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DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACADEMIC ADVISING PROGRAM
FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES AT THE
DIVISION III LEVEL

by
Harris Adler

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration
of
The Graduate School
at
Rowan University
May 19, 2008

Approved by _____
Dr. Burton R. Sisco

Date Approved May 19, 2008

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ABSTRACT

Harris Adler
Development of an Academic Advising Program
for Student-Athletes at the
Division III Level
2007/08
Dr. Burton R. Sisco
Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration

This study was designed to determine the need for an academic advising program for student-athletes at the Division III level. Two hundred sixteen undergraduate student-athletes from Rowan University participated in the study by completing a survey that asked about their needs for an all-inclusive academic advising program, that would include advising, mentoring, study hall and tutoring. Phone interviews and a focus group session were conducted with student-athletes in order to more fully answer the question of whether an academic advising program for student-athletes at the Division III level would be helpful and practical. The major findings concluded that there is a need for an academic advising program for student athletes at the Division III level.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this day and age, academics and athletics have become intertwined. Most professional athletes begin as student athletes in colleges and universities, where they experience pressures unlike those of the average college student. Student athletes are pressured to win in their sport as well as excel academically, to hone their bodies as well as their minds, while often less prepared for the realities of college level academics than the other students at the institutions they attend.

Marcus was a star player on a Division III team, who got caught up in the trappings of college life. Adulation, admiration and endless parties; all of these make college fun, but do not leave much time for academics or actual school work. Three semesters later, Marcus failed school. No longer a star athlete, no degree, nothing to remind him of his glory days but some trophies and newspaper articles. Today, Marcus wakes up daily to go work a 16 hour day which barely pays the bills for his new family. He learned the hard way that obtaining a college degree as a student athlete takes time and discipline, as well as a delicate balancing of ones social, athletic, and academic lives. Many student athletes follow this negative arc, but had he been guided more, pressed into fulfilling his academic obligations instead of attending parties, Marcus would have graduated with a degree.

Marcus' situation exemplifies the difficulty in Division III athletics. In today's society, athletics play a major role in the culture of an institution. Without athletics college campuses would lack much of the enthusiasm associated with the

college experience (Pope & Miller, 1997). Nonetheless, while making substantive contributions to their schools, student-athletes face a number of challenges that are not addressed in an institutional structure (Pope & Miller, 1997). The student athlete is usually academically different from the average student, as the demands put upon him/her are not only personal, but are both personal pressures and the pressures of the entire school to succeed. These larger pressures have a tendency to overshadow academics in the student-athlete's life, even though (especially at Division III schools) the chances are slim that the athlete will ultimately go professional. Division III schools place the same pressures on their student athletes (i.e. practice time, training, traveling) as Division I schools, yet Division III schools have not yet implemented a mandatory academic support system.

Academic and social pressures, along with the unique demands of participating in athletics, consume a majority of a student-athletes time. Since the advent of high profile collegiate athletics, university presidents have expressed concern over admitting large numbers of student-athletes who exhaust academic eligibility without attaining a degree, thus leaving their future in doubt (Pope & Miller, 1997). As a result, many Division I universities have instituted student-athlete academic support programs designed to ensure academic success of student-athletes. Division I athletics are the most influential, revenue generating group on college campuses, therefore academic performance is closely watched by the academic advising office for student-athletes. While Division I athletes are vital to a school, student-athletes at Division III institutions give to their college the same time and dedication in order to succeed.

Statement of the Problem

Issues of student-athlete retention and graduation rates are a concern to many college and university presidents, because of the high profile brought to the institution. For example, Tinto (1993) noted that nearly 60% first time entrants to a four-year university failed to graduate. Because student-athletes face a more strenuous schedule than non-athletes, retention at universities becomes even more difficult. As Eitzen (1988) mentions, student-athletes enter college with worse academic records, and are overall less prepared than their non-athletic peers. The Center for the Study of Athletics in 1987 revealed that nearly one-half of all student-athletes are from low socioeconomic households, where 11th grade was the median level of parental education (Person & LeNoir, 1997). The study continued to show on average student-athletes spent 28 hours preparing for a sport and 23 hours preparing for class, while missing an average of two classes per week (Person & LeNoir, 1997). Because athletes spend so much time preparing for athletic-related activities, they tend to improperly manage personal time when it comes to other endeavors.

The retention and graduation rates of student-athletes in higher education are a growing concern at institutions all across America. Tierney (1992) argued the successful retention of student-athletes offers benefits that can only be measured in satisfaction, rather than numbers. For example, the student will be able to reap the rewards that a college degree affords, while society will be able to utilize the productive skills the student has acquired over the course of the degree. With these factors in mind, graduation and retention rates establish the credibility of an athletic department's reputation towards academics.

Student-athletes face both the academic and social pressures that their non-athlete peers confront as well as the unique demands of participation in competitive athletics. These demands include athletic training, strength and conditioning programs, media relations, and time requirements for travel and games, all of which combine to leave little opportunity for an athlete to have a traditional college experience. Edwards (1990) discusses that some student-athletes spend upwards of 40 hours a week on their sport, and when they are done practicing or playing they are often in pain from the intense physical activity; as a consequence, the motivation to study loses priority to recuperating the body. Recognizing this in 1988, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), which is the governing body for both Division I and Division III athletics, approved legislation requiring that Division I institutions provide general academic counseling for all student-athletes (Smith & Herman, 1996). However, there are no academic support requirements that exist for Division III schools (Smith & Herman, 1996). Yet, one can argue that Division III student-athletes are very similar to Division I student-athlete peers, because of the obstacles both face when trying to complete academic requirements. Since student-athletes represent their universities at both Division I and III institutions in similar manners, there is little reason that Division I athletes should be given more academic support than peers at Division III schools.

Significance of the Problem

Since 1985, when the NCAA began implementation of a mandatory academic support system for athletes at Division I schools, there has been a marked increase in graduation rates for student athletes from these institutions (Suggs, 2000). At the

same time, there has been a decline in graduation rates for Division III schools (NCAA, 2003), where such systems are not mandatory and are rarely implemented.

Why does this gap exist? Where is the divide between Division I and Division III schools that makes this dichotomy logical? The answer can be found in the financial bottom line. Division I schools with high profile athletic teams generate as much revenue as many professional athletic teams. Sponsorships, television deals, media exposure – all of these translate into dollars, which Division III schools will rarely, if ever see.

