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UCF/Lapchick Study of NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament Team Graduation Rates Reveal Ongoing Problems, Particularly for African-American Basketball Players

Women's Teams Overall Graduate More Players than Men's Teams

Orlando, FL... March 15, 2005 - The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport at the University of Central Florida today released a study, "Keeping Score When It Counts: Graduation Rates for 2005 NCAA Men's and Women's Division I Basketball Tournament Teams," which reports graduation rates for Division I teams that have been selected for the men's and women's brackets of the 2005 NCAA Basketball Tournament. 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.

Graduation rates were analyzed for the 65 men's and 64 women's college and university teams that start play in the tournament later this week. The study compares graduation rates for all student-athletes to basketball student-athletes in general and African-American basketball student-athletes in particular. Some of the results were certainly disturbing.

Lapchick said, "When you look at the overall graduation rates for the men's teams, 43 of them would not be eligible for the tournament if a simple 50 percent minimum graduation rate for overall basketball student-athletes was in place on Selection Sunday. For the women's bracket, only eight teams would have been ineligible if the same standard was applied to them."

Institute Director Dr. Richard Lapchick explained, "We are releasing these graduation rates in order to give March Madness fans a perspective on how well our institutions of higher education are doing off the basketball court. Regarding graduation rates for women, we can cut down the nets in celebration. As for men's graduation rates, especially for African-American student-athletes, the dance has barely begun."

The study compares graduation rates for all student-athletes to basketball student-athletes in general and African-American basketball student-athletes in particular. The results for women stand in stark contrast to the men's team. The study also reveals the persistent gap between the graduation rates of white and African-American basketball players.

Highlights from the study include the following:

- **Less than three in 10** (17, or 28 percent) of the men's tournament teams graduated 70 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes, while **only 10** (16 percent) graduated 70 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes.

More...

UCF/Lapchick Study of NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament Team Graduation Rates
Page 2 of 6

- **More than two out of five** (25, or 42 percent) of the men's tournament teams graduated 60 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes, while **fewer than one in five schools** (12, or 19 percent) graduated 60 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes.
- Among the women's teams, **two-thirds** (40, or 66 percent) of the schools graduated 70 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes and **more than two out of five** (24, or 41 percent) graduated 70 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes – **more than double the percentages of the men's teams.**
- **Three-fourths** (46 schools) of the women's teams graduated 60 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes and **59 percent** (35 schools) graduated 60 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes – **these rates were also substantially better than the men's teams.**
- Among the **men's teams, almost two-thirds** (38, or 63 percent) of participant schools graduated 50 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes. Approximately **one-third** (22, or 34 percent) of the schools graduated 50 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes. That is in **stark contrast** to the **nearly nine out of ten women's teams** (53, or 87 percent) that graduated 50 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes and **almost three-fourths** (43, or 73 percent) that graduated 50 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes.
- **Nearly three-fourths** (44, or 73 percent) of the schools graduated 40 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes, yet **less than one-half** (27, or 42 percent) graduated 40 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes. **The vast majority** (55, or 90 percent) **of women's teams** graduated 40 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes and **almost three-fourths** (43, or 73 percent) schools graduated 40 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes.
- In the men's bracket, **almost four out of five schools** (47, or 78 percent) graduated 30 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes, while a **little more than one-half** (35, or 55 percent) schools graduated 30 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes. At this level **women's teams graduated at higher rate**, with **more than nine out of 10** (56, or 92 percent) graduating 30 percent or more of their white basketball student-athletes and **more than eight out of 10** (48, or 81 percent) graduating 30 percent or more of their African-American basketball student-athletes.
- At the lowest end of the graduation rates, **only three percent of the women's teams** graduated 20 percent or less of their white basketball student-athletes and **17 percent** graduated 20 percent or less of their African-American basketball student-athletes. Conversely, **five times as many** (16 percent) **men's teams** graduated 20 percent or fewer of their white basketball players and **more than twice as many** (36 percent) graduated 20 percent or fewer of their African-American male basketball student-athletes.

