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The Privileged 3% of College Students

Sara Sullivan
California State University, Monterey Bay

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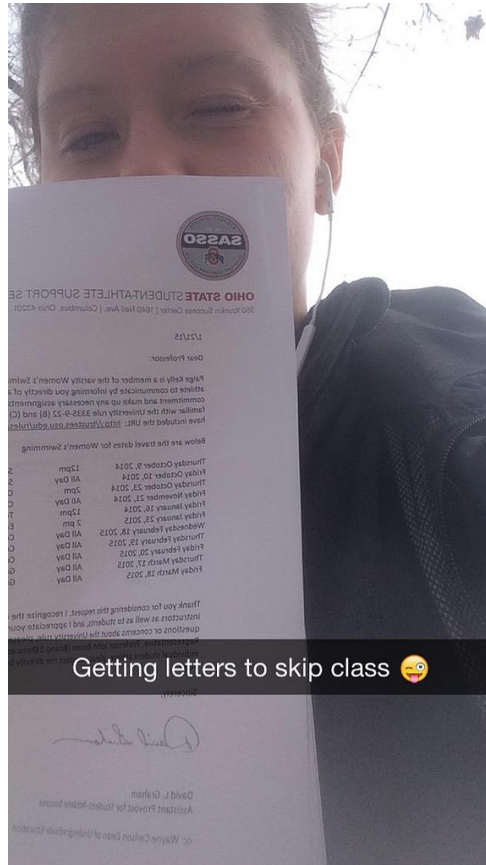
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The Privileged 3% of College Students



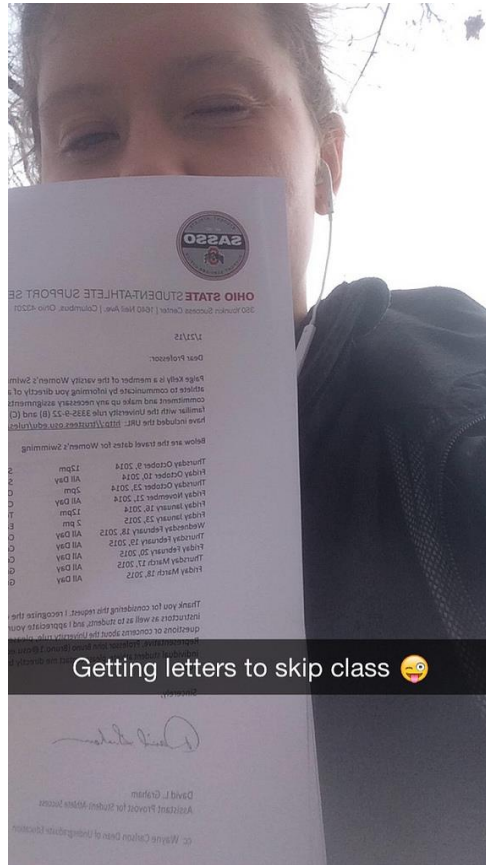
Sara Sullivan

Senior Capstone

Division of Humanities and Communication

Spring 2016

The Privileged 3% of College Students



Kelly, Paige. "Student-Athlete Pride." *Flickr*. Yahoo!, 2 Feb. 2015. Web. 04 Mar. 2016.

Pictured is student athlete Paige Kelly, showing off to social media one of the privileges she gets as an athlete in college.

Sara Sullivan

Senior Capstone

Concentration: Practical and Professional Ethics

Research Essay

Dr. Lee Ritcher

Division of Humanities and Communication

Spring 2016

Table Of Contents

Dedication	Page 4
Senior Project Proposal	Page 5
Research Essay	Page 7
Annotated Bibliography	Page 23
Final Synthesis Essay	Page 30

Dedication Page

I'd like to dedicate my Capstone project to Jacob Putman. Thanks for always pushing me to be my best, challenging my ideas so I think harder and loving me despite the distance.

Senior Project Proposal

1. Provide your name and identify your area of concentration

Sara Sullivan. Human Communications Major with a concentration in Practical and Professional Ethics.

2. Focus: Identify the specific issue, problem, or question addressed in your essay. Be sure to frame as a question. Briefly explain why you chose this focus area.

The privilege of collegiate student athlete

Specific Issue: There are significant advantages/privileges given to collegiate athlete students that are not given to non-athlete students. The playing field of a college education is already sorely unbalanced because of socioeconomics, family restraints, or current job commitments. Once a student actually makes it into college, there are once again unfair advantages that come into play when student athletes are given more privileges than nonstudent athletes. It is a choice to become a student athlete; therefore there is no reason that just because a student chooses to be an athlete s/he should be given so many benefits.

Problem: By giving a group of students advantages/privileges over the rest of the college students, it creates an unfair learning experience at colleges.

Question: Why are student athletes given more advantages than non-athlete students? Is it fair to give a student athlete certain advantages that are not given to all students?

3. Alignment with Common Theme: Provide a concise overview of your project's direct alignment with this semester's shared theme of inquiry.

The syllabus states the following: "This course asks students to investigate their own areas of privilege and marginalizations, identifying communities with which they identify in order to find strength from their communities"

I am identifying an area in my life where I feel marginalized and bringing to light an issue I think most students don't think about.

