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Keeping Score When It Counts: Graduation Rates and Academic Progress Rates (APR) for 2009 NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Tournament Teams
Study of Division I NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament Teams Reveals Marked Improvement in APR and some in Graduation Rates But Large Continuing Disparities of the Success of White and African-American Student-Athletes

Orlando, FL...March 16, 2009 – The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES) at the University of Central Florida released its annual study, “Keeping Score When It Counts: Graduation Rates and Academic Progress Rates (APR) for 2009 NCAA Men’s Division I Basketball Tournament Teams” which is the most comprehensive analysis to date of the NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament-bound teams. The study examines the Graduation Success Rates (GSR) and Academic Progress Rates (APR) for the tournament teams as reported by the NCAA. The study also compares the performance in the classroom for African-American and white basketball student-athletes. Dr. Richard Lapchick, the primary author of the study, is director of The Institute and Chair of the DeVos Sport Business Management Graduate Program at UCF. The 2009 study was co-authored by William Johnson and Chris Kamke.

Lapchick noted that “There is again some positive academic news for the tournament teams when we examine the APR. The APR figures showed significant improvement in that only 21 tournament teams (32 percent) have an APR score below 925. This is far better than the 35 men’s teams (54 percent) below the 925 score in 2008. NCAA President Myles Brand’s academic reform package is working.

“Nonetheless, the continuing significant disparity between the academic success between African-American and white men’s basketball student-athletes is deeply troubling. One of higher education’s greatest failures is the persistent gap between African-American and white basketball student-athletes in particular and students in general. The good news is that the gaps are narrowing slightly and that the actual graduation rates of African-American basketball student-athletes are increasing.”

Based on the GSR, 40 teams (63 percent) graduated at least 50 percent of their basketball student-athletes (down from 64 percent in 2008). In addition, 30 teams (48 percent, the same as 2008) graduated at least 60 percent, and 22 teams (35 percent, a one percent increase from 2008) graduated at least 70 percent. Only 15 teams (24 percent, up from 22 percent in 2008) graduated less than 40 percent.

The NCAA created the APR in 2004 as part of an academic reform package designed to more accurately measure student-athletes’ academic success as well as improve graduation rates at member institutions by providing sanctions in the form of lost scholarships when teams fail to meet the NCAA standard for

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academic performance. Teams that score below a 925, which is equivalent to an NCAA GSR rate of approximately 60 percent, can lose up to 10 percent of their scholarships. Teams can also be subject to historical penalties for poor academic performance over time. Starting next year, teams that receive three straight years of historical penalties (below 900 APR) face the potential of restrictions on postseason competition for the team, in addition to scholarship and practice restrictions.

In the 2009 men's Division I basketball tournament, only 21 teams (32 percent) have APR scores below 925. This is a significant improvement from 35 men's teams (54 percent) below the 925 score in 2008. Also, there were 23 teams (35 percent) with an APR of 950 or above, 18 teams (28 percent) with an APR of 960 or above and nine teams (14 percent) with an APR of 970 or above. Seven of these teams will be subject to contemporaneous penalties by the NCAA, including Cal State Northridge, Southern California, Cleveland State, Morehead State, Portland State, Purdue and Tennessee.

Lapchick emphasized that "the GSR, developed in late 2005, provides a more accurate picture of the success student-athletes have in the classroom at NCAA member institutions than the Federal Graduation Rates. Now that we have four years of Academic Progress Rates (APR) data, this rate is also an important guide and we have included APR in this study."

Based on Graduation Success Rate data, problems emerging from the study include the following:

- **58 percent** (33 teams) of the men's tournament teams graduated 70 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes, while **only 32 percent** (20 teams) graduated 70 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes **creating a 26 percent gap**. However, this improved on a 31 percent gap from last year's study.
- **65 percent** (37 teams) of the men's tournament teams graduated 60 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes, **while only 42 percent** of schools (26 teams) graduated 60 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes **resulting in a 23 percent gap**. This is an improvement of ten percent from last year's study, which showed a gap of 33 percent.
- **88 percent** (50 teams) graduated 50 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes, but **only 50 percent** (31 teams) graduated 50 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes **creating a 38 percent gap** which is actually larger than the 26 percent gap in last year's study.

Lapchick continued, "In spite of the fact that some gaps are closing, race remains a continuing academic issue. This is reflected in the remaining substantial gaps between graduation rates for white and African-American student-athletes shown above and in the sections that will follow here."

Graduation success rates for all men's Division I basketball student-athletes have gone up slightly since last year. GSR data indicates that 65 percent (up one percent) of male Division I basketball student-athletes graduate. White men's Division I basketball student-athletes graduate 80 percent (down one percent) while 58 percent (up one percent) of African-American men's Division I basketball student-athletes graduate. This 22 percent difference is down two percent from last year but still is a cause for alarm in spite of the continued overall improvements.

Lapchick insists, "It is important to understand the fact that African-American basketball players graduate at a higher rate than African-American males who are not student-athletes. The graduation rate for African-American male students as a whole is only 38 percent, versus the overall rate of 61 percent for white male students, which is a scandalous 23 percentage point gap. Too many of our

predominantly white campuses are not welcoming places for students of color, whether or not they are athletes.”

The following results also show a widening gap between the GRS for white and African-American student-athletes on this year’s tournament teams than from the 2008, cause for further alarm. The GSR data shows:

- **20 men’s tournament teams** (36 percent, an increase from 34 percent in 2008) have a 30 percentage point or greater gap between the graduation rates of white and African-American basketball student-athletes.
- **25 men’s tournament teams** (45 percent, an increase from 44 percent in 2008) have a 20 percentage point or greater gap between the graduation rates of white and African-American basketball student-athletes.

