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Does A Student-Athletes' Socioeconomic Background Matter?

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by

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on college football players from low socioeconomic backgrounds (i.e., attended a Title I High School) and examines whether they are more likely to experience athletic success and influence the performance of the college football programs they attend relative to other student-athletes. The results show that, over the period 2010-2016, Title I players are more likely to be drafted or play in the NFL than other student-athletes. In addition, teams with more Title I players on their roster appear to reap some benefits. On one hand, Title I heavy rosters are associated with better conference records and are more successful in terms of having their players drafted. On the other hand, Title I heavy rosters are not associated with the program's financial performance or ability to produce NFL players. Overall, the evidence supports the notion that socioeconomic background is important for athletic success, especially at the individual level. However, this effect is reversed in the case of student-athletes playing as quarterbacks, which raises interesting questions for future research.

Keywords: Title-I, at-risk, low socioeconomic status (SES), NFL, NFL-draft, college, university, community college, performance, success, low income, academics, GPA, high school

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

College athletics, particularly men's football and basketball, are major sources of revenue for some universities. According to the U.S. Department of Education Equity in Athletics Data Analysis (Education), universities that were members of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I conferences generated over $5.2 billion in revenue in 2016. The large sums of money involved in collegiate athletics have created considerable incentives for universities to attract the best players possible. On the students' side, corresponding incentives exist. Athletic scholarships can provide the high-performing athlete with a free education. For the best performers, there is the potential of going professional—a career path that can lead to six or seven figure salaries and national recognition.

Unfortunately, the likelihood of the latter of these incentives—the opportunity to "go professional"—can be exaggerated in the mind of the student-athlete. For example, in college football (the focus of the current study), the NCAA reported that of the roughly 16,000 student athletes that were eligible for the NFL draft in 2016, only 3.9% were drafted. A possible consequence of unrealistic student expectations of going professional is over-emphasizing the athletic relative to the academic elements of a college education.

This overemphasis is particularly concerning for students from a low socioeconomic status (SES), a group that historically has had an academic achievement gap that grows over time in school (von Stumm, 2017). Even more concerning is the fact that universities seeking success on

the playing field can potentially benefit from recruiting students from low SES backgrounds, despite knowing that these students are disproportionately prone to focusing all their efforts on their athletic prospects. To assess if such a troubling concern is valid, we need to better understand the role low SES plays in a student's athletic performance.

The current research seeks to understand if the socioeconomic status of a student-athlete, particularly college football players, influences his likelihood of becoming a professional football player and/or increases the performance of the attended university's athletic team. The research study analyzes large data sets collected from a variety of sources, including Department of Education, Division I NCAA, Division I Schools information systems and The U.S. Census Data, to assess football players' success. Specifically, the study tracks the percentage that plays in the NFL and estimates their athletic contributions to the attended university. Finally, the research study assesses if football players' socioeconomic status is measurably related to the football program's financial performance and success in placing players in the draft and in the NFL.

Because many factors besides socioeconomic status can impact the likelihood of a student's college and professional athletic success, the analysis performed in the study attempts to control for a number of potentially contributing factors.

Determining if universities intentionally recruit student-athletes from low socioeconomic backgrounds to increase their performance is beyond the scope of this research. Instead, this research focuses on the value the football student-athlete brings to the university and identifies if student-athletes from low socioeconomic backgrounds negatively or positively influence that

value. In doing so, the research seeks to provide a basis for determining if additional investigations into recruiting practices may be warranted.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RESEARCH

The need to better understand the impact of socioeconomic status (SES) on student athletic aspirations and performance is motivated by a large body of research relating to the academic performance of college athletes and the broader impacts of SES on student performance. Key findings in this area are summarized in the table that follows.

The literature review describes the historic contextual perspective on the low socioeconomic student-athlete and primarily focuses on how the literature bridges socioeconomics, education and athletic. The goal is to research various journals and publications that focus the research study towards the framework of the student-athlete and university dynamics. The researcher's prevailing assumption is that the research will document that student-athletes from low socioeconomic backgrounds perform poorly in the classroom compared to other non-student-athletes and student-athletes.

The literature review does not answer the question of whether athletics creates a bridge that allows academically challenged student-athletes to cross the chasm of troubled systemic waters. Furthermore, it does not provide clarity on the importance for universities to ensure that adequate resources are provided for low socioeconomic student-athletes who struggle academically. The literature review, located in the Appendix, helps to arrange this research to provide an overarching foundation that supported and guided this study.

The research literature indicates that the lack of academic aptitude may have a higher impact on African American student-athletes from low socioeconomic background than any other race. Some researchers believe that sports have become the key social institution in today's modern society. They believe the "involvement in athletics has hampered the development of African American males in several areas, including academic and occupational achievement" (Allen, 2005).

Various communities and families of the athletically gifted student-athletes push the importance of becoming professional athletes; researchers state that the importance of social and intellectual development has lost its relevancy (Byrd, 2005). This research discusses the concept of non-athletic students having the academic mind frame to allow them to be successful in college academically.

In the article The Personal, Academic, and Career Problems of College student Athletes: Some Possible Answers. (Wittmer, J., Bostic, D., Phillips, T. D., & Waters, W.) The author outlines the level of degree in which the vast majority of student-athletes are instantly moved into his own environment that creates a culture of professionalism and isolates him from the life of a student. The statistical facts emphasized in the article speak to the impacts of the segregation of academia from athletics and how it primarily impacts the African American student-athlete at a much higher rate than any other student-athlete ethnicity.

The author contrasts the experience of a student-athlete to the non-athletic student by stating the university's expectations of both a non-athletic student and one of the student-athlete are not shared. The student-athlete college readiness is not measured by his academic

preparedness; rather, it is primarily measured by his athletic capability, skills and ability to compete at a high-level.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW DISCUSSION

Various researchers have discovered higher graduation rates for undergraduate student-athletes relative to non-athletes. For example Riche (2003) indicates that the higher graduation rates are driven by NCAA and university policies with low academic guidelines for student-athletes in order for them to retain athletic eligibility to play football (Patrick James Rishe, 2003). If these measures are taken by university athletic departments, they indicate a possible acknowledgement by the athlete programs of the student-athlete academic gap.

Published articles have made a strong assertion that indicates that successful football programs have a predictable outcome of positive impacts on the academic front with regards to wins and performance. Rhoads, T., & Gerking, S., 2000, were able to determine that college football success, wins, losses and championships resulted in an increase in financial contributions. An assumption can be made that it is in the best interest of the university to keep its best athletes academically eligible to play to increase chances to win, which results in university profits.

While it may be difficult to isolate the racial group the academic challenges primarily affect, extensive research suggests that the segregation of academia from athletics impacts the African American student-athlete to a much higher degree than any other student-athlete ethnic group (Wittmer, J., Bostic, D., Phillips, T. D., & Waters, W., 1981). The literature review results provide areas of future research to identify if Title-I Division I football programs all have significant influence on academic performance.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

The research questions and hypotheses in this study seek to examine the dynamics of football student-athletes, specifically comparing those from low socioeconomic backgrounds to those from non-low SES backgrounds to determine whether specific socioeconomic variables influence the attended university or student-athletes' success. Of particular interest are the potential impacts of SES has on two types of success: institutional success (in terms of athletic program performance) and student success, measured in athletic terms (e.g., likelihood of being drafted by the NFL) and academic success (e.g., likelihood of receiving a degree).

Research Questions:

The proposed two research questions are framed in terms of correlations between performance and low SES of student-athletes.

RQ1: Is the socioeconomic status of student-athletes an important factor in getting drafted or playing in the NFL?

RQ2: Is the socioeconomic status of student-athletes an important factor for college athletic football programs' success?

Hypotheses:

The research hypotheses provide specific tests related to the research questions. The first pair (H1 & H2) related to the individual student-athlete's athletic performance in terms of getting

drafted or playing in the NFL; the second pair (H3 & H4) relate to the financial and on-field performance of the football program.

H1: Student athletes from low socioeconomic backgrounds have a better chance of playing in the NFL.

H2: Student-athletes from low socioeconomic backgrounds have a better chance of getting drafted.

H3: On average, athletic football programs whose rosters primarily consist of players from low socioeconomic status have better financial performance.

H4: On average, athletic football programs whose rosters primarily consist of players from low socioeconomic status have better win-loss records.

H5: On average, athletic football programs whose rosters primarily consist of players from low socioeconomic status are more successful in promoting the athletic careers of their student athletes, in terms of getting drafted or playing in the NFL.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The framework for this research is based on relevant concepts that allow the research questions to be answered. The data collected provides a more concrete quantitative approach to determine whether there is a predictable correlation between performance and low socioeconomic status of student-athletes.

The Protocol

The quantitative design research focuses on identifying relationships among the variables considered within this research study. While the approach employed does not lend itself to the assertion of cause and effect, it serves to identify the factors that are associated with the variables of interest.

This research study employs OLS regression analysis of the relationship of various performance measures and SES status controlling for other factors that typically affect performance. Among the control variables are those measuring the student-athletes' characteristics (e.g. high school ranking, national ranking, etc.), athletic rankings, national and conference awards, Heisman Trophy winners and team athletic football team rankings.

Methodology and Data Collection Plan

The proposed dataset was obtained from the listing below and spanned the 2010 through 2016 football seasons. The relevant dataset was obtained from various organizations and entities that currently capture the data needed for the research model. The systems used to retrieve the dataset can be found in the Appendix under title "Data Collection Plan."

Data Collection

Prior to conducting any analysis, the data sources were merged into a single dataset that incorporated all the related variables (See Figure 1).

To ensure data accuracy to provide validity to support the quantitative research, an in-depth process was conducted to ensure the level of integrity in the dataset collected. In many instances, the data was put through several rigorous validation processes to ensure the quality of the data. Thus, several information systems were leveraged to validate accuracy of all athletes, universities and high schools as illustrated in Figure 1.

Data Analysis

The dataset produced from the data collection process was analyzed using probit for discrete dependent variables and OLS regression for continuous dependent variables. The analyses performed were designed to address the hypotheses derived from the research questions. Specifically, the following aspects of the research questions were analyzed:

- Identify the criteria of "Performance" from a university and a Student-Athlete perspective
- Determine if low socioeconomic status influenced performance of the university and the student-athlete

• Identify any differences between the performance of high and low performing universities and low and non-low socioeconomic student-athletes

• Capture the influences of these results

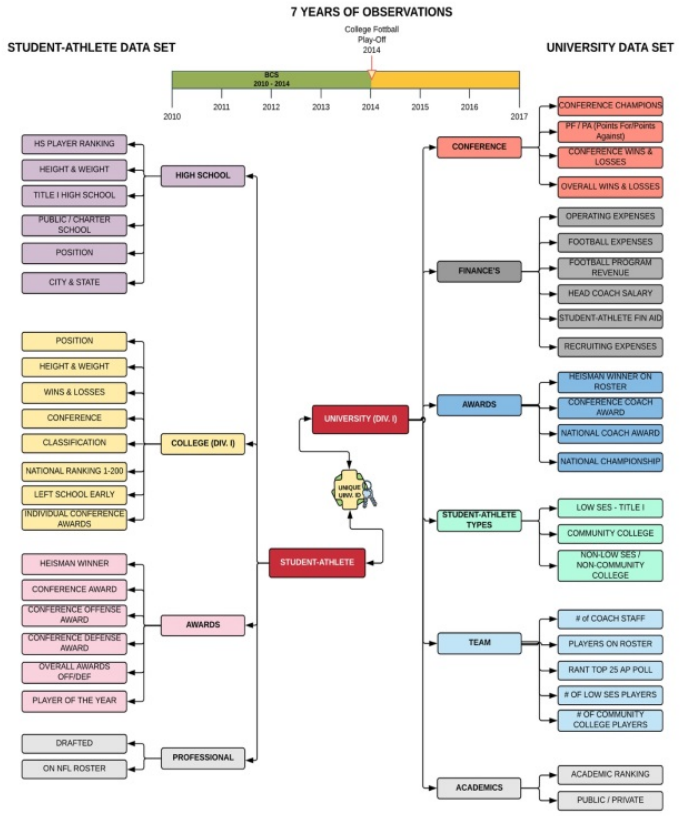
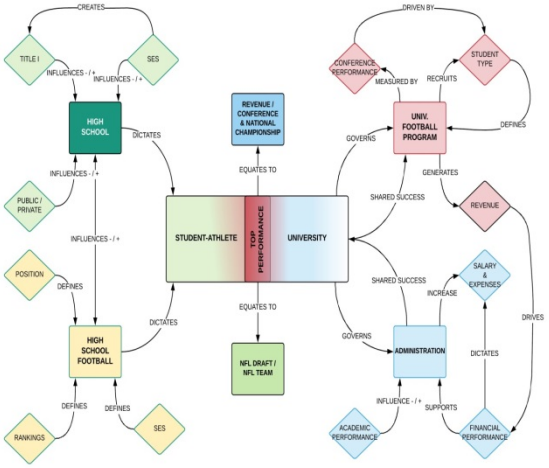


Figure 1

The models investigated are summarized in Figure 2.


CREATES
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HIGH SCHOOL
DICTATES
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PUBLIC / PRIVATE
INFLUENCES - / +
POSITION
DEFINES
HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL
DICTATES
DEFINES
DEFINES
RANKINGS
SES
REVENUE / CONFERENCE & NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
EQUATES TO
STUDENT-ATHLETE
TOP PERFORMANCE
UNIVERSITY
EQUATES TO
NFL DRAFT / NFL TEAM
DRIVEN BY
CONFERENCE PERFORMANCE
MEASURED BY
STUDENT TYPE
RECRUITS
UNIV. FOOTBALL PROGRAM
DEFINES
GOVERNS
GENERATES
SHARED SUCCESS
REVENUE
SHARED SUCCESS
SALARY & EXPENSES
INCREASE
DRIVES
GOVERNS
ADMINISTRATION
DICTATES
INFLUENCE - / +
SUPPORTS
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Figure 2

CHAPTER SIX: ASSUMPTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RESTRICTIONS

Assumptions

All student-athletes listed as Title-I students may or may not be residents of low income families or environment. There are scenarios in which parents will enroll their child in a school in a different schooling zone/jurisdiction in order to place their child into a high school with a high performing, winning football program.

Limitations

There are periods when some universities did not participate in collegiate football for numerous reasons, which resulted in missing observations in the universities' dataset. Specifically, teams occasionally do not participate in football competitions or have a football program during a given year or multiple years because of NCAA violations or lack of financial funding for conference membership, etc. Additionally, three programs representing three branches of the Unites States armed services (Army, Navy and Air Force) did not report financials and coach salaries.

Restrictions

Due to various laws that protect vital information regarding the university student body, Race/Ethnicity information was omitted from this data. By law, colleges and universities must adhere to guidelines which prohibit research to include the race of the student athlete. This study could have benefited from the richness that specific variable could have provided;

however, although race/ethnicity were not included in this research, they may be the subject of future research.

Findings

Summary statistics for the samples used in the empirical analysis are presented in Table 1. The student-athlete dataset comprises 97, 957 observations spanning the years 2010 to 2016. Panel A contains variables from the student-athlete dataset. 36.6% of all student athletes participating in the NCAA Division I football programs come from a Title-I High School. Approximately 1.3% of student athletes are international students, and 4.87% are quarterbacks. A small fraction of the student-athletes in our sample were drafted (5.74%) or made it to the NFL (6.94%).

