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Pamela Jo Robenolt

What's so Special about Intercollegiate Athletic Special Admits?

Implications for Academic Support Programming

Pamela Jo Robenolt

A dissertation

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

University of Washington

2012

Reading Committee:

Edward Taylor, Chair

Eugene B. Edgar

Jennifer L. Hoffman

Program Authorized of Offer Degree:

College of Education

University of Washington

Abstract

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Implications for Support Programming

Pamela Jo Robenolt

Chair of the Supervisory Committee:
Dean Edward Taylor
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

The purpose of this case study is to gain insight into the academic, athletic and social experiences of specially admitted student-athletes in order to better understand what contributes to their lower academic performance in high school but also to further understand what obstacles they experience during their college academic careers and, importantly, what protective factors contribute to some students persisting through to graduation. Participants (N=5) included Division I specially admitted scholarship football players who graduated within six years of entering a college in the Pacific Northwest. They were interviewed to get a better understanding of the factors that contributed to them being specially admitted, obstacles they faced academically and what they identified as promoting in persisting to graduation. It was found outside influences that impacted high school GPA and SAT scores more than ability therefore those scores should not solely be relied on for admission practices and NCAA initial eligibility standards. Obstacles to persistence included, sport schedule, overall football experience (including injuries, coaching changes and loss), focus on NFL as a career excluding other options, entering college with a lack of study skills and not understanding college expectation hindering transition to college. In addition, support outside of athletic, specialized academic support services and personal character traits and belief promoted academic success. Implications for student athlete support services were discussed with recommendations for specific programming.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
List of Figures _____	iii
List of Tables _____	iv
Ch. 1: Introduction _____	1
Background and Context _____	2
Problem _____	4
Statement of Purpose _____	6
Assumptions _____	8
Rationale and Significance _____	9
Terms and Acronyms _____	9
Ch. 2: Literature Review _____	12
NCAA Initial Eligibility History _____	13
Admissions _____	17
Special and Regular Admissions Gap _____	18
Predictors of Academic Success in College _____	24
Predictors of Student Athlete Academic Success in College _____	25
Ch. 3: Methodology and Research Approach _____	33
Purpose and Research Questions _____	33
Rationale _____	34
Research Sample _____	37
Overview _____	38
Research Design and Data Collection _____	39
Data Collection Methods _____	41
Data Analysis and Synthesis _____	42
Ethical Considerations _____	42
Trustworthiness _____	44
Limitations _____	45
Ch. 4: Findings _____	48
Descriptive Analysis _____	53
Factors Contributing to Special Admittance Status _____	65
Obstacles to Persistence _____	72
Promoters of Persistence _____	85
Summary _____	96
Ch. 5: Recommendations _____	99
Summary of Findings and Conclusions _____	99
Programming Implications for Support Services _____	103
Recommendations for Student Athlete Success _____	111
Policy Implications _____	116
Future Research _____	118
Afterthoughts _____	120
References _____	122

Appendix A: NCAA Initial Eligibility Timeline _____	128
Appendix B: LEAP Syllabus _____	134
Appendix C: LEAP Schedule _____	142
Appendix D: LEAP Sample Student Evaluations _____	148

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Number	Page
2.1 Average SAT Scores by Athlete Status and Division _____	19
2.2 High Profile Athletes SAT Divergence of Students at Large _____	20
2.3 Research Focus _____	31
2.4 Balance Institutional Demands & Resources with Student's _____	31
4.1 2003-5 Scholarship Freshmen Football & General Freshmen Population Ethnicity Percentages _____	55
4.2 2003-5 Freshmen Football SAT Scores _____	56
4.3 2003-5 Scholarship freshmen football overall high school GPAs _____	56
4.4 2003-5 Scholarship Freshmen Football High School NCAA Core GPA _____	57
4.5 2003-5 Scholarship Freshmen Football Academic Index Scores _____	58
4.6 2003-5 Scholarship Freshmen Football Admittance Status _____	59
4.7 2003-5 Scholarship Freshmen Football Academic Status _____	59
4.8 2003-5 Academic Status of Scholarship Freshmen Football By Admission Status _____	60
4.9 2003-5 Scholarship Freshmen Football Redshirt Status _____	62
4.10 2003-5 Redshirt Status of Scholarship Freshmen Football by Admission Status _____	63
4.11 2003-5 Academic Status of Scholarship Freshmen Football by Redshirt Status _____	64
4.12 Factors Contributing to Special Admittance Status _____	66
4.13 Obstacles to Persistence _____	73
4.14 Factors Promoting Persistence _____	86
4.15 Pathway to Academic Success _____	98

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Page
2.1 Comparison of Federal Graduation Rates between Student-Athletes and Student Body for Select Groups in 2002 Entering Class _____	16
2.2 Average SAT for 1989 Cohort of Male Students _____	19
2.3 Difference of SAT scores of male student-athletes in high profile sports (1976 & 1989 cohorts) to the general student population (male only) _____	20
2.4 General Students & Student Athlete PAC-10 SAT Score Comparison _____	22
2.5 PAC-10 Conference Special Admissions for Athletes & Overall _____	23
4.1 UW Football Win/Loss Record 2003-2010 _____	50
4.2 Summary of Admission and Graduation Statistics _____	61
4.3 Red-Shirt Summary Statistics _____	63
4.4 NCAA 2004 Federal Graduation Rates _____	66
4.5 Sample In-Season Week Day Football Student Schedule _____	74

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During this process I have been fortunate to have the support and encouragement of many people who helped me reach completion.

First, I would like to extend my thanks and deep appreciation to each participant who gave generously of their time and insight without hesitation. I am truly grateful for their willingness to take interest in my research. Without them this study would not have been possible.

My thanks and acknowledgement to my advisor and chair Ed Taylor and my dissertation committee, Peter Dukes, Gene Edgar, and Jennifer Hoffman for their patience, advice and commitment to my success.

I owe a special thank you to my colleagues, especially the support of Rick Mulcahy and Angie McKinnell whose support was always there when I needed it. Rick, thanks for taking the time to read numerous very rough drafts despite your intense schedule and for all the philosophical discussions. Angie, thank you for your formatting and energy that was inspiring and motivating. You both are great and I owe you. Angie I hope to be as supportive of you when you are working on your dissertation.

My family has always been encouraging and supportive. I would like to thank my parents Ken and JoAnn Robenolt who have always been supportive of all my adventures in life. Thanks and appreciation to siblings Steve Robenolt, Sue Bork, Debra Friedman, Mike Robenolt, Jeff Robenolt and his wife Julie for always encouraging me and understanding when I could not be with them because I had school work. A special thanks to Debra who was also in school for motivating me when she called or emailed during her study breaks. Congratulations to you for crossing that finish line – you inspired me!

I would also like to acknowledge Ed Taylor who kept me on the path and reminded me of the importance of the work. Jennifer and Herbie Hoffman for encouragement, pushing me and showing me the way. Sadena Parks who challenged me to a “work-off” when I was running out of steam. Carrie Bayless for all the discussions on the research and helping me see the big picture when I was stuck in the weeds. Kim Durand who was flexible with my work schedule during crucial times and the rest of my co-workers for filling in on those weekends when I couldn’t help out.

Finally, to all the student athletes I have had the pleasure to work with over the years who have taught me about discipline and pushing oneself to the limit. I have learned so much from your accomplishments and sacrifices. I hope through this process I have learned how to develop curriculum and programs that will help remove some obstacles for your path and make your journey more pleasant.

DEDICATION

For student athletes working on balancing the demands of academics and athletics

Ch. 1 - Introduction

Colleges and universities routinely accept students under a category commonly known as special admissions. This category is often made up of student-athletes with academic preparation that is below the general student population. Like all students, regardless of their admissions status, some persist and graduate, some do not. The purpose of this exploratory case study is to gain insight into the academic, athletic and social worlds of specially admitted student-athletes in order to better understand what contributes to their lower academic performance in high school but also to understand what academic obstacles they experience during their college careers and, importantly, what protective factors contribute to some students persisting through to graduation. The knowledge gained from this inquiry can offer insights to inform student athlete academic service providers in developing support programs for these specially admitted college students. To better understand this student population, this study employed qualitative exploratory case study methodology utilizing the 2003, 2004 and 2005 cohorts of scholarship freshmen football players as subjects for the data analysis. Participants for the interviews consisted of five of the nineteen qualifying specially admitted football students from the 2003 through 2005 group who graduated within six year of being admitted to the university.

This chapter begins with an overview of the context and background framing the study. Next are the problem statement, the statement of purpose, and the research questions guiding the study. The chapter also includes a discussion around research approach, researcher's perspectives and researcher's assumptions. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the proposed rationale and significance of this research and definitions of some of the key terminology used.

Background and Context

In June of 2009 the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I Academic Cabinet began a review of initial eligibility standard requirements as part of a routine five-year plan process. The cabinet has responsibility over academic matters within the NCAA and is comprised of university presidents, senior athletic department administrators, faculty athletic representatives, and other faculty who are all on staff at a Division I institution. The main priority of the cabinet is to maximize first-year college academic success of student athletes, with success ultimately defined as graduating from college, while minimizing adverse effects on minority and low-income prospective student-athletes (NCAA Research, 2010).

During these meetings concerns arose from university presidents that some student-athletes, particularly specially admitted football and men's basketball players, are being admitted to institutions without the ability to compete in the classroom and to ultimately graduate from college. The cabinet requested data on academic success measured by graduation rates and academic progress rate (APR) reports. In an attempt to increase graduation rates, recommendations were made to further study increasing initial eligibility standards with the idea that it would help weed out the student-athletes who could not be academically successful (Dobel, J., 2010). The discussions continued and in October 2011 the NCAA Division I Board of Directors took action to adopt recommendations to increase initial eligibility standards to begin on or after August 1, 2015 (NCAA Division I Board of Directors Report, 2011).

Currently the NCAA Clearinghouse requires each prospective Division I student-athlete to complete 16 core high school classes pre-approved by the NCAA and meet the sliding scale minimum standards for high school grade point average in the core classes and standardized test scores (SAT/ACT). A prospective student athlete can

have as low as a 400 combined math and reading SAT (37 ACT) score if the high school core grade point average (HSCGPA) is as high as 3.55 or a HSCPGA as low as 2.0 with a combined math and reading score of 1010 (86 ACT) to meet the requirements (NCAA Initial Eligibility Center, 2010).

The newly adopted standards increased the core GPA in the 16 courses from a 2.0 to a 2.3 and recalibrated the SAT/GPA sliding scale for student athletes to be able to compete. The new sliding scale requires a high school core GPA to be approximately 0.5 GPA units higher for a given test score compared to the current qualifier standard. For example, with the new standard a SAT of 1000 requires 2.5 high school core GPA to qualify for competition. In addition it has added a category of “academic red-shirt” for incoming student athletes who do not meet the 2.3 core GPA requirement (yet are at or above 2.0). During the first year these students will not be able to compete for their sport, but would be able to practice and receive athletically related aid. In addition, if they do not successfully complete eight semester hours/nine quarter hours during the first term they will not be able to practice the second semester/second and third quarter. Since some student athletes are admitted to universities with lower academic profiles than the general student population, it is important to have minimum institutional academic standards to try to ensure the students have the academic ability to be successful in the classroom. These standards would vary by institution based on the academic profiles of incoming students as well as the academic culture and resources provided by the university. Not limiting access to college to student athletes who actually do possess the academic ability to succeed is a significant consideration for colleges and NCAA policy makers. Therefore this study seeks to better understand the factors that lead to lower academic profiles of student-athletes relative to their peers (at a given institution). This study also examines the experiences of collegiate student athletes who are admitted under the special admissions status. This informs admission and initial

eligibility policy as well as support service programming that promotes persistence and graduation.

Problem

Assumptions regarding specially admitted student athletes academic ability to compete in the classroom and graduate from college are based on high school grade point averages and standardized test scores. While these statistics are easy to obtain it is not clear how they translate into predictors of academic success. These variables are solely used by the NCAA to determine who qualifies for initial eligibility to play NCAA Division I collegiate sports while other important variables, that are more difficult to evaluate, are left completely out NCAA evaluation of initial eligibility.

There are frequent stories in popular media outlets that make assumptions about student athletes, mainly in revenue producing sports such as football and men's basketball. Assumptions are made that some of these young people, mostly men, are just in college to play their sport (Gutting, 2012). Some have gone as far as to claim that these students are cheating to stay eligible (Gerney & Weber, 2010). While there are statistics that show football players have lower SAT scores (Knobler, 2008), at this time there is no research indicating the student athletes with those lower scores are graduating at a lower rate or cheating at a higher rate than other student athletes or the general student populations.

The federal graduation rate statistics provided by the NCAA show that student athlete graduation rates are at an all time high and are two points higher than the general student body (NCAA News, 2011). Graduation rates for football and basketball teams, while steadily increasing, continue to be below college averages. What the articles do not address is that these teams are made up of students with diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds and issues of poverty and racism may have a

significant impact on SAT gaps or lower graduation rates. According to the NCAA overall Division I federal graduation rates for 2004, Black male student athletes graduated at a 50 percent rate whereas Black males overall graduated at 38 percent (NCAA News, 2011). Academic reforms for intercollegiate athletes seem to be working yet the push to increase initial eligibility standards continues.

Without facts and proper analysis of which student athletes are not graduating and why, thousands of student athletes may be denied access to college annually. The students falling into the category are over represented by young people of color and many of whom are also from low socio-economic backgrounds. Previous academic success by others with this profile makes the case that many of these students could successfully complete undergraduate degrees with the proper understanding of their unique needs and with appropriate support in place.

At the University of Washington student athletes comprise one to two percent of the overall student population. Incoming specially admitted student athletes are less than one percent of the entire entering freshman class of 5000 to 5500. The total number of specially admitted student athletes may comprise 20 to 25 percent of the total student athlete population of approximately 650. With this relative small number of specially admitted student athletes, the question is why should so much attention be given to their admittance to the university and academic support. With a limited number being allowed special admittance to the university, coaches tend to fill those spots with student athletes who may be regarded as having a high impact on the team possibility of success. Specially admitted student-athletes are key to the success of a university's athletic program and the success of athletics is viewed positively as helping schools gain regional and national exposure for the university's faculty and research. Specially admitted athletes are deserving of specialized attention, no other students on campus are as highly visible and press-worthy as this population. This is a double-edged sword,

however, and attention brought to low student-athlete graduation rates and low college engagement among student athletes will only create a negative image for a school. Negative press can cause embarrassment and even damage the reputation of the university. The university admits these specially admitted student athletes knowing they are less prepared for the rigors of college and it is crucial it understand and support their academic needs.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the academic, athletic and social experiences of specially admitted student-athletes in order to better understand what contributes to their lower academic performance in high school but also to further understand what obstacles they experience during their college academic careers and, importantly, what protective factors contribute to some students persisting through to graduation.

This study contributes to the on-going deliberations within the NCAA and within higher education administration on how athletics can better support the educational mission of the university and, conversely, on how universities can maximize the academic success of individual student-athletes. Recruiting student-athletes who have the best chance of taking advantage of and ultimately completing their educations is vitally important, but few predictors of special admit academic success exist or have been studied outside of research on cognitive indicators (i.e. GPA and SAT). Understanding more specifically why special admits academically thrive or fail academically will aid in the deliberation, evaluation and reform of NCAA initial eligibility policies, improve efficiency of existing academic support services already in place at colleges.

Research Questions

The following questions will guide this exploratory case study:

1. What can be learned about the student athletes participating in football admitted between 2003 and 2005 through secondary academic data (high school GPA, standardized test scores, transcript information, etc.)?
2. What factors do specially admitted scholarship football student athletes attribute to their lower standardized test scores and/or lower high school grade point averages in comparison with the general student population?
3. What do specially admitted scholarship football student athletes identify as obstacles to reaching graduation?
4. Why do specially admitted scholarship football student-athletes persist to graduation and what do they identify as the factors leading to their success?

Research Design Overview

With approval of the universities institutional review board, data was collected about the 48 scholarship freshmen football students who entered the university between 2003 and 2005. In addition, interviews focusing on the experiences and perceptions of five of the nineteen specially admitted football students who graduated within six years of entering college were conducted. Together this investigation is a case study using qualitative research methods.

In-depth interviews were the primary method of data collection. The interviews subsequently formed the basis for the overall findings of this study. To protect the identity of the interview participants no pseudonym were given so quotes could not be linked together and other possible identifying factors were removed. The sessions were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Although the nature of the study prevented the researcher from achieving triangulation of data, a comprehensive review of the relevant literature and pilot tests shaped and refined the data collection method used. Coding categories were developed and refined on an ongoing basis. Participants were given the opportunity to review quotes used to verify they were in deed their words with the intended meaning and in context of the findings offered. One of the study limitations is triangulation of interview data. Interview data was not compared with other data sources or other informants.

Assumptions

Based on the researcher's background as an intercollegiate learning specialist, four primary assumptions were made regarding this study.

1. High school GPAs and SAT scores do not provide helpful insight into the students' academic needs and ability.
2. Student athletes who struggle academically are not necessarily the same students who have lower academic profiles upon entering the university.
3. Low academic skills are not the primary reason for student athletes leaving college prior to graduation.
4. Most football students do care about their education and obtaining a degree.

These assumptions were based on personal experience of working in the field for over ten years and from discussions with other learning specialist from across the nation who also worked with specially admitted student athletes. Data on specially admitted student athlete success was lacking with the exception of a few studies on predictors of retention or academic success that were quantitative in nature. Lives of specially admitted student athletes are incredibly complex. It is difficult to reduce their academic experience to a few or even few dozen variables.

At the time of conducting this study, the researcher was employed as an assistant director and learning specialist in a student athlete academic service program within an intercollegiate athletic department. Working directly with specially admitted student athletes participating in Division I athletic programs and developing programming to meet the needs of “at-risk” student athletes were major job responsibilities. Thus, the researcher, as a working professional, brings practical experience and an understanding of the environment to the inquiry process.

As valuable as that experience and perspective can be to providing insight, it can also be a limitation leading to bias judgment regarding the research design and the interpretation of the findings. The researcher remained committed to engage in ongoing self-reflection by way of journaling and dialogue with professional colleagues as well as with current and former student athletes.

Rationale and Significance

The rationale for this study comes from the researcher’s desire to uncover ways to better understand specially admitted student athletes’ academic needs and help support their overall college success. It is difficult to develop solutions when the problems are not correctly identified. More data is need to analyze if raising high school grade point averages and SAT scores will truly address the issue of raising graduation rates.

Term and Acronyms

ACT Originally ACT stood for American College Testing but in 1996 the name of the company was officially changed to ACT. It is a standardized test for college admission in the United States. The ACT includes 215 multiple-choice questions and takes approximately three hours and thirty minutes to complete. There are four subject area tests plus a writing test.

APR	To evaluate the success of collegiate athletic teams in progressing towards graduation, the NCAA created the Academic Progress Rate . Each player earns a maximum of two points: one for being academically eligible and one for staying at the institution (retention) or graduating. The total points earned are divided by the total point possible. An APR score of 925 is the equivalent of a 50% graduation rate. Scores under 925 results in NCAA penalties to the team.
Division I	Also known as D-I, Division I is the highest level of intercollegiate athletics recognized by the NCAA. Division I schools generally have sport programs that have larger budgets and may be referred to as “big time” sport programs.
FAR	Faculty Athletic Representative is a faculty member at a NCAA institution who has been designated by the university to serve as a liaison between the school and the athletic department and to represent the university in conference and NCAA affairs.
Football student	An intercollegiate student athlete who participates on the university’s football team.
GPA	Grade point average is calculated by dividing the total number of grade point received by the total number attempted. It is used to measure the student’s academic performance.
GSR	The graduation success rate was developed as an alternative to the federal graduation rates. It does not count student athletes who transfer from an institution in good academic standing against the graduation rate and factors in student athletes who transfer into the university.
HSCGPA	High school core grade point average is the grade point average in the 16 required core classes required by the NCAA for initial eligibility.
Initial eligibility	The NCAA requires graduation from high school, 16 core courses taken in high school with a minimum grade point average in the core courses and a minimum SAT or ACT score to be eligible to participate in NCAA collegiate sport teams.
LEAP	Learn + Experience + Achieve Program is a 4-week summer transition program held the summer before autumn term for incoming freshmen student athletes at the University of Washington.
NCAA	National Collegiate Athletic Association oversees intercollegiate athletics in the United States. It functions a general administrative authority, formulating and enforcing rules for eligibility criteria for athletes and for playing sports within NCAA institutions.
Initial Eligibility Center	The Initial Eligibility Center, formally known as the NCAA clearing house, certifies initial eligibility for incoming prospective student

athletes in Division I/Division II institutions. Certification is required for the student athlete to be able to participate on NCAA athletic teams.

NFL

National Football League is the professional level of football competition.

Regular admit

Students admitted to a university meeting average admission requirements.

SAT

It was first called the Scholastic Aptitude Test, then the Scholastic Assessment Test but now SAT does not stand for anything. It is a standardized test for college admission in the United States. The current exam takes three hours and forty-five minutes to take.

Special admit

A student who is admitted to the university with a lower academic profile than the general student population. Each institution defines the specific details differently taking the profile of the general student population into consideration.

Ch. 2 - Literature Review

The purpose of this exploratory case study is to gain insight into the academic, athletic and social worlds of specially admitted student-athletes in order to better understand what contributes to their lower academic performance in high school but also to understand what academic obstacles they experience during their college careers and, importantly, what protective factors contribute to some students persisting through to graduation. To carry out this study it was necessary to complete a critical review of literature related to the history of NCAA initial eligibility regulations, college admissions including special admission programs, and predictors of college academic success in college. This review was ongoing throughout the data collection, data analysis and synthesis phases of the study.

The evolution of NCAA initial eligibility policy has an important role in special admission guidelines for student-athletes. Changes to initial eligibility standards have often led to debates and even lawsuits over finding a balance between academic integrity of the institution and limited access for minority and low-income student-athletes. It is important to understand which students are granted access to college and who is academically successful in college since these issues are at the very heart of the research questions. The literature on cognitive, non-cognitive and student-athlete specific predictors of academic success in college are explained. Omissions and limitations in this literature were pointed out when they became apparent. Each section of the literature review closes with a synthesis that focuses on research implications. The interpretive summary that concludes the chapter illustrates how the literature has informed the research's understanding of the material and how the material contributes to the ongoing development of the study's conceptual framework.

NCAA Initial Eligibility History

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) was created in 1906. It is a voluntary organization through which the nation's colleges and universities govern their athletics programs. It is comprised of institutions, conferences, organizations and individuals. According to the NCAA, it is committed to the best interests, education and athletics participation of student-athletes with a core purpose “to govern competition in a fair, safe, equitable and sportsmanlike manner, and to integrate intercollegiate athletics into higher education so that the educational experience of the student-athlete is paramount” (NCAA.org, 2010).

Throughout the history of intercollegiate athletics balancing academic integrity, amateurism, and student-athlete welfare has been problematic. The high stakes of creating winning teams that generate revenue seems to be in conflict with the mission of higher education. Trying to ensure athletes are students and are not being exploited for profit has been a key factor in the eligibility policies and academic reform movements dating back to the late 1800's. The full history of initial eligibility legislation (See Appendix A) provides information on the attempts to control eligibility and exploitation by requiring student-athletes to progress towards graduation as a condition of playing their sport. An impact of the NCAA legislation is that the NCAA has become a gatekeeper deciding which student athletes are being granted access to college. Some others view initial eligibility standards from the standpoint of equity and social justice (Gatemen, 2012, New Game Plan, 1999).

In 1992 the NCAA adopted Proposition 16, also known as Prop 16, which would be used to determine initial eligibility. This rule was implemented in 1996. Prop 16 required a GPA of at least 2.0 in a 13-course core curriculum. It implemented a sliding scale model between SAT scores and high school grade point averages so a student

with a 2.0 high school GPA would need a 1010 SAT score but if the GPA was higher the required SAT score requirement would decrease.

In 1997 four Philadelphia students who were not able to obtain the minimum SAT score yet met all other academic requirements sued the NCAA over the freshmen eligibility rules resulting in the lawsuit *Cureton v. NCAA*. They challenged the new regulation stating it created an unjustified disparate impact on African Americans violating Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Baker & Connaughton, 2002 and Waller, 2003). A NCAA memo stated that African Americans and low-income student-athletes had been disproportionately impacted by Proposition 16 standards. According to the NCAA's own research 26.6 percent of African-American student-athletes who appeared on a Division I Institution Request List did not qualify under Prop 16 in 1996 and 21.4 percent in 1997 compared to 6.4 and 4.2 percent of white student-athletes respectively (New Game Plan, 1999, Baker & Connaughton, 2002 and Waller, 2003). In 1999 the judge ruled that the NCAA must stop using its freshmen eligibility rules but in 2000 that decision was reversed on the basis that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 did not apply to the NCAA (Waller, 2003). The NCAA was sued again in *Pryor v. NCAA* in 2002. Kelly Pryor, an African American student athlete with learning disabilities, based her case on charges of intentional discrimination based on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and additional violations for the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The charges alleging race discrimination were dismissed. The court stated that the NCAA adopted Proposition 16 "in spite of" and not "because of" its alleged disparate impact on minority students and they failed to show intentional discrimination (Waller, 2003). Both cases were won on more technical aspects of the law even though it was clear that there was a disparate impact on minority students resulting in fewer student athletes of color gaining access to college. After five years of court battles and the door open to further lawsuits, the NCAA revised Proposition 16's

sliding scale to allow for lower SAT scores with higher GPA scores (Baker & Connaughton, 2002 and Waller, 2003). The NCAA rules impacting initial eligibility are continuing to evolve and are constantly changing. In 2011 the NCAA, again passed legislation, which will be implemented in 2015, to raise the SAT and GPA sliding scale.

The NCAA Eligibility Center (formerly known as the Clearinghouse) requires all incoming Division I student athlete to complete sixteen core high school classes that are pre-approved by the NCAA and meet sliding scale minimum standards for high school grade point average in the core classes and standardized test scores such as the SAT and ACT. A student can have combined math and reading SAT score as low as a 400 or ACT score of 37 if the high school core grade point average (HSCGPA) is 3.55 or higher. Alternatively, a HSCPGA of 2.0 with a combined SAT math and reading score of 1010 or ACT score 86 will meet the sliding scale NCAA requirements (NCAA College Bound Student Athletes, 2010). NCAA initial eligibility requirements completely rely on SAT and GPA scores to make decisions on which student athletes can participate in college athletic programs. They use these numbers to predict academic ability and success.

The most recent graduation data available from the NCAA (2002-03) shows that on the average student-athletes are graduating at the same rate or even higher rates than the general student population in almost every category (Table 2.1). Note in 2002-03 initial eligibility requirements were different. There were fourteen core courses instead of sixteen. The increase in core classes was approved in 2003 and took effect in 2008.

Are the current initial eligibility standards high enough to ensure student-athletes have the ability to be academically successful in college? Even with encouraging graduation data and increasing graduation rates for student athletes, discussions

Table 2.1: Comparison of Federal Graduation Rates between Student-Athletes and Student Body for Select Groups in 2002 Entering Class

Group	Student-Athlete Graduation Rate	Student Body Graduation Rate
Overall	64%	62%
White	68%	65%
African American	53%	44%
White males	62%	62%
White females	74%	67%
African American males	49%	38%
African American females	63%	49%

Figure 1. Adapted from "NCAA Research Related to Graduation Rates of Division I Student-Athletes 1984-2002" by NCAA Research Staff, 2009, p. 10. Copyright by NCAA Research.

of raising NCAA initially eligibility standards to further increase graduation rates continue. Will raising standards increase graduation rates? There are some assumptions that may not be accurate. There is not any research focused on student athletes who are admitted at the lower end of the academic spectrum that analyzes if these are the students who are not graduating and if so are academic ability contributing to these student-athletes not graduating. In addition there is no research on contributing factors for some of these student athletes lower SAT and GPA scores. Again there are assumptions that these students are lacking ability to be successful in college as compared to others who receive higher scores. With that line of thinking, raising the minimum requirements would weed out individuals who may not be able to be successful in college. If this is a false assumption the raising of requirements may have little effect on raising graduation rates but could deny access to student athletes who could be academically successful. It's important to understand individual institution's admissions procedures so to see if there is better place to address the issue of increasing graduation rates.

Admissions

According to the U.S. Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics (US Department of Education, 2010) between 1997 and 2007, enrollment at degree-granting institutions increased at a rate of 26 percent from 14.5 million to 18.2 million compared to an increase of 14 percent the previous 10 years. The increase in the number of individuals seeking admissions along with many institutions cutting freshmen class sizes due to budgetary issues has created more competitive admissions at many universities. For example, during the 2007-8 academic year Harvard accepted only nine percent of applicants, Princeton accepted 9.5 percent and Ohio State rejected 44 percent of its applicant pool. UCLA turned down 38,000 applicants during this same time period (Winik, 2007; Frey, 2007). According to Phillip Ballinger, University of Washington's director of admissions, in 2007 the University of Washington accepted 62 percent of the more than 17,500 applicants which Ballinger reported as "possibly the toughest cut ever" and the most selective it has been in years (Frey, 2007).

