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Academic Perspectives in Higher Education Journal

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The Academic Perspectives in Higher Education Journal is published annually by the Higher Education Student Association (HESA) of the Department of Educational Foundations & Leadership at Old Dominion University. The Journal seeks to publish articles that focus on contemporary issues in higher education that are grounded in theory and have implications for professional practice. Articles may report the results of research, review print publications or other media of professional interest, or report on "cutting edge" best practice in higher education. The contributions of each of author, all the editors and executive board members have had a significant impact on the production of this edition, and are gratefully acknowledged and appreciated.
Academic Perspectives in Higher Education Journal

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Editor in Chief Remarks

Chantal M. Matthews

I enthusiastically present the first edition of Academic Perspectives in Higher Education, a student produced journal sponsored by Educational Foundations and Leadership and Higher Education Student Association at Old Dominion University. The purpose of Academic Perspectives in Higher Education is to advance the field of higher education through the exhibition of the scholarly works of students, alumni and faculty at Old Dominion University.

The first edition of Academic Perspectives in Higher Education features four articles that cover a range of topics important to the field of Higher Education. The opening article is an insightful book review of “Save the World on Your Own Time.” “Save the World on Your Own Time” is a very controversial work that sparks debate about the purpose of higher education as we know it in today’s context. The second article, “General Education Course Enrollment Patterns in a Community College Baccalaureate RN-To-BSN Program” investigates the variables that contribute to the graduation rates of students enrolled in a Nursing program at a community college. Next, the Monarch Spotlight article which will be included in every edition of the journal, will offer insight into the great things happening at Old Dominion University. This edition’s Monarch Spotlight article, “Bringing REP ODU to Housing and Residence Life” focuses on the development and implementation of the tenants of REP ODU into a residence life programming model. Lastly, “The Impact of Intercollegiate Athletics in Higher Education” highlights the role that college athletics plays in higher education.

The development of the very first edition of Academic Perspectives in Higher Education was surely a collaborative effort. I would like to thank the authors, editorial review board members, our amazing graphic designer/webmaster, chief operating officer, advising editor and faculty supporters for their hard work and dedication to ensure the quality of the journal and set a standard of excellence for future editions of Academic Perspectives in Higher Education. It was certainly a pleasure to serve as Editor in Chief and it was more than a pleasure to work with you all on this very important task. Enjoy the 2013 edition, the very first edition, of Academic Perspectives in Higher Education!
Book Review: *Save the World on Your Own Time*

Karen Campbell

The author presents a contemplative review of *Save the World on Your Own Time* by Stanley Fish (2008). A methodical review of the book, by chapter, offers the reader insight into the controversial and Fish’s thought-provoking views as he addresses the purpose of higher education and the job of the faculty. The author confronts Fish with reason and passion while offering additional insight to the presented challenges and issues in higher education which are subjectively displayed throughout the book. The seven chapters are summarized by highlighting key arguments discussed in the context of the book.

**Keywords:** Book Review, Stanley Fish, Higher Education, Book Critique, Response Criticism, College Teaching, Academic Freedom, Debates

*Save the World on Your Own Time* is a thought-provoking perspective about the power of pedagogy, the place of teaching morality and citizenship, and the overall purpose of institutions of higher education. Fish poses the idea that, as subject matter experts, the goal of faculty is to teach students without imposing personal opinion, judgment, or experience on the purity of the advancement of knowledge. He argues that teachers are to do their job, which (for many) include pedagogical issues that Fish does not deem appropriate, such as diversity, civic education, and social justice. He suggests that if faculty members do their job and not someone else’s, then issues relating to the purity of academia would be resolved.

The book is divided into seven chapters with an introduction. In his introduction, Fish explains how he arrived at the need to write a book that would help the world understand the purpose of higher education. He admits that his “obsessive-compulsive” disorder has something to do with his need to put things in order. He writes not to solve problems, but hopes, in bringing understanding to the problems, that he will help resolve problems that do exist. He keeps the solution simple—do your job. His book attempts to answer two major questions: What is the
purpose of higher education and what are those who work in higher education specifically prepared to do?

In Chapter 1, “The Task of Higher Education,” Fish examines the mission statements of several universities insisting that, although they suggest the promotion of diversity of experience and the development of civic-mindedness in their students, moral character cannot be developed in a student nor taught at an institution. He suggests that learning to be civil does not make one so, nor does such material have a place in an institution that should promote and endorse the mastery of intellectual skills. In essence, for Fish, the task of higher education is to educate students; not for professors to act as moral, social, or political activists.

Chapter 2, “Do Your Job,” lays out Fish’s cardinal theme. The foundation for Fish’s argument is that institutions of higher learning must clearly define what their job is and do so within the context of their own definition. He contends that the mastery of a professor is to instruct students by introducing them to new bodies of knowledge and allowing them to think critically so that they are able to engage in independent research with confidence. He adamantly maintains that professors should teach from an academic perspective and refrain from sharing their own personal experiences to influence or persuade students. If faculty search for the truth and teach it, then they are indeed doing their job. His point is further explained by suggesting that undergraduate education should not include excessive extracurricular activities and it should not overlap with academic affairs. If activities are extracurricular, they should indeed be ‘extra’ and not an essential part of the academic development of students. Student affairs administrators and staff, if not previously offended, would certainly be after reading this chapter. Within this chapter, Fish (2008) defines “academicizing” and suggests that it is the proper way to teach.
To academicize a topic is to detach it from the context of its real world urgency, where there is a vote to be taken or an agenda to be embraced, and insert it into a context of academic urgency, where there is an account to be offered or an analysis to be performed.

(p. 27)

An example of academicizing a discussion of stem cell research with a class would include analyzing the ethical issues surrounding the topic rather than discussing whether the use of stem cell research is a good or bad idea. Fish asserts the question is analyzed rather than debated.

