpretation. "*At least as demanding as*" means that the GPA used to determine good academic standing *must be at least as high as* the GPA used to determine eligibility to participate in such activities as the band. It does not mean that it *need not be any higher* than that standard. The interpretation therefore provides no basis for ignoring an institution's clearly stated definition of good academic standing.

But that is where we are. The plain English meaning of at least four NCAA bylaws is being ignored on the basis of a misreading of the plain English meaning of an interpretation. The situation is an affront to the whole process of compliance and rules enforcement. It is particularly troubling for its effect upon our expectation of a level playing field. A great many schools, not realizing that the bylaws can be read in any

other way, have simply applied them in good faith, to their own disadvantage when they come up against teams with a different and more generous understanding of eligibility.

When we have discussed this with the NCAA staff, the only real response that we have gotten is that "good academic standing" is a matter for institutions to decide. That is of course correct. The staff does not seem to understand, however, that the minimum GPA for participation in the band might be different from the minimum GPA for "good academic standing," and therefore they automatically equate the two. In our experience, these are quite different at a great many schools, and under the bylaws, the standard for "good academic standing" is the one that must apply.

In looking for a resolution to this confusion, we certainly do not recommend that students who have been deemed eligible even though they did not meet their institution's definition of "good academic standing" should now be declared ineligible and that a large number of games should now be forfeited. But we do ask the Cabinet to consider these alternatives for the future:

- eliminating all reference to "good academic standing" from the bylaws;
- replacing all references to "good academic standing" with language specifying that in order to compete, student-athletes must meet the same minimum GPA as is required by their institution for participation in other extracurricular activities (the NCAA staff's current interpretation of the "good academic standing" rules); or
- returning to the plain English meaning of both the bylaws and the interpretation, and informing the staff and the member institutions that in order to be eligible to compete, a student-athlete must have a GPA that is sufficient to meet the institution's definition of "good academic standing," and that this standard must be at least as high as that required by the institution for participation in other extracurricular activities, but if the institution has so decided, it can, and in fact it must, be higher.

We thank you sincerely for your attention.

Peter Nicholson
Faculty Athletics Representative
University of Hawai`i at Mānoa

David Clough
Faculty Athletics Representative
University of Colorado

MINUTES OF THE

1A FACULTY ATHLETICS REPRESENTATIVES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

NCAA National Office
Indianapolis, Indiana

May 9-10, 2008

Participants:

Percy Bates, University of Michigan
Peter Nicholson, University of Hawaii, Manoa
Joe Potuto, University of Nebraska
William Smith, University of Utah
Bob Chichester, NCAA
Ted Breidenthal, Sports Association Management, Inc.

Susan Lipnicky, University of Miami (Ohio) attended the meeting and was the conference representative on behalf of Jan Rintala.

Committee members Susan Albrecht, University of Pittsburgh; Roger Caves, San Diego State University; Jack Evans, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Joe Hornsby, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa; Ken Kasavant, Washington State University; Bill McKee, University of North Texas; Jan Rintala, Northern Illinois University; and C. Paul Rogers III, Southern Methodist University, were not able to attend.

Friday, May 9, 2008

1. Opening Remarks. The meeting was called to order at 1 p.m. by Dr. Bates, University of Michigan, president of the Association. All members were present as noted above.

2. Discussion of COIA's National Meeting. The Executive Committee focused its discussion on COIA's announcement that it intends to develop a national ranking system of academic performance by NCAA member institutions. It expressed concern regarding the criteria that will be used to determine the ranking and the overall evaluation process.

3. Discussion of the Good Academic Standing Rules. There was a lengthy discussion on how the NCAA defines "good academic standing" in various NCAA Bylaws (14.4.3.3, 14.01.2.1, 14.02.5, 14.01.2.1.1). It was noted that a large number of institutions that do use the term "good academic standing" (perhaps as many as one-half) apply the relevant bylaws strictly and in good faith. Thus, students who are on probation or who have less than a 2.0 are not eligible to compete. However, it was stated that a large number of the schools that use the term do not refer to the "good academic standing" rules in determining eligibility. Instead, these schools refer to an interpretation of Bylaws 14.01.1 and 14.02.5 to specify that the definition of good academic standing applied to student-athletes shall be a standard "*at least as demanding* as the minimum standard applied to all students in order to participate in extracurricular activities at that institution." Mr. Chichester contacted Julie Cromer, NCAA director of legislative services, who confirmed that this item has been added to the agenda for the newly formed Academic Cabinet.

4. Update on 1A FAR Bylaws. Dr. Bates asked that Mr. Breidenthal provide a written update of the 1A FAR bylaw issues that are left to be resolved from the January 2008 meeting. It was noted that an election to seat a vice president and a treasurer is of paramount importance. Also, the conference rotation on the Executive Committee needs to be addressed.

5. Agenda Items for the September 28-30 1A FAR Meeting.

   a. The tentative agenda for Sunday, September 28, is as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 9 – 10:30 a.m. | APR Discussion |
| 10:30 a.m. – Noon | Discussion of the Basketball Enhancement Committee recommendations |
| 1 – 2:30 p.m. | How to nominate your student-athletes for NCAA scholarships and awards (e.g., Walter Byers Scholarship; post-graduate scholarships; Woman of the Year) |
| 2:30 – 5 p.m. | 1A FAR Business Meeting |

   b. The tentative agenda for Monday, September 29, is as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 – 3 p.m. | The FAR role in dealing with crisis on campus (joint session with athletics directors) |

[The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.]

Saturday, May 10

The meeting was called to order at 8 a.m. by the president, Dr. Bates.

6. Discussion of What the Ideal 1A FAR Association Would Look Like in Five Years. Dr. Bates led the Executive Committee in a discussion about what the ideal 1A FAR Association would look like in the next five years. A number of identifiable goals were discussed, including the following:

   a. The NCAA would contact the 1A FARs first for counsel as it relates to academic issues within athletics;

   b. Key media would contact the president of the 1A FARs to seek comment when needed;

   c. The 1A FAR Executive Committee would be involved in all NCAA planning as it relates to academic reform and like issues;

   d. A broader, more involved partnership would be formed with the NCAA research staff to assist in studying and researching on-going academic issues;

   e. The Association would develop more policy papers and propose legislation, when appropriate;

   f. Regular, annual meetings would be scheduled to discuss academic issues with presidents;

   g. More assistance would be provided to assist in getting FARs more involved on campus;

   h. Clearly define the key issues, articulate them and be in a position to act quickly;

   i. Ensure that faculty are an integral part of all academic reform solutions;

   j. Identify key issues, present the range of arguments, develop three to four components that are necessary and critical to a solution, and allow presidents the freedom to put it together;

   k. Develop a partnership with and a special interest group (SIG) for FARs within the American Education Research Association (AERA);

   l. 1A FARs would take a leadership role in interpreting data that is generated from APR studies;

m. Develop a large sample of successful APR improvement plans to share with and educate other 1A FARs; and

n. Assist the NCAA national office staff with "Shaping the Future of APR."

7. Other Business.

a. Mr. Breidenthal agreed to call all 1A FARs to promote attendance at the annual meeting in September and to solicit interest to serve on one of four new committees to be developed this summer. The new committees are research, academic reform, legislation and membership/media relations.

b. The executive committee applauded the efforts and commitment of Dr. Nicholson, who traveled from Hawaii to attend the meeting.

8. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 10 a.m.

# # # # #

# Good Academic Standing

## Background

The NCAA's good academic standing bylaws establish that member institutions are responsible for enforcing their own policies and standards for good academic standing. These bylaws have not been reviewed by a legislative body in a significant amount of time. The most recent interpretive guidance regarding the "good academic standing" bylaws was provided August 9, 1995. The interpretation states that the good academic standing policies of an institution should be similar to the minimum standard used for all students in order to participate in extracurricular activities at that institution. Please refer to Appendix A for all current legislation and interpretations relating to good academic standing.

## Points to Consider

There are several points to consider regarding NCAA legislation, NCAA interpretations, and the comments from the 1A Faculty Athletic Representatives. Among them:

1. Is it within the appropriate authority of the NCAA to interpret and enforce an institution's policies and procedures?

2. How many member institutions document a "good academic standing" policy for all students in order to participate in extracurricular activities?

3. How can information on the application of "good academic standing" legislation be gathered reasonably? Could Academic Progress Rate data reviews be an avenue to collect such data?

4. Could this issue be addressed at the conference level through compliance reviews and surveys?

5. Should the documentation of "good academic standing" policies and procedures be recommended to the NCAA Division I Committee on Athletics Certification as a point of emphasis for the self-study process?

6. Since the enhancement of the legislation for progress-towards-degree certification, are "good academic standing" bylaws necessary? In some cases conference and/or NCAA eligibility rules already are more restrictive than good academic standing policies on campuses.

**Summary**

The application of the "good academic standing" bylaws has not been formally reviewed recently by an NCAA committee or subcommittee. Previously, the NCAA has found it appropriate to defer to its member institutions in matters of institutional policy. It would be a clear philosophical change for the NCAA to interpret and enforce institutional standards and policies. The question should be raised: should a national body have the power to define and enforce a local policy? If necessary, there appear to be many other avenues by which the NCAA can respond to this issue effectively. APR data reviews, conference surveys, and institutional review via the athletics certification process all can provide valuable information on the ways institutions apply good academic standing policies on their campuses.

**APPENDIX**

Current Legislation

The following are existing bylaws, followed by the interpretation that references the current legislation.

## 1. General Principles

### a. Bylaw 14.01.2 Academic Status.

To be eligible to represent an institution in intercollegiate athletics competition, a student-athlete shall be enrolled in at least a minimum full-time program of studies, be in good academic standing and maintain progress toward a baccalaureate or equivalent degree. *(Revised: 5/29/08)*

### b. Bylaw 14.01.2.1 Good Academic Standing.

To be eligible to represent an institution in intercollegiate athletics competition, a student-athlete shall be in good academic standing as determined by the academic authorities who determine the meaning of such phrases for all students of the institution, subject to controlling legislation of the conference(s) or similar association of which the institution is a member. *(Revised: 5/29/08)*

### c. Bylaw 14.01.2.1.1 Additional Application –Baseball.

In baseball, a student-athlete who fails to meet the requirements of good academic standing at the beginning of an institution's fall term shall not be eligible for competition during the remainder of the academic year. *(Adopted: 4/26/07 effective 8/1/08)*

## 2. Definitions and Applications

### Bylaw 14.02.5/6 Good Academic Standing and Progress Toward Degree.

The phrases "good academic standing" and "progress toward degree" are to be interpreted at each member institution by the academic officials who determine the meaning and application of such phrases for all students, subject to the controlling regulations of the institution; the conference(s) (or similar associations), if any, of which the institution is a member, and applicable NCAA legislation (see Bylaw 14.4).

**3. Progress-Toward-Degree Requirements**

**Bylaw 14.4.3.3 Fulfillment of Minimum Grade-Point Average Requirements.**

A student-athlete shall meet the "satisfactory completion" provision of this requirement by maintaining a grade-point average that places the individual in good academic standing, as established by the institution for all students who are at an equivalent stage of progress toward a degree.

**4. Current Interpretation.**

Definition of Good Academic Standing
**Date Issued:** August 9, 1995
**Date Published:**
**Type:** Official Interpretation
**Item Ref:** 5-n-(5)
**Interpretation:**
Definition of Good Academic Standing: The Academic Requirements Committee recommended that the Council issue an interpretation of Bylaws 14.01.1 and 14.02.5 to specify that the definition of good academic standing applied to student-athletes shall be a standard at least as demanding as the minimum standard applied to all students in order to participate in extracurricular activities at that institution.

It was VOTED

"That the Council issue an interpretation consistent with the committee's recommendation."

# REPORT OF THE NCAA FOREIGN STUDENT RECORDS COMMITTEE OCTOBER 2-3, 2008 MEETING

***ACTION ITEMS*.**

**1. Legislative Items.**

- **Composition of the NCAA Foreign Student Records Committee.**

(1) Recommendation. The NCAA Foreign Student Records Committee recommends the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet sponsor noncontroversial legislation as follows:

(a) To reduce the number of Division I representatives from three to two;

(b) To reduce the number of Division II representatives from three to two; and

(c) To create two positions who can be from either Division I or II.

(2) Effective Date. Immediate.

(3) Rationale. The current committee consists of three NCAA Division I representatives, three NCAA Division II representative and two ex-officio members. As vacancies become available, it has become increasingly difficult to identify individuals from each division who possess extensive knowledge in the area of foreign educational systems and credential evaluation. With this change, the committee intends to alleviate some challenges if there are qualified Division I representatives but the opening is a Division II position and vice versa. It is important to note that this proposal does not create new committee positions and the number of ex-officio members will remain at two.

(4) Estimated Budget Impact. None.

(5) Student-Athlete Impact. None.

**2. Nonlegislative Items.**

- None.

***INFORMATIONAL ITEMS*.**

1. **Grading Scale Changes.** The committee reviewed and approved grading scale additions to Denmark and Latvia.

2. **Germany and Initial-Eligibility Certification Methodology for the *Abitur* (Certificate of General Higher Educational Maturity).** The committee amended the current methodology used for initial-eligibility certification for prospective student-athletes from Germany who present the *Abitur*. The committee determined that all core courses from grades 12 and 13 that appear on the *Abitur*, including leaving exams marks are to be used in the core-course grade-point average calculation. This change is effective for prospective student-athletes enrolling at an NCAA Division I or II institution on or after August 1, 2009. However, the former and the current methodology may be used for prospective student-athletes enrolling for the 2009 spring term to the prospective student-athlete's benefit. However, the new methodology will be effective for all prospective student-athletes enrolling for the 2009 fall term.

