

The Student-Athlete: Recruitment, College Choice and Predictors of Academic Success

College Board Midwestern Regional Forum
February 14, 2012



What is the NCAA?

- The NCAA was created in 1906 and stands for the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Membership organization of over 1,200 U.S. colleges, universities and athletics conferences that promote intercollegiate athletics competition as an integral part of the educational experience.
- The NCAA is governed by college presidents, athletics administrators, faculty and student-athletes at member institutions.
- NCAA national office staff consists of approximately 500 individuals who assist the membership by:
 - maintaining the governance structure
 - implementing and enforcing rules
 - accrediting athletics programs
 - running championship events (89 championships contested)
 - serving as liaisons to prospective students and their parents, high schools, government and corporate bodies
 - administering youth and community outreach programs
 - overseeing various scholarship and insurance programs
 - conducting research on college athletics

What is the NCAA?

- Colleges in the NCAA are all four-year schools.
- Division I
 - Possess so-called “high-profile” athletics programs (N=336 colleges).
 - Compete at a national level.
 - Student-athletes in sports like football, men’s basketball or women’s basketball are typically on full scholarships. Scholarship distribution varies by school in other sports.
 - Schools in this division tend to have large athletics budgets (annual athletics expenses ranging from 3 to 128 million dollars), with much of it generated outside the university (e.g., contest ticket sales or TV contracts).
- Division II
 - Tend to be smaller colleges that compete regionally (N=294).
 - Scholarship availability varies by school and sport.
 - Athletics department budgets typically supported nearly fully by school (annual expenses currently ranging from <1 to 13 million).
- Division III
 - Athletics expected to be fully integrated into the academic mission of the college (N=445 colleges).
 - No athletics scholarships allowed.
 - Athletics department budgets typically supported nearly fully by school (annual expenses currently ranging from <1 to 13 million).

NCAA Eligibility Center (NEC)

- Collects high school transcripts and test scores for all Division I and II prospective student-athletes and certifies that minimum academic eligibility standards have been met.
- Works with high schools to identify all “core” curriculum courses at each school, and calculates core GPA for each student based on those courses.
- All Division I and II freshmen student-athletes must be certified as eligible by the NEC to be granted an athletics scholarship and/or compete in the freshman year.
- Division III student-athletes do not have to go through the NEC process.

Goals of NCAA Research

- To produce high quality research for use by NCAA staff, member colleges and universities, scholars and the media.
- To enhance the NCAA's ability to make data-driven policy decisions.
- To evaluate the full student-athlete experience and determine how to improve academic, social, athletic and health outcomes.

2010-11 Estimated Probability of Competing in Athletics Beyond the High School Interscholastic Level

Student Athletes	Men's Basketball	Women's Basketball	Football	Baseball	Men's Ice Hockey	Men's Soccer
High School Student -Athletes	545,844	438,933	1,108,441	471,025	36,912	398,351
High School Senior Student -Athletes	155,955	125,409	316,697	134,579	10,546	113,815
NCAA Student- Athletes	17,500	15,708	67,887	31,264	3,944	22,573
NCAA Freshman Roster Positions	5,000	4,488	19,396	8,933	1,127	6,449
NCAA Senior Student -Athletes	3,889	3,491	15,086	6,948	876	5,016
NCAA Student -Athletes Drafted	48	32	255	806	11	49
Percent High School to NCAA	3.2%	3.6%	6.1%	6.6%	10.7%	5.7%
Percent NCAA to Professional	1.2%	0.9%	1.7%	11.6%	1.3%	1.0%
Percent High School to Professional	0.03%	0.03%	0.08%	0.60%	0.10%	0.04%

Student-Athlete Experiences

- **G**rowth,
Opportunities,
Aspirations, and
Learning of
Students in College

Study of current student-athletes (Divisions I, II and III). N=20,000 in both 2006 and 2010 versions.

- **S**tudy of
College
Outcomes and
Recent
Experiences

Study of former student-athletes (primarily Division I entrants with a Division II version of SCORE in progress). HS and college academic info + survey at age 30.

GOALS Survey – Main Sections

- College athletics experience
- College academic experience
- College social experience
- Recruitment/Decision to attend current college
- Health and well-being
- Time commitments
- Finances
- Qualitative

SCORE Survey- Main Sections

- College Sports Experiences
- College Educational Experiences
- Current Career and Work Experiences
- Health and Well-Being
- Daily Life Experiences

Current Analyses – GOALS & SCORE

GOALS

- Recruitment and college choice
- Academic outcomes and risk factors
- Academic choices (major and coursework)
- Satisfaction with collegiate/academic experiences

SCORE

- Academic choices (major)
- Affect of athletics participation on life after college
- Satisfaction with collegiate/academic experiences

Recruitment and College Choice

Todd Petr



Recruitment – Factors in College Choice

- In almost all groups studied, athletics participation was the most-often endorsed reason for choosing a college. Academics was generally a close second. These were then followed by:
 - proximity of the institution to home;
 - other peoples' expectations;
 - campus social scene; and
 - proximity to boyfriend/girlfriend.
- At the Division I level, women's basketball student-athletes were less likely than any other sport group to indicate that academics was a prominent factor in their decision. This may be because they felt that they were selecting from an evenly matched set of institutions from an academic perspective.
- Division III student-athletes were most likely to rate athletics and academics equally in their decision-making process.