Lapchick concluded, “As always, there are schools that win big enough to be here in March and graduate their student-athletes. If we were to choose a Top Ten for Graduation Success Rates, these schools would be there: Binghamton, Florida State, Marquette, Robert Morris, Utah State, Wake Forest, Western Kentucky, Butler, Oklahoma State, and Brigham Young University. All of these teams had GSR’s greater than 90 percent. Seven teams achieved a 100 percent GSR: Florida State, Wake Forest, Binghamton, Marquette, Robert Morris, Western Kentucky and Utah State.

NCAA statistics were used in the study. The Institute reviewed 2001-02 graduation (six-year) rates, with a four class average (freshman classes of 1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-01, and 2001-02). The APR data in this study does not include data from the 2007-08 academic performances of the teams in the study, but instead uses the four-year data from the 2003-04, 2004-05, 2005-06, and 2006-07 academic years. This is the first year without the squad-size adjustment for most teams that was in place until teams accumulated four years of APR data.

Note: The men’s percentages were calculated as follows:

1. Overall rates were based on 63 teams. (Cornell, like other Ivy League Schools, does not report graduation rates. North Dakota State also did not report graduation rates.)
2. Rates for African-American student-athletes were based on 62 teams. (In addition to Cornell and North Dakota State not reporting graduation rates, Utah had no African-American basketball student-athletes in the graduating class in the NCAA data from which the study’s data was gathered.)
3. Rates for white student-athletes were based on 57 teams. (In addition to Cornell and North Dakota State not reporting graduation rates, Alabama State, Temple, Memphis, Louisville, Villanova, and Louisiana State University had no white basketball student-athletes in the graduating class in the period under review.)
4. The disparity figures are based on 56 teams because Cornell and North Dakota State do not report graduation rates. In addition, Alabama State, Temple, Memphis, Louisville, Villanova, Louisiana State, and Utah had either no white or black basketball student-athletes.

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 a variety of studies, including annual studies of student-athlete graduation rates and racial attitudes in sports, as well as the internationally recognized Racial and Gender Report Card, an assessment of hiring practices in coaching and sport management in professional and college sport. Additionally, The Institute conducts diversity management training in conjunction with the National Consortium for

Academics and Sports. The Institute also monitors some of the critical ethical issues in college and professional sport, including the potential for exploitation of student-athletes, gambling, performance-enhancing drugs and violence in sport.

The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport is part of the DeVos Sport Business Management Graduate Program in the University of Central Florida'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.

APPENDIX

Graduation Rates for 2009 Men's Teams in the NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament

School	APR	Overall Student-Athlete	African-American Basketball Student-Athlete	White Basketball Student-Athlete	Overall Basketball Student-Athlete
Akron	931	75	25	100	63
Alabama State*	914	57	56	-	56
American	966	86	13	0	31
Arizona	933	64	0	100	20
Arizona State	905	69	38	33	38
Binghamton	960	85	100	100	100
Boston College	944	96	67	50	70
Brigham Young	987	79	100	86	91
Butler	965	89	83	100	92
California	942	76	43	0	30
California State, Northridge	860	56	0	50	8
Chattanooga	921	53	39	17	34
Clemson	920	82	25	100	29
Cleveland State	873	83	75	50	71
Connecticut	946	81	22	0	33
Cornell***	966				
Dayton	974	96	86	100	89
Duke	984	97	86	100	89
East Tennessee State	938	67	64	50	60
Florida State	958	80	100	100	100
Gonzaga	965	89	0	86	67
Illinois	989	86	60	100	80
Kansas	981	70	67	60	64
Louisiana State*	910	69	44	-	40
Louisville*	941	75	33	-	42
Marquette	954	94	100	100	100
Maryland	906	79	0	50	10
Memphis*	927	72	44	-	55
Michigan	927	83	30	100	46
Michigan State	963	79	43	100	60
Minnesota	910	72	38	50	36
Mississippi State	901	78	50	100	53
Missouri	957	71	25	100	36
Morehead State	877	70	43	60	57
Morgan State	929	57	40	100	45
North Carolina	995	85	80	100	86
North Dakota State***	969				
Northern Iowa	962	81	40	100	67

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School	APR	Overall Student-Athlete	African-American Basketball Student-Athlete	White Basketball Student-Athlete	Overall Basketball Student-Athlete
Ohio State	909	78	44	100	53
Oklahoma	911	69	44	100	55
Oklahoma State	957	75	88	100	92
Pittsburgh	935	84	70	100	69
Portland State	894	48	50	10	17
Purdue	894	79	83	83	77
Radford	927	91	67	100	80
Robert Morris	925	95	100	100	100
Siena	921	94	71	100	86
Southern California	863	69	33	67	37
Stephen F. Austin	931	63	38	50	42
Syracuse	955	83	50	50	50
Temple*	909	71	57	-	57
Tennessee	911	78	33	50	38
Texas	929	72	14	50	31
Texas A&M	912	72	44	33	47
UCLA	968	79	38	100	46
Utah**	930	75	-	67	67
Utah State	913	82	100	100	100
Villanova*	990	95	86	-	89
Virginia Commonwealth	949	71	64	50	53
Wake Forest	974	92	100	100	100
Washington	943	83	44	50	50
West Virginia	932	68	30	50	41
Western Kentucky	937	80	100	100	100
Wisconsin	938	79	75	100	86
Xavier	977	92	78	100	82

* Denotes teams that has no white basketball student-athletes

** Denotes teams that has no black basketball student-athletes

*** Denotes teams that did not report graduation rates

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