



Media Contact:
Jessica Bartter, (407) 823-4884
jbartter@bus.ucf.edu

Keeping Score When It Counts: Graduation Rates for 2008 NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Tournament Teams

Graduation Rate Study of Division I NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament Teams Reveals Marked Improvement in Overall Graduation Rates But Large Continuing Disparities of the Success of White and African-American Student-athletes

Orlando, FL...March 17, 2008 – 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 for 2008 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 takes a look at Graduation Success Rates (GSR) 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 study was co-authored this year by Eric Little.

Lapchick noted that “There is positive academic news for the tournament teams when we examine the Graduation Success Rates. However, the on-going and significant disparity regarding the academic success between African-American and white men's basketball student-athletes is deeply troubling. Higher education's greatest failure is the persistent gap between African-American and white basketball student-athletes in particular and students in general. The good news there is that the gaps are narrowing slightly.”

Based on the GSR, 41 teams or 64 percent of the total graduated at least 50 percent of its basketball student-athletes (matching 64 percent in 2007). In addition, 31 teams (48 percent, down from 52 percent in 2007) graduated at least 60 percent, and 22 teams (34 percent, down from 37 percent in 2007) graduated at least 70 percent. Only 14 teams (22 percent, up from 19 percent in 2007) graduated less than 40 percent.

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. The GSR tells us far more than the Federal Graduation Ratesⁱ or the new Academic Progress Ratesⁱⁱ. In April 2008 we will have four years of APR data which will make it much more useful. Because there is no new data, we have not included APR in this study.”

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

- **61 percent** (33 schools) of the men's tournament teams graduated 70 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes, while **only 30 percent** (19 schools) graduated 70 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes **creating a 31 percent gap**. This improves on a 38 percent gap from last year's study.

- **70 percent** (38) of the men's tournament teams graduated 60 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes, **while only 37 percent** of schools (23) graduated 60 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes **resulting in a 33 percent gap**. This improves on a 36 percent gap from last year's study.
- **83 percent** (45) graduated 50 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes, but **only 57 percent** (36) graduated 50 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes **creating a 26 percent gap**. This improves on a 41 percent gap from last year's study.

Lapchick continued, "In spite of the fact that the gaps are closing, race remains a continuing academic issue, 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. On the other hand, the graduation rates for all Division I basketball players, both white and African-American, have gone up slightly since last year. GSR data indicates that 61 percent (up from 59 percent in 2007) of male basketball student-athletes graduate compared to 77 percent of male student-athletes (up seven percent) in general. While white basketball student-athletes graduate at 77 percent (up one percent), 53 percent (up two percent) of African-American male basketball student-athletes graduate. This 24 percent difference is still cause for alarm in spite of the continued improvements."

"It needs to be noted 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 37 percent, versus the overall rate of 61 percent for white male students, which is a scandalous 24 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 distressing results also show improvement from 2007. The GSR data shows:

- **22 men's tournament teams** (34 percent, improved from 49 percent in 2007) have a 30 percentage point or greater gap between the graduation rates of white and African-American basketball student-athletes.
- **28 men's teams** (44 percent, improved from 59 percent in 2007) have a 20 percentage point or greater gap between the graduation rates of white and African-American basketball student-athletes.
- **36 men's teams** (56 percent, improved from 68 percent in 2007) had a 10 percentage point or higher gap between the graduation rates of white and African-American basketball student-athletes.
- **58 of the institutions** (91 percent, up from 86 percent in 2007) had GSRs for all student-athletes that were higher than those of 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 among the men for Graduation Success Rates, these schools would be there: Butler, Davidson, Marquette, North Carolina, Notre Dame, Purdue, San Diego, Villanova, Western Kentucky, and Xavier. The Final Four would include five teams because of a tie: Butler, Notre Dame, Purdue, Davidson and Western Kentucky."

NCAA statistics were used in the study. The Institute reviewed 2000-01 graduation (six-year) rates, with a four class average (freshman classes of 1997-98, 1998-99, 1999-2000, and 2000-01).

