



Media Contact:
Jessica Bartter, 407.823.4884
jbartter@bus.ucf.edu

Keeping Score When It Counts: Assessing the 2007-08 Bowl-bound College Football Teams- Academic Performance Improves but Race Still Matters

Orlando, FL December 3, 2007 – Overall academic progress continued while the gap between white and African-American football student-athletes increased slightly for the 64 Division I-A football teams playing in this year's college football bowl games according to a study released today by The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES) at the University of Central Florida.

Richard Lapchick, the Director of TIDES and the primary author of the study "**Keeping Score When It Counts: Assessing the 2007-08 Bowl-bound College Football Teams-Academic Performance Improves but Race Still Matters**," noted that, "The new study shows additional progress and continues to underline the success of Myles Brand's academic reform package. This year 88 percent (56 of the 64 schools), up from 86 percent in the 2006 report, had a 50 percent graduation rate for their football teams; 73 percent of the teams received a score of more than 925 on the NCAA's Academic Progress Rate (APR) versus only 63 percent in the 2006 report." *The NCAA created the APR in 2004 as part of an academic reform package designed to more accurately measure student-athlete's academic success as well as improve graduation rates at member institutions.

Lapchick added that, "In spite of the good news, the study showed that the huge gap between white and African-American football student-athletes remains a major issue; 27 teams or 42 percent of the bowl-bound schools graduated less than half of their African-American football student-athletes, while **only** Florida Atlantic graduated less than half of their white football student-athletes."

The study was co-authored by Marina Bustamante and Eric Little.

A wide gap remains between white and African-American student-athletes' graduation rates in spite of all this progress with graduation rates. Lapchick said, "Each year the most disturbing information in the graduation rate study is the disparity between the graduation rates of African-American and white football student-athletes. While the graduation rates for African-American student-athletes have improved, the disparity has persisted for years."

Overall at the 120 Division I-A schools (now called the Football Bowl Subdivision), 64 percent of white football student-athletes graduated versus 50 percent of African-American football

student-athletes. The 14 percent gap is actually larger than the 13 percent (62 vs. 49 percent) gap reported in the 2006 study.”

Lapchick emphasized, “However, it must be noted 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 37 percent, in comparison to the 61 percent graduation rate for white male students – a disgraceful 24 percent gap.”

Among the bowl-bound teams, the following results were found:

- 47 schools (73 percent) had graduation rates of 66 percent or higher for white football student-athletes, which was more than 3.6 times the number of schools with equivalent graduation rates for African-American football student-athletes (13 schools or 20 percent).
- 27 schools (42 percent) graduated less than 50 percent of their African-American football student-athletes, while only Florida Atlantic graduated less than 50 percent of their white football student-athletes.
- Seven schools (11 percent) graduated less than 40 percent of their African-American football student-athletes, while **no** school graduated less than 40 percent of their white football student-athletes.

Additional findings include the following:

- 14 schools (22 percent) had graduation rates for African-American football student-athletes that were at least 30 percent lower than their rates for white football student-athletes.
- 24 schools (38 percent) had graduation rates for African-American football student-athletes that were at least 20 percent lower than their rates for white football student-athletes.
- Four schools had graduation rates for African-American football student-athletes that exceeded their rates for white football student-athletes: Florida Atlantic (15 percent higher), Florida State (ten percent higher), Connecticut (four percent higher) and Rutgers (two percent higher). That was up from only one school in the 2006 study.

Three schools had overall GSR rates for football players that were better than the overall student-athletes (Texas Tech, Cincinnati and TCU).

Lapchick noted, “If there were a national championship for graduation rates and APR rates among bowl teams, Navy and Boston College would have played for the National Championship. Both teams graduated at least 93 percent of all football student-athletes and at least 89 percent of African-American football student-athletes. Navy and Boston College also had the top APR scores at 982 and 976 respectively.”

Three conferences distinguished themselves from all of the Division I-A football conferences represented in the APR study. The Southeastern Conference, Atlantic Coast Conference, and Big East Conference are represented by two teams each in the top 10 APR schools (Auburn and Georgia in the Southeastern Conference, Boston College and Wake Forest in the Atlantic Coast Conference, and Rutgers and Connecticut in the Big East Conference). The Atlantic Coast Conference had all eight of its bowl-bound member institutions receive an APR score greater than 925.

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 2000-01 graduation (six-year) rates, with a four-class average (freshmen classes of 1997-98, 1998-99, 1999-00 and 2000-01).