**How much do you agree or disagree that each of the following reasons
contributed to your decision to attend your current college?
(% Responding Agree or Strongly Agree)**

Division I

	Baseball	Men's Basketball	Football	All Other Men's Sports	Women's Basketball	All Other Women's Sports
Academic offerings or reputation	63%	65%	66%	69%	58%	75%
Athletics participation	79%	83%	80%	82%	86%	86%
Proximity to home	63%	56%	60%	46%	54%	49%
Proximity to sig. other	25%	29%	33%	17%	19%	13%
Social scene/friends	39%	40%	40%	31%	22%	25%
Other peoples' expectations	42%	49%	51%	37%	39%	37%

Note: Endorsement of top two scale points on 6-point scale

Recruitment – Usefulness and Frequency

- In most groups studied, two-thirds of student-athletes agreed or strongly agreed that the information they received in recruiting was helpful in making their college choice.
- Depending on sport group, between one-fifth and one-third of student-athletes felt that some coaches contacted them too often in the recruiting process.
 - Highly recruited student-athletes (those who were recruited by 10 or more institutions) were more likely to say there was too much contact in the process than were others. In most sport groups, they were 8 to 15 percent more likely to indicate this.
 - In no group did more than half of student-athletes indicate they had been contacted too often in the process.

Recruitment – Accuracy of Expectations

- Most student-athletes believed that their expectations of the academic experience at college were mostly accurate.
- There was somewhat less belief in the accuracy of athletics expectations than in academics. Division I women's basketball players were noticeably lower on this dimension than other student-athletes.
- When asked about social scene and athletics time demands, between 70 and 80 percent of student-athletes in all groups indicated that their expectations were mostly accurate.

How accurate were your initial expectations of the academic/athletics experience at this college?

(% Responding Very Accurate or Mostly Accurate)

Division I						
	Baseball	Men's Basketball	Football	All Other Men's Sports	Women's Basketball	All Other Women's Sports
Academic	85%	84%	76%	81%	80%	84%
Athletics	80%	76%	72%	76%	60%	67%
Division II						
Academic	74%	79%	80%	81%	82%	81%
Athletics	71%	70%	77%	78%	67%	67%
Division III						
Academic	79%	86%	86%	84%	90%	86%
Athletics	68%	74%	78%	77%	70%	76%

Note: Endorsement of top two scale points on 4-point scale

Recruitment – Importance of Coach in College Choice

- There is no doubt that the coach plays a very important role in college choice. At the Division I and II levels, between 40 and 60 percent of student-athletes indicated that it would be unlikely that they would have chosen the same institution if a different coach had been there at the time of their choice.
- Men's and women's basketball players indicated that the coach was more important in their decision than reported by student-athletes in other sport groups.
- Highly-recruited student-athletes were much more likely to indicate that the coach was a driving factor in their decision-making process.
- Other data indicate that the coach is also a key factor in a student-athlete's overall satisfaction.

Prior to enrolling in your current college, did you visit the campus?

(% Responding Yes)

Division I						
	Baseball	Men's Basketball	Football	All Other Men's Sports	Women's Basketball	All Other Women's Sports
N	90%	85%	88%	85%	92%	91%
Division II						
N	86%	88%	81%	79%	90%	88%
Division III						
N	89%	91%	92%	91%	95%	94%

Note: Endorsement of top two scale points on 4-point scale

I would have gone to a four-year college somewhere even if I hadn't been an athlete

(% Responding Disagree or Strongly Disagree)

Division I						
	Baseball	Men's Basketball	Football	All Other Men's Sports	Women's Basketball	All Other Women's Sports
N	15%	18%	16%	14%	13%	11%
Division II						
N	17%	16%	15%	19%	15%	11%
Division III						
N	14%	12%	12%	13%	11%	13%

Note: Endorsement of bottom two scale points on 6-point scale

Recruitment – Satisfaction with College Choice

- A majority of student-athletes agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I am glad I made the choice to be at this school.” There were some notable sport and divisional differences:
 - Fewer than half of Division I women’s basketball players agreed with that statement.
 - Football players were the least satisfied among Division I men’s sport groups.
 - Only about half of men’s basketball and baseball student-athletes at the Division II level indicated they were glad with the choice that they made.
 - In Division III, men’s baseball student-athletes were 12 percent below the next-nearest sport group in terms of their responses to this item.
- Highly recruited student-athletes at the Division I level were much less likely to indicate satisfaction with their college choice than less-recruited athletes. The difference was 10 percentage points in both football and baseball.

I am glad that I made the choice to be at this school.

(% Responding Agree or Strongly Agree)

Division I						
	Baseball	Men's Basketball	Football	All Other Men's Sports	Women's Basketball	All Other Women's Sports
N	67%	62%	59%	68%	48%	70%
Division II						
N	49%	51%	59%	60%	63%	63%
Division III						
N	51%	63%	67%	69%	70%	77%