An unbalanced situation is created; Division III student-athletes are non-scholarship students, who compete for the love of the game in the purest form, providing entertainment and social cohesion for a school. However, when compared to their Division I peers, it becomes apparent that Division III athletes spend an equal amount of time preparing for athletic contests and are under the same duress as Division I athletes without receiving academic support (Grites, 1986).

The NCAA and associated Division III schools have a responsibility to student athletes at any level of competition. Any student who is willing to add the burden of athletics to his/her work-load should be given proper support to ensure a maximum academic experience. Such support should be extended to all student-athletes, for an obvious reason: they are students before they are athletes, and the colleges and universities they attend exist primarily for academics rather than for athletics. A student-athlete spends a majority of time on athletics representing the college on or off campus, and it should be the responsibility of the college to provide

the necessary academic support in order for them to have the chance to succeed academically.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine whether Division III institutions should provide student athletes with the same academic support program that Division I schools provide. By surveying, interviewing and discussing the issue with undergraduate student-athletes, the aim was to discover if student-athletes felt an academic support center, that would include, advising, mentoring, study hall, and tutoring was necessary to promote academic success.

Definition of Terms

Academic Advising: Academic advising is a process involving a student in close relationships with faculty who share the responsibility for assisting students to develop academic and co-curricular programs to achieve their personal, educational, and career goals.

Academic Support Services: Undergraduate support services offered to students who experience academic difficulties and to those who wish to achieve greater success.

Division I Athletics: Student athletes participating in a sport and receiving a full scholarship to attend their university.

Division III Athletics: Student athletes participating in a sport without receiving a financial scholarship.

NCAA: National Collegiate Athletic Association, the governing body of college athletics.

Prop 16: Proposition 16 governs the NCAA's initial eligibility requirements for student-athletes at more than 300 Division I colleges and universities. Implemented in 1995, Prop 16 is a more restrictive successor to Proposition 48, which went into effect in 1984. High school graduates who do not meet Prop 16's requirements are precluded from participating in intercollegiate competition and may be denied athletic scholarships. To qualify for full eligibility, student-athletes must have a 2.0 grade-point average (GPA) in 13 approved academic "core" courses and an SAT of 1010 or a combined ACT of 86. Students with lower test scores need higher core course GPAs. The minimum test score for students with a GPA of 2.5 or higher is 820 SAT/68 ACT.

Prop 48: In 1984, the NCAA passed Proposition 48, resulting in mandated academic eligibility requirements for freshman varsity athletes. Proposition 48 required student athletes to have a minimum SAT score of 700 (ACT score of 17) and a minimum GPA of 2.0 in at least 11 courses in core subjects.

Student-Athlete: A male or female student who was enrolled full time and participated in a college sport at Rowan University.

Assumptions and Limitations

It can be assumed that all students who participated in this study were involved in athletics at a Division III university. It can be assumed that all participants that completed the survey were truthful and cooperative. In addition, it can be assumed that the athletes and coaches that participated in the phone interviews were honest in expressing their thoughts. Also, it is assumed that the athletes that

participated in this study represented the thoughts of the athlete attending a Division III institution.

The researcher is a caucasian male, where athletics have always been a significant part of life, and there were aspirations to be involved in athletics in a professional setting. There may be researcher bias present since the investigator is a former coach at a Division III institution.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the opinions of selected student athletes regarding the academic support services provided by Rowan University?
2. How do the student athletes at Rowan University feel about having a mandatory study hall and tutoring sessions in order to promote academic success?
3. What recommendations do selected student athletes give to improve academic support services?

Report Organization

Chapter two reviews literature relevant to the study. The literature review provides a framework for the study and discusses what other researchers have found in discussing the need for an academic support center for student athletes at a Division III institution. Chapter three discusses the methodology of the research paper, while chapter four covers the results of the study. Finally, chapter five summarizes the study, and presents findings and conclusions based on the analysis of the data, along with recommendations for practice and future research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Student-Athlete and the Institution

The predicament of student athletes is unique. Simultaneously, they face the academic and social pressures of being a college student, and are expected to perform at the highest level under the microscope of the entire student body and the general public.

In 1987, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), along with the American Institutes for Research (AIR), began comparing the college experience of a student-athlete versus non student-athletes who participated in extracurricular activities. Over 4,000 student-athletes were questioned, and the resulting AIR data produced favorable images of the student-athlete (AIR, 1988). The study remains the most encompassing research to touch upon the experiences of the student athlete, and demonstrated the unique challenges student athletes face in college. Moreover, the study demonstrated that student-athletes are a special population and that academic preparation and commitment should be further studied to gauge the amount of pressure placed upon student-athletes to succeed.

Ferrante and Etzel (1991) suggest that student-athletes should be considered nontraditional students having their own culture, cultural icons, and special academic, social, and competitive schedules. Kramer (1986) cited the example of student-athletes as visible icons on campus noting the distinctive clothing worn to identify them as athletes.

According to Parham (1993), student athletes are subject to different time schedules than their peers. They have both the academic and social pressures that non-student athletes have as well as having to endure taxing practices, and balancing travel and game schedules. Student-athletes are challenged to find ways of maximizing their involvement and learning in both academic and athletic domains while performing in a competitive manner.

Often, the individual needs of a student-athlete are ignored, while the institution's profile is enhanced. Parham (1993), explained that an athlete could be easily manipulated and exploited at the collegiate level. Moreover, the increase in millions of dollars spent on an athletic program or the stress placed on a head coach for the team to succeed, such pressures eventually impact the athlete, making the college experience more challenging than the average student. Win baby, win is often the refrain heard by the student athletes today.