The analysis also considers the influence of the demographic profiles of a student athlete's home state. The univariate statistics of some demographic variables providing information on the student athletes' state of residence prior to joining the collegiate football program are also included in Table 1, Panel B. On average, 76% of residents are white, 27.67% hold bachelor's degrees, 7.7% are unemployed, and earned an annual income of $50, 990. These mean values seem to align with national averages (although the South is more likely disproportionally represented in our Division I football program sample). More importantly, significant variation is present around the mean, which motivates the inclusion of these variables as controls in our regression analysis.

Panel C shows the univariate statistics for variables from the university (football program) dataset, which comprises 898 observations on 129 programs from 10 major conferences,

spanning the years 2010 to 2016. The average roster size of teams included in the study was 117, with 36% of those players coming from Title-I high schools and 4.39% being transfers from community colleges. In addition, the average program hires more than 22 coaches, spends approximately $4.8 million in financial aid, and spends $3.8 million on head coach compensation. Once again, it is remarkable how wide the ranges of values of these variables are within our sample. For example, the maximum total compensation for a head coach was over $19 million. The standard deviation was $3.1 million, which implies that approximately 67% of all football program-years observations involved coaches' total compensations in the range of $100,000 to $6.9 million.

In Table 2 are results from univariate tests designed to provide a comparison of Title-I student-athletes with non-Title-I student-athletes. Panel A presents the analysis at the student-athlete level. We divide the student athlete dataset into two subsamples (Title-I, Other) and present their means of the NFL, Draft, Foreign and Quarterback dummy variables, along with those describing the demographic profile of the state where the Title-I schools are located. The table also shows the difference in the two subsamples' means as well as the corresponding t-statistic. Remarkably, the two subsamples are strikingly different as indicated by the fact that the means difference values are significant for all variables except for one (the number of convictions per million). For example, 7.92% of Title-I student-athletes played in the NFL whereas only 6.37% of all other student-athletes played in the NFL.

The difference (1.54%) is not only statistically significant at the 1% level, but also economically significant since it implies that, on average, Title-I students are approximately 24% (0.0154/0.0637) more likely to make it to the NFL than other student-athletes. In addition, Title-I

student-athletes are, on average, approximately 30% (0.0163/0.0514) more likely to get drafted. In our sample, Title-I students, on average, are less likely to be non-U.S. born or to play the quarterback position. In addition, the average Title-I student-athlete comes from states with lower levels of education and household median income as well as larger ratio of white residents and unemployment rate.

Panel B (Table 2) provides a similar comparison at the team level. We divide our college football program (universities) dataset into subsamples of teams with more and less Title-I students. We then compare the two subsamples in terms of the means of various variables. Programs with more Title-I student-athletes on their roster tend to have bigger rosters, more coaches, greater expenditures (in terms of financial aid and coach's compensation) and rely less on players who transferred from community colleges. Finally, programs with more Title-I students tend to be on average higher ranked academically than those that do not.

In the next four tables, we present results from multivariate regression analysis. Given the fact that we use panel datasets, all our multivariate models include year and college football conference fixed effects. In Table 3, we present results of multivariate analysis of student-athletes' success in getting drafted and playing in the NFL. We estimate probit regressions, where the dependent variable is the NFL dummy variable (column (1) and (3)) and the Draft dummy variable (columns (2) and (4)). The models in columns (1) and (2) employ the full sample whereas, in columns (3) and (4), we drop the observations involving non-U.S.-born players. Our main variable of interest, Title-I, has a positive and highly significant coefficient in all four regression models. This evidence implies a strong positive association between low SES and athletic success, both in terms of getting drafted and playing in the NFL.

Many other (control) variables included in the models are also significant and provide further interesting insights into the determinants of getting drafted or playing in the NFL. For example, as indicated by the negative and significant coefficients of Ratio of community college transferring students and financial aid, student-athletes from programs utilizing more community college transfer students on their roster or spending more on financial aid have a lower probability of athletic success. Conversely, the probability of getting drafted and making it to the NFL increases when there are a greater number of coaches on the team and the program belongs to a university with high academic ranking. Interestingly, playing on a team that employs a highly paid coach improves the probability of getting drafted but not of making it to the NFL. In sum, the evidence in Table 3 supports our first two hypotheses and is consistent with the notion that a low socioeconomic background can become the impetus for better athletic performance.

In the next set of tests, presented in Table 4, we take a closer look at one of the most prominent player positions: the quarterback. We introduce Quarterback (QB), a dummy variable, into the regression models shown in the prior table along with its interaction with Title-I. The coefficient of Title-I is again positive and significant throughout as was the case in the previous table. The coefficient of Quarterback is negative throughout but only significant in the NFL models shown in columns (1) and (3). Thus, quarterbacks, in our sample, have a lower chance of playing in the NFL compared with other position players. More interestingly, the interaction term's (Title-I * Quarterback) coefficient is negative and significant in all models and its magnitude is almost three to four times greater in absolute terms than that of Title-I. This implies that the positive association between low socioeconomic background and athletic success does not exist for student-athletes who play the QB position. This result is also

interesting because it implies that QBs with Title-I High School backgrounds have an even lower chance of athletic success than all other QBs. Considering that most Title-I student-athletes are from lower socioeconomic, non-white backgrounds, these results are consistent with the notion that racial bias may be a factor. Although the race information is not included in the present study, this issue could be addressed in more detail in future research by including the currently missing student-athlete race information in the analysis.

The team level analyses of the determinants of financial and on-field performance are presented in the next two tables. Table 5 presents an OLS regressions of program success, which is measured by on-field performance (i.e. win-loss record, Column (1)) and financial performance (i.e. operating profits, Column (2)). The main variable of interest is Ratio of Title-I students, which is measured as the percentage of the roster drawn from Title-I High School graduates. The coefficient of Ratio of Title-I students is positive and significant in the first model. Thus, the results indicate that there exists a significant positive association between reliance on Title-I players and success on the football field. Although the coefficient is positive in the second model, it is not significant; therefore, we cannot extend this association to the case of financial performance.

The models include several control variables comprising team and university characteristics along with average demographic profile characteristics of the football programs. Although most controls do not yield significant coefficients, there are some interesting findings. For example, having more players on the roster and employing more coaches are positively related with on-field performance, but –expectedly- not related to financial performance. Surprisingly, spending

on financial aid seems to have opposite effects on the two types of performance, displaying a negative association with on-field and a positive association with financial performance.

The average demographic profiles of the team rosters are not related to on-field performance, yet they are significant in terms of financial performance. In sum, the results in table 5 provide support for the hypothesis H4. The results align with the view that rosters with greater reliance on low socioeconomic status student-athletes (Title-I backgrounds) will perform better on the field. However, this reasoning does not extend to financial performance.

Finally, in Table 6, we present the results from probit models, where the dependent variable is the ratio of players from the program that made it to the NFL (Column (1)) and the ratio of players from the team roster that was drafted (Column (2)). Once again, the main variable of interest is Ratio of Title-I students; the models include the same set of controls as in the previous table.

The coefficient of Ratio of Title-I students is insignificant in column (1) but positive and significant in column (2). Thus, it appears that teams that rely on Title-I student-athletes have better success in having their players drafted. This result is consistent with the notion that targeting student-athlete recruits from low socioeconomic backgrounds can be important for the program's success in terms of getting exposure to NFL teams that want to draft their players.

Tables

Table 1: Summary statistics

This table reports the summary statistics of variables used in the study. Refer to Appendix for detailed variable descriptions.

	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Median	Maximum
Panel A: Student variables					
Title-I student	0.3664	0.4818	0.0000	0.0000	1.0000
NFL	0.0694	0.2541	0.0000	0.0000	1.0000
Draft	0.0574	0.2325	0.0000	0.0000	1.0000
Non-U.S. born	0.0139	0.1169	0.0000	0.0000	1.0000
Quarterback	0.0487	0.2153	0.0000	0.0000	1.0000
Panel B: Hometown demographic information at the State level					
Ratio of white residents	0.7608	0.0933	0.2660	0.7810	0.9520
Ratio of residents with bachelor degrees	0.2767	0.0407	0.1830	0.2670	0.5240
Median household income	50990	7377	32338	49555	76165
Unemployment rate	0.0777	0.0207	0.0273	0.0756	0.1378
Number of convictions per million	3.4162	2.0885	0.0000	3.0703	27.2889

Table 1 continued

Number of large cities in the state	5.2936	4.8613	0.0000	3.0000	15.0000
Panel C: NCAAF team variables					
Ratio of Title-I students	0.3644	0.1858	0.0000	0.3984	0.8000
Number of players	117.2438	12.3748	84.0000	116.0000	185.0000
Ratio of community college transferring students	0.0439	0.0556	0.0000	0.0187	0.2769
Financial aid	4,813,910	2,200,755	0.0000	4,512,925	12,900,000
Total compensation for head coach	3,798,598	3,108,812	0.0000	3,014,000	19,300,000
Number of assistant coaches	22.6090	6.5799	0.0000	22.0000	44.0000
Academic rank (1 to 50)	0.1673	0.3734	0.0000	0.0000	1.0000
Academic rank (51 to 100)	0.2344	0.4239	0.0000	0.0000	1.0000
Total Observations	97,957	97,957	97,957	97,957	97,957

Table 2: Univariate Tests

In Table 2 is a univariate test that provides an analysis for two panels, from the student and team level analysis. This table univariate test results. Refer to Appendix for detailed variable descriptions. ***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

Panel A: Student-level analysis				
	(1) Title-I students	(2) Other students	(1) – (2)	t-statistics
Student variables				
NFL	0.0792	0.0637	0.0154***	9.13
Draft	0.0677	0.0514	0.0163***	10.52
Non-U.S. born	0.0010	0.0213	-0.0203***	-26.21
Quarterback	0.0458	0.0504	-0.0046***	-3.19
Hometown demographic information				
Ratio of white residents	0.7661	0.7577	0.0084***	13.53
Ratio of residents with bachelor degrees	0.2744	0.2780	-0.0036***	-13.39
Median household income	50,074	51,531	-1,458***	-29.70

Table 2 continued

Unemployment rate	0.0795	0.0766	0.0029***	21.27
Number of convictions per million	3.4153	3.4168	-0.0015	-0.11
Number of large cities in the state	4.5546	5.7307	-1.1760***	-36.40
Panel B: Team-level analysis				
	(1) Teams with more Title-I students	(2) Teams with less Title-I students	(1) – (2)	t-statistics
Ratio of Title-I students	0.5012	0.2279	0.2733***	31.65
Number of players	118.4175	116.0729	2.3446***	2.77
Ratio of community college transferring students	0.0257	0.0620	-0.0363***	-10.06
Financial aid	4,990,826	4,637,410	353,416**	2.35
Total compensation for head coach	4,366,325	3,232,207	1,134,118***	5.40

Table 2 continued

Number of assistant coaches	23.7406	21.4800	2.2606***	5.08
Academic rank (1 to 50)	0.1675	0.1671	0.0004	0.02
Academic rank (51 to 100)	0.2736	0.1953	0.0783***	2.70

Table 3: Title-I Students and Successes

This table reports the estimated coefficients in the probit model. Refer to Appendix for detailed variable descriptions. We take a natural log after adding 1 for the variables: Number of players, Financial Aid, Total compensation for head coach, Number of assistant coaches, Median household income, and Number of large cities in the state. ***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

	All players		Domestic players only	
	Dependent variable = NFL	Dependent variable = Draft	Dependent variable = NFL	Dependent variable = Draft
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Title-I student	0.0419***	0.0629***	0.0445***	0.0637***

Table 3 continued

	(3.08)	(4.35)	(3.24)	(4.37)
Foreign	0.0194	0.0489		
	(0.33)	(0.78)		
Ratio of Title-I students	-0.0327	-0.1190	-0.1072	-0.1676**
	(-0.47)	(-1.60)	(-1.52)	(-2.21)
Number of players	-0.0704	-0.1259	-0.0784	-0.0885
	(-0.97)	(-1.61)	(-1.06)	(-1.11)
Ratio of community college transferring students	-0.3497**	-0.3555**	-0.3754**	-0.3920**
	(-2.35)	(-2.17)	(-2.46)	(-2.33)
Financial aid	-0.0280***	-0.0062	-0.0282***	-0.0047
	(-2.95)	(-0.59)	(-2.94)	(-0.44)
Total compensation for head coach	0.0014	0.0131***	0.0013	0.0128***
	(0.73)	(6.03)	(0.67)	(5.80)
Number of assistant coaches	0.2471***	0.2186***	0.2484***	0.2162***
	(5.85)	(4.79)	(5.83)	(4.70)

Table 3 continued

Academic rank (1 to 50)	0.0957***	0.0684***	0.0876***	0.0604**
	(4.14)	(2.75)	(3.72)	(2.38)
Academic rank (51 to 100)	0.0193	0.0565***	0.0335*	0.0674***
	(0.98)	(2.75)	(1.67)	(3.21)
Ratio of white residents			-0.3362***	-0.2185***
			(-4.48)	(-2.72)
Ratio of residents with bachelor degrees			-0.9145***	-0.2046
			(-2.64)	(-0.56)
Median household income			-0.1068	-0.1094
			(-0.99)	(-0.95)
Unemployment rate			2.2984***	2.9546***
			(4.36)	(5.33)
Number of convictions per million			0.0001	-0.0074**
			(0.03)	(-2.03)
Number of large cities in the state			0.0529***	0.0177*

Table 3 continued

			(5.42)	(1.72)
Constant	-1.7202***	-2.0237***	-0.1119	-0.8275
	(-4.43)	(-4.54)	(-0.10)	(-0.65)
Year fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Position fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Conference fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	97,009	97,009	95,423	95,423
Pseudo R-squared	0.0801	0.0888	0.0822	0.0903

Table 4: Quarterback Players and Successes

This table reports the estimated coefficients in the probit model. Refer to Appendix for detailed variable descriptions. We take a natural log after adding 1 for the variables: Number of players, Financial Aid, Total compensation for head coach, Number of assistant coaches, Median household income, and Number of large cities in the state. ***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

Table 4 continued

	All players		Domestic players only	
	Dependent variable = NFL	Dependent variable = Draft	Dependent variable = NFL	Dependent variable = Draft
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Title-I student	0.0555***	0.0771***	0.0589***	0.0788***
	(4.03)	(5.27)	(4.24)	(5.33)
Quarterback	-0.0981**	-0.0323	-0.0984**	-0.0297
	(-2.45)	(-0.77)	(-2.45)	(-0.70)
Title-I student * Quarterback	-0.2294***	-0.2014***	-0.2201***	-0.1954***
	(-3.31)	(-2.86)	(-3.16)	(-2.76)
Foreign	-0.0380	-0.0074		
	(-0.67)	(-0.12)		
Ratio of Title-I students	-0.0495	-0.1403*	-0.1235*	-0.1877**
	(-0.72)	(-1.90)	(-1.76)	(-2.49)