4. Purpose: What is your project's primary purpose? What do you hope to accomplish through this project?

My primary purpose is to identify the advantages that student athletes receive.

5. Capstone Title: What is your project's working title? Advantages that come with being a "Privilege of Student Athletes"

6. Working Summary: Provide a one-paragraph working summary of your project...

For my project I would like to explore the world of what comes with being a student athlete. I have noticed throughout my college experience that the athletes at both my junior college and here at CSUMB have been treated differently. In some situations, I see teachers particularly favor the athletes for no reason other than they are athletes. I feel as a student, I should be given a grade for my work inside the classroom, not on the court or field. College students are also given certain benefits just by being a student, but those students who are also athletes are given even more. My paper will be written as an exploratory essay into the world of a student athlete.

7. Sources: Address each of the following:

➤In order to complete your project, what additional knowledge, insights, skills, understanding, and/or other resources and tools do you anticipate needing?

➤Describe the kinds of primary and/or secondary sources you intend to use for your inquiry. This could include collecting original oral histories, analyzing government statistics, consulting scholarly peer-reviewed articles, books, and websites, among others. If you have consulted sources to get started, list them here.

I will access our school's database for some statistics and basic information I need. But I will also be using other sources such as college newspapers, online sports columns, and other online creditable sources. I will also be conducting interviews with athletes and hopefully coaches or athletic directors.

8. Next Steps: What steps will you need to take to meet your project's expectations, including preparation of all required deliverables? (be as specific as possible)

I will first need to get an understanding of what is given to a non-athlete student and then what is given to an athlete. I will also need to interview to get real life examples of how the school systems treat athletes. Then I will need to back it up with some real data and statistics.

9. Timeline: Provide a detailed (and realistic) timeline for completion of each step required to meet the project's expectations.

Draft 1- March 9

Draft 2- March 23

Draft 3- April 18

Final- May 2

Portfolio/Poster Board May 9

In college, many students choose to participate in athletics. According to the National College Athletic Association (NCAA) there are currently 460,000 student athletes in college athletic programs. That means of the 20.1 million students attending college in the United States, fewer than 3% are student athletes. There are many different reasons why being a student athlete is appealing to students including being a part of a team, getting a great workout while having fun, or even getting college paid for through scholarship. At the California State University of Monterey Bay, there are 7,000 students, and of those there are 250 student athletes. That's less than 4% of the school's total population that are involved in the school. Each of these students has the task of balancing school and their commitment to their athletic program.

It may seem like an easy task, but it is not always the easiest to have such a high commitment level to a sport and trying to find time to study and attend classes. Knowing that these students may have trouble, school officials give them an extra hand in making sure their academic requirements and financial requirements are met. The extra help given specifically to student athletes is an unfair advantage that is not given to all students in college. The special treatment is given to all student athletes at any collegiate level: community colleges, state university and private colleges. Having this special treatment puts student athletes in a special category; they are the privileged ones in the college setting. Non-student athletes have other time commitments in their life as well but are not given special treatment. This paper will explore what it means to be a student athlete, what

privileges student athletes receive that non-athletic students do not, and how academic performance comes second to being an athlete throughout college.

Labeling someone as a student athlete comes with a lot of strings attached. The average person would just think this a college student, who is also involved in both obtaining a degree and playing sports for their school. On the surface that conclusion makes total sense. But there is a lot more that comes into being a student athlete. It is not as easy as one thinks. Student athletes are given a strict schedule that fills a majority of their time. Not only do these athletes have to deal with their sport's commitment, but they also have to deal with their schoolwork commitment. There are many steps a student must make when deciding to be a student athlete. The most obvious is to get into a college, whether that means going to a community/junior college or going to a university or private college.

Once a student makes it into a college he or she can finally begin the journey of being a student athlete. Most students make it into college already on an athletic scholarship. Students who are given athletic scholarships are sometimes are students who would otherwise not qualify because of his or her grades, but their skill in sport offers them a special advantage that other students do not get. Writer for Inside Higher Ed, Doug Lederman, identifies in his article the harsh reality about college admissions. Lederman reports

The gaps in academic preparation between athletes and other students are wide. The average SAT for all freshmen was 1161, while the average for all

athletes was 1037, 124 points lower. The average SAT for football players was 941, and for male basketball players, 934.

Seeing that a student can be skillful in something other than academics to get into college just shows students that their potential to bring in money for the school is more important than getting an education. This is only the beginning of the advantages that student athletes get in college.

For those who do not make it into college with that secured spot on the team, they will need to try out for the team and hope they are good enough to be a “walk on” player. But even still as a student athlete there are some channels of paperwork one must go through. The beginning step of becoming an athlete is by signing up with the NCAA eligibility Center. In doing this the student athlete will be reviewed by the board and assured they meet the requirements the NCAA wants for athletes. The most common beginning of paper a student athlete will have to do is sign what is called the “National Letter of Intent” (NLI). This piece of paper is described by National-Intent.org as, “A binding agreement between a prospective student-athlete and an NLI member institution. A prospective student athlete agrees to attend the institution full time for one academic year” (National-Intent.org). After signing this letter, the student is now a part of the NCAA family and officially a student athlete.