Student-Athletes and Academics

The challenges that student-athletes face and the academic performance standards established by the NCAA and associated institutions combine to make the environment challenging for the student athlete to thrive. Recent research shows that the majority of student-athletes enter college with poorer academic records than the non-student-athlete (Eitzen, 1988; NCAA, 2003). These low academic records are a major concern to athletic directors, coaches, and the NCAA. In 1982, the NCAA was concerned with the public scrutiny surrounding intercollegiate athletics, and instituted the Select Committee on Athletic Problems and Concerns in Higher Education (NCAA, 1982). The committee was charged with identifying and addressing the

problems dealing with student-athletes in the classroom, and to recommend suggestions to improve academic performance. The four major issues the committee identified were:

- Universities admitting potential athletes without skills or experience to perform successfully as students;
- Athletes participating in the athletic programs not being required to conform to an academic program that would enable them to receive a degree;
- Student-athletes not being given sufficient attention to help them;
- The demands being placed on the athlete in the pursuit of athletic endeavors, resulting in insufficient time and energy to meet even the minimum academic requirements. (NCAA, 1982)

The select committee developed two major responses that significantly altered college athletics. The first response was to develop and implement “Proposition 48” which set admission standards required for individual student-athletes to become and remain eligible before participating in any athletic competition (NCAA, 1996). The NCAA committee, under Proposition 48, announced that they were strengthening the standards for incoming student-athletes to participate in competitive sports. The standard established that all freshman student-athletes must have a 2.0 grade point average and an 820 combined score on the *Scholastic Aptitude Test* (NCAA, 1996). The result of the NCAA actions was to limit the number of at risk student-athletes entering collegiate institutions.

The NCAA, as a means of enhancing the academic standards of student-athletes, also implemented the *NCAA Life Skills Program* (NCAA, 1996). The mission of the NCAA program was to provide systematic personal development designed to reach each student-athlete based on his or her individual needs (NCAA, 1996). The program was designed to improve the daily life of student-athletes and help them focus on life skills to accommodate the competing academic, social and athletic commitments. The NCAA Life Skills program was designed to develop an academic commitment, athletic commitment, personal development commitment, community service commitment, and career development commitment for all student-athletes. The aim of the NCAA Life Skills program was to help the student-athletes receive a proper education, both in the classroom and in preparation for adult life (NCAA, 1996).

Student-athletes face a number of challenges when integrating into the academic system. For some, the affects of being a full time student-athlete are not a life-changing phenomenon, while for others, the affects can be overwhelming (NCAA, 1996). Student-athletes who participate in revenue-producing sports, such as football and basketball tend to have greater challenges in the academic arena. In response, the NCAA requires academic support for student athletes and is seeking to improve graduation rates on college and university campuses. Success stories of student-athletes leaving college and making significant impacts in the private sector are the driving force of the assistance programs, and ultimately re-focus attention on the true raison d'être of a college education; educating students for productive roles as citizens in society.

Graduation Rates

The academic performance of student-athletes has historically been less than stellar. Statistically, student-athletes generally enter college with poorer academic records than non-athlete peers (Eitzen, 1988; NCAA, 2004). One method that has improved academic performance of student athletes is the use of student assistance programs specifically designed to meet the special needs of student athletes. Since the implementation of these programs, graduation rates have increased at the Division I schools (NCAA, 1999). Student-athletes who entered a Division I institution and received athletic scholarships as freshmen in 2001 graduated at a rate of 63%, compared to a graduation rate of 62% for all other students (NCAA, 2007). The performance of incoming classes of student-athletes continues to show gains set by previous classes with the graduation rates being one percent higher than the general student body. Although the data show that all student athletes are graduating at a higher rate than the student body, athletes in the revenue producing sports of basketball and football are actually graduating at much lower rates (Suggs, 2003). The research shows that for basketball players only 46% earned degrees, while in football, 55% of the student-athletes graduated (NCAA, 2007). The NCAA has examined its approach towards enhancing academic performance recently, and has explored ways of improving the system. Suggs (2003) suggests that one of the NCAA's sanctions is to take scholarships away from teams that graduate fewer than 50% of its players. Suggs (2003) discusses that if this rule went into effect, as many as 180 of the 320 Division I institutions would lose at least one scholarship based on 2003 data.

While Division I athlete's graduation rates are higher, Division III graduation rates are much lower. This disparity may be explained by the following factors. Division III athletes are non-scholarship student-athletes participating in athletics for the love of the game. They spend a comparable amount of time and energy participating in sports, but are not provided the same academic support that Division I athletes are afforded. In the 2001 entering class, Division III student athletes graduated at a 54% rate, while all students at Division III schools graduated at a 62% rate (NCAA, 2007). In stark comparison, Division I student-athletes graduated at a rate of 63%, or nine percentage points higher than Division III student-athletes (NCAA, 2007). The graduation rate for female student-athletes at Division I schools was 73%, as compared to a 71% rate at Division III institutions (NCAA, 2007). In addition, the data show that Division I level black male student-athletes are graduating at a rate of 54%, as compared to a 48% rate at Division III institutions (NCAA, 2007). In revenue producing sports such as men's basketball, black male student-athletes graduate at a rate of 41% at the Division I level, while they only graduate at a rate of 31% at the Division III level (NCAA, 2007).

The importance of completing a college degree is extremely important to the success of an individual. With graduation rates dropping for Division III athletes, fewer students maybe willing to participate purely for the love of the game. While academic assistance programs have contributed to the rise in graduation rates of Division I athletics, the commensurate lack of support for Division III athletes appears to have contributed to lower graduation rates.

The Role of Academic Support

Academic advisors play a central role in academic support programs of student athletes. They monitor eligibility, assist with course selection, assess skill deficiencies, provide tutoring and study halls, and monitor career advancement (Figler, 1988). Academic advisors often possess qualities similar to a coach. As keen observers of athletics, they understand the subtleties of the game and the underlying strategy that goes into playing a game. The advisor acts as a coach in the academic arena by helping student athletes succeed in the classroom (Kramer, 1986). The advisor assumes the delicate task of teaching and tutoring student-athletes to achieve academic excellence at the same time of keeping a competitive edge in whatever game is played. Advisors are charged with helping athletes recognize and enhance motivation to achieve academic proficiency as well as create an understanding of the benefits of such achievements. The advisor's referent power promotes encouragement of student-athletes to finish the academic routines (Kramer, 1986). The advisor, much like the coach on the field provides support by encouraging, instructing, evaluating, and rewarding student-athletes. The advisor serves as an academic coach, helping student athletes to succeed on-and-off the competitive venue (Kramer, 1986).

In addition, there are many specific strategies that are used to strengthen the affect of academic advising. Knowing and evaluating a student's skills and abilities, assessing the factors that inhibit academic success and referring students to appropriate resources are all strategies employed to enhance academic advising (Gordon, 1995). Students who engage in intercollegiate athletics often show an even

greater need for academic advising than those students in the general student body (Gordon, 1995). Gordon claims that approximately 50% of incoming freshmen come to school without any long-term professional goals. Academic advising provides another personalized function to help student-athletes through individualized help. Although academic advisors cannot prevent students from failing, they can provide information and serve as role models to help student athletes succeed academically and socially, and in the process, graduate from college.