Fish continues to reiterate that doing the job is simple—a professor does what is reasonable to do and leaves more “extraneous” matters (e.g., development of morality, values, etc.) to someone else. Fish’s perspective suggests that faculty members do reasonable service when they teach students to love the subject they teach. Fish summarizes his argument by suggesting faculty should aim to teach what they are responsible for teaching, nothing more and nothing less.

Chapter 3, “Administrative Interlude,” Fish discusses the responsibilities of administrators at institutions and how those jobs impact faculty and others. The chapter is aptly titled in that it is short and almost seems out of place in the book. In it, Fish characterizes administration as an intellectual task. Acknowledging his role as an administrator at various points in his career path, he sympathizes with the administrator role and is able to define the tasks and strengths necessary to successfully lead in administrative positions. He offers advice to administrators and attempts to outline what their role should encompass in higher education.

The disappointment of this chapter is that Fish specifically addresses the academic side of administration (those who work with faculty), while ignoring the challenges of student affairs
administrators. Describing the administrative role through the lens of faculty is understandable (especially given Fish’s own faculty background), but his perspective is too narrowly focused. Overall, the chapter is awkward and almost unnecessary in the context of the body of his argument. The chapter simply allows Fish to speak of positions he held as a dean and department chair and acknowledges some of the frustrations he experienced.

In Chapter 4, “Don’t Try to Do Someone Else’s Job,” Fish posits that faculty members must not try to do more than what their job is designed to do—to educate by teaching a mastery skill set without influencing students with personal politics and experiences in the name of education. Fish proposes that citizenship and development of student character should be left in the hands of inspirational speakers, preachers, political activists, and social workers. For a professor to incorporate moral development in the classroom and have political debates is “doing someone else’s job.”

Fish also addresses how academic freedom impacts the way faculty members teach and suggests that, although freedom to teach a subject in a manner that is digestible requires creative ingenuity, faculty should not teach outside of their realm of expertise. Fish adamantly believes that academic freedom and free speech should not be used in areas in which they do not apply. He submits both have their place and should not be abused by “indoctrinating” students (p. 68). Transmitting knowledge objectively is the job of a faculty member. Fish argues that academic freedom does not allow professors to bring their own personal agendas into the classroom in order to influence students; instead, they should bring their knowledge of their subject matter and teach it with vigor and truthfulness. He suggests that there is a line between academic and political activity and the latter should be done “on one’s own time.”
In Chapter 5, “Don’t Let Anyone Else Do Your Job,” Fish argues that higher education should be independent from outside constituents and stakeholders, once again suggesting that the job of the university should be nothing more than educating students. He advocates that the university is for educating students in the academic disciplines asserting as an example that outside religious organizations can be responsible for moral development, but not universities. He believes that institutions of higher learning should not define themselves according to the public interest nor allow others to define the purpose of those institutions. Instead, he unapologetically defends the core values of the academy—research, scholarly pursuits, and critical analysis. He admits doing so may not always be the best advice in practical terms, but confidently proclaims it is better to put your own foot forward than someone else’s.

Fish also explores democracy within university settings, suggesting that there is a need in higher education to balance intellectual diversity (the presence of both liberal and conservative faculty) in order to ensure that truth is taught through equal faculty representation. Yet, Fish submits that balance is not needed if faculty members do their job; for truth is teaching facts and not pushing personal agendas and political beliefs.

Fish, in Chapter 6, “Higher Education Under Attack,” voices how the federal and state governments continue to regulate institutions while reducing financial support toward their sustainability. He insists institutions should only be accountable to its core values of educating students. He also believes that universities need to be proactive when speaking with public officials and demand what is right even if it means forgoing political correctness. In doing so, institutions of higher education position themselves to fight back.
The chapter concludes with a paradoxical display of thought about whether any of the previous provocative discussion is possible in a society built on the principles of diversity, democracy, and civility. On one hand, Fish states, “maybe the academy will just have to learn to live (and perhaps die) in this brave new world…” (p. 165). On the other hand, he vows that institutions of higher education should stand up for themselves and see what happens.

The final chapter, “A Conclusion and Two Voices from the Other Side,” summarizes Fish’s arguments. Fish reiterates the importance of faculty doing their jobs (teaching subject matter in unbiased fashion) and refraining from doing the jobs that belong to other people and organizations. He then offers his audience a different point of view through the introduction of two authors—Mark Bracher, author of *Teaching for Social Justice: Reeducating the Emotions through Literary Study* and Anthony Kronman, author of *Education’s End: Why Our Colleges and Universities Have Given Up on the Meaning of Life*. Bracher (2006) believes that promoting social justice in the classroom will help students be more compassionate to the suffering that exists in the world. In contrast to Fish, he believes that moral development should be taught in the classroom and emphasizes the importance of cognitive and emotional change in an effort to promote compassion in students (Bracher, 2006). Kronman (2007) also opposes Fish’s argument by suggesting that higher education needs to return to the earlier era where teachers helped students investigate the meaning of life and political correctness was not a constraining force in the classroom. He calls for a return to the era where educators evoked questions of humanity, promoted self-discovery, and encouraged philosophical debate (Kronman, 2007).

The paradoxical and somewhat anticlimactic ending suggests that the purpose of Fish’s book is to provoke discussion and perhaps educate the reader on theoretically plausible but often illusory possibilities. Unfortunately, those possibilities do not offer solutions or add to the
discussion of other, more prevalent and dominant issues which surround academia today. Administrators of institutions of higher education are more concerned with affordability, accessibility, college readiness of students, retention, and graduation rates. In addition, the economic downturn has generated much discussion about tuition rates and enrollment caps. These are the issues that should be discussed with the passion and vigor that Fish illustrates in his book. Although Fish is idealistic in proposing a utopia in which education reigns supreme, he does nothing more than rant about the state of higher education through personal opinion and experience. The book offers an intellectualized and uncompromising approach to educating students; although honorable, it seems impractical in a society that increasingly values diversity, democracy, free speech, personal experiences, and politics. Reading *Save the World on Your Own Time* will stimulate intense debate about the current state of higher education and spark conversation about its overall purpose; however, it by no means ends the grand discussion about its lived realities.