3. **United Kingdom and the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC).** The committee determined that effective with prospective student-athletes enrolling on or after August 1, 2010, all BTEC coursework would be considered a category three document and will not advance a prospective student-athlete's high school graduation date even if he or she advances in the structure within the prescribed timeframe. This change is warranted since very few courses offered through BTEC meet the NCAA definition of core course and can be used to meet initial-eligibility requirements. The committee agreed that this information should be reflected in the guide and notification be provided to the membership. Finally, the only acceptable prescribed educational path would be the academic path (e.g., AS-level and A-level coursework) for prospective student-athletes from the United Kingdom.

4. **United Kingdom and the Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE).** The committee was asked to determine if the new VCE structure correlates to the former GNVQ structure and can the achievement of VCE work in the prescribed timeframe advance a prospective student-athlete's high school graduation date. The committee determined that the VCE is a category three document and will not advance a prospective student-athlete's high school graduation date even if he or she advances in the structure within the prescribed timeframe.

5. **Lithuania.** The committee determined that only marks from the high school graduation exams that appear on the *Brandos Atestatas* (maturity certificate) are to be used to

calculate a prospective student-athlete's core-course grade-point average. The committee determined that marks from the state exams should not be used in the calculation of the core-course grade-point average.

**6. Draft of Committee's Policies and Procedures Document.** The committee reviewed a preliminary draft of its policies and procedures which is intended to define the committee's duties, expectations and procedures. The draft will be sent to committee members for their review and feedback and will be approved at the committee's 2009 spring meeting.

*Committee Chair: Robert Watkins, University of Texas at Austin*
*Staff Liaisons: A. Frank Arredondo, Membership Services*
*Binh Nguyen, Membership Services*
*Jobrina Perez, Membership Services*

# Core-Course Appeals Process
## - Discussion Document -

**Background.**

The NCAA Core-Course Review Committee was established in 1997 to assist in the development of policies related to the identification of high school core courses. The committee was composed of five subcommittees: English, mathematics, science, social science and additional. These subcommittees, in their respective academic disciplines, reviewed courses that were denied by the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse.

In 1999, the size of the committee was increased from 18 to 20 to provide additional support in the review of core-course appeals. In 2001, however, the size of the committee was reduced from 20 members to 15 members due to the significant drop-off in the number of cases forwarded to the committee. The drop in cases was directly related to the change in core-course legislation, which decreased the need for the additional review. It was noted during that transition that maintaining high school representation, as well as a balance of divisional membership on the committee was a necessity.

By 2004, the reduction in the number of core-course appeals sent to the committee was so significant, the committee was eliminated altogether. Since that time, all subsequent core-course matters have been handled by the NCAA Core-Course Ad Hoc Committee, made up of three members of the former NCAA Division I Academics/Eligibility/Compliance Cabinet Subcommittee on Initial-Eligibility Issues and three members of the NCAA Division II Academic Requirements Committee; it handles only about five or six cases a year. This is not a legislated committee, but through policy and practice has performed the noted duties.

**Issue.**

Given the legislated role of the NCAA High School Review Committee, it may be appropriate for core-course appeals and issues to fall under its purview. The committee discussed this concept during its August meeting. [Attachment, Item No. 5]

**Points to Consider.**

- Within the NCAA governance structure, the High School Review Committee is uniquely positioned to serve as the authority on core-course-related issues, given the collective experience of the committee's members regarding issues and trends in today's educational landscape. This committee includes four secondary school representatives, and at least one admissions officer among its nine members.

- Within the NCAA Eligibility Center, the core-course review staff and the high school review staff are part of the same department, and all departmental members do work in

both areas. Moving core-course appeals to the High School Review Committee provides continuity as well as additional opportunities for continuing education and collaboration.

- Members of the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet and Division II Academic Requirements Committee would be informed of core-course issues and trends through its regular report from the High School Review Committee. Additionally, the High School Review Committee includes one Academic Cabinet per NCAA Bylaw 21.6.4.1.

- There is a perception among some in the high school community that they do not have a "seat at the table" when it comes to NCAA legislation and policies that directly impact the students they serve. In addition to the expertise gained by placing core-course appeals under the stewardship of the High School Review Committee, such a transition provides an opportunity to demonstrate the contrary.

- Training would be required for those serving on the High School Review Committee regarding legislation, policies and procedures.

**Recommendation.**

Based on the High School Review Committee, Core-Course Ad Hoc Committee and staff review of this issue, it is recommended that the Core-Course Ad Hoc Committee be eliminated and the duties legislatively given to the High School Review Committee. A transition such as this allows for a more consistent and more effective core-course review process. This does not require a legislative change to Bylaw 21.6.4.2 (duties of the High School Records Committee). This action could be done by policy through cabinet action. Finally, this transition would provide an opportunity for the high school community to have a voice in the core-course review process.

**ATTACHMENT**
**SUPPLEMENT NO. 23**

# REPORT OF THE NCAA HIGH SCHOOL REVIEW COMMITTEE AUGUST 21-22, 2008, MEETING

***ACTION ITEM.***

- **Nonlegislative Items.**

  - **NCAA High School Review Committee Policies and Procedures.**

    (1) Recommendation. The committee recommends the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet and NCAA Division II Academic Requirements Committee approve the High School Review Committee Policies and Procedures. [Attachment]

    (2) Rationale. The committee notes the updated policies and procedures will help ensure efficiency and consistency in the processing of high school review cases. Additionally, it will serve as a resource for the NCAA staff, NCAA Eligibility Center staff, members of the committee and secondary schools regarding procedural issues that arise while processing high school review cases.

    (3) Effective Date. Immediate.

    (4) Budget Impact. None.

***INFORMATIONAL ITEMS.***

1. **Distance Learning Education.** The committee discussed distance learning education and its significant growth as a means for prospective student-athletes to meet NCAA initial-eligibility requirements. The Eligibility Center staff discussed the potential for abuse with online education. The committee considered establishing parameters for the staff to use when determining the validity of an online program or courses and/or recommending legislative changes to strengthen the nontraditional courses legislation. The committee asked the staff to collect data to supplement the online education discussion to assist the committee in determining what parameters would be appropriate regarding the use of online education programs or courses. In addition, the committee directed the staff to actively engage in outreach activities with relevant constituencies to share some of their observations and work within existing bodies to address the issue.

2. **Nontraditional Education.** The committee discussed nontraditional education including credit-recovery programs, tutoring programs and home school high schools. The Eligibility Center staff requested the committee establish policy regarding nontraditional education as a

means for prospective student-athletes to meet initial-eligibility requirements. As with online education, there is a potential for abuse within nontraditional education programs. The committee asked the staff to collect data to supplement the nontraditional education discussion to assist the committee in determining appropriate policy regarding the use of nontraditional education programs. In addition, the committee directed the staff to actively engage in outreach activities with relevant constituencies to share some of their observations and work within existing bodies to address the issue.

3. **Core-Course Submission Policy.** The committee reviewed a policy regarding a high school's use of a third-party provider to update the high school's list of NCAA-approved core courses. The committee made several revisions to the policy and asked the staff to update the policy and redistribute to the committee for additional comment and potential recommendation for approval by the Academic Cabinet.

4. **Update from NCAA Student Records Review Committee.** The committee received an update from Steve Clar, staff liaison to the Student Records Review Committee, regarding the work of the Student Records Review Committee**.** The committee discussed the importance of the Student Records Review Committee's work and the ties between the Student Records Review Committee and the work of the High School Review Committee.

5. **NCAA Core-Course Ad Hoc Committee.** The committee discussed the Core-Course Ad Hoc Committee and its charge to review the appeal of core courses submitted to the Eligibility Center by a high school. The committee discussed the importance of giving the secondary-school community a voice in the appeals process and noted its interest in examining the reassignment of core-course appeal responsibilities to the High School Review Committee. The committee asked the staff to seek feedback from Core-Course Ad Hoc Committee members to see if they would support such a move.

6. **High School Review Committee Composition.** The committee requested that the Academic Cabinet and the Academic Requirements Committee consider nominating faculty athletics representatives as their respective representatives to the High School Review Committee. The committee discussed the importance of having representation from the faculty in academic matters that affect student-athletes.

*Subcommittee Chair: Janet Constantinides, University of Wyoming*
*Staff Liaisons: Julie Cromer, Membership Services*
*Jennifer Lane, Membership Services*

**NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet**
**Communication Strategies**

| Group/Conference | Academic Cabinet Member | NCAA Staff Contact | Strategy Ideas |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Big Sky Conference** | TBD | | *Pre-meeting email with "key agenda items" bullet points and invitation to contact prior to meeting to provide input.<br><br>*Post-meeting email with "key take-aways" bullet points and invitation to contact after meeting for additional detail or context.<br><br>*NCAA staff host a "call-in" telephonic update after the cabinet meeting to provide updates.<br><br>*Periodic participation by cabinet reps in regularly scheduled teleconferences with conference compliance administrators, FARs, academic support administrators or others to discuss key agenda items. |
| **Big West Conference** | TBD | | |
| **Horizon League** | Anne Woodrick | | |
| **Ivy Group** | Annette O'Connor | | |
| **Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC)** | TBD | | |
| **New England Collegiate Conference (NEC)** | Barbara Church | | |
| **Southern Conference** | Mary Newton | | |
| **The Summit League** | Pete Carlon | | |
| **West Coast Conference (WCC)** | TBD | | |

| Group/Conference | Academic Cabinet Member | NCAA Staff Contact | Strategy Ideas |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1A FAR** | J. Patrick Dobel; and Ken White | Bob Chichester | *Provide cabinet updates via regular FAR bulletins (e.g., NCAA Academic Reform Bulletin, FARA Voice).<br><br>*Forward each Academic Cabinet report to be posted on organization's Web site or distributed via email list-serve.<br><br>*Representatives contact organization's president prior to each meeting to seek feedback regarding key agenda items. |
| **FARA** | Tom Adair; Kim Capriotti, and Rhonda Hatcher | Bob Chichester | |
| **COIA** | John Bruno | Julie Cromer | |
| **N4A** | Anna Taylor James; and Elaine Wise | John Shukie | *Provide cabinet updates via NCAA Academic Reform bulletins tailored to academic support personnel.<br><br>*Forward each Academic Cabinet report to be posted on organization's Web site or distributed via email list-serve.<br><br>*Representatives contact organization's president prior to each meeting to seek feedback regarding key agenda items.<br><br>*Staff members provide updates during meetings (e.g., annual convention, regional meetings). |
| **NAAC** | Loretta Lamar | Brad Hostetter | *Provide cabinet updates via NCAA Academic Reform bulletins tailored to compliance personnel.<br><br>*Representative contacts legislative/governance committee chair prior to each meeting to seek feedback regarding key agenda items. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **NACADA** | Jill Varnes | Matt Burgemeister | *Provide cabinet updates via NCAA Academic Reform bulletins tailored to academic support personnel.<br><br>*Forward each Academic Cabinet report to be posted on organization's Web site or distributed via email list-serve.<br><br>*Representative contacts chair of organization's Advising Student-Athletes Commission prior to each meeting to seek feedback regarding key agenda items.<br><br>*Staff members provide updates during meetings (e.g., annual convention, regional meetings). |
| **NACDA** | Pete Carlon; and Warde Manuel | Various NCAA Staff | *Provide cabinet updates via NCAA Academic Reform bulletins tailored to athletics administrators. |
| **1A ADs** | TBD | Various NCAA Staff | |
| **NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance** | Herman Holt, Jr. | Julie Cromer; and Diane Dickman | *Staff provides cabinet report and meeting highlights during each CAP meeting.<br><br>*Calls between committee representatives as need for "cross-over" items. |
| **Selected Coaches Groups** | David Dosser; and Nonie Wiggins | Various NCAA Staff | *Provide cabinet updates via NCAA Academic Reform bulletins tailored to athletics administrators.<br><br>*Contact organization executive directors prior to meetings during which relevant agenda items will be discussed. |
| **Two-Year College** | Warde Manuel | Beth DeBauche, Matt Burgemeister | *Staff updates during Two-Year College Relations Panel meetings. |

# Articles of Interest

Each meeting, cabinet members will receive a brief collection of media articles that have been published since the previous meeting. The articles are not necessarily associated with a particular agenda item and do not contain action items, but are simply intended to assist members track on issues relevant to the cabinet's work and jurisdiction.

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# College athletes cluster majors at most schools

By Jodi Upton and Kristen Novak, USA TODAY

When the NCAA adopted new rules in 2003 intended to improve graduation rates of athletes, critics countered that under pressure to keep athletes progressing toward a degree, schools might cut academic corners to help the athletes stay eligible to play.

Teams now can lose scholarships and access to postseason play if enough athletes are not on track to receive a degree or do not graduate.

But giving athletes a more meaningful academic experience also was part of the new rules' intent, NCAA president Myles Brand told USA TODAY for a story in 2003. However, Syracuse University athlete Dylan Malagrino, who had headed the NCAA Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, expressed concern that "coaches and academic administrators in the athletic department might be strongly encouraging students to take easier majors or to choose a major and never switch."

Graduation rates have improved as the rules have phased in over the past few years. Whether that has been due to students taking easier majors has not been studied.

To study the extent to which athletes disproportionately group in particular majors, USA TODAY chose five sports, selected to give a mix along gender, revenue-generating and seasonal lines: football, baseball, softball and men's and women's basketball. USA TODAY reviewed media guides and school websites at 142 schools — the 120 Football Bowl Subdivision (formerly Division I-A) schools and 22 Division I schools with standout basketball teams over the past few years, based on USA TODAY coaches' poll rankings. The result: a list of about 9,300 upperclass athletes on the team rosters during the 2007-08 school year.

Assisted by sports information and other school offices, USA TODAY obtained the majors for about 85% of the athletes in the study. For most of the rest, no major was listed. Primary or first-listed majors were used in the cases of students with multiple majors.

Initially, part of the intent was to compare the percentages of athletes in a major with those of the student body as a whole. That is, if 30% of baseball players are in sociology, is 30% of the entire student body enrolled in sociology? However, short of getting athletes' private records and the federal reporting code of each athlete's major, large-scale comparisons are unreliable because some schools have multiple versions of some majors.

