

A GEOGRAPHICAL AND DEMOGRAPHICAL COMPARISON
OF GRADUATION RATES OF STUDENTS
AND STUDENT-ATHLETES AT THE
NCAA DIVISION I LEVEL

by

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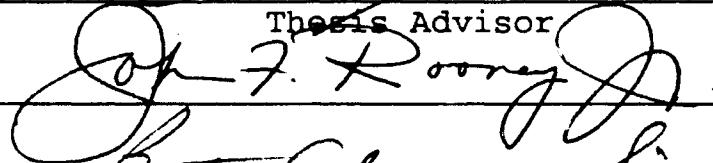
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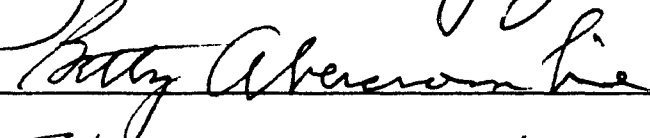
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

One of the most interesting aspects of sports in society today is the amount of media attention devoted to off the field topics. There are still recaps of recent games, statistics sections filled with batting averages, scoring averages, and the league or personal standings. But, in today's papers, they are next to stories of how much money one makes in his contracts and endorsements, scrutiny of his social life and any impending legal battles.

Former Supreme Court Justice Byron "Whizzer" White, himself a great athlete, once said that he always read the sports section of his newspaper first because it was the only section that had good news. I doubt Whizzer would say that now.

In major college athletics, much of the off field news centers around the seemingly overwhelming professionalism that is taking over the campuses and destroying the goals of higher education. It seems like the last decade has produced a tremendous amount of coverage regarding the academic situation in college athletics.

One gets the impression that this topic is a new and imminent problem that must be dealt with immediately. However, the discussion of academic success in college athletics is one that has been around for quite some time. A 1929 report from the Carnegie Fund for the Advancement of

Teaching could find it's way right into today's papers. "In college athletics," it stated "recruiting had become corrupt, professionals had replaced amateurs, education was being neglected, and commercialism reigned" (Savage, 1929).

Because of the tremendous amount of recent media coverage, the public is voicing their concern. One study shows that 74% of the American public feel college sport is spiraling out of control as it wrestles with the problems of improper recruiting, low academic standards, race and sex discrimination, and the increasing power of the media (Farrell, 1990).

These concerns ultimately led this discussion into the houses of the United States Senate. On June 26, 1984, there was a hearing before the Subcommittee of Education, Arts, and Humanities of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources. This hearing featured prominent people in the field of college athletics and education reporting to the committees on the current status of the concerns towards athletics in higher education.

While this particular session was merely investigational and informative, it served notice that this subject was important to many and that the government was now involved in this matter. Ultimately the government became legislatively involved in college athletics when it passed Senate bill 580, the "Student Athlete Right-to-Know Act." This bill requires

colleges and universities that receive any federal assistance and provide athletic aid of any kind, to disclose information pertaining to graduation rates, fields of study, etc (United States GAO, 1989).

The result is that there is now finally some information available on the comparison of academic success between athletes and non athletes, and between athletes of different sports. This information will be the primary source for this study.

Need for the Study

As mentioned earlier, studies show that there is an increasing sentiment among the public that education is being neglected in college athletics. The researcher, from personal experiences as a college athlete and then as a college coach, has endured years of being constantly queried about these matters.

The researcher's question has always been whether the media and the general public are looking at this situation in fair and justifiable terms. Are the reported horrors of academic neglect and educational improprieties widespread or are they isolated? Are the reports for the athletic department as a whole or just one particular team or sport? There are several high profile universities that have had tremendous success on the field yet are perceived as having non student athletes. There needs to be documentation as to whether or not these situations are true, whether or not other

schools are experiencing similar problems, and how these situations can be explained.

Statement of the Problem

It is clear to anyone who has followed this situation in college athletics over the past years that there is an image problem that college student-athletes face regarding their academic standing.

The media has scrutinized programs and delivered eye opening statistics of tremendous academic failure in many magazine articles and even books dealing with the problems at schools like UNLV and Kentucky. The groundswell of public concern over these statistics has led to firing of some coaches and forced even the government to become involved.

In selecting the problem for this study, the researcher considered several factors. First, while some of the stories would show statistics on grade point averages and graduation rates that were shocking, the complete studies were not ever presented. It was not known if these study groups were representative of all the other years at the school in question. Secondly, it wasn't known how the statistics compared to the students at that particular school. Thirdly, it wasn't known how those statistics compared with other athletes in different sports at that particular school. And lastly, it wasn't known how those statistics compared with all the other schools in the nation. These four considerations led ultimately to the purpose of this study, which is to

analyze the academic success of college athletes by comparing graduation rates of athletes and non athletes in similar demographic and regional settings. This includes demographic and geographic comparisons of athletes and students, athletes and athletes and regions and regions.

As a sidebar to this study, the researcher believed that it would be interesting to interview coaches from different demographical and geographical classes in order to ascertain their personal feelings on the subject of academic neglect and abuse in sports. The coaches were queried regarding the current status of academics in athletics and regarding their opinions on some of the often mentioned proposed solutions to the problems.

Research Questions

The research questions of the study were identified as:

1. Is there a significant difference in the graduation rates of athletes and the graduation rates of non-athletes at the Division I level?
2. Is there a significant difference in the graduation rates of male athletes in different sports at the Division I level, specifically in men's basketball which is the area of interest in this study?
3. Are there regional variations in the graduation rates of the male athletes that reflect the role and meaning of sport in those regions?
4. Is there a consensus among coaches regarding their opinions on the topic of academic achievement by the student-athletes?

Assumptions

The study was subject to the following assumptions:

1. The questionnaires returned by the coaches participating contained truthful information, based on factual data.

2. The years or classes (1983 & 1984 entering freshman) tracked in the NCAA GRADUATION RATES REPORT are classes that are representative of freshman classes in recent history.

Delimitations

While the review of literature contains information from varied sources and surveys over the years in athletics, this survey includes only the 1983 & 1984 freshman classes at 55 selected NCAA Division I schools.

Limitations

This study was subject to the following limitations:

1. The accuracy of the information contained in the NCAA Graduation Rates Report, the primary source of information.
2. The accuracy and truthfulness of the answers given by the coaches who returned the surveys regarding personal opinions on the subject.

Definitions

NCAA: The National Collegiate Athletic Association serves as the governing body for intercollegiate athletics. The NCAA had divided their member institutions into three separate divisions for play, Divisions I, II, and III. Division I is made up mainly of larger enrollment schools that offer some type of athletic scholarship and attempt to compete at the highest level. The NCAA is headquartered in Shawnee Mission, Kansas.

GRADUATION RATE: A graduation rate (percent) is based on a comparison of the number of students (n) who entered a college or university and the number of those who graduated within six years.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

At their best, intercollegiate athletics provide millions of people with great pleasure. Thousands of men and women are stronger adults because of the challenges they mastered as young athletes (Knight Commission, 1991). Under the best of circumstances they are a cohesive force, uniting students, faculty, alumni and fans (Rooney, 1985).

At their worst, big time college athletics threaten to overwhelm the universities and undermine the integrity of higher education (Knight Commission, 1991). The benefits have taken a price from our athletes. Only the most dedicated student-athletes succeed academically (Rooney, 1985).

The above two paragraphs echo the sentiments of almost all the literature existing on the subject of academics and athletics. But there is hardly ever any statistical data backing up either of these positions. There may be an occasional article documenting a particular team's poor grade point average or graduation rate, but these articles have been very rare and often incomplete in offering the total picture.

It is the goal of this study to offer the thorough analysis of academic standing in intercollegiate athletics. As a result of recent legislation, there is information available that will document very specifically the recent status of academic success in major college athletics.

To best understand the situation, this review of literature will focus on the history of this topic, cite the existing data on the geographical and demographical information relevant to the study, and discuss some of the common solutions suggested to make the allegedly flawed world of college athletics a better place.

As mentioned earlier in this paper, the concern over the impropriety in college athletics can be traced back to the early beginnings of this century. Actually, the year that Princeton and Rutgers first played intercollegiate football (1869), a game between the two schools was canceled because the faculties feared overemphasis (Cramer, 1986).

Collegiate sport surfaced out of the entertainment void felt by the American public after the end of autumn and the professional baseball season. Schools eventually professionalized their teams by paying and recruiting their players, much like their baseball teams. Collegiate football and basketball filled the void in the sports system in the United States (Rooney, 1985).

