

Keeping Score When It Counts:

**Graduation Rates for 2002-03 Bowl-bound
College Football Teams**

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Executive Summary

Participation in a bowl game signifies excellence for a college football team. These are teams that really score on the field; but when it comes to obtaining a college education and, ultimately, a college degree, do the student-athletes on these teams really make the grade?

In fall 2002, the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport, under the leadership of Director Dr. Richard Lapchick, conducted a study of graduation rates for the 2002-03 bowl-bound college football teams. Graduation rates were analyzed for 55 college and university teams playing 28 bowl games (NOTE: Air Force, like other military academies, does not release graduation statistics). The study compares graduation rates for all student-athletes to football student-athletes in general and African-American football student-athletes in particular. NCAA statistics were used in the study; the Institute reviewed 1995-96 graduation (six-year) rates, with a four class average.

The study revealed that for most of the colleges and universities, the graduation rate of all student-athletes was higher than that of football student-athletes. At the majority of the schools, African-American football student-athletes had lower graduation rates than their teammates, with significant decreases in many instances.

Dr. Lapchick said, "We are releasing these graduation rates in order to give sports fans the perspective on how well our institutions of higher education are doing off the football field, with their promises to all student-athletes who come through their doors to give them an education and help them earn a college degree. It is obvious that too many universities do not fulfill their promises, especially to African-American student-athletes who play football.

"It is a scandal that has been waiting to be fixed for generations of student-athletes playing revenue sports," said Lapchick.

While many teams scored poorly, some schools were notable for their high student-athlete graduation rates.

Lapchick said, "If there were a BCS series for the top graduation rates among bowl teams, Tulane and Notre Dame would have played for the National Championship. Both graduated at least 74% of all football student-athletes, including African-American football student-athletes. Penn State, Virginia, Boston College, Wake Forest, Mississippi, USC, Iowa and Oregon, all with football student-athlete graduation rates of 63% and higher, would also have made the top 10.

"You can have scholar athletes and win at the same time. These schools are proof," said Lapchick.

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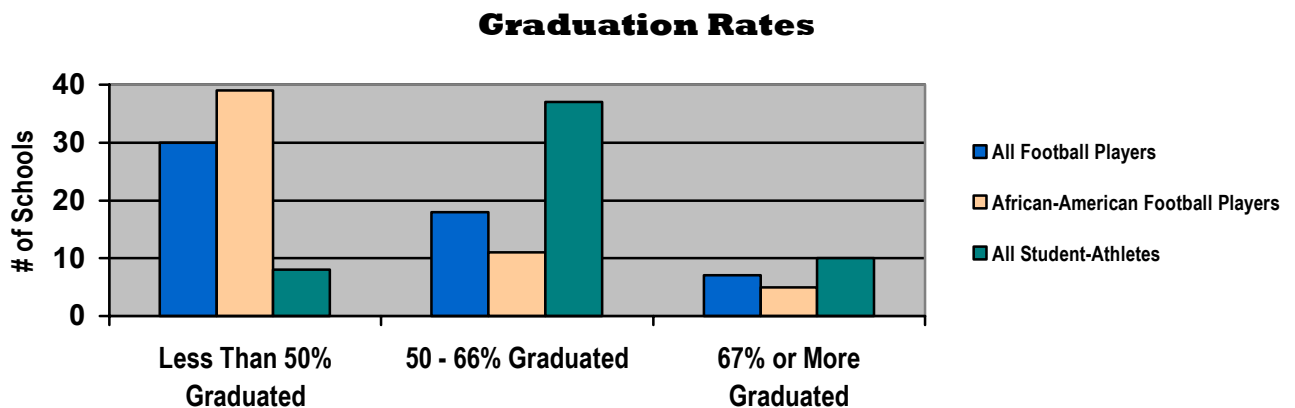
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Keeping Score When It Counts: Graduation Rates for 2002-03 Bowl-bound College Football Teams

Bowl-bound college football teams are acknowledged winners on the field, but do they score equally well when it comes to providing student-athletes with a college education?

To answer this question, the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport undertook a study of graduation rates for 55 college and university teams playing 28 bowl games in the 2002-03 bowl season (NOTE: Air Force, like other military academies, does not release graduation statistics). The study compares graduation rates for all student-athletes to football student-athletes in general and African-American football student-athletes in particular.

The study revealed that for most of the colleges and universities, the graduation rate of all student-athletes was higher than that of football student-athletes. At the majority of the schools, African-American football student-athletes had lower graduation rates than their teammates, with significant decreases in many instances.



Some of the results were certainly disturbing:

- 25 (45%) of the 55 teams had student-athlete graduation rates that were **10 to 20 percentage points lower** than the school's overall student-athlete graduation rate.
- 38 (69%) of the schools had graduation rates for African-American football student-athletes that were **10 to 30 percentage points lower** than the school's overall student-athlete graduation rate; at 19 schools (35%), the rates for African-American team members were **20 to 30 percentage points lower** than the overall student-athlete rate.