The NCAA collects similar information, but does not release it and has no current plans to study it.

Prior research offered an alternative. Professor Robert Case, previously at Indiana University and now at Old Dominion's Sport Management Program, and other researchers have studied athletes' clustering on a smaller scale. Using probability testing for NCAA tournament basketball teams,

they have determined that if 25% or more of a team is in the same major, it constitutes a non-random cluster, regardless of the size of the team.

USA TODAY took it a step further: the 25% mark was used for larger teams (10 upperclassmen or more, with a minimum of five athletes in the major) and a 33% benchmark was used for smaller teams (between five and nine upperclass athletes, minimum: 3). Fifty-five of the 654 teams did not have enough juniors and seniors on the team to be considered.

Eighty-three percent of the schools had at least one cluster. One-third of schools had two or more teams clustering in the same major program.

A cluster isn't necessarily bad, says Walter Harrison, president of the University of Hartford and chairman of the NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance. In fact, two clusters were with softball players in rigorous biology programs, especially rare because lab demands can infringe on practice time.

In addition, 25% may be too low of a standard, Harrison says. But if 40% or 50% of a team has the same major, "those two would be significant thresholds in my opinion, especially in the larger squads." One-third of the 235 clusters included at least 50% of the students on the team with the same major, but no clear standard has been discussed, let alone adopted.

Monitoring the appropriateness of a major is an issue for the school's accrediting agency, not the NCAA, Harrison said.

Although clustering is common among Division I schools, it's still unclear if the clustering has increased since the NCAA rule change, making further studies necessary.

Among the other criteria used in the study:

**The class years:** For all teams, when an athlete's eligibility year and class year both were listed, the eligibility year was used. If an athlete had earned an undergraduate degree, the major for that degree was used. Only juniors and seniors by class-year or redshirt members of those classes were included as some schools do not allow students to declare a major before the beginning of their junior year. The NCAA requires athletes to declare a major before the beginning of their junior year.

**Athlete data:** For football teams, only players on scholarship were included, with the following exceptions for which all juniors and seniors on the roster were included:

• Schools that do not award athletic scholarships in football: Air Force, Army, Navy, Butler, Dayton, Drake, Georgetown and Princeton.

• Schools that can award partial athletic scholarships in football: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Southern Illinois and Villanova.

• Schools that declined to provide scholarship status: Boston College, Iowa, Maryland and Rutgers.

*Athlete data were collected by Steve Berkowitz, Patrick Bohn and Jill Lieber Steeg of USA TODAY. Andy Gardiner, Joan Murphy, A.J. Perez and Erick Smith also of USA TODAY helped check data. Professor Ellen Staurowsky and students Daniel Barton, Dan Bozzelli, Andre Harris, Jennifer Homa, Nori Weider, Meg Olenowski and Shannon Archer of Ithaca College also contributed data. Kristen Novak created the graphic.*

## College athletes studies guided toward 'major in eligibility'

By Jill Lieber Steeg, Jodi Upton, Patrick Bohn and Steve Berkowitz, USA TODAY

Steven Cline left Kansas State University last spring with memories of two years as a starting defensive lineman for a major-college football team. He left with a diploma, credits toward a master's degree and a place on the 2007 Big 12 Conference all-academic team.

He also left with regrets about accomplishing all of this by majoring in social sciences — a program that drew 34% of the football team's juniors and seniors last season, compared with about 4% of all juniors and seniors at Kansas State. Cline says he found not-so-demanding courses that helped him have success in the classroom and on the field but did little for his dream of becoming a veterinarian.

"I realize I just wasted all my efforts in high school and college to get a social science degree," says Cline, who adds he did poorly in biology as a freshman, then chose what an athletics academic adviser told him would be an easier path.

His experience reflects how the NCAA's toughening of academic requirements for athletes has helped create an environment in which they are more likely to graduate than other students — but also more likely to be clustered in programs without the academic demands most students face.

Some athletes say they have pursued — or have been steered to — degree programs that helped keep them eligible for sports but didn't prepare them for post-sports careers.

"A major in eligibility, with a minor in beating the system," says C. Keith Harrison, an associate professor at the University of Central Florida, where he is associate director of the Institute of Diversity and Ethics in Sports.

A USA TODAY study of the majors of juniors and seniors in five prominent sports at 142 of the NCAA's top-level schools shows athletes at many institutions clustering in certain majors, in some cases at rates highly disproportionate to those of all students.

The study involved the fall 2007 student rolls and the 2007-08 rosters for Division I teams in five sports — football, men's basketball, women's basketball, baseball and softball.

All 120 schools in the Football Bowl Subdivision (formerly Division I-A) were included, as were 22 other Division I schools with standout men's or women's basketball teams. Nearly 9,300 athletes across 654 teams were covered by the study. Among the findings:

•83% of the schools (118 of 142) had at least one team in which at least 25% of the juniors and seniors majored in the same thing. For example, seven of the 19 players on Stanford's baseball team majored in sociology.

•34% of the teams (222 of 654) had at least one such cluster of student-athletes.

•More than half of the clusters are what some analysts refer to as "extreme," in which at least 40% of athletes on a team are in the same major (125 of 235). All seven of the juniors and seniors on Texas-El Paso's men's basketball team majored in multidisciplinary studies, for example.

Education specialists say such clustering raises a range of potential problems, including academic fraud; certain majors and classes having dubious academic requirements; and coaches and athletics academic advisers inappropriately influencing students' decisions on majors and classes.

Clustering in relatively easy areas of study is one way athletes cope with the time demands they face from participating in sports, Cline and other athletes say. It also appears to be an unintended consequence of NCAA schools' decisions to make it easier for athletes to become eligible to play as freshmen but harder for them to remain eligible in later years.

"Clustering by itself is replicated in many parts of the university. It's not necessarily bad," NCAA President Myles Brand says.

"But when you have extreme clustering … you really do have to ask some hard questions: Is there an adviser who's pushing students into this? Are there some faculty members who are too friendly with student-athletes? I'm not saying that's the case. But I think you have to ask those questions."

Brand adds that it's up to each school to do so. "There are limits to what the national office can, and should, do," he says. "Anything to do with the academic programs really falls entirely within the purview of the individual institutions."

Questions about clustering get at the basic social contract of college sports.

Instead of being paid, scholarship athletes get a free education. And, according to University of Hartford President Walter Harrison, who chairs the NCAA Division I Committee on Academic Performance: "There are many values of a college education, but among them is majoring in something that will prepare you for a satisfying career."

Cline believes that now. He arrived at Kansas State from Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., in 2003 and intended to pursue a pre-veterinary program.

"The athletics academic advisers emphasized it was going to be really difficult," he says. "But I tried it anyway."

When the biology class went badly, he and his advisers discussed options, including retaking the class. Homesick and wanting to finish college as soon as possible, he says, he "dropped down" to social sciences, a program Kansas State's website says is one of four interdisciplinary majors in the College of Arts and Sciences that "provide options for those who have not chosen a specialized major."

"The athletics academic advisers said, 'This is what everybody is doing. It's the easiest major,' " recalls Cline, who emphasizes that ultimately he — not his advisers — chose his degree program.

Cline completed his degree in four academic years. Afterward, with one season of athletic eligibility left, he stayed at Kansas State and spent the 2007-08 school year in a master's program in college student personnel.

The program is designed to prepare candidates for work at college "student affairs agencies," according to the university's website. Cline says he didn't complete it and doesn't intend to "because it wasn't what I wanted to do."

He now is working in construction so he can save money and try to return to school as a pre-vet student.

"The whole time I was at Kansas State, I felt stuck — stuck in football, stuck in my major. … It was a stupid effort on my part. I wouldn't advise any other athlete to do that. I'd tell them to choose a career — a real career for their life after football and work toward it. Don't let anybody or anything take you off that path. Don't fool yourselves into thinking (you're) going to play (sports) professionally.

"Now I look back and say, 'Well, what did I really go to college for? Crap classes you won't use the rest of your life?' Social science is really nothing specific. … I was majoring in football."

Kansas State provost M. Duane Nellis says the university tries "to be supportive of athletes to be able to pursue what they dream to have as their degree path.

"We've had starting athletes in basketball who went on to … get into veterinary medicine. Any student can get out of sequence if they're in a prescribed curriculum … and if they get out of sequence, it leads them down a different path. They also have to realize, when they decide to pursue athletics, there are time commitments and parameters around that."

**'A mixed message being sent'**

Cline's situation provides a window on the day-to-day machinery of big-time college sports, which can be a physical and psychological grind on student-athletes.

Basketball games, and a few football games, are played on weeknights. Sometimes games are played close to exams. It's not unusual for baseball teams to play five days a week, with games in three different towns.

"There's a mixed message being sent out here" about the importance of academics in college sports, Georgia Tech men's basketball coach Paul Hewitt said in June before the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics.

Several athletes echo Hewitt's sentiments.

Former Boise State safety Marty Tadman was among the 48% of the football team's juniors and seniors majoring in communication during the 2007-08 academic year. Boise State's communication program also drew 50% of the juniors and seniors on the men's basketball and women's basketball teams.

"You hear which majors, and which classes, are the easiest and you take them," Tadman says. "You're going to school so you can stay in sports. You're not going for a degree. … It's a joke."

Like other students, athletes are influenced by their peers. Former Southern California offensive lineman Drew Radovich majored in sociology, putting him among the 58% of the football team's juniors and seniors — and 19% of USC's — in that major. "If I went back and did it all over again, I wouldn't have picked" sociology, says Radovich, now with the Minnesota Vikings. "A lot of other offensive linemen were picking sociology, so I picked it."

Under NCAA rules, schools are required to make academic counseling and tutoring available to athletes.

These services can be provided and paid for by athletics departments, which have been making them — and the facilities in which they are based — increasingly elaborate in recent years.

And because of the NCAA's complex requirements, which often differ from those of a university or individual academic department, academic advisers are involved in many athletes' course selections.

**'Perfect storm' for problems**

With Division I athletes, that involvement usually stems from what's known as The 40-60-80 Rule, which took effect for athletes entering school after Aug. 1, 2003.

To stay eligible to play, athletes must complete 40% of their degree work by the end of their second year of enrollment, 60% by the end of their third year and 80% by the end of their fourth year. Under previous rules, those percentages were 25, 50 and 75.

The increased demands for progress toward a degree have been accompanied by reduced requirements for incoming athletes to be eligible to play as freshmen.

Until recently, incoming athletes had to have at least an 820 SAT score or 68 ACT sum score. Now, if they have a sufficient grade-point average in a set of core academic classes, they can be eligible as freshmen with any standardized score.

"It's a perfect storm formula" for pressure on advisers, says Gerald Gurney, senior associate athletics director for academics and student life at the University of Oklahoma. "A population of weaker students with higher (academic) demands," layered upon a national trend of academic departments raising requirements for entry into certain majors.

There also is a new NCAA rule that threatens penalties for teams with too many players who become academically ineligible or fail to graduate. Based on their annually published Academic Progress Rate (APR), teams can lose scholarships and eventually become ineligible for postseason play, either of which can embarrass a school and affect a team's ability to win.

Hewitt, the Georgia Tech men's basketball coach, bluntly articulated many coaches' view of the "unintended consequences" of the APR system at the Knight Commission meeting in June. He said then that when an NCAA official came to the Atlantic Coast Conference meetings four years ago to discuss the APR system, "almost every coach said: 'You understand what you're basically telling us. We're going to encourage our kids to take the easiest path to eligibility.'

"So if I'm at a Georgia Tech, I'm not going to tell a young man he can't major in engineering," Hewitt said. "But I certainly will counsel him before he takes that first class that … if you decide to go down this road and for some reason you find it harder than you expected and you decide to change your major, you're probably more than likely going to end up being ineligible" for sports.

At Georgia Tech last year, 63% of the juniors and seniors on the men's basketball team majored in management. So did 83% of those on the baseball team and 82% of those on the football team. A little more than 11% of all juniors and seniors at the school were in the major.

Isma'il Muhammad, a basketball player who earned a management degree from Georgia Tech in 2005, said he considered majoring in international affairs, but "it just didn't make sense. I would have had to stop playing basketball," which he has been doing professionally outside the USA since graduating.

Asked why management is so popular among athletes, he said, "They want to own their own business or have other big aspirations. Also, we're not crazy. … Was management easier than engineering? Of course, but Georgia Tech doesn't offer any easy classes or easy majors. It's not like I was a basketball player majoring in pottery."

Muhammad also says he has leads for post-basketball jobs. "Finding a job is not an issue even in this economy we have right now," he says. "A lot of people are affiliated with Tech and (are) fans of basketball and Coach Hewitt."

Bob Vomhof, a former Colorado State football player also still pursuing his sport in a lower level of the pro ranks, has similar confidence in his future prospects — but with a retrospective different from Muhammad's.

Vomhof graduated with a degree in liberal arts, a program that last year had 65% of the junior and senior football players and about 2% of all juniors and seniors at the school. As a junior he wanted to change his major to construction management, he says, but decided that with the time he had to spend on football he couldn't make the move.

Speaking from his hometown of Gillette, Wyo., after spending part of the past Arena Football League season on the San Jose SaberCats practice squad, he says of his outlook: "I think I'll be OK. No matter how bad the job market gets everywhere else, you can always get jobs up here."

This fall, he has been a substitute teacher and has prepared for another AFL tryout. Would he have had a different major without football's time demands?

"If I had all the time of a regular student, I would have tried to make the most of my education and get a degree that gave me a skill. I know if I were a parent, I wouldn't want all my money going to a degree like liberal arts."