In being a part of this “family” comes with certain standards that student athletes must hold themselves to, or they will find themselves on probation or dismissed from athletic program all together! Being a student athlete means that you have to uphold academic standards and NCAA standards. The standards that the NCAA has for student

athletes are very straightforward. The rules state “Student-athletes must meet academic standards throughout their careers on campus to remain eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics...each division create academic standards specific to that division’s goals”(NCAA.org/remaining-eligible-requirements). The rules go on stating what specific grade point average a student athlete must have. If a student athlete is playing for a Division One school, then they must maintain a grade point average that keeps them on track to graduate and is based on the school the student athlete attends. If a student athlete is playing for a Division Two school, then they must maintain “1.8 cumulative grade-point average after earning 24 hours, a 1.9 cumulative GPA after earning 48 hours and a 2.0 cumulative grade-point average after earning 72 hours to remain eligible.” It is clear in the official rules that the athletes’ academic performance is not a high priority. Their academics can be the bare minimum and even less to maintain their athletic status.

Not only do student athletes need to keep their grades up, they also need to maintain performance in their sport. To maintain their performance a student athlete must attend practice, participate in mandatory workouts, and attend and/or play games whether they are home or away. If an athlete cannot make it to a practice he or she will not be allowed to play in the game. Even if a student athlete misses because he or she is working on their academic work, it is not acceptable to miss practice or any other commitment to the athletic program. Along with maintaining attendance to practices and games, student athletes must maintain being a competitive part of the team. Without being of use to the team, the student athlete could soon be a merely student.

In order to keep in shape and in top performance, student athletes are responsible for performing in rigorous training and conditioning to maintain their spot on the team. Each sport has their own methods of training and it differs from school to school and from coach to coach. In an interview with a California State University of Fullerton (CSUF) cheer squad member, Ashley Smith, she explained that what a typical schedule for the academic year would be. Smith explained:

(Cheer) Season started in the summer with a mandatory one-week cheer camp in Northern California. When we (CSUF cheerleaders) were in season practices were held Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for two to three hours. We were also told that we needed to take two kinesiology classes to have extra workouts outside of the squad's group practice. When we were out of season, we would still need to be enrolled in two kinesiology classes and practices were Tuesday and Thursdays for two to three hours as well. It was also expected of us to be at the basketball games whether they were home or away. And our off-season sport was baseball, and we were to sign up to cheer for four games per season.

The time commitment to every athletic department is intense and chaotic. There is a lot expected of student athletes during season and during off-season as well. These athletes are held to a high standard in their sport.

Having such a huge time commitment to being apart of the athletics for a school, the school tries to help out as much as possible. There are many different actions that occur for student athletes to help them excel in school and in their sport. One privilege that is given

to student athletes is that they receive a student athlete orientation when arriving to college. This mainly applies to those athletes who go to college already signed up for a sport. At this orientation they receive one on one counseling on how to make their schedule around their sports schedule. Along with counseling from the school, there are fellow athletes at this orientation unofficially advising new athletes what classes they should be taking and what teachers are best in terms of workload and accommodating athletic schedules. This is a significant advantage that non-student athletes do not receive. A non-student athlete is given a similar orientation experience to athletes. Even though it is a similar experience, non-student athletes still miss out. When it is time to get information about how to register for classes, the counselors will talk to a room full of students versus the one on one like the athletes get. Non-student athletes are only told how to register. The students do not get the help of current students giving help tips about the teachers they are about to sign up for. Having help from current students could be really helpful so that students take the right classes that will work best for their learning style and for their educational plan.

Another advantage given to student athletes is priority registration. It is key for athletes to get this priority because without it, it would be extremely difficult for these athletes to get a schedule that allows them to commit to their sport of choice. The school understands the time commitment the student athletes have to their sport, so they help them out as much as they can. It is a huge advantage to be given priority registration in college. It is an advantage because classes and colleges are so impacted and sometimes only one section is offered for a specific class. Femin Leal of *EdSource* reported on the impact state of the Cal State system, “...our public universities cannot accommodate all of the

eligible students and the state has failed to invest the resources necessary to expand college access to keep pace with demand.” The Cal State system is having a hard time accommodating the influx of students coming into classes, but it has no problem with giving student athletes who are receiving funding and bringing in money for the school, an additional leg up on their peers by giving them priority registration. (Leal, 2015)

Non-student athletes are given registration based on their standing in the college. This means based on how many credits a student has and their academic standing in the college is when they will receive their registration appointment. So non-athletic students will always have to register after student-athletes register. The only exceptions to this rule are students with registered disabilities and veterans. A majority of a school’s population is made up of students who do not fall into any of these categories. Having this system in place is setting up a majority of the student body a severe disadvantage. This priority registration system is making it harder for students to get a fair chance at making it in college. If all students were given registration dates based on their academic and credit standing with the college, it would be fairer for all students. But instead there is a significant disadvantage to Non-athletic students in regards to registering for classes.