**References**


General Education Course Enrollment Patterns in a Community College Baccalaureate RN-To-BSN Program

Dennis Gregory, Jason Krupp and Mitchell Williams

This quantitative study utilizes ex post facto data to examine the graduation rates and time to degree of 240 students enrolled in a bachelor of science in nursing (BSN) program at a community college in Florida. The findings indicate that students who completed all general education requirements before entering the program were more likely to graduate in three years than students who completed some general education requirements after entering the program.

This investigation of patterns of general education requirement course completion was initiated within the context of three national phenomena: an effort to graduate more college students, the growing presence of community college baccalaureate programs, and the labor-market demand for Registered Nurses (RNs) with Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees. Additionally, in response to a changing health care system and patient needs, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academies (2010) stated RNs must increase their levels of training by earning bachelor’s degrees before or soon after entering the workforce. Currently, there are three educational options to becoming a registered nurse: a nursing diploma, an associate degree in nursing (ADN), and a BSN. The most popular educational option is the ADN program, which is found in community colleges (Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, 2010). ADN programs are typically two to three years in duration, and prepare students to take the National Council Licensure Examination for RNs (NCLEX-RN). There are two types of BSN degrees: the pre-licensure BSN program and the RN-to-BSN program. Pre-licensure BSN programs are typically four years in duration, and also prepare students to take the NCLEX RN exam to become RNs after graduation.

The RN-to-BSN program allows RNs who completed Associate Degrees in Nursing to return to college and earn BSN degrees by completing additional general education courses and
junior/senior-level non-clinical nursing courses. The RN-to-BSN program may also be referred to as a BSN-completion program. According to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) (2010), about 50 percent of all RNs had a BSN or higher degree in 2010. The IOM proposed a goal of having 80 percent of the RN workforce with BSN degrees by 2020. With only 21 percent of ADN graduates continuing their education to earn a bachelor degrees (HRSA, 2006), there appears to be a large potential for growth in RN-to-BSN programs.

This capacity for growth is important to leaders of community colleges and universities because the registered nurse occupation is expected to have the largest national growth of any occupation, with a projected 22.2% increase, or 581,000 new jobs between 2008 and 2018 (BLS, 2009). According to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) (2010), about 50 percent of all RNs had a BSN or higher degree in 2010. The IOM proposed a goal of having 80 percent of the RN workforce with BSN degrees by 2020. RN-to-BSN programs provide avenues for RNs who graduated from Associate Degrees in Nursing (ADN) to complete their BSN degrees.

The current study included an analysis of enrollment data of 240 students enrolled in an RN-to-BSN program at a community college in Florida between Fall of 2002 and Spring of 2004. The graduation requirements of the RN-to-BSN program included some general education courses and some upper-division nursing courses. Students in the program could choose to complete the general education requirement before or after entering the program.

The state of Florida requires all baccalaureate students in the state’s public universities and colleges to complete 36 credit hours of general education requirements to graduate. Students who graduate from one of Florida’s community colleges with an Associate in Arts degree have
satisfied the general education requirement and may then transfer to a university to complete the upper-division requirements for a bachelor’s degree. Since community college baccalaureate degrees were implemented to provide transfer options for students who earned Associate in Science or Associate in Applied Science degrees, the remaining general education requirements were integrated into the upper-division curriculum. Students who earned applied science degrees in fields such as nursing could take general education courses such as Humanities or English Composition concurrently with junior- and senior-level nursing research courses. Many researchers have demonstrated students have higher graduation rates when transferring from a community college to a university if they first complete all general education requirements (Cejda, Rewey, & Kaylor, 1998; Cohen & Brawer, 2006; Coley, 2000; Popovich, 2005). No previous research has examined the impact of completing general education requirements prior to entering a community college baccalaureate degree program.

The Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were significant differences in the graduation rates and time to degree completion between students who completed all general education requirements before enrolling in an RN-to-BSN program and students who completed general education requirements after enrolling in an RN-to-BSN program. If students who completed all general education requirements before enrolling in the program had higher graduation rates or graduated at a faster pace, administrators of RN-to-BSN programs and departments of education may benefit from adopting admission or progression policies accordingly.

This study was guided by three research questions:

1. When do RN-to-BSN students complete general education requirements?
2. Does completion of general education course requirements before entering an RN-to-BSN program have a significant impact on graduation rates?

3. Among RN-to-BSN graduates, does the pattern of general education course completion have a significant impact on time to degree?

Methodology

To answer these research questions, a quantitative study utilizing an *ex post facto* research design was employed. Data were extracted from the student information database of an RN-to-BSN degree-granting state college in a major metropolitan area in Florida. The data included course enrollment history, graduation date, gender, and ethnicity of all students who first enrolled in coursework as students in the RN-to-BSN program between the Fall semester of 2002 and the Spring semester of 2004. Student data were divided into the following groups:

- Students who completed all general education requirements before entering the RN-to-BSN program.
- Students who completed general education coursework after entering in the RN-to-BSN program.