*Contributing: Michael McCarthy, A.J. Perez, Erik Brady*

## South Florida grad Okpaleke juggled basketball, books

By Jill Lieber Steeg, USA TODAY
November 19, 2008

Chinyere (Chi Chi) Okpaleke grew up with both parents in health professions — her mother, Celina, as a physician's assistant; her father, Andrew, an internist.
So it isn't surprising that since graduating from the University of South Florida last summer, she's been applying to medical schools and studying for entrance exams.

What makes Okpaleke, 22, unusual is how she arrived at this point. In high school, she became a Florida Class 4A first-team all-state basketball player. In college, she became a significant player for a Big East Conference team. But she stuck to her career plan when her initial major became incompatible with basketball and her eventual major required significant juggling by her and others in the South Florida program.

She ended up starting in 39 of the 62 games in her junior and senior seasons, becoming the program's No. 5 all-time shot blocker and No. 10 rebounder. She also earned her degree in four years with a 3.64 grade-point average and a biomedical sciences major.

"When I received my diploma, I realized it was all worth it," says Okpaleke (Oh-POL-ah-kay). "I thank God every day I took the road less traveled, stayed true to my heart and stuck with it."

**Degree of difficulty**

Her road was among the least traveled by athletes in a USA TODAY study of the majors selected by juniors and seniors in five prominent and widely played NCAA Division I sports during the 2007-08 school year. Of the roughly 9,300 upperclassmen in football, men's basketball, women's basketball, baseball and softball covered in the study, Okpaleke was among 1.3% in a biology-related field and one of six in biomedical sciences.

Says former teammate Sharon Cambridge, 24, a center-forward now working toward her master's in speech language pathology: Okpaleke "came in as a freshman knowing exactly what she wanted to do. That's rare for any student, much less a student-athlete. She set a goal and held on to it, even through the trials. … A lot of student-athletes take the easy way out and realize too late how vital an education is. We have the advantage of getting a free education, and Chi Chi understood the value of that."

A guard-forward, Okpaleke grew up in Tampa. She attended Tampa Bay Technical High School, where she was in a magnet program called the Academy of Health Professions, and became a certified nursing assistant at 18. She began at USF as a pre-nursing major and was admitted into the School of Nursing in her junior year but decided not to pursue that path because the course requirements would've conflicted with practices and games.

"At that point, she said, 'What other choices do I have?' " says Myrtice Landers, USF's athletics academic adviser for women's basketball. "That's when she switched to biomedical sciences. She'd used up the majority of her electives and faced taking only hard-core science classes."

The fall semester of her senior year was the worst. She was taking genetics, organic chemistry and physics II. Because of scheduling conflicts, she missed practice two days a week and part of practice on a third. She had to work one-on-one with the coaching staff to make up practice or conditioning.

**Tough balancing act**

Some professors allowed her to work around classes, labs and tests when she had road games. She'd attend makeup labs or take tests with proctors, out-of-state. Others, though, were not so accommodating.

"Some wanted me to make a choice, either miss my games or drop the course ahead of time," Okpaleke says.

Her solution? While her teammates traveled the day before away games, she flew in on game day with an assistant coach after attending classes.

"She was going to have both — basketball and academics — and the head coach (Jose Fernandez) worked with her to make that happen," Landers says.

Says Fernandez: "Because of where our practice time is slotted — 12 to 3 p.m. — there are often scheduling conflicts with classes. Also, some classes are not offered in the summer. And we want to make sure they graduate in four years.

"It would be unfair for me to tell athletes not to major in what they want to major in, not to take a certain class because they'd have to miss practice. They're here to get an education. … Only a few will make the WNBA or play professionally overseas. They need that degree to become successful later in life. We want them to get a degree that is positive for them, that will help them get a good job.
"But it is tough. When you miss practice, you may lose conditioning and continuity, and that filters into how you do in games."

Early in her senior season, Okpaleke lost her place as a starter, in part, she says, because she was investing so much into academics. Fernandez says it also was "because of a change in personnel. We got some pretty good players at (her) positions."

"I wasn't focused, I wasn't producing … I wasn't playing well. I knew I had to step it up," says Okpaleke, who ended up starting in 18 of 22 games before a knee injury in March and averaging a career-best 25.3 minutes a game.

These days, besides preparing for medical school, she's working in her mother's home health care business. She also is a volunteer coach at her former high school.

"Most college athletes are brainwashed into believing they'll make it to the pros," she says. "My advice would be, 'Besides playing your sport, what is your second-most favorite thing to do? Allow yourself to dream, set a lofty academic goal, focus and stay true to it.' "

## Minnesota task force aimed at student-athletes

By Michael McCarthy and Steve Berkowitz, USA TODAY
November 19, 2008

C.P. Schlatter, a former All-America wrestler at the University of Minnesota, says he majored in nursing even though some of his coaches suggested that he take an "easier" major so he could "breeze through" to an undergraduate degree.

"Their philosophy was you could always go back to (graduate) school and get (a master's) degree, but you can never go back to competing again," Schlatter says. "So their philosophy was (to) take a lighter load."

Some of Schlatter's teammates kidded him about becoming a nurse. But the two-time Big Ten Conference champion and three-time Academic All-American is having the last laugh.

While some Minnesota athletes from the Class of 2008 with less-distinguished credentials remain out of work, he has a full-time nursing job at Fairview Southdale Hospital in Edina,

Minn., that pays him $55,000 a year. The shift from sports star to out-of-work job applicant comes as a shock, the 24-year-old adds.

"Some of them are scrambling," he says. "They have a four-year degree, but no job, nothing to do with it."

Minnesota wrestling coach J Robinson says the window of time in which his athletes can compete is short compared to the time they have for higher education.

"There's certain doors that are open certain times," he says. "Your athletic door is open only a certain time. … I can go and be the world's greatest heart surgeon right now at 62 years old, but I can't wrestle in the national tournament. One of the things you teach young people is priorities. If they're going to go in and they're going to get their master's, you can get an undergraduate degree, then you go get your master's wherever you want to."

The nation's economic crisis and moribund job market have made it more important than ever for college athletes to enter the workforce, whenever they do so, prepared for careers other than playing sports.

In January 2007, as part of a series of initiatives across the university, Minnesota began implementing the five recommendations of a task force aimed at "improving student-athletes' academic experiences and outcomes." The task force was one of 35 formed as part of President Robert H. Bruininks' 2005 plan to make the nation's fourth-largest university, with more than 50,000 students, one of the world's top three public research universities.

**Minnesota's 'model'**

The panel faced a balancing act with which schools across the country are familiar: finding ways to draw better academic performance from athletes without making curriculum changes or having degree programs that Bruininks, in an interview, called "dumping grounds for high-risk student-athletes."

These types of efforts are even more important now that poor classroom results by athletes, under the NCAA's Academic Progress Rate (APR) system, can result in teams losing scholarships and eligibility for postseason play. And at some schools, including Minnesota, faculty groups with oversight of athletics programs monitor athletes' majors.

Among the Minnesota task force's recommendations was one that called for the school to "increase access to academic programs that are relevant to student-athletes as a way to increase their interest and motivation" and to "explore the development of intra- and inter-college majors/emphasis areas that would significantly increase student-athletes' motivation to succeed academically."

"We are not satisfied at the University of Minnesota with the graduation rates of students overall," Bruininks says. "And we weren't satisfied with some of the academic performance trends we saw within intercollegiate athletics.

"We want to make sure that the young people who come to the University of Minnesota have every opportunity to succeed and leave here with a high-quality degree."

The task force's efforts — it spent 18 months assembling and studying six years' worth of academic and demographic data about Minnesota athletes — and university officials' willingness to initiate such a self-examination in a non-crisis situation have been praised. So was the task force's recommendation concerning the creation of a centralized, standardized database through which all relevant university offices can monitor athletes' academic performance and the hiring of a "data czar" to implement and oversee the system. (Minnesota made such a hire in April, associate vice president Sharon Reich Paulsen says.)

The recommendation about majors — at a school rocked by an academic scandal in its men's basketball program in 1999 — is being eyed warily even though Minnesota has made no related changes in its majors and that was neither what the task force had in mind nor the administration's intent when it accepted the task force's report, say Paulsen and one of the panel's co-chairs, Mary Jo Kane.

Minnesota's research is a "model" for other institutions to follow, University of Virginia faculty athletics representative Carolyn Callahan wrote in June's inaugural *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*. But Callahan also cautioned Minnesota against creating "special majors" for athletes.

Among faculty athletics representatives at other Big Ten schools, there is division about the notion of creating sport-focused majors.

"I would have deep concerns with a major that was developed solely or even primarily for student-athletes — even if it was open to other students," Iowa's Elizabeth Altmaier says. "Such a major has the potential and even likelihood of segregating student-athletes further from the campus."

Says Penn State's Scott Kretchmar, a professor of exercise and sport science: "To me, a career related to sports is very viable, just like in music. … I think there's a lot of bias against so-called non-intellectual majors — theater, music, dance, PE, kinesiology — majors that don't rely so much on words and numbers."

The professors who led Minnesota's task force, Kane and Perry Leo, say it was not proposing special majors for athletes.

"Absolutely not," Kane says. "I can understand why (the recommendation's wording) could be interpreted that way. But … the task force recommended just the opposite: increasing access to existing programs — but by no means altering or lowering academic standards. And always doing so with appropriate consultation with deans, chairs and faculty."

**Relevant majors**

Rather than creating new majors, Leo says he wants to give athletes more "business and marketing classes where they can study the marketing of sports.
Something where their sports background would be a positive, not a negative."

To turn this into reality, the sport management and business marketing education (BME) programs are jointly hiring a new faculty member to teach additional sections of existing BME courses and also teach existing sport-management courses, Paulsen says.

A search is underway to hire someone with a Ph.D. in sport management who would be likely to teach those sections and/or courses using examples from the sports industry, Kane says. This could make those sections and/or courses more attractive to, and stimulating for, athletes and non-athletes who are interested in learning about sports marketing and management.

Anything schools can do to help their athletes branch out is a good idea, Schlatter says.

While some of his friends from Minnesota settled for easier majors than his, the reality of finding work is weighing heavily.

"Two or three just went back to graduate school," he says, "because they didn't know what to do — and there wasn't really a market for their degrees."

# Concerns About Clustering

Doug Lederman
InsideHigherEd.com
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National Collegiate Athletic Association officials have taken pride in the rising rates at which Division I athletes are graduating, and they often credit the association's five-year-old academic eligibility rules as a driving factor. But the rules, which for the first time penalize college teams whose athletes do not make adequate progress toward a degree, were also widely seen as increasing the pressure on institutions and coaches to ensure that they do.

The hope was that this goal would be accomplished through a positive change in the culture — recruiting more academically qualified athletes, perhaps, or putting more emphasis on players' classroom success. But the fear among others was that those gains might be achieved through less noble means — encouraging students to take the academic path of least resistance, or, in the worst case, cheating.

Figuring out whether the recent gains in graduation rates of NCAA athletes have been achieved through good means or bad is next to impossible, as the factors are many and evidence about such things as the academic qualifications of incoming athletes is hard to come by. But *USA Today* on Wednesday published a special report that provides significant evidence that athletes on many high-profile teams "cluster" in certain majors.

About a third of all football, men's and women's basketball, baseball and softball teams at the 142 colleges examined had at least 25 percent of their juniors and seniors in the same major field of study, and on more than half of those teams — 125 of 235 — at least 40 percent of the upperclassmen were in the same major.

A few examples: Twenty-two, or 58 percent, of the junior and senior football players at the University of Southern California in 2007 majored in sociology, representing one-fifth of all junior and senior sociology majors at USC. Sixteen of 25 junior and senior football players at Vanderbilt University majored in human and organizational development, and 31 of 41 football players at the University of Michigan majored in general studies.

Such clustering, many college sports officials argue, is not in and of itself a problem. Every college has majors that are more and less popular, and they fluctuate over time for a wide range of reasons. Students also tend to make choices about their studies based in part on what their peers are doing, so given the significant amount of time that athletes spend together, it's hardly surprising that teammates would end up in the same majors. And athletes may end up in certain majors more than other students because of their interests (particularly explaining overrepresentation in sports-related fields) or because the time demands of their sports discourage, if not rule out, disciplines that require lots of afternoon labs or the equivalent.

"There's been an exponential growth in how much we demand of student-athletes, by day, week, semester and across the whole calendar year," said Chris Kennedy, deputy director of athletics at

Duke University. “There’s a sense that coaches want their kids available all the time, and that makes it harder to choose some majors.”

But having significant numbers of athletes at a college in a particular major does raise concerns that the NCAA’s academic policies, well-intentioned as they are, may be driving athletes — or, worse yet, prompting colleges to push athletes — into majors that are perceived as being easier.

In addition to injecting significant new data into the discussion, which has been raised by several recent controversies involving independent study at Auburn University and the University of Michigan, the *USA Today* report highlights athletes at several institutions who said they had been “steered” into certain “friendly” majors by academic advisers or coaches intent on keeping the players eligible to compete. “This is what everybody is doing. It’s the easiest major,” one former athlete recalls being told by an academic adviser from the athletics department.

The idea that big-time college athletes might seek out the academic path of least resistance is hardly a new concept. But what makes the issue of clustering particularly relevant now, for some observers, is that the whole design of the NCAA’s Academic Progress Rate system is to increase the stakes on colleges to ensure that athletes stay on track to a degree. The worry has been that by taking away scholarships from teams whose athletes become ineligible to compete or leave college in poor academic standing, the NCAA — in addition to encouraging more emphasis on academic performance — may well have increased the incentives on athletes and colleges to take the easy route.

**Raising Questions**

The *USA Today* report (heartening proof that newspapers can still engage in good and important enterprise journalism at a time when the industry is struggling) does not offer conclusive evidence either way. But by examining the majors of 9,300 athletes on more than 600 teams at the 120 colleges that play football in the NCAA’s top competitive level and 22 other colleges with high-profile men’s basketball teams, the newspaper updates and greatly expands on data from its 2003 survey (produced in part by this reporter) suggesting that clustering could be an undesirable by-product of the NCAA’s then-pending academic reforms.