Differences in the Division I and Division III Student-Athletes

Most literature on the problems and concerns of advising student-athletes are directed toward the NCAA Division I athlete, or the scholarship athlete (Grites, 1986). Similarly, much of the legislation enacted by the NCAA has focused on improving the public usage of high profile Division I schools and associated athletes. Ironically, Division III student-athletes experience many of the same problems. Institutional participation in men's and women's intercollegiate athletics continues to grow, including more than 60,000 student-athletes competing at the Division III level (NCAA, 2003). These students represent a substantial group of athletes that are similar to, and yet different than scholarship athletes.

The non-scholarship athletes of Division III face daily practice schedules, are required to learn athletic-related information, and are often away from campus just as Division I athletes. Furthermore, they are subject to many of the same NCAA eligibility requirements, yet most do not have the designated resources (athletic academic advisors, study hall, tutors) available to them, as do most scholarship athletes. The Division III athlete is the last true amateur, who plays for the good of

the sport (Grites, 1986). The self-motivation factor of a Division III athlete is truly different than that of the Division I athlete.

Although many of the same academic monitoring efforts that exist in Division I institutions also exist in Division III, the resources and personnel are more limited. Few Division III programs hire athletic academic advisors or athletic tutors.

Although these institutions do provide resources to all students, they do not provide the specialized individual attention that student-athletes need on a regular basis. The support services for the Division III student-athlete originates from already existing institutional resources and the general academic advisor is one of those resources. This differs greatly from the Division I athlete who receives personal attention from an athletic academic advisor, has readily more available tutors, and attends mandatory study halls. Advisors could be useful at Division III institutions by providing reinforcement for student-athletes by encouraging participation, acknowledging academic performance, and recognizing the contributions student athletes make to the quality of the institution (Gordon, 1995).

Summary of Literature Review

The recent landscape of college athletics has changed over the years from a competitive spirited event between two teams, to big business, cut-throat winner take all mentality. At the Division I level, the student athletes are taken care of academically, by being afforded academic support, while at the Division III level the student athletes are not a high priority. At the Division I level the student athlete plays a major role in the institutions lifestyle, playing a major entertainment level for the average student along with alumni and supporters. Since the Division I student

athlete is counted upon for so many hours throughout a day, from practice to travel, their time is limited; therefore they are provided academic support to help them through their academic struggles. On the other hand, Division III student athletes are held to those same requirements, but are not afforded the same academic help as the revenue producing Division I athlete. Therefore, with graduation rates lower in Division III student athletes, and their sacrifice to play for the love of the game, Division III institutions need to take a look at implementing an academic support program.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Study Setting

This study was conducted at Rowan University, a Division III NCAA institution, known for its liberal arts curriculum and athletic success. Located in southern New Jersey, Rowan University is a leading public institution in which highly qualified and diverse faculty, staff, and students integrate teaching, research, scholarship, creative activity, and community service. The university enrolls more than 10,000 undergraduate and graduate students, represented by citizens from the United States and foreign countries (www.rowan.edu/fastfacts). Rowan University offers 36 undergraduate majors in the colleges of Business, Communication, Education, Engineering, Fine & Performing Arts, and Liberal Arts & Sciences. Consisting of 16 athletic programs, comprised of more than 400 student-athletes, Rowan University is one of the most competitive Division III institutions in the country.

Population and Sample Selection

Undergraduate student athletes and coaches that participated in athletics during the 1997-98 academic year were asked to participate in this study. Of the approximate 9,500 students at the university, there were 312 student athletes. In order to participate in the study, the student athlete had to be enrolled as a full-time student, taking at least 12 credit hours, along with playing a sport. After contacting the respective coaches to have the athletes participate in the study, 312 surveys were

distributed with 216 student athletes completing the survey for a response rate of 69%. The researcher then randomly selected 10 individuals from different sports to participate in a personal interview. The researcher then selected 10 student athletes to participate in a focus group session.

Instrumentation

The survey (Appendix B) used in the study was developed by the researcher, based upon a review of the relevant literature. The survey inquired about the need for an academic advising center, mandatory study hall and tutoring sessions, and an academic advising facility at Rowan University. The format of the survey was based on yes/no questions and answers, along with a section to give a response. In addition, the survey asked demographic information such as gender, and sport participation.

The survey was based on prior research done by the researcher and was considered valid. The responses gathered from the initial survey determined a follow-up phone interview and focus group. In order to obtain a closer look at the survey responses, the follow-up interview (Appendix D) and focus group (Appendix E) were asked questions, with time to discuss open-ended responses. The main focus of the interview and focus group was to gain a more in depth feel for the needs of the student athletes at the university.

Data Collection Procedures

The research for this study was conducted in three different stages. Following approval of the instrument from the Institutional Review Board to proceed (Appendix A), a 12-question survey was distributed to each coach, who handed the instrument to their respective student athletes. The student athletes had one week to return the

survey to the respective head coach. A total of 216 surveys were completed for a response rate of 69%.

The second stage was performed by randomly contacting student athletes, from the survey pool and conducting 10 interviews (Appendix C). During the interviews, each student athlete was informed of the reason they were being interviewed and consent was given to authorize the use of this information in the study.

The third stage was to bring more random student athletes in to discuss the issues of the research in a focus group session (Appendix D). During this open forum, 18 participants freely provided opinions based on the research questions.

At the end of each stage, the student-athletes were made aware that the information being obtained was used for a research study and would remain confidential.

Data Analysis

After completion of the research, the data were analyzed in two parts based on the research questions. The first item of the survey was calculated on a frequency and percentage scale from the yes-no responses given by the participants. Data were analyzed to answer first research question “What are the opinions of selected student athletes regarding the academic support services provided by Rowan University?” The second item of the interview and focus group were analyzed based on responses students gave, and the opinions that were expressed. This part helped to answer the two research questions, “Do student athletes feel that a mandatory study hall and tutoring sessions are necessary in order to promote their academic success?” and

“What recommendations do selected student athletes give to improve academic support services?”