With admissions to universities becoming more competitive the question of fairness arises when certain numbers of slots are reserved for student-athletes who do not meet the average academic standards. Former Princeton University President, William Bowen, stated that there "would be more spaces for students who meet regular admission qualification if they hadn't enrolled less qualified athletes" (Knobler, 2008). This sentiment of questioning fairness of reserving admission slots for less qualified student-athletes and if there is a need of special admissions programs is echoed across the nation (Espenshade, Chung, & Waller, 2004; Farrell & Lipka, 2006). At the University of Washington there are usually around 5500 freshmen admitted per year and Intercollegiate Athletics are allowed to specially admit 30 incoming students with an

additional 100 students in the priority admission category. The special and priority admission used by Intercollegiate Athletics is about two percent of the incoming freshmen class. While the issue of fairness can still be debated, putting the numbers in context seems to diminish the severity of the problem. Yet the debates continue and as college admission gets more competitive the issue does not seem to be going away.

Special and Regular Admissions Gap

Most institutions have a process of evaluating academic qualifications based on previously admitted student profiles. These are mainly standardized test scores such as SAT and ACT and high school GPAs. Even though many universities have incorporated some form of minimum requirements standards for regular admissions, most still allow for admitting applicants who have lower academic profiles than the general student population. This policy is often referred to as “special admissions”. There is not much transparency regarding specific information on what the process is for special admittance, which departments receive the slots or how many slots are available. Many different departments across campuses have used these programs to admit student with certain talents or ability that is expected to contribute to the overall growth, diversity and prosperity of the university (Butler, 1995). This includes departments such as art, music, drama, dance, minority affairs, and athletics but athletics tends to garner the most attention. The number of students admitted through this process varies between institutions, as do the procedures that are followed.

The NCAA defines special admissions programs as “those designed for students who don’t meet standard or normal entrance requirements (Scherzagier, 2009).” The NCAA has no regulations overseeing admissions process outside of granting initial eligibility that requires minimum academic standards for student-athletes to be allowed

to participate on a team participating in NCAA competition. It has been shown that recruited student-athletes have been admitted with a lower academic profile than the regular student population (Bowen & Levin, 2003; Shulman & Bowen, 2001). Shulman and Bowen (2001) compared the 1989 cohort of male students' SAT scores of those who went on to play high profile sports such as football, men's basketball and ice hockey. Low profile sports including all other sports sometimes referred to as Olympic sports, to the general student population at several institutions in different NCAA divisions and conferences. When comparing Division IA public universities, Division IA private universities and Ivy League universities, the pattern is consistent in all three types of institutions. The SAT scores averages are highest for the general student populations, or as Shulman & Bowen titled this group the "students at large" and lowest for the higher profile student-athletes (Figure 2.1 and Table 2.2).

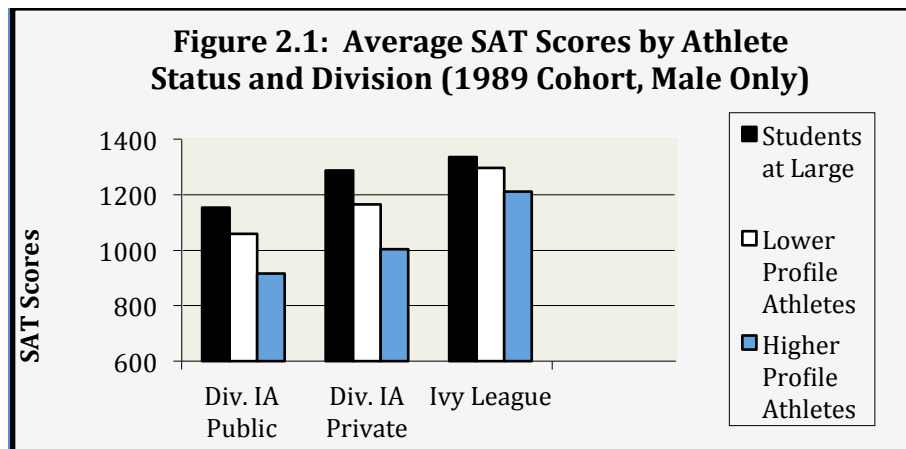


Figure 2.1. Adapted from *The Game of Life*, by Shulman & Bowen, 2001, p. 44. Copyright by Princeton University Press.

Table 2.2: Average SAT Scores for 1989 Cohort of Male Students.

	Div. IA Public	Div. IA Private	Ivy League
Students at Large	1154	1287	1337
Lower Profile Athletes	1060	1165	1298
Higher Profile Athletes	917	1003	1212

2003 study did not include Division I institutions because of the authors' view point that athletics admissions has a larger impact on smaller institutions due to the percentage of the student body participating in sports.

Shulman and Bowen (2001) go further to show the gaps in average SAT scores between the general student population and male student-athletes participating in high profile sports in both the 1976 and 1989 cohorts of entering freshmen (Figure 2.2 and Table 2.3). The gaps are large especially at institutions with "big time" sports programs. It is no surprise that the most significant gaps were found at the Division I private universities (284 points) that are able to bring in the most academically gifted students in the nation.

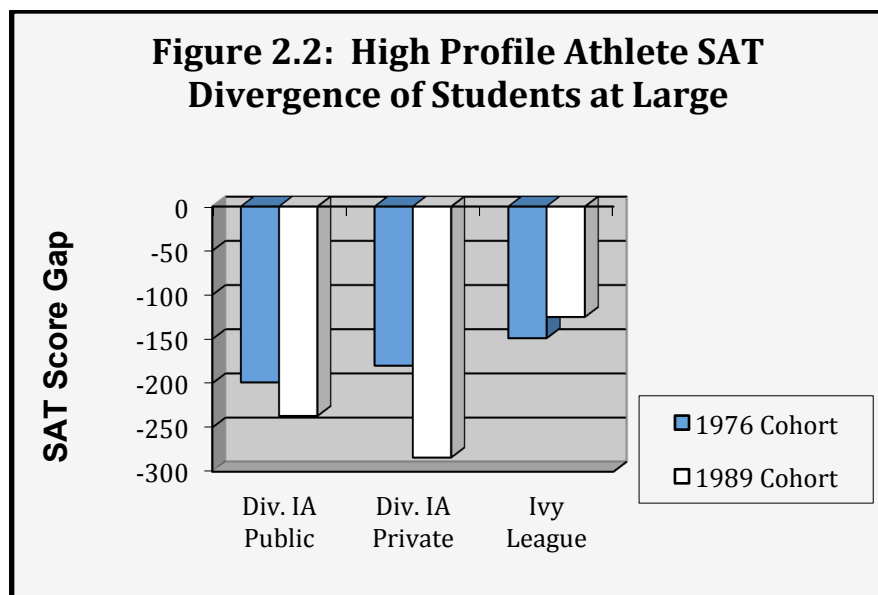


Figure 2.2. High profile athlete SAT divergence from students at large by cohort and division, male students only. Adapted from *The Game of Life*, by Shulman & Bowen, 2001, p. 45. Copyright by Princeton University Press.

Table 2.3: Difference of SAT scores of male student-athletes in high profile sports (1976 & 1989 cohorts) to the general student population (male only)

	Div. IA Public	Div. IA Private	Ivy League
1976 Cohort	-199	-180	-149
1989 Cohort	-237	-284	-125

In 2008, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution surveyed admissions data for 54 public universities including every member of every Bowl Championship Series conference plus 2 other schools that finished in the top 25 in men's basketball or football during the 2007-8 seasons. While many universities were open to sharing their data, some universities refused to provide any data and others provide incomplete information. Information was collected on average SAT scores of the general student population and student-athletes and was broken down into categories of male, female, student, male student-athlete, female student-athlete, football and men's basketball.

The findings were that across the 54 institutions the average overall student SAT score was 1161, the average student-athlete SAT was 1037 which is a gap of 124 points, the average football SAT was 941, a gap of 220. The average men's basketball SAT was 934, a gap of 227 (Knobler, 2008). The report also collected data on special admit percentages for athletes and the overall student body. One limitation of the study is that while all institutions that provided data used a three-year average of classes the years varied from 1996-2007 so it isn't a direct comparison of cohorts. The study concluded while this was "imperfect" there were still some "universal truths" that could be concluded (Knobler, 2008).

The focus of this study is one institution within the Pacific Athletic Conference, formally referred to as the PAC-10 but in 2011 two additional universities were added and it has become the PAC-12. A summary has been included of how the PAC-10 conference compared nationally along with highlighting differences within the conference (see Table 2.4). University of Southern California (USC) and Stanford are private schools and therefore were not required to provide data through the Freedom of Information Act so no information was provided on those institutions.

Table 2.4: General Students & Student Athlete PAC-10 SAT Score Comparison

School	Classes	Student SAT	Student-Athlete SAT	Gap	Football SAT	Gap	Men's Hoops	Gap
National Ave	1996-07	1161	1037	124	941	220	934	227
Arizona	2003-05	1120	1017	103	924	196	1016	104
Arizona State	1996-98	1086	1003	83	937	149	906	180
California	2003-05	1296	1095	202	967	330	948	348
Oregon	2002-04	1100	1018	82	953	148	--	--
Oregon State	1997-99	1085	1012	72	997	88	1009	76
Stanford	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
UCLA	1998-00	1275	1028	247	930	345	935	340
USC	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Washington	2001-03	1172	1046	127	949	223	951	221
Washington State	1998-00	1040	994	46	916	123	1013	27

Table 2.4. Adapted from "AJC investigation: Many athletes lag far behind on SAT scores" by M. Knobler, 2008. Copyright 2008 from The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

While the data is interesting it is difficult to say what can really be understood from these numbers. Four of the eight PAC-10 schools providing data were below the national average of SAT scores for the general student population, six had below average student-athlete SAT scores, four below average football SAT scores and one had below average men's basketball scores. The schools with the most competitive admissions like California and UCLA used special admissions programs at a much larger percentage than the rest of campus (Table 2.5).

Those institutions also had the largest gaps between students and students-athletes, football and men's basketball yet the SAT scores were above the national average across the board. Can it be concluded that the student-athletes at those schools are more prepared for college or have better academic skill sets than schools with lower SATs scores? Since SAT scores are not believed to measure academic

Table 2.5: PAC-10 Conference Special Admissions for Athletes & Overall

School	Special Admit % for athletes	Special admit % overall
Arizona	14.3	4.6
Arizona State	Not reported	Not reported
California	44.4	2
Oregon	18.9	2.7
Oregon State	Not reported	Not reported
Stanford	--	--
UCLA	61.2	2.6
USC	--	--
Washington	23.1	12.5
Washington State	14.1	1.3

Table 2.5. Adapted from "AJC investigation: Many athletes lag far behind on SAT scores" by M. Knobler, 2008. Copyright 2008 from The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

preparedness or accurate predictors of graduation (Sedlackek & Adams-Gaston, 1992) it is not safe to jump to that conclusion.

The SAT has been criticized for being racially biased (Sedlackek & Adams-Gaston, 1992). Black students as a whole enter colleges with lower SAT scores than white students (Knobler, 2008). The Atlanta Journal-Constitution study showed a 149-point difference between black and white students in the general student population within the six Bowl Championship Series conferences, which could explain at least part of the gap since, in general, student-athletes tend to be more diverse than general student populations.

The studies by Shuman and Bowen and Knobler do show that many student athletes are coming in to institutions with lower SAT and GPA scores. But what the studies do not show any comparisons of graduation rates. These student athletes are starting the college process behind other students but how do these student athletes finish? The data leads to many questions. Should the focus on improving student-athlete graduation rates be on student-athletes having higher SAT scores or institutions

having a smaller gap between SAT scores of the general student population and student-athletes? Do either of these variables matter for college success? We do not have data that compares specially admitted student athletes graduation rates to regularly admitted athletes or their non-athlete peers. To better understand who is successful in college we must explore predictors of college success for the general student populations and student-athletes specifically.

Predictors of Academic Success in College

The literature on predictors of academic success among college students is extensive. Previous studies have attempted to measure the correlation of ability measures such as high school grades or standardized test scores (Anastasi, 1988; Daughterty and Lane, 1999; Galicki & McEwen, 1989; Wilson, 1981, 1983; Wolfe & Johnson 1995) and non-cognitive factors such as emotional, social, and health factors (Arthur, 1998; Bray, Braxton & Sullivan, 1999; Clark & Halpern, 1993; Cutrona, Colangelo, Assouline and Russell, 1994; Jeynes, 2002; Ryland, Riordan, & Brack, 1994; Towbes & Cohen, 1996) with mixed results. Predictive validity of cognitive ability measures can vary from institution to institution (Morgan, 1990). Colleges' culture can influence the predictive validity of college GPAs (Ransdell, 2001) so it would not be surprising if the same logic applied to non-cognitive measures as well. Tinto (1993) said, "The key to successful student retention lies with the institution, in its faculty and staff, not one formula or recipe (pg.4). For these reasons it is important that each institution conducts research based on its own characteristics and culture.

Literature on ability and non-cognitive variables to examine academic performance of specially admitted student-athletes provides an important perspective because the NCAA focuses solely on ability factors to determine initial eligibility for

student athletes. Five previous studies focus specifically on predictors of success for student-athletes (Comeaux, 2005; Gurney, Tan, & Winters, 2010; Johnson, 2010; Ridpath, 2002; & Sedlackek & Adams-Gaston, 1992).

Predictors of Student Athlete Academic Success in College

Comeaux (2005) studied 459 football and basketball student athletes attending predominantly white institutions. They completed demographic and environmental measure on the 2000 Student Information Form (SIF) and 2004 College Student Survey (CSS). He used a block stepwise regression analysis and Astin's (1993) Input-Environment-Outcome (I-E-O) model with input and environment characteristics as independent variables (academic background characteristics, demographic characteristics and faculty and academic support factors) and academic achievement (GPA) as the dependent variable. Comeaux found that with the input effects the high school GPA is the most powerful predictor of college GPA and that the verbal SAT score has a significant correlation. Faculty providing help in achieving professional goals and faculty providing respect had significant correlation in the environmental effects which highlights the importance of student-athletes having opportunities to interact with professors outside of class.

High school GPAs and verbal SAT scores are important indicators to take into consideration for coaches recruiting prospective student-athletes and administrators making admission decisions. There are many possibilities that can contribute to lower scores that may not indicated a lack of ability to be successful in an academic program. Our study further explores the impact of faculty on the experience of specially admitted football players who persist to graduation. Protocol questions addressed what the participants felt was encouraging or discouraging in their interactions with faculty as well as the impact on their persistence.

Gurney, Tan, & Winters (2010) studied 183 specially admitted student-athletes who entered a school within a NCAA, FBS program in the Midwest from 1998 to 2003. The sample descriptive break down was 75% male, 49% black, 41% white, 6% Hispanic, 12% other, 70% in state residence. They looked at fifty-eight independent variables in five general groups using a stepwise multiple regression analysis. The five general groupings consisted of background information, pre-college academic credentials, college experience (defined by sport participation and major declaration status), academic performance and persistence and desired outcome (graduation status and final GPA). The dependent variables were academic performance, persistence from year to year and graduation.

When looking at first-semester college academic performance measured by GPA, they found NCAA social studies GPA had a negative correlation, NCAA core HS GPA had a positive correlation, and females significantly outperform males. For first year college academic performance measured by GPA: number of high school math courses taken, ACT reading score, ACT English score, type of sport played, diagnosis of LD has positive correlations. Not surprisingly first term GPA best predictor of first year GPA. The study found student-athletes who declared a major early and who exhausted eligibility more likely to persist to 5th year. Those exhausting eligibility and participating in non-revenue sports were more likely to graduate. This study shows the importance of having a strong start to the academic experience for specially admitted student-athletes. Having the proper resources and support in place along with a balanced class schedule is essential for these student-athletes.

This study borrowed from Gurney, Tan, & Winters findings to look deeper into the impact of when a major is declared on persistence. Interview questions were developed to discuss the participants' view of their major, their choice in major and when they declared the major. It also looks at graduation rates of those scholarship football players

who exhausted their eligibility in general and broken down by regular and special admittance.

Johnson (2010) focused on predicting first-year grade point average and retention of student-athletes using demographic, academic, and athletic variables. He studied 674 first year student-athletes admitted between 2004 and 2008. The descriptive breakdown of the sample was 52% male, 76% white, 18% black, 6% other, 204 from revenue sport, and 470 participating in Olympic sports. He performed a multiple regression analysis using Pearson correlations. The dependent variables were the overall GPA at the end of the first year of college and retention to the second year. The independent variables consisted of demographic, academic and athletic variables.

The study found that HS GPA, first-semester GPA, high school rank, students living within 100 miles or less from campus, and Caucasian compared to African Americans were significant contributors to the predictor model. Surprisingly no athletic variables were significant. Responding to the first semester GPA dominating in predicting the overall GPA at the end of the first year, he ran a second least squares multiple regression analysis removing first semester GPA which found HS GPA, high school rank, high school size, and standardized test scores, gender and Caucasian compared to African Americans significant but distance from home was no longer significant and still no athletic variables were significant in the predictor model for first year overall GPA.

In predicting retention into the second year, distance from home, Caucasian compared to African Americans, first semester GPA and playing time were significant predictors and once first semester GPA was removed sport played was added as a predictor of persistence. In the first run, with first semester GPA, six students predicted to leave were retained and seventy-four students predicted to be retained left. After removing first semester GPA five students predicted to leave were retained and eighty-

four students predicted to be retained were not. This shows the difficulty in predicting retention of student-athletes in any one study. There are too many variables involved with predicting GPAs and retention to possibly include them all in a study and many variables are difficult to measure.

Based on Johnson's research, this study is looking deeper into the athletic variables. Questions regarding the football experience, wins and losses, injury and relationships with the coaches were asked. Since athletics is at the core of the student-athletes experience it seems important to understand how the subjects felt it impacted them academically and in the overall college experience. The variable regarding living distance from home was of interest. What about living close to home might impact the students' experiences? There could be many different aspects but this study looks more in depth at the relationship of family on persistence to graduation.

The purpose of Ridpath's (2002) study was to determine if student athletes from the Mid-American Conference (MAC) conform to the profile of the expected graduate as represented in the literature. The variables studied were characteristics of ethnicity, gender, high school core-course grade point average, ACT and/or SAT score, the sport played in college, student athletes' perceptions of coaches, coaches emphasis on academics, and the use of specialized academic support services. The study sample was 1430 senior student-athletes in the NCAA Division I Mid-American Conference, which included thirteen universities. The student-athletes were asked to complete an independent survey where a descriptive statistical analysis was completed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, 10.1) software. There were 191 respondents, representing twenty-seven different sports. The descriptive analysis showed there were 90 females, 101 males, and 39 student-athletes self-identified as black, 143 as white and 9 as other. The study confirmed that all variables were relevant

to the MAC student-athletes thus coming to the conclusion that one could make generalization to MAC student-athletes from the literature.

Sedlackek & Adams-Gaston (1992) studied 105 incoming freshmen athletes (64% male, 80% white, 15% black, 4% white) participating in revenue and non-revenue sports at a large eastern Division I university. The student-athletes completed the non-cognitive questionnaire and demographic and attitude questionnaires. A step-wise multiple regression analysis was used to determine significant correlations in predicting first term grades. No significant correlations were found to SAT math scores, SAT verbal scores, understanding racism, long-range goals, leadership or nontraditional knowledge. Positive self-concept, realistic self-appraisal, having a strong support person and community involvement all had significant correlations in predicting first term grades. The study recommended that SAT not be used in admissions or for predicting early success of student-athletes and that student-athletes be classified as non-traditional students. It also felt there was a need to teach student-athletes to negotiate a system that was not designed for them.

Sedlackek & Adams-Gaston's findings relating to positive self-concept and strong support were looked at in our study as how they related to persistence to graduation. The idea of support was discussed in length. Subjects were asked to identify what resources and support they found helpful, how they used the support and what support wasn't useful. This information can be useful to academic and other support providers in evaluating or improving current programs as well as developing new services.

Most of the studies on predictors of first year grades, retention or graduation are quantitative. They focus on secondary data and identify correlations between variables. While these studies make important contributions to the understanding of college success there are variables that are not included and ones that cannot be measured. In addition, generalization of the findings should be done with caution. Each institution has

it's own unique culture that can influence the significance of different variables. As with the studies on the general student population, there is disagreement over using standardized test scores as predictors of academic success. The factors that seem to be consistently shown to have an impact on student-athlete college success are gender, ethnicity, and if the student-athlete participates in a revenue or non-revenue sport. To increase graduation rates schools will not drop football and men's basketball programs nor will they nor should they stop recruiting males or minority students. The studies must dig deeper to determine more specifically 1.) are specially admitted student athletes persisting to graduation at lower rates than other students, 2.) are there influences outside of intellectual ability leading to lower SAT and GPA scores, 3.) what do they identify as obstacles to their academic success and 4.) what do they find helpful in persisting to graduation. A better understanding of these areas can lead to more effective policies or reform intended to raise graduation rates and to more valuable support programming.

There is a great deal of attention given to the constant battle to maintain the balance between academic success and competitive success for intercollegiate athlete teams. In response the NCAA implemented legislation that focuses on the academic progress leading to graduation of the student athletes and universities implement academic support programs to assist student athletes to stay on track to persist to graduation. This study focused on four main areas to better understand the scope of the problem of low graduation rates and the issues impacting academic success for specially admitted student athletes (Figure 2.3).

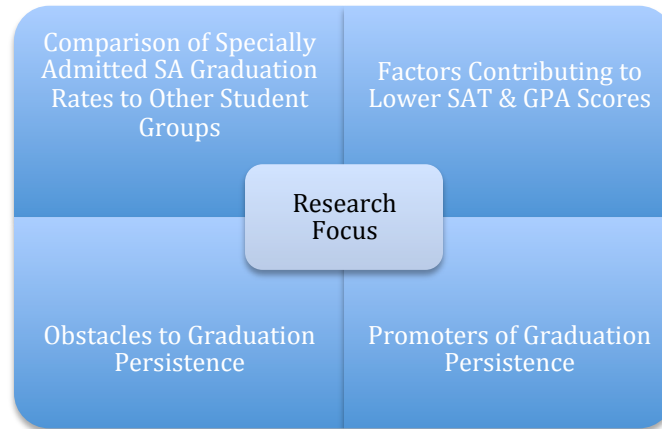


Figure 2.3: Research Focus

There is also the need for the institution to balance the institutional demands and resources to the students' needs (See Figure 2.4). This study focuses on the specially admitted football student's college experience. It delves into the student's academic experience as a student and football player at the University of Washington. It explores how they negotiated the demands of being a student and an athlete as well as the campus resources they found to be useful. It also takes into consideration their family background, personal character traits and beliefs, prior academic experiences and the support systems they relied on during college. Through this discussion we analyzed how to further develop aspects of the experience identified as promoting academic

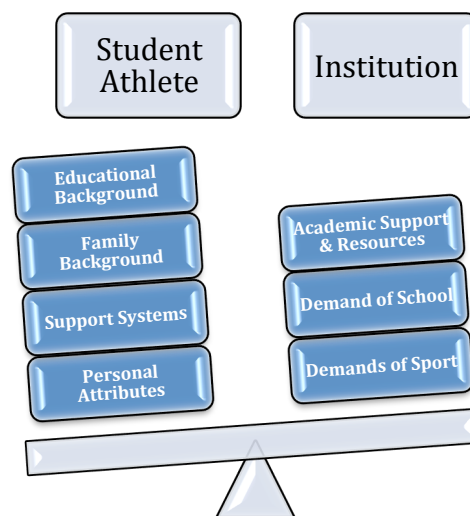


Figure 2.4: Balance institutional demands & resources with student's needs

success and minimized obstacles that students faced in persisting to graduation.

Reaching a balance where students' academic needs are understood and met will create a pathway to academic success.

Ch. 3 - Methodology and Research Approach

Purpose and Research Questions

This study explores factors that contribute to specially-admitted collegiate football players having lower standardized test scores and/or lower high school grade point averages than the general student population. It also looks at what specially admitted collegiate football players identify as the obstacles they faced in reaching graduation and what they felt helped them persist to graduation. The purpose of this exploratory case study is to gain insight into the academic, athletic and social worlds of specially admitted student athletes in order to better understand what contributes to their lower academic performance in high school but also to understand what academic obstacles they experience during their college careers and, importantly, what protective factors contribute to some students persisting through to graduation.

This study provides information to student-athlete support services providers that could aid in the philosophy used making policies, how they allocated resources, programs that are offered and the methods they employ when working with student athletes. The following questions will guide this case study:

1. What can be learned about the student athletes participating in football admitted between 2003 and 2005 through secondary academic data (high school GPA, standardized test scores, transcript information, etc.)?
2. What factors do specially admitted scholarship football student athletes attribute to their lower standardized test scores and/or lower high school grade point averages in comparison with the general student population?
3. What do specially admitted scholarship football student athletes identify as obstacles to reaching graduation?

4. Why do specially admitted scholarship football student-athletes persist to graduation and what do they identify as the factors leading to their success?

This chapter describes the study's research methodology including descriptions and explanations of the following areas: rationale for a mixed methods approach, descriptions of the research sample, overview of research design, methods of data collection, analysis and synthesis of data, ethical considerations, issues of reliability and limitations of the study.

Rationale

This study used a mixed method approach. Descriptive statistics are used to describe basic summary information about the sample being studied. It may allow comparisons across people or other units being measured (Trochim, 2006). It looks at admission and academic progress information that is available through the university database on the 2003 through 2005 scholarship football freshmen cohorts. There are many assumptions made about this group of students yet outside of graduation rates, that institutions are required to report to the NCAA, there is not much information known. Many universities carefully guard admissions data and since there are no required tracking or reporting of the information, analysis of the records are often not performed or shared publically.

The primary part of the study involves qualitative methodology. Interviews of specially admitted football players who graduated within six years of entering the university were conducted. Through listening to the voices of specially admitted collegiate football players, we can learn from their experiences and perspectives on how to better support not only this subset of students but many college students in persisting to graduation.

Qualitative inquiry focuses on meaning in context. Qualitative research “implies a direct concern with experience as it is ‘lived’ or ‘felt’ or ‘undergone’” (Sherman and Webb, 1988). Quantitative research takes components that become the variables to be studied. In the case of student-athlete predictors of academic success most of the known studies use regression analysis methods and analyze as few as six variables to as many as sixty variables to determine which variables are significant leading to retention or graduation. In the case of investigating how and why specially admitted student-athletes persist to graduation there are thousands of variables to consider. The number of variables to be analyzed limits quantitative research method approaches.

Case studies provide an advantage when the research questions are asking “how” or “why” questions about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control (Yin, 2003). According to Yin, a case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context and copes with the distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points” (p 14). The strategies employed in case study research enables researchers to conduct a fairly comprehensive, open ended search for relevant information, identify the major themes and patterns associated with the phenomenon of interest, develop or adopt constructs that embrace the patterns, articulate tentative hypothesis about the meanings of the constructs and their relations, and refine questions and/or suggest conceptual perspectives that might serve as useful guide for subsequent investigations (Ogawa & Malen, 1991). It can generate insights regarding the meaning people attach to a phenomenon and how they describe, assess, and interpret the topic of study. The themes and patterns apparent in these perceptual accounts can be used to formulate potentially productive lines of research but do not necessarily lead to predictions or generalization regarding the topic of interest. Generally speaking, the exploratory case study a.) grapples with complex phenomena in real-life contexts; b.) recognizes that the

complex nature and, at the times, the contemporary character of the phenomena diminishes the degree of control that can be exerted by the investigator; c.) incorporates multiple source of data as a means to acquire and corroborate observations regarding the phenomenon of interest; d.) tends to rely heavily, although not exclusively, on qualitative data; and e.) aims to provide a cogent, detailed portrait of the phenomenon – the attributes it assumes, the variations it displays, the ways it appears to operate, and the combinations of factors that seem to shape the patterns observed in the natural settings (Lofland, 1971, Patton, 1980, Yin, 2003).

For case studies, five components of a research design are especially important (Yin, 2003): a study's questions; its unit of analysis; its proposition, if any; the logic linking the data to the propositions; and the criteria for interpreting the findings. This study will explore the experience of specially admitted scholarship football student-athletes as well as positive and negative factors that influenced persistence to graduation.

The first question will use descriptive analysis while the second, third and fourth questions will be answered by information learned during interviews of participants. The unit of analysis is scholarship football players who were admitted to the University of Washington as freshmen between 2003 and 2005. The propositions help to define what will be within the scope of the study. The literature on cognitive and non-cognitive predictors of success for college students and college student-athletes provide the propositions for the study and were used to develop the interview protocol. Literature on predictors of success for college students would provide a full but realistic range of topics that might be considered a "complete" description of what is to be studied and be the essence of the description (Yin, 2003). It not only provides a starting point for analyzing student athletes but it provides context to the study. Findings specific to this particular institution may not be able to be generalized to other institutions.