The data collected by *USA Today*, which came mostly from information publicly available through the colleges’ sports information and other offices, zeroed in on those teams where at least 25 percent of juniors and seniors (those most likely to have declared a major) had chosen the same major (a 33 percent minimum figure was used for teams of fewer than 10 upperclassmen or women). Eighty-three percent of the colleges (118 of 142) had at least one team that met the 25 percent threshold, and 125 of the 654 total teams had at least 40 percent of their juniors and seniors in the same major.

Some of the numbers catch the eye. Twenty-one of 29 junior and senior football players and all seven men’s basketball athletes at the University of Texas at El Paso majored in interdisciplinary studies in 2007-8. At the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, about 60 percent of football and baseball players and five of six men’s basketball players majored in “university studies,” as did

57 percent of football players and four of five basketball players at the University of New Mexico.

Officials at several of the universities with large apparent clusters in many cases cited anomalies about their institutions to explain the numbers. Dan Radakovich, athletics director at Georgia Institute of Technology, said in an interview Wednesday that the figures reported for his institution — showing that 27 of its 33 football players, 10 of its 12 baseball players, and 5 of 8 men's basketball juniors and seniors in 2007 had majored in management — "don't cause me a whole lot of concern." Georgia Tech has only 31 majors altogether, he said, and 25 of those are in engineering or science-related fields. About half of Tech athletes major in management and about 30 percent in engineering, Radakovich said (70 percent of its swimmers are engineers), and even the management program — ranked 20th in the country among public institutions, he said — "has a technology-based twist."

Asked if the *USA Today* numbers suggest that Georgia Tech's athletes are not representative of the student body as a whole, he said: "No. What it says to me is that student-athletes, when they get here, find that their interest level is more relating to management than to engineering.... I'm not sure that one is incredibly less rigorous or prepares [them] less for a successful career."

What would worry him? "If I was looking and seeing, Why are 80 percent of students in psychology at Georgia Tech? If I see stats moving in that direction, then I would become concerned on my behalf, sitting in the chair I'm sitting in."

Officials at Boise State, where about half of all junior and senior football, baseball and men's basketball players majored in communications in 2007, reacted angrily to the suggestion, as one former player there put it in the *USA Today* article, that "you're going to school so you can stay in sports. You're not going for a degree... It's a joke."

"I think we all take offense to it," the athletics director at Boise State, Gene Bleymaier, told an Idaho Statesman columnist Wednesday. "The implication is 100 percent wrong."

"Communications is a major where there's a number of electives and there's a number of core classes that do provide some flexibility in the classes that you take and the times that you take those classes," Bleymaier said. "I think that plays a role in the attractiveness of communications.... The new [academic] rules that have been implemented over the years have helped and have motivated students. Those rules may in fact have limited some options for student-athletes. There's no question with practice schedules and travel schedules, not every major is readily available. There are some limitations on what major a student-athlete can pursue. Those are choices that every individual can make."

*If*, that is, the athletes are making the choices. The hypothesis behind those most concerned about clustering, though, is that by imposing financial and other penalties on colleges whose athletes don't thrive academically, the changes in the NCAA's rules may have increased the incentives for institutions to make sure that they do, by hook or by crook. While NCAA and many college

officials reject that view as overly cynical, some of them acknowledge that excessive levels of clustering of athletes in majors warrant a closer look.

"[W]hen you have extreme clustering," Myles Brand, the NCAA's president, told *USA Today*, "you really do have to ask some hard questions: Is there an adviser who's pushing students into this? Are there some faculty members who are too friendly with student-athletes? I'm not saying that's the case. But I think you have to ask those questions."

Those questions, Brand and others say, should be asked by professors and administrators on individual campuses, since questions about curriculums and course quality at a given college or university are the purview not of the NCAA, but of the faculty there.

David Goldfield, who is the Robert Lee Bailey Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and has been active in NCAA academic policy making, agreed that professors at campuses where athletes appear to be clustered in a major or majors should be asking them a series of questions to determine if a problem exists.

"I'd be looking for several things," he said. "First is the percentage of courses [that can be taken to satisfy the major's requirements] that are nontraditional courses — offered online or in independent study. The second thing I would look for is if there's a disparity between the student-athletes' grades in that particular major and their grades in other courses — that might tip you off that something is happening in that major.

"The third thing is whether there are certain professors and courses that student-athletes are herded into to boost their GPAs. Do certain professors turn up all the time associated with large numbers of student-athletes?

"These are the issues that faculty ought to pay attention to on their campuses, if we're trying to ensure that our student-athletes, like the rest of the student body, receive an education."

While Goldfield generally agrees with Brand's notion that this is primarily a campus issue, the question of whether NCAA policies might be encouraging clustering is worth trying to ferret out, too. "The first thing you'd want to know ... is whether there was clustering before the change in regulations, or whether the clustering pattern at a particular campus or set of campuses is new. If it's the former, that's one thing. But if there's been a change, maybe we can attribute that to the [Academic Progress Rate], and maybe we need to adjust that because maybe it hasn't changed the culture in quite the way it was intended."

# Athletes' academic choices put advisers in tough balancing act

**By Erik Brady, USA TODAY**

B. David Ridpath has a confession to make. As the athletics department's compliance director and liaison to academic services for athletes at Marshall from 1997 to 2001, he often told athletes to avoid tough majors if they wanted to play their sports.

"Academic advisers say that all the time," he says. "You'd do it in more subtle kinds of ways, but I have directly told kids myself, 'You can be in this major if you want to be, but if you want to play football, or want to play basketball, you may want to look at this major.' And that's what happens."

These days Ridpath is an assistant professor of sport administration at Ohio University and a member of the Drake Group, a national network of faculty members and others who advocate broad reform of college sports, particularly in terms of academic integrity.

"These kids are getting steered into these less rigorous majors, or majors with friendly faculty," Ridpath says. "I do admit I did it myself, and I'm ashamed of it, and I wish I'd never done it."

A USA TODAY study of the majors of juniors and seniors in football, men's basketball, women's basketball, baseball and softball at 142 of the NCAA's top-level schools shows athletes at many institutions clustering in certain majors, in some cases at rates highly disproportionate to those of all students.

Academic advisers for athletes face complex, pressure-filled jobs that have become more so in recent years as the NCAA eased rules on freshman eligibility while ratcheting up requirements for minimum progress toward a degree.

The result is it is easier for an athlete to get into school — but harder to stay in.

Stakes are high: Teams that fail to meet academic standards can lose scholarships. That puts advisers in the crosshairs as they juggle constituencies with competing interests: athletes who want to play, coaches who want them eligible and provosts who want them to graduate.

"Academic-support programs grew up with all the best intentions," says Donna Lopiano, Texas' director of women's athletics from 1975 to '92, now president of Sports Management Resources, a college-sports consultancy. "But when they are controlled by athletics departments, they live in the shadow of a conflict of interest."

Lopiano says the majority of academic advisers are good people doing good work — "a lot of them are saints" — but she thinks the imperative of staying eligible sometimes trumps the best interests of athletes who get nudged into majors they might not otherwise choose.

That, Ridpath believes, is exactly what happens: "Whenever you see a team with a high percentage of players in one major, you have to ask if the advisers are advising athletes on staying eligible for four or five years or advising them how to prepare for their next 55 years."

Ridpath filed a civil suit against Marshall and others alleging he was made a scapegoat in 2001 following an NCAA investigation of academic fraud and improper athlete employment. The suit alleges he cannot get a job in college athletics as a result. Trial is set for February in U.S. District Court in Huntington, W. Va.

The NCAA placed Marshall on probation for academic fraud and a lack of institutional control. Ridpath alleges he consented to a reassignment outside athletics, in part, because the university agreed to tell the NCAA and the public the reassignment was not the result of any wrongdoing by him. The school reassigned Ridpath and told the NCAA it was a "corrective action" that the NCAA then cited in its own report. Ridpath alleges he did not commit NCAA rules violations, only reported them.

**'High-burnout field'**

In 1991, the NCAA's member schools adopted Rule 16.3, making academic support for athletes mandatory. Such support has been a growth industry since — to the point that academic services, and the facilities that house them, are now part of the competition for recruits. "There is an arms race in facilities and an explosion in expense," says Phil Hughes, Kansas State's director of academic support for athletics and past president of the National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletes (N4A).

Liz Friedman, assistant dean in DePaul's School of Computer Science, Telecommunications and Information Systems, was the associate director of student-athlete support services from 1997 to 2007 at Michigan State, where she was academic coordinator for men's basketball. She says she worked well with Tom Izzo but knows of other cases in which advisers felt they could not stand up to high-profile coaches.

"It's a high-burnout field," says Friedman, who also worked at Maryland. "It takes a lot of self-confidence to put your toes against the toes of a multi-million-dollar-earning coach."

Tony Terrell is happy as an academic adviser in health services at UNLV but wasn't happy as an academic adviser to athletes.

"Oh, it's wonderful," he says of his new position. "I don't have to worry about eligibility … and I don't have to deal with coaches."

Terrell was an offensive lineman on the UNLV football team in the early 2000s. He expected to be ordered around by coaches then, but resented it as a professional adviser.

"You're monitoring at-risk players, who maybe came in through alternative admission criteria, or they may have a learning disability, so you may need to coddle them," he says. "Then, you have

coaches micromanaging what you do, and I didn't like that. … I felt that sometimes I was being treated like" a graduate assistant.

Often what's at issue is what majors and courses athletes will take. "For years we were criticized for encouraging athletes to major in eligibility," Friedman wrote in a 2008 monograph for the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA). But "reform measures instituted by the NCAA make this practice more, rather than less, common."

She is referring to what has come to be known as The 40-60-80 Rule. It says athletes must complete 40% of their degree work by the end of their second year of enrollment, 60% by the end of their third year and 80% by the end of their fourth year.

The reform is meant to ensure athletes are moving toward degrees but another consequence is they must often pick a major sooner than other students and have less flexibility to change.

"We certainly want to have a measurable number and we want to make sure we are steering students toward a major that will be useful to them later in life, but if there is some tinkering we can do to provide more flexibility, we ought to consider that," University of Hartford President Walter Harrison, chair of the NCAA's Division I Committee on Academic Performance, said late this summer.

Harrison said last week the panel discussed in late October possible alteration of The 40-60-80 Rule, has asked NCAA staff to try to develop some data on the issue, and "We'll certainly consider what options we have."

**What to major in?**

Advisers have the best interest of the athletes in mind, Friedman says, but they must also keep other, often competing interests in mind, including myriad eligibility rules from the NCAA, the conference and the institution.

Athletes compete with the student body at large for positions in competitive majors, where students must have a certain grade point average to qualify.

Christine Jackson, Louisville's associate director of academic services and the N4A's incoming president, says advisers let students pick majors and courses while pointing out which ones might conflict with practices.

"I like to say I'm the reality check," Jackson says. "We let students pick what they like. But I might say, 'OK, but let's move this lab to the offseason.' Or I'll let them know the business school is really hard to get in; you have to have a 2.75 (GPA). The engineering school is harder.

"There's that reality talk again: 'Yeah, I know you want to be an engineer, but that may not happen if you're taking algebra for a third time. Think about your end result. What do you want to do?' Those kinds of conversations happen."

David Goldfield, faculty athletics representative at Charlotte, was a member of the NCAA committee that created the Academic Progress Rate system that sets minimum NCAA academic standards for teams — and sanctions for failing to meet them.

"The objective," Goldfield says, "was to change the culture of recruiting" to say to coaches "do not recruit student-athletes who have no chance of maintaining their eligibility because if they don't, it will count against you. You'll get embarrassed. You'll lose scholarships and it will affect your wins and losses. …

"We really haven't seen that change in culture. The initial eligibility standards are so low, and the efforts of academic-support services have been so heroic that, in fact, it *is* possible to maintain the eligibility of these student-athletes and not be penalized."

*Contributing: Jill Lieber Steeg, Steve Berkowitz*

**FEATURE – NCAA CHAMPION MAGAZINE**

# Walking a thin line

**The rewards of academic advisement are great, but so are the pressures**
**By Michelle Brutlag Hosick**

When academic-support staff members in athletics departments talk about their jobs, they use words such as “passion,” “fulfilling” and “rewarding.”

But lately, they also are using words such as “grind,” “burnout” and “pressure.”

It’s always been like walking a tightrope. Some who work in academic advising lose their footing and drop out of the profession; others find the right balance between the upside and the downside of the job.

After five years of academic reform in the NCAA, the lofty goals of that high-wire act – keeping student-athletes playing games while steadily working toward and ultimately earning degrees – seem more within reach in Division I than ever before. But the downside hasn’t disappeared, and more and more advisors are warning that recent reforms are shaking the rope a bit.

In many ways, the extra attention that observers – ranging from institutional presidents to journalists – are paying to student-athletes’ academic success has been positive for academic-support staff. Their work is more valued. They get more recognition for a job well done. The pay is sometimes better.

But expectations are higher, stress levels have increased and downtime has become almost nonexistent.

**‘You’ve got to monitor everything’**

As academic standards have increased, so have the requirements for documentation, monitoring and paperwork. Some institutions have hired staff specifically to collect and analyze academic-performance data generated by student-athletes.

That’s the case at Minnesota, where Mark Nelson is director of the McNamara Academic Center. Minnesota hired an analyst to work full time with the registrar’s office and compliance office, searching data to reveal trends indicating who is successful and who is not – and why. Nelson spends much of his time examining graduation rates and Academic Progress Rates.

But the challenge goes well beyond tending to marginal students. Before academic reform, “good students” mostly were left alone after initial discussions about classes and schedules, unless they asked for help. Not so anymore, said Steve McDonnell, associate athletics director for academic services at Texas A&M.