- Only five (9%) of the universities (Notre Dame, Penn State, Washington, Wake Forest and Tulane) **graduated more than two-thirds** of their African-American football student-athletes, while just seven (13%) **graduated at least two-thirds** of all football student-athletes (Notre Dame, Penn State, Oregon, Tulane, Wake Forest, Boston College and Virginia).
- Only 16 (29%) of the universities **graduated at least one-half** of their African-American student-athletes; 25 (45%) **graduated at least one-half** of all football student-athletes.
- 18 (33%) of the schools **graduated less than 35%** of African-American football student-athletes; eight (15%) of the schools **graduated fewer than 30%** of African-American student-athletes.
- The University of Arkansas had the lowest graduation rate, at 16%, for African-American team members.

The study showed that some football programs can win big and still assure the meaningful and complete education of their student-athletes. Six of eight BCS Bowl teams graduated more than 45% of all football student-athletes and five had the same record for their African-American student-athletes.

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Graduation Rates for 2002-03 Bowl-bound College Football Teams

Bowl Name	Participants	Overall Student-Athlete Grad Rate	Football Team Grad Rate	African-American (Football) Grad Rate
Rose Bowl	Oklahoma	43	26	26
	Washington State	58	54	44
FedEx Orange Bowl	USC	61	65	64
	Iowa	70	63	50
Nokia Sugar Bowl	Florida State	56	51	48
	Georgia	63	59	48
Tostito's Fiesta Bowl	Ohio State	56	36	27
	Miami	53	46	45
Capital One Bowl	Penn State	78	75	72
	Auburn	58	37	31
Toyota Gator Bowl	North Carolina St.	56	45	35
	Notre Dame	85	74	74
Outback Bowl	Michigan	69	47	37
	Florida	51	48	49
SBC Cotton Bowl	Texas	56	50	43
	LSU	51	43	36
Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl	Maryland	61	45	37
	Tennessee	57	44	31
AXA Liberty Bowl	TCU	56	44	37
	Colorado State	60	47	37
Silicon Valley Football Classic	Fresno State	41	29	21
	Georgia Tech	53	33	31
Wells Fargo Sun Bowl	Purdue	71	59	52
	Washington	66	60	67
Crucial.com Humanitarian Bowl	Boise State	47	34	42
	Iowa State	60	42	33
Insight.com Bowl	Pittsburgh	62	42	30
	Oregon State	51	35	29
Alamo Bowl	Wisconsin	64	49	44
	Colorado	57	44	29

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Bowl Name	Participants	Overall Student-Athlete Grad Rate	Football Team Grad Rate	African-American (Football) Grad Rate
Motor City Bowl	Toledo	54	56	55
	Boston College	80	76	66
Pacific Life Holiday Bowl	Arizona State	50	44	29
	Kansas State	53	51	40
Gaylord Hotels Music City Bowl	Minnesota	58	44	32
	Arkansas	44	28	16
Mainstay Independence Bowl	Nebraska	55	57	45
	Mississippi	59	66	62
Seattle Bowl	Oregon	67	68	57
	Wake Forest	74	71	67
Sega Sports Las Vegas Bowl	New Mexico	45	35	31
	UCLA	62	61	66
Mazda Tangerine Bowl	Clemson	54	47	35
	Texas Tech	52	50	33
GMAC Mobile Alabama Bowl	Marshall	53	51	55
	Louisville	44	34	29
New Orleans Bowl	North Texas	43	36	30
	Cincinnati	53	41	45
ConAgra Foods Hawaii Bowl	Hawaii	62	56	53
	Tulane	70	80	75
Houston Bowl	Southern Miss	52	56	48
	Oklahoma State	37	40	31
Continental Tire Bowl	West Virginia	60	54	39
	Virginia	80	78	66
Diamond Walnut San Francisco Bowl	Air Force	Not released		
	Virginia Tech	61	40	37

Source: 2002 NCAA Graduation Rates Report
1995-96 graduation (6-year) rates, 4-class average

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About the Institute...

The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport serves as a comprehensive resource for issues related to gender and race in amateur, collegiate and professional sports.

The Institute researches and publishes annual studies on hiring practices in coaching and sport management, student-athlete graduation rates and racial attitudes in sports. Additionally, the Institute conducts diversity management training and will hold a biannual National Conference to address diversity issues in sport. The Institute also will monitor some of the critical ethical issues in college and professional sport, including the potential for the exploitation of student-athletes, gambling, performance-enhancing drugs and violence in sport.

The Institute's founder and director is Dr. Richard Lapchick, a scholar, author and internationally recognized human rights activist and pioneer for racial equality who is acknowledged as an expert on sports issues. Described as "the racial conscience of sport," Lapchick also serves as director of the DeVos Sport Business Management Program at the University of Central Florida (UCF) and is president and CEO of the National Consortium for Academics and Sports (NCAS), a group of more than 210 colleges and universities that helps student-athletes complete their college degrees while serving their communities on issues such as diversity, conflict resolution and men's violence against women.

The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport is part of the DeVos Sport Business Management Graduate Program in UCF's College of Business Administration. This landmark program focuses on business skills necessary for graduates to conduct successful careers in the rapidly changing and dynamic sports industry while also emphasizing diversity, community service and sport and social issues.

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