

BLACK MALE STUDENT-ATHLETES AND RACIAL INEQUITIES IN NCAA DIVISION I COLLEGE SPORTS

2016 EDITION

BY SHAUN R. HARPER, PH.D.



Graduate School of Education
PennGSE
Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education

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The report is also available in PDF for free download at www.gse.upenn.edu/equity/sports2016

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2012, the University of Pennsylvania Center for the Study of Race & Equity in Education released our inaugural report on Black male student-athletes and racial inequities in National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I college sports. Our study received extensive coverage on ESPN as well as in *The Washington Post*, *Sports Illustrated*, *USA Today*, and over 400 other media outlets. This 2016 edition includes updated statistics from 65 universities, and reflects the conference realignment that has occurred over the past four years.

As was the case with our original report, transparency is the primary aim of this publication. In fact, statistics presented herein concerning the overrepresentation of Black male student-athletes are unlikely to surprise anyone who has watched a college football or men's basketball game over the past 25 years. Likewise, scholars who study race in intercollegiate athletics will probably deem unsurprising my updated findings on racial inequities in six-year graduation rates. What I still find shocking is that these trends are so pervasive, yet institutional leaders, the NCAA, and athletics conference commissioners have not done more in response to them. Also astonishing to me is that it seems the American public (including current and former Black student-athletes, sports enthusiasts, journalists, and leaders in Black communities) accepts as normal the widespread inequities that are cyclically reproduced in most revenue-generating college sports programs.

“Perhaps nowhere in higher education is the disenfranchisement of Black male students more insidious than in college athletics”

– Harper, 2006

Perhaps more outrage and calls for accountability would ensue if there were greater awareness of the actual extent to which college sports persistently disadvantage Black male student-athletes. Hence, the purpose of this report is to make transparent racial inequities in the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), Big Ten Conference, Big 12 Conference, Pac 12 Conference, and the Southeastern Conference (SEC). Data from the NCAA and the U.S. Department of Education are presented for the 65 institutional members of these five athletic conferences. Specifically, I offer an analysis of Black men's representation on football and basketball teams versus their representation in the undergraduate student body on each campus. I also compare all Black male student-athletes' six-year graduation rates (across four cohorts) to student-athletes overall, Black undergraduate men overall, and undergraduate students overall at each institution.

Here are some major results of this study:

- » *During the 2014-15 academic school year, Black men were 2.5% of undergraduate students, but 56.3% of football teams and 60.8% of men's basketball teams.*
- » *Across four cohorts, 53.6% of Black male student-athletes graduated within six years, compared to 68.5% of student-athletes overall, 58.4% of Black undergraduate men overall, and 75.4% of undergraduate students overall.*
- » *Only the University of Miami and Northwestern University graduated Black male student-athletes at rates higher than or equal to student-athletes overall.*
- » *Two-thirds of the universities graduated Black male student-athletes at rates lower than Black undergraduate men who were not members of intercollegiate sports teams.*
- » *Only Northwestern graduated Black male student-athletes at a rate higher than or equal to undergraduate students overall.*

In the pages that follow, I summarize previously published studies on Black male student-athletes and provide details about my research methods. I then present lists of high- and low-performing institutions. Statistics are also furnished for each individual university in the five athletic conferences. The report concludes with implications for college and university presidents, athletics directors, Power 5 conference commissioners, the NCAA, journalists, and Black male student-athletes and their families.

MESSAGE FROM KEVIN BLACKISTONE



I was invited last winter to keynote the annual Watkins Awards banquet. A group of Black men created it in 1992 to celebrate Black boys who were outstanding high school students as well as exceptional high school athletes. But I didn't congratulate the honorees who'd accepted football scholarships to Stanford, Texas A&M, Texas, and other major universities across the country where sports like football and men's basketball reap tens of millions of dollars. Instead, I warned them how likely it was that they were being hoodwinked in the college sports industrial complex.

I shared with them seminal research by Professor Shaun Harper, founder of the Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education at the University of Pennsylvania. His 2012 study, "Black Male Student-Athletes and Racial Inequities in NCAA Division I Revenue-Generating College Sports," showed that young Black men represented only 2.8% of undergraduate students on major college campuses, but 57.1% of the football teams and 64.3% of men's basketball teams. In other words, the reason they were on college campuses

was not as part of the educating class, but as part of a special working class: the massively underpaid, poorly insured laborer called "student-athlete." More disturbing, Professor Harper showed that their ostensible remuneration of a college degree was realized at rates that paled to other groups of their college classmates. While 50.2% of Black male athletes graduated within six years, 66.9% of all college athletes, 55.5% of all Black undergraduate men, and 72.8% of all undergraduates finished in the same time.

In March 2016, the newest Watkins Awards winners were feted and, coincidentally, Professor Harper unveiled a four-year update to his study. I didn't address the latest honorees; but if I had, my message wouldn't have changed. This time, the Penn study shows that during the 2014-2015 academic school year, Black men made up 2.5% of undergraduate students, slightly less than four years ago. Still, they comprised a vastly disproportionate, though slightly lower, percentage of the football and men's basketball teams, 56.3% and 60.8%, respectively. No less worrisome than four years ago, this study shows 53.6% of Black male athletes earned degrees within six years while 68.5% of all college athletes, 58.4% of all Black male undergraduates, and 75.4% of all undergraduates did the same. These numbers show slight improvement, but remain an indictment of the system.

In this updated report, Professor Harper further underscores how unethical, if not immoral, the college sports industrial complex is for Black male athletes by measuring the weight of revenues those athletes produce and showing whose pockets they line. He points out that the average salary for 65 head football coaches and 65 head basketball coaches in the five major college athletics

conferences – the Atlantic Coast Conference, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac-12, and Southeastern Conference – is \$3.26 million and \$2.88 million, respectively. Only 16.2% of those coaches are Black. The average salary for the 65 athletics directors in those conferences is \$698,755. Just 14.7% of them are Black. And none of the commissioners of those conferences, who earn on average \$2.58 million annually, are Black.

Had Professor Harper added the race, as well as gender, of all the athletic administrative salaries and lesser sport expenses paid for by the blood and sweat of Black male athletes, one could clearly envision Black men as gerbils on a wheel that produce the financial energy for all intercollegiate sports to survive and prosper. It all reminds me that it long has been time for Black male athletes and their families to demand at least some semblance of an equitable share of the value they produce for college athletics. Until they do, they're consenting to their exploitation.

With all due sincerity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin B. Blackistone". The signature is stylized with large, sweeping loops and a long horizontal tail.

Kevin B. Blackistone

Kevin B. Blackistone is an ESPN panelist and sports columnist at The Washington Post. He also is a visiting professor in the Shirley Povich Center for Sports Journalism at the University of Maryland Philip Merrill College of Journalism.