“You’ve got to monitor everything,” he said. “We have to make sure all students know what the rules are and what they need to keep us informed about. While that’s not a bad thing, it is more demanding of your time.”

Jim Rost, director of the student-athlete enhancement center at Middle Tennessee, cited increased monitoring of student-athletes as the most significant change in his job since academic reform began, and he believes it is creating a dilemma.

Academic-support units must pay attention to all student-athletes, but they also must allocate resources appropriately and effectively. It’s getting tougher to focus on individual needs, and even to know what those needs are, as academic advisors find themselves dealing with more student-athletes.

“If you don’t know what’s happening, how can you possibly know how to intervene?” Rost said. “You can’t use your resources effectively if you don’t know the student-athletes and what their needs are.”

That problem cuts right to the bone for academic advisors. Most, such as Kim Durand, associate athletics director for student development at Washington, entered the profession precisely because they want to help student-athletes succeed outside the arena.

“I’ve always been challenged, impressed with collegiate student-athletes at every level,” Durand said. “There’s not a day that goes by that I don’t get up in the morning and I’m excited to go to work.”

But she admitted that excitement is tempered when she runs into some of the unintended consequences of academic reform.

"Sometimes, advisors will tell you that they struggle a little with what is good, solid academic advice and what they need to do to make a student-athlete aware that these choices might impact their eligibility," she said. Examples include stiffer progress-toward-degree requirements and a rule requiring student-athletes at schools on the quarter system to pass six hours of coursework per academic term.

Academic advisors are trained to consider "what's best" for a student, but those who work in athletics oftentimes find themselves toeing a fine line.

They might encourage student-athletes to stretch their limits by taking challenging courses. But they also must consider that student-athletes need to meet specific grade standards and show progress toward a degree in order to compete – and to retain a scholarship. The resulting advice always is tempered by the need to keep a student-athlete eligible for competition.

"In your heart, you might believe that part of the college experience is having some academic freedom to fully explore what a university has to offer," Durand said. "But sometimes, that advice could be at a detriment to the student's progress."

Tomás Jimenez of LSU described the conundrum this way: "Academic advisors are kind of caught between two worlds – the powerful enterprise of college athletics and the pure education of students."

**Upside/downside**

Balancing the requirements of those worlds can be tough, but the effort can yield rewards.

Many academic advisors believe that recent reforms have created a positive environment for student-athletes, encouraging them to always be aware of eligibility standards and their own academic standing. More student-athletes are thinking for themselves about such things than in years past, said Donald Reed, associate athletics director for academic services at Buffalo.

"They do feel a sense of urgency more now than before," he said. "I look at it as stimulating life lessons. When we go into our professions, there always is some level of urgency as far as completing tasks or meeting standards to be successful. This is helping our student-athletes understand the academic commitments and that there are standards that must be met."

Another benefit: Not only has the advisors' relationship with the student-athletes shifted, but they also are seeing a change in other relationships – opportunities to build more partnerships outside the walls of the athletics department.

Whether they call it north campus, upper campus or something else, academic staffers are spending more time with people who work there: admissions personnel, registrars, financial aid officers, deans and others. They have meetings, they review paperwork and they make sure student-athletes are on the path to graduation.

And some say that relationships with coaches are stronger than before. Many coaches respected the work of the academic professional even before academic reform, and now that respect has grown.

“They see us more as professionals,” Texas A&M’s McDonnell said. “When you talk to coaches, they tell you we have the toughest job, that they wouldn’t have my job for anything. In general, they have a genuine respect for what we do in our profession.”

As penalties for classroom failures have become a Division I reality, coaches who rarely dabbled in the academic side are beginning to realize the true value of the academic-support staff. They’ve become more knowledgeable about academic issues, which makes for a strong partnership. After all, coaches can provide the carrot, or wield the stick, of playing time in urging student-athletes toward better academic performance.

Meanwhile, others who have desired, and perhaps even demanded, academic success from student-athletes – university administrators, faculty and staff – also are becoming more directly engaged in achieving the goal. “It’s more of a partnership,” Middle Tennessee’s Rost said. “Our president is tremendously involved. It really starts at the top and moves on down.”

**The academic/eligibility vise**

But even with such help, academic advisors still bear the basic responsibility for achieving results. In fact, one type of help – in the form of increased financial resources for academic support – seems to be heightening the pressure by increasing that accountability.

As the media report APRs and Graduation Success Rates of football and basketball teams at championship selection time, academic personnel get more public scrutiny. When schools pour money into academic programming but results still are slow in coming, the glare of the spotlight can be harsh.

“Universities have put in a lot more resources to these units, staffing and money for programming,” Rost said. “That puts a little bit more emphasis on our department to have a succinct, clearly defined mission in place to make sure we are using all the resources we have for the student-athletes. There’s more accountability when things are missed. Universities are saying you have all these resources available, you should have known about this.”

Academic staff may be responsible for advising errors, but some suggest it’s unfair to hold advisors responsible in cases in which student-athletes simply are ill-equipped or unmotivated to perform in the classroom.

“I don’t believe it’s uniquely our responsibility to make sure student-athletes succeed,” Rost said. “It’s up to the student-athletes to be intrinsically motivated, to value their education and do what they’re supposed to do. There is a fine line between babysitting and actually teaching them.

"It's the student-athletes' responsibility to go to class, to take the tests, to write the papers. It's our responsibility to provide the best environment for them to be as successful as possible."

Jimenez said academic support may not be enough to help student-athletes who enroll unprepared for college studies. In such cases, he said, it's not the academic staff's job to provide remedial education.

"We certainly can't perform miracles," he said. "It's a societal issue. We're talking about education and the educational attainment of our young people. When we work with young people, we provide support services. We try to supplement their education using different resources, different programs. But we can't recapture what they didn't learn in grades K through 12. We can't re-teach them everything they didn't learn."

**The price of caring**

Such pressures are creating personal issues for academic advisors.

As more and more sports become "year-round," more and more student-athletes stay at school for summer sessions and freshmen arrive early for the "summer bridge" programs on many campuses, there is no real break – no "downtime" – in advisors' work.

The summers don't look much different than the academic year for many academic-support programs. They still conduct orientation programs, offer tutoring sessions, operate the study center, do advising and run study halls. The pressure for student-athletes to get ahead and stay ahead means that more of them stay at school year-round than they did 10 years ago. Sometimes, academic support is even more crucial in the summer, when student-athletes take classes in a compressed time frame.

Reed acknowledged that it's tough but said that academic-support staffs are simply mirroring what is going on in athletics programs overall, especially in football and men's basketball.

"Summer is just a continuation of the spring in a lot of peoples' minds," he said. "We, as academicians, had to come up with a way to assist these students just as we would in the fall or spring, The only way we know it's summer as opposed to spring is there's a few less students and it's a lot hotter."

Add certifications and quarter-school schedules into the mix, and the squeeze gets tighter. Not only has summer downtime disappeared, Durand said, but breaks between terms are nonexistent.

"It's frustrating and concerning to me because the workload of our advisors has quadrupled," she said. "We ask our advisors to not take vacation (at certain times of year). We have had to add staff. The costs associated with doing business have gone up. It seems like every couple of weeks you're reviewing work or projecting their next quarter classes. There's not a time when our advisors are not focused on eligibility."

Student-athletes may be paying a price, too. Instead of spending summers working in jobs, pursuing internships or tackling other interests, they are on campus – full time.

“It’s a grind for the kids, the coaches, for us,” Rost said. “But with the (competitive) culture the way it is, it’s tough to do anything else.”

As the spotlight on academics grows brighter and the pressure on those charged with assisting student-athletes to succeed in the classroom builds, more and more program directors are seeing burnout among their staffs.

Like many in athletics, those who coordinate the academic lives of student-athletes care deeply about the success of those in their charge, and some have difficulty finding a balance between work and life outside of the athletics department.

Sometimes, academic personnel approach the work with expectations that are different from the reality of the job. Sometimes, they simply think it will be “cool” to work in big-time college athletics. But the hours are long and the pressures are real. Advisors and tutors often don’t know when to let the phone ring or to go ahead and take a vacation.

“It is such a high burnout rate,” Jimenez said. “The hours they work, the stressful situations they are placed in, it’s hard to eliminate stress. There’s always something to do. There’s always a student who needs you. There’s always an issue that needs to be resolved.”

Most agree that the pace is different for advisors who work with student-athletes compared to those who work with the general student body. More factors must be considered – athletics commitments and academic activities must be balanced, and every decision must be carefully considered with future eligibility in mind. In fact, Jim Pignataro at Michigan State said that academic personnel working with student-athletes can really no longer be called “advisors.” Instead, he said, they serve as academic coordinators, helping to manage and synchronize every aspect of a student-athlete’s academic career.

But despite all the pressure and the danger of burning out, many advisors wouldn’t consider doing anything else. A new father, Jimenez compared his feelings about his job to his feelings on fatherhood: He wants to see student-athletes succeed, just as he loves to see his toddler mature and grow.

“It’s the moments that you capture when a student graduates, or a student succeeds, or a situation that didn’t seem like it could work itself out works itself out, or you see a staff member achieve a positive result,” he said. “That’s what it’s all about. You’re going to be successful if you’re in it because you really want students to succeed academically and in their lives.”

It is a labor of love, even if the safety net seems a little skimpy.

“By and large, people are very passionate about what they’re doing, and they really care for the welfare of the kids,” Rost said. “It’s a really rewarding field, but it takes a lot out of you, too.

When the day is over, you need to let it go. Sometimes, it can be an emotional roller coaster – you want them to do well. But I will do nothing else. I really love it."

## NCAA president pushes for academic support

MICHAEL MAROT
Associated Press
December 22, 2008

NCAA president Myles Brand has made it a priority throughout his nearly six-year tenure: Schools have to help student-athletes in the classroom.

Overall graduation rates for athletes are at a record high, and schools are investing millions of dollars to attain satisfactory scores on the annual Academic Progress Report, an evaluation of classroom performance. Teams that don't make the APR grade face possible punishments of scholarship losses and, potentially, postseason bans.

The Associated Press spoke recently with Brand about academic support for student-athletes. Brand's condensed responses are excerpted below.

AP: For those who do not follow college sports, talk about what the APR is and give a little synopsis of the penalties and why they were put in place.

Brand: You really need to have a semester-by-semester measure that correlates with a 60 percent graduation rate and we call that APR. The number 925 out of 1,000 correlates with 60 (percent). We're now holding not just the student-athletes accountable, through their eligibility requirements, but we're also holding the teams accountable, and that's the first time we've done that. If a team doesn't have a 925 average, semester-by-semester, then there are going to be sanctions.

We've been phasing this in over several years, so the sanctions start with the loss of scholarships. Starting this year we're going to up the ante. If the teams haven't repaired the problems, if the universities haven't assisted the coaches and the players in meeting their academic requirements in an appropriate way, then we're going to start making sure that not only are additional scholarships taken away, but practice time and (we'll begin) to hold teams out of postseason play.

Next year, if they still haven't repaired the problem, we're going to decertify the team. What that means is that no team in the entire athletic program can participate in postseason play if any team is so penalized. So if one of the minor sports teams is penalized, then basketball and football can't play, or if football turns out to have a problem then the baseball team can't go to the College World Series.

The most important final point I want to make is that our goal is not to sanction. In fact, I think if we don't sanction anyone, we're doing the best job possible.

Because our goal, really, is to change behaviors.

The good news is ... we have started to change behaviors.

AP: Do you think these standards are affecting the educational experience of college athletes and college sports in general?

Brand: I certainly do. Now, when I go around and speak on campuses, to coaches and athletic programs, to student-athletes, they want to brag about how well they're doing academically. They want to show me the academic study centers. The coaches want to talk about and brag about their APR. All that is good.

A few years ago, that was the last thing people wanted to talk about. It's changed the environment for athletics. There's just no question about it.

AP: The Associated Press found that overall spending on academic support services has increased dramatically since the implementation of the APR. Was this anticipated when the standards were toughened or is this an unintended consequence?

Brand: I think it's a good consequence. I want them to spend money to support the student-athletes in their academic endeavors. These are good expenditures by the athletic department. When a university takes a young man or a young woman and it gives them a grant-in-aid (scholarship) to play sports, they undertake a certain obligation or responsibility to that young person to provide them with the best education possible. The obligation sometimes is financial, sometimes is attitudinal, but we're very pleased to see those movements.

AP: Some critics point to clustering, in which athletes are pushed to take certain courses in a major that is seen as easy, as a consequence of the new standards. Does the NCAA view clustering as a negative event?

Brand: Clustering may or may not by itself be bad. For example, my expectation is that those who are interested in music, who are music majors, cluster in certain majors, too, and those who are interested in education tend to cluster in certain majors. But you have to make sure clustering hasn't risen to the point (at) which it really is problematic. And that could happen. The national office cannot go campus-by-campus, look in every classroom over every faculty member's shoulder to see what they're teaching and how they're clustering. That's the role of the institution. It isn't necessarily bad, but I think it is a warning sign that should alert universities to see if there are particular problems.

AP: Is there an extra benefit for student athletes because of the money available for academic services as opposed to other students, who may not have access to those services?

Brand: What we've always asked is for the universities to support these student-athletes in their academic endeavors. What's happened now, I think, is that the institutions, the athletic programs, the individual teams are taking this aspect of their requirement more seriously. So it's not a new

benefit, it's a requirement actually of what we expect from our universities and their treatment of student-athletes. I think it's an obligation of the institution. The institution also has an obligation to other students, non-athletes as well, to provide academic services. How the university decides it wants to allocate its money is up to them. But the fact is they also have a responsibility to those young men and women who play sports.

## Schools invest in athletes' degrees

The Associated Press
December 22, 2008 Monday

OXFORD, Miss. (AP) From the moment he stepped on campus, 320-pound tackle Michael Oher seemed destined to be a star on Mississippi's football team and a failure in its classrooms.