The dependent variables of the study were student graduation rates and time to degree. The first dependent variable was the three-year graduation rate. The graduation rate was measured in accordance with the State of Florida’s accountability model, which assesses graduation rates at three years after initial enrollment (*Florida Department of Education*, 2008). The three-year graduation rate was defined as the percentage of students who graduated within three years after first enrollment as juniors in the BSN program. The graduation rate was calculated by dividing the number of graduates from a cohort by the number of students who began in the respective cohort. The second dependent variable, time to degree, was defined as
the number of terms between a student’s first enrollment as a junior in the BSN program and graduation. Terms in which students were not enrolled were included in the time to degree calculations.

The independent variable was the general education coursework enrollment pattern of completing general education coursework either before entering the RN-to-BSN program or after entering the RN-to-BSN program. Descriptive statistics were used to report the graduation rates of BSN-degree-seeking students who entered the RN-to-BSN program between the Fall semester of 2002 and the Spring semester of 2004. The number and percentage of students who graduated within three years after admission to the BSN program were calculated. A Chi-square test was conducted to determine if there were significant differences in the graduation rates between the two groups, and a t-test was performed to determine if there were significant differences in time to graduate between the two categories of students.

Findings

The race and ethnicity of the sample were collected and summarized to help define the population examined in this study. As indicated in Table 1, the majority of students in the sample were White (74%); they were also predominantly female (88%). According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), approximately 91% of the employed RNs are female, 10.4% are Black, 7.3% are Asian, and 5.1% are Hispanic (2011). Similarly, most students enrolled in BSN programs throughout the US are White (National League for Nursing, 2009) and female (National League for Nursing, 2009a). Since the majority of BSN students and RNs are White women, the large distribution of White women in the sample was expected.
Table 1

Ethnicity of students in sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>74.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 1: When do RN-to-BSN students complete general education requirements? As shown in Table 2, of the 240 students in the sample of this study, the majority of students (193) completed some general education requirements after entering the BSN program. When given the choice, most students (80.4%) elected to begin the program before completing all general education requirements. In contrast, only 47 students (19.6%) completed all general education requirements before entering the program. Some students may not have known about the general education requirements before they applied for admission because they were not required to be completed prior to admission to the program. Other students may have previously completed all general education requirements through their pursuit of another major. Regardless of the reason for completing or not completing general education requirements before
entering the program, the purpose of the next research question was to identify if either enrollment pattern resulted in higher graduation rates.

Table 2
Graduation Status after Three Years by General Education Completion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Education Completed</th>
<th>Graduated</th>
<th>Did Not Graduate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before Entering BSN</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Entering BSN</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 2: Does completion of general education course requirements before entering an RN-to-BSN program have a significant impact on graduation rates? Table 3 shows that the three-year graduation rate of the 193 students who completed some general education requirements after entering the BSN program was 45.6%, compared to a 66% graduation rate of the 47 students who completed all general education requirements before entering the program.
Table 3

*Three-Year Graduation Rate of students by General Education Completion Pattern.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Education Completed</th>
<th>Three-Year Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before Entering BSN</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Entering BSN</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To determine if there was a significant difference in the graduation rates between each group, a Pearson Chi-square test for independence was conducted. The test revealed a significant difference in the three-year graduation rates between the two groups, $X^2 (1, N = 119) = 6.268, p<.05$. Table 4 summarizes the results of the Pearson Chi-square test. Students who completed general education requirements before entering the BSN program were more likely to graduate within three years than students who completed general education courses after entering the BSN program.
Table 4

Chi-Square Results Summary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistical Test</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-square</td>
<td>6.268</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.012*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The difference was significant at \( p < .05 \)

Research Question 3: Among RN-to-BSN graduates, does the pattern of general education course completion have a significant impact on time to degree? Of the 240 students in the study, 119 students graduated within three years. As indicated in Table 5, of those who graduated within three years, the mean number of semesters to graduate for students who completed all general education courses before entering the BSN program to graduate was 5.58. The RN-to-BSN program in this study was designed for students to complete all upper-division courses in five semesters if admitted in the Fall semester and six semesters if admitted in the Spring semester. Because of the difference in the time to graduate based on time of entry, the average of 5.58 semesters to graduate is what one might expect for students who completed all general education requirements before entering the program. Additionally, the mean number of semesters to graduate for students who completed general education courses after entering the BSN program was 6.08.
Table 5

*Descriptive Statistics for Terms-to-Graduation.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completed General Education</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before entering BSN</td>
<td>5.58</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After entering BSN</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The *t*-test results found in Table 6 indicate no significant difference in the mean number of semesters to graduate between the two groups, \( t (117) = -1.86, \ p > .05 \). Therefore, of the students who graduated in three years, general education course enrollment patterns did not appear to have an impact on time to degree. Graduates who completed some general education coursework after entering the program took only half a semester longer than students who completed all general education courses before entering the program.

This finding was unanticipated, especially when couched with the finding that students were more likely to graduate within three years if they completed all general education requirements before entering the program. Even though students were more likely to graduate within three years if they completed all general education requirements before entering the program, some students who completed general education requirements after entering the program were able to graduate at nearly the same pace. Further investigations to determine the
actual number and type of general education courses taken by this group could reveal additional insights.

Table 6

\[ \begin{array}{ccc}
 t \text{ value} & \text{df} & \text{Significance} \\
\hline
-1.86 & 117 & .066^* \\
\hline
\end{array} \]

*The difference was not significant at \( p > .05 \)

**Discussion**

Many factors contribute to student retention and graduation rates. This study was designed using the theoretical framework of Jeffreys’ Nursing Undergraduate Retention and Success (NURS) model, a multidimensional approach to analyzing nursing-discipline-specific factors impacting retention of traditional and non-traditional students. According to Jeffreys (2007), retention is impacted by “the interaction of student profile characteristics, student affective factors, academic factors, environmental factors, professional integration factors, academic outcomes, psychological outcomes, and outside surrounding factors” (p. 161). Academic factors include a student’s involvement with the academic process, including study skills, study hours, use of college support services, course availability, and academic advising
Jeffreys suggested specific investigations of each academic factor may divulge several dynamics which could impact individuals differently. This study extended Jeffreys’ NURS model to include general education course enrollment patterns as an academic factor which may impact two academic outcomes: graduation rate and time-to-degree-completion. The results of this study suggest general education course enrollment patterns may be a significant component to consider as an academic factor contributing to student retention and graduation in the RN-to-BSN programs.