Note: Endorsement of top two scale points on 7-point scale

Predicting Academic Success of Student-Athletes

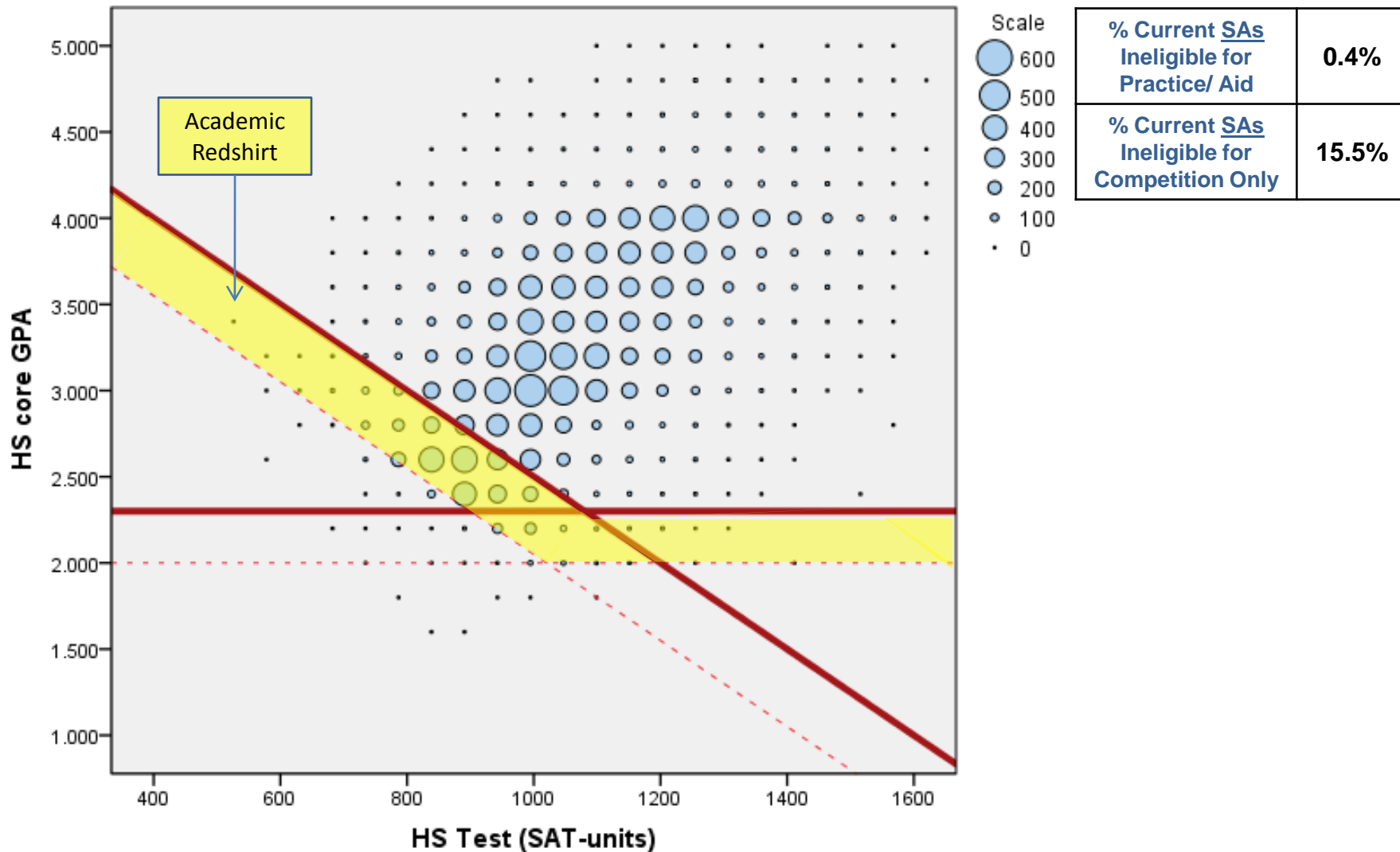
Tom Paskus



Current NCAA Academic Initial Eligibility Standards

- **Division I**
 - Minimum combination of HS grades in 16 core courses and ACT/SAT score
 - No ACT/SAT minimum
 - 2.00 HS GPA minimum
 - Failure to meet makes ineligible for athletics aid, practice and competition.
- **Division II**
 - Minimum 2.00 HS GPA in 14 core courses (becomes 16 in 2013)
 - Minimum 820 CR+M on SAT or 68 sum on ACT
 - Failure to meet makes ineligible for competition only.
- **Division III**
 - No national requirements; follow institutional admissions guidelines.

Competition Sliding Scale Set at ~0.5 SD Below National Student Body Mean with 2.30 Floor



Note: All SAs in yellow area would be ineligible for competition only. New sliding scale for competition requires HSCGPA ~ 0.50 units higher for given test score compared to current rule.

Two-Year College Transfers

- Best predictor of academic success at the 4-year college is 2-year college GPA.
- The number of PE activity courses taken has a strong inverse relationship with academic success at the 4-year school.
- Taking coursework in English, math and science predicts better academic outcomes.

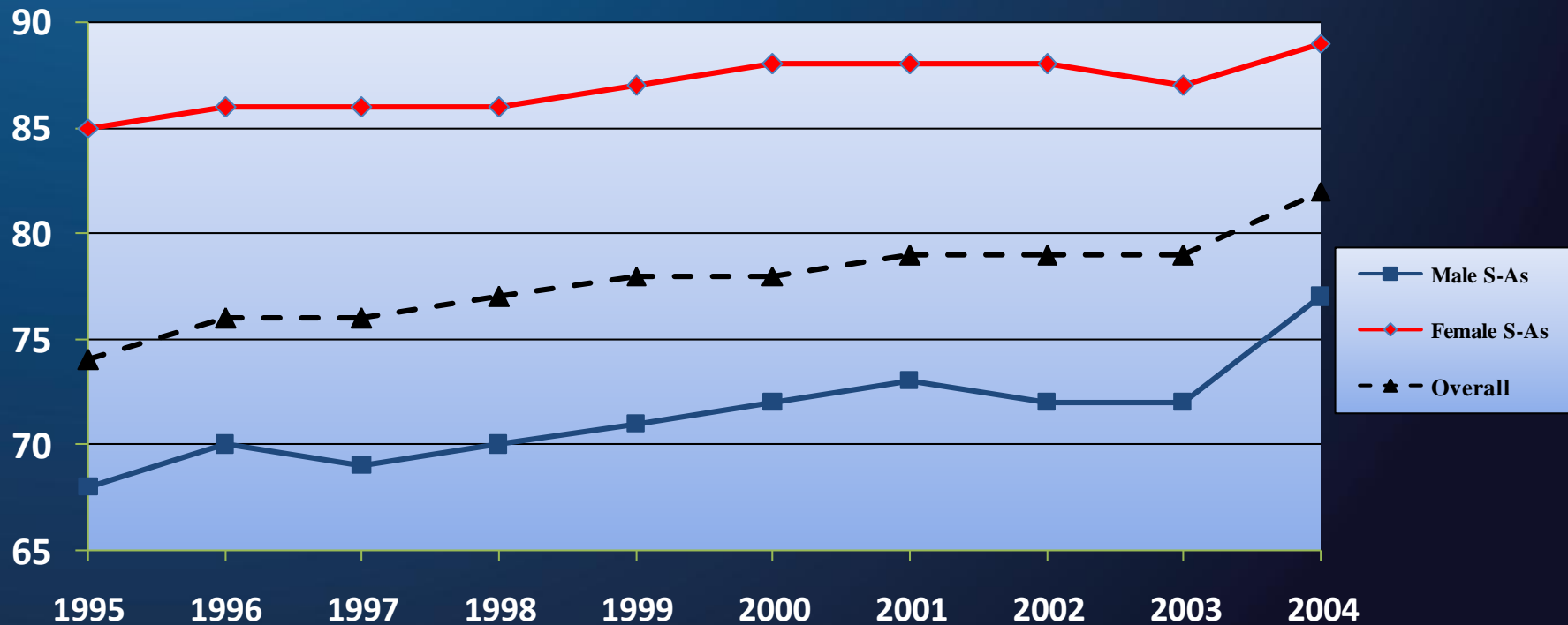
Comparison of Federal Graduation Rates Between Student-Athletes and Student Body For Select Groups in 2004 Entering Class