Table 4 continued

Number of players	-0.0521	-0.1166	-0.0691	-0.0883
	(-0.73)	(-1.50)	(-0.94)	(-1.11)
Ratio of community college transferring students	-0.3452**	-0.3627**	-0.3784**	-0.4056**
	(-2.34)	(-2.23)	(-2.49)	(-2.43)
Financial aid	-0.0298***	-0.0090	-0.0310***	-0.0084
	(-3.21)	(-0.87)	(-3.30)	(-0.81)
Total compensation for head coach	0.0013	0.0128***	0.0011	0.0125***
	(0.66)	(5.97)	(0.57)	(5.70)
Number of assistant coaches	0.2512***	0.2331***	0.2532***	0.2313***
	(6.06)	(5.21)	(6.04)	(5.13)
Academic rank (1 to 50)	0.0957***	0.0691***	0.0865***	0.0595**
	(4.19)	(2.82)	(3.71)	(2.38)
Academic rank (51 to 100)	0.0230	0.0616***	0.0373*	0.0720***
	(1.19)	(3.05)	(1.88)	(3.48)

Table 4 continued

Ratio of white residents			-0.4095***	-0.2974***
			(-5.54)	(-3.77)
Ratio of residents with bachelor degrees			-0.8355**	-0.1251
			(-2.45)	(-0.35)
Median household income			-0.1371	-0.1394
			(-1.28)	(-1.22)
Unemployment rate			2.1747***	2.8541***
			(4.18)	(5.21)
Number of convictions per million			0.0016	-0.0057
			(0.48)	(-1.56)
Number of large cities in the state			0.0585***	0.0240**
			(6.02)	(2.35)
Constant	-1.4124***	-1.6050***	0.4076	-0.2396
	(-4.01)	(-4.18)	(0.36)	(-0.20)
Year fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Conference fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 4 continued

Observations	97,222	97,222	95,636	95,636
Pseudo R-squared	0.0708	0.0795	0.0736	0.0817

Table 5: Title-I Students and Team Successes

This table reports the estimated coefficients in the OLS model. Refer to Appendix for detailed variable descriptions. We take a natural log after adding 1 for the variables: Number of players, Financial Aid, Total compensation for head coach, Number of assistant coaches, Median household income, and Number of large cities in the state. ***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

	Dependent variable = Performance in conference	Dependent variable = Operation profits
	(1)	(2)
Ratio of Title-I students	2.0612*	1.7087
	(1.92)	(1.45)
Number of players	4.6507***	-1.0273

Table 5 continued

	(2.78)	(-0.55)
Ratio of community college transferring students	1.2618	-0.3592
	(0.37)	(-0.10)
Ratio of foreign students	-0.3675	9.5715
	(-0.10)	(1.15)
Financial aid	-0.5095**	0.5947**
	(-2.39)	(2.50)
Total compensation for head coach	0.0019	0.0912*
	(0.04)	(1.82)
Number of assistant coaches	2.1497**	-0.7344
	(2.18)	(-0.67)
Academic rank (1 to 50)	0.1397	-0.9229
	(0.23)	(-1.39)
Academic rank (51 to 100)	0.5732	-1.9452***
	(1.11)	(-3.37)

Table 5 continued

Ratio of white residents	0.8843	3.1378
	(0.47)	(1.33)
Ratio of residents with bachelor degrees	-8.8069	-42.9817***
	(-1.27)	(-5.63)
Median household income	-1.8411	13.7680***
	(-0.79)	(5.35)
Unemployment rate	3.1417	45.8337***
	(0.23)	(2.97)
Number of convictions per million	0.1270	-0.2244***
	(1.64)	(-2.62)
Number of large cities in the state	0.2261	0.3488
	(1.02)	(1.39)
Constant	-2.4159	-139.6677***
	(-0.10)	(-5.07)
Year fixed effects	Yes	Yes

Table 5 continued

Conference fixed effects	Yes	Yes
Observations	848	801
Pseudo R-squared	0.0564	0.6368

Table 6: Title-I Students and NFL/Drafted Players

This table reports the estimated coefficients in the OLS model. Refer to Appendix for detailed variable descriptions. We take a natural log after adding 1 for the variables: Number of players, Financial Aid, Total compensation for head coach, Number of assistant coaches, Median household income, and Number of large cities in the state. ***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

	Dependent variable = Ratio of NFL players	Dependent variable = Ratio of drafted players
	(1)	(2)
Ratio of Title-I students	0.0051	0.0335***
	(0.49)	(3.57)

Table 6 continued

Number of players	-0.0066	-0.0054
	(-0.41)	(-0.37)
Ratio of community college transferring students	-0.0159	0.0009
	(-0.49)	(0.03)
Ratio of foreign students	-0.0277	-0.0346
	(-0.76)	(-1.04)
Financial aid	-0.0059***	-0.0046**
	(-2.87)	(-2.45)
Total compensation for head coach	-0.0000	0.0012***
	(-0.09)	(2.93)
Number of assistant coaches	0.0341***	0.0305***
	(3.60)	(3.54)
Academic rank (1 to 50)	0.0101*	0.0089*
	(1.72)	(1.67)
Academic rank (51 to 100)	0.0058	0.0125***
	(1.17)	(2.77)

Table 6 continued

Ratio of white residents	-0.0055	0.0072
	(-0.30)	(0.43)
Ratio of residents with bachelor degrees	-0.1858***	-0.0483
	(-2.79)	(-0.80)
Median household income	0.0232	-0.0020
	(1.03)	(-0.10)
Unemployment rate	0.4691***	0.4878***
	(3.65)	(4.17)
Number of convictions per million	-0.0003	-0.0018***
	(-0.46)	(-2.68)
Number of large cities in the state	0.0073***	0.0005
	(3.42)	(0.25)
Constant	-0.1358	0.0413
	(-0.57)	(0.19)
Year fixed effects	Yes	Yes

Table 6 continued

Conference fixed effects	Yes	Yes
Observations	849	849
Pseudo R-squared	0.5766	0.5751

CHAPTER SEVEN: BROADER IMPLICATIONS

As noted in the introduction, the data available to use does not allow us to determine if universities are intentionally recruiting students of low SES in order to improve their football teams' performance without regard to the academic implications of doing so. The data suggests, however, that a higher than average percentage of low SES students positively impacts a university's win/loss record and SES students move into professional football at a higher rate than average.

A number of explanations are possible for the athletic success of low SES students. One might be that in overcoming hardships associated with low SES, they are better prepared to excel athletically than students on average. If this explanation is accurate, then universities are to be commended for recruiting such students.

A second explanation may be that low SES students, on average, place a higher priority on athletic success than non-low SES students and, correspondingly, a lower priority on academic success. In this scenario, a university focus on recruiting from low SES populations to improve team performance is a disservice to these students. Indeed, describing this practice as exploiting the low SES students might not be too harsh.

As identified in Table 4, the probability of being drafted or playing in the NFL is lower for quarterbacks. This could be partially driven by QBs staying longer in college before getting

drafted. Indeed, as shown in Table 7, the average number of years of academic enrollment for QBs was significantly longer than that of others.

On average, quarterbacks stay 0.172 years (or about 2 months) longer than all other position players on any given team. Perhaps due to the tense competition in the quarterback position and the low probability to transition to the NFL, quarterbacks may prefer to stay in school longer to leverage their opportunities between academics and college football.

Table A1: QB Student-Athlete Average Years of Academic Enrollment Compared to All Other Positions

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances		
	All Other Player Positions Student-Athlete Average of Years of Academic Enrollment	QB Only Student-Athlete Average of Years of Academic Enrollment
Mean	1.98301694	2.155164637
Variance	1.378561039	1.589631482
Observations	46988	2217
Pooled Variance	1.388067209	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	49203	
t Stat	-6.723070675	
P(T<=t) one-tail	8.99358E-12	

Table A1 continued

t Critical one-tail	1.644884597
P(T<=t) two-tail	1.79872E-11
t Critical two-tail	1.9600122

The probability of being drafted and or playing in the NFL increases based on being from a Title-I high school. This result is not consistent for students who come from a community college transferring into a Division I football program; these students seem to experience the opposite effect. A plausible reasoning that supports this outcome derives from the primary need for attending a community college. In most cases, these students enroll in community colleges as a result of under achieving academically in high school. To be considered eligible to play football, the student must possess a minimum of a 2.3 GPA in the core courses. Community college allows student-athletes to become eligible by taking classes to increase their GPA to be accepted to the school that recruited them for football. Consequently, this population of student-athletes may be less likely to experience success beyond their college football career.

The story emerging from the results in Tables 2 – 6 illustrates the significance that socioeconomic status has on student-athletes' success. First, we look at the research questions and see how the findings answer the question of whether the low socioeconomic background of student-athletes significantly influences performance. Based on the results, student-athletes' socioeconomic status has a significant correlation to college football programs' success.

Furthermore, the research indicates that student-athletes' socioeconomic status has a significant correlation to the student-athlete attracting attention from the NFL and being drafted. However, it is not clear whether a low socioeconomic status increases or decreases the student-athlete's probability for staying in school. The data collected in this research accounts for individuals who left school early. The population consisted of over 9,700 records of Division I football athletes from all participating colleges and universities. Of this population, approximately 36% are Title I students and 500 student-athletes left college early within the seven years of observation; 194 (or about 38%) of the 500 plus athletes that left college early were Title-I student-athletes. A more rigorous investigation of the relationship between SES and propensity to leave college early is left for future research. In untabulated tests, we failed to find a significant correlation between low SES and years of academic enrollment.

A university that ignores a student-athlete's socioeconomic weakness should not be allowed to benefit from his athletic strengths. Socioeconomic status (SES) of student-athletes is comprised of more than the income of their parents and immediate family; it is also comprised of his potential lack of ability to acquire an educational aptitude for higher learning. Being a student-athlete from a low-income community is not the only factor that creates a systemic learned behavior; it is also characterized by the academic and sociological climates.

Success for a student-athlete can be measured in many ways; some will state the opportunity to play on such a big stage is a once in a lifetime experience. Others possibly argue the platform on which Division I football programs operate upon creates an opportunity that can transform young men lives. While a significant amount of research studies speak to the probability of playing sports professionally, graduation rates and financial gains of the attended universities,

there is ever-looming gap that exists is one that questions the intent of the university who admits student-athletes from low socioeconomic environments.

By default, the inherited core essence of a higher education institution is to provide and teach professional work-related skills and knowledge while facilitating an environment that creates an organic mechanism for students to grow personally and academically. However, these young men are recruited on their physical attributes, not their academic aptitude one. The question remains how or does the university support these student-athletes in adjusting to this paradigm shift of environments.

College football programs provide an organized structure and set of rules that offer the student-athlete discipline and accountability; however, these traits may not translate to tangible attributes that will prepare a student-athlete for the rest of his life and develop a diverse set of skills and knowledge outside of football. College football provides an opportunity for some who may never have the chance to experience the vast diversity of social environments outside their own and grants them a guaranteed quality education. However, little research has been conducted to understand if students from low income families are over performing for their attended university athletically, yet being underserved by the attended university academically.

The development or lack thereof for these student-athletes could have a lifelong effect on their personal growth and wellbeing as members of society beyond college football. The various hypotheses were tested to determine if student-athletes from low socioeconomic backgrounds influence their teams' performance and how likely their status influenced their ability to play professionally. This study also viewed the academic commitment from the low-income student-

athlete by assessing the number of years they were enrolled in school. These components allowed the study to illustrate how the student-athletic goals conflicts with the presumed academic goals of the university through an academic lens.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS

In the empirical analysis several regressions were conducted to test the hypotheses pertaining to an expected relationship between socioeconomic status and performance. The findings indicate there exists a relationship between student-athletes from low socioeconomic environments and performance. Additionally, the analysis also considered SES status' impact at the team/program level by examining its influence on team performance (win-loss record), financial performance (operating profits), and success in student-athlete placement in the NFL draft and playing in the NFL.

Several hypotheses held true to the anticipated results that athletic football programs whose rosters primarily consist of players from low socioeconomic status, on average, have better win-loss records. Additionally, the results further confirm that student-athletes from low socioeconomic backgrounds have a better chance of getting drafted.

The research findings allowed for the discovery of the benefits of having student-athletes from low socioeconomic backgrounds and their influence on increasing performance from a university and personal perspective. This research study used historical data variables for Title-I and non-Title-I students to determine whether it is plausible that Title-I student-athletes have a higher probability of experience personal athletic success and whether collectively low SES students can positively impact team performance and create value for their college programs. The findings of the multiple regression analysis of the 7-year sample constructed for this

research suggest that low SES matters in an important way. It influences performance not only at the individual but also at the team level. Whether low socioeconomic status impacts recruitment valuations requires further investigation.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The framework of this research is based on relevant concepts that allow the research questions to be answered. By using the data collected to tell the story, it provides a more concrete quantitative approach to determine the theories of the implied issues that may or may not exist in relation to the identified hypotheses that predict a correlation between performance and low socioeconomic status of student-athletes.

In summary, the findings stem from the analysis of a large dataset of student-athletes from 2010 – 2016 that illustrated consistent results in general theory that increased success can be achieved by an unexplained association of Title-I or low socioeconomic status and not by athleticism alone. Student-athletes from Title-I schools have an increased chance than student-athletes from a non-Title-I high school or international students of playing in the NFL and or being drafted. The association between Title-I student-athletes and athletic performance throughout this research and data models created remained significant.

Perhaps the causality can be explained by identifying the race of the student-athlete and whether that specific race from low socioeconomic environments is more driven to compete at a higher level than any other racial population. Another point of interest that could create a prioritization may be that the lack of a quality education forces the student to rely on football as a more perceived chance of achieving as a career. The high risk high rewards that professional

football creates in the eyes of young men from low socioeconomic environments may be creating a false sense of a means to escape poverty.

CHAPTER TEN: AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The research conducted in this study indicates that success is highly more attainable for Title-I students; however, it does not provide a description of what race this applies to and whether their success be replicated. To date, no research study has addressed whether racial differences can account for the effects attributed to student-athletes' low socioeconomic backgrounds. Nor has any research been conducted to explain the psychological factors that provide athletes from low income communities the ability to have a higher probability of attaining success. Undoubtedly, an important missing variable, such as race, can potentially create the causality between SES and performance shown in our tests. Therefore, the availability of race information would provide access to plethora of areas to conduct further research. Understanding the mental and physical dynamics of the character of the Title-I student-athlete, including the racial/ethnicity cultural elements, offers numerous opportunities for future research.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Variable descriptions

Variables	Descriptions
Student variables	
Title-I student	An indicator that takes a value of 1 if the student is from a Title-I school and 0 otherwise.
NFL	An indicator that takes a value of 1 if the student is picked by a NFL team and 0 otherwise.
Draft	An indicator that takes a value of 1 if the student is drafted and 0 otherwise.
Foreign	An indicator that takes a value of 1 for foreign students and 0 for domestic students.
Quarterback	An indicator that takes a value of 1 if the student's position is quarterback and 0 otherwise.

Appendix B: NCAAF team variables	
Ratio of Title-I students	The ratio of Title-I players in the team.
Number of players	The number of players in the team. It is log-transformed after taking a value of 1 in the regression analysis.
Ratio of community college transferring students	The ratio of players who are transferred from community colleges.
Financial aid	The total amount of financial aid for the team. It is log-transformed after taking a value of 1 in the regression analysis.
Total compensation for head coach	The total compensation made for head coach. It is log-transformed after taking a value of 1 in the regression analysis.
Number of assistant coaches	The number of assistant coaches in the team. It is log-transformed after taking a value of 1 in the regression analysis.
Academic rank (1 to 50)	An indicator that takes a value of 1 if the school is included within the top 50 academic rankings.
Academic rank (51 to 100)	An indicator that takes a value of 1 if the school is ranked between 51 and 100 in the academic rankings.