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH METHODS

This publication is an update to a report the research center I direct at Penn released in December 2012 (see Harper, Williams, & Blackman, 2013). Similar to our original study, I provide data herein on racial representation and six-year graduation rates. This 2016 edition includes updated statistics and reflects the realignment of NCAA Division I athletic conferences. My analyses focus on the 65 universities that comprise the “Power 5” conferences: ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac 12, and SEC.

These five conferences were chosen because every NCAA Division I football champion since 1989 and each Division I men’s basketball championship team since 1991 (except the University of Connecticut) has come from them. They were also selected because football teams at their member schools routinely play in post-season bowl games. Since its launch in 2014, only teams from these five conferences have played in the College Football Playoff. Millions are paid to conferences when football teams at member institutions reach the playoffs and men’s basketball teams advance in the NCAA Division I tournament. Above all, I focus on universities in these five conferences because they are likely sites at which trends reported in published research on Black male student-athletes are most problematic.

BLACK MALE STUDENT-ATHLETES: A RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Much has been written over the past four decades about Black male student participation in intercollegiate athletics. Numerous studies highlight a range of inequities at Division I institutions, the NCAA’s highest and most financially lucrative competition level. Most emphasis in the literature has been on members of revenue-generating sports teams, namely football and men’s basketball. Harper (2006) explains that these are the two sports that garner the most media attention (which also generates television contracts and corporate sponsorships), attract the most fans (who pay to attend games), and yield the most revenue from merchandise sales (e.g., jerseys and other apparel).

Scholars have recently examined how Black men are socialized to value sports over academics at a young age (e.g., Beamon & Bell, 2006; Benson, 2000); the ways in which colleges and universities reap enormous financial benefits at the expense of Black male student-athlete success (e.g., Beamon, 2008; Donnor, 2005; Harper, 2009a); and the long-term effects of sports participation on Black men’s psychological wellness and post-college

career transitions (e.g., Beamon & Bell, 2011; Harrison & Lawrence, 2003). Considerable effort has also been devoted to exploring racial differences between Black men and their White male teammates. For example, Harrison, Comeaux, and Plecha (2006) found disparities in the academic preparation of Black and White student-athletes. Specifically, Blacks were recruited from less prestigious high schools with insufficient resources, which likely underprepared them for the rigors of college-level academic work.

More than 30 years ago, renowned scholar-activist Harry Edwards wrote, “They must contend, of course, with the connotations and social reverberations of the traditional ‘dumb jock’ caricature. But Black student-athletes are burdened also with the insidiously racist implications of the myth of ‘innate Black athletic superiority,’ and the more blatantly racist stereotype of the ‘dumb Negro’ condemned by racial heritage to intellectual inferiority” (1984, p. 8). This caricature and other racial stereotypes continue to plague Black male student-athletes at many predominantly white colleges and universities (Hodge, Burden, Robinson, & Bennett, 2008; Hughes, Satterfield, & Giles, 2007; Oseguera, 2010). Because Black men are so overrepresented in college athletics, Harper (2009b) contends the myth also negatively affects those who are not student-athletes, as their White peers and others (e.g., faculty, alumni, and administrators) often erroneously presume they are members of intercollegiate sports teams and stereotype them accordingly.

The importance of engaging student-athletes in educationally purposeful activities and enriching educational experiences, both inside and outside the classroom, has been well established in the literature (Comeaux, Speer, Taustine, & Harrison, 2011; Gayles, 2014; Gayles & Hu, 2009). Notwithstanding, Black male student-athletes rarely accrue benefits and developmental outcomes associated with high levels of purposeful engagement beyond athletics. This has serious implications for faculty-student interaction, an important form of engagement. Comeaux and Harrison (2007) found that engagement with faculty was essential to academic achievement for Black and White male student-athletes, yet professors spent significantly more out-of-class time with Whites. Furthermore, high-achieving Black male student-athletes in Martin, Harrison, and Bukstein’s (2010) study reported that coaches prioritized athletic accomplishment over academic engagement and discouraged participation in activities beyond their sport.

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH METHODS

Studies cited in this section illuminate only a handful of longstanding and pervasive problems, especially in big-time college sports programs. They advance a sociocultural understanding of the status of Black male student-athletes, one of the most stereotyped populations on college campuses.

My report complements this literature by furnishing a statistical portrait of these students and highlighting racial inequities that disadvantage them in the five conferences that routinely win NCAA Division I football and men's basketball championships.

DATA SOURCES AND ANALYSIS

This report is based on statistics from the NCAA Federal Graduation Rates Database. I first calculated Black men's share of undergraduate student enrollments at each university in Power 5 conferences during the 2014-15 academic school year. These percentages were juxtaposed with Black men's share of scholarship student-athletes on football and basketball teams at each institution that same year.

I also analyzed each institution's federal graduation rates and compared Black male student-athletes to three groups: [1] student-athletes overall, [2] Black undergraduate men overall, and [3] undergraduate students overall. These graduation rates were averages across four cohorts, as opposed to a single year. These undergraduate students entered college in 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008 and graduated by 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. Graduation rates reported herein are for Black male scholarship athletes on all sports teams, not just football and basketball.

Highlighted on Page 5 of this report are racial demographics of coaches and athletics department administrators during the 2014-15 academic school year. Those data were retrieved from the NCAA Sport Sponsorship, Participation and Demographics database. Salary data for Power 5 coaches, athletics directors, and conference commissioners were retrieved from a publicly available USA Today database.

LIMITATIONS

This study has two noteworthy limitations. First, the NCAA federal graduation rates database is inclusive of only scholarship student-athletes. It is possible (but not likely) that a team had significantly more or substantially fewer Black male members who were not athletic scholarship recipients.

Every Heisman Trophy winner over the past 25 years attended one of the universities analyzed in this report.

Second, federal graduation rates do not account for undergraduates who transferred from one institution to another. Transfer students are counted as dropouts. In response to this limitation, the NCAA calculates a Graduation Success Rate (GSR). The NCAA explains on its website that the GSR "adds to the first-time freshmen, those

students who entered midyear, as well as student-athletes who transferred into an institution and received athletics aid. In addition, the GSR will subtract students from the entering cohort who are considered allowable exclusions (i.e., those who either die or become permanently disabled, those who leave the school to join the armed forces, foreign services or attend a church mission), as well as those who left the institution prior to graduation, had athletics eligibility remaining and would have been academically eligible to compete had they returned to the institution." While this is a more reliable measure of success, it does not provide a consistent set of conditions by which to compare student-athletes to undergraduates who do not participate in intercollegiate athletics. Put differently, there is no GSR calculation for other groups; I therefore relied on federal graduation rates that treat student-athletes the same as all other collegians in my analyses for this report. Besides, no published evidence or anecdotal reports suggest that Black male student-athletes are any more or less likely than other racial groups to transfer.