Many believe that the order American sport took in the beginning, collegiate football and basketball before professional football and basketball, was a big contributor to concern over collegiate sport. One author notes,

America is unique in their history of professional sport and many feel this is the largest contributor to abuse in the collegiate system. The fact that intercollegiate football and basketball began before the professional versions of those and so precluded the formation of viable minor leagues in those sports - has created a situation that is unknown and unthinkable in other countries. In the U.S., outstanding high school football and basketball players, often with little interest in and preparation for higher education, are required to attend a university in order to gain an opportunity to play their sport at the pro level (Sperber, 1990).

Rooney agrees that the unusual origin has made big time college football and basketball very similar to the N.F.L. and the N.B.A. (Rooney and Pillsbury 1993). They have big stadiums and crowds, coaches that are paid well, excellent media coverage and the athletes are top notch athletes who dedicate most of their time and energy to sports. But because these sports were first being played at the collegiate level, most of the big time programs are found in small towns which is unlike the professional basketball and football teams. Rooney also feels that the current status of professional sports is a cause for collegiate concern,

Because of the paucity of professional sport franchises, universities have created high-profile, sophisticated sports programs to cater to the entertainment needs of their state and regional constituencies. American sports fans have been conditioned to expect first class sports entertainment from our universities because we have a poorly developed professional sports entertainment delivery system. Compared to people in other industrialized countries, Americans have about one-tenth the live per-capita access to sports; just one professional pro football or baseball franchise per eight million people" (Rooney, 1982).

While discussing the history of concern of abuse and academic neglect in collegiate sport, it should be noted that the majority of written and broadcast literature is devoted to football and men's basketball. Because of the enormous popularities of these sports on the professional and amateur levels, these sports have drawn the fans, created the revenues, and thus, have had the most intense media scrutinization. "Everybody would pretty much agree that we need to focus on football and basketball, that's where the salient problems are" said Richard McGuire, an academic advisor at the University of Virginia (Lederman, 1991).

Not only has most of the information focused on football and basketball, but most of it focuses on only a handful of schools

At the 828 colleges and universities that comprise the NCAA, over 254,000 young men and women participate in 21 different sports each year in about one quarter of a million contests. At the huge majority of these institutions, virtually all of these young athletes participate in these contests without any evidence of scandal or academic abuse. The problems are not confined to big schools, or to football or basketball or to men's sports. But they are most apparent within major athletic programs and are concentrated most strongly in those sports for which collegiate participation serves the talented few as an apprenticeship for professional careers (Knight Commission, 1991).

There is very little literature documenting the academic situations in college athletes. In particular, information on graduation rates and the geographical and demographical interpretation of that information is almost nonexistent. Of

the literature that is there, most of it tends to agree with the theories that there is more reason for concern at institutions with major athletic programs. It doesn't reveal much concern over the smaller schools and it does show that some schools seem to serve only as a stepping stone to the professional ranks.

A study of former athletes at Memphis State University, a major sports school, reveals that most athletes in football and basketball did not start to college with a degree as their principal goal (Boone, 1987). They came instead to play ball. They enjoyed their sports, and college athletics represented a chance to keep playing in an exciting atmosphere. And the career that most of them expected when starting out was that of a professional athlete. The graduation rates for the athletes in this study further reveal that view. The football players had a rate of 51% (39/76) while the basketball players had a rate of 11% (2/18).

A study was done at Cincinnati Technical College surveying 51 basketball players and 51 non-players with similar aptitude test scores. The study shows that 9 of the 51 basketball players had graduated while only 7 of the 51 non-players graduated (Marcotte, 1986).

The University of California at Davis conducted a comprehensive study of athletes graduation rates. The UC-Davis study is one of the only projects analyzing some of the specifics this study will examine. The UC-Davis study

analyzes graduation rates for male athletes and male students for the years 1970-79. They also break down the rates by specific sport. The study shows that the male athlete graduation rate is 79%, compared to the student rate of 68%. It also shows a reasonably consistent breakdown between sports. Basketball graduated 94% of its players, Football, Cross Country and Golf graduated between 81% and 89% of its players, and Water Polo, Baseball and Soccer graduated between 69% - 73% of its players (McKenzie, 1981).

The University of California at Davis graduation rates were based on a six year period, and this appears more to be the most realistic timetable for graduation rate analysis. Much of the attention centering on academic neglect among collegiate athletes used to be based on horrendous four year graduation rates. Much of the literature now show trends of students taking longer and longer to graduate.

U.S. Newspapers are explaining the reasons for students taking longer than the traditional four years to graduate, if they graduate at all. A Richmond Times-Dispatch article reveals 50% - 75% of students at Virginia's colleges and universities are failing to graduate in five years (Intress, 1992). State education officials said the numbers reveal growing differences in the abilities, preparedness and financial situations of students. The University of

Minnesota student newspaper, The Daily, cites a Big Ten conference study where the four year graduation rate at Minnesota is only 8%. The six year rate jumps to 36%. The Big Ten average for four years is 36%, but almost doubles to 60% for five years (Dennis, 1991). Minnesota officials explain the low marks at Minnesota by saying that because Minnesota is a land grant institution, based on the premise that higher education should be available to everyone, there appears to be a great many students who, due to inadequate preparation or financial difficulties, may not be able to carry a full time load for four years.

A study by the City University of New York (CUNY) reveals more about the trend in taking additional time to earn a degree (see Figure 1). In June 1970, 50% of CUNY graduates took more than four years to graduate. In 1973, 62% of graduates took more than four years to graduate and in 1980, 67% of CUNY graduates had taken more than four years to graduate (Murtha, 1989).

By deciding to use only studies that listed graduation rates at five years or six years, a few more published lists of graduation rates were found. The CUNY study showed graduation rates for the freshman class of 1978 to be at 29.6% five years later. The freshman class of 1980 showed a graduation rate five years later of 27.3% (Murtha, 1989).

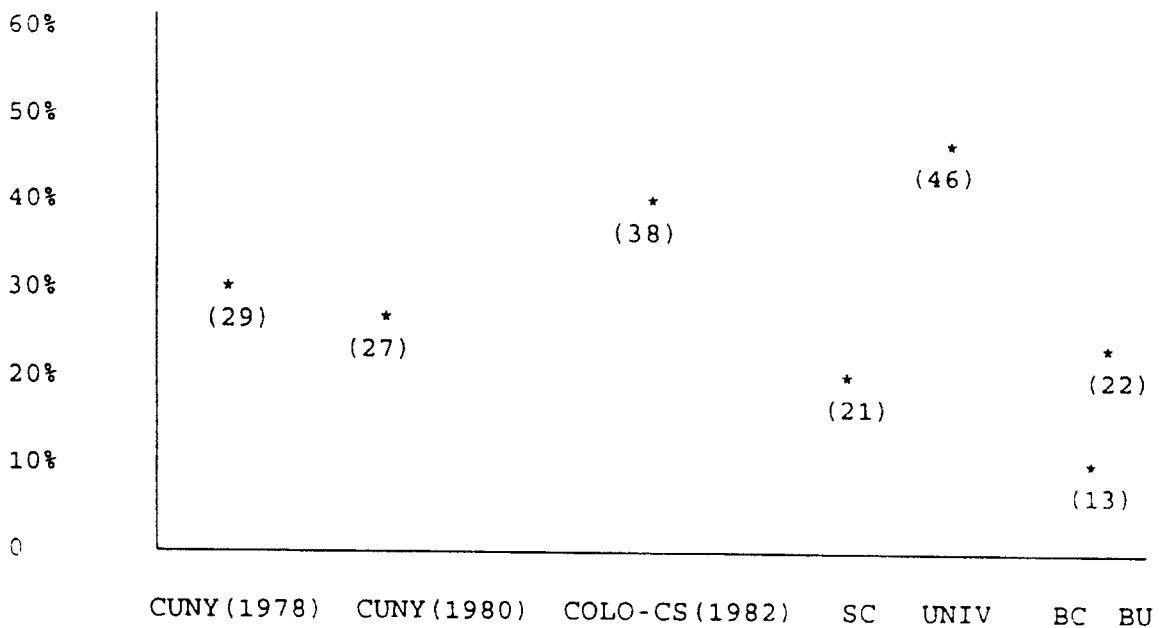
A study analyzing all the Georgia State University and Senior College Systems shows five year rates for the 1983

freshman class. The University system reported a rate of 46% while the Senior Colleges reported a rate of 21%. This study also showed rates separately for blacks. Blacks in the University system graduated in five years at a 22% rate, while the Senior College blacks had a rate of 13% (Szutz and Pounds, 1989).