Student athletes not only have an advantage in selecting classes, but also in passing their classes as well. Although an academic tutoring services is offered to all students enrolled in college, student athletes are given extra tutoring services. In an interview with A. Jacob Putman a graduate from Fullerton College who played football for the school, he explained the academic commitment the school held him and his team too. Putman said,

We were told to head to the library after each practice to do study hall. In study hall, we would sit and do our homework; we (football players) would have at least one teacher and one tutor in room with us to help us do our homework. We were also offered additional tutor time outside of this designated time. Anything we needed to excel in academics was at our fingertips.

This is the same story across the board for student athletes in regards to the access to tutoring for athletes. Putman was from a junior college and got as much attention as he needed, so one could only image what stops are pulled out for athletes at a Division 1 school. Instead, he didn't need to schedule an appointment with a tutor shared by the entire student body, he had one at his disposal. Although there are academic services offered to all students whether they are an athlete or not, there isn't as much tutoring offered as there is if a student is an athlete. Only a handful of classes are supported through the tutoring center. If a student is not an athlete, the student may not get the help they may need. Student athletes are always given as many academic resources as they need to help them succeed in college.

Most schools just have separate tutoring staff for their athletic program. But at Louisiana State University (LSU), a Division 1 school, the student athletes have their own "student-athlete center". This way they do not have to try to share with a space the other non-athlete students on campus and have their own center to get all the help they need. LSU was sponsored by Cox Communications to build the "Cox Communications Academic Center for Student-Athletes". In an article published in University Business the aims of this

academic center are share, “The goal is to support student-athletes in their studies as well as in financial literacy, health and wellness, dealing with the media, and other areas”.

(T.W.D. 2016) Although it is nice that Cox Communications think that athletes need this support, if the center were open to more than just the athletic department, it would benefit more people than just a small percentage of the school’s student population.

Within the last few years the Delta Cost Project has started investigating where colleges’ money goes to on campus. It has been noted by Delta Cost Project that colleges are spending three to six times as much on a student athlete's education than it is on a non-student athlete. In 2010 alone some of the Division One schools athletic programs were a \$6 billion enterprise. (Desrochers, 2013) All this money is being raised from and for the athletes. The money goes directly into coaches’ pockets and into helping expand the athletic programs for Division One schools. Having \$6 billion going toward the academic enrichment of all students would be a better use of this money. But the athletic minority is seemingly more important than academic majority across college campuses.

Academically speaking, tutoring is not the only upper hand that student athletes have. Student athletes are given notarized notes from the school to miss class if there is a game, or if they were out of town the night before. This means that a student athlete could potentially miss a test and make it up at a different time. Having extra time to study and be more prepared for the test. Student athletes are playing for the school and representing the school so this gives them a free pass to miss classes because of their commitment to the school. But what about Non-athletic students? What happens to the student who needs to miss class because work kept her late? She has an equal commitment to the class as the

athlete who got a pass to miss class because of his or her commitment to the school. It's a completely unfair advantage that athletes get. Student athletes are not better students than Non-athletic students. Each student has their own commitment to the school and to other areas of their own life. Non-athletic students should not miss out on this privilege that is only given to student athletes.

Special treatment does not end with priority registration and getting notes to be excused from class. In many colleges across the United States, student athletes are held to a different standard, where their performance in their sport is more important than being honest students. The University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill can best exemplify the shift of importance from academics to athletics. In 2010 an academic fraud case began and is still being investigated today. UNC was most known for being one of the most well respected public schools fell into the most widely publicized academics scandals ever. At the heart of this academic scandal is the athletic department. For years athletes were told to take "paper classes" in order to keep their grade point average up to NCAA standards. In the official reports of the scandal it was reported that more than 3,100 student athletes took these paper classes in order to maintain their grade point average. These paper classes were started in 1995 and flew under the radar for fifteen years. Not only were athletes told to take these paper classes, they were advised to take certain teachers who would grade higher for athletes.

When this scandal came to light, many other colleges had similar issues come to light. Writer for Chronicle of Higher Education, Brad Wolverton, highlights this issue of special treatment in a recent article entitled, "Missed Classes, a Changed Grade, and a

Disillusioned Advisor". Wolverton writes about a recent event that occurred at University of California of Los Angeles (UCLA) involving grade changing for a basketball player. In the article he writes that academic advisor, Will Collier, was told by the basketball coach to ask a teacher to change a players grade so that the player could meet academic requirements. How is this acceptable? In today's society it is so important for sports players to get the grades they need without putting any effort into the work. The article further says that the player consistently missed academic meetings and if he did show up he would stay on his phone the entire time. This player clearly had no intention of putting the effort into their schoolwork. It is completely unacceptable that just because a student is also an athlete for the school that they should receive special treatment.

Wolverton also states in his article "The University, like many others, admitted players with academic deficiencies" (Wolverton, 2015). This once again reaffirms the fact that an athlete doesn't need to have good academic standing to get into colleges. By basing admission based on athletic ability is extremely unfair advantage. So many students work hard to get good grades and write competitive papers that show colleges that they are meant for college and all too often they get overlooked. Instead an athlete that has lower academic ability is offered admission on the condition that they play for the school. Not only a UCLA do students get admitted, it's in so many other schools as well. The Indy Star online write Mark Alesia shares how this is true. "We know they're not qualified academically," said DiNardo (former Coach for Indiana University), now a commentator for the Big Ten Network, "so our obligation extends past what it is for a non-student-athlete." (Alesia, 2008) DiNardo knew that he got players that were not academically sound and knew that he could just use his resources to make sure that his players would make it

through college. This continues to highlight the idea that athletes' success in their sport is more important than success in the classroom. Having this idea in place it continues to discourage other students in trying to do well in order to get into college. Even if a student has a better academic score than a student athlete, it is more likely that the student athlete will get chosen to attend college over the non-athletic student. It is just a sad reality that college students are now faced with.