Student-Athlete Group	Student-Athlete Graduation Rate	Student Body Graduation Rate
Overall	65%	63%
White	68%	66%
African-American	55%	44%
White Males	62%	63%
African-American Males	50%	38%
White Females	74%	68%
African-American Females	66%	46%

Comparison of Graduation-Success Rates and Federal Graduation-Rate Cohorts (2001-2004 Entering Classes)

	Federal Rate	GSR
Enrolled (Under Federal Definition)	76,536	76,536
Enrolled as Frosh in January	0	2,190
Two-Year College Transfers	0	9,278
Four-Year College Transfers	0	7,927
Non-Scholarship Athletes (Only at Schools Not Offering Aid)	0	8,882
Total Enrolled	76,536	104,813 (+36.9%)
Allowable Exclusions (Death, Military, Church Mission, etc.)	261	357
Left Eligible	0	19,339
Total Denominator	76,275	85,117 (+11.6%)

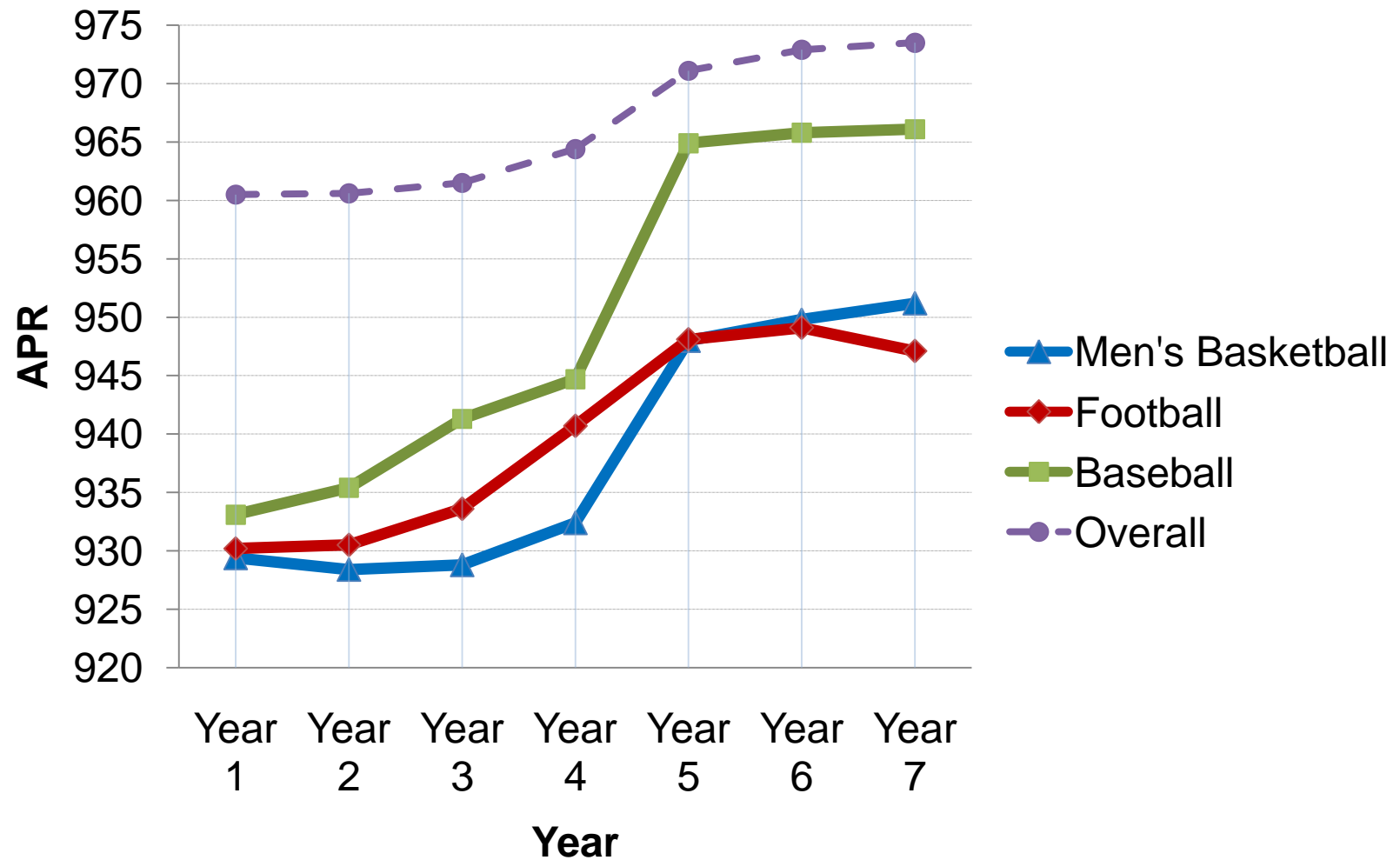
Annual Graduation-Success Rates of All Student-Athletes at Division I Institutions Overall and by Gender