The significant difference in graduation rates between the two categories of students supported prior research indicating community college students who completed associate degrees prior to transferring to universities had higher baccalaureate graduation rates than students who transferred without associate degrees (Cejda, Rewey, & Kaylor, 1998; Cohen & Brawer, 2006; Coley, 2000; Popovich, 2005). This study supports the body of professional literature indicating the completion of general education course requirements prior to transferring to a baccalaureate program results in higher graduation rates. In addition, this study’s findings extend the knowledge-base to include a community college baccalaureate RN-to-BSN program.

Wehlburg (2010) suggested the integration of general education courses with specialized courses may lead to higher student retention rates. This study did not support Wehlburg’s argument. While this study did not directly measure retention rates, the lower graduation rate suggests a lower retention rate of students who attempted to integrate remaining general education requirements along with the junior- and senior-level nursing curriculum.

Unfortunately, there are no state level or national benchmarks for graduation rates of RN-to-BSN programs. Therefore, it is difficult to assess how students in this program performed in
comparison to similar programs throughout the state or in the nation. The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission (NLNAC) both require schools of nursing to calculate graduation rates as a component of the program’s focus on continuous improvement (Papes & Lopez, 2007). While the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) defined graduation rate as the “number of students completing a program divided by the number of students entering a program” (Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 2009 p. 17), the CCNE allows program administrators to determine the entry point and time frames to use in graduation rate calculations. The entry point for students in this study was defined by the first term of enrollment in any course after being admitted to the BSN program. In a study by Papes and Lopez (2007), administrators at Barry University defined the entry point for students in their RN-to-BSN program as the term in which an admitted student took the first nursing course. Administrators at other schools may choose to define the entry point as the second semester of courses in the nursing program. Since there are no national standards for measuring nursing student graduation rates, and there are no central databases to access RN-to-BSN graduation rates, it is difficult to compare graduation rates of RN-to-BSN students in this study to previous research.

Implications for Leaders in Higher Education

Given the nationwide effort to graduate more students and the health-care industry’s trend of requiring registered nurses (RNs) to have bachelor’s degrees, leaders in higher education should consider the results of this study when examining policies and procedures related to admission requirements and/or curriculum design for RN-to-BSN programs. The methodology of this study could be used at other institutions to help determine if general education enrollment
patterns impact graduation rates with their populations of students. Due to increased accountability concerns in a financially-stressed public funding system, it may not seem like a practical business decision to deny students admission because of a few remaining general education course requirements. When great emphasis and efforts are placed on increasing the number of students who enroll in programs, admission requirements may not be as stringent as programs with limited enrollment capacities. Financial constraints and incentives should be weighed with factors which could impact student success. Short-term financial gains associated with higher enrollment numbers could be negated by lower graduation rates of less-prepared students. Delaying admission and/or enrollment in the junior-level courses by one or two semesters in order for students to complete remaining general education requirements could result in increased student graduation rates at your institution. A higher graduation rate in RN-to-BSN programs translates to a more efficient supply of BSN graduates for the RN workforce.

Recommendations for Practitioners

Students who completed all general education requirements before entering the RN-to-BSN program were more likely to graduate in three years than students who did not complete all general education requirements before entering the program. If students entering the program were aware of lower chances of graduating in three years without first completing remaining general education requirements, they might have chosen to complete them before entering the program. Whether or not program administrators decide to implement policies to require all general education requirements to be completed prior to being admitted to the program, at a minimum, the findings of this study should be considered when advising; further, students should be counseled to complete as many requirements as possible before transferring or applying for admission to a baccalaureate degree program.
Prior to implementing a policy requiring students to complete all general education requirements before granting them admission to an RN-to-BSN program or any baccalaureate program, practitioners should ensure the degree-program classification system at their institutions can accommodate students who are missing such requirements. Some applicants may have already earned a two-year degree, and it may not be appropriate to classify them as degree-seeking for an additional two-year degree. It is important for practitioners to collaborate with the college/university administration at their institutions to establish provisional admission classifications for students to be admitted as juniors to the programs with the limitation of being permitted to enroll only in general education courses. Students classified in such provisional admission categories should be considered degree-seeking and eligible for financial assistance. Once the provisionally-admitted students have completed all remaining general education courses, then they can be reclassified as fully admitted into the program and be eligible to enroll in upper-division courses.

**Considerations for further research**

Metzner and Bean (1987) found the top three predictors of attrition among non-traditional students were grade point average (GPA), intent to leave, and number of credit hours enrolled. Students in this study were enrolled in a program where the curriculum was designed for them to progress in cohorts. The upper-division courses were offered about every five weeks, and students were restricted to no more than one upper-division course at a time. Because of the controlled design of the curriculum, there is not likely to be much variance in the number of credit hours in which students enroll each semester. Variance in number of credits enrolled could be attributed to general education course enrollments, which this study addressed.
Grade point average and intent to leave were not addressed in this study, however these factors could potentially impact student graduation rates of students in RN-to-BSN programs. Earlier studies suggested grade point average in science courses predicted how students would perform in nursing programs and on the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN) (Byrd, Garza, & Nieswiadomy, 1999; Griffiths, Bevil, O’Connor, & Wieland, 1995). While students in RN-to-BSN programs have already successfully completed the NCLEX exam, it would be revealing to determine if student GPA in science courses also predicted success in BSN-level coursework among this population. If GPA in specific science courses were predictors of success or attrition in RN-to-BSN programs, students with lower GPAs could be provided with remediation opportunities to achieve desirable levels prior to admission to the program.