Generalization to the theories on predictors of college of success provides analytical generalization, which is more of the goal of case study research (Yin, 2003).

Research Sample

This case study focused on the experiences of scholarship student-athletes in football at a large, public, Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) institution. The university is located in an urban area in the Pacific Northwest. The sample consists of 48 scholarship football players who were admitted to the university in 2003, 2004 and 2005 academic years. These years were chosen because 2003 was the first year of the NCAA academic reforms and at the time of the study 2005 was the last year allowing for the six-year time frame for graduation. The statistical data analysis is on all 48-football student-athletes. There was purposeful sampling used for the interviews. The criteria used for determining eligibility for interviews were individuals who were specially admitted from the 2003-5-cohort group and who graduated within six years of being admitted to the institution. With these identifying qualifications there were nineteen students with qualifying criteria for the interviews. Football students who transfer leave the school for a variety of reasons from coaching change, for more playing time, personal/family reasons, or a variety of other non-academic related reasons and were not included in the sample. The many different reason they leave campus makes them too varied of a group. There is not a large enough group that individuals who were forced to leave due to academic status to interview and with such small numbers it would be difficult to protect the students' identity. Interviewing scholarship football players who exhausted eligibility but did not graduate would add an important perspective. There was not the needed access to this group to secure enough participants for the study. This is an area for future consideration.

A letter advertising the study was sent out in a mailing that went out to all former football players on record through the alumni association for former student-athletes at the institution. Five subjects responded to the letter and interviews were conducted with three of those five. There was an expected low response rate to the letters so snowball-sampling techniques were also employed. Snowball sampling has existing subjects help recruit additional participants from their acquaintances. This technique is often used in when populations are difficult to locate. There were an additional two subjects found who agreed to be interviewed. In total there were five subjects interviewed out of the nineteen who fit the qualifying criteria. While five subjects is a small sample, the researcher's intent is to describe a particular context, not to generalize to another context or population.

Overview

This case study focuses on scholarship football players admitted between 2003 and 2005 at a large public university in the Pacific Northwest. There were forty-eight subjects in the overall sample and five specially admitted football players who graduated interviewed. In seeking information about the college experience of this group four research questions were explored to gather the information needed. The information needed to answer these questions was determined by the conceptual framework and fell into three categories: perceptual, demographic and theoretical. This information included:

- Specially admitted football players perceptions of factors contributing to their being specially admitted, factors leading to persistence, and obstacles they encountered.

- Demographic information pertaining to participants, including year admitted, academic status after six years of being admitted, ethnicity, and red-shirt status.
- An ongoing review of the literature providing the theoretical grounding for the study.

Research Design and Data Collection

Preceding the actual collection of data, a selected review of the literature was conducted to study the contributions of other researches and writers in broad areas of the history of NCAA initial eligibility regulations, college admissions including special admission programs, and predictors of college academic success in college. The focus of the review was to gain a better understanding of how student athletes gain access to collegiate athletic participation, how students who have academic profiles that are not up to par with the general student populations fit into the campus environment and what is known about factors leading to the successful completion of college for student-athletes.

Following the literature review, the researcher developed and successfully defended a proposal for this study that included the problem statement, purpose statement, and research questions outline in Chapter I; the literature review in Chapter II; and the proposed methodological approach outline in this chapter. Once the proposal was approved the researcher completed the necessary work to gain human subjects approval including participants' confidentiality and informed consent.

The first step was collecting data for the descriptive analysis for scholarship football players from 2003 through 2005 at the University of Washington. The institution granted permission to collect data from their records. Information was gained from two university sources: a spreadsheet that contained admissions information including high school GPA, NCAA core GPA, standardized test scores and academic index scores and

a database that had information on ethnicity and academic status including if they graduated or left the institution and when their last term of record was completed. Red-shirt status was determined by viewing team roster archives that were found on websites that are accessible to the public (gohuskies.com, 2010). The data were compiled into a spreadsheet and frequencies, means, variance and cross-tabulation analysis were conducted to provide a descriptive analysis of the 2003 through 2005 freshmen scholarship football cohort.

In the second phase of the study invitation letters were included in a mailing to former football players registered with the alumni club for former student-athletes per accordance with the human subjects department requirements. The letters indicated that the study was looking to interview former scholarship football players who entered the university as freshmen during 2003, 2004 or 2005. It also discussed the purpose of the study along with information regarding confidentiality. Five individual contacted the researcher via email or cell phone and three scheduled interviews. Two had scheduling conflicts and were not able to be interviewed during the required time line. The semi-structured, in-depth interviews were about ninety minutes in length and were conducted in person in a quiet area chosen by the subject to maximize their comfort and convenience.

Interviews are necessary when researching past events that are impossible to replicate (Merriam, 1998). The method of interviewing was chosen as the primary method for data collection in this study due to the potential to elicit rich, detailed descriptions of the specially admitted student athletes' academic experience. This method also allows for follow up questions to probe for additional information and clarification of answers. Creswell states that collecting data through in-depth interviews can be beneficial by "offering the potential to capture a person's perspective of an event or experience" (Creswell, 1994). There is the assumption that using interviews for data

collection is a legitimate way to generate data by capturing the meaning of their experience in their own words (Patton, 1990). Through listening to the voices of specially admitted collegiate football players, we can learn from their experiences and perspectives to better support not only this subset of students but other different types of at-risk college students in persisting to graduation.

Data Collection Methods

The descriptive data of the 2003-05 scholarship freshmen football cohorts was collected with permission of Intercollegiate Athletics from the University of Washington's student database on initial eligibility and general student information. A descriptive analysis of data on the 2003 through 2005 admitted scholarship football players was conducted to see what could be learned about the cohort as a whole. Information related to academic status, GPA, SAT scores, graduation status and red-shirt status were analyzed and when possible compared to the general student population of the university.

Interviews of the individuals belonged to a group of specially admitted student athletes who graduated. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. The interviews were semi-structured with the largest part of the interview guided by a list of questions to be explored where neither the exact wording nor order of the questions is determined ahead of time (Miriam, 1998). Questions were asked pertaining to factors contributing to their being specially admitted to college, their college experience and their persistence to graduation. All the interviews were conducted in person and digitally recorded.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

Descriptive analysis of the admissions data for scholarship football players from 2003 through 2005 at the University of Washington was analyzed through frequencies, means, variance and cross-tabulations. Variables such as admission status, ethnicity, SAT scores, NCAA core HS GPA, HS GPA, and graduation status were analyzed. The goal was to be able to statistically describe the football players in this group as a whole.

Notes from interviews and verbatim transcripts were put in a database divided by major subjects. Transcriptions of interviews were coded with the aid of TAMS Analyzer 4.10b5 for Mac. It is a coding and extraction software for qualitative research. Once coded, themes and patterns were identified that were consistent with the literature on predictors of success between participants within the groups. Pattern matching logic (Trochim, 1989) compares empirically based pattern with a predicted one and if the pattern coincides it can help strengthen internal validity (Yin, 2003). The data was analyzed across groups to develop preliminary theoretical findings to encourage development rather than verification of analytical theories (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2001).

Ethical Consideration

One of the major ethical considerations was protecting the identity of the interview subjects; as a result some data were not useable. Often in case study research the data are reported in a format that tells the individual story or lays out the history in chronological order. To protect the identity of the subjects quotes are provided by a topic and not in any particular order (i.e. subject 1, subject 2, etc.) to make it more difficult to put the data together to build a profile of the individuals. Identifying information such as ethnicity, position played, specific of injuries incurred, geographic

backgrounds, year admitted, year graduated and awards won by individuals were not used.

Throughout the study there was sensitivity and respect shown to the subjects. No deception was used in the study. Great care was taken to make sure potential subjects understood the purpose of the study, what type of information would be gathered, and how the information would be used. Informed consent was discussed in length with frequent reminders that participation in the study was voluntary. There would be no adverse consequences for leaving the study at any time or for not answering particular questions. Subjects were informed about possible harm and great sensitivity was used for subject recalling experiences that may have been private or unpleasant. The subjects were able to choose the location and time of the interviews to increase their comfortable level and make the experience as convenient as possible. Participants were given the opportunity to review the transcripts of their interviews to eliminate any information they felt uncomfortable being used, that was taken out of context or that was misrepresenting their experience.

There were attempts to protect the privacy of the individuals. The research chose to send the invitation letter through a mailing instead of gaining access to the potential subject contact information. The only material that had subjects names attached was the informed consent was kept in a locked cabinet in a locked office at all times. All other materials including the recorded interviews and transcripts had no names or contact information attached and also was kept in a locked cabinet in a locked office. Nobody except the researcher had access to this material. All research will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness consists of the efforts by the researcher to ensure the study has validity and reliability. It is imperative that there is confidence in how the study is conducted and in the conclusion of the study. In qualitative research this is mostly accomplished through the design, data collection and data analysis. Understanding is the primary rationale for the inquiry. The criteria for trusting the study are going to be different than if discovery of a law or testing a hypothesis is the primary objective (Merriam, 1998). “What makes case study work ‘scientific’ is the observers’ critical presences in the context of occurrence of phenomena, observation, hypothesis-testing (by confrontation and disconfirmation), triangulation of participants’ perceptions, interpretations and so on” (Kemmis, 1982, p. 103). What is being observed is how people understand their experience. Human beings are the primary instrument of data collection and analysis so interpretations of their reality are accessed directly through their observations and interviews (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Many agree that when reality is viewed in this manner, internal validity is strength of qualitative research (Merriam, 1998).

There are strategies that can be employed to increase internal validity. Triangulation uses multiple sources of evidence to develop converging lines of inquiry (Yin, 2003). Multiple sources of evidence were used. This includes interviewing five subjects and collecting student data from multiple university spreadsheets and databases. Interviewing multiple sources allow for triangulation of converging lines of data and multiple measures of the same phenomenon. Merriam (2003) recommends taking data and tentative interpretations back to the subjects to check that their experiences are accurately represented and the findings a plausible. The participants were allowed to review the transcripts of the interviews and the quotes that would be used to verify they were accurately portrayed and the finding were plausible.

Researcher's biases were examined by clarifying the researcher's assumptions and theoretical orientation at the beginning of the study.

Reliability refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated. In qualitative studies, the researcher's goal is to describe and explain the world as those in the world experience it (Merriam, 1998). The term reliability in the traditional sense does not apply to qualitative research. Lincoln & Guba (1985) suggest that rather than insisting on replicating the data, that if data collected results make sense if they are consistent and dependable. The question is not whether the finding will be found again but whether the results are consistent with the data collected. Techniques were used to increase dependability. Triangulation strengthens reliability as well as validity. The researcher used theory as the basis for context from which the data were collected (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The theory on student-athlete predictors of success were used to create protocol and in the analysis.

Limitations

This study contains certain limitations. Some of these limitations are common criticisms of the research methods used and some are particular to this study. Careful thought has been taken to account for the limitations and to minimize their impact. In the descriptive analysis of the data, one runs the risk of distorting the original data or losing important detail when describing a large set of observations with a single indicator. The GPA does not tell you whether the student was in difficult courses or easy ones, or whether they were courses in their major field or in other disciplines. The researcher avoided excessive generalizations and misleading results.

There are certain limitations associated with the quantitative research method of interviewing. Interviews tend to have a smaller sample size with the goal of more in

depth information over a breadth of information. The sample size of this study was further complicated by the difficulty of locating qualified subjects. After graduation these former student-athletes do not necessarily stay in the area or keep contact with the institution. In addition the study was limited to researching only specially admitted football players who were able to graduate within the six-year time frame. There is no non-athletic collegiate population to use a comparison group. The original study proposed interviewing football players who exhausted their eligibility yet did not persist to graduation. Important information along with some comparison to the graduation group could have been gained if a large enough number of would have been accessible for interviews. There were only six individuals who met the criteria and none of them responded to the invitation letter.

Due to the non-random and smaller sample size it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions from findings or generalize them to larger group. The goals of this study were more exploratory and descriptive. They were not to generalize information to a larger group, but were to give voice to the subjects and identify areas they identified as helping them persist towards graduation or obstacles they encountered and how those were overcome. Also interviewees are not equally articulate and perceptive. The information may have been distorted or exaggerated consciously or unconsciously (Merriam, 1998). Steps were taken to make sure the subjects understood the purpose to the research and were comfortable with the interviewer as well as the setting.

Some researchers are more skilled than others in getting to subjects to share information and in creating questions. The researcher as interviewer also takes on an active role in the research and the bias of the researcher can enter into the data collection and analysis. The researcher had spent extensive time in the intercollegiate athletic setting observing the environment and examining her biases. Protocol questions

were piloted in advance to the study. While these factors can lead to inconsistencies in the data, care was taken to limit the impact on the study.

In summary this chapter describes the study's research methodology including descriptions and explanations of the following areas: rationale for a mixed methods approach, descriptions of the research sample, overview of research design, methods of data collection, analysis and synthesis of data, ethical considerations, issues of reliability and limitations of the study. Case study methodology was used to study what specially admitted scholarship football players, who graduated within a six year time period from being admitted, attributed to persisting towards graduation as well as identifying the obstacles they faces and how they overcame those obstacles. A descriptive statistical analysis was completed on the forty-eight student-athletes in the 2003-5-cohort group. An additional five out of the nineteen football players who were specially admitted and graduated were interviewed. Validity and reliability were accounted for by a variety of strategies including triangulation of data and use of a case study database.

A review of the literature was conducted to devise a conceptual framework for the design and analysis of the study. Key themes from the findings were identified. Through a comparison with the literature, interpretations and conclusions were drawn, and recommendations were offered for support services for student-athletes, policy for admissions, and further research. The goal of this study was to contribute to the understanding of the specially admitted scholarship football player experience to persist to graduation.

Ch. 4 - Findings

The purpose of this exploratory case study is to gain insight into the academic, athletic and social worlds of specially admitted student-athletes in order to better understand what contributes to their lower academic performance in high school but also to understand what academic obstacles they experience during their college careers and, importantly, what protective factors contribute to some students persisting through to graduation.

This study examined needs of specially admitted scholarship football student athletes at the University of Washington, Seattle campus. The purpose of this exploratory case study is to gain insight into the academic, athletic and social worlds of specially admitted student-athletes in order to better understand what contributes to their lower academic performance in high school but also to further understand what obstacles they experience during their college academic careers and, importantly, what protective factors contribute to some students persisting through to graduation.

It is from the perspective of the specially admitted student athletes' voice and what institutions can do to support these student athletes. The study does not use a deficit perspective looking at how to "fix" the student to fit the institution, which puts the responsibility on the student athletes to change. It recognizes university admitted these students aware of the gap between their academic preparedness when compared to the general student population so therefore has an obligation to understand and support their academic needs. Current studies on predictors of student athlete academic success do not look specifically at specially admitted students and employ quantitative methods using 6 to almost 90 variables. It is important to explore the vast amount of variables impacting these students' experiences and to identify the factors that the students, themselves, express as having positive or negative impacts on their academic

performance.

Failure to distinguish between the multiple influences on academic success can lead to assumptions about student athletes (Comeaux & Harrison, 2011). Assumptions that include that these students are not intelligent, they do not care about graduation, they cheat to stay eligible are just a few examples. In many cases these assumptions are not tested and are repeated in popular media as fact. Popular media can drive policy in intercollegiate academic reform even when the assumptions are not supported by the research. When administrators do not see the true issues at the heart of problems it is difficult to implement effective reforms and policies. This study attempts to understand the complexity of the specially admitted student athlete experience.

This chapter begins with a description of the setting and participants. There is a brief overview of the methodology for the qualitative data collection and analysis. It also covers the descriptive analysis of the 2003 through 2005 scholarship football freshmen cohort as well as findings of the research questions pertaining to how the scholarship football players interviewed discussed the factors contributing to their being specially admitted, obstacles they faced and beliefs or support that helped them persist to graduation.

Setting

The setting is a large, public, Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) institution. The university is located in an urban area in the Pacific Northwest. The university supports twenty-one athletic teams with about 650 student athletes and it has a long tradition of competitive teams with a rich history of winning programs. It also has a well-established academic support program providing services for all student athletes. It includes advising, tutoring and specialized support for students who may have learning disabilities or are academically under-prepared for college.

The time period that was reviewed was unique and unsettling for the football team. The football students were admitted between the 2003-04 and the 2005-06 academic years. Table 4.1 looks at head coaches and the win-loss record of years 2003 through 2010 allowing for a six-year period for the 2005-06 freshmen to graduate. During these seven years there were three head coaches. There was yet another head coaching change in 2002, which is relevant because some of the football students were recruited to the university by this coach even through a new coach was in place by the time they arrived on campus. The turnover over of a coaching staff can be a very disruptive force for the team. New personalities and new systems are not always a good match for the existing players. During these transitions some players choose to leave and others are asked to leave. It can be a very stressful time for players with concerns about how or where they will fit into the new plan.

Table 4.1 University of Washington Football Win/Loss Record 2003-2010

Year	Head Coach	Win/Loss Record	
		Overall	In Conference
2003	Keith Gilbertson	6-6	4-4
2004	Keith Gilbertson	1-10	0-8
2005	Tyrone Willingham	2-9	1-7
2006	Tyrone Willingham	5-7	3-6
2007	Tyrone Willingham	4-9	2-7
2008	Tyrone Willingham	0-12	0-9
2009	Steve Sarkisian	5-7	4-5
2010	Steve Sarkisian	7*-6	5-4

*Include post-season bowl game win

Source: www.4malamute.com/schedule_2001.html

In addition to the coaching changes the team was losing games in historic proportions. All of the individuals who were interviewed had graduated before 2009 and all but one were still playing during the 0-12 season of 2008 when the head coach was fired during the season with five games remaining. These were very trying times for the

players and the extreme number of losses did have an impact on their college experience.

Participants

The sample consists of all 48 freshmen scholarship football players who were admitted to the university in 2003, 2004 and 2005 academic years. These years were chosen because 2003 was the first year of the NCAA academic reforms and at the time of the study 2005 was the last year allowing for the six-year time frame for graduation.

The five participants interviewed for this study were all specially admitted with football scholarships between 2003 and 2005. They all graduated within a six-years of being admitted. They represent a cross section of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. None of the individuals have documented learning disabilities or cognitive deficits. All of these participants experienced a significant amount of playing time during their collegiate athletic careers. While this is a small sample these individual represent the experiences of the majority of specially admitted scholarship football players who persist to graduation and do not have cognitive impairments or severe learning disabilities that would prevent their ability to learn new information even with accommodations and strategy instruction. Cognitive impairments impacting ability to learn differ from learning disabilities, which do not prevent individuals from learning new skills and material.

Methodology

This study used a mixed method approach. Descriptive statistics are used to describe basic summary information about the 48 football students who entered the university between 2003 and 2005. There was purposeful sampling used for the interviews. The criteria used for determining eligibility for interviews were individuals

who were specially admitted from the 2003-5-cohort group and who graduated within six years of being admitted to the institution. There were nineteen students identified with qualifying criteria for the interviews. Football players who left the school in good academic standing were not interviewed. Those students leave the university for a variety of reasons including coaching change, more playing time, personal/family reasons, as well as a host of other non-academic related reasons. This makes them too varied of a group from which to compare experiences. There is not a large enough group that individuals to interview who were forced to leave due to academic status and with such small numbers it would be difficult to protect the students' identity. Interviewing scholarship football players who exhausted eligibility but did not graduate would add an important perspective. There was not the needed access to get enough participants to be included in the study. This is an area for future consideration.

A letter advertising the study was sent in a mailing that targeted all former football players on record through the alumni association for former student athletes at the institution. Five subjects responded to the letter and three agreed to participate in the study. There was an expected low response rate to the letters so snowball-sampling techniques were also employed. Snowball sampling has existing subjects help recruit additional participants from their acquaintances. This technique is often used in when populations are difficult to locate. There were an additional two subjects recruited who agreed to be interviewed. In total there were five subjects interviewed out of the nineteen who fit the qualifying criteria. While five subjects is a small sample, the researcher's intent is to explore a particular phenomenon with the goal of gaining insight to the participants' experience, not to generalize to another context or population. Findings specific to this particular institution may not be able to be generalized to other institutions. Generalization to the theories on predictors of college of success provides analytical generalization, which is more of the goal of case study research (Yin, 2003).

Individuals interviewed belonged to a group of specially admitted student athletes who graduated. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. The interviews were semi-structured with the largest part of the interview guided by a list of questions to be explored where neither the exact wording nor order of the questions is determined ahead of time (Miriam, 1998). Questions were asked pertaining to factors contributing to their being specially admitted to college, their college experience and their persistence to graduation. All the interviews were conducted in person.

Notes from interviews and verbatim transcripts were put in a database divided by major subjects. Transcriptions of interviews were coded with the aid of TAMS Analyzer 4.10b5 for Mac, which is coding and extraction software for qualitative research. Once coded, themes and patterns were identified they were compared to the literature on predictors of success between participants within groups. Pattern matching logic (Trochim, 1989) compares an empirically based pattern with a predicted one and if the pattern coincides it can help strengthen internal validity (Yin, 2003). The data was analyzed across groups to develop preliminary theoretical findings to encourage development rather than verification of analytical theories (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2001).

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics are used to describe basic summary information about the sample being studied. The summary allows comparisons across people or other units being measured (Trochim, 2006). This study looks at basic information that is available through the university data on the 2003 through 2005 scholarship football freshmen cohorts. There are many assumptions made about this group of students yet outside of graduation rates that institutions are required to report to the NCAA, there is not much information known. Many universities carefully guard admissions data and there is no

required tracking or reporting of the information to the NCAA. If analysis of the records is performed, often they are not shared outside the institution.

The first step was collecting data for the descriptive analysis for scholarship football players from 2003 through 2005 at the University of Washington. The institution granted permission to collect data from their records. Information was gained from two university sources: a spreadsheet that contained admissions information including high school GPA, NCAA core GPA, standardized test scores and academic index scores and a database that had information on ethnicity and academic status including if they graduated or left the institution and when their last term of record was completed. Red-shirt status was determined by viewing team roster archives that were found on websites that are accessible to the public (www.gohuskies.com, 2011). The data were compiled into a spreadsheet and frequencies, means, variance and cross-tabulation analysis were conducted to provide a descriptive analysis of the 2003 through 2005 freshmen scholarship football cohort.

The study looked at the entire cohort of scholarship football players who entered the university as freshmen in 2003, 2004 and 2005. Data on the student athletes and the general student population who entered the University of Washington as freshmen autumn quarter from 2003 through 2005 is limited to self-identified ethnicity from applications, age when entering the university, academic index scores¹, high school grade point averages, and SAT scores. In addition to this information there are data on the freshmen football cohort regarding NCAA core GPA, admittance status², academic status³ and red-shirt status⁴.

¹ A scale based on high school GPA and SAT scores used by the Washington State Higher Education Coordinating (HEC) Board until 1995.

² If the student was a special admit or a priority/regular admit.

³ If the student graduated or were in good standing when they left the institution.

⁴ If the student competed in their sport during the first year of admittance.

The all incoming-students are asked to identify their ethnicity on their college applications (Figure 4.1).

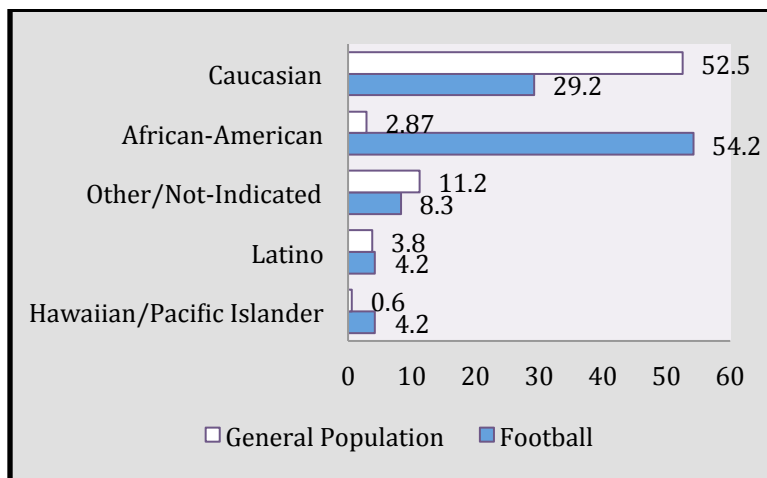


Figure 4.1: 2003-5 Scholarship freshmen football and the general freshmen student population ethnicity percentages

The 2003-5 scholarship freshmen football cohort self-reported 54.2 percent as African American, 29.2 percent as Caucasian, 4.2 percent as Latino, 4.2 percent as Hawaiian/Pacific Islander and 8.3 percent as other or not indicated. This totals 70.9 percent indicating minority status compared to 32.9 percent (University of Washington Quick Stats Archives, 2011) within the general population during the same time period. To match the institutional record keeping the total includes *other* and not-indicated categories. The University of Washington reported, 76.6% of the general student population and 100% of the football group are in the 18 to 22-age range (University of Washington Quick Stats Archives, 2011).

The 2003-5 scholarship freshmen football cohort had SAT scores ranging from 730 to 1170 with a mean of 933 and median of 930 (see Figure 4.2). During the 2003-5 time period over seventy-four percent of the general incoming freshmen class had SAT scores over 1100 with less than eleven percent of the scores being below 1000 (University of Washington Quick Stats Archives, 2011).

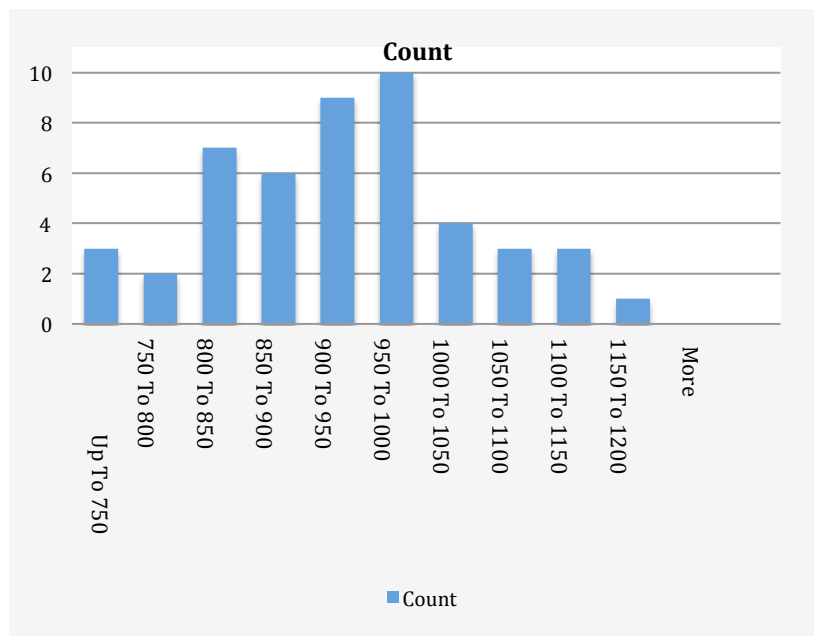


Figure 4.2: 2003-5 Scholarship freshmen football SAT Scores (Verbal and Math Combined)

The average high school grade point average for incoming freshmen at the University of Washington in 2003-5 was a 3.67 (University of Washington Quick Stats Archives, 2011). The range for scholarship freshmen football players was 2.0 to a 3.7 (Figure 4.3). The mean GPA was a 2.8 and the median was a 2.7.

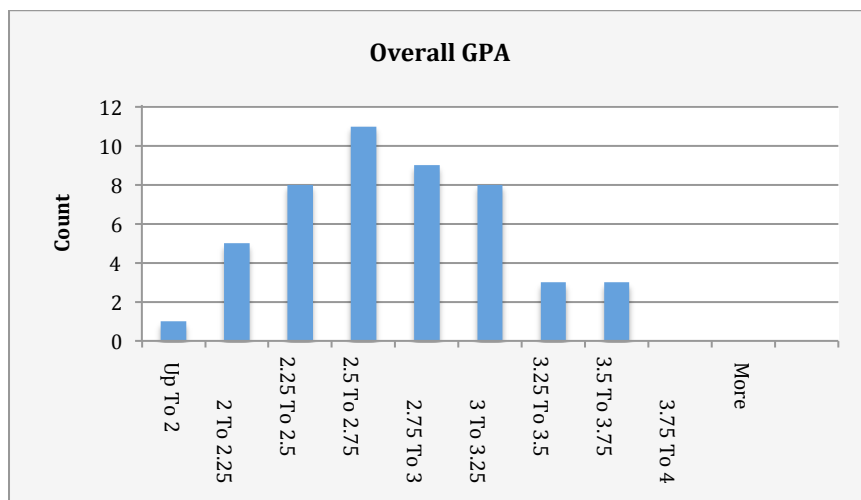


Figure 4.3: 2003-5 Scholarship freshmen football overall high school GPAs

The high school core GPA is the grade point average in the sixteen-core courses outline by the NCAA. This includes four years of English, three years of mathematics

(Algebra I or higher), two years of natural/physical science, one year of additional English, mathematics or natural/physical science, two years of social science, and four years of additional courses from any of the previous categories, foreign language or comparative religion/philosophy (NCAA Initial Eligibility Center, 2011). In the case of this cohort the NCAA core GPA is slightly higher than the overall GPA ranging from 2.1 to 3.9 with a mean of 2.8 and a median GPA of 2.7 (Figure 4.4).