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

1. *Overall rates were based on 64 teams (Cornell, like other Ivy League Schools, does not report graduation rates).*
2. *Rates for African-American student-athletes were based on 63 teams (Gonzaga had no African-American basketball student-athletes in the NCAA from which the study's data was gathered).*
3. *Rates for white student-athletes were based on 54 teams (Connecticut, Coppin State, Louisville, Memphis, Miami, Mississippi Valley State, Temple, UMBC, Villanova, and Winthrop also had no white basketball student-athletes in the period under review).*

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 2008 Men's Teams in the NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament					
School		Overall Basketball Student-Athlete	African-American Basketball Student-Athlete	White Basketball Student-Athlete	Overall Student- Athlete
American	GSR	18	22	0	83
Arizona	GSR	25	0	100	63
Arkansas	GSR	50	50	50	66
Austin Peay	GSR	75	70	100	65
Baylor	GSR	58	50	100	87
Belmont	GSR	75	0	86	88
Boise State	GSR	60	57	0	73
Butler	GSR	92	86	100	89
BYU	GSR	67	50	71	77
Cal State-Fullerton	GSR	27	20	33	58
Clemson	GSR	31	18	100	84
Connecticut**	GSR	22	13	-	79
Coppin State**	GSR	43	43	-	61
Cornell*	GSR	-	-	-	-
Davidson	GSR	91	100	50	96
Drake	GSR	50	0	67	82
Duke	GSR	67	63	67	97
George Mason	GSR	53	50	100	75
Georgetown	GSR	82	78	100	96
Georgia	GSR	19	21	0	65
Gonzaga***	GSR	63	-	71	85
Indiana	GSR	78	33	100	82
Kansas	GSR	45	33	50	70
Kansas State	GSR	67	50	100	77
Kent State	GSR	64	67	33	78
Kentucky	GSR	23	9	100	71
Louisville**	GSR	50	50	-	72
Marquette	GSR	89	86	100	95
Memphis**	GSR	40	33	-	67
Miami**	GSR	73	63	-	83
Michigan State	GSR	67	50	100	79
Mississippi State	GSR	75	80	100	76
Mississippi Valley State**	GSR	56	56	-	52
Mount Saint Mary's	GSR	54	44	100	88

Graduation Rates for 2008 Men's Teams in the NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament

School	Overall Basketball Student-Athlete	Overall Basketball Student-Athlete	African-American Basketball Student-Athlete	White Basketball Student-Athlete	Overall Student- Athlete
North Carolina	GSR	86	75	100	83
Notre Dame	GSR	91	100	100	98
Oklahoma	GSR	46	36	100	65
Oral Roberts	GSR	48	31	71	73
Oregon	GSR	59	56	67	70
Pittsburgh	GSR	56	55	100	79
Portland State	GSR	43	50	50	53
Purdue	GSR	91	100	100	82
Saint Joseph's	GSR	75	71	50	89
Saint Mary's	GSR	38	25	38	71
San Diego	GSR	86	100	88	87
Siena	GSR	85	71	100	93
South Alabama	GSR	70	63	100	84
Southern California	GSR	29	22	50	68
Stanford	GSR	67	71	60	94
Temple**	GSR	43	50	-	71
Tennessee	GSR	33	25	100	75
Texas	GSR	33	22	67	74
Texas A&M	GSR	40	38	25	73
Texas-Arlington	GSR	50	45	100	63
UCLA	GSR	40	30	100	73
UMBC**	GSR	80	80	-	85
UNLV	GSR	15	10	50	63
Vanderbilt	GSR	83	80	80	94
Villanova**	GSR	89	86	-	94
Washington State	GSR	35	33	25	72
West Virginia	GSR	33	22	33	68
Western Kentucky	GSR	100	100	100	73
Winthrop**	GSR	77	82	-	85
Wisconsin	GSR	67	40	86	78
Xavier	GSR	90	88	100	94

*Cornell does not report Graduation Success Rates

**Connecticut, Coppin State, Louisville, Memphis, Miami, Mississippi Valley State, Temple, UMBC, Villanova and Winthrop had no white basketball student-athletes

***Gonzaga had no African-American basketball student-athletes

ⁱ The Institute has taken the position that Federal Graduation Rates (FGR) give an unfair depiction of a school because it does not account for transfer students. A student-athlete who transfers in good standing and graduates at another institution counts as a non-graduate at the initial school. The FGR also does not count a junior college student who transfers into a four-year college and graduates or a former student-athlete who returns and graduates more than six years after original enrollment. The Institute supports the NCAA's new Graduation Success Rates, developed in 2005, which accounts for these factors, as a better way to fairly measure the results.

ⁱⁱ The APR was created in 2004 as an integral piece of the extensive academic reform package developed to more accurately measure student-athletes' success in the classroom and encourage an increase of the graduation rates at member institutions by providing sanctions in the form of lost scholarships when teams fail to meet the NCAA standard for academic performance.

There is currently a margin of error used in the calculation of the APR that provides protection to certain institutions which have a small sample size of data or some teams who would have been subject to penalties by their APR scores, but did not have to take any actual penalties because they did not have any students leave ineligible in the last year or received a waiver from penalties. These margins of error will be eliminated when a four-year rolling average APR can be determined.

#