Having special treatment in regards to admission is just the first step for some athletes. DiNardo states that he had to use extra resources to help out his players that were admitted despite their academic eligibility. In California there was a piece of legislation passed for just this situation. Brent Schrontenboer, writer for Union Tribune San Diego, reports on the "Student Fair Opportunity Act" (SFOA). Former of California, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, signed the SFOA into law in 2005. "It requires Cal State schools to provide appropriate academic support to ensure student-athletes are given a fair opportunity to earn a degree" (Schrontenboer, 2006). In signing this is just gives an extra help to student athletes in the Cal State system. Instead of not admitting student athletes that do not qualify for the school academically, this law gives academic inferior students a chance to get a degree that they do not qualify to receive in the first place. This is pushing out non-athletic students who are actually academically qualified to attend a Cal State and giving special treatment once again to student athletes.

Not only are student athletes likely to get special treatment in admission and in grading, they are also guided in specific directions when trying to obtain their degree. It's not a surprising fact that some majors in college are easier than other majors. Athletes

know that their sport will have a lot of time commitments that could hinder them from putting in the time they need to for their classes. No matter how much tutoring time they get, some student athletes just can't dedicate the time that their major wants. So instances like this, student athlete academic advisors might try to sway the athletes to change majors to something "easier". Instead of pushing a student towards their academic goals, advisors tell students to just change to something easier. It is really a harsh reality of being a student athlete. Kansas State University football player, Steven Cline, knows this reality all too well. When he was having trouble in classes in his veterinary degree, and was advised to switch to a major where "34% of the football team's junior and seniors were in" (Levine, Etchison, and Oppenheimer, 2014). The team didn't care about his goals; they just cared about him being able to perform on field. In taking the advice of his advisors, Cline ended up with a degree in social sciences and working at a construction site to get money to go back to school to further his education. This is just an unfortunate truth of playing sports in college; your education comes second to your sport.

USA Today, features an article entitled, "Bonuses pay coaches for wins. Players' education? Not so much", which explores a little behind why student athletes are guided to take different classes. In the article, readers are shown the reality of the world that is college sports. Readers begin to see that coaches of Division One schools are making anywhere from \$5 million to \$600,000 a year. Each salary is based on how the team does in their sport. Not to mention bonuses that can range from \$52,000 to \$800,000 if the team gets a title. These bonuses are based on performance in the sport that they coach, not on their academic performance of the players. (USA Today, 2013) Without having the team's coach behind their academic performance it is all too easy for student athletes to feel like

their academic endeavors are not important and all that truly matters is the performance for the team and the sport.

Knowing that stories like this haven't been stopping, the NCAA decided to conduct a survey to better understand what student athletes thought about schooling and playing sports. In an article for, *College Sports Journal*, authors Jennifer Kulics, Alan Kornspan, and Mark Kretovics shared their findings of the NCAA research. These authors shared that student athletes are picking majors that work best for their eligibility as athletes. The main focus of student athletes going to college is not about their education is about their eligibility to play sports in college. The focus is never about these athletes being the latter part of their title. Student athletes are likely to change their major in the first year of them playing sports in college. The success rate for graduation is 25% higher if a player switches majors to the same major as a majority of their team. (Kulics, Kornspan, and Kretovics)

Within this article there were quotes pulled from surveyed participants. A majority of them have negative views towards the academic requirements that are laid out for them. In 2011 the NCAA raised the percentage towards degree requirement. In doing this is made student athletes have 40% of work done towards their degree in the first two years, 60% done their third year and 80% done by their fourth year attending college. There were initially a lot of issues with raising this academic requirement, but it was greatly needed for athletes to stay on track and for academics to be held to a more important standard. At first it was hard for student athletes to grasp this new standard they were being held to. Some comments include "I think it is wrong because most people who come to college don't know what they want to do and we shouldn't be rushed". Others statements are more positive

and said "I think it is good. It is showing that the NCAA wants to produce degrees out of their student athletes." (Kulics, Kornspan, and Kretovics) There is a definite mixed emotion in the NCAA world in regards to the academic standards that student athletes are held too. Some people think that the new standard is too tough on athletes, while others appreciate the added standards so that athletes do not forget that they wear two hats simultaneously.

But even with these new NCAA rulings put into place it is still easy for student athletes, to once again choose his or her sport over academics. Putting this standard in class only makes it a more logical choice for student athletes to choose a major that is easier for them to obtain while still having a high time commitment for their sport. It is a shame that athletes are feeling the pressure to perform more in their sport than in the actual reason they are at school for. Obtaining a degree should be just as important, if not more important, than playing for the school. This cycle of putting sports first for student athletes is extremely disappointing for all student athletes.