AIMS OF THIS PUBLICATION

I hope this report will be useful to student-athletes and their families, coaches and administrators in athletics departments, the NCAA and other policymakers, and journalists. As such, I present statistics for each individual university in the Power 5 conferences. I aim to equip readers with data they can use to demand racial equity on behalf of those who disproportionately comprise teams that earn billions of dollars for their universities and sports conferences.

A hand holding a microphone against a blue background with bokeh lights.

WHITE MEN CALLING THE SHOTS

On average, Power 5 football coaches earn \$3.26 million annual salaries; head coaches of men's basketball teams earn \$2.88 million. Black men are 16.2% of these head coaches. Power 5 athletics directors earn, on average, \$698,775 annually. Black men are 14.7% of these athletics directors. The five conference commissioners earn, on average, \$2.58 million salaries. None are Black.

RACIAL EQUITY: WINNERS AND LOSERS

Highlighted in this section are universities with exceptionally high and low statistical indicators of equity for Black male student-athletes.

Winners are institutions that graduate Black male student-athletes at the highest rates, as well as those at which these students graduate at rates equal to or higher than the three comparison groups. On the one hand, I think it is important to call attention to universities that outperform others on benchmarks chosen for this study, hence the rank-ordered lists on these two pages. But on the other hand, I deem it problematic to offer kudos to institutions that sustain any version of inequity. Put differently, just because a university performs well in comparison to others of similar size or schools within the same athletic conference, does not necessarily render it a national model that is exempt from recommendations offered at the end of this report. For example, Duke is ranked third on mylist of institutions with the highest graduation rates for Black male student-athletes. But it is important to note that this rate is 11 points lower than the University's six-year rate for all undergraduates. While they deserve praise for graduating 83% of Black men on intercollegiate sports teams, Duke administrators and coaches must assume greater responsibility for closing this 11-point gap.

Losers are institutions in the Power 5 conferences that graduate Black male student-athletes at the absolute lowest rates, as well as those at which these students are most overrepresented on revenue-generating sports teams. Regarding the latter, my concern is not that there are so many Black men on football and basketball teams. Nowhere

in this report (including the recommendations section) do I suggest that athletics departments should award fewer scholarships to talented Black male student-athletes. What I deem troubling, however, is the disgracefully small number of Black male students in the undergraduate population versus their large representation on revenue-generating sports teams. These are campuses on which admissions officers and others often maintain that academically qualified Black men cannot be found; yet their football and basketball teams are overwhelmingly comprised of Black male student-athletes.

Data presented on the lowest graduation rates list, as well as statistics presented on the individual conference pages that follow, do not signal victory for the NCAA. The Association has claimed in a television commercial that Black male student-athletes at Division I institutions graduate at rates higher than do Black men in the general student body. This is true across the entire division, but not for the five conferences whose member institutions routinely win football and basketball championships, play in multimillion-dollar bowl games and the annual basketball championship tournament, and produce the largest share of Heisman trophy winners. Across these 65 universities, Black male student-athletes graduate at nearly five percentage points lower than their same-race male peers who are not on intercollegiate sports teams. That an average of 46.4% of Black male student-athletes on these campuses do not graduate within six years is a major loss.

25 UNIVERSITIES WHERE BLACK MALE STUDENT-ATHLETES ARE MOST OVERREPRESENTED

Rank	University	Student-Athletes (% Difference) ¹
1	Auburn University	-74.7
2	Mississippi State University	-72.2
3	University of Mississippi	-71.4
4	Texas A&M University	-70.7
5	Ohio State University	-69.4
6	Texas Christian University	-67.1
7	University of Alabama	-66.5
8	Louisiana State University	-66.3
9	West Virginia University	-66.0
10	University of Florida	-65.9
11	North Carolina State University	-65.7
12	University of Louisville	-65.6
13	University of South Carolina	-65.0
14	Texas Tech University	-64.8
15	Syracuse University	-64.2
16	University of Missouri	-63.0
17	Wake Forest University	-62.9
18	Clemson University	-62.2
19	University of Tennessee	-62.0
20	UCLA	-61.6
21	University of Georgia	-60.9
22	University of Pittsburgh	-60.7
23	University of Arkansas	-60.6
24	University of Miami	-59.3
25	Florida State University	-59.2

¹ Numbers represent percent differences between Black men's representation in the undergraduate student body versus their representation on revenue-generating sports teams. For example, Black men were 3.2% of undergraduates at Auburn, but comprised 77.9% of football and men's basketball teams (thus, the percent difference is 74.7).

RACIAL EQUITY: WINNERS AND LOSERS

UNIVERSITIES WITH HIGHEST BLACK MALE STUDENT-ATHLETE GRADUATION RATES

Rank	University	Grad Rate ²
1	Northwestern University	94%
2	Stanford University	89%
3	University of Notre Dame	87%
4	Duke University	83%
5	Vanderbilt University	69%
6	Georgia Institute of Technology	66%
	University of Miami	66%
8	Clemson University	65%
9	University of Nebraska	64%
10	Wake Forest University	63%
	University of Alabama	63%

² Across four cohorts

UNIVERSITIES WITH LOWEST BLACK MALE STUDENT-ATHLETE GRADUATION RATES

Rank	University	Grad Rate ³
56	Syracuse University	42%
57	University of Southern California	41%
58	Iowa State University	39%
59	University of Arkansas	36%
60	University of Iowa	34%
	University of California, Berkeley	34%
62	Michigan State University	33%
	Oklahoma State University	33%
	University of Mississippi	33%
65	Kansas State University	26%

³ Across four cohorts

UNIVERSITIES AT WHICH BLACK MALE STUDENT-ATHLETE GRADUATION RATES ARE EQUAL TO OR HIGHER THAN COMPARISON GROUPS

Comparison Group	Equal To	Higher Than	% Higher
All Student-Athletes	None	University of Miami	6
		Northwestern University	4
All Black Men	University of Colorado Kansas State University University of Minnesota University of Oregon	West Virginia University	19
		Arizona State University	17
		Oregon State University	16
		University of Alabama	13
		Mississippi State University	13
		University of Nebraska	12
		Purdue University	10
		Baylor University	10
		Auburn University	10
		University of Kentucky	9
University of Missouri	9		
University of Arizona	7		
Northwestern University	6		
University of Kansas	6		
University of Louisville	4		
Clemson University	3		
Texas Christian University	3		
Indiana University	1		
All Undergraduates	Northwestern University	None	***



BLACK ENTERTAINERS, WHITE SPECTATORS

On average, 61,469 fans attend home football games and 10,452 attend men's basketball games at universities in the Power 5 conferences. While Black undergraduate men comprise a disproportionately high number of players on these fields and courts, their spectators are overwhelmingly White.

