



Media Contact:

Brandon Moyer 804-814-7275, [Brandon.Moyer@knights.ucf.edu](mailto:Brandon.Moyer@knights.ucf.edu)

Michaela Robbins 423-991-7212, [Mrobbi12@knights.ucf.edu](mailto:Mrobbi12@knights.ucf.edu)

## **Keeping Score When It Counts: Assessing the Academic Records of the 2014-2015 Bowl-bound College Football Teams**

**By Richard Lapchick with Dionne Sanders, John Fox, and Vroni Van Berlo**

**Orlando, FL...December 8, 2014**– The overall academic progress of college football student-athletes continued while the substantial gap between white and African-American football student-athletes remained large for the 76 Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) eligible schools. The results were reported in **“Keeping Score When It Counts: Assessing the Academic Records of the 2014-2015 Bowl-bound College Football Teams,”** a study released by The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES) at the University of Central Florida.

Richard Lapchick, director of TIDES and the primary author of the study, said, “The academic success of FBS football student-athletes continued to grow this year. The overall football student-athlete Graduation Success Rate (GSR) for bowl-bound teams is 73 percent, up from 72 percent in 2013.”

Lapchick added, “This year, 99 percent of the schools (74 of the 75)\* participating in a bowl game had at least a 50 percent Graduation Success Rate for their football teams, a slight decrease from 100 percent in the 2013 study. In addition, every school received a score higher than 930 on the NCAA’s Academic Progress Rate (APR), an increase from 97 percent in the 2013 study. Both APR and GSR figures are encouraging.”

Lapchick stated, “However, the gap between white and African-American football student-athletes continues to be a major issue standing at 18 percent this year. Among the 75 bowl-bound teams, the average GSR for African-American student-athletes is 67 percent, up from 65 percent in 2013. The average GSR for white football student-athletes is 85 percent, up from 84 percent in 2013. In addition, 7 percent of the bowl eligible schools (5 out of 75)\* graduated less than half of their African-American football student-athletes, while no team graduated less than half of its white football student-athletes.”

Lapchick noted, “It must be emphasized that African-American and white football players graduate at a higher rate than their male non-athletic peers in the student body. The graduation rate for African-American male students as a whole is only 41 percent, in comparison to the 65 percent graduation rate for white male students, according to the NCAA Education and Research

RICHARD E. LAPCHICK, DIRECTOR

KEITH HARRISON, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR • SCOTT BUKSTEIN, RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Tel: 407-823-1516 or 407-823-4887 • Fax: 407-823-3771 • Web: [www.tidesport.org](http://www.tidesport.org)

~MAKING WAVES OF CHANGE~

Data. That 24 percent gap for the general student population remains scandalous and totally unacceptable for education in America. The problem goes back to the academic preparation students get before they ever get to college.”

\* The University of South Alabama data for GSR was not available on the NCAA website. Therefore, percentages for GSR were calculated out of 75 instead of 76 teams.

Lapchick said, “Alabama, Florida State, Ohio State, and Oregon, which will contend in the college football playoff for the National Championship, all had good academic records. Alabama’s APR stood at 975, Florida State’s APR is 958, Ohio State’s APR is 972, and Oregon’s APR is 958. They graduated 80 percent, 65 percent, 78 percent, and 70 percent of all their football student-athletes, respectively. As for their African-American student-athletes, they graduated, 72 percent, 57 percent, 68 percent, and 60 percent, respectively. Their white football student-athletes graduated at rates of 96 percent, 100 percent, 91 percent, and 83 percent, respectively.

Stanford, Rice, Notre Dame, and Air Force would have played for the National Championship if there was a college football playoff based on Graduation Success Rates among bowl teams. All teams graduated at least 93 percent of all football student-athletes and at least 97 percent of African-American football student-athletes. Stanford, Rice, and Air Force graduated 100 percent of their African-American football student-athletes.”

Additional troubling statistics in the study are:

Among the bowl-bound teams:

- 72 schools (96 percent)\* had GSRs of 66 percent or higher for white football student-athletes, which was more than 2.2 times the number of schools with equivalent GSRs for African-American football student-athletes (33 schools or 44 percent).\*
- All bowl-bound schools graduated 50 percent or higher of their white football student-athletes while 5 of the 75\* bowl-bound schools (7 percent) graduated 50 percent or less of their African-American football student-athletes.
- BYU was the only school that graduated less than 40 percent of their African-American football student-athletes. There were none in the 2013 study.

