

Trinity College Student-Athletes and Time Management

Nina Yu '12
Senior Research Project
Educational Studies
December 19, 2011



Context

- Roughly 650 student-athletes at Trinity college
 - 1/3 of students are student-athletes at Trinity College
 - 27 varsity sports teams
- Part of the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC) which emphasizes academics
- “The primary mission of the Conference is to organize, facilitate, support, and regulate intercollegiate athletic competition among member institutions in a manner consistent with our commitment to academic excellence and our core values.”



Research Question

- How do athletes prioritize athletics, academics and their social life and how do they budget their time according to this prioritization?
 - How do different approaches taken by coaches impact students' time management?



Significance in Literature

- Disadvantaged population (Hollis, 2001-2002)
- Athletics are the most time consuming extracurricular activity (Richard & Aries, 1999)
- Athletes scored higher on academic adjustment than non-athletes (Melendez, 2006-2007)

Methods

- Surveyed 456 varsity student-athletes and received 124 responses for a response rate of 26%
 - 48 questions
 - anonymous
- Interviewed 6 coaches of 9 different teams
 - 4 female teams & 5 male teams
 - Recorded and transcribed
 - Pseudonyms



Thesis

- I argue that athletes feel that their athletics and academics are most important to them and therefore budget their time accordingly. In addition, females are more self-motivated academically than males.
- Players with academic requirements see the requirements as helpful.



Athletes Budget Their Time Better In Season

- More efficient with time in season
- Athletes reported procrastinating more out of season
- Spent more time on academic work out of season
 - No difference in grades received in and out of season



Coach Views On Time Management In Season

- “What I find is that our student athletes do better when they’re in season because they’re forced to budget their time. When they’re just free to their own devices it doesn’t work out very well but when they’re in season it works out much better.” (Male Coach)



Athletes Prioritize Their Academics and Athletics Above Their Social Life

- Athletic and academic responsibilities were more important than social activities
- Athletes felt their sport interfered with going out
- No difference b/t females and males in time spent doing social activities but spent more time doing social activities out of season




Coach Views On Social Life


- “We have 3 S’s on our team. School, sports and social life. In that order, always. It’s as straightforward as it comes.” (Female Coach)
- “I think social life should be a distant third.” (Male Coach)



Females Are More Self-driven Academically


- Males felt academic requirements more helpful
- Males reported less interference with academics and social life than females
- Fewer females reported that they chose Trinity because of athletics
- Females dedicated less time to sports in and out of season
- More males recruited and do not think they would have gotten in had they not been recruited
- Females have more restrictions on their social life than males

- 
- “I think you’ll find that the guy teams have to babysit their players more than the female teams [academically]...The girls seem to pick the school because of academics but the guys pick the school because of the sport...So once the girls come here, they are focused on their academics because that is why they chose the school.” (Female Coach)
 - “Their time is almost budgeted for them, almost like being in high school.” (Male Coach)



Students Perceive Academic Requirements To Be Helpful

- Students that are required to go to study hall out of season strongly disagreed more with the fact that they procrastinate more out of season than in season
- Students required to go to study hall in season reported spending more hours on academic work in season than students not required to go to study hall
- Students required to go to study hall in season and students required to go to study hall out of season reported being better at budgeting their time out of season than students that are not required to go to study hall

- 
- “We monitor study halls with our guys, especially our freshmen. We’ve been monitoring their progress ...so just checking in with a few of the professors to make sure that they’re doing what they need to do to stay on course and stay successful.” (Male Coach)



Conclusion

- Because athletes are thought to be a disadvantaged group it is important that they have coaches that are invested in their academics, although females seem to be more self-sufficient when it comes to academics than males.
- Athletes as a whole prioritize academics and athletics higher than social life, reflecting coach expectations.
- Athletes with academic requirements benefit from them.



Acknowledgements

- Thank you!
 - Rachael Barlow
 - Robin Sheppard
 - Abby Himmelrich