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software, which calculated frequencies and percentages. The findings from the data analysis were then used to create the set of open-ended questions for the follow-up interview. The questions followed the same set of research questions, but allowed the answers to be analyzed by categorizing the comments and suggestions made by the student athletes using a content analysis procedure.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

Profile of the Samples

The participants in the study consisted of 216 student athletes that were selected through a convenience sampling process. Convenience sampling is a sample selected based on availability. For the first part of the study, 312 surveys were distributed and 216 were returned based on the availability and cooperation of the participants for a response rate of 69%. In order to participate in the study, the student athletes had to enroll as a full time student athlete, taking at least 12 credit hours along with playing a sport.

The male subjects constituted a majority of the respondents. In fact, of the 216 surveyed, 54.6% were male. The female population of the survey represented 45.4%. Tables 4.1 through 4.3 represent the male to female percentages in the survey, interviews, and focus group.

Table 4.1 represents the participant's male to female ratio in the survey. The response rate for the survey was 69%. Table 4.1 displays a small disproportion between the males and females as 54.6% were male, whereas 45.4% were female.

Table 4.1

Gender-Survey

	<i>N</i> =52	
Gender	Frequency	%
Male	118	54.6
Female	<u>98</u>	<u>45.4</u>
Total	216	100.0

Table 4.2 represents the frequency and percentage of student-athletes that participated in the personal interviews. The data collected showed equal amount of males and females from the 10 personal interviews.

Table 4.2

Gender-Interviews

	<i>N</i> =10	
Gender	Frequency	%
Male	5	50
Female	<u>5</u>	<u>50</u>
Total	10	100

Table 4.3 represent the amount of student-athletes that took part in the focus group based on gender. Female student-athletes comprised 55.5% and male student-athletes were 44.5%.

Table 4.3

Gender-Focus Group

	<i>N</i> =18	
Gender	Frequency	%
Male	8	44.5
Female	<u>10</u>	<u>55.5</u>
Total	18	100.0

Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the opinions of selected student athletes regarding the academic support services provided by Rowan University?

Tables 4.4 and 4.5 provide information regarding Research Question 1. The data are based on the survey returned by the 216 student athletes. Table 4.4 describes how each student athlete felt about whether they were receiving proper information when seeing a regular school advisor. The student-athletes believed they were receiving proper information from the school advisor as 71.7% were in agreement. Table 4.4 goes on to answer the question if the athletic department had it's own academic advisor, would one be more receptive to using the services provided. Of the 216 survey participants, 82.9% of the people surveyed gave a yes for an answer. Table 4.4 also discusses whether student-athletes attended study hall. The response was 62.5% attended mandatory study hall, although the numbers from the response vary because study hall was only mandatory for freshman and student athletes with a GPA under 2.5.

Table 4.4

Survey Responses

	Proper Information N=216		Receptive of an Academic Advisor N=216		Attended Mandatory Study Hall N=26	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	155	71.7	179	82.9	135	62.5
No	<u>61</u>	<u>28.3</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>17.1</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>37.5</u>
Total	216	100.0	216	100.0	216	100.0

Table 4.5 presents responses to whether the student athletes surveyed would like the athletic department to have it's own tutors, advisors, and study hall. The results showed that 75.9% of the subjects that responded thought it was a positive idea to have separate academic tutors and advisors for the student-athletes.

Table 4.5 answers the question posed to the student-athlete as to whether they believe increased academic support would benefit them as a student athlete. Data showed that 74% of the student-athletes thought it would definitely help their academics to have an increased level of academic support.

Table 4.5

Survey Responses

	Tutors and Advisors for Student Athletes N=216		Increased Academic Support N=216	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Yes	164	75.9	160	74
No	<u>52</u>	<u>24.1</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>26</u>
Total	216	100.0	216	100.0

Research Question 2: How do the student athletes at Rowan University feel about having a mandatory study hall and tutoring sessions in order to promote academic success?

Tables 4.6 through 4.10 presents the results of the personal interviews and the views of the 10 student athletes on the benefits of mandatory study hall, tutoring sessions, academic advisors for student athletes only, and a separate academic support center. Table 4.6 shows through the interviews that 70% of the student-athletes were in favor of having mandatory study halls because it would give them flexible study times due to time constraints. Table 4.7 shows that 50% of the student-athletes

wanted an athletics only advisor because of the positive benefits it would provide based on the advisor being able to understand the student-athletes rigors, along with time constraints. Also, 40% of the student-athletes were in favor of having an athletics only advisor because of the positive benefits that person could provide to the university and the student-athletes. Table 4.8 shows that student-athletes were in favor of tutoring sessions, as 50% were in favor of it due to needing help in all of personal class work, while 20% thought they would need it if they were struggling in an individual class. Table 4.9 shows that 40% of the student-athletes were for an academic advising center in order to study with other athletes and another 40% were in favor because of the availability of a peaceful academic area.

Table 4.6

Mandatory Study Hall Interviews

Response	Reason	N=10 Frequency	%
Yes	flexible study time	7	70
No	unnecessary, high academics	2	20
No	financial burden to university	1	10

Table 4.7

Academic Advisors for Student Athletes Interviews

Response	Reason	N=10 Frequency	%
Yes	positive educational benefits	5	50
Yes	positive athletic contributions to the school	4	40
No	athletics is a students choice	1	10

Table 4.8

Tutoring Sessions Interviews

Response	Reason	N=10	
		Frequency	%
Yes	individual attention for class work	5	50
Yes	struggling in an individual class	2	20
Undecided	no opinion	2	20
No	unnecessary, high academics	1	10

Table 4.9

Academic Support Center Interviews

Response	Reason	N=10	
		Frequency	%
Yes	opportunity to study with other athletes	4	40
Yes	peaceful academic area to do class work	4	40
No	unnecessary, financial burden	2	20

Research Question 3: What recommendations do selected student athletes give to improve academic support services?