Steven Wieberg, a writer for *USA Today*, shares a small insight on this issue. Wieberg discusses the ups and downs that the NCAA has faced in regards to academic performance of the athletes in the program. There has been a significant push to get athletes to perform better academically and for some schools it has worked, but the bigger Division One schools it hasn't. "The NCAA's heart is in the right place. They want to improve the academic performance of student-athletes," says Nathan Tublitz, a University of Oregon biology professor and co-chairman of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics, an alliance of faculty senates at Division I universities. "But rules are only as good as their enforcement. At the moment, the enforcement seems a bit lax" (Wieberg, 2008). This is the

major issue with getting the academic performance to be where it needs to be. The whole organization, team, coaches, academic advisors, athletes and parents all need to be behind the academic performance. The new rules will not even mean anything if once again student athletes are just told to switch to easy majors, and given passing grades for an academic performance that is subpar.

Being a student athlete comes with immense pressure and incredibly high standards. Students who are involved with athletics in a collegiate level are getting a different experience. These athletes are learning countless tools that will help them develop as individuals and also to bond as a team. Although there are many reasons why being a student athlete is beneficial; there are just as many reason why being a student athlete can hinder a student athlete in the classroom. There is definitely a stigma that is attached to being a student athlete. The stigma can help or hinder an athletes experience in college. But without a doubt, all student athletes are given special treatments to make sure that their success on the court is not hindered by academic short falls. The graduation rate for student athletes is at an all time high, but that high is still only 53% of college athletes actually graduate (NCAA, 2015). This is an extremely disappointing statistic knowing that there are so many resources being poured into the academic programs of across all college campuses.

Throughout this paper, criteria for being a student athlete and privileges given to student athletes have been identified and explored. In identifying what privileges are given to students athletes lead to the identification of special treatment that occurs throughout the entire span of a student athletes experience in college. College athletes have a lot to

balance and having extra help at times is beneficial to them. But the overwhelming evidence that there is favoritism to this minority on college campuses is unfathomable. A majority of college students are working, going to school, and/or taking care of families, but are not given any extra assistance the way student athletes are. The advantages given to student athletes are not always their fault. Academic advisors and coaching staffs should be keener into making sure that their student athletes get everything out of their college experience. This means that academic advisors and coaching staffs should be focus equally on making sure athletes thrive academically and athletically. After all, student athletes are not just athletes they are also students.

Annotated Bibliography

Alesia, Mark. "Tailor Treatment to Meet Athletes' Needs." *Clinical Psychiatry News* 34.5 (2008): 34. [Www.newhaven.edu](http://www.newhaven.edu). Sept.2008. Web. Apr. 2016.

In this article, Alesia shows how Indiana State University coach DiNardo allowed athletes to be admitted to the school even though their academic standing didn't meet the schools requirements. Having this article in hand gives more information about how admission works for athletes. Athletes are admitted to school without any regard for their academic standing. When these athletes are admitted, they need extra help to graduate. It is hard to do well in a school that a student does not qualify to be in. Alesia shows thoroughly throughout his article about it is difficult for students to do well when they are not even prepared to be thrown into a school that doesn't fit their academic standing.

"Bonuses pay coaches for wins. Players' education? Not so much." USA Today n.d.:

Academic

Search Premier. Web. 19 Apr. 2016.

USA Today reports on the status of coaches' wages. There has been a big increase for coaches whose teams do well in playoffs. But there is little to no wage increase for coaches whose players do well academically. In articles argument helps this paper's argument in highlights that there is no push for student athletes to do well in school. Coaches mainly care about winning and not about their players graduating or actually doing well in school. Students' grades are consistently coming second to a good standing in the NCAA rankings. Players look to the coaches for all kinds of support and all coaches care about is the players performance in the sport.

Desrochers, Donna M. Academic Spending Versus Athletic Spending: Who Wins? Issue Brief.

N.p.: American Institution for Research, 2012. Wwww.deltacostproject.org. Jan. 2013.
Web. Mar. 2016.

A majority of spending for college campus is on the athletic program. According the Delta Cost Project, there has been an ongoing investigation to see how much money is spent on athletic programs versus academic spending for colleges. There has been the finding that there is three to six times more spending towards athletic programs than for academics across college campuses in the Unites States.

The article will add to the paper's argument that there is money care and money being spent on athletes than non-athletic students.

Klulicas, Jennifer M, Alan S. Kornspan, and Mark Kretovics. "An Analysis Of The Academic Behaviors And Beliefs Of Division I Student-Athletes: The Impact Of The Increased Percentage Toward Degree Requirements." *College Student Journal* 49.1 (2015): 1-12. Academic Search Premier. Web. 19 Apr. 2016.

The NCAA recently changed the academics requirements of the athletes in their program. In doing this it has set off a large conversation between the athletes and the NCAA. The old academic requirements were slightly lower than what they are now. In raising the academic standards for athletes the goal is to get more athletes to graduate college. Some athletes think that there is already a lot of pressure for them to be doing well and this added pressure is making it more difficult for athletes to graduate. This source has a survey that has given a lot of insight to the true feelings of athletes and their athletes.