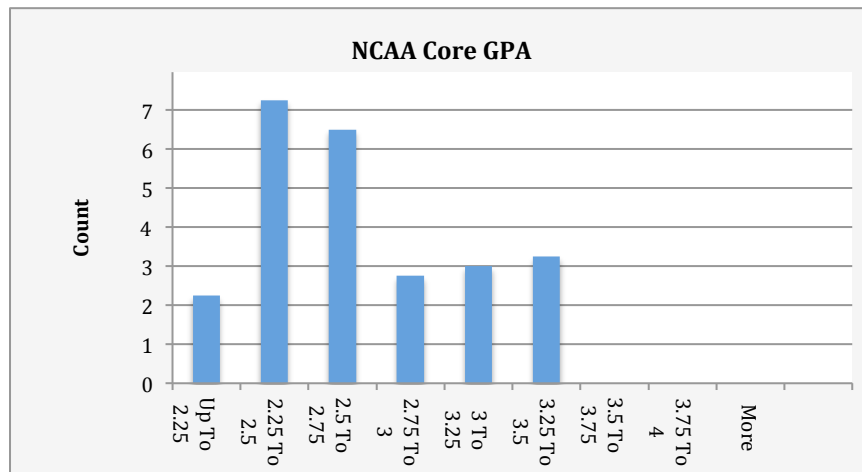


Figure 4.4: 2003-5 scholarship freshmen football High school NCAA core GPA

The NCAA defines special admits as “a student athlete who is admitted with a lower academic profile than the general student population” (NCAA Division I Board of Directors Report, 2011). It is up to each university to define what is a “special admit” at that particular institution. The profile can look significantly different depending on how competitive admissions are and what the average incoming freshmen student profile is at the particular institution.

In the state of Washington, the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board (HEC Board) developed an academic index by taking a student’s high school GPA and SAT or ACT score and applying it to a formula to produce a number between 0 and 100. The score is used as a predictor of success. For example, according to the HEC Board, a score of 28 indicates a student at the University of Washington or Washington State

University has an eighty percent probability of achieving a “C” average or better during his/her freshmen year (Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2011). The admissions index scores are no longer formally used in admissions decisions. It was replaced in 1996 with a comprehensive review process but the University of Washington still used the index to determine special admittance status for student athletes using the 1995 Admission Tables For Freshmen Applicants. At the University of Washington a student is specially admitted if they have an academic index of 27 or below. There are assumptions about the academic ability of student athletes who are specially admitted but there is relatively little known about these students academic ability besides their high school GPA and SAT scores.

The academic index scores for the 2003-5 scholarship football players ranged from 0 to 69 with a mean score of 24 and median score of 21 (Figure 4.5). The general freshmen population had a mean academic index score of 75 and a median score of 76.

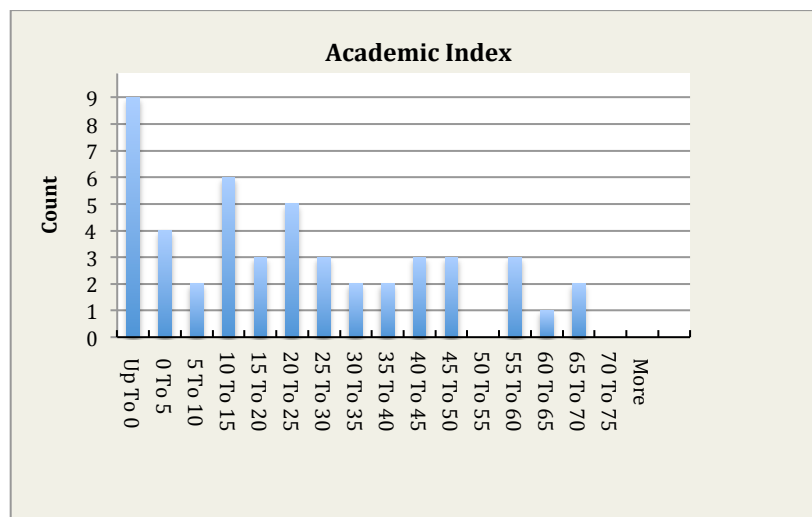


Figure 4.5: 2003-5 scholarship freshmen football academic index scores

Based on the academic index it can be determined that 31 (65%) of the cohort were special admits and 17 (35%) were priority/regular admits (Figure 4.6). Priority admittance starts at an academic index of 28 and normally would have gone up until the number determined for regular admittance. That number would change from year to

year based on the profile of the incoming freshmen class. Since the University of Washington switched from using the academic index for admission decision and replaced it with the comprehensive review there is no longer a clear cut off between priority and regular admittance so the two categories are being grouped together. Intercollegiate Athletics is normally allowed about thirty specially admitted and one hundred priority admitted student athletes per year between all of the sports. There are no limits on admission for regularly admitted student athletes.

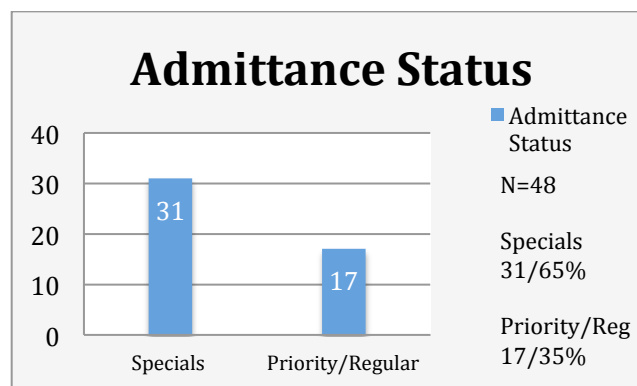


Figure 4.6: 2003-5 scholarship freshmen football admittance status

The NCAA uses graduation as the main measurement of success for student athletes. During 2003-5, thirty-three of the forty-eight football players graduated (Figure 4.7). Of those thirty-three, two graduated after the six-year NCAA cut off for tracking the graduation success rate (GSR). Seven players had left the institution eligible or in good academic standing. The most common reason for leaving the institution is to transfer to

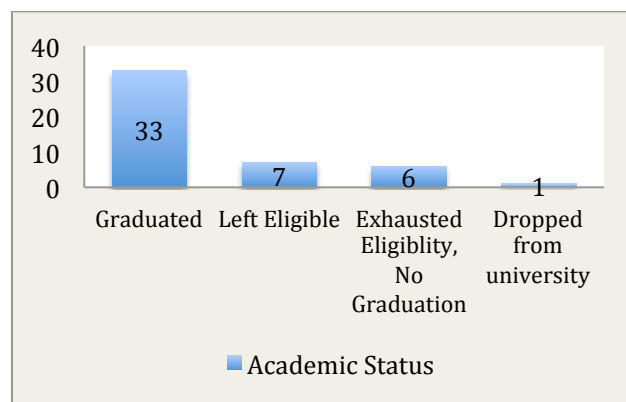


Figure 4.7: 2003-5 scholarship freshmen football academic status

another school but other personal reasons could cause a student athlete to leave. Six players exhausted their eligibility, playing four years of competition within a five year time period, yet did not graduate. One was dropped from the university due to poor academic performance. The six-year graduation rate for the overall student population is seventy-five percent (Perry, 2009).

The NCAA does not require institutions to define special admittance policies or profiles. They also do not require that any particular data be tracked on specially admitted student athletes. They do have a goal of increasing graduation rates and will be raising initial eligibility standards in part to reach this higher graduation goal. Raising initial eligibility standards will most likely impact the specially admitted student athletes causing, at least some of them, not to be able to play their sport even if they could be admitted to an institution. Looking at academic status by admission status (Figure 4.8), sixty-eight percent of the special admits graduated compared to seventy-one percent of

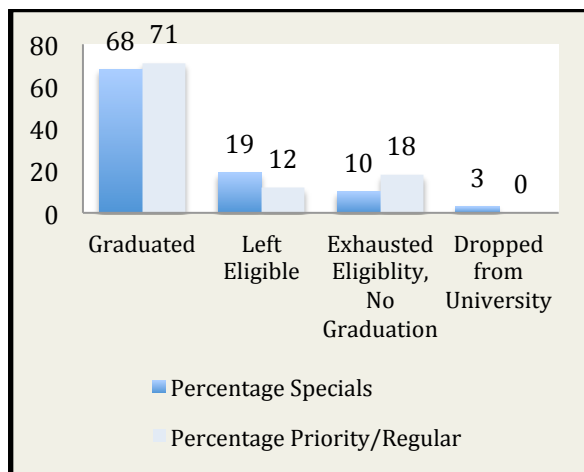


Figure 4.8: 2003-5 academic status of scholarship freshmen football by admission status

priority/regular admits. Nineteen percent of the thirty-one special admits left eligible compared to twelve percent of the seventeen priority/regular admits. Ten percent of special admits exhausted their eligibility without graduating compared to eighteen

percent of the priority/regular admits. Three percent of special admits were dropped from the university for academic reasons, compared to zero percent of the priority/regular admits.

In summary, the specially admitted football students were admitted with a core GPA that was 0.74 lower than the priority/regular admits, with an SAT score 87 points lower and an academic index score that is 38 points lower (Table 4.2). The academic profiles for the specially admitted students are significantly lower than the

Table 4.2: Summary of Admission and Graduation Statistics

	Count of Admission Status	Average of HS Core GPA	Average of SAT Score	Average of AI	Graduation percentages
Priority/Regular	16	3.3	995	49	71
Special	32	2.56	908	11	68
Total	48				
Difference		0.74	87	38	3
Average		2.93	951.5	30	69.5

priority/regular admits and the combined group is significantly lower than the overall student population. Yet graduation rate of the specially admitted students is only three percent lower than the priority/regular admits and the group is five percent lower than the 2009 overall graduation at the University of Washington (Perry, 2009). The five percent difference is cause for concern but when factoring in the number of student athletes who left the institution eligible during the coaching changes as the NCAA GSR does, the graduation rate for this cohort increases to eighty percent.

Redshirting is the term used when freshmen sit out of competition for the first year of college. This practice can have many benefits including allowing the freshmen to get adjusted to college life without the pressures of competing, allowing them to get stronger, and giving them an extra year to take classes and graduate. A student athlete

is allowed four years of competition within a five-year period so student athletes who do not redshirt need to graduate within that four-year window.

NCAA initial eligibility standards for Division I college bound athletes will be changing for students entering on or after August 1, 2015. Incoming student athletes will be required to have a 2.3 core GPA, which has been raised from a 2.0 and the SAT/GPA sliding scale has increase requirements. There has been a category “academic redshirt” created for incoming student athletes who have the minimum core GPA of 2.0 but do not reach the new 2.3 core GPA requirement. An academic redshirt will be able to receive athletic aid during the first year of enrollment and may practice during the first academic term but may not compete in the first year of enrollment (NCAA New Initial Eligibility Standards for Division I College Bound Athletes, 2012). While there is merit to this idea it is not clear if this practice would lead to higher retention or graduation rates.

Within the study’s group, 33 (69%) redshirted their freshmen year meaning they did not compete that first year. Fifteen (thirty-one percent) played in competition their freshmen year (Figure 4.9). Of the 33 who redshirted 23 (70%) were specially admitted and 10 (30%) were priority/regular admitted. Of the fifteen football players who did not redshirt 9 (60%) were specially admitted and six (forty percent) were priority/regularly admitted (Figure 4.10).

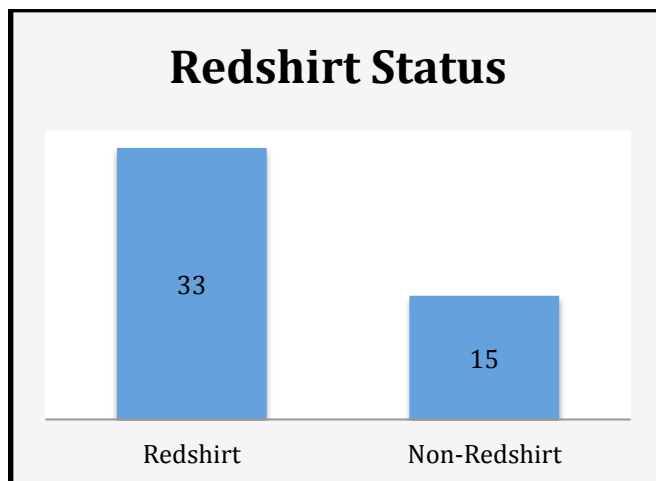


Figure 4.9: 2003-5 scholarship freshmen football redshirt status

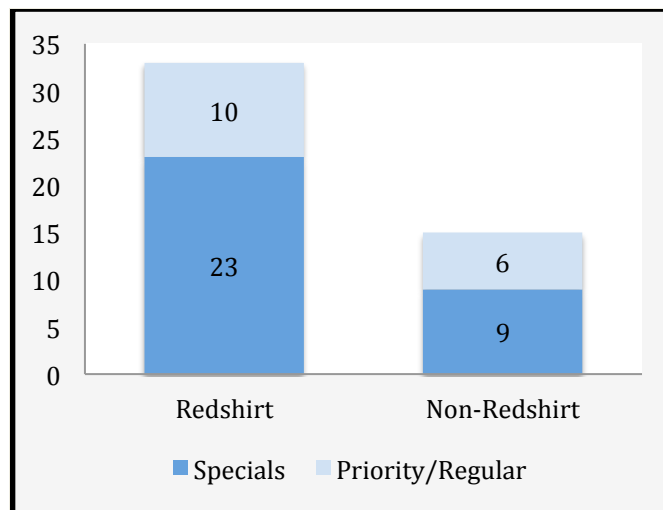


Figure 4.10: 2003-5 redshirt status of scholarship freshmen football by admission status

The difference between core GPA, SAT scores and academic index for the non-redshirt and redshirt football students are not significant (Table 4.3). The surprising statistic is that the student athletes who competed as freshmen graduated at a six percent higher rate. It is particularly interesting considering recent NCAA legislation to require student athletes with lower incoming academic profiles to be required to redshirt.

Table 4.3: Red-shirt Summary Statistics

Red Shirt Status	Count of Redshirt Status	Average of HS Core GPA	Average of SAT Score	Average of AI	Graduation percentages
Non-redshirt	15	2.85	946	27	73
Redshirt	33	2.79	933	23	67
Total	48				
Differences		0.06	13	4	6
Averages		2.82	939.5	25	70

During 2003-5 time period at the University of Washington, football players who did not redshirt graduated at a higher level, fewer left the institution eligible, fewer exhausted eligibility without graduating and none of them left the institution for academic reasons (Figure 4.11). This could be because football players who do not redshirt tend

to be considered some of the most talented athletes. They would be less likely to transfer to another school for more playing time and may be more motivated academically to ensure they continue being allowed to play.

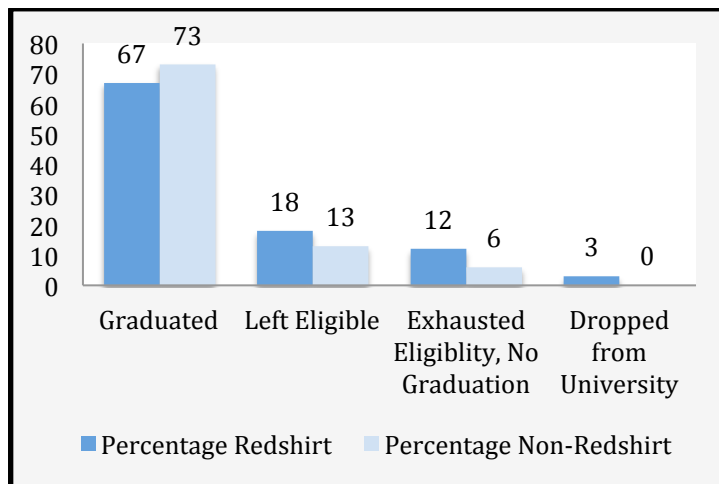


Figure 4.11: 2003-5 academic status of scholarship freshmen football by redshirt status

Initial eligibility standards are increasing the core high school GPA from a 2.0 to a 2.3. In this 2003-5 cohort of scholarship freshmen football players, six individuals would not have been admitted under this standard. Of those one football student exhausted eligibility without graduation, two left the institution in good academic standing and three graduated. These numbers represent just one institution and is too small of a group to make any generalization but it does create the question of will raising the initial eligibility standards and creating this category of academic redshirt help to increase graduation rates? Could there be unintended consequences of lowering motivation or stigmatizing students by redshirting those with lower grades who are still qualifiers? Will the increase in the GPA/SAT sliding scale deny access to college to students who can be successful? These are important questions to consider as we move forward.

When compared to the general student population, the 2003 through 2005 freshmen scholarship football students had considerably lower high school grade point averages and standardized test scores but they graduated slightly below the general student

population percentage. During this time period there were coaching changes that may have lead to higher transfer rates. If the number of students who left the institution in good academic standing is subtracted from the data, the graduation is slightly above the general student population. The University of Washington statistics are somewhat higher but representative of the national trends (NCAA News, 2011) that show general student populations graduating 63% and student athletes at 65% and males graduating 60% and male student athletes at 58% (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: NCAA 2004 Federal Graduation Rates

Overall Students	Student Athletes	Overall Male Students	Male Student Athletes
63%	65%	60%	58%

Source: NCAA Federal Graduation Rates, 2011

The SAT and GPA may be of concern but the graduation rates are not showing a problem at the University of Washington or nationally. Statistics do not always tell the full story of the student experience. It is important to include the voice of student athletes to hear more about what factors they feel contributed to their lower SAT and GPA scores, what obstacles they faced in obtaining a degree and what helped them persist to graduation.

Factors Contributing to Special Admittance Status

Qualitative themes were developed from the participants' responses of the interview questions. Four major themes emerged revolving around the second research question that looked at factors that may have contributed to the participants having lower standardized test scores and/or lower high school grade point averages than the general student population or, in other words, to them being specially admitted. Those themes were 1.) participation in sport, 2.) academic under-achievement, 3.) issues related to low socio-economic status and 4.) lack of preparation for the SAT (Figure 4.12).

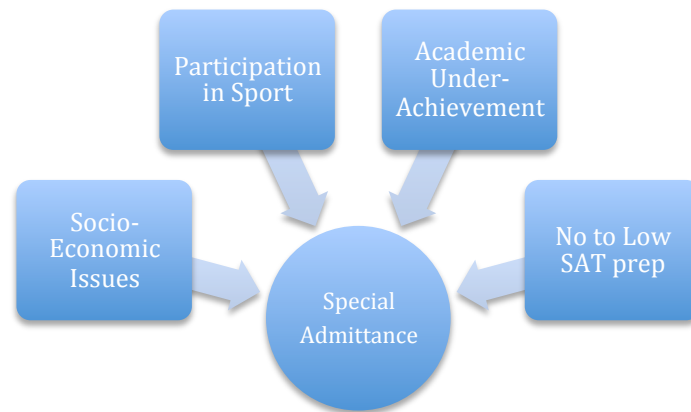


Figure 4.12: Factors contributing to special admittance status

To protect the identity of the participants no identifying information including pseudonyms are included at the end of any of the quotes. Quotes could be connected and profile could be assembled that may lead to identifying individuals.

Participation in Sport

The subjects reported that, even in high school, participation in football began to impact their ability to reach their academic potential. The time commitment, energy and the distractions that occur when the individual reaches a level of success take away from time and energy that could have been put into studies.

I would say what lead me to not have higher grades was focus on sports. I was fortunate enough to have an older brother who received a scholarship to another university. I was able to see what it took to get a scholarship and I tried my best to get a scholarship. I would say that took up a lot of my time. Summers were dedicated to football. After school I was working out when some other kids may have studied or did other things. I don't remember having a summer. It was football, summer camps and workouts. I think if I didn't have football my GPA would have been a lot higher.

They start to receive attention from their peers, family and media distracting from their education and reinforcing the efforts put into sport.

So I had an opportunity to start with a great GPA and my last 2 years of school I started getting a little bit of recognition and a bit of social status so

my grades definitely started to slip from the 3.0 to a 2.6 in the end. I would say the social environment has a lot to do with it (grades dropping).

The effects of participation in high school athletics (Marsh and Kleitman, 2003; Fejgin, 1994) are seen as mostly positive across a variety of outcomes like social and academic self-concept, reduce absenteeism, homework, educational aspirations and enhanced identification with the school. While time and energy that went into playing their sport and the recognition they received from excelling in sports may have contributed to lower high school grade point averages the participants would mostly likely agree to the benefits of athletics at the high school level. As the first subject mentioned, his goal was to receive a scholarship to college and he felt that athletics was his best chance to reach that goal. Others did not see college as a possibility until they started getting recruited to colleges during their junior year of high school.

Academic under-achievement

All of the participants felt that during high school they were under-achieving academically and were not focused on academics for a variety of reasons related to sport participation and some not. These statements were consistent across socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds variables. The comments participants identified as non-athletic related dealt with issues that could be related to priorities, time management, maturity or the academic culture of the environment. There is the possibility that some of these were indirectly were related to the messages the student athletes were receiving about sport and it's importance over academics. They were not related to cognitive issues or lack of academic ability.

It wasn't really football that caused my grades to drop. It was more the social aspect - poor management by a 16/17 year old where I am hanging out later and you get a bit more recognition.

Where I grew up, if you were seen carrying books or a backpack weren't cool and you were teased. So I developed this fear that you wouldn't be part

of the cool kids if you did homework or stuff like that. I never cared about school. I never took it seriously.

I think I just didn't try in high school. I don't remember ever doing homework at home, I don't remember studying for test at home.

Many of the participants expressed that once they had accepted a scholarship offer they put less effort into their academics causing grades to drop.

I got offered a scholarship March of my junior year and I accepted it a couple of weeks later. That totally takes away the motivation to do well in school. Why would you, I don't know?

I struggled a bit my senior year and that brought it (GPA) down. Actually what it was, my senior year I went girl crazy. I was chasing girls. I was the big man on campus – football star, basketball star. My moms bought me a car. I figured I already got a scholarship so I felt like everything was a cakewalk. After football season I just didn't care anymore. I almost didn't graduate – I failed 2 classes. I really slacked off as a senior. I have never been a mathematician or a chemist. Those classes were kind of hard but I didn't see what it had to do with football other than that I was a good student.

Well once I saw the grade scale and the SAT scale (NCAA initial eligibility sliding scale) and I hit the SAT score I was coasting. I got an 880 (math and verbal combined score). Now I can make it and now I just have to maintain and just graduate.

How it (lower grades and scores) happen was because I was a football player being offered a scholarship and they (the school/coaches) wanted to get me in. So totally underachieving, not trying didn't matter. I would say that I understood that it didn't matter. I believed that. I was never that interested in school leading up to college. I mean I believed the idea it didn't matter as long as I could pass the (NCAA) clearinghouse and that held up to be true. My high school coach and parents would tell me that if someone is just as good as you and they have better grades they will take the guy with the better grades but in reality if you are good enough and they want you to play they will get you in.

There are implications for policy and academic reform after acceptance of a scholarship. If students feel that once they have accepted a scholarship and can clear the NCAA initial eligibility clearinghouse their high school academic performance no longer matters, the NCAA or schools themselves can set policies regarding a significant drop in grades. Some universities will flag a student's admission application if they see a downward trend in grades the student's last year or two of high school. What is not

clear is if coaches or universities are communicating the possibility of revoking a scholarship due to grades falling after the acceptance of a scholarship offer. Simple university policies that are clearly communicated to student athletes on revoking scholarship offers to student athletes who show significant downward trends in academic performance their final two years of high school could prevent the lack of motivation some high school student athletes experience after signing a letter of intent to accept a scholarship.

Socio-economic issues

About two-thirds of the participants attended a high school that served in an area of high poverty and/or grew up in a home that they self-describe as being lower income or “poor”. When you juxtaposed this background with the backgrounds of the majority of incoming freshmen at most universities, especially predominately white institutions, it is not surprising that these students may have lower academic profiles that lead to being specially admitted.

I went to XX High School – you were lucky if you had a book. My high school didn't prepare me for college. But I adjusted (to college) really fast.

My mom, she didn't understand how to read or write (in English). She wasn't able to help us with our homework. School was just never important in my house. It was to my mom. She thought just by going to school you would learn and be successful.

Earlier in my (pre-college academic) career I was influenced by gangs and I was involved – that was all my life. When I got into high school and football things changed. My freshmen year I was getting in deeper and deeper and by my sophomore year my GPA was so low I actually dropped out of high school and brought back by people - my mom pressuring me and I thought this just isn't for me. I actually dropped out for like six months and after that I came back to play football. That's what brought me back (football) they saw something in me and I was playing football and started seeing the light. I had dug myself into such a hole by the time I figured that (importance of school) out. They took me to a class and I didn't know nouns and subjects it was so embarrassing. My high school coach's wife would tutor me after school and give me background.

My parents could die happily if I graduated from high school and got a job. They never pressed for me to do more (academically) because they didn't know more. So college was the American dream for the future but not for the very first generation. So my dad was tremendously proud with me just graduating high school.

There are no data on percentage of scholarship student athletes who are from low-income backgrounds or their graduation rates at this institution or in general throughout NCAA member institutions. The NCAA is fully aware of the possibility of raising initial eligibility standards could deny college access to thousands of young people and repeatedly states that their goal is to minimize the impacts of higher initial eligibility demands on low-income students. What is not known is how many of these young students who may be denied the opportunity to attend college could be successful and graduate. This is especially sensitive since the NCAA is basing initial eligibility standards on cognitive variables such as high school GPA and standard test scores without factoring in the non-cognitive variables that might be impacting those data.

No to low SAT preparation

For most of the participants there was no to very low SAT preparation. They took the exam without knowing the format and without taking a practice exam first. There is agreement that understanding the format of the exams and coaching will produce higher scores. Research has shown that there modest benefits of SAT courses and books (Briggs, 2001; Powers & Rock, 1999; Becker, 1990 and DerSimonian & Laird 1983).

The SAT, I think I did pretty good compared to other athletes. I was one and done. I didn't have any SAT prep, no practice test, no books no nothing. It was just a test. The night before the test I was anxious and wasn't able to sleep and then the morning of the test I was running late and just grabbed a muffin and rushed down to (the testing location) take it.

I didn't take any SAT prep. I think I took it my sophomore year in high school and I got like a 1030 and that was good enough to pass the clearinghouse so that was it. I was explained how the scoring system works but I didn't take a class or get a book. I knew what I needed to get in and when I got my results I knew I didn't need to take it again.

Took the SAT one time. I went to one SAT prep session and left early.

*As far the SAT I struggled with the SAT. That is why I took the ACT. I think I passed to come to the UW with the ACT (not the SAT). I don't remember studying for it. I think I took the SAT three times and did terrible. I took the ACT once and I would say that I lucked out. I don't think I took it as seriously as I should have but I passed. **(Follow up comment: Some people don't do well on standardized tests.)** Yeah, that's the thing; I just suck at taking tests when it comes to multiple-choice questions, even when I know the material. Maybe that is my deal too, I'm just not good at taking those standardized test. I didn't take prep classes or have tutors or a book. I should have but I didn't.*

If they did receive help it was mostly in the form of free assistance from teachers or coaches once they had taken the test at least once without receiving the score needed for NCAA initial eligibility.

I took the SAT six times. I was hating math – that was one of my biggest things. I just couldn't do the math. My high school coaches and people would know my scores and where I was doing bad so every time I took the SAT they got me books, helped me study I would stay after school and finally I got to the point I understood enough to get a high enough score. It wasn't a good score and I'm not proud of it but it was high enough to get in. No prep classes just the book. Teacher helped me with the book. They helped me understand the SAT a little bit. It would ask what is stick to wood – I never knew that. And the next question was what was window to street it completely opposite. But I would have picked something that went with window like glass. They helped me understand the format –what it was asking.

Basic preparation such as coaching students on the format of the exam and knowing what type of questions are asked may increase scores on standardized tests for some lower scoring student athletes. Some of these student athletes were satisfied with receiving a score that was high enough for eligibility even though it is lower than the average incoming freshmen. They did not feel the need to retake the test for a higher score to be more competitive with the general student population. They understood they had a score that was high enough to meet their needs. None of the participants put much preparation into the SAT. Three of the subjects took them once, one of the individuals took multiple exams yet still did not receive any support in preparing for the

exam and final participant only received tutoring on the exam from high school teachers after not being able to receive a needed score after multiple attempts.