ATLANTIC COAST CONFERENCE

REPRESENTATION

University	% of Undergraduates	% of Basketball and Football Teams	% Difference
Boston College	1.8	27.8	-26.0
Clemson University	3.4	65.5	-62.2
Duke University	4.2	59.2	-55.0
Florida State University	2.8	62.0	-59.2
Georgia Institute of Technology	4.0	56.5	-52.5
University of Louisville	4.5	70.1	-65.6
University of Miami	3.1	62.4	-59.3
University of North Carolina	2.8	62.0	-59.1
North Carolina State University	3.1	68.9	-65.7
University of Notre Dame	1.8	47.8	-46.0
University of Pittsburgh	2.2	62.9	-60.7
Syracuse University	3.5	67.7	-64.2
University of Virginia	2.4	57.0	-54.6
Virginia Tech	2.3	57.0	-54.7
Wake Forest University	3.1	66.0	-62.9

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL BLACK MEN

University	Black Athlete %	All Black Men %	% Difference
Boston College	62	78	-16
Clemson University	65	62	3
Duke University	83	89	-6
Florida State University	54	68	-14
Georgia Institute of Technology	66	68	-2
University of Louisville	47	43	4
University of Miami	66	69	-3
University of North Carolina	45	74	-29
North Carolina State University	60	62	-2
University of Notre Dame	87	89	-2
University of Pittsburgh	57	64	-7
Syracuse University	42	65	-23
University of Virginia	58	79	-21
Virginia Tech	56	66	-10
Wake Forest University	63	79	-16

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL ATHLETES

University	Black Athlete %	All Athletes %	% Difference
Boston College	62	76	-14
Clemson University	65	71	-6
Duke University	83	86	-3
Florida State University	54	63	-9
Georgia Institute of Technology	66	69	-3
University of Louisville	47	62	-15
University of Miami	66	60	6
University of North Carolina	45	72	-27
North Carolina State University	60	67	-7
University of Notre Dame	87	90	-3
University of Pittsburgh	57	68	-11
Syracuse University	42	73	-31
University of Virginia	58	75	-17
Virginia Tech	56	69	-13
Wake Forest University	63	77	-14

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL STUDENTS

University	Black Athlete %	All Students %	% Difference
Boston College	62	91	-29
Clemson University	65	82	-17
Duke University	83	94	-11
Florida State University	54	76	-22
Georgia Institute of Technology	66	81	-15
University of Louisville	47	53	-6
University of Miami	66	80	-14
University of North Carolina	45	90	-45
North Carolina State University	60	74	-14
University of Notre Dame	87	95	-8
University of Pittsburgh	57	80	-23
Syracuse University	42	81	-39
University of Virginia	58	94	-36
Virginia Tech	56	82	-26
Wake Forest University	63	87	-24

BIG TEN CONFERENCE

REPRESENTATION

University	% of Undergraduates	% of Basketball and Football Teams	% Difference
University of Illinois	2.2	54.5	-52.2
Indiana University	2.0	53.3	-51.3
University of Iowa	1.3	36.1	-34.8
University of Maryland	5.6	60.4	-54.8
University of Michigan	1.7	45.8	-44.2
Michigan State University	2.6	50.5	-48.0
University of Minnesota	1.7	47.7	-46.0
University of Nebraska	1.3	56.3	-55.0
Northwestern University	2.3	33.3	-31.0
Ohio State University	2.4	71.9	-69.4
Penn State University	1.7	58.9	-57.2
Purdue University	1.6	53.9	-52.3
Rutgers University	2.9	52.6	-49.8
University of Wisconsin	1.0	39.6	-38.6

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL BLACK MEN

University	Black Athlete %	All Black Men %	% Difference
University of Illinois	48	66	-18
Indiana University	50	49	1
University of Iowa	34	47	-13
University of Maryland	62	68	-6
University of Michigan	59	73	-14
Michigan State University	33	55	-22
University of Minnesota	48	48	0
University of Nebraska	64	52	12
Northwestern University	94	88	6
Ohio State University	52	68	-16
Penn State University	61	64	-3
Purdue University	58	48	10
Rutgers University	54	68	-14
University of Wisconsin	47	58	-11

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL ATHLETES

University	Black Athlete %	All Athletes %	% Difference
University of Illinois	48	75	-27
Indiana University	50	66	-16
University of Iowa	34	74	-40
University of Maryland	62	69	-7
University of Michigan	59	80	-21
Michigan State University	33	70	-37
University of Minnesota	48	73	-25
University of Nebraska	64	67	-3
Northwestern University	94	90	4
Ohio State University	52	75	-23
Penn State University	61	79	-18
Purdue University	58	72	-14
Rutgers University	54	70	-16
University of Wisconsin	47	71	-24

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL STUDENTS

University	Black Athlete %	All Students %	% Difference
University of Illinois	48	84	-36
Indiana University	50	76	-26
University of Iowa	34	70	-36
University of Maryland	62	83	-21
University of Michigan	59	90	-31
Michigan State University	33	78	-45
University of Minnesota	48	74	-26
University of Nebraska	64	66	-2
Northwestern University	94	94	0
Ohio State University	52	82	-30
Penn State University	61	86	-25
Purdue University	58	71	-13
Rutgers University	54	79	-25
University of Wisconsin	47	83	-36

BIG 12 CONFERENCE

REPRESENTATION

University	% of Undergraduates	% of Basketball and Football Teams	% Difference
Baylor University	2.8	55.2	-52.4
Iowa State University	1.5	48.1	-46.6
University of Kansas	2.3	56.6	-54.3
Kansas State University	1.9	42.5	-40.6
University of Oklahoma	2.5	53.0	-50.5
Oklahoma State University	2.3	61.2	-58.8
University of Texas	1.6	51.3	-49.7
Texas Christian University	2.3	69.4	-67.1
Texas Tech University	3.7	68.4	-64.8
West Virginia University	2.9	68.9	-66.0

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL ATHLETES

University	Black Athlete %	All Athletes %	% Difference
Baylor University	62	69	-7
Iowa State University	39	62	-23
University of Kansas	51	70	-19
Kansas State University	26	63	-37
University of Oklahoma	51	60	-9
Oklahoma State University	33	51	-18
University of Texas	43	70	-27
Texas Christian University	61	71	-10
Texas Tech University	46	58	-12
West Virginia University	55	65	-10

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL BLACK MEN

University	Black Athlete %	All Black Men %	% Difference
Baylor University	62	52	10
Iowa State University	39	43	-4
University of Kansas	51	45	6
Kansas State University	26	26	0
University of Oklahoma	51	52	-1
Oklahoma State University	33	42	-9
University of Texas	43	60	-17
Texas Christian University	61	58	3
Texas Tech University	46	47	-1
West Virginia University	55	36	19

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL STUDENTS

University	Black Athlete %	All Students %	% Difference
Baylor University	62	73	-11
Iowa State University	39	69	-30
University of Kansas	51	62	-11
Kansas State University	26	58	-32
University of Oklahoma	51	67	-16
Oklahoma State University	33	61	-28
University of Texas	43	80	-37
Texas Christian University	61	75	-14
Texas Tech University	46	60	-14
West Virginia University	55	57	-2