Division I Academic Progress Rate (APR)

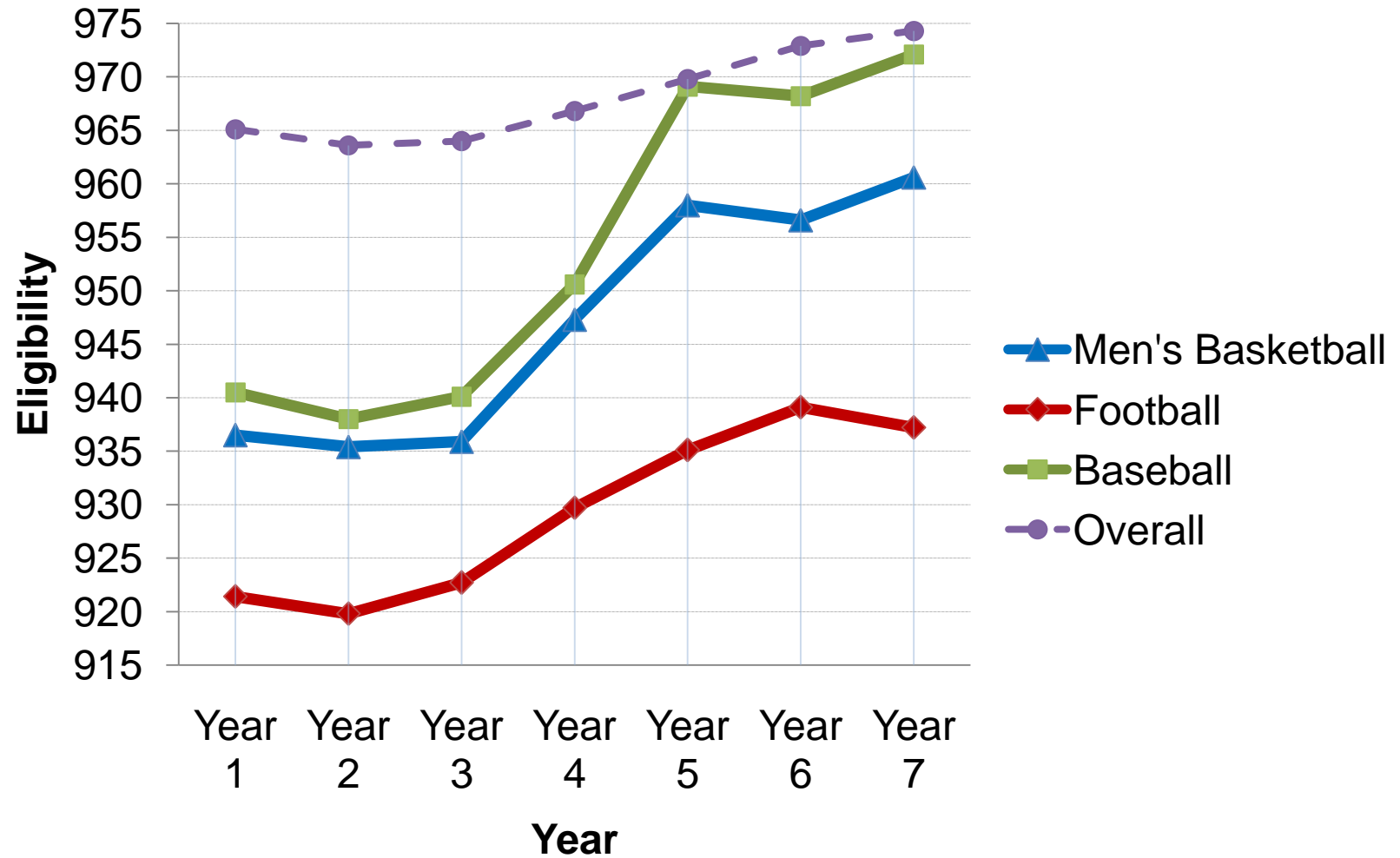
- $APR = Eligibility + Retention$
- APR designed to be a real-time proxy of eventual graduation success.
- Teams held to APR standards rather than graduation success rate (GSR) standards because APR is contemporary.
- New APR-cut line predicts a GSR of 50% on average.

