



Research



Division III Football Graduation Rates Study

NCAA Research Staff – July 2021

Introduction

- ▶ The study goal is to better understand:
 - ▶ The 51% Federal Graduation Rate for football student-athletes that initially enrolled at a Division III institution in 2013. The lowest of any sport.
 - ▶ The 34% Federal Graduation Rate for Black football student-athletes who initially enrolled at a Division III institution in 2013. The lowest of any race/ethnicity group in any sport.

Comparison of Federal Graduation Rates Between Student-Athletes and Student Body

For Select Groups in the 2013 Cohort

Group	Student-Body	Student-Athletes	Football	Men's Basketball	Women's Basketball
Overall	63	68	51	57	71
White	57	71	57	66	75
Black	45	44	34	42	57

Research Questions

- ▶ Forty-nine percent of football student-athletes did not attain a Bachelor's degree from the institution at which they initially enrolled in 2013.
 - ▶ After how many academic terms did the student-athlete separate from the institution?
 - ▶ How many enrolled at another degree-granting institution?
 - What type of institution – Two-Year or Four-Year?
 - How many attained a degree?
 - What type of degree – Associate's, Bachelor's, Certificate, other?
- ▶ How many football student-athletes overall who initially enrolled at a Division III institution in 2013 ultimately attained a degree?

Methods

- ▶ Employed the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) to attain enrollment tracking records for football student-athletes who did not attain a degree from the Division III institution at which they initially enrolled in 2013.
- ▶ Required the submission of key identifying information which the NSC matched with their database. The submission information was compiled from the NCAA's Academic Portal and an additional request from selected Division III institutions. Of the 242 Division III institutions sponsoring football in 2013 from which data was requested, 148 (61%) participated.
- ▶ 3,126 records were requested. 2,802 records were successfully matched (90%). This data was recombined with the overall graduation rates dataset.

Finding #1

- ▶ Ninety-six percent of football student-athletes who did not attain a degree from the institution at which they initially enrolled, separated from the institution. The 4% balance remained at the initial institution and did not attain a degree.
- ▶ Number of academic terms in attendance prior to separation:
 - ▶ Mean (average): 3.1
 - ▶ Median (midpoint): 2
 - ▶ Mode (most common): 2
- ▶ Conclusion: Separation without a degree from the initial institution for Division III football student-athletes most typically occurred after the first year of enrollment. This was consistent across Black and white football student-athletes.

Finding #2

- ▶ Seventy-eight percent of football student-athletes who separated from their initial institution enrolled at another degree-granting institution.
 - ▶ Two-Year Institutions: 46%
 - ▶ Four-Year Institutions: 54%
- ▶ Conclusion: More than three-quarters of football student-athletes who separated from their initial institution enrolled at another degree-granting institution. Enrollment was split between Two-Year and Four-Year Institutions. This pattern was consistent across Black and white football student-athletes.

Finding #3

- ▶ Forty percent of football student-athletes who enrolled at another institution attained a degree. The rate for Black football student-athletes was 27% and 48% for White.
 - ▶ Associate's Degree: 13%
 - ▶ Bachelor's Degree: 84%
 - ▶ Certificate/Other: 3%
- ▶ Conclusion: Less than half of football student-athletes who enrolled at another institution attained a degree. This rate was 27% for Black football student-athletes. Most who earned a degree, earned a Bachelor's Degree. This pattern was consistent across the Black and white groups.

Finding #4

- ▶ Seventy-three percent of football student-athletes overall attained a degree from the institution at which they initially enrolled or at a subsequent institution. The rate for Black football student-athletes was 54% and 80% for white.
 - ▶ Associate's Degree: 3%
 - ▶ Bachelor's Degree: 96%
 - ▶ Certificate/Other: 1%
- ▶ Conclusion: Approximately three-quarters of football student-athletes who initially enrolled in 2013 ultimately attained a degree. The rate was lower (54%) for Black football student-athletes and higher for white (80%). Almost all earned a Bachelor's Degree. This pattern was consistent across the Black and white groups.

Next Steps

- ▶ The report will be presented to key working groups, committees and councils. It will be shared with institutions that participated in the study as well as the broader membership.
- ▶ The 2021 Graduation Rates will be reported this Fall.
- ▶ Further analysis of the NSC data will be conducted.



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