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Keeping Score When It Counts: Sweet 16 Men’s and Women’s Teams A Look at Their Academic Success

Orlando, FL – March 26, 2008... If the Sweet 16 for men’s/women’s basketball teams were based on Graduation Success Rates¹, then the complete seeding would be (team’s overall GSR is in parentheses after the school’s name):

Men’s

- #1. Western Kentucky (100%)
- #2. Davidson (91%)
- #3. Xavier (90%)
- #4. Villanova (89%)
- #5. North Carolina (86%)
- #6. (tie) Stanford (67%)
- #6. (tie) Wisconsin (67%)
- #6. (tie) Michigan State (67%)
- #9. Louisville (50%)
- #10. Kansas (45%)
- #11. (tie) UCLA (40%)
- #11. (tie) Memphis (40%)
- #13. Washington State (35%)
- #14. (tie) West Virginia (33%)
- #14. (tie) Texas (33%)
- #14. (tie) Tennessee (33%)

Women’s

- #1. (tie) Notre Dame (100%)
- #1. (tie) Vanderbilt (100%)
- #1. (tie) Tennessee (100%)
- #1. (tie) Oklahoma State (100%)
- #5. (tie) George Washington (92%)
- #5. (tie) Connecticut (92%)
- #5. (tie) Stanford (92%)
- #8. Duke (90%)
- #9. Pittsburgh (79%)
- #10. Rutgers (75%)
- #11. (tie) Louisville (73%)
- #11. (tie) Old Dominion (73%)
- #13. Maryland (71%)
- #14. North Carolina (64%)
- #15. Texas A&M (61%)
- #16. Louisiana State (55%)

The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES) at the University of Central Florida released a new study on the Graduation Success Rates of the teams in the men’s and women’s Sweet 16. It is a follow-up to its annual study, “Keeping Score When It Counts: Graduation Rates for 2008 NCAA Men’s and Women’s Division I Basketball Tournament Teams,” which compared graduation rates for Division I teams that have been selected for the men’s and women’s brackets of the 2008 NCAA Basketball Tournaments. The author of the study is Dr. Richard Lapchick, who is director of The Institute and of the DeVos Sport Business Management Graduate Program at UCF. The study was co-authored this year by Eric Little.

Lapchick noted “the new GSR, developed in late 2005, provides a more accurate picture of the success student-athletes have in the classroom at NCAA member institutions. Based on the GSR, 16 women’s teams or **100 percent** graduated at least 50 percent of its basketball student-athletes. That compared to only nine men’s teams or **56 percent**. Whether it is 64 or 16 teams, the women do better than the men academically.”

In addition:

- 15 women's teams (**94 percent**) compared to **only** eight of the men's teams (**50 percent**) graduated at least 60 percent of their overall basketball student-athletes.
- 13 women's teams (**81 percent**) compared to five of the men's (**31 percent**) teams graduated at least 70 percent.
- No women's team graduated less than 40 percent compared to four of the men's teams (**25 percent**).

Lapchick emphasized, "Race remains an ongoing academic issue because of the continued gap between graduation rates for white and African-American student-athletes including a significant disparity between white and African-American basketball student-athletes.

"White male basketball student-athletes graduate at 77 percent versus only 53 percent of African-American male basketball student-athletes. While white female basketball student-athletes graduate at 88 percent, only 72 percent of African-American female basketball student-athletes graduate. These 24 and 16 percent disparities are alarming, yet slightly improved from the 25 and 17 percent gaps respectively a year ago. In fact, the GSR rates for both white and African-American basketball student-athletes are improved from the 2007 data."ⁱⁱⁱ

Distressing results on the topic of race and academics for the Sweet 16 teams' GSR data are:

- Two women's tournament teams (**13 percent**) and five men's tournament teams (**31 percent**) have graduation rates for African-American basketball student-athletes that were at least 30 percent lower than their rates for white basketball student-athletes.
- Five women's teams (**31 percent**) and six men's teams (**38 percent**) have graduation rates for African-American basketball student-athletes that were at least 20 percent lower than their rates for white basketball student-athletes.

Lapchick concluded that "No matter how many teams we examine, overall women basketball student-athletes succeed academically better than their male counterparts. And no matter whether we look at women's or men's college basketball, the gap between the graduation rates of white and African-American basketball student-athletes is too big and must be narrowed. I believe that NCAA President Myles Brand's reform package is leading us in the right way but the job is far from done."

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).

THE INSTITUTE FOR DIVERSITY AND ETHICS IN SPORT (TIDES)

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

Men's Basketball Sweet 16: Graduation Success Rates (GSR)				
	Overall Basketball Student-Athlete	African- American Basketball Student-Athlete	White Basketball Student-Athlete	Overall Student- Athlete
Davidson	91	100	50	96
Kansas	45	33	50	70
Louisville*	50	50	-	72
Memphis*	40	33	-	67
Michigan State	67	50	100	79
North Carolina	86	75	100	83
Stanford	67	71	60	94
Tennessee	33	25	100	75
Texas	33	22	67	74
UCLA	40	30	100	73
Villanova*	89	86	-	94
Washington State	35	33	25	72
West Virginia	33	22	33	68
Western Kentucky	100	100	100	73
Wisconsin	67	40	86	78
Xavier	90	88	100	94

**Louisville, Memphis and Villanova had no white student-athletes for GSR purposes*

Women's Basketball Sweet 16: Graduation Success Rates (GSR)				
	Overall Basketball Student-Athlete	African- American Basketball Student-Athlete	White Basketball Student-Athlete	Overall Student- Athlete
Connecticut	92	83	100	79
Duke	90	75	100	97
George Washington	92	83	100	93
Louisiana State	55	56	50	69
Louisville	73	71	71	72
Maryland	71	73	100	78
North Carolina	64	57	75	83
Notre Dame	100	100	100	98
Oklahoma State	100	100	100	73
Old Dominion	73	67	100	72
Pittsburgh	79	71	86	79
Rutgers	75	86	100	75
Stanford	92	80	100	94
Tennessee	100	100	100	75
Texas A&M	61	50	100	73
Vanderbilt	100	100	100	94

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.

The GSR also reveals more than the new Academic Progress Rates. 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. 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.

ⁱⁱ African-American male and female basketball players graduate at a higher rate than African-American male and female students 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 male white students, which is a 24 percentage point gap. The graduation rate for African-American female students as a whole is only 48 percent, versus the overall rate of 66 percent for female white students, which is an 18 percentage point gap.

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