Although the gender and ethnicity of the students in this study were collected for reporting purposes, comparing graduation rates or time to degree by race or ethnicity was not the purpose of the study. A follow-up study to determine if there were any differences between the graduation rates based on race or gender could provide valuable information for practitioners. If certain ethnic groups have significantly lower graduation rates, program administrators may be inclined to further examine potential reasons and solutions for such discrepancies.

Some students in this study attended other community colleges prior to transferring to the RN-to-BSN program at this institution. This study did not examine differences between transfer students and native students. When students transfer from a community college to a university, there is often a decrease in academic performance, as evidenced by a lower GPA at the university. This phenomenon is known as “transfer shock” and has been studied extensively (Laanan, 2007). While transfer shock has been well-documented among students who transfer
from community colleges to universities, such research has not been conducted to determine if there is a similar experience among students transferring from one community college to another community college’s baccalaureate program. The increasing number of community college baccalaureate degree programs warrants investigations to determine if the transfer-shock phenomenon occurs in this population.

Since this study focused on students at one institution, caution should be used before generalizing the results to other schools without further investigations including other institutions. General education enrollment patterns of students in RN-to-BSN programs throughout Florida should be investigated to determine if results will be similar among the 10 RN-to-BSN programs offered in the state colleges throughout the region. When investigating other schools throughout the state, attention should be given to the curriculum design. Students in the program of this study participated in courses either online or face-to-face, and all upper-division courses were taken one at a time in a dynamically-dated course format. Most classes were approximately five weeks in duration and taken one at a time, compared to the traditional model of enrolling in multiple sixteen-week courses simultaneously. The format and timeframe of the courses could be analyzed as potential variables impacting student success rates.

**Conclusion**

The Institute of Medicine suggested 80 percent of the RN workforce should have BSN degrees by the year 2020. In order to adapt to a changing health-care system and patient needs, RNs must increase their levels of training by earning bachelor’s degrees before or soon after entering the workforce (Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, 2010). If registered nurses (RNs) will increasingly be required to have baccalaureate degrees to work in the health-
care industry, the viability of the ADN in community colleges and nursing and hospital training programs will become questioned. While traditional BSN programs coexist with RN-to-BSN programs in the higher education community, practitioners on both sides should maintain awareness of factors to help facilitate student success in obtaining BSN degrees efficiently. This study revealed a higher graduation rate for students who completed all general education requirements before entering the RN-to-BSN program than students who completed general education requirements after entering the RN-to-BSN program. Advisors at community colleges offering the ADN should encourage pre-nursing students early in their academic careers to complete all general education requirements for their AA degrees while preparing for entry into ADN programs. Students who graduate with both ADN and an Associate in Arts (AA) degrees will be better prepared for admission to RN-to-BSN programs, and they will be more likely to graduate with BSN degrees in a timely manner.

References


MONARCH SPOTLIGHT
Bringing REP ODU to Housing and Residence Life


Old Dominion University (ODU) is a thriving public research institution located in the heart of Hampton Roads in Norfolk, Virginia. The urban campus encompasses a highly diverse population enrolling nearly 24,000 students and approximately 5,000 live on campus.

Housing & Residence Life recently joined the Division of Student Engagement and Enrollment Services, a new division formed to enhance student engagement, learning, and success. ODU is focused on reconnecting the living and learning experience and has doubled its housing capacity in the past five years. Housing and Residence Life is a comprehensive auxiliary enterprise composed of 9 residence halls, and three apartment complexes.

Introduction

During the fall of 2011, a group of ODU students launched the Monarch Citizen campaign in an effort to encourage our community to be more committed to a culture of Responsibility, Engagement and Pride (REP). Led by Luis Ferreira and Fred Tugas of the Student Government Association, and Greg Walsh, Student Representative of the Board of Visitors, the initiative was rolled out with great success the week of Homecoming of 2011. The group distributed t-shirts (resembling the old “RUN DMC” t-shirt lettering, but instead saying “REP ODU”) and spoke with faculty, staff and other students about the importance of making our campus the best it can be.

The t-shirts have become a popular image and prized possession on campus among the student body. Recently, an alumni version of the t-shirt has become more prevalent, which sends a message that even non-current ODU students are buying into the message – a good sign that it is resonating with the ODU community.

After informally surveying the students this fall, the Residence Education staff within the department of Housing & Residence Life decided to develop a residential curriculum that would facilitate development under the umbrella of these tenants, with the hope that implementing this model will better help prepare our students to be holistically strong for life after college. To
understand and appreciate why the tenants are valuable and applicable to our work, we needed to examine what it means to be a Monarch Citizen.

Citizenship works on many levels. While we are all here at ODU, there should be a sense of obligation and opportunities available to develop citizens within our residential communities. Facilitating positive interactions within our residence halls/apartments, addressing student behavior timely and appropriately and developing and holding one another accountable for community living expectations are all interconnected in the creation of a positive living/learning environment and cultivating true Monarch Citizens. While looking at the following tenants and their planned outcomes, we expect that:

- **Responsibility** - On-campus residents will step up as responsible members of their local and campus communities and hold others accountable for their actions.
- **Engagement** - Students living on-campus will forge meaningful connections with peers, faculty, and staff
- **Pride** – Students living on-campus will demonstrate Monarch Pride by positively representing ODU at all times.

These three areas are essential to this plan. Students’ first and utmost priority is to succeed in the classroom. But it is our belief that if students are not intentionally embracing and practicing the three tenants, they will likely not maximize their academic potential. Maintaining that responsibility, pride and engagement are interconnected and are present in all facets of campus life; it is critical these tenants are embraced in multiple ways through the interactions that students have while they are at ODU.