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

- *Overall rates were based on 64 teams (Pennsylvania, like other Ivy League schools, does not report graduation rates)*
- *Rates for African-American student-athletes were based on 63 teams (Utah State had no African-American basketball student-athletes in the NCAA from which the study's data was gathered)*
- *Rates for white student-athletes were based on 60 teams (Alabama A&M and Delaware State are HBCUs and have no white basketball student-athletes; Syracuse and Louisiana at Lafayette also had no white basketball student-athletes)*

More...

UCF/Lapchick Study of NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament Team Graduation Rates
Page 3 of 6

The women's percentages were calculated as follows:

- Overall rates were based on 63 teams (Dartmouth College, like other Ivy League schools, does not report graduation rates)
- Rates for African-American student-athletes were based on 59 teams (Saint Francis, Santa Clara, Montana and Oregon had no African-American basketball student-athletes in the NCAA from which the study's data was gathered)
- Rates for white student-athletes were based on 61 teams (Alcorn State and Coppin State College are HBCUs and have no white basketball student-athletes)

Lapchick noted, "Race is an ongoing academic issue, reflected in the continued gap between graduation rates for white and African-American student-athletes. While rates for both groups have improved over the last few years, a significant disparity remains between graduation rates for white and African-American basketball student-athletes. Overall on Division I teams, 51 percent of white male basketball student-athletes graduated versus only 38 percent of African-Americans.

"However, 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 34 percent, versus the overall rate of 59 percent for male white students, which is a scandalous 25 percentage point gap. One of the benefits of examining graduation rates is that they focus light on the fact that too many of our predominantly white campuses are not welcoming places for students of color, whether or not they are athletes."

Lapchick continued, "Among all college sports, men's basketball has the worst track record for graduation rates. When we look at all 328 Division I teams, 45 did not graduate a single African-American basketball student-athlete in six years. This is in a sport in which 58 percent of Division I male basketball student-athletes are African-American.

"It also is disturbing that there were 27 Division I women's programs that did not graduate a single African-American basketball female student-athlete in six years, just as African-American female basketball student-athletes reached a record-high level of participation (42 percent) in 2003-04."

Overall in Division I, only 43 percent of male basketball players graduate and an even lower 38 percent of African-American male basketball student-athletes graduate. In contrast, 65 percent of female basketball student-athletes and 60 percent of African-American female basketball student-athletes graduate.

Lapchick noted, "Even among the women's teams there was a disparity between the graduation rates for white and African-American student-athletes. However, in all cases, despite the disparity the rates were significantly higher both for white and African-American women basketball student-athletes."

- The records of **23 men's and 18 women's teams** showed a 30 percentage point or greater gap between the graduation rates of white and African-American basketball student-athletes.
- Graduation rate statistics for **29 men's and 24 women's teams** confirmed a 20 percentage point or higher gap between the graduation rates of white and African-American basketball student-athletes.
- **The data for 36 men's and 27 women's teams** revealed a 10 percentage point or greater gap between the graduation rates of their white and African-American basketball student-athletes.

More...

UCF/Lapchick Study of NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament Team Graduation Rates
Page 4 of 6

- At the **majority of the schools**, African-American basketball student-athletes had lower graduation rates than their teammates – significantly less in many instances.
- **Ten women’s and nine men’s teams** did not graduate any African-American basketball student-athletes in the reporting period; **two women’s and eight men’s teams** did not graduate any white student-athletes in this period.
- For **most of the colleges and universities**, graduation rates for all student-athletes were higher than those of basketball student-athletes.

“We annually release the graduation rates in order to give March Madness fans a perspective on how well institutions of higher education are doing off the basketball court,” said Lapchick. “Colleges and universities promise all student-athletes that they will receive an education and earn a college degree. The 2005 study shows that problems persist and that, once again, too many universities do not fulfill their promises, especially to African-American student-athletes who play basketball.”