FIGURE 1

DESCRIPTIVE HISTOGRAM on
the GRADUATION RATES for SELECTED SCHOOLS

Five year Graduation Rates



KEY

CUNY = City University of New York

COLO-CS = Colorado U. @ Colorado Springs

SC, UNIV, BC, BU = (in the Georgia State Colleges and Universities System)

SC = Senior Colleges

UNIV = Universities

BC = Rate for Blacks at Senior Colleges

BU = Rate for Blacks at Universities

An article in USA Today magazine about black collegiate athletes is one of the only other pieces to mention anything about specific racial breakdown of graduation information. The author mentions an undocumented statistic that reveals that only about 20% of black athletes playing Division I football or basketball ever receive college degrees (Farrell, 1990).

One of the most interesting studies seen was completed at Ball State University that compared academic success of not only the student-athletes but also the students that attended sporting events regularly. Using a five year rate, the study showed Ball State student-athletes graduating at a 63% rate, student-athlete spectators at a 66% rate, and the general students at a 49% rate (Henriksen, 1989).

In the Atlas of American Sport, Rooney and Pillsbury have broken down the country into ten geographical regions (see map in Figure 2). For our study's purposes, we will have eleven regions (see Carolinas region). These breakdowns are based primarily on the different characteristics each region offers in the context of sports

The regionality of American culture shapes these experiences into distinct sports regions and landscapes. Each region is increasingly dominated by national trends and the omnipotent role of t.v. programming, yet the major sports regions in the United States continue to thrive. Each is a part of the whole, yet is distinguished on the basis of the combinations of the sports that are played, the quality and intensity of their play, their spectator preferences, and the role of sport generally in the host communities (Rooney and Pillsbury, 1993).

FIGURE 2

Rooney and Pillsbury sports regions map (1992).

Sports Regions

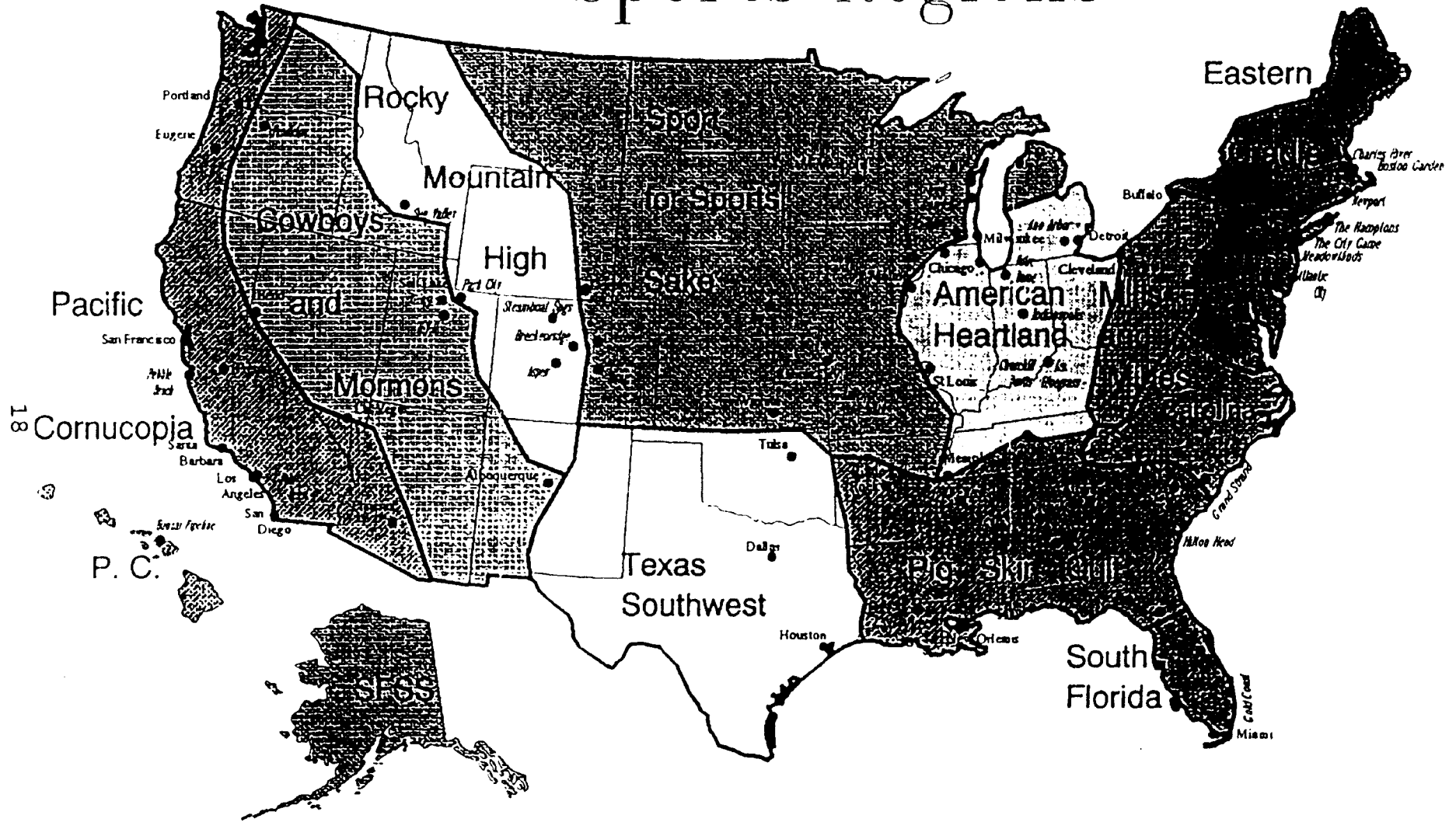


FIGURE 3

LISTING OF SCHOOLS THAT WERE RANDOMLY SELECTED
TO COMPRISE THE SPORT REGIONS FOR THIS SURVEY

REGION I *Pacific Convergence*

1. UNIVERSITY of PORTLAND
2. LOYOLA-MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY
3. CALIFORNIA STATE at LONG BEACH
4. UNIVERSITY of SAN DIEGO
5. ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

REGION II *Cowboys: Mormons*

1. BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY
2. BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
3. UNIVERSITY of NEW MEXICO
4. WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY
5. NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

REGION III *Rocky Mountain High*

1. UNIVERSITY of COLORADO
2. MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
3. UNIVERSITY of WYOMING
4. IDAHO STATE UNIVERSITY
5. UNIVERSITY of IDAHO

REGION IV *Sport for Sport Sake*

1. CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY
2. UNIVERSITY of NORTHERN IOWA
3. UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN - GREEN BAY
4. UNIVERSITY of MISSOURI
5. UNIVERSITY of IOWA

REGION V *Texas Southwest*

1. UNIVERSITY of TULSA
2. TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
3. SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY
4. BAYLOR UNIVERSITY
5. OKLAHOMA UNIVERSITY

REGION VI *American Heartland*

1. NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
2. EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
3. INDIANA UNIVERSITY
4. KENT STATE UNIVERSITY
5. UNIVERSITY of LOUISVILLE

REGION VII *Pigskin Cult*

1. UNIVERSITY of TENNESSEE - CHATANOOGA
2. UNIVERSITY of SOUTH CAROLINA
3. UNIVERSITY of NEW ORLEANS
4. ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
5. UNIVERSITY of SOUTH ALABAMA

REGION VIII *South Florida*

1. UNIVERSITY of MIAMI
2. UNIVERSITY of SOUTH FLORIDA
3. STETSON UNIVERSITY
4. BETHUNE - COOKMAN UNIVERSITY
5. UNIVERSITY of CENTRAL FLORIDA

REGION IX *Carolinas*

1. UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA - CHARLOTTE
2. DUKE UNIVERSITY
3. UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA
4. WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY
5. UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA - WILMINGTON

REGION X *Mills and Mines*

1. PENN STATE UNIVERSITY
2. CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY
3. MARSHALL UNIVERSITY
4. UNIVERSITY of WEST VIRGINIA
5. MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY

REGION XI *Eastern Cradle*

1. VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY
2. UNIVERSITY of MAINE
3. BOSTON COLLEGE
4. UNIVERSITY of HARTFORD
5. FORDHAM UNIVERSITY

The following paragraphs contain a brief summary of the ten (eleven) regions that Rooney and Pillsbury developed and were used in this study. The summations deal mainly with information that might be relevant to this study.

THE EASTERN CRADLE

Consisting of mainly eastern seaboard cities and states, this region is known as the cradle of American sport. The three sports making up America's sports trinity, baseball, basketball and football, all evolved here. But recently, the region's output of athletes in these main sports is at an all time low. Basketball is the only major college sport for many of the schools and fans in this region.