APR Trends in Baseball, Men's Basketball and Football



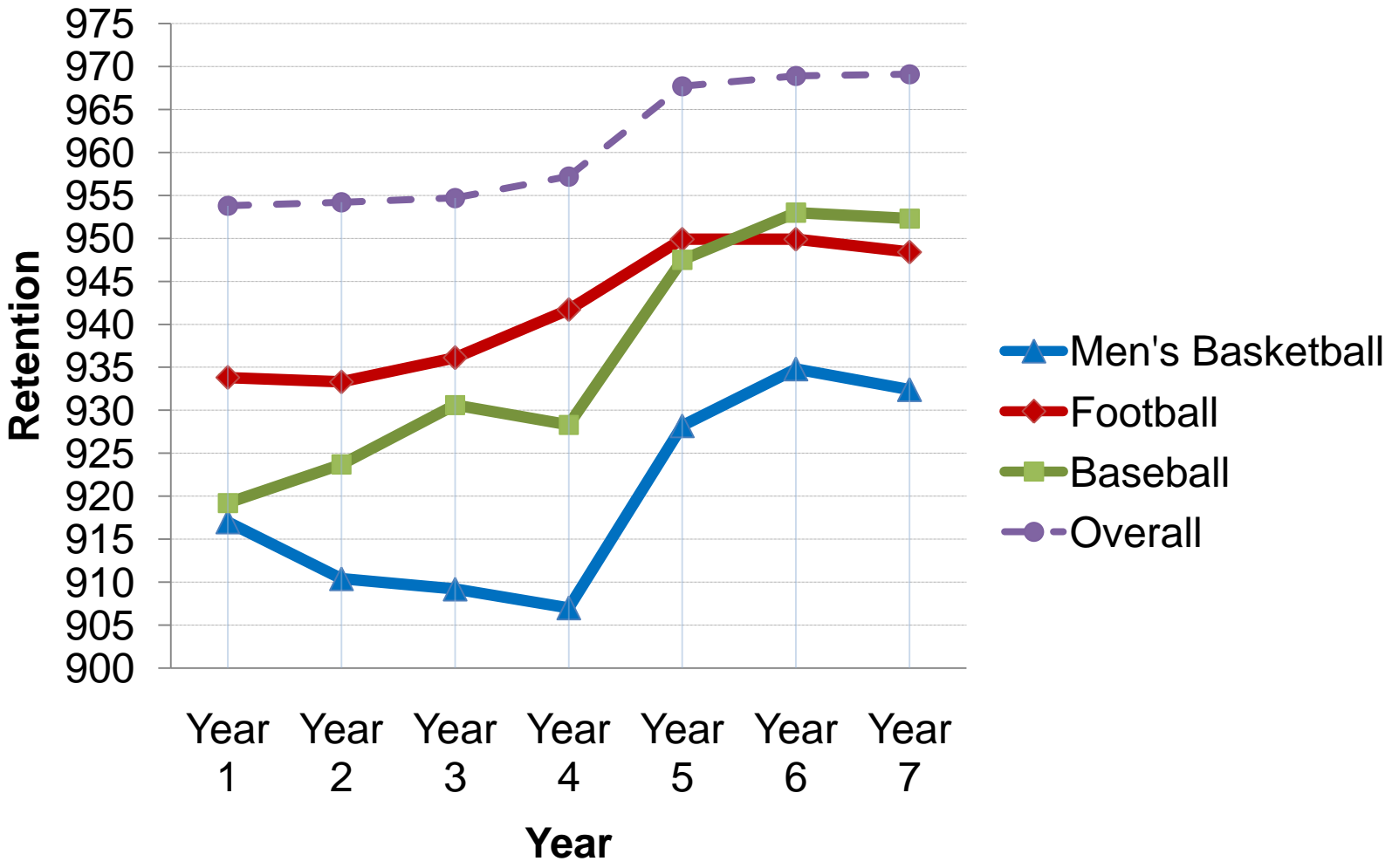
Note: Analyses based on 275 baseball squads, 323 men's basketball squads and 232 football squads that sponsored the sport within Division I during all 7 years. Overall rates include all men's and women's sports, including the three sports displayed. Retention calculation changed in 2007-08 (year 5).

Eligibility Trends in Baseball, Men's Basketball and Football



Note: Analyses based on 275 baseball squads, 323 men's basketball squads and 232 football squads that sponsored the sport within Division I during all 7 years. Overall rates include all men's and women's sports, including the three sports displayed.

Retention Trends in Baseball, Men's Basketball and Football



Note: Analyses based on 275 baseball squads, 323 men's basketball squads and 232 football squads that sponsored the sport within Division I during all 7 years. Overall rates include all men's and women's sports, including the three sports displayed. Retention calculation changed in 2007-08 (year 5).

We Have Also Learned...

- The act of transferring negatively impacts SA academic achievement, especially among lower performing SAs.
- Student-athletes generally perform worse academically in-season, especially if there is no competition in the subsequent semester.
- Academic preparation is the best predictor of poor APR or GSR, but we can identify other factors that may be unique to certain sports or schools.

Average Hours Spent Per Week In-Season on Athletic Activities in 2010 (SA Self-Report)

Division I							
	Baseball	Men's Basketball	Football (FBS/FCS)		All Other Men's Sports	Women's Basketball	All Other Women's Sports
Athletic Hrs	42.1	39.2	43.3	41.6	32.0	37.6	33.3
Division II							
Athletic Hrs	39.0	37.7	37.5	31.3	34.2	31.7	
Division III							
Athletic Hrs	34.8	30.8	33.1	29.2	29.8	28.9	

Note: Green = Decrease of 2+ hours on athletics from 2006;
Red = Increase of 2+ hours on athletics from 2006.

Self-Identity among Division I Student-Athletes

Percentage of Student-Athletes with High <u>Athletic</u> Self-Identity						
Baseball	Men's Basketball	Football		All Other Men's Sports	Women's Basketball	All Other Women's Sports
87%	80%	79%	78%	79%	65%	78%

Percentage of Student-Athletes with High <u>Academic</u> Self-Identity						
Baseball	Men's Basketball	Football		All Other Men's Sports	Women's Basketball	All Other Women's Sports
51%	60%	61%	64%	62%	64%	77%

Note: % indicating an average scale score of 5 or higher on 6-point scale.

How likely do you think it is that you will become a professional and/or Olympic athlete in your sport?

(% responding at least 'somewhat likely')

Division I						
Baseball	Men's Basketball	Football		All Other Men's Sports	Women's Basketball	All Other Women's Sports
60%	76%	58%	46%	37%	44%	16%
Division II						
43%	48%	41%		30%	25%	10%
Division III						
19%	21%	15%		13%	5%	5%

Note: Endorsement of top three scale points on 6-point scale.