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 925, 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. Over time, historical penalties will be put into place for schools who continue to fall below the 925 APR. Of the 17 teams below the 925 score this year, only Hawaii will be subject to contemporaneous penalties by the NCAA.

The APR data does not include data from the 2006-07 academic performances of the teams in the study but instead uses the data from the 2004-05 and 2005-06 years. The NCAA is generally treating the APR data as preliminary until it gets the full four years of data collected. This is the reason that the NCAA is applying the "squad-size adjustment" until it has the four-year cohort.

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, 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 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 nationally recognized Racial and Gender Report Card, an assessment of hiring practices in coaching and sport management. Additionally, the Institute conducts diversity management training in conjunction with the National Consortium for Academics and Sports. 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 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.

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Academic Rates for Teams in the 2007-2008 NCAA Division Bowl Games

Bowl Name	Participants	APR	Graduation Success Rates (GSR)			
			Overall Football Student-Athlete	African-American Football Student-Athlete	White Football Student-Athlete	Overall Student-Athlete
BCS National Championship	Ohio State	928	53	43	74	77
	Louisiana State	941	51	42	70	69
Allstate Sugar Bowl	Georgia	963	41	29	67	65
	Hawaii	902	45	38	57	65
FedEx Orange Bowl	Virginia Tech	928	72	70	78	83
	Kansas	918+	56	49	64	70
Tostitos Fiesta Bowl	Oklahoma	936	44	40	53	65
	West Virginia	924+	65	59	71	68
Rose Bowl Game Presented by Citi	USC	947	57	53	59	68
	Illinois	926	73	61	84	88
GMAC Bowl	Bowling Green	921+	76	74	80	87
	Tulsa	935	59	48	66	73
International Bowl	Rutgers	971	55	57	55	75
	Ball State	942	81	79	84	85
Capital One Bowl	Michigan	958	73	56	92	83
	Florida	961	72	64	86	89
Toyota Gator Bowl	Virginia	948	68	62	81	85
	Texas Tech	931	79	70	86	73
Outback Bowl	Wisconsin	935	61	52	69	78
	Tennessee	938	52	47	60	75
AT&T Cotton Bowl	Missouri	934	60	47	81	70
	Arkansas	934	53	35	88	66
Roady's Humanitarian Bowl	Georgia Tech	959	51	34	81	69
	Fresno State	945	50	45	58	63
Chick-fil-A Bowl	Clemson	945	75	75	75	84
	Auburn	967	59	47	84	75
Meineke Car Care Bowl	Connecticut	963	78	85	81	79
	Wake Forest	966	90	89	90	93
Valero Alamo Bowl	Penn State	960	76	76	79	88
	Texas A&M	922+	62	59	70	73
Champs Sports Bowl	Boston College	976	93	90	94	96
	Michigan State	922+	43	35	58	79
Insight Bowl	Indiana	943	67	61	77	82
	Oklahoma State	924+	64	56	81	73
AutoZone Liberty Bowl	UCF	928	46	40	63	74
	Mississippi State	921+	64	52	95	74
Brut Sun Bowl	South Florida	910+	61	59	73	75
	Oregon	912+	55	41	78	70
Gaylord Hotels Music City Bowl	Florida State	952	58	60	50	78
	Kentucky	946	59	51	71	71
Texas Bowl	Houston	928	49	46	55	63
	TCU	962	69	66	74	68
Pacific Life Holiday Bowl	Texas	944	42	30	67	74
	Arizona State	926	55	53	64	68
PetroSun Independence Bowl	Colorado	934	68	61	78	78
	Alabama	942	49	41	73	73
Emerald Bowl	Maryland	944	69	62	80	78
	Oregon State	913+	62	47	72	75
Motor City Bowl	Central Michigan	921+	68	53	82	80
	Purdue	915+	70	61	74	82
Sheraton Hawaii Bowl	East Carolina	921+	75	72	83	78
	Boise State	955	63	54	70	73
Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl	U.S. Air Force	975	92	84	92	93
	California	965	52	49	58	75
New Mexico Bowl	New Mexico	915+	51	45	66	64
	Nevada	920+	54	31	70	67
Papajohns.com Bowl	Southern Miss	970	81	81	82	83
	Cincinnati	941	67	64	75	66
R&L Carriers New Orleans Bowl	Memphis	954	59	47	90	67
	Florida Atlantic	914+	53	59	44	62
Pioneer PureVision Vegas Bowl	Las Vegas	945	53	44	61	77
	UCLA	931	56	43	70	73
San Diego County Credit Union Poinsettia Bowl	U.S. Naval Academy	982	95	89	98	98
	Utah	949	55	41	81	74