THE CAROLINA SUBREGION

(The Carolinas, considered by Rooney and Pillsbury a subregion of the Eastern Cradle, is considered a separate region for this study's purposes. Basketball is the area of particular interest in this study and the Carolinas are too influential in that respect to not be considered on their own.)

Basketball is easily the regions most important collegiate sport. Schools such as Duke, North Carolina, North Carolina State and South Carolina have heavily impacted the national scene for quite some time.

MILLS AND MINES

The area made up of mining and milling towns of western Pennsylvania, northern West Virginia, eastern Ohio and western New York is a mere ghost of its once proud sporting self. It was an early home of pro football, as well as the prime producer of high school football talent. It also produced many baseball and basketball as well. But the production of top high school players has decreased drastically. The major college teams have remained competitive, but only by recruiting large numbers of athletes from other regions.

AMERICAN HEARTLAND

Basketball has long captured the self-image of the American Heartland, even though the region is one of the most balanced in the nation. The Illinois, Indiana and Kentucky regions have provided major basketball talent from all counties in the region, big and small. Collegiate basketball thrives with Indiana, Michigan, Kentucky and Louisville being national powers. This is probably the most impressive overall sports region with tremendous talent also in football, and tremendous interest in pro and college sports.

SPORT FOR SPORT SAKE

The quality of play in this region seems to be sacrificed for the goals of increasing participation. Some of the sports are very popular, but produce far below the norm of major talent. Football and basketball are the major games throughout the region, but many smaller sports are king in

specific areas. Hockey, wrestling, track and field and even rodeo are extremely important to certain areas. Many outdoor recreational sports thrive in the northern areas.

PIGSKIN CULT

Football is king in this region. High school games regularly see 10,000 or more spectators and the intensity actually builds for college football. This region is also a prime producer of basketball talent and basketball is enjoying more popularity of late, but football is definitely the major concern.

SOUTH FLORIDA

In the past ten to fifteen years, South Florida has established itself as the top producer of high school talent in the country. Major league baseball has found many players here, influenced by the Latin American population. Miami, Florida State and Florida are perennial football powers that recruit almost exclusively from this area. More and more basketball coaches are recruiting this area as well. The presence of millions of visitors to this warm climate has shaped this industry as well. Golf and tennis are extremely popular, and sports such as jai-alai, dog racing and rodeo attract significant attention.

TEXAS SOUTHWEST

Just like the Pigskin Cult, this is football country. First and foremost, community pride and prestige are linked to the performances of the high school team. The region also produces top notch baseball talent, particularly in Oklahoma. Some individual sports are noteworthy, especially wrestling in Oklahoma and track and field in Texas, Basketball has not done well in the past but is getting stronger collegiately with the importing of talent.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH

This region, which has the lowest number of permanent residents, is influenced like South Florida by its sports oriented visitors. This region is characterized by very little team and spectator sports and a large number of individual activities.

COWBOYS AND MORMONS

This region is an area of few cities and long distances. The church dominated tendencies of this area has helped it to overcome its natural barriers to strong team athletics. Football and basketball thrive, partially because the low population levels that make team sports difficult also mean that resources are highly concentrated. The few universities have well funded athletic programs able to attract quality players from outside.

PACIFIC CORNUCOPIA

California has long been perceived as a place of natural and human extremes. This is evident in the broad spectrum of activities there. California is the runaway leader in major league baseball production and Arizona is second. California, Hawaii and Arizona all produce football players at a higher rate than the national average. Basketball is less important, strange considering the dominance of John Wooden and UCLA. The Pacific Cornucopia is most devoted to participatory individual and minor team sports (Rooney and Pillsbury, 1993).

There is now a basis on which to expect to see some geographical and demographical tendencies between graduation rates and emphasis on sports. While the information gathered on graduation rates is not by any means enough to reach final conclusions, it appears there is reason to believe that there might not be any significant differences in the rates of student-athletes and in students. In his article on black athletes, Farrell states that this should not surprise "When examining issues in sports, it should be clearly understood that sports are just a microcosm of society, no better and no worse. The problems that manifest themselves in the rest of society, and particularly those that are overwhelming the black community, also must be faced in the world of athletics" (Farrell, 1990).

Some even think that athletes should always be more successful than the general students. The fact that they are usually on scholarship and are not forced from college for lack of money is one reason cited. They also are forced to use their playing eligibility up in five years so they are more apt to stay in school consecutively. And the academic support staff that most major programs is another strong reason why they should do better, according to certain academic officials (Lederman, 1991).

But ironically, there still appears to be a perception that the academic standing of student-athletes is a major problem, while the situation among students in general is seldom discussed. The two most important pieces of literature today regarding this subject confirm this. The Knight Foundation Commission report was put together by a committee made up of respected college presidents and athletic personnel. One of the four goals of the Commission regarding academics is that the graduation rates of student-athletes will be comparable to the graduation rates of other students who have spent comparable time as full time students. (Knight Foundation Commission, 1991). This assumes it is not already comparable.

And the United States Senate published a document which is almost entirely responsible for the passing of the Student-Athlete Right to Know Act. That act resulted in the NCAA Manual on Graduation Rates, the main body of research in this

project. the opening statement of Senator Metzenbaum says that in far too many cases, the student-athlete leaves school with no degree. He believed that the school is more interested in athletics than academics. (U.S. Senate, 1984).

If the situation is indeed as bleak as some of these articles in the past lead us to believe, what are the some of the causes and recommendations for improvement? Many believe that there is too much money involved in big time college athletics. Cramer says, "before we strap on our shiniest moral armor, let's be honest. If educators were paid up to \$500,000 a year to produce the academic equivalent of the UNLV basketball team, wouldn't education be better off and wouldn't the moralist of administrators cut a few corners" (Cramer, 1986). Many feel that the time commitments put on athletes is a major cause of the problems. Some think that athletes are becoming a sub-culture on campus today with pressures on them and the demands on their time eliminating shared experiences with others (Paterno, 1990). It was suggested that thinking of athletes as traditional students in special circumstances may be doing them a disservice. It might be better to think of them as non-traditional students with their own cultures and problems in relating to the larger system (Sedlacek and Adams-Gaston, 1989).

There are many arguments for and against the remedies suggested to reform and improve the situation in college

athletics. This study's main purpose is to objectively document the graduation rate information in an attempt to see if any or all of these reforms are needed.

CHAPTER III

Methods and Procedures

The purpose of this study is to examine the academic success of college athletes through a demographical and geographical analysis of graduation rates of student athletes and the general student body. While grade point averages, honors won, course load and other factors provide insight into one's academic career, for the purpose of this study, the ultimate indicator of success is whether or not the student graduates. The following explains the selection of subjects, development of the survey instrument, collection of data and procedures used in the statistical analysis of the results.

Selection of Subjects

The researcher, using a random selection process, selected 55 Division I schools to be a part of the graduation rate data gathering process. All NCAA Division I schools were given a number that corresponded to where they were alphabetically in the NCAA BLUE BOOK. A Minneapolis - St. Paul phone book was used as a random numbers table. These schools are NCAA Division I institutions, competing in intercollegiate athletics. These schools were selected with geographical consideration. Using the geographical breakdown in Rooney's Atlas of American Sport (1993) as a guide, eleven regions were developed. The first five schools randomly selected within one of the eleven geographic regions would

comprise that particular region. This would go on until each of the eleven regions had a five schools sample.

Twenty five coaches were randomly selected using a similiar random number process from a list of contacts the researcher has made in his professional career. This list was used for two specific reasons. Most importantly, the researcher felt that he would receive the highest return rate from coaches that know him and would trust his assurances of confidentiality. Second, this list is a cross-section of geographic and demographic make-up.

Development of Survey Instrument

A questionnaire was developed to meet the needs of this study. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire was determined through a test and re-test reliability process. Five other coaches were asked to fill out the survey questionnaire and every response was checked. The researcher verified that there was a greater than 60% rate of similiarity.

The committee was involved in the design of the survey. Dr. John Rooney, Professor of Geography at Oklahoma State University; Dr. Betty Abercrombie, past and head of the Health, Physical Recreation and Leisure Department at Oklahoma State University; and Dr. Bert Jacobson, head of the Health, Physical Recreation and Leisure department at Oklahoma State University were the commitee members. The questionnaire was

given to the committee with a request for comments and/or recommendations. Revisions were made from the panel suggestions.

The questionnaire was designed to gather some personal thoughts from the coaches who are surrounded by the topic on a daily basis. The demographic information includes the geographic region the school represents and the division in which the schools compete athletically.