It is important to look at the factors leading to lower admissions profiles and not to make assumptions regarding the students' ability or intelligence. Having a lower standardized test scores and/or lower high school grade point averages may translate to a student being less prepared for college, it does not necessarily mean those students are not capable and not able to be successful at the college level. There is a significant difference in how to legislate policy, implement reform and provide support based on if the main problem is students lacking intelligence or being ill prepared.

The students interviewed felt the time they put into sports in high school took away from time that could have been put into academics. They also felt that they under-achieved in high school for a variety of reason that may not been directly or even indirectly related to participation in sports. It was also evident issues related to low socio-economic status negatively impacted most of the participants. Subjects discussed a range of issues including under performing educational systems lacking resources, gang activity, and parents not understanding the school systems detracted from their educational performance.

Obstacles to Persistence

The next research question asked what were obstacles to academic performance and graduation identified by the specially admitted scholarship football student athletes. Five main themes emerged: 1.) time required for sport/schedule, 2.) focus on going to the NFL at the exclusion of other possibilities, 3.) lack of study skills, 4.) not understanding college expectations and 5.) the overall football experience including injuries, coaching changes, and game losses (Figure 4.13).



Figure 4.13: Obstacles to persistence

Sport schedule

When subjects were asked to how participation in football impacted their schooling one of the first things that was mentioned was their schedule and the time they put into sport took away from the effort put into school. At times their football schedule impacted their choices of majors and classes. This was even more evident when in competition season.

In college the time and energy that is devoted to sport requirements is greatly increased from high school in weekly hours and throughout the school year. A normal schedule for football players (see Figure 4.16) at this institution during football season would be weight lifting and treatment starting at 6am, two to four hours of class per day mostly in the morning and early afternoon, football meetings and practice starting around 2pm until about 6pm. There would be treatment of injuries or medical issues if needed, a shower followed by dinner after practice with tutoring and study table starting around 7pm until 9pm. There are some players who study film or play books when they have

free time; which could be before class, in between classes or after tutoring and study time is over in the evening.

Table 4.5 Sample In Season Week Day Football Student Schedule

Time	Activity
6-8am	Treatment, weights and conditioning
8:30am-1:30pm	Academics: class and tutoring
2:15-6pm	Football meetings and practice
6-7pm	Treatment, shower and dinner
7-9 or 10pm	Academics: tutoring, study time

The weekends consist of mainly football related activities. Fridays there is travel or reporting to the team hotel after practice and game walk-through, Saturday is game day and Sunday football players have treatment for injuries and some football players will review film of the game or film preparing for the next game. All of the football students interviewed talked about the message whether it was implicitly stated or not was that football was priority over academics.

Institutionally there were a lot of things that got in your way mostly related to football. Scheduling is obvious an obstacle and it is definitely difficult but you have to learn to manage time.

The schedule, you take classes in the time that football doesn't take up. You can't miss football –that isn't ok. And the classes you do go to you are tired. And little things like you can't fit into the desk. You go to class and you are sweating from workouts and you don't fit in the desk. You are thinking I'm uncomfortable, my back hurts and you miss parts of the lecture.

Simple things like because of football you show up to class tired. It is a matter of where your priorities are. I remember having to do mat drills before a final. Why does that promote doing well on a test – it doesn't. I would say my schedule was pretty clear that football was more important. The amount of effort I put in just minutes compared to hours. There was so much more that went into football. School got my leftovers.

My sophomore year we had a meeting that they told us that scholarships were not a five year deal but were yearly renewals and if we did not perform on our end you are not guaranteed a next year of scholarship which reminded us that you do have to take care of school but football takes priority. It takes priority over classes. We have a game and you have final or exam you are going to that game. If you have a class during practice time you need to get a new class. The priority is football and is still above academics.

While NCAA regulations state that student athletes will limit sport participation to twenty hours while in season of competition and eight hours outside of their season of competition these time limits are only for mandatory activities. Many institutions get around these requirements by having voluntary workouts and other voluntary activities. Many of the student athletes would say the word “voluntary” should be surrounded by quotations. While often coaches are not allowed to monitor these activities other staff monitors them and in some cases punishments are given for missing voluntary activities. In December of 2011, University of California – Los Angeles football players’ checks were withheld for not completing the required voluntary workouts in preparation for post-season play during final exam week (Foster, 2011). The players went straight to social media with their complaints stating that they go to a difficult school and finals week should be about studying. UCLA officials awkwardly fielded questions from the press and eventually released the funds to the students.

Participants reported in attempts to balance school and football they may accept a lower grade to get by or weigh the amount of effort a certain class or major would take an opt for a choice that would be easier to balance. In many cases they would first attempt the more competitive major and find they could not balance their study effort and time with their sport.

My grades wouldn't show but college wasn't very difficult for me. I could have gotten way better grades but I caught myself just trying to get the bare minimum while trying to balance football and school.

Declared my major my sophomore year – it was my third choice. After

business I tried to go the history route for a sec but I didn't know we had to write so many papers we had twenty page papers every couple weeks. I can't do that and play for this guy at the same time. So I went to AES (American Ethnic Studies), it was like branch of history we were learning about different cultures over time. It was more manageable. It still had its hard classes.

Degree – I think I could have done something a lot better. I can't say that I did it right with my major. There is nothing wrong with what I majored in but I could have gone for something a bit tougher which would have drove me to study more, get more involved on upper campus.

As an athlete you know you have to take a lighter load during season and load up on the harder classes off-season. The playing takes a toll on your body and your energy is so sapped that you maybe can take one hard class but not a full schedule. You can see it and guys are just sapped by the end of the season and the next year they don't do that again. Mentally it just drains you completely. It also depends on wins and losses. I remember the year we were winning and that was so fun. I think that energy gives you a push. Following that horrible season it was just bad. Mentally you are just zapped.

The amount of time and effort that sport participation may be the biggest obstacle that student athletes face in persisting to graduation. It impacts grade point averages, course selection and even major selection. The NCAA attempts to regulate the time put into sport by setting hour limits on mandatory practice time. Recent NCAA legislation (NCAA Division I Board of Directors Report, 2011) will penalize teams not reaching the required APR percentages by reducing practice four hours/one day of practice a week and replacing that time with academic activities. This would result in sixteen hours of practice over five day rather than twenty hours over six days per week. These penalties begin with in the 2013-2014 academic year and will only impact teams not retaining students and/or not having students in good academic standing at a level where the APR percentages were not met the previous year. These efforts are needed but may not go far enough. Either time for academics needs to be increased to allow for student athletes to compete in the class room or the reality of the time felt needed for sport participation for teams to be successful needs to be accepted and academic modifications like reduced class load or credit for athletic participation during season

could be explored. To continue conversations of academic concerns without addressing the student athlete schedule is disingenuous.

Focus on going to the NFL

All participants entered college with the dreams to play professional football and two out of the five were able to experience playing at a professional level; one in the NFL and other in Arena League. Others may have been able to continue playing at a professional or semi-professional level under that of the NFL but chose to not pursue those avenues. It can be difficult to demonstrate the importance of certain classes or majors when the students' career goals are to play sports at the professional level. While other student understand the need for certain classes or majors to reach their goals, some student athletes struggle to see the relevance of the academic work and how that work will add and not distract from the NFL dream.

I realized that I couldn't major in business after the first quarter. I didn't really see how my classes or the degree was going to be useful. I still hoped to make it to the NFL so my time and energy went there. I even had a chance to study in Africa in winter during mat drills but ended up not going because the coaches weren't really into it. They thought we wouldn't stay in shape and I didn't want to lose playing time so I didn't go. A couple other guys went and they hardly got on the field even though they returned in good condition. I always regretted not going.

They discussed being encouraged to hang on to their ambitions of playing in the NFL and how their desires to live out those childhood dreams may have caused them not to see or take advantage of other opportunities until they started to develop more relationships with others outside of athletics.

I think I drastically under-achieved in high school. I underachieved in college too but not as much. I think I'm doing well now (post-graduation) and I would relate that to when I stopped living with guys on the team and started living with friends who didn't play sports. Being surrounded by those guys was huge, so huge. The guys on the team they think they are mature but they are not. There is a lot of immaturity that goes on about seeing their future. If you went down to the computer lab and polled football and basketball players about their options after college they would say to keep doing what

I'm doing – playing my sport. Where the guys I lived with the options were something in the professional world – it is limitless. Sports limited options because they don't see what else is out there.

It is difficult to tell anyone that his dreams for the future might not be realistic. It is especially difficult when it is the dream to play professional sports and the individual has made it to the level of competing in Division I athletics. For the most part those students would not be recruited if the coaches did not feel they had the possibility of becoming a great athlete at the professional level. Even when the common statistics are shared, like these from the NFL Players Association (2011), stating less than three percent of college student athletes will play in the NFL and of those who make it the average career will be about three years. The students hold out hope of beating the odds. Much of the student's identity has been wrapped in being an elite athlete. Individuals committed to roles without exploration of their options are said to be experiencing identity foreclosure (Marcia et al., 1993). It has been suggested that the demands of intercollegiate athletics in conjunction with the restrictive nature of the athletic system, can isolate student athletes from non-athletic college activities, restrict opportunities for exploration and promote identity foreclosure (Chartrand & Lent, 1987; Nelson, 1983; Petitpas & Champagne, 1988). Even highly successful professional athletes like Michael Jordan and Brett Favre struggled with leaving their sport even after long illustrious careers and financial security.

Lack of study skills

Some participants reported entering college with weak study skills as an obstacle. Tracking back the issue of weak study skills, it was found there were different sources to the same problem. In some cases the source was school systems in low-income areas that lacked resources and did not provide a quality education.

I'm coming from XX (large western metropolitan city) and nobody every taught me how to read/study. They taught me how to read but not how to really study. I learned how to do that by struggling. By end I was reading, answering questions in class and I was a real student as compared to a student athlete. I finally opened the book and was studying better.

The big obstacle was the education I got growing up.

Just the understanding stuff, the textbooks and everything due to the lack of school I got when I was younger made it difficult. I wish my road from elementary school and middle school was different. It would have been a lot easier.

In other situations the schooling was adequate yet the students were able to navigate to high school graduation because of high levels of cognitive ability without having to apply or learn college level study skills. The increased academic demands in college require more study skills and more time devoted to studying due to the amount of material covered, students being required to acquire knowledge from textbooks without instruction and the increased need to not only memorize but apply new knowledge to demonstrate learning.

I never have really been much of a studier. I hated making study guides and stuff. I tried, pay attention in class and keep things in my memory - my notes, the stuff that the teacher gave to us. In high school I was able to get by and do well without really having to do that much studying.

In both cases the problem is the same, their prior educational experiences had not prepared them for college level work. Study skills are not difficult to remediate with proper support. The NCAA requires academic support be available to student athletes. It can be provided through regular campus support programs or from the athletic department itself. At universities where there is a large gap between general student population's and specially admitted student athletes' academic profiles it is crucial that specially admitted student athletes be recognized as a special population on campus so their needs can be evaluated and addressed in meaningful ways. Basic study skill instruction needs to be addressed and can quickly help specially admitted student athletes adjust to their academic demands so they can be competitive in the classroom.

Not understanding of college expectations

Going hand in hand with lack of study skills, not understanding college expectations was another problem the participants discussed. Often this comes in the form of not fully understanding the requirements for classes or a major leading to goals that are unrealistic. The fact is, that by definition, specially admitted student athletes have significantly lower academic profiles than their regularly admitted peers. At universities with competitive admissions these student athletes are competing in the classroom with top students from not only across the state or region but also from across the world. The reality is that for these students it is often very difficult to make up the gap in time to be able to gain entrance into competitive majors. Often the students do not really understand the workload and requirements for the major.

I originally I got a phone call about registration and getting into the right FIG (freshmen interest group) and so I was like business all the way. My dad is an entrepreneur and he said if you have the opportunity go business. So I took microeconomics my first quarter and barely got a passing grade with a 0.7. My original goal was to get a degree in business but I had NO idea what that really meant. It was a stretch goal to say the least.

My dad owned his own business so I thought, let's go to college and I didn't think about finding a field to study. I didn't understand that. I was just in high school. So I came in for business and I didn't even know how to study so how could I keep up with that material and the GPA requirements?

Some participants recalled not understanding other expectations that slowed their transition to being successful college students.

When I first got to college it was like don't open your books, don't even take them out of the plastic you can get more money back. So at first I didn't touch the books, that is why I failed economics, I was like that is \$100 I'm not going to touch it. With time I opened the books and thought I'm losing money but I did it. They (academic support services) told me that you get the same amount back if you resell your book if it is new or marked up but I didn't believe it. It was true though.

I didn't really need to study much in high school. When I got to college I would study an hour or so in study table and do some other tutoring but didn't do much outside of that. It wasn't until I started dating my current wife

that I realized how much regular students study. I was doing so much more than I ever did in high school but it just wasn't enough.

Not understanding the expectations of the institution is the equivalent of not knowing the rules in a game. It will hinder the success of a student. More and more schools are holding orientations and summer course for incoming student athletes so many of the expectations for college can be discussed and experienced. These programs can have a beneficial impact on the students' transition to college and get them off to a positive start.

Overall football experience

Besides the sport schedule, focus on the NFL, lack of study skills, and not understanding college expectations; there are host of issues that participants identified as obstacles to academic success that are related to the overall football experience. These are aspects of the game like injuries, game losses and, coaching changes.

All participants experienced non-career ending injuries during their collegiate football career. They recalled the impact it had on their academic performance and motivation. In some cases the injury was a wake up call that made them realize how important their education was and how short lived playing football could be.

Yes, I had a "fun" conversation with a friend from the dorms. He was another football player and he is two years older than me. We had a conversation and I was hurt, I broke my XX in off-season conditioning. I told him the coaches hate me, they don't even acknowledge me and it sucks. He said you are a piece of meat and you have to make the decision of what you are going to do. If you want to go to the NFL stay healthy, work your butt off, be the biggest fastest and strongest. Or if you want to graduate go to school and actually do your work. That conversation really opened my eyes. I was brought here to play football and I couldn't do that, I was hurt. I couldn't do what I was called to do and I was treated like crap. If I get hurt, break my leg and I can't play I have nothing so I better at least get something I can take away. With a broken wrist or bad back I still have school and that can't be taken away. So there was a shift and I didn't miss class after that.

It (coaches ignoring him during and after injury) shook my confidence. I felt that I was doing something wrong and that the other players were better than

me. There are others who are going to take my place. And when I got back into it I was below people that I was ten times better than. And that just got me angry. It didn't motivate it the way they (coaches) hoped it would. I can either train my hardest and do football but you can't do both (football and academics) I guess some people can but the easy way is that you can only focus on one so I felt screw these guys (coaches) and I'm going to graduate. And I'll get some positive affirmations that I'm good at something by getting good grades. Academically was the way to go.

In other cases, participants discuss the negative impacts on academics due to injuries. They report the mental difficulties of dealing with an injury and not being able to play their sport as impacting their effort and their goals for academic outcomes. All participants recalled coaches ignoring them or being treated differently by coaches and other support staff. They discuss being told they “were stealing their scholarship” or were called names and felt their manhood and toughness were in question.

Injuries - that is the thing that stop me from fully accomplishing my academic goals. When I wasn't injured I would focus more on my education and wouldn't struggle as much in the classes. Sometimes (when dealing with an injury) I would be just like 2.0 is just as good as a 4.0, a 1.0 is good enough. Now that I looked back I wish I would have gotten that 3.0 because I could have.

I did the best I could do I just know that I the whole thing was that I was playing with injuries – I always come back to injuries. When I was healthy I was just rolling. If it was a class I needed to get the job done I would put in the time and energy to do it and get the job done. When I wasn't healthy I just didn't put in as much effort. The whole injury part, I just ...You are in such a bad place and your energy is down. You do what you can and you switch it around. You put a little bit here and a little bit there. But when you have positive energy you can put it in everywhere.

When you get hurt coaches hate you. They want nothing to do with you. They say you're a worthless and say you are stealing because you have a scholarship and aren't playing. You are stealing?? They say suck it up you aren't hurt. And granted some people do milk injuries. But I was a guy that never missed a practice, never had an injury and the one time I got hurt it was like the coaches were (pause) they didn't believe me. For a guy like that to treat me like that it makes you nuts and makes you dislike the whole situation.

It is evident that injuries, not being able to play and the change in how the players are approached by coaches is emotionally difficult for most student athletes even when the injuries are not career ending. The injuries can have a positive or

negative impact on the individual's attitudes towards academics. In many cases injuries do have an adverse impact academic performance that can be shorter or longer-term. Directly afterward an injury there can be problems occurring due to mobility issues, pain, possible medication, stress and mental health issues directly related to the injury, and time missed from class after surgery and during recovery. It is important that coaches and staff be sensitive to the emotional and physical toll of injuries and that there is support for these athletes who need help coping with the intense and complicated emotions they are experiencing.

Losses

These young men faced significant losses on the field. Regardless of the year they were admitted, all four or five seasons were losing seasons and all, except one subject, experienced a very discouraging season with no wins. This extreme amount of losing took a toll on the team and coaches. The participants described the experience of losing's negative impact on their schooling.

Because football dominated my life, my morale, my attitude losing definitely negatively effected everything else, everything else. We were embarrassed to come back to campus on Monday. Classmates and even professors would ask you what was going on or teased you. It was humiliating. I was used to winning.

When things were going good on the field I had more initiative to do more and do better – I didn't want to become ineligible. Losing game after game got to me. I just wouldn't study Friday, Saturday and Sunday. It was really hard to focus on material or do a paper after a loss.

Elite high school athletes are used to winning. Losing game after game and season after season took an emotional toll that negatively impacted the academic performance of many football players. As the participants recalled their football experience years later they were still very upset and, in many cases, angry. Yet all participants said they felt they had learned from the experience and came out of it stronger.

It is very possible that a very successful season could produce distractions that would interfere with academic focus as well. Further research on the impact of the success of the season could provide more insight to the impact of winning or losing seasons.

Coaching Changes

The participants were admitted over a three-year time period so in some cases the head coach who recruited them was gone before they arrived, in other cases the head coach was fired after their first or second year but in all cases these student athletes ended up playing the majority of their college athletic career for a different coach than recruited them. Most all of them also experienced working with several different position coaches over their tenure. Many of them had difficulty with the instability that results from coaching changes. Relationships with the coaches are developed with the student athletes and their families during the recruiting process. There is a feeling of fear when a new coach comes in and a feeling that you are not “their guy” so they may not care about you or want you there. The reality is that after a head coaching change there can be a lot of players who leave the program. Some leave voluntarily and others are encouraged or are pushed to leave if they want to play. Leaving a program can result in losing a year or two of eligibility and requires the student athlete to leave friends and an university that they may have strong bonds with and feelings towards. Again the emotional toll can be significant and have a negative impact on schooling.

There was a time I was all Pac-10 academic team – my freshmen and sophomore year. As the whole coaching situation (coaching change) came my grades began to fall and I stopped caring.

I guess just overall football experience, I was doing great until XXX got here and then there is a drop off. I'm not blaming him on my grades but the mental toll just got to me. It was so demotivating. He doesn't want me here

so what I'm I doing but the other side was I started this and I'm going to finish.

Coaching changes create stressful times. Whether the coaches left for a new or better position or were fired, the student athletes are were bonded to the coaches who left and may be grieving the loss of a person who was very instrumental in their lives. In addition, the student athletes are uncertain regarding where they stand on the team and need to prove themselves again. Student athletes may need additional support during coaching changes. There may be an opportunity non-athletic bonding experiences for coaches and players as well as education for incoming coaches to reduce the stress on student athletes.

There were many obstacles to persistence to graduation identified by the football students participating in the interviews. These obstacles include time required for sport, focus on going to the NFL at the exclusion of other career possibilities, lack of study skills, not understanding college expectations, and the overall football experience including injuries, game losses and coaching changes. The remaining research question asked the participants to identify the beliefs and resources that helped them stay motivated and persist to graduation.

Promoting Persistence

The fourth research question focused on what the specially admitted football students attributed to their success in reaching graduation. They discussed three main categories that they felt had significant impact on their academic success: 1.) personal attributes, 2.) support systems outside of athletics and 3.) specialized academic support within athletics (see Figure 4.14).

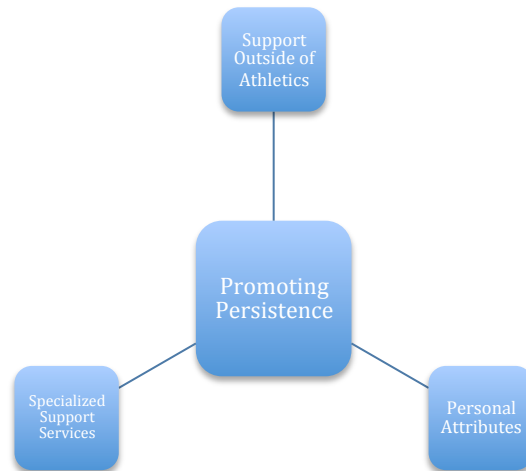


Figure 4.14: Factors promoting persistence

Personal Attributes

Originally the study asked what the participants attributed to their persistence towards graduation was looking at the actions, support and resources that they identified as being helpful. Many of the aspects they talked about were much more about their character and beliefs than from any support that was being offered. Personal beliefs and character were the most relevant aspect of persistence to graduation. They discuss four sub-categories: 1.) belief in the importance of a college degree, 2.) not being a stereotype, 3.) not being a quitter, and 4.) not letting others down.

Importance of a College Degree

All participants held the belief that a college education is required for success in today's society and found that belief a driving force in persisting to graduation. All came into college with the goal of graduating and say that goal did not waiver at any time and if anything became strong as football losses continued to pile up and as they got closer to finishing school.

I had a chance to leave (NFL) before my senior year and my thing was to finish my education. It kind of bit me in the ass but I graduated so I win.

I think the number one thing that kept me going was that degree. Keep your eyes on the prize. There were tough times in football but the rewards of graduating from the University of Washington was worth more than the struggle.

I just wanted a degree; if you are going to have a chance you need a degree.

I was self-motivated. I see the value in getting a degree. I knew that the probability of me being successful without a college degree was low so that was one of the reasons I stayed motivated to graduate.

I always loved playing football but I knew the importance of academics over football. I had a lot of friends who were like NFL, NFL, NFL but I would never allow myself to believe that the NFL comes before school. Though I love football and I put so much time and energy into it. I don't know what kind of jobs would be out there but it would be a lot better to have a degree if I didn't go to the NFL. That never changed over time.

The stereotype is that student athletes in revenue generating sports are at college to play their sport and they do not care about graduation. These students came to college with strong beliefs on the importance of obtaining a degree and the goal of finishing college. The goal did not waiver and the desire to graduate got even stronger as they got closer to finishing. This indicates that the motivation to graduate already exists. The specially admitted student athletes need to be armed with the skills and opportunities to develop themselves as students so they are able to realize this goal.

Not a Quitter

A personal character trait that most of the participants expressed was that they were just not quitters and walking away before it was over was not apart of their character. Their football experience was difficult and while they would admit that leaving had crossed their minds in the end they never seriously considered not finishing school.

My mentality is not to really give up on anything.

There were times I didn't want to be here and thought maybe I would just go home and go to school there but I've never been a quitter.

(Did you ever feel like giving up?) All the time. I just had to finishing things through. Quitting is the easiest thing to do. I'd be lying if I said I didn't think about it. It ran laps in my head. There is a difference between people who stay in it and people who quit. Everybody thinks about it from time to time.

(Did you ever feel like giving up?) A couple times with my injuries...I know they say when you fall down you have to get back up but all my life it seems like they have been kicking me down, kicking me down, but I was driven to finish what I started and see it through to the end.

Some also expressed that they had to stay in football because they could not afford going to college without a scholarship.

Wanting to quit had more to do with football. If there was a way to continue with my education without football I probably would have done that after my junior year. I would have done it because football was really stressful. But I always wanted to get my degree.

(Did you ever feel like giving up?) No there were times leaving the team crept into my mind but never leaving school. But I stayed because I couldn't pay for school on my own.

I call them the terrible years, there were times I wanted to quit but I wanted to get my degree and I knew my mom wanted me to get the degree so I couldn't even let that come across my mind. We couldn't afford college without the scholarship.

The commitment of continuing participating in a sport you no longer want to play is a show of discipline and strength. The time and energy required, not to mention the physical toll it takes on the body, is intense especially when the student is not enjoying it and his heart is no longer in it. Continuing to play Division I football in order to finish college is testimony to the value those students put on their college education.

Not Wanting to Be a Stereotype

For participants who were from lower socio-economic backgrounds or who are under-represented minorities there was an added pressure of not being a stereotype and

they expressed feelings of not having other options. These students used these pressures of college and sport as motivators when times got difficult.

Also I didn't want to be one of those neighborhood losers. You know the ones you see standing on the block who is still standing there – doesn't have a car still living with his mom. Like "what happened to him – he dropped out of school and is still living with his mom" (laugh). We laughed at guys like that and I didn't want to be one of them.

I wasn't going to be another Black man that dropped out of college. The stereotypes and what other people would say and think and not wanting to let down my mom. I didn't want to be a statistic.

I didn't want to be one that they said he had all the talent in the world but he didn't get it done, he didn't go to class.

People were telling me that I wouldn't be successful. I got it everywhere, even family members. I had a professor my freshmen year and again my junior year and he was surprised I was still here. He was like, "You still go here?" and I was like "Yeah" and then and later and thought "wait a minute" I think he thought I wouldn't make it. We do it all the time with freshmen, this person isn't going to make it because of academics, this person is going to get too home sick, this person is going to be a baby. You are always going to have those people and that is what he (the professor) thought of me. I found the haters motivating. When you are down and in a bad state of mind those are things that get you going – proving people wrong and proving people right and not letting people down. For an athlete that is a big thing, it motivates you.

These football students had added pressures dealing with stereotypes and the stigma of being a student athlete. They show resilience in dealing with these pressures and turn the negatives into motivation. What is not known is the emotional toll these pressures took on the participants or the impact on academic performance. Stereotype threat (Steele, 1997) asserts that sustained school success requires identification with school and pressures on stigmatized groups can cause dis-identification leading underperformance in certain domains. Research has shown that stereotype threat has dramatically depressed mathematic standardized test performance of women and African Americans who stereotyped as not performing as well as other groups in math. Steele presents "Wise Schooling Practices" that can be adopted to reduce stereotype

threat. These practices can easily be adopted in courses and programs across the university.

Not Letting Others Down

There were eight references from the five participants about not wanting to let others down and there were no direct questions that would have lead to that particular phrasing. Most were talking about their mothers and the sacrifices made for them. They also talked about their responsibility to the people who helped them get into college, their setting an example for their communities and the others who may be following in their footsteps. Their going to college was about more than them.

I didn't want to disappoint my mom. She worked so hard to put me in the best schools and get me the best stuff – things she never had. It would have been a slap in her face for me to not finish especially since I had the ability to do it.

I didn't want to let people down that motivated me. Letting XXX down or Coach XXX down. I would just think about how people would feel if I quit or how people who looked up to me would feel. If I quit just think about the next guy it would be that much easier for him to quit. If I did it why can't they?

Most of participants viewed their education as an opportunity that benefited more than just them. They acknowledged that there were many people who helped them get to college and felt a debt to them. They also saw their education as about something bigger than them so their success or failure would impact a bigger community. The participants used this added pressure to motivate them to persist to the finish for the larger cause or group. This is a lot of pressure for a young person to manage.

Support Outside of Athletics

The participants noted the people that supported them academically. This study focuses on family, faculty and friends outside of teammates. Teammates were

discussed as a support for dealing with the stress of the football losses but not when discussing academics. Academic support services will be discussed separately.

Family Support

Family plays an important role in persistence. Research on families, education and sport was limited to minority families. Much of the past research focused on negative stereotypes of family support noting lack of cultural capital (Moynihan, 1965; Eitzen and Zinn, 2004). Yet there was evidence that African American families often demonstrated strength and resilience (McCubbin, Thompson and Futrell, 1998) and parents of high achieving African American student athletes maintained high academic expectations by putting pressure on their sons to perform at a high level in the classroom (Martin, Harrison and Bukstein, 2010).

The goal to graduate was definitely there and there was the goal to go to the NFL but definitely for my parents I was in college. I had to graduate for my family, even if I was getting 20 sacks a game I had to graduate for my family. The whole goal is what can you do to help the family. I'm supposed to do better than my parents and my kids are supposed to do better than me.

Mom motivated me just by how hard she worked and maybe by my getting an education she can have an easier life sometime down the road.

Obviously my mom, my brothers kept me going – they graduated and now I have a little brother in college. I always stayed motivated to graduate I just lack motivation in football at the end. I would say my family was strong and supported me especially during the rough times here. And I was motivated by just me wanting to get a degree.

