CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES
AND
MT. SAN ANTONIO
COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

#89-0014
A Study of the Academic Progress of California Community College Student Athletes

Twelve community colleges participated in the study of the academic progress of student athletes. Student athlete transcripts of those who were involved in women's volleyball, softball and basketball and men's basketball, football and track and field during 1986-87. Students were selected on the basis of athletic eligibility FORM 3. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Barriers to participation were identified and higher education institutions were encouraged to work with high schools to enhance the academic performance of student athletes.
A Study of Academic Progress of California Community Student Athletes

Mt. San Antonio College and the California Association of Community Colleges (CACC) Commission on Athletics (COA) continue to explore and develop ways to enhance the educational programs of California's community college (CCC) student athletes.

The intercollegiate athletic program of the California community colleges is an integral part of the educational program of the colleges. Its participants are students first and then athletes. There has been a great deal of discussion among various groups about the achievement of educational goals by student athletes. To date, we have only been able to generalize about the types of academic courses, counseling, and progress that characterize student athletes and how they might compare to their non-athlete counterparts.

The Commission on Athletics' Code Committee has placed on its agenda consideration of State Athletic Code policies that will mandate an increase in the level and number of courses taken by student athletes to be eligible for athletic participation. It is believed that this will further encourage student athletes to attain academic degrees and/or transfer to four-year institutions.

As part of this effort, the Code Committee has requested Information about the academic records of student athletes. We now propose a research project that will be used to develop a snapshot picture of the academic progress made by California's community college student athletes.

There is need for an objective research study which gives a clear and much-needed picture of the academic programs in which student athletes participate. With the assistance of 12 community colleges across the state, we will review the academic programs of some 1,800 student athletes and 1,800 demographically similar non athletes through their academic careers at a California community college.

This project has been a priority of the California Community Colleges' Board of Governors since 1986. It has been encouraged and supported by the California Association of Community Colleges' Board of Directors, its Research Commission, and its Commission on Athletics. In addition, it has support of the Northern and Southern California institutional research groups.
Funding is being requested to support the planning, administration, follow-up, and data analysis of the research project. The results of this project will allow clearer definition and implementation of educational services and requirements to allow student athletes to attain educational goals.
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1. Specific Educational Program Being Addressed

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM TO BE ADDRESSED IN THIS PROPOSAL

This research project will evaluate the academic progress made by California community college student athletes. It will answer questions being asked about the type and number of courses attempted and completed by California community college students who are participants in the intercollegiate athletic program. Upon completion, the California Association of Community Colleges (CACC) Commission on Athletics (COA), California Community College Board of Governors, and governing boards of California community colleges will be able to more clearly define and implement educational services and/or requirements needed to allow student athletes to attain their educational goals.
2. Specific Problems Being Addressed

PROBLEMS BEING ADDRESSED

Some persons argue that our community colleges are providing athletic programs for certain physically gifted students. Athletes, they say, are only taking courses within the physical education division; they use the resources of the college to participate in sports, thus making it impossible for them to attain any educational goals. We are providing a proving ground for over zealous men and women to prepare to become professional athletes.

Others note that, at most, there are only 6,000 professional athletes in the United States sports scene. There is little that student athletes can expect if their goal is to become a professional athlete, they say; therefore, our student athletes are more like all other community college students. In fact, they argue, California community college student athletes are attempting the normal number of academic courses. Because of their interest in the intercollegiate athletic programs, there are a certain number of physical education courses which are naturally taken; we are finding that the student athlete attempts and completes larger numbers of academic courses than the average California community college student.

To date, the two opinions about our student athletes have remained largely unsubstantiated. There has been no objective research to provide accurate information about the academic progress made by groups of California community college student athletes.

This project is designed to provide those answers.
3. Population To Be Served

THE POPULATIONS TO BE SERVED

Ninety-six of the 107 California community colleges offer intercollegiate athletic programs for more than 23,000 men and women participants. This project is designed to serve our colleges and their student populations.
4. Objectives

OBJECTIVES --- PROJECT WORK STATEMENT

A. PROJECT RESEARCH METHODS

In order to complete this outcomes research project, the following methods will be used:

1. Twelve colleges, one from each California community college athletic administrative conference, will be asked to participate in the study.