Collection of Data

The questionnaires were mailed to the 25 selected coaches along with a Self Addressed Stamped Envelope. A cover letter was sent explaining the purpose and the need for the study, asking their help in expediently returning the survey and promising confidentiality with regards to their names and their schools names being left off the results.

A follow up phone call was made to each coach that hadn't returned the survey after four weeks. Those coaches that preferred to be interviewed by phone were allowed to do so.

The collection of all the graduation rate data was done by obtaining reports and manuals of pre-existing material compiled by the NCAA in their 1991-92 Graduation Rates Summary, which was created in compliance with Senate Bill 580 "the Student-Athlete Right to Know Act".

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data obtained from the manual on graduation rates were entered by the researcher into applicable statistical tests designed to measure the levels of significance between the different samples. Standard T-tests were used to analyze the differences in the graduation rates of athletes versus students and the differences between sports. A confidence interval for standard error of percentages was conducted to test the differences between the basketball only data. The data from the coaches survey were simply described in numerical terms.

Due to the large population of the students, the .01 level of confidence was established as the level of significance for research question #1, whereas .05 was the level for the other tests.

The standard error of the percentages were computed and tests were done for problems involving the significance of the difference between a sample proportion and a known universe proportion. The students rates were the known universe and the expected rate for question #1 and the first part of question #3. The national athletes rate was used as the expected rate for the second part of question number three to determine which rate was significantly different among the single sample universe of men's basketball.

Finally, in interpreting the data for the responses from the questionnaires used in question number four, simple

descriptive numbers were used to most clearly illustrate the information. 15 or more responses (15/25, or 60%) is deemed as a consensus for this study's purposes.

Chapter IV

Results

This chapter includes the results of the statistical analysis of the data and a discussion of the findings . The primary purpose of this study was to compare the graduation rates of students and student athletes with respect to geographical and demographical consideration.

Z scores were computed and confidence intervals were established to determine if there were significant differences between the groups and individuals studied.

This chapter will first include information on all of the demographics of the data before presenting the statistical analysis of the data as they relate to the research questions stated in Chapter I.

Demographic Information

The survey contains graduation rate data from the 1983-84 and 1984-85 freshman classes of all 298 Division I schools (as of Fall 1990-91). Table 1 shows the entire breakdown of the raw data of the totals for all the Division I schools.

TABLE 1

1991-92 NCAA MANUAL ON GRADUATION RATES REPORT

RAW DATA TOTALS		
UNIVERSE	SAMPLE SIZE	GRADUATION RATE (%)
ALL STUDENTS	534981	53%
MALE STUDENTS	268812	51%
FEMALE STUDENTS	266169	54%
WHITE STUDENTS	424666	56%
BLACK STUDENTS	49564	31%
ALL ATHLETES	13449	52%
MALE ATHLETES	9405	47%
FEMALE ATHLETES	4044	62%
WHITE ATHLETES	8990	59%
BLACK ATHLETES	7169	35%
MEN'S BASKETBALL	973	38%
MEN'S BASEBALL	1070	48%
FOOTBALL	3863	46%
MEN'S CC/TRACK	1072	43%
MEN'S OTHER SPORTS	2427	55%
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL	935	57%
WOMEN'S CC/TRACK	722	54%
WOMEN'S OTHER SPORTS	2388	66%

Tables 2a-2k show a slightly condensed form of the raw data for the schools comprising each geographic region. These 55 schools were randomly selected to make up a representative sample of the geographical sport regions discussed earlier in Chapter III. While 55 schools only make up 18% of all Division I schools, the paucity of Division I schools in some of the regions make five a majority sample number.

TABLES 2a - 2k

RAW DATA FOR THE GEOGRAPHICALLY SELECTED SCHOOLS
IN GRADUATION RATE PERCENTAGES AND SAMPLE SIZE

REGION: PACIFIC CORNUCOPIA

SCHOOL

	UP	LMU	CSLB	USD	ASU
<u>UNIVERSE</u>	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n
STUDENTS	57-379	67-683	33-2196	53-749	44-4022
ATHLETES	55-33	75-8	17-29	69-13	32-71
MEN'S BASKETBALL	NA-3	67-3	0-8	NA	33-8
MEN'S SPORTS	54-26	80-5	46-20	83-6	27-48
WHITE STUDENTS	57%	69%	36%	50%	45%
WHITE ATHLETES	54%	60%	16%	67%	38%
BLACK STUDENTS	0	45%	11%	29%	28%
BLACK ATHLETES	0	100%	13%	NA	29%

KEY

UP = UNIVERSITY of PORTLAND
 LMU = LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY
 CSLB = CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY at LONG BEACH
 USD = UNIVERSITY of SAN DIEGO
 ASU = ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

RAW DATA FOR THE GEOGRAPHICALLY SELECTED SCHOOLS
IN GRADUATION RATE PERCENTAGES AND SAMPLE SIZE

REGION: COWBOYS AND MORMONS

SCHOOL

	BSU	BYU	UNM	WSU	NAU
UNIVERSE	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n
STUDENTS	19-1270	39-5943	27-2210	11-1424	33-1203
ATHLETES	44-39	38-84	28-85	33-58	38-34
MEN'S BASKETBALL	0-3	20-3	0-3	0-3	33-3
MEN'S SPORTS	35-23	27-60	26-62	36-42	29-21
WHITE STUDENTS	18%	39%	30%	14%	34%
WHITE ATHLETES	43%	44%	26%	32%	43%
BLACK STUDENTS	08%	14%	12%	08%	20%
BLACK ATHLETES	57%	0%	25%	22%	25%

KEY

BSU = BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY
BYU = BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
UNM = UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
WSU = WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY
NAU = NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

REGION: ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH

SCHOOL

	UC	MSU	UW	ISU	UI
UNIVERSE	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n
STUDENTS	61-3346	52-2020	42-1333	48-1420	42-1153
ATHLETES	58-50	52-56	57-70	38-45	39-56
MEN'S BASKETBALL	33-3	25-3	20-3	0-3	0-3
MEN'S SPORTS	62-37	47-36	59-51	32-31	31-42
WHITE STUDENTS	63%	NA	43%	48%	43%
WHITE ATHLETES	57%	51%	63%	48%	47%
BLACK STUDENTS	39%	NA	17%	21%	11%
BLACK ATHLETES	43%	60%	25%	20%	25%

KEY

UC = UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
MSU = MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
UW = UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
ISU = IDAHO STATE UNIVERSITY
UI = UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

RAW DATA FOR THE GEOGRAPHICALLY SELECTED SCHOOLS
IN GRADUATION RATE PERCENTAGES AND SAMPLE SIZE

REGION: SPORT FOR SPORTS SAKE

SCHOOL

	CU	UNI	UWGB	UM	UI
UNIVERSE	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n
STUDENTS	64-829	59-1652	31-715	54-3480	63-3599
ATHLETES	57-28	63-49	43-14	49-75	66-87
MEN'S BASKETBALL	25-3	0-3	20-3	50-3	20-3
MEN'S SPORTS	45-20	65-31	36-11	46-52	65-60
WHITE STUDENTS	64%	61%	31%	58%	64%
WHITE ATHLETES	56%	75%	43%	61%	72%
BLACK STUDENTS	27%	42%	14%	26%	29%
BLACK ATHLETES	NA	22%	NA	07%	42%

KEY

CU = CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY
UNI = UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA
UWGB = UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN AT GREENBAY
UM = UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
UI = UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

REGION: TEXAS SOUTHWEST

SCHOOL

	TU	TA&M	SMU	BU	OU
UNIVERSE	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n
STUDENTS	49-647	65-5544	69-1327	66-2316	41-2326
ATHLETES	53-55	32-78	45-56	55-42	30-86
MEN'S BASKETBALL	25-3	0-3	75-3	0-3	0-3
MEN'S SPORTS	41-41	33-58	35-40	48-33	26-58
WHITE STUDENTS	49%	66%	80%	67%	42%
WHITE ATHLETES	66%	39%	50%	68%	29%
BLACK STUDENTS	25%	51%	51%	47%	29%
BLACK ATHLETES	20%	15%	29%	40%	29%

KEY

TU = TULSA UNIVERSITY
TA&M = TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
SMU = SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY
BU = BAYLOR UNIVERISTY
OU = OKLAHOMA