Tables 4.10 through 4.13 provides information regarding Research Question 3 from a focus group made up of 18 student-athletes from the sample of 216 student-athletes. An open discussion was formed on the topic of academic support services and Tables 4.10 through 4.13 shows the results of how the focus group felt about a mandatory study, academic advisors, tutoring sessions, and an academic support center for student-athletes. Table 4.10 shows that 50% of the focus group believed there should be a mandatory study hall because of the increased number of resources available during a study hall time and the increased amount of flexibility in

scheduling times to study. Table 4.11 shows that 33% of the focus group were in favor of an academic advisor for student-athletes due to the individual attention provided by the advisor. Also, 28% of the focus group believed it would be beneficial due to a student-athletes time constraints, and the advisor would be more flexible in helping the student-athlete. Table 4.11 shows the results on whether individual tutoring sessions would help a student-athlete; 56% of the student-athletes were in favor of individual tutors due to the constant pressures and need for help in class work, while another 22% of the student-athletes thought it would be beneficial if they were struggling in an individual class. In Table 4.13, an academic support center for student-athletes is supported at a rate of 56% due the opportunity to study with other athletes, and 11% agreed that it would be beneficial because it would be a separate, quiet place to study.

Table 4.10

Mandatory Study Hall Focus Group

		N=18	
Response	Reason	Frequency	%
Yes	increased time flexibility and resources	9	50
Undecided	no opinion	6	33
No	unnecessary, high academics	3	17

Table 4.11

Academic Advisors for Student Athletes Focus Group

		N=18	
Response	Reason	Frequency	%
Yes	individual attention	6	33
Yes	necessary due to time constraints	5	28
Undecided	no opinion	4	22
No	current situation adequate	3	17

Table 4.12

Tutoring Sessions Focus Group

		N=18	
Response	Reason	Frequency	%
Yes	individual attention for class work	10	56
Yes	struggling in an individual class	4	22
No	unnecessary, high academics	4	22

Table 4.13

Academic Support Center Focus Group

		N=18	
Response	Reason	Frequency	%
Yes	opportunity to study with other athletes	10	56
Yes	quiet individual area	2	11
Undecided	no opinion	4	22
No	current situation adequate	2	11

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

The goal of an academic support program for student athletes at a Division III institution is to provide the necessary resources for the athletes to maintain a high level of academic standards while competing in sports. All Division I institutions have mandatory academic support programs for their student athletes, and Division III athletes put in an equivalent amount of time and energy, so the opportunity to help them maintain high academic standards should be discussed at all postsecondary institutions.

Results from the survey indicated that 74% of the sample believed that increased academic support was needed and should be provided for student athletes at Rowan University. Further, 75.9% thought that it was necessary that separate tutors and advisors be provided for the student athletes. Finally, 71.4% of the subjects in the focus group and personal interviews believed that the school should provide separate academic advisors for student athletes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine whether Division III institutions should provide student athletes with the same academic support program that Division I schools provide. By surveying, interviewing, and discussing the issue with undergraduate student-athletes, the aim was to discover if student-athletes felt an

academic support center, that would include, advising, mentoring, study hall, and tutoring was necessary to promote academic success. The study focused on student athletes at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey during the 2000-01 academic year.

Methodology

The participants in the study consisted of 216 student athletes, from Rowan University, that were selected through a convenience sampling process. For the first part of the study, 312 surveys were distributed and 216 were returned based on the availability and cooperation of the participants for a response rate of 69%. In order to safeguard the rights and welfare of student participants, an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application (Appendix A) was completed and submitted to the Rowan University IRB for approval. Participants were asked to read and sign a consent form (Appendix B) prior to completing the survey. The IRB application was approved on October 18, 2000 (Appendix A).

Data were gathered through three sources: a survey, personal interviews, and a focus group. The survey (Appendix C) was distributed to 312 student athletes at Rowan University, with 216 surveys returned. The survey included a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey, a consent form, institutional approval forms, and a return address campus envelope to return the completed survey.

The second source of data were developed from 10 personal interviews with individual student athletes to further see if there was a need for an academic advising plan for student athletes at this Division III institution. A content analysis procedure

was used to find common themes regarding the wisdom of having an academic advising program.

The third source of data were developed from a focus group composed of 18 student athletes to discuss and provide information regarding whether there was a need for an academic advising program at Rowan University. A content analysis procedure was used to find common themes regarding recommendations of improving academic support services for student athletes at Rowan University.

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), which calculated frequencies, percentages, standard deviations, and means. The findings from the data analysis were then used to create the set of open-ended questions for the follow-up interview. The questions followed the same set of research questions, but allowed the answers to be analyzed by categorizing the comments and suggestions made by the student athletes using a content analysis procedure.

Findings and Discussion

Research Question 1: What are the opinions of selected student athletes regarding the academic support services provided by Rowan University?

The survey data collected from the student athletes at Rowan University supports Grites's (1986) conclusions that the non-scholarship athletes of Division III face daily practice schedules, are required to learn athletic-related information, and are often away from campus just as Division I athletes. Furthermore, they are subject to many of the same NCAA eligibility requirements, yet most do not have the

designated resources (athletic academic advisors, study hall, tutors) available to them, as do most scholarship athletes. The data showed that 82.9% of the student athletes at Rowan University were receptive to the idea of having a designated academic advisor, along with 74% stating the need for increased academic support.

Research Question 2: How do the student athletes at Rowan University feel about having a mandatory study hall and tutoring sessions in order to promote academic success?

Gordon (1995) states that advisors could be useful at Division III institutions by providing reinforcement for student-athletes by encouraging participation, acknowledging academic performance, and recognizing the contributions student athletes make to the quality of the institution. Students who engage in intercollegiate athletics often show an even greater need for academic advising than those students in the general student body.

Following completion of the surveys, 10 student athletes (5 male & 5 female) were selected to participate in individual personal interviews regarding the need for academic advising for a Division III athlete. Data from the interviews showed that 70% of the students wanted a mandatory study hall and individualized tutoring. In addition, 90% of the student athletes wanted an academic advisor specific to athletics, with 80% wanting an academic support center specifically for athletics.

Research Question 3: What recommendations do selected student athletes give to improve academic support services?

Figler (1988) states that academic advisors play a central role in academic support programs of student athletes. They monitor eligibility, assist with course

selection, assess skill deficiencies, provide tutoring and study halls, and monitor career advancement.

In addition a focus group with 18 student athletes from all different sports was conducted to discuss the need for an academic support program at the school. From the focus group discussion, it was determined that only 50% of the student athletes thought there should be a mandatory study hall, whereas 78% thought that individualized tutoring would be beneficial. In addition, 61% of the student athletes thought there should be an academic advisor for the athletics department only, while 67% thought there should be an academic support center for athletics.