It is very clear that family is important to most of the students. There are ways support programs can partner with families to create stronger support programs. Families can provide important information and insight regarding the student's learning and motivation, which can be very helpful to the academic staff working with these students. It is important to include families into the college experience to help them understand what their son is experiencing and provide suggestions on how to provide some support that

may not be obvious to the families. There are simple communication systems that could encourage the sharing of information between student, families and academic support staff that could prove beneficial to the students' success.

Non-athlete Peer Support

Most participants found academic support outside of athletics through girlfriends, friends and groups. These outside friends provided encouragement to study, opportunities to form learning communities and served as good role models. Theory of involvement (Astin, 1984) argues that students learn by becoming involved and Terenzini et al. (1996) suggests the importance between engagement and overall college success. Student athletes' athletic involvement and schedules puts them at risk for limited opportunities for engagement in campus opportunities (Gayles & Hu, 2009; Umback, Palmer, Kuh, & Hannah, 2006).

Some friends outside the team would help me a bit – we had really casual study groups. I probably studies a bit more with them than I would have with my teammates.

I met my wife at school. She was a tremendously good student and got academic scholarships to come to school. We started dating my sophomore year. She is a very good person. When I started dating her, I guess that is when I started studying more and reading. She was definitely a positive influence on everything in my life and she didn't allow me to do the bare minimum. She encouraged me to do more and when challenged I do more.

I started going to the ECC (Ethnic Cultural Center) to hang out and found people were studying. I started to go there to study too. You would find other people in the same class and sometimes just discussing the lectures or the material can help.

This highlights the importance of Intercollegiate Athletic Departments partnering with other campus departments to make campus integration a priority by finding meaningful ways for student athletes to engage in campus opportunities.

Faculty Support

All the participants reported that the faculty with only a few exceptions was supportive. Most all even reported that they considered a few of them as friends. It was interesting how little effort was needed put forth by the faculty for the student to feel supported. Saying hello, knowing their name, looking them in the eye, recommending support services and engaging them when they came to office hours were some of the supportive actions discussed by the participants.

In my major Professor XXX – I went to her office hours a lot. I did my senior thesis with her. She helped me when I was struggling.

XXX – I failed his class 3 times (it was a science requirement for graduation) and we got close. He is a funny guy. The last time I took his class I told him my situation and he helped me out so much – he talked to the tutor and the TA and he worked it out so it was understandable to me. After I talked to him, the next day I had an email from the TA saying to go talk to her and she helped lay out what I needed to know. After working with her for a while I started to really understand the stuff. I was like man why didn't I do this the first time. After I sent him a thank you note. He didn't have to do all that.

They would say listen this is what I need you to do, this is the bigger picture and this is what you need to do to learn. They could see my heart was in it and they were willing to help out. They didn't give me answers or special projects to do but they really stretched out the hand for support. Like they would get me to go to CLUE and say if you are struggling here is a resource. Their willingness to meet me half way was encouraging to me to meet them more than half way.

They would encourage me – some new my story about how I got to the UDub and they would see how much I was trying and they would encourage me. When I would struggle I would talk to them and the TAs and they would say how proud they were of me and my accomplishments even though I wasn't a 4.0 student. Sometimes I would just pass the class with a 2.0 but I would honestly tell them I'm trying and I'm giving you everything I got even though my paper might only be a 1.9. They respected that – I think that professors like that I didn't BS them. I would say that I don't know if I will pass your class with a 3.0 but I will be here and I will be trying.

They knew me and treated me like a person. They knew my name and would call on me when I raised my hand or would ask me questions.

Martin et al. (2010) found professors were highly instrumental in enhancing the quality of the academic experience for male student athletes and faculty empower

the college environment with their leadership. Allowing the time and means for student athletes to create a strong support group outside of athletics and to engage with this support can truly enhance the academic experience for college athletes.

The relationships that student athletes establish with faculty and peers other than their teammates are directly related to academic success (Comeaux and Harrison, 2011). College students, especially in revenue generating sports, have been shown to lag behind peers in career planning (Blann, 1985; Kennedy & Dimick, 1987; Sowa & Gressard, 1983). A participant quoted previously felt he really began to see the possibilities of career options outside of athletics once he started living with non-athletes, others mentioned how their academic efforts and outcomes improved once they got involved with activities or people outside of athletics. Students reported spending time in a fraternity, ethnic heritage related clubs or with serious girlfriends as a change agent in their outlook towards academics and athletics. It is important for making the time for student athletes to integrate on campus and for campus partnerships to develop to allow for meaningful social and academic engagement.

Student Athlete Academic Support

Participants said they did not use university academic support services regularly outside of the service provided through the athletic department. All participants were in mandatory freshmen football study table their first year and used tutoring and advising to various degrees throughout their academic career. While many students may have not enjoyed the academic structure they had through athletic department support services, when reflecting back they all felt that it was important and contributed to their successful transition to college and ultimately graduation.

Study table at first I hated it but by second quarter I realized it helped. I mean the first couple of years things like study table and the structure helped me learn how to be a student. The right tutors at the times like XXX

by the time you get to the end you steam roll through and you get to the end. It is just determination.

Freshmen year – SAAS was big – coordinator, advising... that stuff was key I used that. Especially that it was for athletes – it's tough especially your freshmen year. I loved the mandatory tutoring your freshmen year and study table. That was huge – even though I was prepared those things helped me understand college a little faster. It made me want to do better and it helped me graduate. Maybe without that I wouldn't have...I would still have graduated but I would have struggled more.

Tutoring was helpful. It forced me to study and set time aside for school.

I remember Bridge was a shocker and that helped me prepare. I realized how much I was going to have to do to be successful.

I used advising for choosing classes with XXX the whole time. That was helpful. He asked what I wanted to do and we planned it out the whole year and the whole everything I needed to do until graduation once I picked my major.

The support provided by academic services often extended beyond the academic realm. Students noted it was a safe place to go for advice or to just spend time.

I went to XXX, he wasn't my adviser but he is the man. When I had issues or troubles he talk to you as an individual and a friend. You can tell him stuff and he won't tell anyone else. He will have your back.

(Referring more to wanting to quit) There was support especially in academics (student athlete academic support services) that was helpful – coming around just to talk and they would be encouraging.

Student athlete academic support services have been existence since the early 1970s. These services are important to student athlete academic success especially at institutions where there is a considerable academic preparedness gap between special admitted student athletes and the general student population. Specialized services to meet the needs of this sub-population of student may not be met elsewhere on campus especially during the crucial first years while the students are transitioning to college life. These support services should focus on building

academic skills and increasing academic identity with the goal of allowing the student athlete to become an independent learner.

Summary

The academic experience of the specially admitted student athlete is complex and varied. It is important to hear what the specially admitted student athletes identify as reasons they were specially admitted, what obstacles they faced and what was helpful to them in their goal of reaching graduation.

Many of the specially admitted football students had lower high school GPAs and SAT scores due to 1.) their high school participation in sports, 2.) academic under-achievement in high school, 3.) low socio-economic issues impacting education and 4.) no to low SAT preparation. The issues were not related to lower academic ability or low intellectual functioning. While there are some student athletes admitted to universities with ability and intellectual functioning deficits, those are not the majority of the specially admitted student athletes and at the University of Washington, that is a relatively small group. Graduation rates show the majority of the specially admitted football students are able to be successful and do graduate.

The obstacles the specially admitted students reported are 1.) the athletic schedule, 2.) focus on goals to play in the NFL, 3.) lack of study skills upon entering college, 4.) not understanding college expectations and 5.) the overall football experience. These problems are common and would most likely be reported as issues at any university with a big-time athletic program. The importance is what are institutions willing to do to address the obstacles that are interfering with academic performance. Some of issues that the students discussed can be solved with specialized support and programming for the students, but some require larger

discussion addressing coaching communication with players through education and system changes at the university level.

Studying specially admitted football players who graduated not only identified helpful resources and successful strategies but also personal beliefs and character traits to look for in recruited athletes. The participants discussed the following: 1.) personal attributes, 2.) support systems outside of athletics and 3.) specialized academic support within athletics. Within the category of personal attributes that were important to academic success the following four sub-categories were identified: 1.) the belief in the importance of a college degree, 2.) not being quitters, 3.) not wanting to be a stereotype, and 4.) not letting other people down. These items also can provide suggestions for programming as well as for recruiting prospective athletes. Expanding this study to other institutions and comparing the specially admitted students who graduated to the ones who exhausted their eligibility but did not graduate could provide greater insight beliefs, character traits, resources and support that can help increase retention and graduation rates.

Taking what we have learned about what promoted positive impact and minimized negative impact on graduation persistence (Figure 4.14) we can create a pathway to academic success. There are many services that can be instituted to

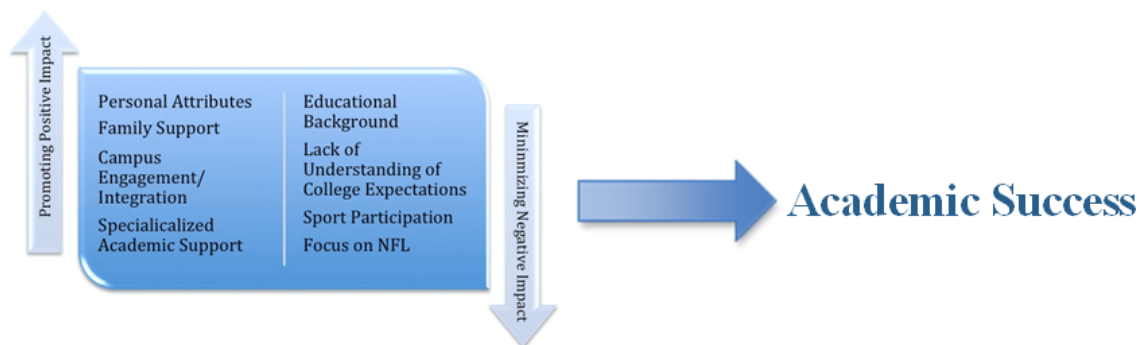


Figure 4.14: Pathway to academic success

support specially admitted student athletes based on the information provided by the participants regarding the obstacles they faced and what helped them persists to graduation. These projects and services will be explored in the following chapter.

Ch. 5 - Recommendations

This chapter includes a summary of the study's findings and recommendations based on those results. While the recommendations are mainly for student athlete academic support units to use in considering programming and policy; this information may be of interest to coaches, others involved in the recruiting process, athletic department administration, other campus administration involved in undergraduate academic affairs and possibly the NCAA Division I Academic Cabinet. The recommendations are specifically for the University of Washington but other universities may find that similar programs may benefit their student athletes and campus. There are applications for policy and practice as well as suggestions for further study.

Summary of Findings and Conclusions

This exploratory study examined the 2003 through 2005 cohorts of incoming freshmen football students who were on scholarship at the University of Washington. A descriptive analysis of the group of 48 football students was performed. This cohort has significantly lower SAT scores and high school grade point averages than the general student population yet graduation rates were slightly below the campus average. The data also showed that specially admitted football players graduation rates were only slightly below football players who were in the priority or regular admit category. Surprisingly, football students who completed their true freshman year of college or, in other words did not red-shirt, had higher graduation rates and were less likely to exhaust their athletic eligibility without graduating. The data show that when measuring success as graduation these specially admitted football students are having a similar range of success as their peers within football and within the general student population even though their SAT scores and high school grade point averages are significantly lower

upon entering the university. These results indicate that the student athletes being recruited and admitted into the university are receiving the needed the support to graduate. The numbers are a useful comparison between specially admitted football students, their teammates and non-athlete peers but do not speak to their college experience. Interviews with specially admitted football students gave rich insights into what they saw as promoting and detracting from graduation persistence.

Interviews of specially admitted football players who graduated within six years of being admitted discussed factors leading to special admittance status, obstacles that impeded academic success and resources that lead to persistence. The findings cover areas that the majority of the subjects felt were significant issues that impacted them in those categories.

Many of the specially admitted football students attributed lower high school GPAs and SAT scores in large part to the following issues: 1.) participating in sports during high school taking time and energy away from academics, 2.) under-achieving academically when in high school, 3.) socio-economic issues impacting education such as attending schools with few resources or living in environments where high levels poverty and crime distracted from schooling and 4.) having no to low SAT preparation leading to lower scores. These issues are not related to lack of intelligence or ability to be successful at the college level yet have a negative impact on high GPAs and standardized test scores. Preparedness and ability are different issues and must not be used interchangeably. Preparedness can be remediated and student athlete academic support programs have proven to have much success in this area.

NCAA initial eligibility standards rely solely on SAT scores and high school grades without consideration of the non-cognitive factors that can contribute to lower scores but which do not affect the ability of the student to be successful in college. There is a need for academic standards and for not admitting students who do not

possess the ability for learning new material at a college level. These standards need to be weighed against to learn the possibility of excluding young people access to college based on scores that do not evaluate their ability to be successful in the academic environment.

Currently there are no evaluation tools that allow for non-cognitive factors to be weighed into the decision making process by a national level organization such as the NCAA Initial Eligibility Center. It is problematic to create regulations for all NCAA Division I schools that will meet the needs of each institution. The University of Washington has developed a more holistic approach to admissions selection that does allow more factors than test scores and high school grades to be taken into consideration. It is important for each institution to develop a means of evaluating the student's ability to succeed at their university based on the culture and the resources available. It is also crucial that each institution carefully consider its obligation to the students it accepts and evaluate if there are the needed resources to support that student. The pressures to admit a high profile high school athlete can be considerable even when their academic performance is in question. Media will scrutinize the institution's decisions if the student is turned away and is successful in another program or if the student is admitted and does not thrive. These are not decision to be made lightly or without consideration of the whole student not just focusing on standardized test scores and high school grade points averages.

There is overlap between the preparedness gap of specially admitted football students and the academic obstacles they encounter in college. The main obstacles the specially admitted students reported are as follows: 1.) the demands of the athletic schedule, 2.) focus on goals to reach the NFL, 3.) lack of study skills upon entering college, 4.) lack of understanding college expectations and 5.) the football experience, including injuries, coaching changes and losses, having a

negative impact on the overall college experience. Some of these stated obstacles are institutionally imposed on the students and some are a matter of educating and training that can be easily provided by academic support services with the proper staffing and resources. Some of the issues that deal more with institutional athletic structure or team participation, such as sport schedule or injuries, have been accepted as part of the reality of being a college athlete.

It is important to take a closer look at what student athletes identify as impeding them academically and explore options to lessen the negative impacts of athletic participation on academic success. The participants discussed the following as helping persist to graduation: 1.) the belief in the importance of a college degree, 2.) not being quitters, 3.) not wanting to be a stereotype, 4.) not letting other people down, 5.) the importance of support systems outside of athletics and 6.) student athlete academic support programs.

It is interesting to note that the majority of what the football students attributed to their success was related to their personal belief system or character traits. These beliefs and character traits can be encouraged and strengthened with support. Recruiting individuals who already possess these characteristics is important. It can be difficult to tell what an individual truly believes during the recruiting process. Creating recruiting evaluation tools by measuring beliefs and character traits that are identified as leading to graduation persistence could assist coaches in assessing prospective students who may be more likely to thrive in that team and university culture. Even being able to articulate to the prospective students that specific personality traits are important for success at that institution could aid the individual to make a more informed decision on their college choice. The development of success profiles and self-evaluation tools for prospective

students based on the campus and sport culture could be a valuable learning experience for the university.

The study participants all felt they benefitted from specialized academic support services provided through the athletic department. Student athlete specific academic support programs have existed since the early 1970s. Having academic support, such as tutoring and advising, available to student athletes was mandated by the NCAA in the 1990s. Most Division I sport programs have an in-house academic support programs. The participants found the support offered by this department to be an important resource in their development as a student. They specifically mention the most common services such as advising, tutoring, and study table. Recommendation will be made to expand programming into other areas that could enhance the academic and overall college experience of specially admitted student athletes.

Programming Implications for Support Services

Based on the research findings of this study, additional programming has been created through Student Athlete Academic Services to help promote the academic success of student athletes at the University of Washington. The following programs are in different stages of development and implementation.

Summer Transition Programs

Specially admitted student athletes discussed they entered the university lacking in study skills and an understanding of expectation in college. Summer transition programs for incoming student athletes are becoming more popular and can have significant impact in increasing study skills and expectations before the regular first term begins.

Learn + Experience + Achieve Program (LEAP) was developed as a result of this research using Claude Steele's Stereotype Threat Theory and Wise Schooling Practices (1994) as a foundation and also included model practices in undergraduate education and learning theory. The subjects of the study did not get to participate in the LEAP program, but did participate in a less rigorous summer bridge program that was held in September after football camp yet before the autumn quarter began. NCAA rules changed in 2006 allowing for student athletes to attend courses the summer before admittance. LEAP was instituted the following year. The program focuses on understanding the expectation of being a successful student at the University of Washington by having the students live a rigorous academic experience over a four-week period prior to starting athletic camps. This allows for the first major experience the student has on campus to be academic rather than athletic related. There are two courses included in the program.

The core course is English 108. The curriculum focuses on college writing and critical thinking through a metacognition lens where the students are reflecting on themselves as learners, the process by which they learn and exploring resistance they may have to the process. The students create a writing portfolio consisting of four major papers and several smaller assignments practicing some of the different styles of writing they will encounter in English composition as well as other courses. Assignments include summaries, narratives, reflections, analysis, problem statements, annotated bibliography, and other research components. The program was developed in partnership with the English Department to assure it was preparing students for English composition and University of Washington writing standards. (See appendix A for LEAP syllabus, Appendix B for LEAP schedule, and Appendix C for LEAP summaries of course evaluations.) The instructors for this course are from the English Department. They all have previous experience teaching writing composition.

The second course, General Studies 105, is an introduction to university culture and resources. It is linked to English 108. The skills focused on are necessary for academic success, including note taking, writing, active reading, and time management. It allows student to build study and academic skills through modeling, practice and feedback as well creating and working in learning communities. The course utilizes academic skill building in smaller groups so students can get more individualized feedback while they practice skills in the context of the writing course material. The Student Athlete Academic Service staff teaches this course. This allows them to become familiar with the students, assess their classroom skills and habits and develop appropriate support systems for individuals before autumn term begins. There are also guest speakers from within the athletic department and across campus including an upper class student athlete panel, a sport psychologist, a nutritionist, social network specialists, representatives from the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity, and a faculty panel.

The program also has the students experiencing campus orientation and the city. The student athletes attend a two-day freshmen orientation with their non-athlete peers. Prior to this program many of the student athletes did not attend this orientation resulting in missing out on important information about being a successful student on campus. There is also a field trip component called Fridays on Foot. There are three trips that provide an opportunity for student athletes to explore the city using public transportation. Assignment are integrated into the excursions. Many student athletes have such busy schedules they are unaware of what some of the neighborhoods in the city have to offer and how easy it is to reach these areas by public transportation. These trips are informative and open the students to being better integrated into the city.

LEAP provides an excellent opportunity for students to receive six credits and get their feet on the ground before athletic camps and school officially beginning. There are

many benefits of the program outside of skill building. The students become familiar with campus, increase their confidence, make friends with other students, participate in athletic workouts, and transition to dorm life. The coaches enjoy the student athletes arriving on campus earlier. The academic staff is able to better assess student needs and interests that benefit in advising for class registration and creating academic support systems.

Continuum of Specialized Support

Summer transition programs contribute to a smoother transition from high school to college but more support is needed for specially admitted student athletes throughout the school year. There is a need for a continuation of increasing studentship skills and academic identity through freshmen seminar courses, general studies study skills/campus resources courses, applied skill workshops, one-on-one instruction with learning specialists and specialized tutoring is needed. These programs are in different stages of development. While this level of support may seem extreme to some, it is important to recognize this is a specialized student population (Lang, Dunham, Alpat; 1980, Petrie, 1993; Tracy & Sedlacek, 1987; Sedlacek & Gaston, 1992) and these student athletes are navigating a system that has not been designed for them (Sedlacek, 1992). The university has admitted these students fully aware of academic preparedness gaps between these students and the general student population. The institution has a duty to meet their academic needs. To exploit their athletic talent without addressing their academic needs would be unethical.

Individualized Instruction

One-on-one work with students is time consuming and costly but required to give specialized instruction and support. Due to a variety of reasons, some specially

admitted student-athletes have significant academic skill deficits. Through one-on-one work the support staff can better evaluate the academic needs of student and address those skills through direct instruction using a modeling with practice with feedback loop. There is sometimes a connection that is not being made or skill set that was not learned. Once issues are identified, learning strategies and skill instruction can be taught and applied to the student's current course work. The student is allowed to practice the strategy and skills with the support staff so they receive immediate feedback. The practice continues with the support staff allowing for more independence as the student works towards mastery. This type of intensive work is required for some freshmen with the goal of working towards independence as quickly as possible. The time that requires varies from student to student in some cases the student learns the skills quickly and for others the process might take a full academic year or longer.

The first step is developing a relationship with the student where they feel supported and creating an environment where it is safe for them to open up about their academic difficulties. Elite athletes are competitive and they are used to being one of the best at what they do. It can be difficult for them to admit they struggle with material or to show anything they may feel is a weakness. If the student does not feel he/she is receiving the support to be successful and learn in their new environment motivation will decrease and behavior issues ranging from shutting down to acting out could be seen. These students want to be academic successful and have a strong desire to graduate. They need to understand they are capable of doing the work and through academic successes they will increase their confidence levels.

Applied Study Skills Workshops and Reading Groups

To continue building study skills, we are exploring grouping students who are in the same course to create reading groups and learning communities. These groups are

a direct result of this study and are in the early stages of development. During the first term of 2011, the ESS 101 workshop focused on incorporating learning the content for an introductory geology course with study skills applied specifically to address the needs of the course including note taking for a class that provides power point slides in advance, using the course website, learning new vocabulary, preparing for a debate, preparing for a multiple choice exams, taking the exams and learning from the exam experience. The workshop provided study skill instruction applied to the course content with practice of the skills. Weekly short quizzes were created from old exam questions posted on the course website to help students become more comfortable with the testing format and understand the type of questions that would be asked on the exam. A geology tutor and a learning specialist developed the curriculum for this workshop. Ten students participated in weekly meetings. The students reported they felt they were well prepared for the exam as a result of workshop. All students passed the class with at least a 2.0 score on a 4.0 grading scale. There was no comparison of the grades of these students to other student athletes or other students. Evaluation of the workshop and the students' academic performance will be added for future workshops.

There were also reading groups organized. Students met regularly with a tutor present to read and discuss course material. Students find that they have better understanding of the text when reading it aloud and discussing the material with others. Students have reported finding other people in their classes in the dorms and forming their own groups after being exposed to reading groups. The specially admitted students build confidence in their comprehension and become more comfortable in the academic environment. As a result they are more likely to stay engaged in lecture and actively participate in class discussions. We hope to continue these workshops, add additional groups and provide space for students wanting to create their own groups.

Campus Integration

Research on the importance of campus integration and involvement, specifically for student athletes, focusing on academic outcomes is fairly new and in the beginning stages with exception of a few older studies. Specially admitted students may feel intimidated in academic environments leading them to avoid interaction with faculty and non-athlete peers. Fitting another activity into a student athlete's schedule can be difficult. Developing courses for credit would allow the time needed to devote to campus integration for student athletes. Currently there are two such courses being developed.

The first class is a two-credit, general studies freshmen seminar that will be a continuation of the summer transition program. This course will focus on academic identity, building studentship skills and campus engagement. Students will learn academic strategies and skills for college success and complete video interviews of other students they believe have strong skills. These videos will have students discussing strategies for time management, organization, studying for exams and other important skills. The video will be used in future summer bridge courses and orientations as tips on being successful at the University of Washington. There will also be panels of current and former student athletes who will come in to lead discussions on academic success and life after college.

Faculty members will be invited in to class to discuss articles relevant to the curriculum. In most cases the students will be reading research written by the faculty member who will visit class. These discussions will give the students the opportunity to engage in academic discourse and connect more deeply with the faculty members.

The class will also be participating in on campus field trips to engage in campus activities and resources. There will be trips to different areas on campus to connect with non-athletes who are studying like the Instructional Center and Center for Learning and Undergraduate Enrichment. There will also be social activities include such as open mic night at the Ethnic Cultural Center and other social activities on the campus calendar. It is designed to engage freshmen early in their academic career and make them aware of the activities and resources outside of the athletic department.

The second course in development will focus on research and engagement outside of athletics for sophomores. It is important that the faculty involved enjoys working diverse students and are committed to the project. It is also imperative that subject matter is able to engage all students and lends itself well to a service learning and/or research component.

The course in development is through the Sociology Department and is building from a new fairly course on investigating the criminal justice system. Students learn about issues of how the system works and fairness while engaging in participant observation in the court room and interviewing people involved. The students are learning about criminal justice and qualitative research methodology. Students will work in groups on research projects and will be encouraged to participate in the university's research symposium for undergraduate students. The goal is to engage students and build academic identities through success in a rigorous research course and by presenting their research in public. The professor is committed to extra office hour support for all students and additional tutoring support will also be available for student athletes.

Summer transition program, individualized instruction, applied study skill workshops, and courses developed to encourage faculty and non-athletic peer

integration together provide a strong continuum of support for the first two years of college. This would develop the needed academic skills, habits and understanding of expectations to fully take advantage of the college experience and opportunities available. Most of these services can be provided through the Athletic Department with key partnerships on campus to minimize the cost of resources by undergraduate programs.

Recommendations For Student Athlete Success

In addition to the programs outlined above, the following programming will be explored to assess the need, possible benefits and feasibility of implementation.

Family Partnerships

There are some simple steps that could be made to increase a sense of community for families of football players run by the academic staff that would be low to no cost to the institution or family. Social networking websites, like facebook, can be created for football students' families and academic support staff. Information can be posted regarding academic calendar, deadlines, and activities. An academic contact person could be appointed for families who can answer questions and put them in touch with needed resources. Families could also communicate with each other and academic staff on other issues including who will be attending games and making arrangements to connect with each other. This can also be an effective way for out of area families to connect with local families. There are limitations to interactions between academic staff and student athletes so at times having a local family connection to provide out of town families and their sons some comfort can be a great benefit. This might involve the student being able to eat a home cooked meal, spend a holiday with a family when a trip

home is not possible or even getting some extra help after a surgery when parents can not make the trip. These types of interactions may not be appropriate or allowed with academic or athletic staff. A facebook page, along with the ability to text, email or call can increase communication and build community where knowledge is shared between the parties to benefit the student.

In the past at the University of Washington, there were pre-game meals or snacks involving families and academic staff. It is recommended to reconstitute parent and academic staff activities prior to football games. The Athletic Department could also place academic staffs' football tickets in the parent section. These are both good ways for the families and staff to have time to connect and check in with each other. If these types of activities are not possible due to budget constraints or NCAA regulations limiting what the institution can provide to families, pre-game meeting times with academic staff could be arranged. A limitation to this type of programming is game related activities exclude connections to families who are not local and may not be able to travel to games.

Creating relationships between the academic staff and specially admitted football students' families will benefit the students. When there is an existing relationship is it more likely that there will be communication prior to a problem occurring and for the parties to work together to help prevent issues and solve problems that do arise.

Data Collection on Specially Admitted Students

Increasing data collection on special admits to include tracking and reporting of progress to degree, graduation rates, who leaves the university and primary reasons for leaving before graduation is needed to compare specially admitted students to the priority/regular admitted students. Currently the Graduation Success Rate and Academic Progress Rate are in place to evaluate the success of the institution in retaining and graduating the student athletes being admitted to the university. There is

no break down by admission status and it is often presumed the problems are attributed to the specially admitted student athletes. While that may be the case at some universities, it is not been shown since the NCAA does not require this type of data analysis and reporting. It would be difficult for the NCAA to make this type of reporting mandatory since each institution can define "special admit" differently and some institutions do not report having specially admitted student athletes. A comparison of specially admitted student athletes to priority/regularly admitted student athletes is needed to see if recruiting and admissions standards and policies are working properly. There can be assessment of where possible problems may be occurring so proper adjustments can be made to the support being provided or in recruiting philosophies. Each institution should be judged based on the success, or lack of success, of the students who are being admitted and policy decision should be made accordingly.

NCAA/NFL Educational Partnerships in High Schools

Since universities are not allowed to have much interaction with high schools due to NCAA recruiting regulations, it is important that the NCAA and the NFL work within the high school systems to educate students and coaches about college expectations. College academic preparedness programming for high school athletes that stress academic demands of college athletes could be very effective if started early enough. This could include education on academic requirements for initial eligibility, difference between high school and college, study skill instruction and SAT preparation as well as activities that stress leadership and character building.