RAW DATA FOR THE GEOGRAPHICALLY SELECTED SCHOOLS
IN GRADUATION RATE PERCENTAGES AND SAMPLE SIZE

REGION: AMERICAN HEARTLAND

SCHOOL

	NU	EMU	IU	KSU	UL
UNIVERSE	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n
STUDENTS	88-1835	36-2996	54-6199	47-2290	27-2184
ATHLETES	84-61	42-62	58-101	56-43	46-57
MEN'S BASKETBALL	100-3	33-3	67-8	100-3	0-3
MEN'S SPORTS	82-45	37-38	60-75	53-32	38-40
WHITE STUDENTS	89%	37%	57%	43%	30%
WHITE ATHLETES	84%	50%	58%	55%	54%
BLACK STUDENTS	82%	26%	19%	19%	12%
BLACK ATHLETES	78%	0%	53%	38%	32%

KEY

NU = NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
EMU = EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
IU = INDIANA UNIVERSITY
KSU = KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
UL = UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

REGION: PIGSKIN CULT

SCHOOL

	UTC	USC	UNO	ASU	USA
UNIVERSE	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n
STUDENTS	30-934	60-2347	19-1910	31-824	26-1588
ATHLETES	37-63	60-77	29-14	23-48	38-21
MEN'S BASKETBALL	100-3	33-3	67-8	100-3	0-3
MEN'S SPORTS	29-49	50-56	20-10	18-38	45-11
WHITE STUDENTS	32%	62%	23%	31%	25%
WHITE ATHLETES	39%	69%	40%	35%	40%
BLACK STUDENTS	23%	54%	06%	14%	18%
BLACK ATHLETES	29%	25%	0%	09%	14%

KEY

UTC = UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATANOOGA
USC = UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
UNO = UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS
ASU = ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
USA = UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

RAW DATA FOR THE GEOGRAPHICALLY SELECTED SCHOOLS
IN GRADUATION RATE PERCENTAGES AND SAMPLE SIZE

REGION: SOUTH FLORIDA

SCHOOL

	UM	USF	SU	BCU	UCF
<u>UNIVERSE</u>	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n
STUDENTS	57-1864	36-2649	61-488	36-546	44-1265
ATHLETES	57-54	54-41	50-48	31-29	20-67
MEN'S BASKETBALL	100-3	0-3	40-3	33-3	33-3
MEN'S SPORTS	55-42	50-24	55-31	31-29	30-47
WHITE STUDENTS	54%	36%	62%	75%	45%
WHITE ATHLETES	54%	55%	57%	0%	44%
BLACK STUDENTS	53%	26%	25%	36%	31%
BLACK ATHLETES	60%	50%	22%	32%	17%

KEY

UM = UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
USF = UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA
SU = STETSON UNIVERSITY
BCU = BETHUNE COOKMAN UNIVERSITY
UCF = UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

REGION: CAROLINAS

SCHOOL

	UNCC	DU	UNC	WFU	UNCW
<u>UNIVERSE</u>	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n	% - n
STUDENTS	50-1367	92-1505	76-3388	81-869	42-1149
ATHLETES	43-23	92-50	76-92	58-52	71-48
MEN'S BASKETBALL	33-3	100-3	67-3	0-3	75-3
MEN'S SPORTS	25-12	90-41	72-61	50-44	74-27
WHITE STUDENTS	52%	93%	79%	81%	43%
WHITE ATHLETES	50%	93%	78%	65%	74%
BLACK STUDENTS	35%	80%	54%	56%	24%
BLACK ATHLETES	17%	88%	68%	22%	60%

KEY

UNCC = UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHARLOTTE
DU = DUKE UNIVERSITY
UNC = UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
WFU = WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY
UNCW = UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT WILMINGTON

REGION: MILLS AND MINES

SCHOOL

	PSU	CSU	MU	WVU	MSU
UNIVERSE	74-3564	35-1207	39-1206	55-2602	38-978
STUDENTS	74-3564	35-1207	39-1206	55-2602	38-978
ATHLETES	60-77	23-39	40-55	65-51	45-42
MEN'S BASKETBALL	60-3	0-3	33-6	40-3	13-8
MEN'S SPORTS	57-53	18-20	39-46	59-39	41-37
WHITE STUDENTS	77%	38%	39%	56%	39%
WHITE ATHLETES	59%	25%	45%	76%	70%
BLACK STUDENTS	44%	13%	30%	30%	22%
BLACK ATHLETES	67%	0%	27%	45%	18%

KEY

PSU = PENN STATE UNIVERSITY
 CSU = CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY
 MU = MARSHALL UNIVERSITY
 WVU = WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY
 MSU = MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY

REGION: EASTERN CRADLE

SCHOOL

	VU	UM	BC	UH	FU
UNIVERSE	83-1552	50-1509	85-2157	51-957	73-1420
STUDENTS	83-1552	50-1509	85-2157	51-957	73-1420
ATHLETES	88-31	57-46	86-50	79-43	88-65
MEN'S BASKETBALL	100-3	67-3	100-3	100-3	33-3
MEN'S SPORTS	86-21	52-33	80-35	71-21	85-47
WHITE STUDENTS	81%	51%	86%	51%	63%
WHITE ATHLETES	90%	60%	85%	32%	88%
BLACK STUDENTS	45%	20%	78%	74%	93%
BLACK ATHLETES	100%	50%	89%	100%	100%

KEY

VU = VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY
 UM = UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
 BC = BOSTON COLLEGE
 UH = UNIVERSITY OF HARTFORD
 FU = FORDIUM UNIVERSITY

The return rate for the coaches' survey after follow up phone requests was 25/25 or 100%.

Statistical Data

The following tables and information show the results of the statistical tests conducted to determine how the data relates to the research questions.

Results related to Research Question 1:

The first research question was: Is there a significant difference in the graduation rates of athletes and the graduation rates of non athletes?

Table 3 indicates that there are no significant differences among these groups at the .01 level. Therefore, results indicate that there is no significant difference in the graduation rates of athletes and the graduation rates of non-athletes at the Division I level.

TABLE 3

RESULTS FROM TEST FOR SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OBSERVED VERSUS EXPECTED GRADUATION RATES OF THE ATHLETES VERSUS STUDENTS

	n	GRADUATED	NOT GRADUATED	EXP #	σ
ATHLETES	13449	6993	6455	7128	57.9
STUDENTS	534981	283540	251441		

KEY

EXP # = EXPECTED NUMBER
= STANDARD DEVIATION

FORMULA

$$Z = \frac{-135}{57.9} = -2.33$$

so using the .01 level, where anything higher than 2.58 is significant; $-2.33 < 2.58$ and therefore, not significant

Results Related to Research Question 2:

The second research question was: Is there a significant difference in the graduation rates of male athletes in different sports?

Table 4 shows that there are significant differences among some of the groups. Therefore, results indicate that there are significant differences in the graduation rates of male athletes. Specifically, basketball and cross country track are significantly lower while the combined grouping of other sports are significantly higher.

TABLE 4

RESULTS FROM FORMULATED Z-SCORES ON THE EXPECTED FREQUENCY RATES FOR GRADUATION RATES OF THE DIFFERENT SPORTS GROUPS

MALE SPORT	Graduated		EXP #	σ	Z SCORE
	n	#			
BASKETBALL	973	370	461	15.6	-5.80
BASEBALL	1070	514	507	16.3	+ .43
FOOTBALL	3863	1777	1831	31.0	-1.70
CC/TRACK	1072	461	508	16.3	-2.88
ALL OTHERS	2427	1335	1150	24.6	+7.50

EXPECTED FREQUENCY is 52% (national athletes rate)

Results related to research Question 3:

The third research question was: Are there regional variations in the graduation rates of the male athletes that reflect the role and meaning of sport in those regions?

Table 5 shows the raw data for the regional breakdown of the graduation rates for the universes studied in answering research question 3.

TABLE 5
REGIONAL BREAKDOWN OF GRADUATION RATES

	STUDENTS % - n	ATHLETES % - n	BASKETBALL % - n	ALL MALE SPORTS % - n
REGION-PC	51-8029	50-154	33-22	58-105
REGION-C&M	26-12050	36-300	11-15	31-208
REGION-RMH	49-9272	49-277	16-15	46-197
REGION-SFSS	54-10275	56-253	23-15	51-174
REGION-TS	58-12160	43-317	20-15	37-230
REGION-AH	50-14604	57-324	60-20	54-230
REGION-PCULT	33-7603	37-223	13-15	32-164
REGION-SF	47-6812	42-239	41-15	44-173
REGION-C	68-8278	68-265	55-15	62-185
REGION-M&M	48-9562	47-264	35-25	43-203
REGION-EC	68-7683	80-238	80-15	75-157

* THE n values for basketball are averages from the actual range given from the NCAA data. Because of confidentiality rules, the NCAA would only give a range that the n is in (example a = 1-5)

Table 6 shows that there are significant differences among the sport specific groups. Therefore results indicate that there are significant differences in graduation rates of the different subgroups where compared on a regional basis. Specifically, in Region II, the rates of the All Athletes category is significantly higher than that of the students in Region III. The rates of the Men's basketball category is significantly lower than that of the Students. In Region IV, the Men;s Basketball rates are again significantly lower than that of the Students. In Region V, all three groups (All Athletes - Men's Basketball and All Male Athletes) had rates significantly lower than that of the Students. In Region VI, the All-Athletes category had rates significantly higher than that of the Students. And in Region VI, the All-Athletes category had rates significantly higher than that of the Students.