Conclusions

The majority of student athletes at Rowan University agreed that an academic support center for student athletes would have a positive impact on their academic lives. Respondents indicated that having mandatory study hall, tutoring, separate advisors and academic center would all help improve their ability to succeed as an undergraduate student. Thus, it can be concluded that these features are important to the welfare of the student athlete at Division III institutions and should be implemented at Rowan University.

Implications

The purpose of the study was to examine whether Division III institutions should provide student athletes with the same academic support program that Division I schools provide. Thousands of student athletes at Division I institutions have benefited from academic support programs at their institutions. With Division III student athletes going through similar daily struggles, more research needs to be

implemented to see if there is a need for these programs at Division III schools, such as Rowan University. Unfortunately, little research has been completed in this area to date, with very few Division III institutions implementing academic support systems for student athletes. This study could serve as a model for additional research at the Division III level.

Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations are made for further research:

1. This study looked at responses from student athletes at one Division III university. In order to gauge students perceptions at a national level, a larger study involving more Division III institutions would be needed..
2. A study of the Rowan faculty and administration should be initiated regarding their attitudes and opinions towards an academic support program for student-athletes.
3. Further research regarding student athletes' specific needs should be done in order to fully understand how an academic support center can provide maximum benefit.
4. A longitudinal study needs to be done on an annual basis to look for trends on academic success rate for student athletes and if a support center is in greater need because of changing graduation and retention rates.

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APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Application and Notice of Approval

2000

Rowan University
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW APPLICATION

INSTRUCTIONS: Check all appropriate boxes, answer all questions completely, include attachments, and obtain appropriate signatures. Submit an **original and two copies** of the completed application to the Office of the Associate Provost.

NOTE: **Applications must be typed.**
Be sure to make a copy for your files.

FOR IRB USE ONLY:

Protocol Number: IRB-_____

Received: _____ Reviewed: 10/18/00

Exemption: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Category(ies): _____

Approved: [Signature] (date) 10/18/00

Step 1: Is the proposed research subject to IRB review?

All research involving human participants conducted by Rowan University faculty and staff is subject to IRB review. Some, but not all, student-conducted studies that involve human participants are considered research and are subject to IRB review. Check the accompanying instructions for more information. Then check with your class instructor for guidance as to whether you must submit your research protocol for IRB review. If you determine that your research meets the above criteria and is not subject to IRB review, **STOP**. You do not need to apply. If you or your instructor have any doubts, apply for an IRB review.

Step 2: If you have determined that the proposed research is subject to IRB review, complete the identifying information below.

Project Title:

Development of an Academic Advising Program for Student Athletes at a Division III Institution
Harris Adler

Researcher: Harris Adler

Department: Educational Leadership

Location: Rowan University

Mailing Address: 201 Mullica Hill Road
Glassboro, NJ 08028

(Street)

(Town/State/Zip)

E-Mail: harrisadler@hotmail.com

Telephone: 856-256-4685

Co-Investigator/s:
n/a

Faculty Sponsor (if student)* Dr. James Coaxum

Department Educational Leadership

Location: Rowan University

E-Mail: coaxum@rowan.edu

Telephone: 856-256-4779

Step 3: Determine whether the proposed research eligible for an *exemption* from a full IRB review.

Federal regulations (45 CFR 46) permit the exemption of some types of research from a full IRB review. If your research can be described by one or more of the categories listed below, check the appropriate category(ies), complete questions 1-5, and complete the Assurances on the last page of the application.

If your research cannot be described by any of these categories, your research is not exempt, and you must complete the entire "Human Research Review Application."

- ☐ **Category 1** - Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as: (a) research on regular and special education instructional strategies; or (b) research on the effectiveness of, or the comparison among, instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
- ☒ **Category 2** - Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior, unless: (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that the human participants can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the participants; and (b) any disclosure of the human participants' responses outside the research could reasonably place the participants at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the participants' financial standing, employability, or reputation.
(Note: Exemption for survey and interview procedures does not apply to research involving children. Exemption for observation of public behavior does not apply to research involving children except when the investigator does not participate in the activities being observed.)
- ☐ **Category 3** - Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under Category 2 above if: (a) the human participants are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or (b) federal statute requires without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.
- ☐ **Category 4** - Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that participants cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the participants.
- ☐ **Category 5** - Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (a) public benefit or service programs; (b) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (c) possible changes in or alternatives to these programs or procedures; or (d) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.
- ☐ **Category 6** - Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies: (a) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed; or (b) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
(Note: Exemption categories cannot be applied to research involving fetuses, pregnant women, human in vitro fertilization, or prisoners.)

Please answer Questions 1-5 below

1. WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH?

To determine if a student athlete academic support program is needed and wanted at Rowan University

2. DESCRIBE THE DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH INCLUDING WHAT WILL BE REQUIRED OF SUBJECTS (ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEET IF NECESSARY):

The subjects will be required to fill out a 12 questions survey dealing with academic support, tutoring, study halls, and advising

3. DESCRIBE THE SUBJECTS WHO WILL BE PARTICIPATING (NUMBER, AGE, GENDER, ETC):

The surveys are being distributed to the 312 student athletes on campus

4. DESCRIBE HOW SUBJECTS WILL BE RECRUITED (e.g. ADVERTISEMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS IN CLASS, E-MAIL, INTERNET)

The surveys will be handed to their respective coaches and the coaches will deliver them to their athletes

5. WHERE WILL THE RESEARCH BE CONDUCTED:

Rowan University

NOTE: IF THE RESEARCH IS TO BE CONDUCTED IN ANOTHER INSTITUTION (e.g. A SCHOOL, HOSPITAL, AGENCY, etc.) A PERMISSION LETTER FROM AN ADMINISTRATOR ON THE LETTERHEAD OF THAT INSTITUTION MUST BE ATTACHED.

IF THE RESEARCH IS TO BE CONDUCTED AT ANOTHER UNIVERSITY, A SIGNED COPY OF THE IRB APPROVAL FORM FROM THAT UNIVERSITY MUST BE ATTACHED.

ATTACH THE CONSENT FORM TO THIS APPLICATION. The Consent Form must address all of the elements required for informed consent (SEE INSTRUCTIONS).