Formula 1: Academic Risk for Student-Athletes at Entry

Category	Weight	Variable(s) / Criteria
Academic	+2	(HS student) HS core GPA < 2.6 <u>or</u> ACT/SAT < 820 <u>or</u> Core units < 16 <u>or</u> Academic nonqualifier <u>or</u> Number of HS > 2 <u>or</u> Educational disability diagnosed <u>or</u> other locally identified factor; (Transfer) 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 <u>or</u> Student has low financial resources <u>or</u> Student is homesick <u>or</u> other locally identified factor
	+1	Personal, health, injury, family, mental health or substance abuse issue(s)
Sport	+1	Student-athlete in high profile sport at the institution <u>or</u> High-profile student-athlete (e.g., Olympic/pro caliber)
	+1	Team environment does not prioritize academics <u>or</u> Coach in first year
Total		0-1 = low risk; 2-3 = moderate risk; 4+ = high risk

Formula 2: Academic Risk for Student-Athletes Post-Entry

Category	Weight	Variable(s) / Criteria
Academic	+4 or +2	(+4) Current cumulative GPA < 2.0 <u>or</u> Current term GPA < 2.0 <u>or</u> Academically ineligible within the past year (+2) Current cumulative GPA < 2.6 <u>or</u> Current term GPA < 2.6 <u>or</u> Educational disability diagnosed <u>or</u> Other locally identifiable academic criteria
Role of Academics	+1	Identifies strongly as athlete, not as student <u>or</u> 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 <u>or</u> Student has low financial resources <u>or</u> Student is homesick <u>or</u> other locally identified factor
	+1	Personal, health, injury, family, mental health or substance abuse issue(s)
Sport	+1	Student-athlete in high profile sport at your institution <u>or</u> High-profile student-athlete (e.g., Olympic/pro caliber)
	+2	No athletic eligibility remaining
	+1	Team environment does not prioritize academics <u>or</u> Coaching change occurred <u>or</u> Student-athlete dissatisfied with athletics experience
Total		0-2 = low risk; 3-4 = moderate risk; 5+ = high risk

Summary on Academic Success

- Re-conceptualizing academic risk among student-athletes.
 - Nuanced
 - Complex
 - Some factors common with other college students, some unique to student-athletes
 - Dynamic
- Highlighting academic risk management issues at the team/school level.

Academic and Other Collegiate Experiences

Annie Kearns



Choice of Major

- Approximately one-quarter of student-athletes choose *Business* as their major. The next most popular choice – *Social Sciences* (12%).
- Limited data on a non-athlete comparative sample show that student-athletes are more likely than non-athletes to choose *Business* and the *Social Sciences* as their major. Non-athletes are more likely to choose a major within the *Humanities*.
- The primary motivator for major choice is preparation for a career and personal interest in the topic.

Reasons for Choosing Major

(Percent endorsing top two points on 6 point scale)

	Div. I High Profile (MFB, M/WBB)	Div. I All Other Sports
Major would prepare me for a career...	74%	75%
I had personal interest in the topic...	81%	84%
I thought the major would be easy...	15%	11%
Recommended by prof/advisor not affiliated with athletics...	14%	14%
Coach recommended major...	4%	2%
Coach pressured me to choose major...	1%	<1%
Athletics academic advisor recommended major...	9%	5%
Athletics academic advisor pressured me to choose major	2%	1%
Teammates recommended major...	9%	6%
Major would help maintain eligibility...	9%	4%
Class schedule worked well with practice schedule...	15%	10%

Satisfaction with Choice of Major

- When asked directly if they would have chosen their current majors if they **weren't** student-athletes, over two-thirds of current student-athletes reported they **definitely** would.
- The majority of student-athletes (87%) also reported that *athletics did not prevent them from majoring in what they wanted*.
- Division III student-athletes were more likely to say that athletics did not affect their choice of major.
- Former student-athletes reported less satisfaction with major choice than current student-athletes.

Reasons for Choosing Classes

(Percent endorsing top two points on 6 point scale)

	Div. I High Profile (MFB, M/WBB)	Div. I All Other Sports
Classes are relevant to my future...	67%	71%
I have personal interest in my classes...	60%	66%
I thought the classes would be easy...	31%	21%
A professor or academic advisor recommended the classes...	62%	55%
Parents expected me to take the classes...	28%	21%
Coaches recommended the classes...	21%	9%
Teammates recommended the classes...	22%	18%
Took classes primarily to stay eligible...	29%	16%
Classes fit well with my practice schedule...	47%	47%