Oher was the son of a crack-addicted single mom, and as a teen could barely read. His educational record – 11 schools in nine years as he moved from home to home in Memphis – read like an indictment of a failed education system.

But four years later, at a school that graduates fewer than 60 percent of all students within six years, Oher has cleared every hurdle and nearly earned his degree all that stands between him and graduation are a final semester and workouts for the NFL draft.

"I haven't struggled a bit in college," the All-American offensive lineman says. "It's been a breeze."

It's a tribute to Oher's determination and character, to be sure.

His story also says something about the state of big-time college athletics.

Like a lot of other athletes at Ole Miss and elsewhere, Oher got not only tutoring help but a full range of academic support services throughout his career. At Ole Miss, 14 full-time staffers line up tutors for student-athletes, help them choose classes, monitor study halls and check attendance. More than 60 percent of the Rebels' 390 athletes receive at least some tutoring, and together they averaged about 1,000 sessions a week this fall.

Such services are not unusual.

The last five years have seen an astounding jump in the time, money and resources devoted to academic support for student-athletes, even as some faculty complain that just plain students are being left behind. To learn more about the trend, The Associated Press surveyed the 65 schools from the six major conferences involved in the Bowl Championship Series plus independent Notre Dame.

The AP started work before the first kickoff of the season and eventually obtained at least some financial information from 45 schools about the resources they devote to graduating athletes.

The picture formed by the data is one of schools frequently spending more than $1 million annually on academic support, with some spending hundreds of thousands of dollars more in 2008 than they did in 2004, the AP found. Eight BCS schools reported spending increases of more than 70 percent in the last five years. Four, South Florida, Illinois, Georgia and Kansas more than doubled spending.

Helping athletes graduate has become its own academic profession. A national group for people who work in the field has nearly doubled its membership to around 1,000 in just two years. Many work in new academic centers devoted exclusively to athletes.

Behind the spending binge, fueled by both public and private funds, are toughened NCAA regulations that now punish schools for poor academic performance.

"Now, when I go around and speak on campuses and speak to coaches and athletic programs and to student-athletes, they want to brag about how well they're doing academically," NCAA president Myles Brand said. "They want to show me the academic study centers. The coaches want to talk about and brag about their APR (Academic Progress Report). All that is good. A few years ago, that was the last thing people wanted to talk about.

"It's changed the environment for athletics insofar as it takes seriously now academic progress and accomplishment. There's just no question about it."

Ole Miss opened a remodeled, 23,500 square-foot center a year ago that cost $5 million.

Up the road in Starkville, Mississippi State recently cut the ribbon on a $10 million building that features group and individual study areas, private cubicles for tutoring and the latest in computer and video conferencing, plus a cafeteria and weight room. A school that used to tutor students in a basement now has a facility where 12-foot-tall front doors open onto an elaborate display of great moments in school history that's meant to wow recruits and their parents.

A few weeks after Mississippi State opened its center, South Carolina upped the ante with a groundbreaking ceremony for a $13 million facility. Plans call for a new, three-story center at Oregon.

Oklahoma, with a 30,000 square-foot facility that cost between $7 million and $8 million, spent about $2.45 million helping all its athletes last year.

Florida, the Sooners' opponent in next month's national championship game, spent $1.67 million. Texas ($1.90 million), Ohio State ($1.89 million), Kentucky ($1.86 million), Tennessee ($1.83 million) and Georgia ($1.77 million) are in the same league.

Athletic departments say if such facilities are extravagant, it only demonstrates their commitment to academic success. Even some critics of college sports agree that when schools recruit often underprepared students, and demand thousands of hours of practice and travel time, they owe

them extra help. Sure enough, 79 percent of student-athletes graduated in 2008 a new high, according to the NCAA. Rates are up 3 percent since 2005, when the NCAA put in place a new system for calculating the graduation rate and academic support services were growing.

But there's also a range of criticism. Faculty have raised concerns about oversight, and the growing disparity between concierge-style academic support for athletes and what non-athletes receive.

"It grates," said Kenneth Holum, a longtime University of Maryland history professor and chair of the faculty senate. "Why are the athletes more deserving than the other students? We try hard to give all the students an equal chance to profit from the material we're providing them, and other students don't have this opportunity."

Teachers like Holum also believe that the growing academic support system hurts educational values. They worry student-athletes get so much help that they never learn the lessons of personal responsibility.

They also claim the trend exacerbates the isolation of student-athletes not just socially, but educationally, too in clusters of courses and majors where they are steered because of scheduling or perceived difficulty.

"They're steered to the courses that they know they can pass," Holum said. "If the effort is to keep them eligible, they're being shortchanged."

Advisers to athletes see their work differently. They consider themselves educators. And when they lay out the case in favor of a big investment in academic support, they note that the students they work with often are from disadvantaged backgrounds.

"I'm not saying a regular student is not coming from a single-parent home," said Ericka Lavender, an academic adviser to North Carolina State's football team. "But they're not having to get up at 4:30 in the morning and go all day, and still worry about whether their little brother or sister ate dinner or made it home from school."

Several N.C. State advisers emphasized they do a lot more than line up tutors. They teach study skills and offer career and personal advice. Increasingly, those in the field have graduate degrees in subjects like psychology and special education.

Many are former athletes, such as Natasha Criss, who works with Maryland's men's basketball team. When she came to Maryland as a track-and-field competitor in 1988, there were only four staffers working from cramped quarters in the old Cole Field House. Now she's one of 15 full-time staffers working out of a corporate-like suite in Maryland's Comcast Center arena.

She's pushing the athletes hard. In 2006, none of Maryland's four seniors left with a degree. All three seniors on last season's team graduated.

"She helps us pick our classes, she checks our classes. To be honest with you, our graduation rate is getting better because of her," said forward David Neal, the lone senior on this year's team. "She's hounding us to do our work. We have a mandatory study hall because of her. Her job is to make us graduate, and she's doing a great job of it."

Critics readily acknowledge student-athletes are entitled to academic help. But the rapid spending growth makes them skeptical the money is being doled out thoughtfully.

A big question is oversight: Whom do the academic advisers work for? The players? Coaches? The university?

"It's a straightforward potential conflict of interest," said Nathan Tublitz, a University of Oregon neuroscientist who works with the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics, an alliance of Division I faculty senates dedicated to academic reform.

Since programs need athletes to stay eligible, "it's in their best interest to find advisers to make sure they will be eligible, whether they do it the right way or the wrong way," he said.

Mark Meleney, president of the National Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics, estimates about half of academic support operations nationwide report to the athletic director, not the academic side of the university though Meleney personally thinks the latter structure is preferable.

A standard reply from defenders of academic services is that cheaters will cheat no matter who's in charge.

Meleney knows that point all too well. At Florida State, where he works, the advisers report to the academic side. But FSU has been embroiled in a scandal in which 61 athletes were found to have engaged in academic fraud involving an online music course. It was determined that two employees in FSU's office of Athletic Academic Support services, which Meleney led, had enabled and encouraged the cheating. FSU failed to monitor aspects of the program, and the NCAA's Division I Committee on Infractions will soon issue its decision.

In the wake of the scandal, Meleney's contract was not renewed and he was reassigned elsewhere in the university this year. He no longer works in the field whose professional association he leads.

Another worry is that the growth in academic support services and their facilities for athletes' exclusive use is contributing to the isolation of student-athletes on campus.

At Maryland, the basketball players practice, eat dinner together and then report to study hall in the Comcast Center, saving them travel time back and forth to campus. That may help them bond and save time for studying, but it's an example of how they can be further isolated from the student body.

Then there is the so-called "clustering" of student-athletes in certain courses and majors.

It's not unusual to find former student-athletes with stories like that of Ryan Roques, who was a starting defensive back at UCLA. He was on path to a psychology degree, but a class he needed to remain eligible conflicted with practice.

His academic advisers said he only had one choice.

"They said, 'Well, you've got to switch your major,'" Roques recalled. "I said, 'What major could I possibly be three-quarters done with if I've actually been majoring in psychology.' They were like, 'Well, let's see here, sociology or history.'"

Roques graduated in 2000 with a degree in sociology.

"A sociology degree, I don't even know what using that would be," he said with a laugh.

After years of working within the system and rationalizing the treatment of players like Roques, David Ridpath, a former compliance director, changed direction when he became entangled in NCAA sanctions at Marshall in 2002. He says he was unfairly used as a scapegoat amid accusations of wrongdoing, including academic fraud.

Now a sports administration professor at Ohio University, Ridpath heads The Drake Group, a watchdog that has proposed doing away with stand-alone support centers and moving athletes into the normal academic advising system.

"The big problem with these academic centers for me is very clear and only because I lived it and I can say this from experience," he said. "The goal is to keep the kids eligible, and there's a big difference between keeping kids eligible and helping them get a viable college education."

From 1999 to 2002, Jason Lanter was an academic adviser at Maryland in the division of letters and sciences, home to students with undecided majors. He also was an academic counselor to students who simultaneously worked with advisers from the athletics department.

He recalls student-athletes coming to him with course cards written in someone else's handwriting.

"It's pretty easy to read between the lines that the athletic counselors are just putting standard courses down," said Lanter, now a professor at Kutztown University and the president-elect of The Drake Group. "I'm not saying everybody did this, but it was enough for it to be an issue for concern for me. It's just frustrating when I don't think the athletes are receiving the education they were promised as part of their scholarship."

Deborah Reid Bryant, a Maryland assistant dean who oversees the department where Lanter worked, says policy changes implemented in 2005 have improved communication between advisers in the athletic department and their academic-side counterparts.

Said Reid Bryant, who arrived in 2006: "Each semester has gotten better and better."

A sign on Karen Schiferl's wall at Ole Miss reads: "You can't fix stupid."
Everyone else, however, can be helped.

An associate athletic director who runs the school's academic support operation, Schiferl and her staff see students with all kinds of needs. After assessing an athlete's learning style, they offer a variety of tools to help students keep pace from simple major advising to more involved help allowed under the Americans with Disabilities Act, including the use of readers and note takers.

Schiferl and her employees are aware of the arguments that swirl around athletes' use of academic centers. They try to stay away from the debate and just assist each individual.

"We just have to help that kid as much as possible," Schiferl said. "What we really do, because of where things are, we have to compensate. We can't remediate. We can't make up for 19 years of not knowing. We have to figure out a way to sometimes compensate for that lack of knowledge."

A handful of Ole Miss athletes come from some of the nation's poorest counties and don't have a rigorous education to begin with. Others never took learning seriously until forced to keep pace or lose eligibility. Schiferl says a key to improving athletes' lives is teaching good study habits and time management.

Peria Jerry, an Ole Miss defensive lineman who like Oher will likely be selected early in the NFL draft, says he didn't take high school seriously and was forced to go to prep school to qualify for college. Over time, his view of learning changed.

"I enjoy it now," Jerry said. "It's really easier than I thought it was going to be. I mean, a little studying ain't going to hurt. It's only going to help you out. That's the way it is for the game. You've got to study film to see what the opponent's going to bring to the table, so it's basically all the same."

## The New York Times
## SAT Changes Policy, Opening Rift With Colleges

December 31, 2008
By SARA RIMER

This March, high school juniors taking the SAT will have the option of choosing which scores to send to colleges while hiding those they do not want admissions officials to see.

The new policy is called Score Choice, and the College Board hopes it will reduce student stress around the SAT and college admissions.

But when it comes to college admissions, few things are ever simple. Some highly selective colleges have already said that they will not go along with Score Choice, and the policy is stirring heated debate among high school counselors and college admissions officials.

Some argue that it is really a marketing tool, intended to encourage students to take the test more often. Others say that, contrary to the College Board's goal, the policy will aggravate the testing frenzy and add yet another layer of stress and complexity to applying to college.

"In practice, it will add more anxiety, more confusion, more testing for those who can afford it and more coaching," said Brad MacGowan, a college counselor at Newton North High School in suburban Boston and a longtime critic of the College Board and standardized testing.

Many students take the SAT more than once, and the College Board automatically sends colleges the scores of every SAT test a student takes.

Under Score Choice, students can choose their best overall SAT sitting to send to colleges, but they will not be able to mix and match scores from different sittings. (Each sitting includes tests in critical reading, mathematics and writing, with a top score of 800 in each area.)

There is no additional charge if a student selects Score Choice, which also applies to SAT subject tests, formerly called SAT II and given in areas like history, sciences and languages.

Score Choice is not a new concept. From 1993 to 2002, students were allowed to take as many SAT subject tests as they wanted and to report only their best scores to the colleges they applied to.

In ending that policy in 2002, the College Board said that some students who had stored their scores had forgotten to release them and missed admissions deadlines. It also said that ending Score Choice would be fairer to low-income and minority students, who did not have the resources to keep retaking the tests.

Now, the College Board sees things differently.

“It simply allows students to put their best foot forward,” said Laurence Bunin, a senior vice president with the College Board.

With Score Choice, Mr. Bunin said, students can “feel very comfortable going into the test center because, goodness forbid, if for whatever reason they don’t feel comfortable, it won’t be on their permanent record forever.”

William R. Fitzsimmons, the dean of admissions at Harvard, shares that view.

“In some respect,” Mr. Fitzsimmons said, “Score Choice will help defuse some of the pressure and give students a sense that not everything is riding on the tests, which really is the case.”

But Jerome A. Lucido, the vice provost for enrollment policy and management at the University of Southern California, said, “Students will like it because they’ll have a sense of control, but my sense is that it’s not worth the trade-off in terms of complexity and more gamesmanship.”

A major concern has to do with how colleges will handle Score Choice.

Admissions officials at some highly selective colleges — the University of Southern California, Stanford, Claremont McKenna and the University of Pennsylvania, among others — have said that, Score Choice or not, they want all the scores — from the SAT and the ACT.

It is in the students’ best interest to send all scores, these officials say, because their practice is to combine the highest subscores from all of the score reports.