Appendix C: Hometown demographic information (State level)	
Ratio of white residents	Ratio of white residents in the state where the student's high school is located.
Ratio of residents with bachelor degrees	Ratio of residents with bachelor degrees in the state where the student's high school is located.
Median household income	The median household income of the state where the student's high school is located. It is log-transformed after taking a value of 1 in the regression analysis.
Unemployment rate	The unemployment rate of the state where the student's high school is located.
Number of convictions per million	The number of convictions per million for the state where the student's high school is located.
Number of large cities in the state	The number of large cities in the state where the student's high school is located.

Appendix D: Literature Review

Source	Findings
Sewell, W. H., & Shah, V. P. (1967). Socioeconomic Status, Intelligence, and the Attainment of Higher Education. Sociology Of Education, 40(1), 1-23.	• This study was conducted in the late 1960's, this research reviewed the analysis of socioeconomic status and intelligence and what impacts or effects it had on students view of planning on college, college attendance and eventually graduation. • While this data and research can be seen as antiquated research study, it further highlights the factors that socioeconomic status and intelligence influences the educational progress of the college student.
Athletics. (2013). Higher Education Abstracts, 48(1), 8-10. doi:10.1111/hea.12000_7	• This article reviews the landscape of Division II college student-athlete both male and female. Its findings suggest that scholarship student-athletes, both male and female have significantly higher GPAs than non-scholarship student-athletes. • This article does not take in account for the extent of the level of competition at a Division II school compared to a Division I.

	• This article creates a thought process that question: If the financial demand and revenue is no longer a part of the equation, does the student-athlete begin to prioritize and balance athletics & academics?
Bailey, S. (2017). A comparison of academic and athletic performance in the NCAA. College Student Journal, (2), 173.	• The author states that there is no significant data that proves that athletes perform significantly less academically than their non-student-athlete colleagues. If these assumptions hold true, the graduation rates for each student-athlete and non-student-athlete would be similar in rate and growth. • The author believes that there is a correlation that links elite student-athlete to excelling academically.
Walpole, M. (2003). Socioeconomic Status and College: How SES Affects College Experiences and Outcomes. Review Of Higher Education, 27(1), 45-73.	• This research is a quantitative study that examines the college students from low SES backgrounds and use data to determine if they follow the same patterns as college students from high SES. • The research speaks to the effects of social class in a college environment a holistic understanding of how individuals from low SES family

	structures and create the process of gaining social liberation. • This article is prevalent to my current research as it ties into the essence of the student aspect and the validation that there are some variables that are factors to a student success based upon their socioeconomic status. • The research indicated a present impact to low socioeconomic college students and their struggles. Thus, validating the need to further understand the impacts on student-athletes from low socioeconomic environments.
singer, j. n. (2008). Benefits and detriments of African American male athletes' participation in a big-time college football program. international review for the sociology of sport, 43(4), 399.	• This research was conducted by studying four African American football student-athletes. The study focused on their ability to matriculate through a major university football program and reach what the author calls "success" despite the racial discrimination during their time playing college football. • The author did not define if the term "success" equated to graduation or the opportunity to play in the NFL.
LAM, G. (2014). A theoretical framework of the relation between socioeconomic	• The research analysis in this study talks to the level of importance that must be in place to

status and academic achievement of students. education, 134(3), 326-331.	nurture the relation between students who fall within the low socioeconomic status and fostering a climate of high academic performance. • The author argues that the socioeconomic status is a critical variable that indicates the likelihood of a student to drop out of school due to the variables that create factors that define low academic performance. • Based upon the authors research study he argues that prior to high school teachers engaging with students based upon their intellect, they form preconceived expectation on students that are from low socioeconomic statuses. • This causes one to question if various stereotypes are placed on or towards student-athletes from low socioeconomic statuses as well. If so would the assumption of the university be one that would assume that student-athletes with low SES be more inclined to help build their program due to lack of learning motivation

Mixon Jr., F. G., Treviño, L. J., & Minto, T. C. (2004). Touchdowns and test scores: exploring the relationship between athletics and academics. Applied Economics Letters, 11(7), 421.	• This article talks to the correlation of the relationship between athletics and academics within the university setting. This study believes that colleges and universities are benefiting from the student-athlete athletic contribution to the football programs and its success enhances the university to ability to attract high quality students. • The author argues that previous survey results indicated that some prospective students' state that football programs are not a deciding factor to them, this article finding argue the opposite. The research discovered that there is a positive and significant relationship that college football programs act as a one of the universities selling point in regard to recruiting.
Wilson, D., Jones, D., Bocell, F., Crawford, J., Kim, M., Veilleux, N., & ... Plett, M. (2015). Belonging and Academic Engagement Among Undergraduate STEM Students: A Multi-institutional Study. (Cover story). Research In Higher	• This research study looks into the aspects of the student having a need to having the presence of belonging and Academic Engagement to aid the student to be successful in their academic journey. • In the study the authors recognize how sense of belonging at several various levels are directly correlated to behavioral and emotional

Education, 56(7), 750-776. doi:10.1007/s11162-015-9367-x	components of action that students experience in the classroom. • The research states that, the motivation that drives the student to excel in the classrooms is directly dependent of the university engagement and provided sense of belonging. • The belonging of the student-athlete is primarily a by need basis. The student-athlete may lose his sense of belonging once he can no longer perform athletically or has moved on to the professional level.
Wittmer, J., Bostic, D., Phillips, T. D., & Waters, W. (1981). The Personal, Academic, and Career Problems of College student Athletes: Some Possible Answers. Personnel & Guidance Journal, 60(1), 52.	• The author captures the realistic views that athletics has become segregated from academics. This article outlines the level of degree in which the student-athlete is instantly moved into his own environment with a separate set of standards and guidelines. • The article illustrates how the worries, stress and hardships of a student attending the same university are not the day-to-day issues of a student-athlete. • The statistical facts highlighted in the article points out that the impacts of the segregation of academia from athletics impacts the African

	American student-athlete at a much higher rate than any other student-athlete ethnicity.
Devin G., P., & Jaren C., P. (2009). The Impact of College Sports Success on the Quantity and Quality of Student Applications. Southern Economic Journal, (3), 750.	• In this article, the authors talk to the data sets that was used to if college football/basketball success increases the quantity of applications to a school after that school achieves success • Based upon their findings they discovered that there are positive impacts to the university enrollment based upon the university athletic success. • The article explains further that based upon the university status (private), some universities will adjust their tuition based upon the athletic program achieved success.
Floyd, C. (1996). Achieving Despite the Odds: A Study of Resilience Among a Group of Africa American High School Seniors. The Journal of Negro Education, 65(2), 181-189. doi:10.2307/2967312	• This article was conducted using the interview methodology. The author interviewed 20 African American students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Despite their economic status these individuals were excelling academically. • In the author's findings, he identified that the economic background does not dictate the academic aptitude of the student nor does it define the student potential.

	• The draw to this research is it may be somewhat biased by the students that were selected and the idea that no other schools where used in this study. It does not provide a large enough sample data pool to quantify that this implied resilience can be replicated across races, various socioeconomic climates and age groups.
RHOADS, T. A., & GERKING, S. (2000). Educational contributions, academic quality, and athletic success. Contemporary Economic Policy, (2),	• This article looked at the financial success of college football and basketball within the U.S. whom success of the collegiate teams motivated alumni and donors to make financial contributions to their universities. • While the data analyses of this research were conducted quite some time ago, (1986-87 to 1995-96), nonetheless, the data indicated that donors and alumni respond positively to football wins/championships. • In parallel the data also indicated a negative impact on contributions when their university experienced an athletic suspension of some sort for an NCAA regulation violation. • This article concludes that by investing on the football program there are positive impacts on the academic front. Based upon the researchers'

	results college football success results in an increase in financial contributions.
Natoli, R. r., Jackling, B., & Siddique, S. (2015). Insights into Departure Intention: A Qualitative Case Study. Education Research & Perspectives, 42(1), 459-490.	• This article examines the cause and effects of the student and their views on the engagement and departure intention from university. • The research study focuses on the student logic and reasons why they contemplated departure from their university • The author's research methods included interviews of business students; however, the demographics of the students were participants at a university located in the Western suburbs of Melbourne Australia. The results are not clear if this can be applicable to students in the US. • The summation of this article indicates that for students to remain engaged in the academia realm of the institution the pre-entry attributes are significantly important to the student. • The influence on student departure intention is based primarily on the various variables that are critical to academic retention. (Teaching quality,

	Administrative support, assessment activities, Interactions Peers & Staff, Clubs and Societies)
Farkas, G. (2017). Human capital or cultural capital?: Ethnicity and poverty groups in an urban school district. Routledge.	• This book speaks in depth on the surreal reality of students living in poverty that make-up over ¼ of all students in the U.S. • It speaks on how millions of young children will have to learn how overcome their socioeconomic disadvantage in order to have an opportunity to a semi-normal life experience. • This book illustrates the uphill battle that most children that are in low socioeconomic will face to gain some element of social mobility.
COLE, E. K. (2016). FOR THE WIN: A story of academic fraud and its cover-up to keep "student"-athletes eligible in big-time college sports. a review of JAY M. SMITH AND MARY WILLINGHAM'S cheated: the UNC scandal, the education of athletes, and the future of big-time college sports. Journal Of College & University Law, 42(1), 227-234.	• The author provides a point of view of in the form of a book that documented how student-athletes at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill (UNC) falsified their way through college education to avoid the losing their ineligibility. • The context is derived for a book written by Jay M. Smith and Mary Willingham's: Cheated: The UNC Scandal, the Education of Athletes, and the Future of Big-Time College Sports.

	• The author speaks to the acts of the student-athletes who received high grades in selected independent study classes that were offered and taught by faculty who felt sympathetic for the student-athlete. • Like many other literature reviews conducted the common thread is leading back to the acknowledgment that race lies at the center of the lack of academic importance to the student athlete more specifically the African American student-athlete. • There seems to be a literature trend that ties sub-par academic expectation and aspirations that correlates to the student-athletes perceived purpose of college.
Din, F. S. (2005). Sport activities versus academic achievement for rural high school students. In National Forum of Applied Educational Research Journal-Electronic (Vol. 19, No. 3E, pp. 1-11).	• In this article the researcher discovered, for sample set of subjects he used for his study, he found that there was a minimum impact on academic achievement and rural high school achievement. • However, as the author further reviewed the results he discovered that the students in the rural high school that participated in playing

	sports did not have any impact on their academic achievements.
Fisher, B. (2009). Athletics success and institutional rankings. New Directions For Higher Education, 2009(148), 45-53. doi:10.1002/he.367	• This research shares a similarity in theme to the previous researcher in this literature review as the author examines athletic success and its effects on university rankings. • The author highlights that universities seek endorsements based on their ability to have higher rankings. These rankings can justify their ability to push a product or brand due to its own brand awareness based upon the rankings. • The conclusions to this research like others similar studies; it discovered that there is a positive influence on financial donations based upon rankings.
Patrick James Rishe, a. (2003). A Reexamination of How Athletic Success Impacts Graduation Rates: Comparing Student-Athletes to All Other Undergraduates. The American Journal Of Economics And Sociology, (2), 407.	• This study looks at the graduation rates of all students and compares them to those of the student-athlete. The researcher discovered that the student-athletes had higher graduation rates than undergraduates. The author argues that this is primarily due to the NCAA and university policies that have a very low mandate on academics for student-athletes to remain athletic eligibility to play football.

	• In the research the author indicates that, perhaps the GPA is also lower than the average student based on the principle that the student-athlete is playing a traveling half of the school year. With a demand to represent the university his focus may not necessarily be on the academic perspective at the time.
Byrd, K. L., & MacDonald, G. (2005). Defining college readiness from the inside out: first-generation college student perspectives. Community College Review, (1), 22.	• The author speaks to the concepts of how and what kind of pressures that university place the students from first generation backgrounds and the responsibility they carry reach success as a student. • It assumes that self-regulating behavior indicates student readiness for college. The assumption that all students will naturally inherit the discipline to be self-regulated is not remotely possible. • While the author does not expand the research beyond the limitation of subjects that were interview, the author did conclude that the students whose parents did not go to college could have possibly view themselves as less than adequate for college.

	• The notion of being ready or adequate for college is the assumed intimidation that most feel when deciding to become a student. This is not a shared emotion for student-athletes. Their readiness is not measured on their academic preparedness; however, it primarily measures them by their athletic capability and skills.

Appendix E: Data Collection & Analysis Figures

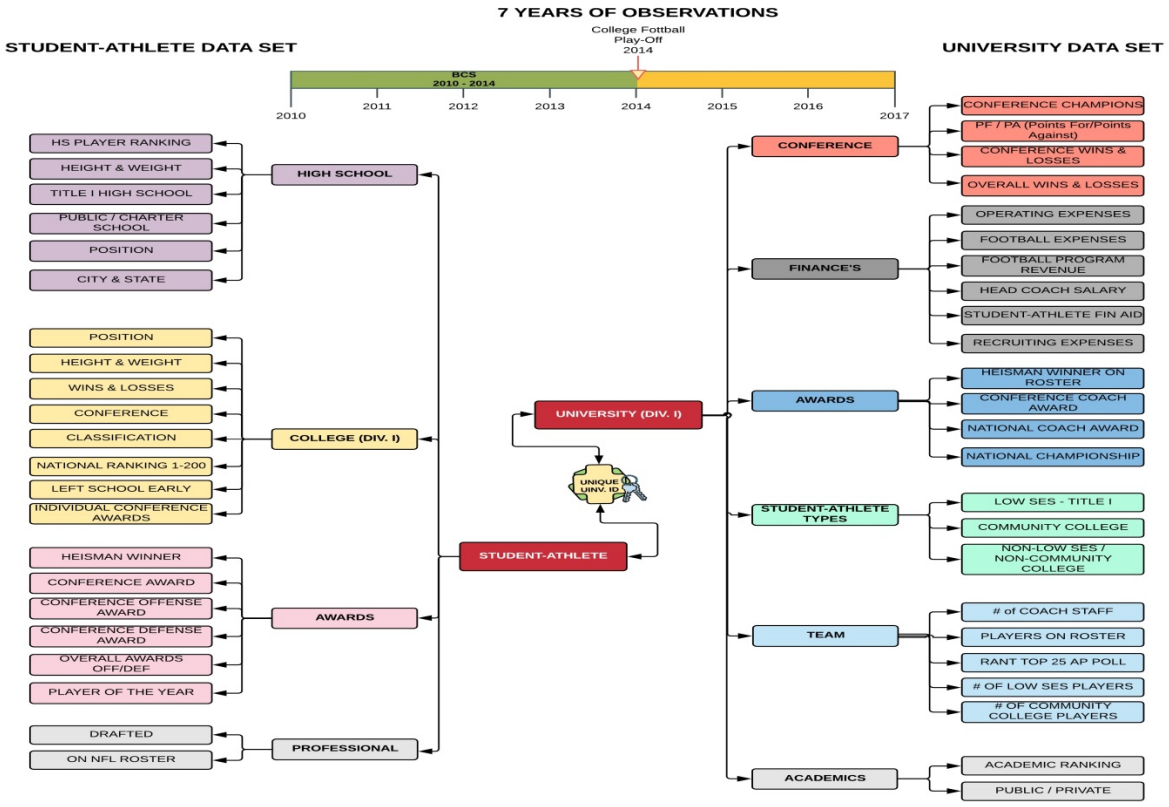

Figure 1 (Enlarged)