Satisfaction with Classes

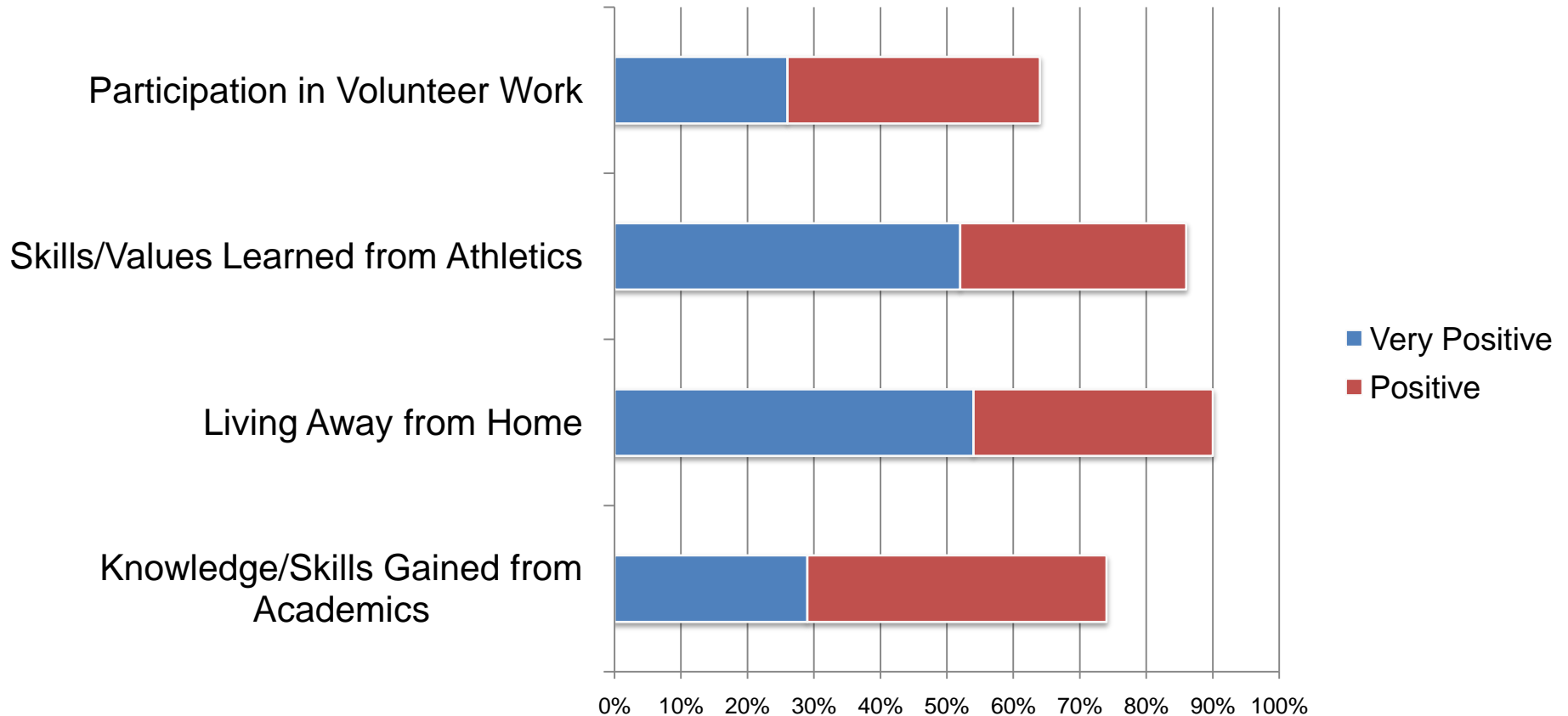
- Overall, student-athletes do seem to be satisfied with their coursework. Two-thirds reported enjoying at least *most* of their classes.
- Coaches discouraged a class at least once:
 - Division I: 39%
 - Division II: 25%
 - Division III: 18%
- Coaches discouraging a class was much more prevalent among females than males. Those in Division I and females also were more likely to report that athletics prevented them from taking courses they were interested in and that they regretted those decisions.

Non-Traditional Courses

- About 40% of student-athletes reported that they've taken a non-traditional class at some point during their college career. This was less likely to occur among Division III respondents.
- Generally taken during the school year at the home institution.
- Reasons for taking the classes were fairly varied and included *to get ahead academically; fit well with practice schedule; fit well with academic schedule; and required for major.*
- While about one-half say these courses are as difficult as traditional courses, slightly less than one-half say they learn as much in these courses as they do traditional courses.

Value Gained from College Experiences

- Former student-athletes report that their experiences living away from home and the skills/values learned through athletics were positive influences in preparing them for life after college.



Items on Campus / Team Climate from GOALS Study

College / University	Team
This college has created an inclusive environment for all students	My coaches have created an inclusive environment for all members of the team
This campus community is accepting of differing viewpoints and cultures	My coaches and teammates are accepting of differing viewpoints and cultures
This college makes a genuine effort to recruit a diverse student body	My coaches make a genuine effort to recruit a diverse group of student-athletes
*There are many opportunities at this school to learn about or discuss other cultures or viewpoints	There are many opportunities on this team to learn about or discuss other cultures or viewpoints
I always feel comfortable expressing my social and political views on this campus	I always feel comfortable expressing my social and political views on this team
I always feel comfortable expressing my religious views on this campus	I always feel comfortable expressing my religious views on this team
Members of the campus community are always respectful of members of the opposite sex	My coaches and teammates are always respectful of members of the opposite sex
Members of the campus community are always respectful of persons from other racial/ethnic groups	My coaches and teammates are always respectful of persons from other racial/ethnic groups

*Highlight denotes greater endorsement on team (college/university) versus other.

Social Experiences

- Student-athletes report a general sense of belonging to the campus and feelings that they are part of the campus community.
 - Those in Division III report a stronger sense of belonging than those in Divisions I and II.
 - Certain sport group differences within division.
- Over 90% overall report that *athletics has provided them a connection to the campus.*

Overall Satisfaction with College

- Satisfaction measures:
 - Two-thirds of current student-athletes *agree or strongly agree* that they are glad they choose their current institution;
 - Over one-half of current student-athletes *agree or strongly agree* that they would choose their current college again; and
 - Over 60% report they would recommend their school to a prospective student-athlete.
- Factors affecting satisfaction:
 - Choosing a college primarily for athletics (less satisfied);
 - Having a high athletic *and* high academic identity (more satisfied);
 - Feeling a sense of connection to the campus (more satisfied); and
 - Positive feelings about academic effort (more satisfied).
- Those who reported higher levels of satisfaction with their athletics, academic *and* social experiences were more likely to earn their degree.

Would Like to Change about Student-Athlete Experience?

- Themes to the open-ended question include:
 - Coaches (11% of those responding to this section said that some aspect of their coach or coaching would be the piece they would most like to change)
 - Would like more time for academics, relaxing, etc.
 - Would choose a different college
 - Major and classes taken
 - More playing time or team/personal success
 - Their personal work ethic
 - Finances
 - Not be injured
 - Better facilities
 - Better teammates
 - Less time traveling

Best Part of Student-Athlete Experience?

- Themes to the open-ended question include:
 - Teammates, bonds, friendships
 - Social aspect of team membership (e.g., meeting new people)
 - Traveling
 - Coaches (4% of those responding to this section said their coach was the best part of their experience)
 - Winning / Competition
 - Having their education funded
 - Perks
 - Exposure
 - Staying in shape
 - Academics
 - Other

Thank You

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