In addition, the size of the gap among some schools is alarming:

- 15 schools (20 percent)\* had GSRs for African-American football student-athletes that were at least 30 percentage points lower than their rates for white football student-athletes, which is a decrease from 23 percent in the 2013 study.
- 39 schools (52 percent)\* had GSRs for African-American football student-athletes that were at least 20 percentage points lower than their rates for white football student-athletes, which is an increase from 47 percent in the 2013 study.

Nine schools had Graduation Success Rates for their African-American football student-athletes that exceeded their rates for white football student-athletes, up from five schools in 2013. They were Arizona (19 percentage points higher), Air Force (11 percentage points higher), Utah State

(11 percentage points higher), Rice (nine percentage points higher), Notre Dame (seven percentage points higher), Duke (four percentage points higher), Utah (four percentage points higher), Stanford (three percentage points higher), and UCF (three percentage points higher). Penn State had the same GSR for African-American and white football student-athletes.

Six bowl-bound schools had overall GSRs for football student-athletes that were better than for the overall student-athletes of the school. They were Boise State (six percentage points higher), Air Force (three percentage points higher), Rice (three percentage points higher), Northern Illinois (two percentage points higher), Stanford (one percentage point higher), and UCLA (one percentage point higher).

The top 15 APR schools are represented in several conferences. The Atlantic Coast Conference had five schools in the top 15, while the Big Ten had three. There are three conferences (Mountain West, Pacific-12, and Southeastern Conference) which each had two schools in the top 15 while the American Athletic Conference had one school.

This year there will be three bowl games in which both teams have APRs higher or equal to 970 in 2014. The Sugar Bowl has Alabama and Ohio State with APRs of 975 and 972, respectively. The Orange Bowl has Mississippi State and Georgia Tech with APRs of 974 and 983, respectively. The Independence Bowl has South Carolina and Miami (FL) with APRs of 980 and 972, respectively.

NCAA statistics were used in this study. The Institute reviewed data collected by the NCAA from member institutions for the graduation rate study. The Institute reviewed the six-year graduation rates of each school's freshman class that enrolled in 2007-08, and it then calculated a four-class average (freshmen classes of 2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07, 2007-08).

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. The APR holds each team accountable for the success of student-athletes in the classroom and their progression towards graduation. Individual teams are penalized if they fall below an APR score of 930, which is an expected graduation rate of 50 percent of its student-athletes. As of now, scholarship reductions are the only penalties: up to 10 percent of scholarships can be taken away. Historical penalties will be imposed on schools who continue to fall below the 930 APR.

The new postseason eligibility structure took effect in the 2012-13 academic year, with a three-year implementation window, which moves the benchmark from 900 to 930. For access to postseason competition in 2014-15, teams must achieve a 930 four-year average APR or a 940 average over the most recent two years to participate in championships.

This year, none of the bowl bound teams had an APR below 930. There were three in the 2013 study.

The APR data does not include data from the 2013-14 academic performances of the teams in the study but instead uses four years of data ending in the 2012-13 school year. This is the most updated data available on the NCAA website.

The study was co-authored by Dionne Sanders, John Fox, and Vroni Van Berlo.

The Institute has taken the position that Federal Graduation Rates (FGR) gives 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 as a graduate or a former student-athlete who returns and graduates more than six years after original enrollment. The Institute supports the NCAA's use of the Graduation Success Rates (GSR), developed in 2005, which accounts for these factors, as a better way to fairly measure the results.

The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport ("TIDES" or the "Institute") serves as a comprehensive resource for issues related to gender and race in amateur, collegiate and professional sport. The Institute researches and publishes a variety of studies, including annual studies of student-athlete graduation rates and racial attitudes in sport as well as the internationally recognized Racial and Gender Report Card, an assessment of hiring practices in professional and college sport. 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 social issues in sport.