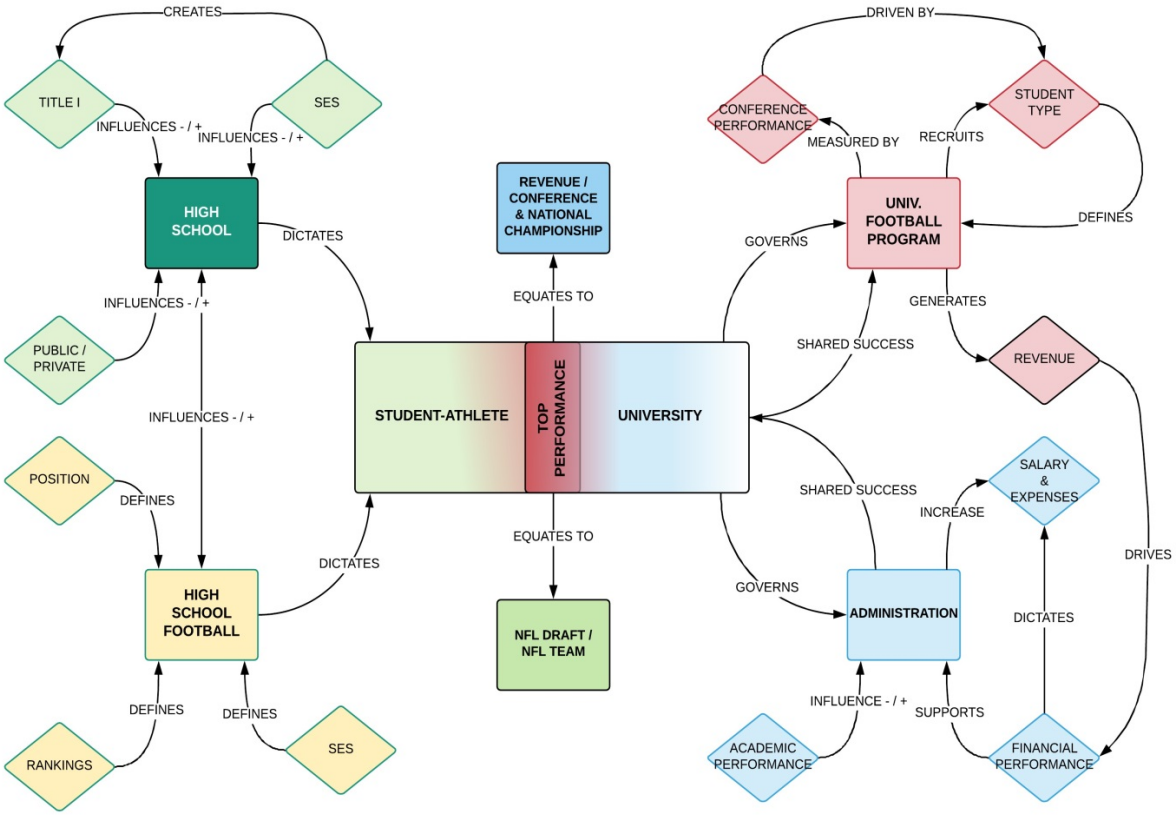

Figure 2 (Enlarged)

Appendix F: Definition of Key Terms

Title-I: This term is used to define the if a high school is deemed eligible or a recipient of governmental financial assistant, based primarily on the percentage of population of student enrolled that are from low-income families. A high school that has a minimum of 40 percent of children from low-income families enrolled is allowed and eligible to use Title-I dollars.

NCAA: The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is a membership-driven organization that set forth the rules, regulation and bylaws related in relations to all members of the intercollegiate athletic programs. The NCAA also set forth the guidelines in which structures the Bowl(s) and National Championship game.

Division I Conference: This division consists of schools that commonly have significant larger financial structure and student bodies than the other lower divisions. For the purpose of this research, the specific group that was focused on was those who participate in the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS).

Student-Athlete: An individual who is enrolled fulltime at a college or university and has been submitted to the NCAA as an eligible and active member of a team and is listed on the football team roster.

Socioeconomic Status (SES): The social standing/class of a student athlete from a non-low-income community.

Low Socioeconomic Status: The social standing/class of a student athlete from a low-income community.

Low Income: Defined as a working or non-working family that has a cumulated earning less than twice of the perspective federal poverty line year. (Poverty lines are adjusted each year by the Census Bureau)

Appendix G: Data Collection Plan

The data retrieved that represents the data sets were extracted from the following information systems/organizations:

- United State Census Bureau
    - Poverty and Economy Income Details per year (2010-2016)
- United States Department of Education
    - U.S. High School Private
    - U.S. High School Public
    - Title-I Eligible Status
- National Student Clearinghouse Research Center
    - Student Athletes:
        - Name
        - Birth Place
        - Height & Weight
        - College Attended
- NCAA ncaa.org
    - University Year-by-Year Win/Loss Record
    - Coach Year-by-Year Win/Loss Record
    - Student-athlete's career statistics
    - Student-athlete's year-by-year statistics
- CFBSTATS.com
    - Student-Athlete Home Town
    - College Attended
    - High School

    - Roster Status
    - Position
    - College Football Program Wins & Losses
    - College Football Program Revenue
    - Classification (e.g. FR, SO, JR, SR or GRAD)
    - Years in College
    - Roster Status
    - Position
- NFL.com
    - NFL Draft (If Applicable)
    - Draft Year
    - Draft Round
    - Draft Team

Appendix H: Search Description

The protocol chosen to facilitate this research included various search engines, information systems, databases, including JSTOR and EBSCO, accessed through the University of South Florida online library. Google Scholar was also a beneficial source in finding related publications to assist in developing and support the research question and hypotheses.

Appendix I: Supporting Research: Industry Analysis: Division I College Football in the U.S.

This section covers the innerworkings of the collegiate landscape of college football in the US. An Industry Analysis was conducted by the author to provide a deep dive into the key stakeholders of the industry and how their various impacts they experience within their individual journey. This article examine if the journey of being recruited and participating in a Division I college football program enrich the experience of the student-athlete's college life athletically and academically?

This Industry Analysis examines the stakeholders within the constructs of the college football environment and seeks to explain the various impacts on key stakeholders within the constructs of this industry. More importantly, this research tracks the student-athlete with regards to both decision paths of either seeking a professional football career or an education with the benefits to playing football.

Does the journey of being recruited and participating in Division I college football program enrich the experience of the student-athletes college life athletically and academically? This research outlines the concepts of the NCAA with a focus on Division I football and the various layers of the industry as a whole.

Keywords

NCAA, Division I, Student-Athlete, Parents, College Football, Conferences, SEC, ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, Conference USA, High School, Recruiting, Recruit, Coach, Head Coach, African

American, Student, University, College, College Football, Football, NFL Draft, NFL, Revenue, Academics, National Championship, BCS

Executive Summary

This Industry Analysis looks into the aspects of the stakeholders within the constructs of the college football environment and seeks to explain the various impacts on key stakeholders within the constructs of this industry. More importantly this research tracks the student-athlete both decision paths of the process of seeking a professional football career or an education with the benefits to playing football.

The student athlete will face many decisions within his journey as a football player it can be critical that the supporting people within his family environment become a voice of practicality when making a college selection or deciding when to leave college in order to pursue the quest of playing in the NFL. This decision for a young adult can be become challenging, as it will have a binary result of success or failure that will result in a direct impact on his adult life.

Many Division I student-athlete will at some point of their collegiate career, will face the struggle of making the decision to remain a college student or leave college early to play professional football. For some this decision will not be an issue as there are some student-athletes that will accept the reality that professional football will not be their career vehicle, however, there is a large majority of student-athletes that will go through that decision thought process. Understanding how to distinguish attainable reality compared to chasing a dream of playing professional football and understanding the low probability of that intended dream will need to be understood by the student-athlete and their support system(s).

The parent(s) may have to become more aware of the long-standing impacts as they introduce their child to football and consider the level of importance that they may place on their child's athletic success. A balance approach must be in place that represents a success in both college football and academically, the student-athletes journey cannot be defined by expectations of playing professional football alone.

Introduction to the U.S. College Athletic Landscape

The term "college athletics" refers to sports-related and organized athletics competition, where the participants are students of institutions of higher education (e.g. colleges and universities) in the United States (US). These institutions of higher learning subsidize the various sports and athletic activities as part of their extracurricular programs. The college athletics framework is built upon a two-tiered system.

The first tier of college athletics is overseen by academic sport governing organizations, including the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), and the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) which is an association made up of community college and junior college athletic departments throughout the United States

For this industry analysis, the author focuses on the first tier of the college athletics framework, which involves only the sports sanctioned by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). For some, it is considered a privilege to compete at the height of collegiate athletics and receive a valuable education. However, many athletes in today's evolving college athletic

landscape, more specifically those in college football, believe they are victims because they do not benefit from the revenues at the Division I level.

Participating in college athletics enriches one's college experience. However, the physical and mental demands can outweigh the intended academic purpose. Players train daily in hopes of demonstrating an uncommon level performance so that their football accomplishments and accolades result in multimillion-dollar contract offers from National Football League (NFL) teams.

In recent NCAA reports, statistics show that approximately 2% will see financial contractual rewards for college football student-athletes. However, the majority of student-athletes who play football experience and endure the wear and tear on their bodies without ever reaping professional rewards. A number of misconceptions exist about the student-athlete and his journey into his attended college and football program. Student-athletes and their parents participate in the recruiting process, a far from atypical experience when compared to the non-athletic college student.

This industry analysis outlines the collegiate football landscape from various facets and provides insights into the many layers of college athletics as an industry. Due to the magnitude of the population of athletes who participate in college athletics at the Division I level, this analyses only focuses on Division I college football. This focus is accomplished by highlighting the stakeholders within the constructs of Division I college football and addressing the various impacts on the identified stakeholders. These stakeholders include the student-athlete, the colleges and universities that exist within the industry environment, and the professional sports

teams, such as the NFL, that are the potential employers of the student-athletes from the collegiate football system.

The business model of the NCAA serves as the governing body of college sports and currently monopolizes the earning potential of the student-athlete and his attended university. Since its conception, the NCAA has maintained its status as a profitable organization by increasing its profits year in and year out.

In this analysis, Porters Five Forces Model is used to identify and evaluate the key factors that could possibly disrupt college athletics as an industry and cause a breakdown in the control the NCAA has on student-athletes, the educational institutions, and other revenues. For a period of time, the NCAA and other partnering corporate entities made millions of dollars from the likeness of the student-athlete. In a class action suit filed by an ex-University of California at Los Angeles basketball player, the judge ruled that it was unlawful for the NCAA to profit from the likeness of a student-athlete. An athlete's likeness was defined as a student-athlete's personal rights; it was ruled that the student-athlete reserved the right to govern the commercial use of his name, image, likeness, or other obvious facets of the student-athlete's distinctiveness or brand recognition.

If the NCAA allowed players to profit from their right to use their likeness, would it increase the chances of student-athletes choosing to stay and play at the college level?

College Athletics: The Industry and the Business

On December 28, 1905, in New York, 62 colleges and universities became charter members of the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (IAAUS). The IAAUS was established officially on March 31, 1906, and took its present name, the NCAA, in 1910. The NCAA did not function under a full-time leader until 1951.

Currently, the NCAA is headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana. The NCAA has had only six leaders/presidents within the 66 years of its existence. The NCAA remains divided into three divisions (Divisions I, II, III). Its current organization is structured by three divisions with approximately 347 institutions in Division I (DI), 309 in Division II (DII), and 442 in Division III (DIII).

In August of 1973, Division I, Division II, and Division III were adopted by the NCAA membership in a special convention. Under NCAA rules, Division I and Division II schools can offer scholarships to athletes for playing a sport. Division III schools, in most cases, do not offer any athletic scholarships. Generally, larger schools compete in Division I and smaller schools participate in Division II and Division III. Division I football was further divided into I-A and I-AA in 1978. Subsequently, the term "Division I-AAA" was added briefly to delineate Division I universities that do not have a football program.

The core essence and values for Division I collegiate football programs include compliance, ethical conduct, academics, diversity, amateurism, recruiting, eligibility, financial aid, postseason competition, and the financial sustainability of the athletic program operations. This

industry analysis examines the football student-athlete and parents/guardian's environments to better understand the key priorities when selecting a college and why.

The NCAA membership has adopted amateurism rules to ensure the students' priority remains obtaining a quality educational experience and that all student-athletes compete equitably. All incoming student-athletes must be certified as amateurs.

To be certified as an amateur, prospective student-athletes must first register with the NCAA Eligibility Center online at www.eligibilitycenter.org, where they provide information about their amateur status. The amateurism certification process ensures that incoming Division I or II student-athletes meet NCAA amateurism requirements. Student-athletes who fully complete the process are typically approved as certified.

With the global recruiting of athletes becoming more common, determining the amateur status of prospective student-athletes can be challenging for colleges and universities. All student-athletes, including international students, are required to adhere to NCAA amateurism requirements to remain eligible for intercollegiate competition.

Another NCAA function is to provide an organizational structure for the participating athletic programs of numerous colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. The NCAA's organizational structure includes over 450,000 college student-athletes who compete yearly in college competitive sports.

Division III schools do not offer athletic scholarships to their student-athletes, but these students can apply to receive academic scholarships and other financial aid, including tuition, room and board, and other college related fees, to defray the costs of obtaining a college education. Division III students do not need to register with the NCAA Clearinghouse.

The NCAA operates as a non-profit association that provides the rules and regulations to govern the athletes of 1,123 institutions, conferences, organizations, and individuals. It is also comprised of 98 voting athletic conferences and 39 affiliated organizations. The NCAA membership consists of various roles that make up participating colleges/universities, voting athletic conferences, and affiliated groups (See Appendix for **NCAA Members).**

Typically, these roles, which outlined in the appendix, are salaried staffed positions and, in some cases, are mandatory for the athletic program to have in order to be considered compliant as a college/university participating in NCAA athletics.

On numerous occasions, the NCAA has been questioned and challenged on its positions regarding policies related to student-athlete financial guidelines, especially regarding its use of the age-old classification of College Athletes as "amateurs" who should be the first to be acknowledged as student-athletes and subject to the restrictions its members have imposed on the compensation student-athletes receive. Every year, a significant number of players are reported to have received benefits over and above the NCAA's approved limits.

The sanctions for such violations have led to players having their college eligibility revoked. The impact of the violations also affects the colleges and universities where these players

competed. In some well-publicized cases, teams' wins were stripped away, the college and university football teams were banned from participating in bowl/tournament championship games and, for more extreme violations, coaches were fired and athletic programs severely restricted in their abilities to recruit student-athletes.

Understanding the Collegiate Stakeholders

I. The Student-Athlete

The definition of a student-athlete is an individual who participates in an organized competitive sport sponsored by the educational institution in which he or she is currently enrolled. Typically, student-athletes must balance the roles of being a full-time student with being a full-time athlete.

According to NCAA Research, the estimated probability of competing in professional athletics is extremely low and could alarm the aspiring college athlete, especially if he desires a career as a professional athlete. According to NCAA research conducted in 2015, approximately 1.5% of NCAA students who are draft-eligible will have an opportunity to make a professional roster. This 1.5% represents the total 20% of all participating athletic programs that have potential student-athletes with the opportunity to play on a major league level.