TABLE 6

T-TEST RESULTS ON REGIONAL DIFFERENCES
OF SEPARATE SPORT GROUPINGS

	STUDENTS	ALL ATHLETES		MEN'S BB		ALL MALE ATHLETES	
	%	%	Z	%	Z	%	Z
REGION							
PC	.51	.50	0.24	.33	1.68	.58	1.43
C&M	.26	.36	3.90	.11	1.32	.31	1.64
RMH	.49	.49	0	.16	2.64	.46	0.80
SFSS	.54	.56	0.63	.23	2.40	.51	0.79
TS	.58	.43	5.41	.20	2.98	.37	6.45
AH	.50	.57	2.52	.60	0.89	.54	1.21
PCULT	.33	.37	1.27	.13	1.64	.32	0.27
SF	.47	.42	1.54	.41	0.46	.44	0.44
C	.68	.68	0	.55	1.07	.62	1.74
M&M	.48	.47	0.32	.35	1.30	.43	1.42
EC	.68	.80	3.96	.80	0.99	.75	1.80

KEY =

AREA = Geographic Sport Region
 % = Graduation Rate Percentage
 Z = Formulated Z score

* at the .05 level, a Z score of greater than 1.96 is deemed significant

Table 7 shows that there are significant differences among the single universe of Men's Basketball. Therefore, there are significant differences in the graduation rates of Men's Basketball when compared regionally. Specifically, Region II has significantly lower rates than the national average, as does Region VII while Regions VI and XI had significantly higher rates than the national average.

TABLE 7 RESULTS OF CONFIDENCE INTERVALS FOR STANDARD ERROR OF PERCENTAGES TEST FOR MEN'S BASKETBALL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN REGIONS

REGION	INTERVAL	%	COMMENT
PC	+ -20%	.33	within interval
C&M	+ -24%	.11	significantly higher
RMH	+ -24%	.16	within interval
SFSS	+ -21%	.23	within interval
TS	+ -24%	.20	within interval
AH	+ -21%	.60	significantly higher
PCULT	+ -24%	.13	significantly lower
SF	+ -24%	.41	within interval
C	+ -24%	.55	within interval
M&M	+ -19%	.35	within interval
EC	+ -24%	.80	significantly higher

KEY

% = Graduation Rate %

FORMULA FOR CONFIDENCE INTERVALS (at .05 level):

$$\frac{pq}{n} \times 1.96$$

where p is %
q is 1-p
n is size of sample

so for n of 15, the interval is + -24% or {14-62}
n of 20, the interval is + -21% or {17-59}
n of 22, the interval is + -20% or {18-58}
n of 25, the interval is + -19% or {19-57}

Results related to Research Question #4:

The fourth research question was: Is there a consensus among coaches regarding their personal feelings on the topic of academic achievement by the student-athletes?

Tables 8A and 8B show the data for all of the coaches' responses to the questions in the personal opinion survey. These tables show that there was a consensus reached on every statement or recommendation (although questions 8b2 and 8b6 had the consensus of indifference).

Specifically, most coaches disagreed that there is a serious problem with academic neglect by today's student athletes. A consensus agreed that there is a slight problem with academic neglect, but time commitments make it tough and they receive positive experiences that outweigh the negative academic sacrifices. A consensus agrees with the statement that there is academic neglect, but it is by all of the students, not just athletes. A unanimous vote shows disagreement to some extent that there is no problem with academic neglect by student athletes. Most coaches agree to some extent that they do enough to give the athletes help and that the student should be held responsible for their own academic affairs. And then there is a consensus that while the situation is not ideal there have improvements and even more improvements would make the situation better.

TABLE 8A

RESPONSES BY COACHES WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE SURVEY

*there were 25 responses to each statement; using a Lichert scale the numbers correspond to the amount of answers in each category. The coaches are answering as to whether they feel the statements accurately describe the current situation in athletics.

STATEMENT A1 : There is a serious problem with academic neglect by today's student athletes. Too many put way too much emphasis towards sports and not enough towards academics.

1	5		19	
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

STATEMENT A2 : There is a slight problem with academic neglect by today's student athletes, but they have unusual commitments which make it tougher to succeed on the highest level. Overall, the positive experience outweighs the sacrifices they make.

1	16	5	4	
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

STATEMENT A3 : There is a problem with academic neglect but it is by all of today's students, not just athletes.

7	18			
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

STATEMENT A4 : There is no problem with academic neglect by today's student athletes.

			16	9
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

STATEMENT A5 : As coaches, we do more than enough to give our athletes a chance to succeed academically. The individual athlete is responsible for his own academic affairs and coaches are blamed too much when athletes fail.

4	16	5		
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

STATEMENT A6 : The academic situation is not ideal but there have been improvements in the system and if more improvements were made; the situation would be much better.

5	17	3		
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

TABLE 8B

RESPONSES BY COACHES WHO PARTICIPATED IN EACH SURVEY

* There were 25 responses to each recommendation; using a Lichert scale the numbers correspond to the amount of answers in each category. The coaches are answering as to whether they feel these recommendations will help improve the current situation in athletics.

RECOMMENDATION B1 : A tenure system rewarding competitive coaches who abide by the rules and provide academic support.

19	6			
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

RECOMMENDATION B2 : Making freshmen ineligible.

	7	15	3	
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

RECOMMENDATION B3 : Toughening entrance requirements.

4	2	1	14	4
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

RECOMMENDATION B4 : Development of a professionally funded minor league.

6	18	1		
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

RECOMMENDATION B5 : Better high school preparation.

16	9			
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

RECOMMENDATION B6 : A more even distribution of revenue sharing.

1	8	16		
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

TABLE 8B (cont'd)

RECOMMENDATION B7 : A reduction of practice time and travel commitments.

	3		22	
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

RECOMMENDATION B8 : Shorter seasons from start to finish.

			19	6
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

RECOMMENDATION B9 : Less games.

			10	15
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

RECOMMENDATION B10 : No cut, five year scholarships for athletes.

			20	5
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

RECOMMENDATION B11 : Majors or fields of study more practically suited for some of the academically less prepared athletes.

12	10	3		
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	INDIFFERENT	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

CHAPTER V

Summary Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter contains a summary of the purpose, procedures and findings of the study, the conclusions and the recommendations for further study.

Purpose and Procedure

The primary purpose of the study was to compare the graduation rates of students and student-athletes at the NCAA Division I level with respect to their geographical and demographical groupings.

This study was based on the 1991-92 NCAA Division I Graduation Rates Report, a report that lists all of the pertinent data regarding graduation rates. The researcher, following Rooney and Pillsbury's Geographic Sports Regions (with the Carolinas modification), randomly selected 55 schools to represent those two regions.

The data provided by the Report was uniform and thorough for every school, though some schools didn't compete in all of the sports, and some sports had no freshmen in a particular sports for the two years tracked. Also, because of the NCAA's concerns with confidentiality, the N or sample size of the men's basketball rates at the individual institutions were given in letters to represent a range instead of the actual N. For example, the sample size for the University of Montana is

given as A. The values for the letters were as follows: a=1-5, b = 6-10, c = 11-15, d = 16-20 and e = greater than 20. This study used the median number to represent the middle or average of the range.

The data were computed using statistical formulas designed to find the levels of significance of a difference between sample proportions and known universe proportions. Confidence intervals were estimated within a universe to expect percentages to fall to a given level of probability.

The data from the survey responses was simply described using a histogram to illustrate their significance.

Findings

The study found that there are no significant differences between the graduation rates of students and the graduation rates of student athletes.

The study also found that among the universe of male athletes, the graduation rates of basketball players and cross-country/track athletes were significantly lower than those of the national average, while the combined group of other sports (golf, tennis, soccer, volleyball, lacrosse etc.) had graduation rates that were significantly higher than those of the national average.

The study also found that there are some significant differences among the graduation rates of the different sport

breakdowns (i.e. Students, All Athletes, Men's Basketball and All Male Athletes) when these rates are compared within their own geographic Sports regions. In the Cowboys and Mormons Regions, the category of All Athletes had a significantly higher rate than the Students rate. In the Rocky Mountain High and Sports for Sports Sake Region, the Men's Basketball rate was significantly lower than the Student rate. In the Texas Southwest region, all these groups had rates significantly lower than the Student;s rates. In the American heartland and the Eastern Cradle Regions, the All Athletes rates were again significantly higher than the Student's rates.