2. Sports studied will include football, women's volleyball, women's softball, and men's track and field.

3. Participating student athletes will be identified by screening Form 3 eligibility and participation rosters. The study will begin with sport participants during the fall 1985 and spring 1986 semesters. Student athletes who have participated in the identified sports will have their transcripts evaluated for each semester of their attendance at a California community college. This may include the transcripts reviews for up to six semesters (through fall 1988). Transcripts will be evaluated to identify the nature and extent of the academic progress made during their community college educational careers.

4. The evaluations will provide specific information, including the number of units attempted, number of units completed, grade point average (gpa), and an analysis according to courses attempted and completed in the following categories:
   - Physical education activity courses,
   - Varsity sport courses, and
   - All other physical education courses; and
   - Transferable and non transferable courses excluding physical education, including but not limited to courses transferable for the baccalaureate degree; associate degree only courses; basic skills courses; precollegiate courses.

Transcripts will be analyzed to provide a chronological academic record of student athletes beginning with the 1985-86 sport season. By starting with 1985, we will have an opportunity to observe the full range of academic work attempted during the student athletes' participation and enrollment through the 1988-89 college year or graduation, whichever comes first.

5. In addition, participating colleges will be requested to provide transcript information for the same number of demographically similar non athletes who were full-time students. These students will be randomly selected to form a statistically matched control group.
for the purpose of this study.

6. When reporting the results of the study, colleges and students will remain anonymous. Results will be presented for the total group and for appropriate sub groups such as college size and location, rather than for individual colleges.
5. Workplan Narrative

PROJECT TIME LINE
Even though the time line starts before the FII proposals are approved by the Board of Governors, CACC has already begun the development work on this project. The following is a time line for project completion:

- **May 20, 1989:** Select 12 colleges to participate in this research project.
- **June 26-27, 1989:** Circulation of research methods to be used by the 12 colleges.
- **August 1, 1989:** Data gathering materials to participating colleges.
- **October 1, 1989:** Complete information from 12 colleges returned to project director.
- **October 26-27, 1989:** Progress report of project to COA.
- **December 1, 1989:** Completion of data analysis.
- **February 1, 1990:** First draft of written report.
- **March 15, 1990:** Final draft of written report.
- **April 15, 1990:** Upon review and approval by the Chancellor's Office, report finalized and published.
- **May 1, 1990:** Report available for distribution.
6. Expected Outcomes

OUTCOMES

A. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project will provide:

1. A model for California's community colleges to assess the academic progress and performance of student athletes.

2. Consistent and aggregated data for future state and local policy studies.

3. A review of the academic records of some 1,800 student athletes and 1,800 non student athletes of the California community colleges who attended from 1985 to the present.

4. A snapshot picture of the types of courses attempted by the students and a comparison of athletes and demographically similar non athletes.

5. New information about student athletes who have participated in certain sports since 1985 that will enable colleges to evaluate better the appropriateness of their student support services.

B. IMPACT OF PROJECT

It is expected that the results of this project will provide the information needed to further strengthen the academic and student support components of intercollegiate athletes' educational programs, thereby enhancing achievement of educational goals.

C. CONTINUED SUPPORT OF GRANT

It is expected that there will be no further grant support needed upon completion of this research project, unless additional information is desired.

D. POTENTIAL FOR ADAPTATION TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS OR PROGRAMS

All of the 96 community colleges which participate in intercollegiate athletics will use the results of this research project according to rules and regulations developed by the governing bodies. It is anticipated that colleges and districts will use the research model as a guide to continue individual institutional research on this topic.
7. Evaluation Plan

EVALUATION PLAN
The research project will be monitored closely as it progresses through its time schedule by a review committee, the governing bodies, and the individuals responsible for the completion of the project.

The review committee will be comprised of representatives selected by the California Community College Chancellor's Office; the Research Committee of the California Association of Community Colleges, and at least two mutually agreed upon members.

Among the responsibilities of the review committee will be the development of the evaluation design to assess the effectiveness of the project.
8. Dissemination Plan

DISSEMINATION PLAN
Results will be publicized throughout the state by the governing bodies in both written and verbal form. Results will be disseminated through CACC’s THE NEWS, the COA Newsletter, an issues paper, and other appropriate documents, and upon request, presentations before the Board of Governors and other appropriate California community college bodies.
9. Budget Narrative

[NO “BUDGET SUMMARY” ACCOMPANIES THIS DOCUMENT.]