PAC 12 CONFERENCE

REPRESENTATION

University	% of Undergraduates	% of Basketball and Football Teams	% Difference
University of Arizona	1.7	52.6	-50.9
Arizona State University	2.2	56.1	-53.9
University of California, Berkeley	1.3	52.0	-50.7
UCLA	1.0	62.6	-61.6
University of Colorado	0.9	44.7	-43.8
University of Oregon	1.1	53.3	-52.2
Oregon State University	0.8	***	***
University of Southern California	1.9	57.6	-55.7
Stanford University	3.1	27.3	-24.2
University of Utah	0.8	33.8	-33.0
University of Washington	1.5	52.8	-51.3
Washington State University	1.8	40.9	-39.0

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL BLACK MEN

University	Black Athlete %	All Black Men %	% Difference
University of Arizona	51	44	7
Arizona State University	56	39	17
University of California, Berkeley	34	62	-28
UCLA	61	74	-13
University of Colorado	49	49	0
University of Oregon	49	49	0
Oregon State University	57	41	16
University of Southern California	41	71	-30
Stanford University	89	91	-2
University of Utah	***	51	***
University of Washington	58	65	-7
Washington State University	46	48	-2

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL ATHLETES

University	Black Athlete %	All Athletes %	% Difference
University of Arizona	51	59	-8
Arizona State University	56	64	-8
University of California, Berkeley	34	68	-34
UCLA	61	73	-12
University of Colorado	49	65	-16
University of Oregon	49	60	-11
Oregon State University	57	60	-3
University of Southern California	41	68	-27
Stanford University	89	95	-6
University of Utah	***	65	***
University of Washington	58	70	-12
Washington State University	46	62	-16

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL STUDENTS

University	Black Athlete %	All Students %	% Difference
University of Arizona	51	61	-10
Arizona State University	56	59	-3
University of California, Berkeley	34	91	-57
UCLA	61	91	-30
University of Colorado	49	69	-20
University of Oregon	49	67	-18
Oregon State University	57	62	-5
University of Southern California	41	90	-49
Stanford University	89	95	-6
University of Utah	***	59	***
University of Washington	58	81	-23
Washington State University	46	67	-21

SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE

REPRESENTATION

University	% of Undergraduates	% of Basketball and Football Teams	% Difference
University of Alabama	4.1	70.6	-66.5
University of Arkansas	2.4	63.0	-60.6
Auburn University	3.2	77.9	-74.7
University of Florida	2.4	68.3	-65.9
University of Georgia	2.7	63.5	-60.9
University of Kentucky	3.3	***	***
Louisiana State University	4.6	70.8	-66.3
University of Mississippi	4.9	76.3	-71.4
Mississippi State University	8.6	80.9	-72.2
University of Missouri	3.3	66.3	-63.0
University of South Carolina	3.7	68.8	-65.0
University of Tennessee	3.2	65.2	-62.0
Texas A&M University	1.3	72.0	-70.7
Vanderbilt University	3.6	53.7	-50.1

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL BLACK MEN

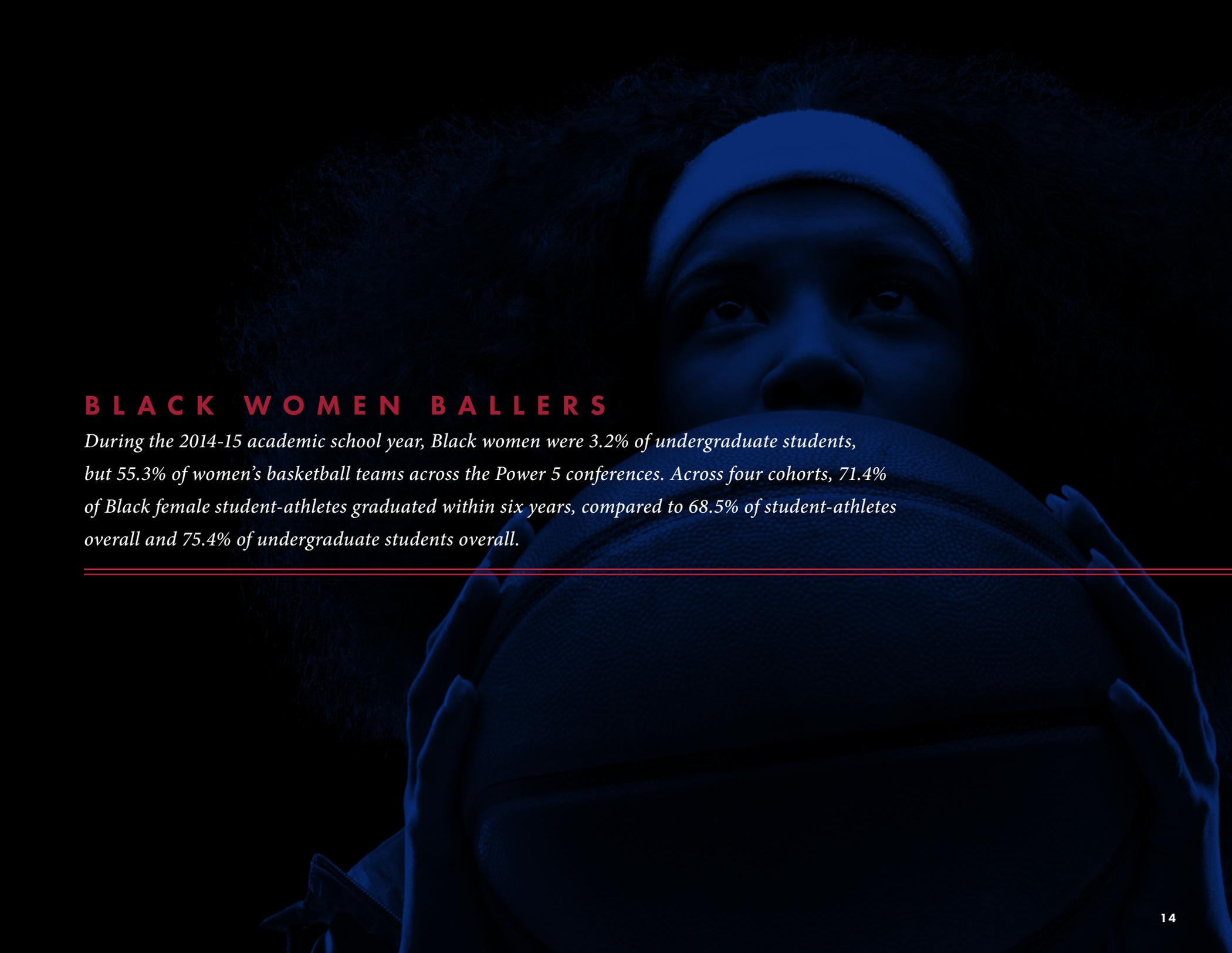
University	Black Athlete %	All Black Men %	% Difference
University of Alabama	63	50	13
University of Arkansas	36	43	-7
Auburn University	49	39	10
University of Florida	43	69	-26
University of Georgia	51	74	-23
University of Kentucky	47	38	9
Louisiana State University	45	53	-8
University of Mississippi	33	38	-5
Mississippi State University	51	38	13
University of Missouri	59	50	9
University of South Carolina	53	62	-9
University of Tennessee	47	50	-3
Texas A&M University	50	57	-7
Vanderbilt University	69	82	-13