### Academic Rates for teams in the 2013-2014 NCAA

Bowl Name	Participants	APR	GSR			
			Overall Football Student-Athletes (%)	African-American Football Student Athletes (%)	White Football Student-Athletes (%)	Overall Student-Athletes (%)
Rose Bowl	Florida State	958	65	57	100	84
	Oregon	958	70	60	83	82
Sugar Bowl	Alabama	975	80	72	96	91
	Ohio State	972	78	68	91	89
Cotton Bowl	Michigan State	962	69	56	89	86
	Baylor	957	72	67	89	88
Orange Bowl	Mississippi State	974	66	62	93	84
	Georgia Tech	983	66	63	73	81
Fiesta Bowl	Arizona	960	64	62	63	75
	Boise State	988	85	79	92	79
GoDaddy Bowl	Toledo	974	70	60	89	78
	Arkansas State	938	63	56	80	70
Birmingham Bowl	Florida	969	81	71	100	83
	East Carolina	941	70	66	81	79
Cactus Bowl	Washington	967	70	62	85	80
	Oklahoma State	930	59	56	67	70
Alamo Bowl	Kansas State	968	66	57	76	79
	UCLA	979	88	83	96	87
TaxSlayer Bowl	Iowa	969	78	59	97	89
	Tennessee	932	62	56	92	78
Armed Forces Bowl	Pittsburgh	961	67	59	81	79
	Houston	937	57	50	71	63
Ouback Bowl	Wisconsin	989	69	59	85	84
	Auburn	965	68	61	85	78
Foster Farms Bowl	Stanford	984	99	100	97	98
	Maryland	950	74	67	93	86
Belk Bowl	Georgia	967	75	72	87	84
	Louisville	947	62	54	80	80
Music City Bowl	Notre Dame	972	94	97	90	99
	LSU	946	71	61	89	81
Texas Bowl	Arkansas	935	59	56	60	76
	Texas	947	61	48	88	83
Russell Athletic Bowl	Oklahoma	965	59	52	76	80
	Clemson	983	81	80	93	91
Liberty Bowl	West Virginia	942	74	67	88	83
	Texas A&M	971	74	65	96	76
Holiday Bowl	USC	941	58	49	78	80
	Nebraska	980	81	78	88	83
Pinstripe Bowl	Boston College	981	92	88	93	95
	Penn State	954	87	88	88	89
Independence Bowl	South Carolina	980	76	73	79	85
	Miami (FL)	972	86	85	100	92
Sun Bowl	Duke	992	92	93	89	97
	Arizona State	941	69	71	86	82
Military Bowl	Virginia Tech	977	74	63	100	88
	Cincinnati	944	68	62	85	79
Bitcoin Bowl	UCF	978	90	91	88	95
	North Carolina State	950	65	59	72	81
Quick Lane Bowl	Rutgers	980	83	80	89	86
	North Carolina	938	69	57	91	86
Heart of Dallas Bowl	Illinois	957	72	63	94	88
	Louisiana Tech	941	77	74	89	81
Hawaii Bowl	Rice	975	95	100	91	92
	Fresno State	948	66	50	85	73
Poinsettia Bowl	Navy	971	80	80	82	89
	San Diego State	960	71	65	75	77
Boca Raton Bowl	Northern Illinois	968	91	84	98	89
	Marshall	948	63	59	68	74
Miami Beach Bowl	BYU	938	47	33	72	73
	Memphis	940	76	73	87	84
Camellia Bowl	South Alabama	933	currently no entry	currently no entry	currently no entry	73
	Bowling Green	965	71	61	85	86
Idaho Potato Bowl	Western Michigan	958	68	53	87	83
	Air Force	976	93	100	89	90
Royal Purple Bowl	Colorado State	943	78	62	87	83
	Utah	970	66	75	71	81
New Mexico Bowl	UTEP	928	65	58	72	75
	Utah State	988	86	93	82	87
New Orleans Bowl	Louisiana Laffayette	951	69	63	79	76
	Nevada	930	73	67	74	80
Buffalo Wild Wings	Minnesota	962	71	52	84	89
	Missouri	980	72	64	86	85
Citrus Bowl	Missouri	940	92	84	61	75
Popeyes Bahamas Bowl	Central Michigan	940	54	41	67	75
	Western Kentucky	952	73	67	82	80
Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl	TCU	945	83	76	96	87
	Mississippi	946	52	44	82	79