When analyzing the Men's Basketball rates with respect to geographical consideration, the researcher found the Rocky Mountain High, Sport for Sports Sake and Texas Southwest all had graduation rates that were significantly lower than the rates of the national basketball average.

The study found that there was a consensus reached on every statement made and recommendation offered on the subject of academics and the student-athlete.

A consensus was reached showing the coaches either agreeing or strongly agreeing that there is a slight problem with academic neglect, that it isn't just the athletes neglecting academics but also the students, that the situation is improving, and that ultimately the individual should be responsible for his own academic affairs.

The coaches either disagreed or strongly disagreed that there was no problem with academic neglect but also disagreed or strongly disagreed that the problem was serious.

The researcher found the coaches reached a consensus agreeing or strongly agreeing that the recommendations of a tenure system rewarding competitive, rule abiding coaches, the development of a pro funded minor league, better high school preparation of the athletes and college majors more practically suited for some academically unprepared athletes would improve the situation in college athletics.

The study found that the coaches reached a consensus disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that the recommendations of less games, no cut scholarships, reduced practice time and seasons, and tougher academic entrance requirements would help the situation in college athletics.

The study also found the coaches reached a consensus by being indifferent on the recommendations of making freshmen ineligible and evenly distributing revenues to help the situation in college athletics.

Regarding the recommendations on the B side of the survey, there was a consensus reached on every recommendation, although two of the recommendation, making freshmen ineligible and evenly distributing revenues, were recommendations that the consensus was indifferent to. The consensus agreed to some extent that a tenure system rewarding coaches who are competitive while following rules would help. They also

agreed to some extent that better high school preparation of the athletes, college majors more suited for some of the academically disadvantaged athletes and the development of a professionally funded minor league are all recommendations that would help the current situation in athletes.

The consensus disagreed that toughening entrance requirements would help the situation. Reducing practice time, games and the season weren't thought to help either nor were no cut five year scholarships for athletes.

Conclusions

The ultimate reason for conducting this study was to see if all the attention and discussion centering around the problems with college athletes was warranted. Is there a significant disparity between what students are doing on campuses across the country and what the student-athletes on those campuses are doing?

The null hypothesis was accepted; there was no significant difference between the graduation ratio between students and student-athletes. This was complimented by similar results of different tests noted by references in the Review of Literature. The researcher feels strongly that this was a representative national sample and that further tests would reveal similiar results.

Though it was discovered that the graduation rates of male basketball players were significantly lower than the national student averages, the situation must be discussed in relative terms. Of the 973 basketball players sampled, 610 were black. The black student rate was 31 per cent, the lowest rate of any subgroup sampled. Compared to the student rate, the basketball player had a noticeably higher rate. While that may be a major part of explaining the basketball rates, it must be complimented by factors discussed earlier in the review of literature regarding the extra problems associated with the "revenue" sports.

Perhaps similarities would show up if comparable tests were done determining differences among majors at high profile schools. The rates for actors and filmmakers at the University of Southern California or the rates for musicians at the University of North Texas might be lower than for similiar departments at schools that don't promote as many people to professional careers.

Cross Country/Track also had a significantly lower rate. With little information on the specific problems associated with that sport, the research could only hypothesize as to why it joins men's basketball as the only significantly lower rates.

The significantly higher graduation rate sports (golf, tennis, volleyball, soccer and lacrosse) can be explained in easier fashion. Most of these sports are the individual

sports pursued by wealthy families who usually have the ability to provide a sound academic upbringing. The white athletes rate is 59% and 2023 of the 2427 other sports athletes are white.

The results from the geographic region analyzation provided the most surprise to the researcher. Expecting to find trends such as lower rates for true basketball hot beds (Carolinas, Eastern Cradle, American Heartland) and higher rates where there isn't as much emphasis on the sport (Pigskin Cult, Texas Southwest, Rocky Mountain). The results came out very mixed. The Eastern Cradle and American Heartland were higher and Pigskin Cult and Cowboys and Mormons were lower. Unfortunately, the researcher feels that much of that can be explained by the extremely small sample sizes. Five schools with freshman classes anywhere from 0-10 (most likely no higher than 5 or 6) may not be a true representative of the entire region or several years worth of schools and classes.

The coaches responses were what the researcher would expect a group of professionals to state regarding discussions of problems among their own business. The researcher would have responded in very similar ways.

RECOMMENDATION FOR FURTHER STUDY

The researcher believes that the issue of significant differences between the student athletes and the students is worthy of continuous study.

The questions regarding the geographic regions should be asked and studied for future years and the sample sizes should grow to include all schools. This would make for a more reliable study.

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APPENDIX A

AS A BASKETBALL COACH, PLEASE GIVE YOUR FEELINGS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF ATHLETES

(using the following scale, please put the number that most closely corresponds to your feelings about the following statements on the line provided)

- 1=STRONGLY AGREE
- 2=AGREE
- 3=INDIFFERENT
- 4=DISAGREE
- 5=STRONGLY DISAGREE

A1_____ THERE IS A SERIOUS PROBLEM WITH ACADEMIC NEGLECT BY TODAY'S STUDENT-ATHLETES. TOO MANY PUT WAY TOO MUCH EMPHASIS TOWARDS SPORTS AND NOT ENOUGH TOWARD ACADEMICS.

A2_____ THERE IS A SLIGHT PROBLEM WITH ACADEMIC NEGLECT BY TODAY'S STUDENT ATHLETES, BUT THEY HAVE UNUSUAL COMMITMENTS WHICH MAKE IT TOUGHER TO SUCCEED ON THE HIGHEST LEVEL. OVERALL, THEY RECEIVE SO MANY POSITIVE EXPERIENCES IT OUTWEIGHS THE SACRIFICES THEY MAKE.

A3_____ THERE IS A PROBLEM WITH ACADEMIC NEGLECT BUT IT'S BY ALL OF TODAY'S STUDENTS, NOT JUST ATHLETES.

A4_____ THERE IS NO PROBLEM WITH ACADEMIC NEGLECT BY TODAY'S STUDENT-ATHLETES.

A5_____ AS COACHES, WE DO MORE THAN ENOUGH TO GIVE OUR ATHLETES A CHANCE TO SUCCEED ACADEMICALLY. THE INDIVIDUAL ATHLETE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OWN ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND COACHES ARE BLAMED TOO MUCH WHEN ATHLETES FAIL.

A6_____ THE ACADEMIC SITUATION IS NOT IDEAL BUT THERE HAVE BEEN IMPROVEMENTS IN THE SYSTEM AND IF A FEW IMPROVEMENTS WERE MADE, THE SITUATION WOULD BE EVEN BETTER.
SIMILIAR TO THE SCALE YOU USED BEFORE, PLEASE RESPOND TO SOME OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED BY COACHES AND ADMINISTRATORS REGARDING IMPROVING THE ACADEMICS SITUATION IN ATHLETICS)

- 1=STRONGLY AGREE IT WOULD IMPROVE THE SITUATION
- 2=AGREE IT WOULD HELP THE SITUATION
- 3=INDIFFERENT
- 4=DISAGREE IT WOULD HELP THE SITUATION
- 5=STRONGLY DISAGREE IT WOULD HELP THE SITUATION

- B1_____ A TENURE SYSTEM REWARDING COMPETITIVE COACHES WHO
ABIDE BY THE RULES AND PROVIDE ACADEMIC SUPPORT
- B2_____ MAKING FRESHMAN INELIGIBLE
- B3_____ TOUGHENING ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS
- B4_____ DEVELOPMENT OF A PROFESSIONALLY FUNDED MINOR
LEAGUE
- B5_____ BETTER HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION
- B6_____ A MORE EVEN DISTRIBUTION OF REVENUE SHARING
- B7_____ A REDUCTION OF PRACTICE TIME AND TRAVEL
COMMITMENTS
- B8_____ SHORTER SEASONS FROM START TO FINISH
- B9_____ LESS GAMES
- B10_____ NO CUT, 5 YEAR SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ATHLETES
- B11_____ MAJORS OR FIELDS OF STUDY MORE PRACTICALLY SUITED
FOR SOME OF THE ACADEMICALLY UNPREPARED ATHLETES

Thank you very much for your participation. Please use the envelope enclosed for mailing and

VITA

Michael J Mc Collow

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: A DEMOGRAPHICAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL COMPARISON OF
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