The NFL has already identified the need for this type of outreach and programming resulting in the creation of the NFL Engagement Zone that focuses on education and resource for high school and college athletes who are working

towards the goal of playing in the NFL. It has a website with articles, videos and online forums dealing with academic excellence, life skills, financial literacy, leadership and social media. A program such as this could be expanded beyond online support to add opportunities for high school football students and coaches to interact with NFL player development personnel in person. In addition, developing free programs and coach training that high schools could adopt into their sports programming to support their student athletes could be very successful in reaching and educating the needed students. While these efforts will take time and money to develop, implement and coordinate they could have meaningful impact on academic achievement of student athletes in high school that continues into their college careers.

Student Athlete Schedules

The first and biggest issue the participants discussed interfering with academics was the athletic schedule. There are not many working within intercollegiate athletics that would not agree with this statement. Lack of time is a concern that repeatedly comes up for student athletes and the staff supporting them. The NCAA has put restrictions of the hours put into in competition season and out of season practices in place. There are other activities included that are considered ‘voluntary’ and do not count against that time block. There are unconfirmed estimate of student athletes devoting 40 or more hours to athletic related activities. That type of schedule on top of academic responsibilities would be difficult for any student. Student athletes who are specially admitted tend to have additional academic requirements. They may have more tutoring and more academic meetings to work on academic skill instruction causing even more strain on the already demanding schedule. On top of the long hours the academic time for

studying is usually in the evening after all other activities are over and the student has put in a long day. This is not the optimal time to learn new material.

This is not a new problem yet it is one that is not frequently discussed with the idea amelioration. It seems to be more accepted as something students need to work around. There are at least two different approaches to addressing this issue. Time for athletic related activities could be reduced. While a simple idea it does not seem very realistic. Teams across the country have found ways of manipulating the current regulations to allow for additional time. Student athletes also often feel the need to put in the extra hours to stay competitive and reach their athletic goals. The NCAA academic redshirt proposal will have students with low academic preparedness profiles who do not successfully pass their first term be required to sit out of team activities including practice to allow for more academic time. While the idea is well intentioned, it waits until the student is academically under-performing to provide extra support. It is also unknown how being removed from the team could further stigmatize and stereotype the student athlete. Preference would be to proactively provide support to avoid academic problems.

While not ideal, it seems logical to discuss the possibility of student athlete having reduced academic responsibilities during their season of competition. There could be credit for sport participation. This is difficult to work into university major requirements but yet is done at some universities. It would not be difficult to develop curriculum that could be added into team activities that would be worthy of college credit that could enhance the students' development as an athlete and a student. This would be a major shift in current practices. Yet if administration acknowledges this obstacle to academic success, it is worth discussing how to limit the negative impact on the student athlete.

Emotional Support for Injured Student Athletes

The subjects in the study all discussed injuries as taking an emotional toll that negatively impacted their academic success. Adding more formal or systematic sport psychology support for injured student athletes to make counseling more normalized could increase the number of student athletes receiving emotional support and developing coping strategies to manage the additional stress of an injury. This step could take away stigma of seeing sport psychologist or get students who are hesitant in the door by “requiring” intake after an injury that results in significant loss of playing time or surgery. After an initial meeting the possibility of having an injury support group could be an additional support tool.

Coaching Workshops

Football students report coaches and other staff engaging in behavior from ignoring the student to verbal interactions that are hurtful and emotionally damaging. Creating educational workshops for coaches and support staff covering supporting student athletes with injuries could have significant impact on lower the stress of these students during this difficult time. Workshops could possibly be developed through the peer advocate program with guidance of the sport psychologist.

Resilience Training

Resilience training, implemented by a sport psychologist, for student athletes that teaching coping strategies can have benefit applying to many contexts of life outside of athletics, including their relationships as well as achievement in academics or other activities. Students learn to detect inaccurate thoughts, to evaluate the accuracy of those thoughts, and to challenge negative beliefs by considering alternative interpretations. It would also teach a variety of strategies that can be used for solving

problems and coping with difficult situations and emotions. Students learn techniques for assertiveness, negotiation, decision-making, social problem solving, and relaxation.

Most of the programs above are outside the control of student athlete support services to create and implement. Exploring these areas of concern will take considerable cooperation throughout the athletic department and across campus departments. Discussions of these issues by key administration and staff could lead to create problem solving that could have significant positive impact on the student athlete experience.

Policy Implications

Non-cognitive Variables Consideration in Admissions and Initial Eligibility Decisions

Cognitive variables such as SAT and GPA should not be the sole factors used in predicting academic success in college. It may be difficult to assess and measure important non-cognitive variables such as character, work ethic, desire to obtain a college degree, and family support but efforts should be made to develop a more holistic tool that could help for assessing fit for the student athlete to the university based on the academic culture and support resources the institution has available.

When the problem is not correctly defined it is more difficult to develop solutions to address the true issues. Expanding this study to have an in depth investigations across NCAA Division I programs to identify causes of some student athletes having lower SAT scores and high school GPAs could shed valuable insight into defining needs of these students resulting in more effective policies and support programs. There seems to be an assumption that their academic ability and intellectual functioning may be impaired. So to avoid admitting students who do not

possess the ability to succeed in college initial eligibility standards are raised. If the main issues are more about dealing with non-cognitive issues such impact of poverty and more focus on sport than school at a high school level a different approach is needed to address the preparedness gap between specially admitted and regularly admitted students.

Downward Trends in High School Grades

Universities could implement admission policies that would clearly communicate to high school students that downward trends in their grades during the last two years of high school will impact admissions status and could lead to admissions being denied. It should be made clear that initial eligibility and admissions to the university are two different processes and both need to be cleared to attend college and participate in athletics. Just simply communicating the expectation could motivate high school student athletes to finish high school with full effort and not coast to graduation once signing their national letter of intent to accept their scholarship at a particular school. This could lead to better high school GPAs.

Future Research

Part of the goal of an exploratory study is to identify areas that would benefit from future research. The following areas would expand the understanding of the student athlete experience allowing for more informed policy and support programming decisions.

Division I study of factors contributing to lower SAT scores and high school GPAs

This study was limited to only one institution and a very small sample. It would be beneficial to create a study focused on Division I institutions to explore the major factors contributing to lower SAT scores and high school GPAs. A comparison between

sports, universities and conferences would be enlightening and could have substantial impact on NCAA initial eligibility policy.

Qualitative review of student athletes exhausting eligibility yet not persisting to graduation

Football students who exhaust their eligibility yet do not persist to graduation are an important group. This study was not able to receive access to a large enough sample to include them in the interviews. A study that would include their voices could shed light on identifying why some student athletes do not persist to graduation. It would be compelling to compare responses to obstacles faced and resources used to the specially admitted football students who graduated.

Expanding current study to include specially admitted football students with learning disabilities

None of the volunteers for this study had diagnosed learning disabilities. Specially admitted football students who have learning disabilities may report having different programming needs from specially admitted football students. They qualify for extra services and accommodations through campus programs such as Disability Resource for Students that could impact their experience.

Impact of injuries on student athletes' college experience

Currently it is difficult to locate any research on how injuries to intercollegiate athletes impact academic success and college experience. Injuries seem to be increasing in numbers and severity. It is important to understand more fully how athletic injuries impact the overall college experience and acknowledge the toll injuries take on the student athletes outside of their sports.

Afterthoughts

This inquiry began over twelve years ago as my experience working with specially admitted student athletes did not match what I was reading in popular media. Reports of cheating and other scandals seem to be much more the exception to the experience and not as common as these stories would lead readers to believe. There were often no comparisons of student athletes to other student groups so it was difficult to ascertain if these problems were proportional to their age groups or occurring at higher rates.

At the time there was not much research available from the perspective of the student athlete experience. The lives of specially admitted student athletes are extremely complex and it is very difficult to capture their experience in any research study. The demands of balance being a student and an athlete are tremendous and could overwhelm the most prepared students. In my experience specially admitted football students are often from low socio-economic backgrounds and are students of color. They enter knowing their background is different than the vast majority of the students on campus. They deal with stereotyping and stigma while trying to figure out how they fit into the campus environment. It often seems that the systems and schedules are designed to reinforce the message that athletics participation does come before academic pursuits. Their time and energies for schooling is limited yet they persist to graduation at impressive numbers.

Why some individual may question why these students are on campuses and if they are real students, I invite anyone to try to step into their shoes for one week to examine what is being asked of these students. Recognizing institutional demands in balancing being a student and athlete, I challenge each university to learn as much as possible about these students in order to support the specially admitted student athletes academic efforts to the best of institution's ability. To admit these students fully knowing

their academic preparedness is significantly below the general student population and not to provide specialized academic support is unprincipled. We must better understand the specially admitted student athlete experience in order to determine the issues. If we are not looking at the true roots of the problem it will be much more difficult to develop effective solutions.

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Appendix A: NCAA Initial Eligibility Timeline

Timeline of Initial Eligibility and Major Academic Reform NCAA – Division I⁵

- 1889 Harvard University President Charles W. Eliot proposed banning freshmen from intercollegiate athletic competition and restricting student-athletes to three years of eligibility.
- 1898 The Brown Conference (the Ivy League minus Yale University) suggested 12 rules dealing with eligibility, which included the fulfillment of entrance requirements prior to athletics participation. The rules were never agreed upon or made operational.
- 1903 Harvard banned freshmen from athletics competition.
- 1906 The National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) was formed. The Big 10 Conference prohibited both graduate students and freshman participation in varsity sports. Harvard, Yale, and Princeton universities applied the ban to only major varsity sports. Wesleyan and Williams Colleges barred freshmen if they were deficient in high-school Carnegie units.
- 1917 The NCAA recommended that eligibility standards not be lowered because of World War I. Several colleges and conferences ignored the suggestion and lowered standards.
- 1922 The NCAA unanimously adopted a 10-point resolution urging member institutions to accept the following: no varsity competition for freshmen; a three-year eligibility limit; no graduate-student participation; no transfer-student participation; and no payment to students for athletics participation. The Big 10 refused to participate against colleges that did not have freshmen-restriction rules.
- 1930 The University of Michigan's faculty representative to the NCAA called for binding national eligibility rules. At the time of the suggestion, individual institutions could decide whether or not to follow NCAA guidelines.
- 1931 The NCAA voted to make freshmen ineligible for its championships.
- 1944 The NCAA eased eligibility rules during World War II. Allowing freshmen and transfer students athletics eligibility.
- 1947 The NCAA implemented the "sanity code" banning all athletic scholarships in an attempt to control recruiting and financial aid abuse. It was repealed three years later. It also returned to pre-war eligibility rules, with an exception for military veterans.

⁵ Principal sources used for the timeline are Bowen, Levin, & Shulman, 2003; NCAA, 2010; New Game Plan, 1999; NCAA Division 1 Board of Directors Report, 2011; Ridpath, 2002; Shulman & Bowen, 2001; Waller, 2003.

- 1957 An American Council on Education report called for more stringent eligibility rules, including basing financial awards to athletes on academic achievement and economic need; limiting financial awards to tuition, fees, room, board, and books; prohibiting freshmen eligibility; admitting athletes based on the same academic standards as non-athletes; requiring athletes be enrolled in academic programs that lead to a degree, and making normal progress towards that degree; and athletics recruiting by athletics staff was prohibited.
- 1961 The Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) required a minimum 750 Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT, now known as the Scholastic Assessment Test) score requirement for athletics participation.
- 1965 The NCAA approved the "1.6 Rule," which used a complex formula weighing high school GPA, SAT score and class rank. It attempted to predict an incoming student-athletes ability to maintain a 1.6 GPA during his first year of college. If the student did not meet the rule he could not practice, compete or receive athletic aid. The NCAA provided predictor tables but it was up to the individual institutions to determine eligibility based on their own data.
- 1968 The NCAA passed legislation allowing freshmen to participate in all NCAA championship events except basketball and post-season football.
- 1970 The Missouri Valley, Southeastern, Southwest, and Ohio Valley conferences implemented SAT/ACT (American College Test) minimum standards for athletics eligibility.
- 1972 The NCAA reinstated freshmen eligibility in all sports.
- 1973 The NCAA replaced the "1.6 Rule" with an eligibility standard that requires high school student-athletes to have graduated with a 2.0 GPA in all courses taken. The rule was commended for its simplicity but criticized for relying on solely on the high school GPA, which varied greatly by school. There was also fear of GPA inflation or other abuses.
- 1983 The NCAA adopted Proposition 48, also known as Prop 48. The rule required incoming freshmen to have obtained either a 700 on the SAT or a 15 on the ACT, and a 2.0 high school GPA in 11 academic core subjects. The core curriculum was to consist of a minimum of three English courses, two mathematics courses, two social science courses, two courses in the natural or physical sciences, plus two others in foreign language, non-doctrinal religion, or other courses in the listed academic categories already mentioned. Continuing eligibility requirements of maintaining satisfactory progress towards a degree and to be in good academic

standing were also adopted.

- 1986 The NCAA implemented Proposition 48. The start of tracking & publishing of graduation rates began at this time.
- 1988 The first federal action to require Division I and II schools to disclose graduation rates began. The bill later became known as the "Student Athlete Right to Know Act".
- 1989 The NCAA adopted Proposition 42 and scheduled it to become effective in 1990. The rule eliminated partial qualifiers and required meeting Proposition 48 standards for eligibility for scholarship athletes during the freshman year.
- 1990 The NCAA overturned Proposition 42 and passed legislation that allowed Proposition 48 non-qualifiers to obtain institutional, though not athletics, financial aid during the freshman year.
- 1991 Reporting of graduation rates became federal law as part of the 1991 Campus Crime Act.
- 1992 The NCAA's Division I adopted Proposal 16, which became effective in 1995. The rule required an SAT score of 700 or an ACT score of 17 (equivalent to the old ACT score of 15 after scoring readjustments), and a GPA of at least 2.5 in a 13-course core curriculum. There was a sliding scale component between GPA and SAT scores.
- 1994 The NCAA undertook a review of Proposal 16 including a review of all available research on its impact, particularly on minorities. The NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse was created as a national center for determining initial eligibility for all NCAA Division I and II institutions removing the initial eligibility certification process out of the hands of member institutions themselves.
- 1995 The NCAA delayed the implementation on Proposal 16 for a year. However, the 2.0 GPA requirement in a 13-course core curriculum became effective immediately. The association also adopted Proposal 36, which was implemented in 1996. This rule established an initial-eligibility index for a partial qualifier based on a core-curriculum GPA of 2.75, and an SAT score of 600 or an ACT score of 15. It also permitted partial qualifiers to receive institutional financial aid, including athletically related financial aid.
- 1996 The NCAA implemented Proposal 16. Additionally, the association revised the standardized test scores on the re-centered version of the SAT, which was first administered in 1995. The minimum SAT score was 820, considered the equivalent of 700 on the prior version of the SAT. The NCAA removed the authority in determining a core-course from the individual colleges and

universities and gave it to high school principals.

- 1997 Four Philadelphia students sued NCAA over freshmen eligibility rules (*Cureton v. NCAA*) in the Eastern District Court of Pennsylvania stating that the NCAA freshman eligibility regulation created an unjustified disparate impact on African Americans violating Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- 1998 NCAA memo to Division I schools discussed NCAA research data about the effect of Proposition 16 on African Americans. The memo stated that African Americans and low-income student-athletes had been disproportionately impacted by Proposition 16 standards. According to the NCAA's own research 26.6 percent of African-American student-athletes who appeared on a Division I Institution Request List did not qualify under Prop 16 in 1996 and 21.4 percent in 1997 compared to 6.4 and 4.2 percent of white student-athletes respectively.
- 1999 The District Court judge ruled that NCAA must stop using its freshmen eligibility rules. Citing the NCAA's own reports and memos, the judge says that the rule has an "unjustified" impact on African Americans. The U.S. Third Circuit Court granted the NCAA request to stay the decision while there was a pending appeal. The court reversed the district court's decision and remanded the case to district court to enter summary judgment for the NCAA.
- 2000 Round three of the *Cureton v. NCAA* law suit, also in U.S. Third Circuit Court, was decided in favor of the NCAA on the grounds that the NCAA did not receive federal funding therefore was not required to comply with Title VI. The plaintiffs initiated round four of appeals but the appeal was denied.
- 2002 The NCAA was sued again in *Pryor v. NCAA* on the grounds of discrimination on the basis of race. Again the NCAA won the case but did revise Proposition 16's sliding scale to allow for lower SAT scores with higher GPA scores. Division I increased its minimum progress-toward-degree requirements and raised minimum GPA requirements and increased the number of minimum core-courses required for initial eligibility from thirteen to fourteen.
- 2003 Division I approved an increase in the core-course requirement from fourteen to sixteen, effective in 2008.
- 2004 Division I adopted a comprehensive academic-reform package, which established the Academic Progress Rate (APR) to measure academic performance for all sports teams on a term-by-term basis; created penalties for teams that do not meet APR benchmarks; and established the Graduation Success Rate, which measures graduation rates and included students transferring into the institutions. The GSR also allows institutions to subtract

student-athletes who left their institutions prior to graduation as long as they would have been academically eligible to compete had they remained.

- 2006 Division I adopted the “improvement-plus” model that allowed teams below a 900 APR to gain relief from the initial phase of the historically based penalties by first demonstrating consistent and significant APR improvement, then meeting at least at least one institutional-characteristic component including a comparison between the team and the general student body graduation rates and a resource component.
- 2008 The Board of Directors approved a policy that allowed transfer student-athletes that achieved a 2.6 grade-point average or higher, immediate transfer to another four-year institution and earned the eligibility point as a “1-for-1” in the APR formula.
- 2008 Division I approved the creation of a head coach APR portfolio, which collected and compiled the single-year APR for head coaches and was publicly available. Data for head coaches in baseball, men’s and women’s basketball, football and women’s indoor and outdoor track became available in 2010, with other sports to follow.
- 2011 On October 27th, 2011, at the NCAA Division I Board of Directors’ Meeting, the board unanimously approved sweeping and surprising changes regarding what was categorized as student-athlete and team academic success and student-athlete well being. This included six initiatives: 1.) increase initial-eligibility standards, 2.) changes for two-year college transfers student-athletes, 3.) adjustments to core course requirements, 4.) increases to Academic Progress Rate for postseason competition, 5.) allowance for a \$2000 annual stipend for full scholarship student-athletes to address the gap between scholarships and the cost of attendance and 6.) the allowance for multi-year grants as opposed to annual renewal for scholarships.

Initial-Eligibility Standards: Student-athletes who received the minimum initial-eligibility standards (SAT/GPA sliding scale with at least a minimum 2.0 in core courses) would continue to be eligible for athletically related financial aid and practice during their first regular academic term of enrollment but to be able to practice their second term they would need to pass nine semester or eight quarter hours. The standards for immediate access to competition were raised to at least a 2.3 GPA with an increased sliding scale. Incoming student-athletes would need to earn a half-point higher GPA for a given test score compared to the current standard for aid and practice.

Core Course Requirements: Prospects to successfully complete ten of the sixteen total required core courses before the start of

their senior year in high school. Seven of the ten courses must be successfully completed in English, math and science. This legislation will affect student-athletes enrolling in college in August 2015 and later.

Two-year college transfer students: Two-year college transfers student-athletes GPA was increased from 2.0 to 2.5, limiting the number of physical education courses to two, and two-year college transfers not qualifying out of the high school would be required to take a core curriculum. This is to take effect for student-athletes enrolling full-time in college for the first time August 2012 or later.

Cost of Attendance: Student-athletes who receive full athletics scholarships, or get other school financial aid, would have the opportunity to receive additional athletics aid or other institutional aid, including use of the Student-Athlete Opportunity Fund up to the full cost of attendance or \$2,000, whichever is less. The new rule makes the additional aid available to student-athletes in head-count sports (for example football and basketball) and those in equivalency sports who reach the value of a full scholarship. This is allowable but it is the decision of the institution to decide if they will implement the policy. It was to start with the incoming 2012-2013 student-athletes and continuing student-athletes will be included if the university offers the stipend. This is currently under NCAA review after 160 institutions voted to override the proposal.

Multiyear Grants: Beginning in the 2012-2013 academic year institutions may voluntarily, but are not required, to grant multi-year grants up to the full term of eligibility. One-year grants will remain the minimum. A prescribed minimum award value should apply to all scholarships. The percentage amounts are to be decided in the coming months, and institutions could increase the allotted aid during the period of the award.

Appendix B: LEAP Syllabus

ENGL 108: WRITING READY

GETTING A START ON WRITING & CRITICAL THINKING IN COLLEGE | SUMMER LEAP 2010

Instructors & Office Hours: (in Conibear Lounge)	SECTION H XXX T, Th 1-3 PM XXX M, W 1-3 PM	SECTION I XXX M-Th 1-2 PM XXX M-Th 1-2 PM
Class Location:	MGH 287	MGH 238
Class Times:	M-TH 9:30-12:00PM; F 9:00-3:00PM / Structured Study M-TH 1:30-3:00PM	
Course website:	http://depts.washington.edu/uwleap	
Message board:	https://catalysttools.washington.edu/gopost/board/changed/17638/	

Course Materials

- Summer LEAP Course Reader (available from Ave Copy @ 4141 Univ. Way NE and 42nd)
- A 80-page composition notebook, which will be your Process Journal
- An active email address and web access
- A folder to hold and organize all of your assignments, which will be turned in as part of your Final Portfolio; a stapler, pencils, pens, paper, and other useful school supplies
- Access to a college-level dictionary (not a pocket dictionary), such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*, which can be accessed via the UW library webpage:
<http://www.lib.washington.edu/research/dic.html>

Course Overview

In this course, you will learn to become critically conscious of your specific relationship to and encounters with writing and reading—you will be metacognitive about your own academic strengths and difficulties. In other words, through thinking about and reflecting on the writing, reading, and analytical skills you bring to this class, you will learn to assess who you are as a writer, and you will develop your skills to engage with and to perform more effectively in the many courses that will require writing at the University.

This course is divided into four major sequences. The first of the four sequences focuses on the concept of literacy and the nature of learning. You will explore these subjects critically and theoretically by reading essays and narratives about the process of learning to read and write. You will also write your own literacy narrative in which you reflect on your own experiences with reading and writing. Furthermore, we will push the definition of literacy beyond just a knowledge of letters to include multiple literacies and multiple ways of knowing and showing.

The second and third sequences examine the challenges and strategies of active learning and academic inquiry. We will explore the concept of difficulty in reading and learning, conventions of ‘academic discourse’, reasons why students resist facing challenges, and ways for working through difficult learning tasks. At the same time, we will further develop writing habits, reading lenses, and learning practices, including close reading and responding to difficult texts, analyzing texts, working in peer groups, conducting research, and using campus resources.

Finally, the fourth sequence asks you to look back at the quarter and reconsider your literacy narrative in terms of the ways your writing, reading, and learning have changed. You will be asked to put together a portfolio of all of your work and to submit a culminating prospective essay in which you will track your progress as a writer, reader, and scholar. The prospective essay will serve both as a cover letter to your portfolio and as a survey of how you now view yourself as a writer, the challenges you will face in future classes, how you expect to meet these challenges, and how you will further develop your new set of skills, strategies, and theories.

ENGL 108 promises a fast-paced, compressed quarter of writing, reading, discussion, research, asking questions, critical thinking, analysis, fun, revision. We will engage texts small and large, everyday and theoretical. To this end, on Fridays, we will head out into the city, into the “field” to do some exploration, observation, and interaction. The “Fridays on Foot” are designed to first, encourage you to become more aware of the campus, the city, and the communities at large, and second, to think about the connections between what we do in class to what you do out of class, between learning and lived experience. By the end of the quarter, the hope of this course is that you realize that learning and knowledge and experience are more than just rubrics, rote, numbers, syllabuses, tests, grades, and graduation requirements—that learning and knowledge are fundamentally interconnected, intertextual, personal, political, cultural, and mutually enhancing.

ENGL 108 Learning Goals or Outcomes

1. This course wants you to leave this class more confident of yourselves as writers and more comfortable about the writing skills you will bring to future college writing assignments. To this end you will:

- Write frequently in different contexts and for different audiences and purposes.
- Learn through practice why college-level writing is most successful when it follows a process of inquiry, drafting, and revision.
- Learn strategies for active reading of college-level material, and come to understand how strong writing skills often depend upon strong active-reading skills.

2. This course wants you to leave this class having learned about and experienced specific campus and classroom-based writing resources. To this end you will:

- Learn to make active and effective use of campus writing centers and tutors.

- Become familiar with general writing resources like dictionaries and handbooks, both on-line and hard copy.
- Become familiar with library-based research resources, both physical and electronic.
- Explore how general campus student resources can support you as a learner.

3. This course wants you to leave this class having been introduced both to a series of key learning issues and to how understanding such issues can make them not just better and more successful writers, but better and more successful students as well.

To this end you will:

- Become familiar with such writing-connected learning issues as ‘resistance’, ‘difficulty’, ‘authenticity’, and ‘transfer’.
- Learn to recognize the writing strengths you bring to college level work, and learn how to use them effectively.
- Become better aware of your writing difficulties and learn how to manage them.
- Explore how your varied life skills and experiences have prepared you for effective reading and writing at the university.

4. This course wants you to leave this class having learned strategies for writing well by becoming effective members of a university-level learning community. To this end you will:

- Develop strategies for peer collaboration, review, and response.
- Engage in classroom discussions in a spirit of inquiry, respect, and openness.
- Learn to make use of instructor office hours and student-teacher conferences.
- Learn how to practice better self-advocacy.

Grading

ENGL 108 is graded. You will earn between a 0.0 to 4.0 on your university transcript. However, if this course is a condition of admissions, you must get a 2.0 or higher to be considered successful. We expect you to work hard and to achieve the highest grade possible as a way of preparing yourself for the academic year to come. Your grade is made up of two parts: your writing portfolio and class participation.

Grading Breakdown

Literacy Narrative	10%
Close Reading	10%
Read-search Project	10%
Prospective Cover Letter	10%
Participation	20%
Final Portfolio	40%

(which includes: Prospective Cover Letter and everything you’ve written in class and out of class including revisions, presentations, Fridays on Foot projects, all neatly organized)

Major Papers (40%) & Final Portfolio (40%)

In this course, you will complete four assignment sequences. For each of these sequences, you will complete in-class exercises and writings, readings, several short, building-block assignments, and peer review and group work—all to prepare for the longer major papers: the Literacy Narrative, the Close Reading, the Read-Search Project, and the Prospective Cover Letter. Each sequence and each sequence's major paper are worth 10%. All of the preparatory work leading up to each major paper must be completed to receive full credit for the sequence.

At the end of the course, you will be asked to compile and submit a Final Portfolio of all your work, including all short in-class and out-of-class papers as well as the four major papers for each sequence. You will include everything you have written during the course in this final portfolio. If any assignment is missing, you will not get credit for having done it and this will impact your portfolio grade. The Final Portfolio is worth 40% of your grade.

Preparedness and Participation (20%)

Preparedness and participation forms a large component of your final grade. Reading and commenting on the work of your peers, discussing ideas, and engaging with the classroom community are all important parts of this course. You can see why it is essential that you attend class and participate. For example, class discussion, group activities, oral presentations, and peer-review sessions cannot be made up. Missing class may seriously compromise your ability to do well in this class. Negative participation will hurt your participation grade.

Participation is determined by 1) your respectful, on-time presence in class, 2) your willingness to discuss, comment, and ask questions, 3) your preparation for class, which includes bringing required materials to class and doing all of the assigned reading for class, 4) your engagement in group work and peer workshops, 5) your daily use of the class blog, 6) and your interactions with me and other students, 7) your Process Journal, 8) readings quizzes and in-class exercises, and 9) conferences with your instructor. Finally, failure to turn in homework, incomplete assignments, or late papers will negatively impact your participation grade.

Attendance & Lateness

If you miss a class, you miss the explanation of an assignment, the clarification of a persuasive strategy, an in-class exercise, the chance to have your draft critiqued, an opportunity to help someone else improve, and overall the class as a learning community. Because the course is only four short weeks, each class will cover a significant amount of material. Also, you are expected to be in class on time. Class will start immediately at the appointed time. If you come in after the start of class, even by only a few minutes, you are late and you will be marked as such. Chronic or conspicuous attendance problems will negatively affect your class participation grade. If you know you are going to miss class, please let your instructor know ahead of time (via email), provide any pertinent documentation, and we will make any necessary arrangements. And when you

do miss class, always find another student to get class notes and see your instructor in order to make up missed work in a timely manner.

Classroom Climate & Respect

Although this class will be a site of collaboration, discussion, and debate, we must all keep in mind that everyone has a different perspective, different ideas, and not everyone will always agree. Your instructors do not expect you to agree with them all of the time. Nor should you feel that you must agree with all of your classmates. You are required, however, to listen, to try to see different points of view, and to respect your instructors and classmates. Please address and respond to instructors and peers politely and respectfully. During a debate, during disagreement, during interesting and charged conversations, remember to be cool, open, courteous, reasonable, and specific in your reactions and responses. Remember that it is difficult to know the backgrounds, experiences, beliefs, moods, or feelings of your peers. Be sensitive, generous, and responsible.