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL ATHLETES

University	Black Athlete %	All Athletes %	% Difference
University of Alabama	63	71	-8
University of Arkansas	36	52	-16
Auburn University	49	63	-14
University of Florida	43	59	-16
University of Georgia	51	69	-18
University of Kentucky	47	59	-12
Louisiana State University	45	62	-17
University of Mississippi	33	54	-21
Mississippi State University	51	63	-12
University of Missouri	59	72	-13
University of South Carolina	53	63	-10
University of Tennessee	47	62	-15
Texas A&M University	50	68	-18
Vanderbilt University	69	80	-11

GRADUATION RATES - BLACK ATHLETES VS. ALL STUDENTS

University	Black Athlete %	All Students %	% Difference
University of Alabama	63	66	-3
University of Arkansas	36	60	-24
Auburn University	49	68	-19
University of Florida	43	86	-43
University of Georgia	51	84	-33
University of Kentucky	47	60	-13
Louisiana State University	45	64	-19
University of Mississippi	33	60	-27
Mississippi State University	51	60	-9
University of Missouri	59	70	-11
University of South Carolina	53	72	-19
University of Tennessee	47	68	-21
Texas A&M University	50	80	-30
Vanderbilt University	69	92	-23



BLACK WOMEN BALLERS

During the 2014-15 academic school year, Black women were 3.2% of undergraduate students, but 55.3% of women's basketball teams across the Power 5 conferences. Across four cohorts, 71.4% of Black female student-athletes graduated within six years, compared to 68.5% of student-athletes overall and 75.4% of undergraduate students overall.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING RACIAL EQUITY IN COLLEGE SPORTS

Problems as pervasive as the underrepresentation of Black men in the undergraduate student population at predominantly white universities, their overrepresentation on revenue-generating NCAA Division I sports teams, and their comparatively lower six-year graduation rates warrant a multidimensional response from various stakeholders. I provide recommendations in this section for five groups, including Black male student-athletes and their families.

THE NCAA AND SPORTS CONFERENCE COMMISSIONERS

Two NCAA databases were used for this study. I commend the Association for gathering and making statistics publicly available. A necessary next step would be to produce a series of NCAA research reports that disaggregate data by race, sex, sport, division, and particular subsets of institutions within a division (for example, the five conferences that routinely win Division I football and men's basketball championships). Data in the aggregate allows the NCAA to make claims such as "Black male student-athletes at Division I institutions graduate at higher rates than Black men who do not play college sports." While this may be true across the entire Division I, it is not the case at the overwhelming majority of universities in Power 5 conferences.

I also recommend that the NCAA Office of Inclusion establish a commission on racial equity that routinely calls for and responds to disaggregated data reports, raises consciousness within and beyond the Association about the persistence and pervasiveness of racial inequities, and partners with athletic conferences and institutions to develop policies and programs that help narrow racial gaps. Each athletic conference should

create its own commission that is charged with overseeing racial equity at member institutions.

In March 2010, former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan suggested that any sports team failing to graduate at least 40% of its players should be ineligible for participation in post-season play and championship contests. Six years later, I still support this recommendation. A policy intervention such as this is important and should be racialized. That is, the NCAA and conference leaders must pay attention not only to overall team rates, but also racial trends within teams. For instance, the overall graduation rate for a football team may be 49% – but Black men, the population that comprises two-thirds of that team, may graduate at a rate far below 40%.

One response from the NCAA to the Duncan proposal was that it would unfairly punish current student-athletes for graduation rates based on previous cohorts. I do not see the difference here between this and other sanctions the NCAA imposes. As noted in my forthcoming book, *Scandals in College Sports*, the NCAA often renders colleges and universities ineligible for post-season play because of policy violations committed in prior years. Furthermore, while the release of data from the federal government and the NCAA tend to lag by 2-3 years, my four-cohort analysis of six-year graduation rates showed very little variation from one year to the next. Teams that sustain racial inequities should not be rewarded with opportunities to play for NCAA championships.

I believe conferences should commit a portion of proceeds earned from championships and other revenue sources back to member institutions for programming and other interventions that aim

Teams that sustain racial inequities should not be rewarded with opportunities to play for NCAA championships.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING RACIAL EQUITY IN COLLEGE SPORTS

Though many aspire to play professional sports after college, the National Football League (NFL) and the National Basketball Association (NBA) will draft fewer than 2% of student-athletes each year.

to improve racial equity within and beyond sports. For example, admissions offices typically do not have enough staff to do what I propose in the next section – money from athletic conferences would help. These funds also could be used to support the work of the commissions on racial equity that I proposed earlier.

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LEADERS

Accountability is practically impossible in the absence of transparency. Thus, college and university presidents, trustees, provosts, and faculty senate committees that oversee athletics must demand disaggregated data reports from athletics departments and offices of institutional research. These reports should include analyses of racial composition on individual sports teams in comparison to racial demographics within the undergraduate student body, as well as inequities in graduation rates. Furthermore, campus leaders should pay more careful attention to racial differences in student-athletes' grade point averages (GPAs), classroom experiences, course enrollment and major selection patterns, participation in enriching educational experiences beyond athletics (e.g., study abroad, summer internships, service learning, and research opportunities with faculty), and post-college pathways (graduate school, employment in one's major field of study, etc.). Presidents must hold themselves and athletics directors and coaches accountable for narrowing racial gaps documented in these reports.

The underrepresentation of Black male undergraduates is an issue that many campus leaders (especially admissions officers) view as difficult to address. Perceivably, there are too few young Black men who meet admissions standards and are

sufficiently prepared for the rigors of college-level academic work. Despite these arguments, colleges and universities somehow manage to find academically qualified Black male student-athletes to play on revenue-generating sports teams. Perhaps admissions officers can learn from some practices that coaches employ. For instance, a coach does not wait for high school students to express interest in playing for the university – he and his staff scout talent, establish collaborative partnerships with high school coaches, spend time cultivating one-on-one relationships with recruits, visit homes to talk with parents and families, host special visit days for student-athletes whom they wish to recruit, and search far and wide for the most talented prospects (as opposed to recruiting from a small number of high schools). I am convinced that if admissions officers expended as much effort as coaches, they would successfully recruit more Black male students who are not athletes. Some would likely argue that affirmative action policies might not permit such targeted recruitment of one specific racial group. Somehow, there is considerably less institutional anxiety about potential affirmative action backlash when coaches do all that is necessary to recruit Black men for participation on revenue-generating sports teams.