The creation of a student-athlete occurs at a very early stage of life, depending on the individual's level of development and physical growth. Most universities compete against each other to recruit and acquire the high-performing student-athletes as early as the junior year of high school.

On average, a Division I prototypical athlete entering his junior year in high school will receive hundreds of offer letters from colleges and universities. Many athletes will have the opportunity to make numerous campus visits at the athletic departments' expense; these visits are intended to provide a glamourous glimpse of the campus life.

From that early age, coaches place a great deal of emphasis on student-athletes playing at the peak of their abilities, making the big plays, and creating the highlight reel footage. Winning is absolutely everything to young athletes, and college coaches know it. In a number of cases, high school seniors who are stars on their teams and in their regions are visited and recruited by Division I head football coaches of a major university.

Some realities of college football are not commonly discussed, such as the limited financial aid the student-athlete can receive. Without adequate support from family, the student-athlete's campus life could be extremely grim. As the student-athlete struggles with the time commitment demanded to balance their academic and athletic lives, many choose football to survive and maintain their position.

The vast majority of Division I athletes are considered to be professional grade athletes; they use their college careers as a platform to transcend to the professional level. Some of these athletes openly acknowledge and admit that obtaining a college degree is secondary in regards to their priorities, if important at all.

From an early age, the idea of becoming a NFL superstar is an expectation imbedded in the student-athlete mind; the mindset begins when the student is first introduced to the sport and

begins to excel in it. For many Division I athletes, college serves as a formality and training process that helps them transition into a professional athlete. Many coaches are aware of the student-athletes' aspirations for playing professional football, so they coach these young men in a fashion that can make their aspirations a reality.

There are alarming statistics about NCAA sports that parents should know! In an article titled "Facts about the NCAA Sports," the NCAA highlights details about collegiate sports of which most high school athletes may not be aware. Of the 176,000 student-athletes in 346 Division I schools, less than 2% of high school athletes will receive an athletic scholarship. The odds of being a scholarship athlete are indeed low.

Table A2: Estimated Probability of Competing In NCAA Athletics Beyond High School

Student-athletes	**Football**
High School Student-Athletes	1,083,600
NCAA Student-Athletes	72,800
Percentage Moving from High School to NCAA	6.7%
Percentage Moving from NCAA to Major Professional*	1.6%

Today, high school football and basketball seniors across the country host live nationally televised press conferences to announce where they have signed a letter of intent to play college ball. These young kids are the product of the college recruiting business model because nearly every major university has adopted this model; many schools invest millions of dollars yearly to recruit and attract the elite athletes across the country.

Some of these student-athletes may have inherited a false sense of reality during their recruitment process, which further heightens their intention of pursuing professional football as the primary goal of attending college. Recently, this mentality was highlighted in an ESPN documentary conducted on the University of Kentucky head basketball coach, John Calipari.

While it is not common knowledge to the student-athlete or the parent, the NCAA has well-structured rules related to the validity of an athletic scholarship. Athletic scholarships are treated as only a yearly commitment; the university or college reserves the right to withdraw the scholarship at any time, regardless of the student's academic or athletic status.

II. The Student-Athlete's Parent

As the young child begins to learn to play football and gets acknowledged for his ability to play the sport, he receives praise and pressure from his parents and the thoughts of excelling in football grow.

The transition from playing a recreational sport quickly shifts to having the ability to earn a college scholarship for playing football. Many parents and students know the athletic scholarship can be achieved due to the increasing number of U.S. colleges and universities that are part of the NCAA that provide athletic scholarships yearly. However, many parents plant the idea into their child that even better opportunities exist beyond college.

The parent's role is essential to the student-athletes' decision-making process. Parents may dismiss the notion that their child's first priority should be excelling as a student; many parents may consider academics an institutional formality and focus on the success of their child's

football career. There has been an increase of the over emphasizing of playing football. When it is time for a student-athlete to select a college, most high performing athletes select their school based on the football team's performance and records rather than the institution's academic ranking.

National reports state that over 30 million young children participate in some kind of organized competitive athletic sports; 70% will quit that sport prior to reaching the age of 13 or before their freshman year in high school.

Of the 30 million young students who participate in sports, approximately 126,000 student-athletes will receive some form of a college scholarship. That number is considerably low; research reflects that less than 2% of that 126,000 will transition to the professional level, which means that, in the United Sates for all division collegiate schools, only 2,520 will become professional athletes in their perspective sports in America.

Parents' may not understand their core responsibility is to influence a child's growth and development in academics as well. The characteristics and make-up of the parents' expectations for the child set the stage of how much of the child's time will be invested in scholastic endeavors, commitment to sports training and related activities, and preparation to be successful in football and academically.

Too much emphasis on football can negatively impact and potentially develop character issues. Placing this type of pressure on the child to perform can slowly cause the young athlete to develop an extremely narrow focus of goals in life.

Some of these issues are found most frequently in African American communities. High school football coaches believe the parents and students do not understand the student's life beyond the athletic scholarship. This belief could be the cause of the lack of awareness of the value of athletic scholarship, due to the fact that, in some instances, African American high school student-athletes are first generation college students. The NCAA reports that many participants recruited to play at NCAA participating schools are first-generation college students.

Student-athletes from the African American community may have parents who are more likely to instill in their child the ideals of pursuing a career in professional football as a high priority. This type of parental thinking has become a systematic epidemic to some youths within various African American communities.

A past research study, *Parent academic involvement as related to school behavior, achievement, and aspirations: Demographic variations across adolescence*, has indicated that, based upon Socioeconomic Status (SES), parents academic level of importance will more likely play a major part in the raising of the child academic goals. Researchers have discovered that African Americans families from lower SES are often less involved in the success of their children's education and academic achievements.

Because the value of formal education is discounted by some parents, most young African American males believe that using their athletic abilities to succeed in sports is likely their only avenue to success. Developing an affinity and love for football at an early age to strengthen their focus and efforts on athletics diminishes the importance of education, which has become a

cycle passed from generation to generation, more specifically in African American communities.

III. The Universities

Year after year, there have been documented incidents of the widespread corruption in college athletics. Even after many revisions of the NCAA rules and regulations, colleges and universities continually have failed to bring lasting institutional and cultural changes within the collegiate sports arena. In recent studies and publications, various scholarly faculty members across many U.S. universities have stated the numerous contradictions with intercollegiate athletics.

Many academic institutions have stated that their athletic programs show glaring disrespect of the value and integrity of higher education. In a research article, an author noted that some faculty viewed university athletics and sports programs as negatively affecting the academic reputation of their universities while others believed there is a direct disconnect between athletics and academics.

Faculty members have recognized the harsh reality of the commercialization of college athletics. As a result, whether they agree with the collegiate business model, most universities are in the business of sports. In today's collegiate climate, various schools provide CEO-level financial compensation packages to their head coaches. This compensation includes the coaches' salaries, which are considerably more than the highest salaries of the university's faculty and administration staff. Financial contributions have gone as far as the alumni of the university,

who have formed groups that are structured in a way that they can augment the coaches' salaries without violating NCAA compliance regulations.

The Role of the NCAA

Student-Athletes Success

The role of the NCAA is to create and foster an eligibility standard that considers the academic performance of the student-athlete, which includes the student-athletes' grade point average (GPA), test scores, core curriculum courses taken in high school and grades earned for the core courses. The NCAA's stated mission is to enable all student-athletes to be successful in college and successfully manage the amount of coursework required of them.

In past year, the NCAA officials have admitted that there are probably student-athletes who are not academically inclined to keep up with the general student body population. While a population of student-athletes struggles academically, the NCAA also states that a significant number of student-athletes perform highly in the classroom.

In some cases, student-athletes are admitted to college underprepared academically. The NCAA has sanctioned some universities for creating college courses catered for football student-athletes to enroll in to insure they maintain eligibility. In some cases, these courses had classroom environments where the professor took attendance, issued and graded various assignments and exams, and passed student- athletes without the players attending one class or taking a test .

The University of North Carolina admitted that it was guilty of the academic-fraud-for-athletes scandal for athletes taking a course in African American studies. The outcome of the NCAA investigation from the summer 2007 to summer 2009 revealed that approved classes were taught by an identified professor at the university. The investigation discovered 50 plus students were enrolled in an abnormal course that indicated no evidence of the faculty member listed as instructor of record, or any other faculty member, actually supervised the course nor graded the work.

While this egregious act is alarming, universities are pressured constantly by the desire to win at all cost, resulting in professors making unethical concessions to help the student-athlete remain academically eligible. Some universities are essentially admitting that football student-athletes did not achieve required academic standards and did whatever they could to circumvent the academic process in return for wins and losses.

Proper Governance

The NCAA has another functional role that helps guides the rules of engagement across conferences and divisional levels. The NCAA consists of a Board of Governors that ensure the overall core strategic direction, guidance, and controls are in place. Currently, the NCCA governance model has two approaches. The first approach consists of the Division I Board of Directors, which includes University presidents, a student-athlete, a faculty representative, the athletics director, and a female administrator. The primary function of the Board is to provide for day-to-day operations of the division (see Figure 2 Board of Directors model).

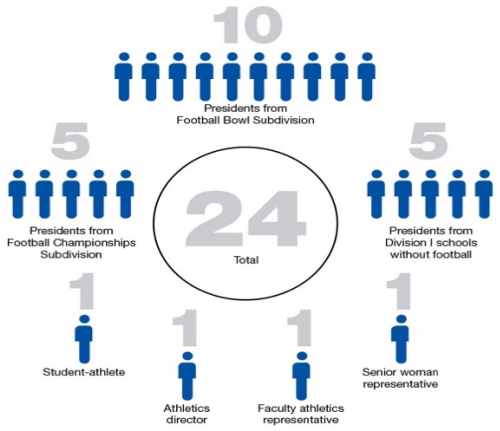

Figure 3

Figure 4 is the Council, which is responsible for making the day-to-day policy and legislative decisions for the NCAA participants (see Figure 3 Council Operations).

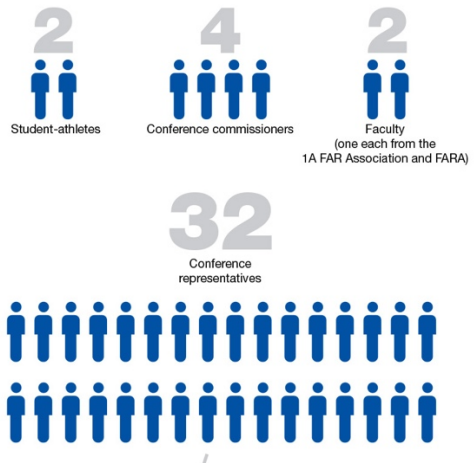

Figure 4

The end goal of this governance structure is to improve the perception of collegiate athletics as well as participating universities and conferences. This structure provides a great deal of decision power to the presidents to dictate the desired course of collegiate athletics, policies,

and bylaws. In 2014, the NCAA governance was revamped due to a much-needed reorganization and strategic focus.

NCAA Programs

The NCAA also provides programs to ensure it cultivates and facilitates a culture that supports the student-athlete. To ensure a support system for the student-athlete community, the NCAA created a "Stay in the Game" initiative. This initiative guarantees the student-athlete athletic scholarship, regardless of athletic performance or football-related injury. In 2015, 65 of the Division I conference institutions adopted this policy. For participating schools, the "Stay in the Game" program ensures the student-athlete an education.

The NCAA has several other programs, including programs that promote and support various causes and diversity focused agendas, such as gender equality, health awareness, and injury prevention and safety. Furthermore, the 65 participating schools within the major conferences (Atlantic Coast, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac-12 and Southeastern) have structured their scholarship offerings to include the full cost of university attendance.

In summary, the NCCA holds the university accountable for the academic progress of the student-athlete. Its goal is to provide the framework and confines within which the Division I school must play. If the participating institution plays outside the boundaries, harsh penalties can be assessed at various levels of the athletic program.

The NCAA, rich in history and revenue, has stood the test of time and managed to provide a structured format by which the majority of large universities abides. With the evolving reality that everyone in the collegiate landscape makes money, the NCAA has acknowledged the rapid

growth of commercialization placed on College athletics and commented that potential changes are imminent in the near future.

An exponential amount of profits flows to and from the NCAA and its participating institutions, compared to the financial assistance provided to the vast pool of scholarship student-athletes. While the NCAA has made strides in progressing its thinking about how to create an equal balance of equity, the student-athlete education and academic achievement remains looming. The NCAA faces a long journey to bring a holistic solution of financial equality to all key stakeholders. To truly transform the current collegiate landscape, the NCCAA may have to transform its perspective on amateurism and academic achievement of the student-athlete. The approach needs to provide a more effective mechanism to ensure that student-athletes success equates to more than that of a national championship.

Comparison of a University Professor's Compensation to an Athletic Coach's Compensation

In the evolving financial landscape of college athletics in the United States, one group that has benefited from the upward trend in salaries and other compensation is Division I football coaches. Highlights of the multimillion-dollar contracts and compensation deals have been aired on sports cable networks and documented in sports publications worldwide. It has become common knowledge that coaches make significantly more than tenured college professors.

For example, for the fiscal years including 2015 and 2016, the highest salaried non-student football staff member at the University of Alabama earned $1,082,248. Judith Bonner, serving as President of the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, was compensated at that level.

At the same time, the highest paid head football coach, Nick Saban, at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, made $15,214,395 annually, according to the USA Today website. This salary difference is significant, in the range of approximately $14,000,000.

Athletic programs at many universities in the United States will continue to struggle to identify the moral balance between academics and athletics. More and more universities are losing the academic compasses as their essential existence and yielding to the ever-increasing demand to promote and invest in their athletic programs.

Universities are making strategic decisions to promote their brand by emphasizing their athletic programs and the quality of the athletic talent they can bring to the campus. However, in some cases, institutions will make these strategic decisions and elect not to equally invest in academia. In numerous cases, this decision has resulted in an over-emphasis on the football athletic program as the focal point of the school, not the academic successes of the student-athletes.

In trying to understand the financial dynamics related to how universities invest in athletics, the researcher began to investigate the top ranked Division I universities and the financial agendas at play within the institutions. Four universities were selected in this study: the University of Alabama, the University of Michigan, the Ohio State University, and Oklahoma State University.

Across the four universities, collectively, a total of $60,000,000 was spent on the head football coach in 2015-16 while a total of $8,000,000 was spent on the top paid professor or presidents. Four head coaches are worth $60,000,000 to these universities; however, the academic future, landscape and mission are seemingly worth $8,000,000.

The researcher recognizes that these state institutions have salary constraints and regulations that are governed by their respective governing bodies. In the discussion case section, the researcher presents how a state university overcame institutional adversities to ensure they would financially secure their head coach.

In efforts to provide an unbiased approach, further research was conducted on the same four universities to identify the top 19 salaried faculty/professor positions. Likewise, the same effort was utilized to outline the head football coaching staff and its salaries; across the board, the disparity of salaries was not close.

In the illustration in **Table A2** Top 4 College Coaching Salaries, the researcher provides a detail breakdown of the universities' coaching staff in comparison to academic employees.