“Our plan is to first tell students to relax,” said Bruce Poch, vice president and dean of admissions at Pomona College. “The habit here is like many colleges, which is to see it all, but consider for admission purposes the highest individual score.”

Gary Meunier, a counselor at Weston High School, in Weston, Conn., said one reason he favored Score Choice was that while he believed that most schools did look at the highest subscores, he had also seen schools rule out students with any scores below 500.

“Some kids, their performance in the classroom far exceeds the way they perform on standardized tests,” Mr. Meunier said. With Score Choice, “they get a couple more shots at it,” he said. “For those kids, they take it with a little less anxiety. At one test, if they blow it, no one’s going to see it.”

Some critics of the new policy note that the SAT’s main rival, the ACT, which has been drawing increasing numbers of test takers, has long had a de facto Score Choice policy.

“Was this a student-centered decision?” said Richard H. Shaw, dean of admissions at Stanford, referring to the College Board’s reason for introducing Score Choice. “Or was it business-centered because they’re worried about losing market share?”

Mr. Shaw added that he was equally opposed to the ACT's de facto Score Choice. "I don't want to give them any credit whatsoever," he said. "I think they started this."

Score Choice was developed in response to student demand, Mr. Bunin said. "The students were clear," he said. "They thought that having some control over their scores would reduce their stress."

The College Board surveyed more than 3,000 high school students from a range of income groups and ethnicities, Mr. Bunin said. It also surveyed 700 counselors from a diverse group of high schools across the country, and 70 percent favored Score Choice, he said.

But other counselors, as well as admissions officials, have expressed concern that the policy will give affluent students who can afford to take the SAT many times an even greater advantage.

Among the questions being asked about how Score Choice will work is this one: What if a student opts for Score Choice and tries to apply it to a college that requires all the scores?

Mr. Poch of Pomona said: "My own view is that tests are a transcript. I don't get to choose which grades appear on a transcript any more than I get to suppress a driving record from an insurance company."

*Tamar Lewin contributed reporting.*

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: Behind the line on grades

MIKE KNOBLER
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution
December 28, 2008 Sunday

Football and men's basketball players on the nation's big-time college teams averaged hundreds of points lower on their SATs than their classmates, and some of the gaps are so large they call into question the lengths to which schools will go to win.

The biggest gap between football players and students as a whole occurred at the University of Florida, where players scored 346 points lower than the school's overall student body. That's larger than the difference in scores between typical students at the University of Georgia and Harvard University.

Nationwide, football players average 220 points lower on the SAT than their classmates --- and men's basketball players average seven points less than football players.

Those figures come from an Atlanta Journal-Constitution study of 54 public universities, including the members of the six major Bowl Championship Series conferences and other schools whose teams finished the 2007-08 season ranked among the football or men's basketball top 25.

While it's commonly known that admission standards are different for athletes, the AJC study quantifies how wide the gap is between athletes and the general student body at major universities.

Georgia Tech's football players had the nation's best average SAT score, 1028 of a possible 1600, and best average high school GPA, 3.39 of a possible 4.0 in the core curriculum. But Tech's football players still scored 315 SAT points lower on average than their classmates.

At the University of Georgia, the average football SAT was 949, which is 239 points behind the average for an undergraduate student at Georgia --- and 79 points behind Tech's football average. The Bulldogs' average high school GPA was 2.77, or 45th out of 53 teams for which football GPAs were available. Their SAT average ranked them 22nd.

Nationwide, coaches who would never offer a scholarship to a player who was 6 inches shorter or half a second slower than other prospects routinely recruit players whose standardized test scores suggest they're at a competitive disadvantage in the classroom.

It's the price of winning.

"If you're going to mount a competitive program in Division I-A, and our institution is committed to do that, some flexibility in admissions of athletes is going to take place," said Tom Lifka, chairman of the committee that handles athlete admissions at the University of California,

Los Angeles. "Every institution I know in the country operates in the same way. It may or may not be a good thing, but that's the way it is."

UCLA, which has won more NCAA championships in all sports than any other school, had the biggest gap between the average SAT scores of athletes in all sports and its overall student body, at 247 points.

Administrators such as Lifka say the SAT gap between athletes and non-athletes is the price of fielding a team, and they argue what's important is that large numbers of their scholarship athletes earn degrees. Critics say athletes who arrive on campus unprepared to compete academically get shuffled off to easy majors and unchallenging courses and don't receive much of an education.

Questions about fairness

"The problem is there's a huge world of Mickey Mouse courses and special curriculums that athletes are steered into," said Murray Sperber, a visiting professor in the University of California's graduate school of education and the author of four books about college athletics and college life. "The problem is there are many athletes graduating from schools who are semiliterate."

Who gets hurt? Former Princeton University President William Bowen points to the students the colleges would have admitted if they hadn't enrolled less qualified athletes.

"There are grounds for concern," Bowen said. "Places at a lot of these schools are precious things. To have them allocated this way raises troubling questions about fairness, about taking advantage of educational opportunity."

But Georgia Tech men's basketball coach Paul Hewitt says he and other coaches are able to go beyond test scores to find recruits who can succeed in school while also having the talent to play at a high level.

Hewitt says the only fair comparison is between athletes and other students with similar socioeconomic backgrounds. Seen that way, he argues, athletics programs perform very well. Black athletes, for example, graduate at higher rates than black students as a whole.

"To insinuate that athletics has caused this problem of poor graduation rates [among black students] is wrong," Hewitt said.

The Journal-Constitution obtained the test scores and other academic data from reports each major college athletics department is required to file with the NCAA, college sports' governing body. The NCAA considers the reports confidential; the Journal-Constitution obtained them under state public record laws.

The reports are required only once in 10 years; the Journal-Constitution requested the data from the most recent report filed by each school.

The data from the University of Georgia are for the freshman classes of 1997, 1998 and 1999. The university does not have more recent information, athletics department spokesman Claude Felton said. The data from Georgia Tech are for the freshman classes of 2003, 2004 and 2005.

The differences in the age of the data make comparisons among the schools imperfect, but there are two reasons to think they're still noteworthy. First, there's little difference on average between the figures for the schools with the oldest data and those with the newest. Second, each school reported figures for three consecutive freshman classes, and the average change in the football team's SAT scores was less than three points between a school's oldest class and its most recent. Twenty-seven schools improved their average football SAT; 26 didn't. Also, regardless of the differences between individual schools, some universal truths emerged:

- All 53 schools for which football SAT scores were available had at least an 88-point gap between team members' average score and the average for the student body.

- Schools with the highest admissions standards, such as Georgia Tech; the University of Virginia; the University of California, Berkeley; UCLA; and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, had the biggest gaps between the SAT averages for athletes and the overall student body.

- Football players performed 115 points worse on the SAT than male athletes in other sports.

- The differences between athletes' and non-athletes' SAT scores was less than half as big for women (73 points) as for men (170).

- Many schools routinely used a special admissions process to admit athletes who did not meet the normal entrance requirements. More than half of scholarship athletes at the University of Georgia, the University of Wisconsin, Clemson University, UCLA, Rutgers University, Texas A&M University and Louisiana State University were special admits.

"If the university says they'd help us meet team needs, that's as important as finding an oboist for the orchestra," said Nancy McDuff, the University of Georgia's associate vice president for admissions and enrollment management.

Special admissions

The numbers, however, show special admissions exceptions are used far more often for athletes than oboists. At Georgia, for instance, 73.5 percent of athletes were special admits compared with 6.6 percent of the student body as a whole.

The University of Oklahoma and the University of Florida, whose football teams play Jan. 8 for the national championship, ranked near the bottom in standardized test scores. Florida's freshman

football classes of 2002-04 ranked 50th in average score out of 53 schools for which football SAT averages were available, and Oklahoma's freshman football classes of 2001-03 ranked 42nd. Florida's football players ranked last in average high school GPA, at 2.54. The average for all football players in the study was 2.93.

This season is typical. Five of the last seven public universities to win college football's national championship ranked among the study's bottom 20 in football SAT scores.

It's true not just in big-time college sports but even in the Ivy League. Football players in the Ivies' 1995 freshman class scored 144 points lower on average than other Ivy League men, according to Bowen's book "Reclaiming the Game."

The key question, Lifka said, is whether schools admit only athletes who have a reasonable chance to succeed academically. Seventy percent of UCLA athletes graduate within six years of enrollment, according to the latest figures reported by the NCAA. Nationally, the figure for athletes is 64 percent, two points higher than for all students, though athletes in the high-profile sports fared worse. Division I-A football players were six points behind the rate for all students, and men's basketball players were 13 points behind.

Lifka said his 26 years of experience working with athletic admissions have shown him high school GPAs do a much better job than test scores in predicting athletes' college success. Coaches and athletes say a player's attitude toward school and willingness to put in the effort matter as much as anything.

"If the teacher can teach it, I can learn it," said Calvin Booker, a senior quarterback who transferred from Auburn University to Georgia Tech two years ago.

Even Sperber, a critic of the college athletics system, says the test scores in the Journal-Constitution study should not feed a dumb jock stereotype. Instead, he said, the scores reflect the students' background and their focus on sports over academics.

"I met very, very few certifiably dumb jocks," Sperber said, adding that athletes whose athletics careers were over proved to be some of his best students. "The discipline they had learned in sports they finally could apply full time," he said.

NCAA President Myles Brand said the big question isn't whether athletes are as qualified as other students when they enroll but whether, given help, they can obtain degrees. "What you are really looking for is whether the student-athletes who are being accepted have the capability of graduating from that institution with the academic support they have available," Brand said.

Schools make the call

The NCAA leaves that calculation to its member schools, though various reforms over the past 25 years set minimum standards for freshman eligibility. Brand said it's not up to the NCAA to

regulate how many admissions exceptions a school grants recruited athletes and how much of a gap there can be between athletes' academic qualifications and those of other students.

"Admission standard is entirely the province of the school," he said.

Brand is concerned enough about the numbers of special admissions that he is instituting a program to alert college presidents whose schools grant an unusually high number of exceptions.

The decision how far to go in lowering admissions standards for athletes varies considerably from school to school. It can be a challenge to avoid a race to the bottom.

"We go out on the field and get beaten by people we couldn't admit," said Charles Young, former president of the University of Florida and former chancellor of UCLA. "It creates strong pressures to go [to rival schools' admissions standards], and there have to be very strong countervailing pressures to avoid going there."

One observer says the Journal-Constitution figures show current university policies are less about admitting only qualified students and more about lowering standards for athletes and then dealing with the consequences.

"They're saying we'll take just about anybody as long as we can get them through," said Allen Sack, director of the University of New Haven's Institute for Sport Management and a former University of Notre Dame football player. "They're betting what they can do is they can get anyone through school if they get the right kind of counseling."

## Public university athletes score far below classmates on SATs

Associated Press
January 1, 2009

ATLANTA, Ga. (AP) — Football and men's basketball players are averaging hundreds of points less on their college entrance exams than their classmates, according to a newspaper's study of 54 public universities.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution review found the biggest gap between football players and students occurred at the University of Florida, where players scored 346 points lower than the school's overall student body.

Football players averaged 220 points lower on the SAT than their classmates — and men's basketball players average seven points less than football players, the paper reported.

The paper reviewed 54 public universities, including the members of the six Bowl Championship Series conferences — the Big East, Big 12, Big Ten, Pac-10, SEC and ACC — and other schools whose teams finished the 2007-08 season ranked among the football or men's basketball top 25.

Georgia Tech's football players had the nation's best average SAT score average, 1,028 of a possible 1,600, and best average high school GPA, 3.39 of a possible 4.0 in the core curriculum.

But Tech's football players still scored 315 SAT points lower on average than their classmates.

"If you're going to mount a competitive program in Division I-A, and our institution is committed to do that, some flexibility in admissions of athletes is going to take place," Tom Lifka, chairman of the committee that handles athlete admissions at UCLA, told the newspapers. "Every institution I know in the country operates in the same way. It may or may not be a good thing, but that's the way it is."

UCLA has won more NCAA championships in all sports than any other school and had the biggest gap between the average SAT scores of athletes in all sports and its overall student body, at 247 points.

Critics say athletes who arrive on campus unprepared to compete academically get shuffled off to easy majors and unchallenging courses and don't receive much of an education.

"The problem is there's a huge world of Mickey Mouse courses and special curriculums that athletes are steered into," Murray Sperber, a visiting professor in the University of California's graduate school of education, told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. "The problem is there are many athletes graduating from schools who are semiliterate."

The Journal-Constitution obtained the test scores and other academic data from reports each major college athletics department is required to file with the NCAA. That governing body considers the reports confidential but the newspaper obtained them under state public record laws.

The reports are required once every decade and the Journal-Constitution requested the data from the most recent report filed by each school.

Many schools routinely used a special admissions process to admit athletes who did not meet the normal entrance requirements. More than half of scholarship athletes at the University of Georgia, the University of Wisconsin, Clemson University, UCLA, Rutgers University, Texas A&M University and LSU were special admits.

"If the university says they'd help us meet team needs, that's as important as finding an oboist for the orchestra," said Nancy McDuff, the University of Georgia's associate vice president for admissions and enrollment management.

NCAA President Myles Brand said the question isn't whether athletes are as qualified when they enroll but their potential for success.

"What you are really looking for is whether the student-athletes who are being accepted have the capability of graduating from that institution with the academic support they have available," Brand said.

## NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet
## NCAA Approved Meeting Sites

The following cities are approved to conduct NCAA committee meetings:

Albuquerque
Atlanta
Baltimore
Charlotte
Dallas
Denver
Ft. Lauderdale
Houston
Indianapolis
Kansas City
Memphis
Miami
Milwaukee
Minneapolis
Nashville
New Orleans
Orlando
Phoenix
Pittsburgh
Portland
Raleigh
Salt Lake City
San Antonio
San Jose
Savannah
Seattle
St. Louis
Tucson

# February 2010

February 2010

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March 2010

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