Black undergraduate men elsewhere on campus could benefit from the centralized resources and institutionalized support offered to student-athletes. If targeted academic advising, tutoring, clubs and activities, life skills development resources, structured study spaces, alumni networks, and committed institutional agents were made available to Black men who are not student-athletes, their academic success and college completion rates would improve. Likewise, Black undergraduate men who receive scholarships comparable to those awarded to student-athletes

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING RACIAL EQUITY IN COLLEGE SPORTS

are far more likely to persist through baccalaureate degree attainment than are those who encounter financial stressors or work more than 20 hours each week to support themselves. Postsecondary administrators should commit more financial and human resources to replicating the best features of athletics departments for populations that graduate at the lowest rates. This would surely include Black undergraduate men.

Racism and routine encounters with racial stereotypes are among many factors that undermine Black students' persistence rates and sense of belonging on predominantly white campuses. Several scholars (e.g., Edwards, 1984; Hodge et al., 2008; Hughes, Satterfield, & Giles, 2007; Oseguera, 2010) have noted that Black male student-athletes are often stereotyped as dumb jocks. "One could easily summarize their status as Niggers with balls who enroll to advance their sports careers and generate considerable revenue for the institution without learning much or seriously endeavoring to earn their college degrees" (Harper, 2009b, p. 701). Any effort to improve rates of completion and academic success among Black male student-athletes must include some emphasis on their confrontations with low expectations and stereotypes in classrooms and elsewhere on campus. Provosts, deans, and department chairs should engage faculty colleagues in substantive conversations and developmental exercises that raise consciousness about implicit biases and racist/sexist stereotypes they possess about students of color and student-athletes in general, and Black men in particular.

COACHES AND ATHLETICS DEPARTMENTS

In preparation for athletic competitions, coaches develop strategies for defeating opposing teams. This usually entails watching their opponents' films, making necessary adjustments to the playbook, strategizing with the coaching staff, and a range of other preparatory activities. This same degree of strategy and intentionality is necessary for tackling racial inequities in intercollegiate athletics. The director of athletics must collaborate with coaches and other staff in the department to devise a strategy for narrowing racial gaps in graduation rates, academic success indicators (e.g., GPAs and timely progress toward degree completion), and assorted student-athlete outcomes. In the absence of a comprehensive and actionable strategy document, inequities are likely to persist or worsen over time. The plan must be constructed in response to data that are disaggregated by race, sex, and sport. Racial equity goals, efforts that will enable the department to actualize those goals, key persons who will be chiefly responsible for particular dimensions of the strategy, and methods of assessment should be included in the plan. The implementation of any strategy is unlikely to be successful without compliance from coaches. Hence, they must be involved in all phases of the process and view themselves as departmental agents who are rewarded for winning games and achieving equity in student-athlete success. Black male student-athletes should also be involved in this strategic planning process.

Similar to my first recommendation for the NCAA and Power 5 conferences, I also recommend that athletics departments create internal committees or task forces that focus on racial equity. This group should be comprised of stakeholders within and beyond the athletics department, including administrators from academic and student affairs, current and former Black male student-athletes, and professors who study and write about race and/or sports. Commission members could engage colleagues from their respective areas of the institution in the athletics department's strategic efforts to improve racial equity. For instance, professors could help their colleagues understand how they are complicit in conveying low expectations and racial stereotypes to Black male student-athletes who take their courses. Moreover, these particular faculty members could assume leadership for crafting an institutional strategy to disrupt classroom practices that sustain racial inequities for student-athletes and other students of color.

Martin, Harrison, and Bukstein (2010) studied Black male student-athletes who had good grades, records of athletic accomplishment, and impressive résumés that included leadership roles within and beyond athletics. More student-athletes like these can be found at colleges and universities across the country. Athletics departments that wish to improve Black male student-athletes' academic success can learn much from Black male student-athletes who are academically successful. There are Black men on NCAA Division I football and basketball teams who graduate with higher than average GPAs and transition into rewarding careers and productive post-college lives that no longer include participation in organized sports.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING RACIAL EQUITY IN COLLEGE SPORTS

I advise Black male student-athletes and their families to resist the seductive lure of choosing a university because it appears to be a promising gateway to careers in professional sports.

Understanding how these men managed to succeed in college would be useful to coaches and others who endeavor to help lower-performing student-athletes thrive personally, academically, and athletically.

Similarly, athletics departments can learn from other NCAA Division I institutions at which Black male student-athletes graduate at rates comparable to or higher than student-athletes overall, undergraduate students overall, and Black undergraduate men overall. What is it about these institutions that enable them to achieve racial equity? Inspiration can be derived from effective programs and practices implemented elsewhere to improve Black male student-athlete success. One example is the University of Wisconsin's Beyond the Game initiative, which prepares Black male student-athletes for post-college options beyond professional sports. The initiative is led by a cross-sector team that includes senior administrators from the athletics department as well as Black male student-athletes, graduate students, alumni, full-time professionals from the UW Career Services Office, tenured faculty, and a vice provost.

While an athletics department may genuinely care about academic success and the healthy development of student-athletes, players often receive contradictory messages from coaches who are expected to win, advance to bowl games and the NCAA basketball tournament, and fill stadiums with excited fans who buy tickets and make donations to the university. These pressures explain, at least in part, why coaches discourage student-athlete engagement in activities and experiences beyond athletics that lead to academic and personal success (Martin, Harrison, & Bukstein, 2010).

Most Division I institutions offer centralized resources and support services for student-athletes, which I think is praiseworthy. However, I agree with other scholars (e.g., Comeaux et al., 2011; Gayles, 2014; Gayles & Hu, 2009) that coaches and staff in athletics departments should encourage student engagement with faculty outside the classroom, a diverse cadre of peers who are not members of sports teams, and professionals in other offices on campus (the counseling center, career services office, etc.). Moreover, student leadership skills can be enhanced through campus clubs beyond athletics; perspectives can be broadened through spending a semester overseas; and essential knowledge that is necessary for admission to graduate school or success in one's future career can be gained through doing research with professors or an internship related to one's field of study. Student-athletes are unlikely to be engaged in these ways unless their coaches are supportive; coaches are unlikely to be supportive of anything that threatens their own career stability. If racial equity and student-athlete engagement are to improve, college presidents and athletics directors must expand the reward structure for coaches to include metrics related to student-athlete engagement.