Leal, Femin. "More Students Are 'College Ready' but Crowded Campuses Make It Harder to Get into CSU." EdSource. N.p., Dec. 2015. Web. Apr. 2016.

Leal Femin writes an article stating how hard it is to get into California State University campuses. There are 23 CSUs in the system, but it is still getting harder and more competitive to get into these public universities. This article shows that it is truly getting harder to get into schools as it is. This paper shows that student athletes are getting into schools even though they do not meet the academic

requirements. By doing this it hurts the chances of others getting in to a school where it is already difficult to get into.

Levine, Joshua, Sara Etchison, and Daniel. Oppenheimer. "Pluralistic Ignorance Among Student-

Athlete Populations: A Factor In Academic Underperformance." *Higher Education* 68.4 (2014): 525-540. Academic Search Premier. Web. 5 Mar. 2016.

The article is about a study done on the academic performance of student athletes. In this article researchers have suggest that the lack of performance of student athletes is because they lack motivation in academic endeavors. Within this article researchers also suggest that student athletes do care about their academic performance, but try to fit into a social norm that makes it acceptable for athletic students to underperform in comparison to their non-athletic peers. Having this article in hand will help me highlight real facts and statistics about the performance of student athletes.

National Letter of Intent, [Http://www.national-letter.org](http://www.national-letter.org). Nov 2015. Web.

The National Letter of Intent is a document that all athletes must sign in order to be apart of the NCAA. This website gives insight on what signing with the NCAA really means. It also gives information about how to become eligible for the NCAA. This source will be helpful for giving me a better understanding of the process of becoming a student athlete in college. It will also help me understand

what needs to be done and how an athlete can lose their rights to be apart of the NCAA.

NCAA, [Http://www.ncaa.org/HowWeWork](http://www.ncaa.org/HowWeWork). Nov. 2015. Web.

NCAA is the National College Athletic Association. This online source gives me credible information about the NCAA. In navigating the website I have a lot of information that I was not aware of previously. Having this knowledge at my fingertips, I am able to make a more informed argument about student athletes. This website provides what the rules are for student athletes and what benefits being with the NCAA will give each student athlete. It also shows a top-down map of how everything for the NCAA works.

Putman, Andrew Jacob. "Inside View of FJC Football." Personal interview. Mar. 2016.

In this interview I got a first hand account of what the football team at Fullerton Junior College from Fullerton, California was. Having this interview on hand gave a starting point to find out what to look for and also it showed insight to what it meant to be involved with a sport at the college level. There are a lot of benefits to being a student athlete. Putman gave multiple examples and in depth background to what is given to student athletes at a junior college level. He also gives details into the incorporation that the NCAA has at the junior college level.

Schrontenboer, Brent. "Athletes Going to College Get 'special' Treatment | The San Diego Union-Tribune, Dec. 2006. Web. 03 March 2016.

This article shows readers the treatment of students who participate in college athletes. Within the article readers find out about a law that was passed just to help athletes succeed. Since athletes are being let into schools with below average grades, schools are now responsible to give extra help to the athletes who are given admission despite their academic standings. The law was passed and signed under Arnold Schwarzenegger's term as governor. The law is called Student's Fair Opportunity Act. This will help the paper's argument that athletes are given special treatment throughout their entire college career.

Smith, Ashley. "Inside View of CSUF Cheer." Telephone interview. Mar. 2016.

In this interview I got a first hand account of what the cheer team at California State University of Fullerton from Fullerton, California was. Having this interview on hand gave a starting point to find out what to look for and also it showed insight to what it meant to be involved with a sport at the college level. There are a lot of benefits to being a student athlete. Smith gave multiple examples and in depth background to what is given to student athletes at the university level. She also gives details into the incorporation that the NCAA has at the university level.

T. W., D. "Cox Communications Academic Center For Student-Athletes." University Business 19.4 (2016): 27. Academic Search Premier. Web. 19 Apr. 2016.

This source sheds some light on some extra facilities that sports programs get. In 2015 LSU was given a student athlete center for their sports program. In the

article it stays what the facility is used for. The intended purpose is to give student athletes a place for them to come and study away from the regular student body. This student center is also offering help for student athletes in regards to the press and their life after college sports. It does not help them find jobs after college, but it will help them if student athletes are planning to enter the drafts. This article will help me highlight my reoccurring theme of athletes getting special treatment and more academic help than non-athletic students.

Wieberg, Steven. "NCAA chided over academic enforcement." USA Today n.d.: Academic Search Premier. Web. April 2016.

Wieberg shares how the NCAA heart is in the right place with the changing of the academic standard their athletes will be held to. Although the NCAA's heart may be in the right place it doesn't change the fact that there are so many other factors that go into good grades, than just saying there needs to be good grades for the athletes. The ruling is pretty relaxed and without the support of many, many other factors that go into getting a grade for a student athlete then this new ruling will be meaningless.

Wolff, Alexander, and Ted Keith. "Game Changer." Sports Illustrated 123.21 (2015): 14-16. Academic Search Premier. Web. 4 Mar. 2016.