Table A3: Top 4 College Coaching Salaries

2015 - 2016 Salary in Comparison Coaches & Assistant Staff vs. Top Salaried President & 19 Top Salaried Professors				
University - NCAA Conf.	**Head Coach**	**Salary**	**Michigan Asst Football Coach's Salary**	**Football Program Salary**
Michigan - Big	**Jim Harbaugh**	**$ 19,333,000**	$ 4,308,750	**$ 23,641,750**
	Michigan Top Salaried	**Salary**	**Michigan Top 19 Professors' Salary**	**Top 20 Academia Salary**
	Paul Castillo	$ 895,209	**$ 11,856,234**	$ 12,751,443
	(+) Coach (-) Professor	**$ 18,437,791**	**$ (7,547,484)**	**$ 10,890,307**

Table A3 continued

University - NCAA Conf.	Head Coach	Salary	Alabama Asst Football Coach's Salary	Football Program Salary
Alabama - SEC	Nick Saban	$ 15,203,790	$ 5,320,000	$ 20,523,790
	Top Salaried Faculty	Salary	Alabama Top 19 Professors' Salary	Top 20 Academia Salary
	Judith I Bonner	$ 1,082,248	$ 6,445,963	$ 7,528,211
	(+) Coach (-) Professor	$ 14,121,542	$ (1,125,963)	$ 12,995,579

University - NCAA Conf.	Head Coach	Salary	Ohio State Asst Football Coach's Salary	Football Program Salary
Ohio State -	Urban Meyer	$ 13,214,600	$ 4,583,100	$ 17,797,700
	Top Salaried Faculty	Salary	Top 19 Paid Academia Employees	Top 20 Academia Salary
	Raul Weiss	$ 1,981,635	$ 21,326,260	$ 23,307,895
	(+) Coach (-) Professor	$ 11,232,965	$ (16,743,160)	$ (5,510,195)

University - NCAA Conf.	Head Coach	Salary	Oklahoma Asst Football Coach's Salary	Football Program Salary
Oklahoma -	Bob Stoops	$ 12,267,000	$ 4,390,900	$ 16,657,900
	Top Salaried Faculty	Salary	Top 19 Paid Academia Employees	Top 20 Academia Salary
	T Ford	$ 4,696,561	$ 9,869,190	$ 14,565,751
	(+) Coach (-) Professor	$ 7,570,439	$ (5,478,290)	$ 2,092,149

While the data depicts significant differences in Head Coach's' salaries in comparison to those for the senior academic positions, the data also shows some institutions place equal importance on their staff.

Illustrated below in **Table A3** are the salaries of the four combined universities' head football coaches compared to the highest paid faculty/staff. Also illustrated is the assistant football coaching staff compared against the top 19 paid professors.

Table A4: Football Coach versus Academic Professor Salaries

Four Universities Combined	Head Coach / Top Salaried Professor	Asst. Coaching Staff / 19 Top Salaried Prof.	Total Salaries Combined
University Football Program	$60,018,390.00	$18,602,750.00	$78,621,140.00
University Academic Positions	$8,655,653.00	$49,497,647.00	$58,153,300.00
Difference	$51,362,737.00	$ (30,894,897.00)	$20,467,840.00

The outlier in the data collected was Ohio State University. According to an article written in 2014, "The Lantern," Ohio State was ranked 5th in the Big Ten conference for providing the highest average faculty salaries. While the Ohio State University clearly understands the importance of investing in its academic staff, it also comprehends the value it receives from investing in the football program.

These academic investments are important because they support a student-athlete's academic development; however, they are even more important for ensuring that student-athletes are provided the education to help them develop a career plan and manage their finances when their athletic career is over.

Universities must invest in the coaches, and the athletic departments must own the responsibility for their players' academic success. These investments will better enable their athletes to be independent and successful in their college careers and beyond.

Discussion Case Study: Roll the Tide – How the University of Alabama is Financing its Football Program

Securing Coach Saban's ability to "Roll the Tide:" The University of Alabama and its financial supporters' determination to prioritize and strengthen the football program.

Division I universities make millions of dollars from their athletic programs. That source of revenue enables them to pay their athletic department staffs' multi- million-dollar salaries. At present, only the coaches and universities are allowed to profit from sports-related endorsements and the use of their student- athletes' likenesses.

In a growing number of situations, alumni and university boosters supplement the coach's salary. At these same universities, however, student-athletes leave their training and practice sessions hungry and with no money to buy food.

In 2013, a private foundation established to support the University of Alabama's athletic program, purchased a $3,100,000 home for the head football coach and his wife. This private foundation also has paid the yearly property taxes for them. One important detail in this scenario is the private foundation bought the home from Coach Nick Saban then gave the home back to him.

In 2017, the University of Alabama trustees approved a three-year contract extension for Coach Saban through the 2024 football season that is estimated to pay him more than $65,000,000 over that time. To illustrate the importance the University of Alabama has placed on its head coach,

the records of the university's average salaries for its academic and coaching personnel were researched.

A professor at the University of Alabama earns, on average, $186,636 per year. In comparison, Coach Nick Saban will make approximately $11,400,000 for his coaching duties with an additional $4,000,000 as a contract signing bonus. The contract also includes a $400,000 completion bonus.

From a review of the University of Alabama salary data for academic positions, there are a total of 304 full-time professors who earn an average of $186,636 per year, totaling approximately $55,900,000 per year. In seven years, Coach Saban could personally fund an entire university of full-time professors and have $14,400,000 left to live on.

Also, the University's trustees wanted to ensure that Coach Saban's staff was well compensated; they approved a five-year arrangement for the new athletic director, Greg Byrne, including salary increases for Coach Saban's assistants. The athletic director Byrne will make $900,000 a year, with a $25,000 annual raise starting in 2018.

The offensive coordinator, Brian Daboll, will earn $1,200,000 annually under his new three-year agreement. Defensive coordinator Jeremy Pruitt's three-year contract is worth $4,200,000, including a $100,000 raise each year. The financial compensation outlined above only accounts for the salaries of Coach Saban and two members of his coaching staff. Alabama's assistant football coaches' compensation can be found in the Table A4.

The financial summation comparison in the table below does not include Coach Saban's medical and administrative staff or any other sport (e.g. Basketball Men and Women, Baseball Men and Women, etc.). In Table 10 is The University of Alabama's Professor – Football Coaching Staff salary comparison.

Table A5: The University of Alabama Salary Comparison

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA	**Academic** Full-Time Professors	**Athletics *Football** Primary Football Staff
EMPLOYEE COUNT	304	12
AVG. YEARLY SALARY	~$55.9M	~$26.1M

Potentially, the university receives millions of dollars that cannot be accounted for. This revenue comes from a variety of sources, such as corporate endorsements and athletic apparel/equipment contracts.

Essentially, the University of Alabama is cashing in on its student-athletes. The University of Alabama is not alone; many other Division I schools operate the same and build up their athletic programs by similar means. These student-athletes are not provided any financial health guarantees in the event they can no longer compete for the university due to an unforeseen injury.

To put the total amount of revenue generated by these Division I institutions into perspective, the NFL, across both divisions, made a total of $12,156,000,000 in 2016. The NCAA's Colleges and University collectively generated 33% of the NFL's total revenue (See **Table 6**).

Table A6: Equity in Athletics Data Analysis Forbest Sports Money: 2016 NFL Valuations

NCAA Division I College Teams	
ACC	$527,658,411
American	$159,353,816
Big 12	$531,951,895
Big Ten	$744,393,720
C-USA	$123,409,990
Independent	$124,002,513
MAC	$101,646,998
Mountain West	$126,719,325
PAC-12	$547,680,916
SEC	$952,080,336
Sun Belt	$78,228,399
Total Revenue	**$4,017,126,319**
NFL AFC Division	
AFC East	$1,631,000,000
AFC North	$1,430,000,000
AFC South	$1,438,000,000
AFC West	$1,372,000,000
Total Revenue	**$5,871,000,000**

Table A6 continued

NFL NFC Division	
NFC East	$1,998,000,000
NFC North	$1,403,000,000
NFC South	$1,397,000,000
NFC West	$1,488,000,000
Total Revenue	**$6,286,000,000**

Are the universities unwilling to improve the equality in the distribution of sports revenue to its student-athletes in fear of potentially losing billions of dollars in profitability? The institutions exploit the student-athletes to maintain the revenues the athletic programs generate from ticket sales, television contracts, and apparel and other merchandising licensing agreements.

In many scenarios, most athletes recruited to play a sport are habitually persuaded to major in fields that will not aid their success in a career later in life. This persuasion primarily occurs because the majors suggested by the athletes' coaching staff are not as academically demanding, which results in more time the athlete can dedicate to perfecting his athletic craft. However, the majors are not academically challenging, causing a scholastic gap for the athlete.

Most college freshman athletes major in interdepartmental studies. The student-athlete is taught that this major allows them to have less of a course load and provide more time in the gym. The primary focus for most college athletes is to remain academically eligible to play, so the quality of education and commitment to education are non-existent in the minds of these athletes.

While researching some of the schools in the Power Five Conference, data was collected to identify the majors that football players where enrolled in during 2015. The data collected from the individual university was conducted through the institution's online rosters.

The variety of ambiguous curriculum to choose from further enables the student-athlete to easily check off the eligible check box in order to play football. See **Table 7** for a review of the common majors selected by football players within the top NCAA Division I conferences.

Table A7: Common Majors Selected by College Football Players

Conference	**School**	**Major**
ACC	Clemson	Parks, recreation and tourism management
ACC	North Carolina	Exercise and sport science
Big 10	Illinois	General studies
Big 10	Michigan	General studies
Big 12	West Virginia	General or multidisciplinary studies
Big 12	Baylor	Health, human performance and recreation studies
PAC 12	Arizona State	Interdisciplinary studies
PAC 12	Washington State	Tie-Criminal justice, sport management and social sciences
SEC	Tennessee	Recreation and sport management
SEC	Ole Miss	General studies

The NCAA promotes that athletes graduate at a higher rate than the general student body. However, the federal rates provided yearly paint a different picture. The NCAA statistic does

not portray a holistic view of the student-athlete. Its research study does not follow the student as he may transfer from school to school until graduating or dropping out.

On its organization's website, the NCAA has stated that this methodology is not the most accurate approach for accounting for graduation rates.

Current reported numbers provided by the NCAA position it as an institution that has made positive strides in graduating student-athletes. What is not clearly stated in their statement of "success" is whether the graduating students were able to translate their degree into a promising, meaningful career.

With the academic landscape predefined for the student-athlete, how can anyone expect to place value on college? The moment a high school senior commits to a college, he is instantly convinced the value of his college experience is not in the rigor of his studies but in the investment of his time dedicated to football strength and conditioning, which, in his mind, is preparing him to be a star in his sport.

Some institutions have had head coaches go as far as providing their athletes with "students" to "help" the athletes with their curriculum work, so much "student help" that various universities have been sanctioned by the NCAA and governing bodies for violating school policies and major acts of plagiarism. Yet, the sanctions have not deterred these institutions from continuing down this path.

A few years ago, a Northwestern quarterback by the name of Kain Colter shared his personal story in a federal courtroom in Chicago about the impasse he was challenged with as he tried to balance what defined success for him academically and athletically.

While Colter was dedicated to the football program, he wanted to ensure that his studies were aligned properly with what was required for him to attend medical school. In a humble tone, he admitted that he knew that, had it not been for his athletic ability, he would not have been accepted to Northwestern University. He clearly stated, "Football was the reason I was there."

Colter detailed his struggle with his football obligations contradicting his focus on pre-med studies. Consequently, he chose a psychology major! Colter's dilemma does not happen for many athletes, primarily because, for a majority, sports are their only focus.

Strangely enough, when assessing the student-athlete's situation, the conflict of prioritizing the college education and the athletic requirements and sacrifices presents a significant challenge for these young people. With the amount of pressure placed on these students to succeed athletically, are the institutions creating an academic pitfall?

Institutions seem to be disregarding their educational responsibilities to the student-athlete and not providing the guidance to help them make the most informed decisions that could dictate the student-athletes future.

Professional Sports

To fully understand the athletic landscape and journey student-athletes take to become a professional athlete, a person must recognize that it is neither a coincidence nor luck that only a few student-athletes make it to the professional level. Natural talent separates the average athlete from the elite athlete. However, the transformation from a college athlete to a professional athlete is based on the level of physical training and mental preparation made by the athletes and the investments of time made by their coaches and trainers.

In Division I football, a student-athlete can request for his college to have him evaluated to determine if he would be selected in the professional draft. Depending on the outcome of that evaluation, the student-athlete could get a red flag about his potential draft ranking, which could serve as a recommendation for the student-athlete to stay in school.

The NFL provides this player evaluation service to help NFL organizations in identifying NFL-quality players and high-level student-athletes, who have the potential to enter the league early. The bases of the evaluations are clearly the NFL's responsibility.

The NFL depends on its College Advisory Committee from NFL clubs and directors from the league's two sanctioned scouting organizations, National Football Scouting Organization and the Bears Lions Eagles Steelers Talent Organization (BLESTO), to provide realistic projections to underclassmen student-athletes regarding their draft stock before they declare their desire to enter the Draft to the NFL.

Division I college football and basketball coaches essentially create a "farm league" for professional teams. NFL organizations depend on certain coaches to continuously produce professional-caliber athletes.

While some universities may develop two NFL prospects a year on average, several coaches at the Division I level are well known for running athletic programs that professional sports organizations rely on as a source of draft quality players. These professional sports teams rely on student-athletes from these schools to shape the future of the NFL organization.

To be eligible for the NFL draft, college players must be out of high school for a minimum of three years and have used up their college eligibility before the start of the next college football season. Underclassmen and players who graduated before using all their college eligibility may request the league's approval to enter the draft early.

Collectively, the NFL teams build their franchises solely with college football players. In more cases, college coaches are convincing players that their university athletic experience is merely the development process that will enable them to reach their goals of playing in the NFL. Regardless of the college football player's academic status, the university he attends has reached the financial understanding that the coach's job is to win games, win the conference championship, and prepare student-athletes for the NFL. The academic understanding of the university's responsibility to prepare the student-athlete for his life after sports is less evident.

The Impact of the Media on College Football

Media plays a significant role in the commercialization and monetary valuation of college sports. The researcher examined how much significant reliance college athletics places on various media channels and outlets (i.e. TV, radio, and social media). Several drivers influence the relationships between the NCAA and the various types of media with which it partners.

Recent news stated that Entertainment Sports Network (ESPN) is contracted in total to spend $5.64 billion to the NCAA for the rights to televise NCAA sanctioned schools' collegiate games.

These types of multimillion-dollar television contracts helped usher college football into the strategic business model it currently enjoys. The NCAA college football television broadcast dominates the local and cable sports networks. The ability of cable networks to provide coast-to-coast coverage of all the major collegiate teams has created a massive movement.

When universities entered television markets to highlight their college football programs, they began to truly see the revenue opportunities presented. At one time, the only major Division I university with a television contract was Notre Dame; it remains one of the few with a major television network which, in this case, is NBC.

The television network NBC Sports Group has structured the deal with Notre Dame to extend a 10-year contract in order to televise Notre Dame Football games will them until 2025. The NBC and Notre Dame contract was reported to be worth approximately $15 million annually. In systematic adoption fashion, other universities began to secure lucrative television deals.