It helps that the catchphrase ‘REP ODU’ is so easy to remember. We want it to be a simple concept. But if appropriately and consistently applied, it can have widespread, positive life-long effects. Soon, you will read about how each tenant has been developed individually and how this new curriculum structure has already positively impacted some of our students.

For now, some background about who we are. The mission of the Housing & Residence Life (HRL) department at ODU is to provide safe and well-maintained communities that enhance
the overall collegiate experience. We want to offer a living and learning experience that facilitates students’ development as Monarchs and growth as global citizens.

**Programmatic Aspects of the Curriculum**

Throughout the 2012 – 2013 academic year, we are diligently working to establish a sincere relationship with every single student that lives with us in the halls and help him/her understand the value of being a Monarch citizen. We have taken an active role to build these relationships through programs such as the Student Success Initiative, Community Charter, and House Calls.

*Student Success Initiative*

The Student Success Initiative (SSI) has been implemented as a pilot program in three out of the four freshman residence halls at ODU. The SSI is a series of three intentional conversations held at strategic points throughout the year based on the tenants of REP ODU. During fall 2012, Resident Assistants (RAs) conducted individual interviews with each student during the first three weeks of the semester to build rapport and proactively discuss topics such as personal safety, academic success, campus involvement, and time management. For example, in a typical SSI session, an RA may ask a student, “How do you plan to take responsibility for your personal safety while attending ODU?”

Simply asking this question could be quite a reality check for some students who may have never had to consider personal safety in an urban setting. At the end of each conversation, the RA works out an action plan with the student with respect to each of the three REP ODU tenants. An added benefit of the SSI model is that it shifts the role of the RA from an authority-based figure to a revered “mentor.” By establishing these mentor relationships with students early on, RAs are in a much better position to promote the tenants of REP ODU. In spring 2013, RAs will conduct the second and third conversations in the series – a “mid-year reflection” on the successes and pitfalls of the fall semester and a “next steps plan” for the summer and sophomore year.

*Community Charter*

The community charter goes a step beyond the SSI and attempts to cultivate the tenants of REP ODU on a hall/floor level in each residence hall across campus. Grounded in the work of Terry Piper (1997), the community charter is a tool that enables the residents of each floor to
create a set of community standards for behavior with the RA acting as a facilitator of the process. By allowing residents to create specific floor norms with respect to topics such as guest behavior, visitation, floor leadership, academics, and safety/security, they are empowered to take greater responsibility for the success and well-being of their community. This process also gives students an early opportunity during the first floor meeting to practice civil discourse, learn from the diverse views of other students on the floor, and express their own personal views. For many students, this may be the first time they have had to articulate their preferences on a community issue such as acceptable noise levels. The RA is present to assist the student if he/she struggles and to maintain civility in the room should the conversation become too heated. At the end of the process, each student signs the community charter to symbolize the group effort and commitment to Monarch Citizenship. To convey the importance of these community charters and increase visibility, Housing & Residence Life has placed them in large frames on each floor for students and guests to see.

House Calls

The “House Calls” program was another way we facilitated the development of positive relationships this fall. This door-to-door welcoming campaign consisted of faculty, staff, and university police going around to all of the residential rooms and apartments on campus, which consists of 4,600 students, to give out ODU REP magnets and swag, introducing themselves and telling residents, face-to-face, that we are glad you are here with us. We handed out magnets for their fridges that asked the following important questions:

- Is what I am doing right or wrong?
- How will this action affect my future?
- If someone was watching, would I make a different decision?
- How will my parents/family/friends feel?
- How do my actions represent the ODU Community?

We want for students to think about their actions, find themselves considering these questions and asking others these questions when they see or contemplate questionable behavior.

Floor Wars

RAs and RHA are encouraged to connect their events to Responsibility, Engagement, and/or Pride. In the following example, an RA submitted an activity planning proposal (Three Floor Wars Programs) that supported all three tenants.
Three Floor Wars Programs:

“*The Robot Build-Off event epitomizes the tenant Responsibility. This event emphasizes the importance of recycling. Residents will create a robot for their floor using recyclable materials. Recycling is an easy way to take responsibility of our environment, and this event can help residents learn to recycle and reuse everyday materials in ways that are different from their intended purposes. The “recycle robot” will be judged by the HRL Office Staff, and points will be awarded based on the cumulative scores.*

*The Food Donation Drive supports the Engagement tenant, which will run all week long. It is important that students are engaged in the Norfolk community, not just the ODU community. This event will encourage students to think about families that live in the area. Residents will be urged to donate non-perishable food items to bins located on their residential floors. All of the donations will go to the Norfolk Food Bank. Points will be awarded to floors based on the weight of their overall donation.*

*A challenge representing the Pride tenant is the Floor Decorating Competition. It is important for students to feel like the residence halls are a place to call home and to be proud of where they live. The Floor Decorating Competition will give residents a chance to express pride in the floor they live on while connecting with other floor mates. The final products of each floor will be judged by the HRL Office Staff.”*

**Haunted Halls (HRL Annual Event)**

This model is more than just welcoming students, though. In order to continue to promote the tenants, it is important that we continue to thread them into our curricular efforts throughout the year. HRL at ODU has taken great pride in showcasing a university-wide event for the past five years. This *Haunted Halls* event involves the hard work of nearly half of the RA staff, and the careful and attentive leadership of several paraprofessionals and professionals to ensure a successful production. Annually, as anticipated, many students stand in line for hours to participate in the event, which is held over two nights around Halloween, to get scared and be entertained. Equipping the actors with skills and costumes, converting a large lounge into a haunted environment, and advertising the event takes a great deal of work. Every time the residence education team puts on a program, it has to connect to one of the three tenants.
This year, the coordinators made sure to take the extra steps to educate our students and other participants about some of the lesser known, but arguably most meaningful, aspects of the program. First, the donated goods (admission was waived in lieu of at least one donated canned or non-perishable food item) collected at the event would be given to the Southeastern Virginia Food Bank. To provide a reflective moment of responsibility to the on-campus residents, our staff took time to create bulletin boards throughout all of our residential communities that promoted Haunted Halls, but also informed people about the realities faced by the Southeastern Virginia Food Bank. Some of those facts included - that 40,034 individuals live at or below poverty in Norfolk; that 157,378 individuals are served by the Food Bank of Southeastern Virginia; and that 4,324,813 meals are provided through this organization annually in the city of Norfolk.