JOURNALISTS AND SPORTS MEDIA

Young Black men's aspirations to play professional sports are shaped largely, though not entirely, by television and other forms of media (Benson, 2000). I believe it important for journalists to highlight other aspects of Black male student-athletes beyond their athletic prowess. More reporting must be done on those who simultaneously perform well in classrooms and on the field or court, similar to participants in Martin, Harrison, and Bukstein's (2010) study.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING RACIAL EQUITY IN COLLEGE SPORTS

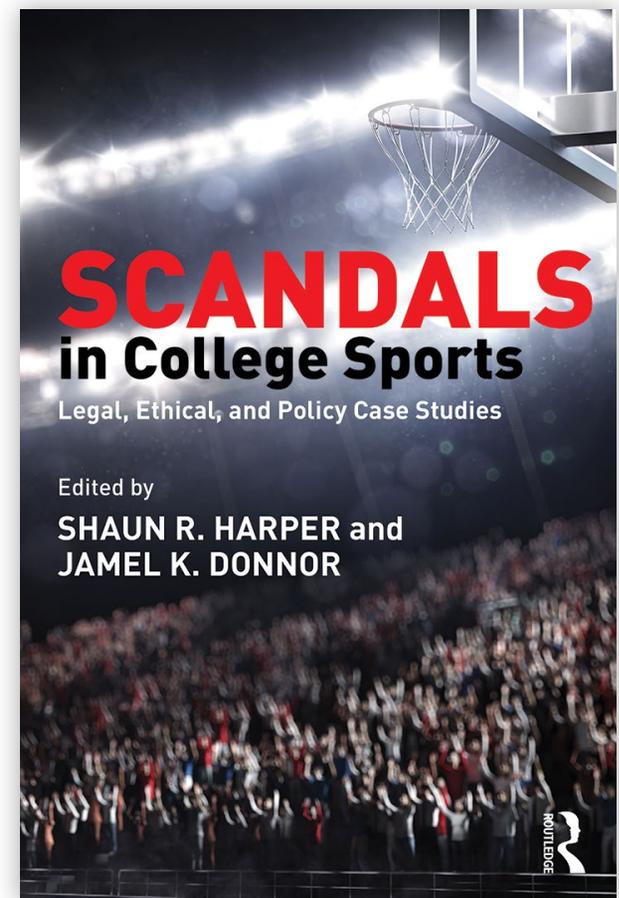
An ESPN film or some other documentary on former Black male student-athletes who attended college, achieved academic and athletic success, were engaged campus leaders within and beyond athletics, graduated in 4-6 years, and took assorted post-college pathways (meaning, some enrolled in graduate school, some began full-time jobs in their fields of study, and others embarked on professional sports careers) would advance a more complete understanding and realistic depiction of this population. The film could highlight strategies these men employed to balance academic commitments and sports, as well as how some crafted post-college aspirations beyond playing for the NBA or NFL. Stories such as these also can be told through a series of newspaper articles and sports magazine features. I deem irresponsible (and racist) journalistic practices that continually yield single narrative, one-sided portrayals of Black male student-athletes.

BLACK MALE STUDENT-ATHLETES AND THEIR FAMILIES

The NFL and NBA draft fewer than two percent of college student-athletes each year (Harper, Williams, & Blackman, 2013). Put differently, over 98% of these students will be required to pursue other options. Given this, I advise Black male student-athletes and their families to resist the seductive lure of choosing a university because it appears to be a promising gateway to careers in professional sports. It can be for a very small number of student-athletes, but not for the overwhelming majority. In addition to asking, “how many of your former players have gone to the League,” it is important for prospective student-athletes and those who support them to pose a more expansive set of questions to coaches during the college recruitment process: What is

the graduation rate for Black men on your team? Besides the few who got drafted, what are other recent Black male graduates doing? Will you support my interest in spending a semester abroad and doing a summer internship in my field? How many players on your team studied abroad or did internships in their fields this past school year? What will happen to me if I don’t get drafted? How prepared will I be for a career in my field? Give me specific examples of ways you encourage academic success and the holistic development of your players.

Students who are highly engaged inside and outside the classroom are considerably more likely than are their disengaged peers to graduate from college and compete successfully for highly-coveted jobs and admission to graduate school. They also learn more, earn higher GPAs, and develop a wider array of skills that will be useful in their lives and careers after college. Thus, I strongly encourage Black male student-athletes to take advantage of clubs, activities, and experiences outside of sports. Spending all one’s time in the athletics department and on team-related activities is unlikely to yield a résumé and portfolio of enriching educational experiences that render him competitive for rewarding post-college options beyond the NFL or NBA.



COMING SOON

This book includes 22 case studies of ethical dilemmas, NCAA policy violations, and unlawful activities involving student-athletes, coaches, and other stakeholders. Scandals range from academic misconduct, illegal recruiting practices, and sexual assault to the recruitment of criminals, inappropriate romantic relationships, hazing, concussions, point shaving, and homicides.

THE AUTHOR



Recognized in *Education Week* as one of the 12 most influential professors in the field of education, **Dr. Shaun R. Harper** is an expert on race, equity, and student success in U.S. colleges and universities. He is a tenured professor in the Graduate School of Education, Africana Studies, and Gender Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, where he founded and serves as executive director of the Center for the Study of Race & Equity in Education. He is author of over 100 peer-reviewed journal articles and other academic publications, and recipient of nearly \$12 million in research grants and contracts. His 12 books include *Scandals in College Sports* (Routledge, 2017). *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Ed*, and over 11,000 other newspapers have quoted Dr. Harper and featured his research. He has been interviewed on ESPN, CNN, and NPR, and is President-Elect of the Association for the Study of Higher Education.

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ABOUT THE CENTER

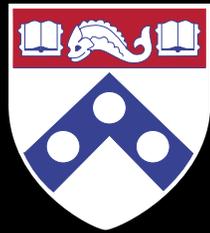
The Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education unites University of Pennsylvania scholars who do research on race and important topics pertaining to equity in education. Center staff and affiliates collaborate on funded research projects, assessment activities, and the production of timely research reports. The Center's strength resides in its interdisciplinarity – professors from various departments in the School of Arts and Sciences (Sociology, Mathematics, History, Political Science, Anthropology, Africana Studies, English, and Asian American Studies), the Perelman School of Medicine, the School of Social Policy and Practice, the Wharton School, Penn Law School, and the School of Nursing join Penn GSE faculty as affiliates. Principally, the Center aims to publish cutting-edge implications for education policy and practice, with an explicit focus on improving equity in P-12 schools, colleges and universities, and social contexts that influence educational outcomes. The Center is home to the Penn Equity Institutes.

PHONE: (215) 898-7820

E-MAIL: [EQUITY@GSE.UPENN.EDU](mailto:equity@gse.upenn.edu)

WEBSITE: [WWW.GSE.UPENN.EDU/EQUITY](http://www.gse.upenn.edu/equity)

TWITTER: @RACEEQUITYED



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