Universities realized the true financial potential by understanding that the television model of brand awareness further promoted and extended their brand to an audience they would not normally reach. In 2012, the South Eastern Conference (SEC) expanded its conference to include Texas A&M and Missouri. Alone, that decision generated $420 million from TV and radio rights deals.

On average, most university athletic programs' television revenue generates upward of $15 million annually for football teams in the major NCAA conferences. Television revenue has provided a growing number of universities with financial stability. This success has driven universities to seek more avenues to use media outlets for further revenue to support their athletic departments, and often, the football program is key to that strategy.

Money is the primary driver behind college football and TV having such great success and continued growth. The various television networks have enabled universities and their college football programs to enjoy nationwide coverage, which has fostered the increasing popularity of the sport. This popularity has led to programming more and more college football games at all levels of the sport because of consumer demand.

According to the National Football Foundation, more than 216 million viewers watched the NCAA football regular season with an additional 126 million watching the college bowl games. Also, college football had over 48.9 million fans attend games in person. Figure 1.0 shows the attendance statistics provided by the National Football Foundation.

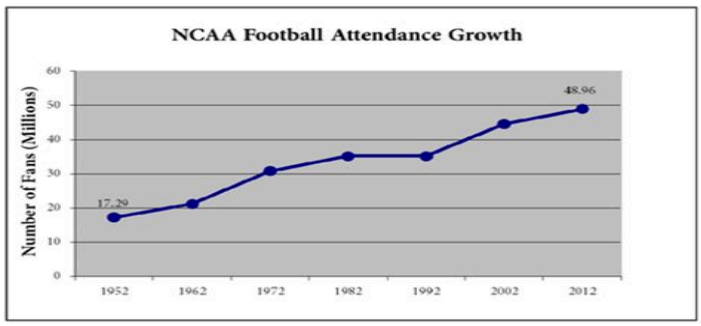

Figure 5

The growth of football and the ever-increasing revenue stream for the universities has had many sports experts challenging whether student-athletes should be paid or otherwise compensated for their athletic performances on the field. When assessing the economics of the college athletic program, such a proposal seems quite logical.

An Assessment of the College Athletics Industry utilizing the Porter Five Forces Model

According to Porter, the main influences that directly impact rivalries among firms in an industry are:

- mature-market
- evenly stable competitors
- high fixed costs
- high exit barriers

When analyzing the NCAA Division I landscape, the author has realized that all of these dynamics exist in participating athletic programs.

The several consumers of NCAA College Teams are:

- student-athletes
- alumni
- fans
- media outlets
- corporations

All of the consumers listed above have bargaining power, however, some are more powerful than others. The level of power diminishes as the hierarchy of power trickles down to the student-athlete level.

The goal of using Porter's five forces is to identify the influences that directly impact the level of competition within the NCAA Colleges and Universities. We look at the core factors to determine if they are forces that can dictate if the NCAA has a cap of its overall profitability. Furthermore, we ask the question: could the factors serve as an evolving potential threat to the NCAA, causing it to become less unattractive in regards to future profitability due to more lucrative, profitable threats by its consumers?

Threat of New Entry: Unionization of Student-Athletes

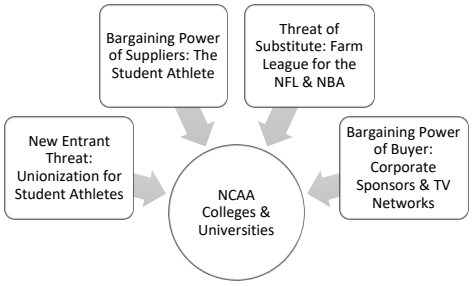

Figure 6

As discussed earlier in this analysis *(See page 22)*, players from Northwestern University pushed to unionize the football team. The goal was to have the players recognized as employees, which would entitle them to employee benefits and compensation. When this proposal was reviewed by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the NLRB unanimously voted against the athletes being considered as employees of the University. According to transcripts of the case, the NLRB rule was not against the question of employee status, but rather the NLRB chose not to extend its authority to college football.

However, the Northwestern players made a strong argument. In the case of student-athletes, the number of hours needed for them to be considered employee labor accumulates quickly. Players dedicate hours to athletic and academic preparation that are equivalent to those of a full-time job. College athletics and related activities take up to 40 to 50 hours a week throughout the season and 50 to 60 hours a week throughout training camp in in the spring and summer. These hours do not include any academic coursework required for the student-athlete to maintain his eligibility.

The intent is to not put additional financial debt on the student, so it may be less than likely that the athletes will receive salaries in return for playing on a Division I football team. A reasonable compromise could possibly be to allow the student-athlete to receive an increase in financial stipends or the ability to seek part-time employment during the off-season.

Bargaining Power of the Supplier: The Power of the Student-Athlete

Many experts, economists, sports journalists, and athletic enthusiasts argue that student-athletes should be compensated in some form. When assessing the power of student-athletes,

one opportunity for using their power is not available to them; that opportunity is the ability to help create NCAA legislation.

Division III allows its students to vote on policy changes, even though these athletes are not on scholarship. However, the Division felt compelled to allow the athletes to have a voice in their athletic future. Division I athletes are only allowed to provide input. What is alarming is that the NCAA has known for years that without the student-athletes on the field on Saturday, playing and mesmerizing millions of college sports fans with their athletic abilities, the billions of dollars of revenue generated for these colleges and universities would not exist.

The on-field success of college athletes helps make millions of students, alumni, and fans to buy season tickets for games, sign-up for cable network providers' sports packages, increase jersey sales, and expand licensing of college-themed consumer products.

A group of approximately 30 student-athletes represent the broader population of college athletes as a "voice" in the NCAA. This committee is known as the National Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) and is comprised of members from the 32 Division I conferences. While this group has made some contributions to the direction of policies for the NCAA, it has not made any impact regarding the fair treatment of the student-athlete.

Some athletes have gone on record and reported their coaches have stated they would be kicked off the team for not attending "voluntary" activities. From the perspective of the student-athlete, players should be able to threaten to leave their college and university if they are not

provided with the ability to find alternative ways to pay for college expenses that their scholarships do not cover.

Student-athletes threatening to stop playing college football is less than likely to happen. The reality is thousands of other student-athletes would be willing to replace them for a Division I scholarship opportunity.

Threat of Substitute: The Creation of the NFL Farm System or Development League

What would the financial impact be to Division I schools if the NFL or another organization adopted a development football league that would allow young athletes to avoid college and begin making a living playing football? What if there was no need to worry about amateurism or having to wait to go pro?

Some significant research studies and economic models have been performed by a private group to understand the viability of creating a developmental league. While the NBA has a development league that young athletes can try out for, the NFL does not have an affiliated developmental league. However, football playing student-athletes may not have to wait much longer for the "what if" scenario; the idea of a development league could potentially become a reality.

Some peculations have been made of a group that has been seeking to start a professional league to launch in 2018 or 2019. From recent reports, the group has stated that it does not intend to compete with the NCAA; however, it becomes a threat to the talent pool. The

proposed plan for this pilot is to target 200 players to play on four teams during the NFL off-season.

The average salary of each player would be approximately $50,000 a year with a benefits package that includes the ability for each player to seek endorsements and performance contracts for his likeness to supplement and maximize profitability. If players are allowed to forgo college and begin making a living immediately, it's easy to see where the impact could be significant.

While many student-athletes easily may opt-out of a league such as this and elect to play at an elite Division I college or university and potentially earn a four-year degree, the reality of this concept has the NFL considering its approach for addressing the dilemma. The NFL also has gone on record with considerations of creating a developmental league; it has presented viable options to the Competition Committee that would create a system for young players to develop.

Bargaining Power of the Buyer: Corporate Sponsors and TV Networks

The benefits of the corporate sponsors and TV network partnerships to the colleges and universities are consistent revenue streams that can be forecasted accurately. Sponsors and other entities contractually obligate themselves financially to the school's athletic department in exchange for the rights to license and market the athletic department's brand.

Most Division I schools base their budgets on these revenue streams. The NCAA and universities rely on these organizations for financial support that allows them to sustain their programs at a high level. As documented on the NCAA website, www.ncaa.com, Turner Sports

and CBS Sports are listed as having the "exclusive" rights to license and market NCAA logo merchandise and tickets and use NCAA taglines in commercial promotions.

These companies contribute significant amounts to the NCAA and the colleges and universities in terms of yearly revenue. The NCAA-sponsored "March Madness" men's college basketball tournament makes over a billion dollars each year, and none of the players in the tournament receive any compensation for their participation or the success of the event. As discussed earlier in this industry analysis, the NCAA Tournament will be shown on CBS/Turner through 2032. Both parties signed an eight-year, $8.8 billion extension with the NCAA for the broadcast rights to the men's college basketball tournament.

The Industry Buyer (Corporation/TV Networks) has more power than the Industry Supplier (Student-athlete). These major corporations can dictate the athletic paradigm that exists today, but what stands in the way of balancing the inequality of this collegiate athletic cultural business model is greed.

The essence of greed has tarnished many corporations from behaving ethically with some sense of a moral compass. In a *Business Journal of Ethics* article, the author speaks of greed. Major corporations will never sacrifice their bottom line to benefit a student-athlete who, through his athletic talents, is making billions of dollars for his institution, the NCAA, and the corporate sponsor.

The potential threat exists, but it is not financially rational for the various major corporations to permit the athletes to benefit from their profits. The hard question that remains unanswered is:

Is a college football scholarship an adequate and appropriate form of compensation when a college football player is required to do more for the university and its athletic department than play football?

Research studies indicate that most Division I college football student-athletes are unlikely to make graduating with a degree their primary goal. According to Mangold, Bean, and Adams, "It is not unreasonable to expect that highly integrated social communities may compete with learning communities, particularly if the nature of the social interaction is in conflict with the goals of the learning community"

Conclusions

What is more important to the individual student-athlete: seeking a professional football career or an education with the benefits to play football? There are success stories of athletes being successful through both decision paths. However, more scenarios exist where the athlete has been the victim of making the wrong decision and choosing the wrong path to professionalism.

Ultimately, the decision belongs to the student-athlete and the supporting people within his circle. This decision can be very difficult to make and can have lasting impact on his adult life. The athlete needs a strong foundation of support and knowledge about the options available and circumstances that come with each choice of academics or professional sports.

As the parent(s) introduce their child to sports, it is important that they restrain their personal desires and dreams for their child, which can constrain their son's ability to choose what he

feels is best for him, an academic or athletic career. The parent(s) must not let the child's journey be defined by their self-gratifying expectations.

Many student-athletes will continue to struggle with the dilemma of retaining the student-athlete life versus declaring eligibility as an underclassman for the NFL draft. Could the unionization of student-athlete players actually change the monetary chase to play professional football? These student-athletes must demand a stronger voice in the NCAA!

To truly invoke a cultural change and reform within the NCAA, an industry threat must be introduced to force the organization to rethink its approach to student-athletes in the United States.

The critical decision of remaining a student or deciding to leave college early to play professional football will be at the center of the student-athletes' thought process, and the supporting people within his circle can either provide reasonable, logical thinking or be the demise of the athlete's career. Making the wrong decision can have a lasting impact on his adult life. Being able to discern the disparity of perception versus reality will enable the athlete to make logical choices in life.

What if CBS/Turner Sports and ESPN mandated that student-athletes were required to be paid a portion of the proceeds if they remained in school or had reached the end of their eligibility; would the NCAA comply or find another brand/network to partner with to retain all profits? Athletics first, academics optional is the culture that has been adopted by the majority of these Divisional I universities because collegiate athletics has become a business. In examining the

threats to the NCCA industry, the introduction of a development league would gradually impact the bottom line of universities over time. The NCAA's quality of play and eventual profitability would be impacted as adoption of new a product could diversify the talent pool and revenue streams.

NCAA Members:

College Presidents – These are the leaders of the participating Division I and II schools and include the NCAA president.

Athletic Directors – These are the heads of the athletic departments at their perspective schools; they provide oversight and guidance to the athletic staff and enforce policies and NCAA guidelines.

Faculty Athletic Representative – This position is designated to bridge the two university departments of academia and athletics.

Compliance Officer – This position communicates and manages the various rules relating to student-athletes on their campus.

Conference Staff – These positions are the various principal groups that create the competition amongst the various conferences in the NCAA.

Academic Support Staff – These positions are employees tasked with preparing athletes academically for the future.

Coaches – These positions are the individuals hired to recruit, train, strengthen, and coach the student-athletes for competitive sports.

Sports Information Directors – This role serves as the keeper of records and statistics to document the players' statistical accomplishments as well as those of the team.

Health and Safety Personnel – These positions are the hired medically trained personnel responsible for the overall health and well-being of the student-athletes.

Discussion with a Division I Football student-athlete:

In a conversation with a Division I student-athlete football player, he stated that at one point during his sophomore year in college, his position coaches pulled him aside and told him that he had NFL quality skills that would transcend into NFL league quality traits. He was somewhat stunned that he was considered a NFL quality player by his coach's evaluation since he was a partial scholarship athlete.

He stated that he wanted to get his degree for his mom, but the thought of going to the NFL lingered in his mind. From that day, every practice, every film day session and every snap, his goal was to put great game film together for NFL scouts to see. Midway through his sophomore year, he said that his academics were put on hold; he explained that he knew deep inside his talents were not of NFL quality. The student-athlete admitted that his team had guys who were 10 times faster, stronger and a higher football IQ. Oddly enough, he said, it made him push even harder.

Confessions of a Missed Opportunity:

A few years ago, a three-year defensive tackle from the University of Tennessee was interviewed by a journalist about his college career and present realization due to his decision to declare himself eligible for the NFL early. The young man stated that he was full of regret; he passed up his senior season because, he said, an agent convinced him he would be a middle-round draft pick.

This young man was never drafted and is home in New Orleans, hoping to get an opportunity to audition with an Arena Football League team. He stated, "I made a bad decision. A lot of guys like me are sitting at home wishing they had that degree."

Table A8: Alabama's Assistant Football Coaches' Compensation:

- Outside Linebackers Coach Tosh Lupoi - $950,000
- Co-Offensive Coordinator Mike Locksley - $1,200,000
- Tight-Ends/Special Teams Coach Joe Pannunzio, - $375,000
- Offensive Line Coach Brent Key - $400,000
- Running Backs Coach Burton Burns - $490,000
- Defensive Backs Coach Derrick Ansley - $405,000
- Defensive Line Coach Karl Dunbar - $575,000
- Strength and Conditioning Coach - Scott Cochran $535,000

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

As a previous football student-athlete and Division II college basketball coach, the relevancy of this topic hits very close to home for the author. Throughout the authors early childhood and into his later college life, he experienced every aspect of a student-athlete life and even participated in the rigorous competitive aspect of recruiting. With his lived experience, he developed a passion to educate future student-athletes and parents on the aspect of college athletics and the level of commitment it demands. His desired outcome is that this body of work and future publications can shed light and provide clarity into the industry of college athletics in the U.S. A seasoned IT professional with 20 plus years' experience across several industry sectors, Carl Gilmore has been responsible for the execution, strategic planning, technical design, development, and deployment of a multimillion dollar projects including utility Smart Grid Program initiatives. He has managed and deployed various advanced technology efforts that has provided him the honor of receiving several technical awards. Carl E. Gilmore Jr., earned his bachelor's degree from Lane College in Jackson, Tenn., Master of Business Administration from the University of Central Florida in Orlando, Florida and his Doctorate of Business Administration at the University of South Florida.