NOTE: IF THE ONLY RECORD LINKING THE SUBJECT AND THE RESEARCH WOULD BE THE CONSENT DOCUMENT, AND THE RESEARCH PRESENTS NO MORE THAN MINIMAL RISK OF HARM TO SUBJECTS, YOU MAY USE AN ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE FOR CONSENT. IF YOU WISH TO REQUEST PERMISSION FROM THE IRB TO USE AN ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE, ATTACH A COPY OF THE FIRST PAGE OF YOUR RESEARCH INSTRUMENT OR A LETTER WITH THE REQUIRED INFORMATION (see Instructions).

If you are requesting an exemption from a full IRB review, STOP. Complete the last page of this application ("Certifications"), and forward the completed (typed) application to the Office of the Associate Provost for Research, The Graduate School, Memorial Hall.

CERTIFICATIONS:

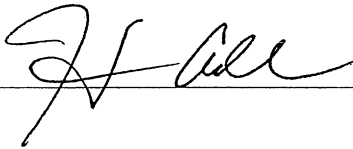
Rowan University maintains a Federalwide Assurance (FWA) with the Office of Human Research Protection (OHRP), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. This Assurance includes a requirement for all research staff working with human participants to receive training in ethical guidelines and regulations. "Research staff" is defined as persons who have direct and substantive involvement in proposing, performing, reviewing, or reporting research and includes students fulfilling these roles as well as their faculty advisors.

Please attach a copy of your "Completion Certificate for Human Participant Protections Education for Research Teams" from the National Institutes of Health.

If you need to complete that training, go to the Web Tutorial at <http://cme.nci.nih.gov/>

Responsible Researcher: I certify that I am familiar with the ethical guidelines and regulations regarding the protection of human participants from research risks and will adhere to the policies and procedures of the Rowan University Institutional Review Board. I will ensure that all research staff working on the proposed project who will have direct and substantive involvement in proposing, performing, reviewing, or reporting this research (including students fulfilling these roles) will complete IRB approved training. I will not initiate this research project until I receive written approval from the IRB. I agree to obtain informed consent of participants in this project if required by the IRB; to report to the IRB any unanticipated effects on participants which become apparent during the course or as a result of experimentation and the actions taken as a result; to cooperate with the IRB in the continuing review of this project; to obtain prior approval from the IRB before amending or altering the scope of the project or implementing changes in the approved consent form; and to maintain documentation of consent forms and progress reports for a minimum of three years after completion of the final report or longer if required by the sponsor or the institution. I further certify that I have completed training regarding human participant research ethics within the last three years as indicated below my signature.

Signature of Responsible Researcher: _____



Date: 10/1/00

Faculty Advisor (if Responsible Researcher is a student): I certify that I am familiar with the ethical guidelines and regulations regarding the protection of human participants from research risks. I further certify that I have completed training regarding human participant research ethics within the last three years as indicated below my signature (attach copy of your "Completion Certificate for Human Participant Protections Education for Research Teams" from the National Institutes of Health).

Signature of Faculty Advisor: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX B

Letter of Informed Consent and Survey

Dear Student-Athletes,

I am a graduate student in the Higher Education Administration program and would like to ask for your help with a research study I am conducting as part of my thesis. The study is investigating the need for an academic support program for student athletes at Rowan University.

Attached is a letter of consent and a short survey. Please fill both out completely. Once the survey is complete you can return it to me (with the informed consent form) in one of the following ways:

- Drop it off in Men's Basketball Office
- or
- Drop it off to your corresponding coach

Please return both the survey and the informed consent form by February 1, 2000.

Thank you in advance for your help and support.

Sincerely,

Harris Adler
Graduate Student
Higher Education Administration
856-256-4685

Informed Consent Form

I agree to participate in a research project entitled “Development of an Academic Advising Program for Student-Athletes at the Division III Level”, which is being conducted by Harris Adler as an assignment in fulfillment of the Master’s Degree in Higher Education Administration. The purpose of the study is to investigate the need for an academic support program for student athletes at Rowan University. The data collected in this study will be submitted as part of a research paper.

I understand that my responses will be anonymous and that all the data gathered will be confidential. I agree that any information obtained from this study may be used in any way thought best for publication or education provided that I am in no way identified and my name is not used.

I understand that there are no physical or psychological risks involved in this study, and that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time without penalty.

I understand that my participation does not imply employment with the state of New Jersey, Rowan University, the principal investigator, or any other project facilitator.

If I have any questions or problems concerning my participation in this study, I may contact Harris Adler 856-256-4685 or Dr. James Coaxum at 856-256-4779.

(Signature of Participant)

(Date)

(Signature of Investigator)

(Date)

Survey

This survey is being administered as part of a Master's Degree research project. While your participation is voluntary and you are not required to answer any of the questions herein, your cooperation and participation are important to the success of the project and are greatly appreciated. If you choose to participate please understand that all responses are strictly confidential and no persona information is being requested

The purpose of the study is to investigate the need for an academic support program for student athletes at Rowan University.

Please answer the following questions about your involvement as a student athlete:

1. Are you a male or female?

2. What sport do you participate in? -

3. What are your career goals?

4. When choosing classes do you see an advisor in the academic center?

5. When going to the University Academic Center, do you feel you receive proper information?

6. Do you think it would be advantageous for the Athletic Department to have its own Academic Center for student athletes only?

7. Would you be receptive to an academic advisor for student-athletes only? If so, why?

8. Did you attend student-athlete study hall this past year? If so, did you think it was properly administered?

9. Would it be beneficial for you to have tutors and advisors available for student-athletes only? If so, why?

10. Would it be beneficial for you as a student-athlete to have an increased level of academic support (study hall, tutors, advisors)? If so, why?

APPENDIX C

Interviews

Interviews

1. Are you a male or female?

2. What sport do you participate in? -

3. Did you attend mandatory study hall for student-athletes this past year?

4. If the Athletic Department had its own mandatory study hall, would this benefit you?
If so, why?

5. If the Athletic Department had its own academic advisor, would this benefit you? If
so, why?

6. If the Athletic Department had its own tutors, would this benefit you? If so, why?

7. If the Athletic Department had its own academic support center, would this benefit
you? If so, why?

APPENDIX D

Focus Group

Focus Group

Discussion Questions

1. Do you believe student athletes should have mandatory study hall? Discuss.
2. Do you believe student athletes should have their own academic advisors? Discuss.
3. Do you believe student athletes should have their own personal tutor? Discuss.
4. Do you believe student athletes should have their own academic support center? Discuss.