Guidelines for Good Class Discussion

1. Listen carefully
2. Think carefully
3. Try not to interrupt
4. Make sure what you say is relevant, on topic
5. Speak up even if you aren't sure you are right
6. Speak up even if it is scary
7. Write down your thoughts as they come to you
8. Ask follow-up questions
9. Connect your ideas to the readings or earlier discussions
10. Do not dominate the conversation—make sure everyone gets heard

Late Assignments

All assignments must be done completely and turned in on time. For graded assignments, **for every day that the paper is late, your final grade will be penalized by 1.0**—a whole letter grade. Note that late work will receive no comments from instructors. For other assignments, late papers will affect your overall participation grade. Moreover, you still need to complete late work and include it in your portfolio, as your portfolio must be complete in order for you to pass the course. If you miss class on the due date of a paper, you must notify your instructor and make arrangements to get the paper to me as soon as possible. **Unless previously arranged, do not send assignments via email.** Furthermore, all work must be seen and checked off by your instructor to be eligible for your portfolio! Remember that a paper has not been officially handed in until it is in my hands. Never turning anything in late is always the best policy.

Assignment Format

All formal papers must be typed or produced on a word processor. Word processing is preferable because it makes the mechanics of revision—rearranging, adding, and deleting—easy. All papers should be submitted with the following manuscript guidelines:

- 1) 1" margins top, bottom, left, and right on each page;
- 2) Double-spaced, single-sided, using a standard font (preferably Times Roman), using a font size no larger than 12 pt;
- 3) Number all pages except for the first page in the top right-hand corner; title page does not count;
- 4) Stapled once at the top left corner (do not use fancy report covers or binding gadgetry);
- 5) At the top of the first page, include your name, your course section, my name, date, and title;
- 6) Correct MLA citations and bibliography (see usage manual for guidelines); papers with fundamental citation problems will not receive credit;
- 7) Include any exercises or additional material required by the assignment.

Paper should be spell-checked and proof-read. Papers that do not follow these format guidelines will not be accepted. They will be returned unread to you. Papers will be regarded as late until they are resubmitted in the proper format.

Resources & Getting Help

Instructor office hours are listed at the front of the course policies. We are available during those times and by appointment to help you. We encourage you to come see us early and often even if it is just to talk about the class, about the assignments, or about school in general. Instructors are also available electronically by email and the course message board. We will do our best to answer your emails and blog posts, usually within twenty-four hours. If you want to contact one of us privately, send the message to the individual instructor. In general, email is the best way to contact us. In addition, remember that emails (and blog posts) to instructors and professors are professional documents and require professional and respectful language.

Please also use the course email reflector list (which goes to everyone) and class message board to solicit help from your peers and tutors. Further resources, both on- and off-campus can be found on the Links page of the course website:
<<http://depts.washington.edu/uwleap/links.html>>.

Conferences

Stay in touch with instructors, tutors, and staff. In addition to time with tutors, you will be asked to have at least two one-on-one conferences (one with each instructor). These

conferences are intended to provide more focused feedback on your writing, reading, and process than can be given during regular class times.

Tutors and Support Services

We have six tutors dedicated specifically to working with this class. You are required to visit them regularly for further guidance on your work at any point during the course. Keep in mind that all of these tutors are here to help you with the process of critical thinking, reading, writing, which means they will help you figure out how to work through the challenges you face—they will not “fix-it” for you.

Writer’s Handbook & Grammar Help

The UW English Department also provides a grammar help and writing help website called Ask Betty: <<http://depts.washington.edu/engl/askbetty/>>, which includes an online workshop on reading instructor margin comments, help for ESL students, frequently asked questions about grammar, and other online resources. Furthermore, make good use of a writer’s handbook, like *The Everyday Writer* by Andrea A. Lunsford, and its companion website: <http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/everyday_writer/>.

Academic Dishonesty or Plagiarism, the Quickest Way Out of the NCAA

Plagiarism, or academic dishonesty, is presenting someone else’s ideas or writing as your own. In your writing for this class, you are encouraged to refer to other people’s thoughts and writing — as long as you cite them. Many students do not have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism, so feel free to ask questions about these matters at any time. Plagiarism includes:

- a student failing to cite sources of ideas
- a student failing to cite sources of paraphrased material
- a student failing to site sources of specific language and/or passages
- a student submitting someone else’s work as his or her own
- a student submitting his or her own work produced for another class

If you have any doubt about how to cite or acknowledge another’s writing or how to put things into your own words, please talk to your instructors. It is always better to be safe than sorry. Academic Dishonesty constitutes grounds for failure of the assignment in question, possible failure of the course, suspension from play, or even suspension from the University. As a matter of policy, any student found to have plagiarized any piece of writing in this class will be reported to the College of Arts and Sciences for review. For further information, please refer to UW’s Student Conduct Code at <<http://www.washington.edu/students/handbook/conduct.html>>.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have (or think you have) a learning disability that requires accommodations, please contact Pam Robenolt in Learning Services so we can begin to make proper arrangements. Even if you are not sure that your disability will influence your performance in this class, it may be good for me to know in advance so we can troubleshoot challenges that may arise.

UW SafeCampus

Preventing violence is everyone's responsibility. If you're concerned, tell someone. Here are some other SafeCampus tips:

- Always call 911 if you or others may be in danger.
- Call 206-685-SAFE (7233) to report non-urgent threats of violence and for referrals to UW counseling and/or safety resources. TTY or VP callers, please call through your preferred relay service.
- Don't walk alone. Campus safety guards can walk with you on campus after dark. Call Husky NightWalk 206-685-WALK (9255).
- Stay connected in an emergency with UW Alert. Register your mobile number to receive instant notification of campus emergencies via text and voice messaging. Sign up online at <<http://www.washington.edu/alert>>

For more information visit the SafeCampus website at <<http://www.washington.edu/safecampus>>.

Course Concerns

If you are experiencing a problem with the course, please see your instructors as soon as possible—we are very open to feedback and responsive to student concerns. However, if you do not feel comfortable speaking with either of your instructors, please contact Pam Robenolt in Learning Services.

Appendix B: LEAP Schedule

ENGL 108 H & I / Summer LEAP 2010 / University of Washington

WEEK 1	SEQUENCE ONE "LITERACY" - DISCUSSION/IN-CLASS	To Do/DUE
MON 7/12	<p>Welcome and Introduction to Course Introductions & Student Survey Course Policies, Overview, Syllabus Classroom Policies, Participation, Study Skills Plagiarism</p> <p>How to Become an Active Reader Strengths & Difficulty Inventory I Process Journals, Vocabulary List</p> <p>What is Literacy? 1.1 Literacy Narrative Brainstorming Conferences</p>	<p>Do: Find a place to keep all your materials together and organized. Remember, to participate in class you must have all books, handouts, process journals, etc.</p> <p>Do: Go to course message board, set-up profile, read required threads, reply to welcome</p> <p>Do: Read and annotate Course Policies & Syllabus. Do: Read and annotate Douglass & Alexie</p> <p>Do: Literacy Narrative Brainstorming Exercise (2 full pages, bring in _____ copies)</p> <p>Ahead: Read King and Tan</p>
TUE 7/13	<p>Discuss Douglass & Alexie</p> <p>Sequence One Major Paper #1: Literacy Narrative Reading an Assignment Sheet</p> <p>Summarizing a Text 1.2 Summary Of King Organization & Paragraphing 1.3 One Main Point Paragraph Revision</p> <p>Workshop: Literacy Narrative, A Beginning Workshop/Peer Review 101</p> <p>Process Journals</p>	<p>Due: 1.1 Literacy Narrative Brainstorming Exercise</p> <p>Do: Read King and annotate.</p> <p>Do: One Main Point Paragraph Revision (Must be longer than 1/2 a page)</p> <p>Do: King Summary (1-2 full pages)</p> <p>Don't Forget: Conferences with Instructors</p> <p>Ahead: Peruse <i>You Are Never Where You Are, A Collection of Poetry</i></p>
WED 7/14	<p>Discuss King.</p> <p>Audience & Tone, Introductions</p> <p>Critical Thinking & Analysis Summary vs. Analysis, Reading for Writing</p> <p>Process Journals, Generating Critical</p>	<p>Due: 1.2 Summary of King Due: 1.3 One Main Point</p> <p>Do: Read and annotate Tan</p> <p>Do: Draft of you Literacy Narrative (3 full pages, bring _____ copies)</p>

	<p>Questions</p> <p>Workshop: One Main Point & Paragraphing</p>	
THUR 7/15	<p>Discuss TSIS Worksheets, Discuss Tan.</p> <p>Evidence and Support, Using Evidence Introduction to Quoting, Intertextuality Organization & Paragraphing (cont.)</p> <p>Conventions of Academic Papers</p> <p>Workshop: Literacy Narrative Final Draft</p> <p>Process Journals, Introduction to Sequence Two</p>	<p>Due: Literacy Narrative Draft</p> <p>Do: Literacy Narrative Final Draft, turn-in at 9:00 AM next Monday, typed, stapled</p> <p>Do: Read Thurber's "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty." Read Hughes' "Theme for English B."</p> <p>Ahead: Quiz Likely on the readings.</p> <p>Extra Credit: After reading <i>You are Never Where You Are</i>, select one poem and write a 2 page response. Extra Credit Responses are due Monday morning on paper, at the start of class.</p>
FRI 7/16	<p>Fridays on Foot: Downtown Seattle</p>	<p>Do: Fridays on Foot Worksheet</p>
WEEK 2	SEQUENCE TWO "CLOSE READING" - DISCUSSION/IN-CLASS	To Do/DUE
MON 7/19	<p>Process Journals, Portfolio Maintenance Literacy Narrative Self-Reflection Strengths & Difficulty Inventory II</p> <p>Video Day: Close Reading Commercials</p> <p>Discuss Hughes. Discuss Thurber.</p> <p>What is Close Reading? Strategies for Close Reading Working with Difficult Texts Rhetorical Features Workshop: Close Reading of Thurber</p> <p>Summarizing, Paraphrasing, Quoting The Quotation Sandwich</p> <p>Sequence Two Major Paper #2: Close Reading Selecting a Passage</p>	<p>Due: Literacy Narrative Final Draft Due: Fridays on Foot Due: Extra Credit <i>You are Never Where You Are</i> Response Paper</p> <p>Do: Read Freire closely and annotate carefully.</p> <p>Do: Selecting a Passage</p> <p>Do: TSIS Worksheet on Quoting</p> <p>Ahead: For extra credit, read (in the packet) about the International District. Read Dubrow's "Introduction" and "Hashidate-yu." Read "Struggles in Our Democracy: The Japanese American Experience."</p>

TUE 7/20	<p>Process Journals, Responding to Comments, Grammar</p> <p>Discuss & Close Reading of Freire Breaking Down Difficult Texts</p> <p>Claims, Thesis vs. Claim Introductions (cont.)</p> <p>Workshop: Selecting a Passage</p>	<p>Due: Selecting a Passage for Close Reading, turned in after the workshop. Make sure the sheet has been signed off. Due: TSIS Worksheet on Quoting</p> <p>Do: Close Reading Proposal Worksheet</p> <p>Do: TSIS Worksheet on Metacommentary</p>
WED 7/21	<p>Discuss Freire (cont.) Freire Debate Exercise</p> <p>Thesis vs. Claim (cont.) Conclusions</p> <p>Workshop: Close Reading Proposal Close Reading Proposal Worksheet</p> <p>Process Journals</p>	<p>Due: Close Reading Proposal Worksheet, turned in after the workshop. Make sure the sheet has been signed off. Due: TSIS Worksheet on Metacommentary</p> <p>Do: Close Reading Draft (3 pages, bring _____ copies)</p>
THUR 7/22	<p>What is Argument? Opinion vs. Argument</p> <p>Workshop: Claims and Argument</p> <p>Critical Questions (cont.) Close Reading as Generative of Ideas</p> <p>Workshop: Close Reading Draft</p> <p>Introduction to Sequence Three</p> <p>Process Journals</p>	<p>Due: Close Reading Draft</p> <p>Do: Sequence Two Major Paper Close Reading</p> <p>Do: Begin thinking about possible topics for Read-Search Project</p> <p>Extra Credit: After reading the essays on the International district, answer reading questions. Reading questions due Monday morning on paper, at the start of class.</p>
THUR 7/23	<p>Fridays on Foot: International District</p>	<p>Do: Fridays on Foot Worksheet</p>

WEEK 3	SEQUENCE THREE "READ-SEARCH" - DISCUSSION/IN-CLASS	To Do/DUE
MON 7/26	<p>Process Journals, Portfolio Maintenance Close Reading Self-Reflection Strengths & Difficulty Inventory III</p> <p>What is Research? What is a "Good" Source? Primary and Secondary Sources Bibliographic Format</p> <p>Sequence Three Major Paper #3: Read-Search Project</p> <p>Generating Topics/Research Questions 3.1 Research Question & Narrative Read-Search Project Brainstorming Workshop</p>	<p>Due: Close Reading Major Paper Due: Fridays on Foot Due: Extra Credit ID Reading Questions</p> <p>Do: TSIS Worksheets</p> <p>Do: Review the readings from Weeks 1 & 2.</p> <p>Do: 3.1 Research Question & Narrative (2 pages, bring _____ copies)</p> <p>Ahead: Peruse more of <i>You Are Never Where You Are, A Collection of Poetry</i></p>
TUE 7/27	<p>Library Day and Research Orientation Research & Library Scavenger Hunt Finding Sources Researching Your Critical Question Evaluating Sources Online Sources</p> <p>Workshop: Research Narrative</p> <p>Research Proposal Workshop: Sample Research Proposal 3.2 Research Proposal</p>	<p>Due: 3.1 Research Question & Narrative, which will be turned in with Read-Search Project Brainstorming Sheet</p> <p>Due: TSIS Worksheets.</p> <p>Do: 3.2 Research Proposal Draft, the second section of your Read-Search Project (2 pages, bring _____ copies)</p> <p>Do: Begin to finalize the Research Narrative section of your Read-Search Project</p> <p>Ahead: Do a little preliminary research on your Read-Search topic. Take some basic notes on your research process in your Process Journal.</p>
WED 7/28	<p>Using Evidence, Using Quotes Quoting, Paraphrasing Summarizing (cont.)</p> <p>Workshop: Read-Search Project Proposal 3.2 Research Proposal</p> <p>What is an Annotated Bibliography? 3.3 Annotated Works Cited</p>	<p>Do: Locate four authoritative, useful, and relevant sources for your Read-Search Project. Read and take notes on your three sources, pulling out main points and useful quotes.</p> <p>Do: 3.3 Annotated Works Cited, the third section of your Read-Search Project</p> <p>Do: Read-Search Project Draft (6 pages, bring _____ copies)</p>

<p>THUR 7/29</p>	<p>Read-Search Micro-Presentations</p> <p>Workshop: Read-Search Project Putting All the Pieces Together Literacy Narrative Annotated Bibliography Research Proposal</p> <p>Process Journals, Introduction to Sequence Four Introduction to the Prospective Cover Letter Introduction to the Final Portfolio Looking Ahead to the Next Four Years</p>	<p>Due: Read-Search Project Draft</p> <p>Do: Sequence Three Major Paper Read-Search Project Do: Read Bartholomae. Read Graff.</p> <p>Do: Prospective Brainstorming</p> <p>Do: Organize your portfolio. Bring your portfolio to class.</p> <p>Extra Credit: After reading <i>You are Never Where You Are</i>, select another poem and write a 2 page response. Extra Credit Responses are due Monday morning on paper, at the start of class.</p>
<p>FRI 7/30</p>	<p>Fridays on Foot: Capitol Hill</p>	<p>Do: Fridays on Foot Worksheet</p>

WEEK 4	SEQUENCE FOUR "PROSPECTIVE" - DISCUSSION/IN-CLASS	To Do/DUE
<p>MON 8/2</p>	<p>Process Journals, Portfolio Maintenance Read-Search Project Self-Reflection Strengths & Difficulty Inventory IIV</p> <p>Sequence Four Major Paper: Prospective Cover Letter & The Final Portfolio</p> <p>Course Outcomes</p> <p>Introduction to 100-Level Composition Courses University Myths, Composition Myths</p> <p>Discuss Bartholomae. Discuss Graff.</p> <p>Workshop: Course Reflection & Course Outcomes Self-Reflection</p> <p>Workshop: Prospective Cover Letter Brainstorming Prospective Cover Letter Draft</p>	<p>Due: Read-Search Project Due: Fridays on Foot Due: Extra Credit <i>You are Never Where You Are</i> Response Paper</p> <p>Do: Cover Letter Draft (2 pages, bring _____ copies)</p> <p>Do: TSIS Worksheet</p> <p>Ahead: Look through your Process Journal and track your progress, your strengths and challenges, and your ideas.</p>

<p>TUE 8/3</p>	<p>Discuss Graff. Discuss TSIS. Revision Strategies, Grammar Review Using a Writing Handbook Process Journals, Incorporating Process Journals Letter to Self Workshop: Prospective Cover Letter Draft</p>	<p>Due: Cover Letter Draft Due: TSIS Worksheet Do: Revised Prospective Cover Letter Draft Do: Organize your Final Portfolio</p>
<p>WED 8/4</p>	<p>Last Day of Class Workshop: Final Portfolio & Cover Letter Process Journals Course Evaluations</p>	<p>Due: Bring your Cover Letter, your Final Portfolio, and any final questions you have about your papers, revision, or the portfolio itself. Do: Put the finishing touches on your Final Portfolio, which includes ALL work from the quarter, Cover Letter, and Revised Paper Final Portfolio Turn-In: 5 PM @ Conibear</p>
<p>THUR 8/5</p>	<p>UW ORIENTATION</p>	
<p>FRI 8/6</p>	<p>UW ORIENTATION</p>	

Appendix C: Sample Summary Course Evaluations

Course Evaluation – Section H

1. What, if any, writing skills and strategies did you learn or develop in this course?

How to write MLA Format (2)
 How to revise papers (4)
 How to do an annotated bibliography (2)
 Develop a claim (4)
 Word choice
 Analyzing (3)
 Narrative
 How to use feedback
 Organization (2)
 Repetition
 Literacy devices
 Close Readings (annotate) (6)
 How to follow instructions
 How to follow the prompt
 Expand on commentary (2)
 How to cite sources
 Overall better writing
 A lot of skills

2. How has your perception of your strengths (fluencies) and weaknesses (difficulties) as a writer been changed or reinforced.

I now have more strengths than weaknesses (4)
 Many weaknesses have turned to strengths
 I know what I need to work on (2)
 I still have some weaknesses
 I have gotten better at transitions
 Very good
 It changed
 I'm more comfortable
 It's good to know your strengths and weaknesses
 You will always have weaknesses
 I had weaknesses because I have never tried them
 I try and get more help if I need it

3. Has your attitude toward the activity of writing been affected in any way in this course, or has it not? If so, how has it been affected?

My attitude is better because my writing is better (2)
 Writing is easier for me (2)
 I take a lot more time on my work now

Gained confidence in my writing (6)
 Yes (2)
 Now I'm a good writer (2)
 There's more to writing than just writing
 I still don't enjoy it
 I'm tired of writing after LEAP
 It has helped my time management wise
 Writing isn't as intimidating
 The challenging writing makes it more interesting
 More interested because annotating helps me comprehend

4. What, if anything, have you learned about the expectations and conventions of college-level academic writing?

What is good in high school is only average in college
 I've learned how demanding the work load will be (2)
 How to cope with the work load
 Follow directions (6)
 Be descriptive
 College academic writing is a different language
 Totally different
 More than skim reading
 Complete everything on time (3)
 College level writing is hard
 Higher expectations
 Do your work to your highest ability (2)
 Fast pace
 Taken very seriously
 You must pay attention in class if you want a good grade
 Pay attention to formatting
 Analyze your own writing
 Takes more time
 Come to class prepared

5. When you are next faced with academic writing tasks, how do you plan on using the skills and strategies learned in this class (including meta-cognitive skills, reading and reflecting on others' and your own writing, using campus resources, etc.) to perform these tasks?

Brainstorming (2)
 Format correctly
 Make sure everything is organized
 Actually write the paper
 Understand the prompt fully
 Write and Revise (2)
 Highlighting and annotate readings (2)
 Do everything that was taught in class

Work Harder (2)
 Looking at the course packet (2)
 Using tutors (4)
 Looking back at notes (2)
 Other resources
 Use all the skills (2)
 Using the library for research papers
 Peer review
 Talk to teachers
 Make an outline
 Think metacognitively

6. Which aspects of the class, if any, contributed most to your learning?

In class sessions help the most
 Worksheets
 Going over concepts
 Going over the readings (3)
 They all did (2)
 Close Reading (2)
 Revising (2)
 Comments from others
 Teacher's feedback (4)
 Group Work (3)
 Tutors
 Open discussion
 Activities
 Writing
 The different types of writing
 Friday's on Foot
 Writing in different tones
 Better word choice

7. Which aspects of the class, if any, did not contribute to your learning?

Friday's on Foot
 Comments on papers were difficult to read
 Peer Editing
 Off topic lectures
 Process Journal wasn't used enough
 Reviewing basic material at the beginning of LEAP
 Less time on formatting
 More specific feedback

8. Is there anything you would have liked to have spent more or less class time on?

Spend more time on close readings
 More work on strategies
 More on citing
 Bibliography
 More debates
 How to use punctuation
 More time writing
 More tutoring
 Poems
 How to construct an essay
 Why a claim is important

9. Please comment on the instructors' contribution to the course and effectiveness in teaching the subject matter. How did you feel about experiencing team teaching?

Very helpful (2)
 Good feedback (3)
 Excellent (3)
 Actually taught, not like high school
 Made class fun
 Tutors helped too
 Team teaching was great (3)
 Knowledgeable (2)
 Best teaching I've ever experienced
 I feel better about college now
 Two different viewpoints (4)

10. Do you feel like the course was tailored to help students at varying skill levels? Why/why not?

Yes, wrote many different types of papers (4)
 Yes, they wanted to see where each student was at
 Yes, you could choose what you wanted to write about
 Yes, you had a lot of help (2)
 Yes, gave us many strategies and resources
 Yes, gave everyone confidence
 Yes, gave a lot of one on one time
 Yes (2)
 Yes, it challenged everybody

11. About how many hours per week did you spend doing work for the class, outside of class time?

6 0-5
 2 6-10
 5 11-15

0 16-20
5 21+

12. How useful to your learning were each of the following:

(1=Not Useful; 2=Somewhat Useful; 3=Relatively Useful; 4=Significantly Useful; 5=Extremely Useful):

Instructors' discussion of student writing and writing strategies	4.7
Instructors' written feedback on your writing	4.8
Assignments reflecting on your own writing processes: difficulty/fluency free writes; literacy narratives; prospective essay	3.9
Participating in peer group workshops on your writing	3.6
Writing short assignments leading up to a major paper	3.8
Class discussions of assigned readings or writing	4.3
Conferences with the tutors	4.3

13. On a Five point scale, with 1 low and 5 high:

How confident were you before the course that you could successfully prepare for a complete college level writing tasks?	3.2
How confident are you now that you have developed tools in this course that will help you prepare for and complete college level writing?	4.5

Course Evaluation – Section I

13. What, if any, writing skills and strategies did you learn or develop in this course?

Close Reading (8)

Analysis (12)

Writing Claims (4)

Revision Process (4)

Metacognition (3)

Using evidence

Quoting

Develop my ideas (3)

Seek help if you need it (2)

Writing Strategies

Time management (2)

Bibliography

Different styles of writing (2)

More Confidence

Reflection

Commercials have worth
 Ideas are more important than grammar
 How to organize good papers (3)
 Critical Thinking

14. How has your perception of your strengths (fluencies) and weaknesses (difficulties) as a writer been changed or reinforced.

I know my strengths and weaknesses now (3)
 I have more strengths (2)
 I know what I need to work on
 I'm more confident with my writing (2)
 I feel more organized now
 It all changed with the help of the tutors
 My strengths are stronger (7)
 My weaknesses got stronger (7)
 My writing is a lot better (4)
 I realize I still need to work on my writing
 I still struggle
 I have fewer weaknesses

15. Has your attitude toward the activity of writing been affected in any way in this course, or has it not? If so, how has it been affected?

No, I still view writing the same (6)
 I like writing now (7)
 I learned new writing strategies
 Writing is easier for me now
 It changed cause now I know I have to do it (2)
 It helped me look at writing as a process
 I want to write good papers now
 The hard grading has given me more motivation
 I realized writing isn't that bad after all
 It has made writing more understandable
 I force myself to like each assignment to make it easier

16. What, if anything, have you learned about the expectations and conventions of college-level academic writing?

Needs more analysis (4)
 Not as much description (2)
 Needs more reflection
 A much higher level (7)
 There is a process for college level writing
 Takes more time and effort (5)
 Teachers expect that you know how to write well
 Stay Organized

Take notes
 Revising my writing (3)
 Must write to the assignment (2)
 Takes more focus (2)
 Ask questions if you don't know something
 Be yourself while you're writing
 Elaboration is key

17. When you are next faced with academic writing tasks, how do you plan on using the skills and strategies learned in this class (including meta-cognitive skills, reading and reflecting on others' and your own writing, using campus resources, etc.) to perform these tasks?

Use Office Hour (3)
 Use Tutors (5)
 Look at everything from LEAP (2)
 Use Reflection more
 Use Analysis more
 Annotate my readings (4)
 Always ask Why and How
 Brainstorm (3)
 Outline (5)
 Write
 Set up a process to organize my thoughts
 Look at my notes (2)
 Revise my papers (7)
 Read my own writing
 Write multiple drafts (2)
 Peer editing
 Use the library for research papers (3)
 The many resources for help (2)

18. Which aspects of the class, if any, contributed most to your learning?

Individual comments on papers
 Process Journals
 Teachers helped (4)
 Tutors helped (7)
 The writing process
 Discussions
 Writing Strategies
 Close Reading
 Taking notes
 Explanation of assignments
 Different Styles of writing
 Different ways of comprehension
 Workshopping in class (4)

The first week set the expectations
 Thorough teaching
 The passion of the teachers
 Paying attention to detail

19. Which aspects of the class, if any, did not contribute to your learning?

It all helped (8)
 None (12)
 Peer editing
 Commercials

20. Is there anything you would have liked to have spent more or less class time on?

No (4)
 More fging over papers in class
 Less time on research paper
 More worksheets
 Less lecture
 More close reading (5)
 Less reading (3)
 More writing in class (2)
 Less worksheets (2)
 More work on claims
 More time for revisions
 More time of readsearch paper
 More time on everything
 More time on analysis (3)

21. Please comment on the instructors' contribution to the course and effectiveness in teaching the subject matter. How did you feel about experiencing team teaching?

Team teaching was great (6)
 Thought that XX was a harder grader
 Both were open-minded
 At times, the teachers had different opinions which was confusing (2)
 Good to have different opinions and feedback (5)
 Good to have different teaching strategies
 Both were passionate
 Nothing should change about the way you both teach
 Both were great teachers (8)
 I had difficulty with the team teaching
 Both were very knowledgeable
 Great at explaining
 Pushed us to the get best out of us

XX explained a little better

22. Do you feel like the course was tailored to help students at varying skill levels?
Why/why not?

Yes, the work given was all helpful

Yes, the class prepared me for college (5)

No, it was very difficult for me

Yes, taught basics through college level

Yes, they helped if you needed it

Yes, everybody learned something (2)

Yes, lots of writing techniques and papers (3)

Yes, the tutors could help the lower level students (2)

Yes, the tutors could help all the students (3)

Yes, they helped all the students

Yes, the teachers cut us slack knowing that we weren't great writers

23. About how many hours per week did you spend doing work for the class,
outside of class time?

2 0-5

6 6-10

8 11-15

3 16-20

2 21+

24. How useful to your learning were each of the following:

**(1=Not Useful; 2=Somewhat Useful; 3=Relatively Useful;
4=Significantly Useful; 5=Extremely Useful):**

Instructors' discussion of student writing and writing strategies	4.5
Instructors' written feedback on your writing	4.9
Assignments reflecting on your own writing processes: difficulty/fluency free writes; literacy narratives; prospective essay	4.3
Participating in peer group workshops on your writing	3.8
Writing short assignments leading up to a major paper	4
Class discussions of assigned readings or writing	4.6
Conferences with the tutors	4.4

13. On a Five point scale, with 1 low and 5 high:

How confident were you before the course that you could successfully prepare for and complete college level writing tasks?	2.8
How confident are you now that you have developed tools in this course that will help you prepare for and complete college level writing?	4.4

VITA

Pamela Robenolt was born and raised in Wisconsin. She studied in the South Pacific and work as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Central Africa. Currently she calls Seattle her home. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration through Lakeland College and a Master of Arts in Education and Human Development from The George Washington University. In 2012 she earned a Doctor of Education at the University of Washington in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies with an emphasis in Higher Education.