The main argument of this article is that the NCAA needs to raise the standard of academic performance for student athletes. The current stand that the NCAA has for their athletes is a very low bar. It is not promoting a good academic

experience for the athletes, which is what college is all about. This article will help prove my point that the requirements for athletes are super low. This article will also exemplify that athletes gets special treatment. Student athletes are just held to a different standard and this article will help me prove this point.

Wolverton, Brad. "Missed Classes, A Changed Grade, And One Disillusioned Adviser."

Chronicle Of Higher Education 62.7 (2015): A20-A24. Academic Search Premier.
Web. 4 Mar. 2016.

The main point of this article is highlighting the choice one academic advisor, Will Collier, had to face regarding one of the student athletes he was advisor for. The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) was is a sticky spot, when one of their star athletes was not making the academic cut and was being threatened with missing out on three important and consecutive games. This will help prove my point that student athletes are given special treatments by their academic advisors. Wolverton's article will show that student athletes should not be given special treatment because they play a sport in college.

I knew right away what I wanted my capstone to be about. Growing up I was always interested in sports and even played, but I was never good enough to make the team. The respect for the game and the players was always there. As I got older I realized that the athlete department at school would give special treatment to the athletes and I felt it was unfair. I never wanted to blame the players, but it was hard to not take their privilege personally. Working hard in school is something I've always prided myself on, but seeing that athletes were getting better grades when I know for a fact they didn't put in, as much effort as I had was something that really got to me. In high school I also saw that my principle would change the grades for football players so that they would meet grade requirements. Seeing someone do that was really hard for me. It made me feel like my work, as a student wasn't valuable because I didn't play a sport for school. When given the chance to write and research whatever I wanted, I choose to write about the privilege of being a student athlete.

Athletes across the nation at any level are given special privileges. It is complete biased and unfair for our society to work like that, but the love of the game makes people do crazy things. To align my work my capstone theme was challenging. It is so easy to write an expose on a topic, but that wouldn't have worked well for thinking in the realm of capstone and academia. Within Dr.Lee's capstone syllabus she identified what we should focus on. Lee states "This course asks students to investigate their own areas of privilege and marginalizations, identifying communities with which they identify in order to find strength from their communities." In identifying where I felt marginalized it was easier for me to focus my scope of investigation and research. Throughout class there were many discussions about privilege and marginalization. It was also nice to share with the class

what my project was going to be on and hear their own personal experiences with the same situation I was dealing with.

In having class discussions it made the research process easier. I was constantly getting information in class that would help me think of different ideas of what to research. It also gave me a good idea of people I should interview and look up. Throughout this whole process I was finding out statistics that were blowing my mind. I couldn't stop talking about this topic to anyone and everyone. My writing process was so easy because there was just so much information to help me support what I wanted. My classmates were very organized and we all helped each other stay on track all semester.

I'm extremely thankful for the open style of class that Dr. Lee had, because it allowed my classmates and me to get a lot of ideas and information. Having an open classroom discussion regularly, it provided a great opportunity for my classmates and I to learn to work together in a classroom setting. There were some class discussions where not everyone agreed on the same line of thinking, and that was okay. It was helpful to have exposure to the certain line of thinking so that my classmates and I could see the other side of thinking. Having challenging topics has made capstone more interesting than it could have been otherwise.

Throughout my research and paper, I was able to share with my classmate and other readers a different side of college sports. There is so much that goes on with college sports that a lot of people do not realize. According to the National College Athletic Association (NCAA) there are currently 460,000 student athletes in college athletic programs. That means of the 20.1 million students attending college in the United States,

fewer than 3% are student athletes. At the California State University of Monterey Bay, there are 7,000 students, and of those there are 250 student athletes. That's less than 4% of the school's total population that are involved in the school. Each of these students has the task of balancing school and their commitment to their athletic program.

It may seem like an easy task, but it is not always the easiest to have such a high commitment level to a sport and trying to find time to study and attend classes. Knowing that these students may have trouble, school officials give them an extra hand in making sure their academic requirements and financial requirements are met. The extra help given specifically to student athletes is an unfair advantage that is not given to all students in college. The special treatment is given to all student athletes at any collegiate level: community colleges, state university and private colleges. Having this special treatment puts student athletes in a special category; they are the privileged ones in the college setting. Non-student athletes have other time commitments in their life as well but are not given special treatment.

In my research I was able to show my readers a different side of college sports. I've felt that my capstone matches my capstone theme of identifying marginalization. Throughout my whole educational experience I have felt marginalized by the athletic department. Even though it is such a small number of students, it has just made my educational experience feel like I am not worth anything to my school. I get good grades and participate whenever I can, but because I am not an athlete I have not and will not matter to my school. It is such a shame that athletic ability outshines academic ability. My capstone allowed me to reflect upon my life in an academic setting and see where I felt the

most marginalized. I don't dislike athletes or the athletic department, but it's hard to fully respect them after all the special treatment that department receives.

Even though my capstone isn't as incorporated to my capstone's class theme, I think that the research and the marginalization will shine through my paper. It could have been easy to find something to write about that aligned better with my capstone theme, but I was very passionate about this and wanted to explore this topic more. This issue of privilege and marginalization has come up time and time again in my experience throughout college. I am so glad I finally got the chance to write about it and share my thoughts and research with my college.