“The story for men is a continuing nightmare that has spanned generations of student-athletes playing basketball,” Lapchick added. “I am hopeful that the initiative led by NCAA President Dr. Myles Brand, to provide incentives for schools with high graduation rates and to impose penalties, such as losing scholarships or not making the Tournament, for schools that fall short of some reasonable graduation rate goals, will finally restore confidence that institutions of higher education will deliver the promise of a meaningful education to all students, including student-athletes in revenue sports like basketball.”

Lapchick concluded, “As always, there are schools that win big enough to be here in March *and* graduate their student-athletes.”

Top 10 NCAA Division I Tournament Schools with the Highest Graduation Rates for Overall Male Basketball Student-Athletes

Rank	School	Graduation Rate
1 (tie)	Bucknell University	100 %
1 (tie)	Utah State University	100%
3	Stanford University	92%
4	Mississippi State Univ.	75%
5	University of Wisconsin, Madison	73%
6	St. Mary’s College of California	71%
7 (tie)	Villanova Univ.	67%
7 (tie)	Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	67%
9	Michigan State Univ.	64%
10	Univ. of Kansas	60%

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Top 10 NCAA Division I Tournament Schools with the Highest Graduation Rates for Overall Female Basketball Student-Athletes

Rank	School	Graduation Rate
1 (tie)	College of the Holy Cross	100 %
1 (tie)	Vanderbilt Univ.	100%
1 (tie)	Univ. of Montana	100%
4	Univ. of New Mexico	93%
5 (tie)	Duke Univ.	92%
5 (tie)	Santa Clara Univ.	92%
5 (tie)	Rice Univ.	92%
8	Temple Univ.	90%
9	Univ. of Virginia	87%
10	DePaul Univ.	86%

Top 10 NCAA Division I Tournament Schools with the Highest Graduation Rates for African-American Male Basketball Student-Athletes

Rank	School	Graduation Rate
1 (tie)	Bucknell University	100 %
1 (tie)	Oakland University	100%
3	Stanford University	86%
4	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	83%
5 (tie)	St. Mary's College of California	80%
5 (tie)	Winthrop University	80%
7 (tie)	University of Wisconsin, Madison	75%
7 (tie)	University of Central Florida	75%
9	Villanova Univ.	71%
10	Mississippi State Univ.	70%

Top 10 NCAA Division I Tournament Schools with the Highest Graduation Rates for African-American Female Basketball Student-Athletes

Rank	School	Graduation Rate
1 (tie)	Boston College	100 %
1 (tie)	College of the Holy Cross	100%
1 (tie)	Duke Univ.	100%
1 (tie)	Liberty Univ.	100%
1 (tie)	Temple Univ.	100%
1 (tie)	Univ. of New Mexico	100%
1 (tie)	Univ. of Notre Dame	100%
1 (tie)	Univ. of Oklahoma	100%
1 (tie)	Univ. of Southern California	100%
1 (tie)	Vanderbilt Univ.	100%

More...

UCF/Lapchick Study of NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament Team Graduation Rates
Page 6 of 6

NCAA statistics were used in the study. The Institute reviewed 1997-98 graduation (six-year) rates, with a four-class average (freshmen classes of 1994-95, 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98). Research assistance for this was provided by Tyechia Smith and Erin Alexander, who are graduate research assistants in the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport.

Please note: The Institute believes that the way graduation rates are currently compiled is unfair. Using the current methodology, a student-athlete who transfers in good standing and graduates at another institution counts as a non-graduate at the initial school. Also, the methodology does not count a junior college student who transfers to a four-year college and graduates, or a former student-athlete who returns and graduates six years after original enrollment. We support the NCAA's current initiative to redefine how graduation rates are calculated.

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 Sport. 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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News release and table are available at: www.bus.ucf.edu/sport/ides/2005ncaatournament

Attachments:

- **Table – Graduation Rates for 2005 Men's Teams in the NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament**
- **Table – Graduation Rates for 2005 Women's Teams in the NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament**

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