As we continue to find ways to integrate Monarch Citizenship into the daily life of our ODU students, we must also face the unfortunate scholastic challenges that our students face. Recent research has shown us that many students are scoring low on writing tests when they enter college. And that they often continue to struggle with their writing throughout their first and second years of college (Arum & Roska, 2011). Recognizing this need, coupled with our attempts to engage students to become Monarch Citizens, we created a goal that will inform both efforts to a desired end - to get the students to express themselves through writing and tell their story as it pertains to Monarch Citizenship (Hayne et al, 2009).

**Learning Opportunities for Staff**

*Guiding Philosophy*

At its best, REP ODU should not only be for the students that we work with, but also guiding principles for what we - staff and faculty - do on a daily basis. It is important that students see us doing what it is that we expect of them. So when we respond to crises promptly, we are able to show our students that we are RESPONSIBLE. When we take the time to invite students to dine with us and have a conversation, it sends a message that we are sincerely ENGAGING with them. When we take the time to wear an ODU polo shirt on Fridays or at a conference, our professional peers know that we take PRIDE in our institution. When students see us engaging the tenants, it reinforces their value and meaning.

*The Case for Night Desk Receptionists*
As we approached the 2012-13 academic year, it became increasingly apparent that we needed to develop a program that would create a presence in our residential communities during the late night and early morning hours. Assessing our program during the summer months, we discovered a highly active, and often negative, late-night social environment was likely to occur on any given night. As a result, we created a Night Desk Receptionist (NDR) position, whose responsibilities include: performing community rounds, working at the residence hall front desk, assisting with administrative tasks, and providing additional services and a measure of security in the residence halls. There are 3 NDRs in each building, meaning that approximately 36 NDRs work nightly on ODU’s campus. The NDRs are primarily on-campus students. They are integral members of the Housing & Residence Life (HRL) team, serving as essential front line representatives of the department during the hours of 12 am to 5 am. This new position infuses the tenants of responsibility and engagement, adds depth to our support systems and reinforces the community of care that we seek to establish through our work every day.

After having completed only two months in their new positions, NDRs were asked to express themselves in writing about how they feel their work relates to REP ODU. The following are excerpts from their comments, which were abundant and, remarkably, all positive:

“REP ODU is engaging in many ways. As a Night Desk Receptionist, I am concerned if students are safe inside and outside of the residence halls. My responsibilities require me to observe and respond to disruptive behavior. As for our department, it is great to be appreciated for being responsible students. It is a great way to take pride in Old Dominion University.”

"Being an NDR has allowed me to become a major player in enhancing the large campus/small community environment that ODU has come to be known for over the years. Having direct relations with the students allow me to develop meaningful, open relationships with them. As an NDR, along with the police department and other housing staff, I have also become responsible for ensuring the safety & well-being of each student in the living community. As an ODU student, I have Monarch Pride, which means it is my duty to represent my campus in a positive way, when I’m on duty and when I’m not.”

“My position as an NDR has helped me become more responsible because of the demands of the job. Since this is a night-shift job, you have to do more planning than
typical workers if you want to keep up on your sleep, and school work. This job has also made me feel more concerned and responsible for our school’s safety even outside of work. I've become more engaged through meeting and chatting with my fellow students while I work, and through meeting my fellow NDRs, and the RAs. Finally, my pride in ODU has shot up considerably since I started working as an NDR, because I’ve realized how ODU handles certain situations, and they handle them quickly, efficiently and with the utmost care. It’s an honor to be part of a school that truly cares for its students.”

Oftentimes we see our methods of pedagogy as the best ways to facilitate learning among our students. During the course of the year, however, there will be times where we can - and should - ask the students to take on a leadership role to create an environment that will encourage our students to grow as Monarch citizens (Tagg, 2003). The Monarch Citizenship model places a lot of emphasis on getting our unengaged student engaged. The programs that we create, the academic priorities that we support and the ways in which we encourage student engagement such as the NDR position, are all pathways to success through REP ODU. The aforementioned comments alone tell us that we are on the right track.

Another important part of being engaged is asking questions. Intentional interactions could present a whole new world to these students, which could have tremendous implications on their futures. Just a short conversation and the right questions could encourage a student to reflect on their values in a meaningful way or alter their career aspirations. In short, we want to inspire our students to be curious about the world they live in, actively inquire about it, and consider their place within it as they grow up. As we get older; we have the tendency to not be as curious (Kashdan, 2009). Curiosity among college students can play an essential role in lifelong happiness. Many students enter college with long term career goals in mind, which have been influenced by outside factors (i.e., parents and peers) (Haynes et al, 2009).

A recent report, Colleges Confront a Gender Gap in Student Engagement, demonstrated that women and men engage with their campus community in entirely different ways. “Women tend to study abroad, volunteer in the community, and spend longer hours preparing for class, some experts noted. Men spend more time playing video games, relaxing, and watching television, but men have more substantive engagements with their professors, are more likely to
do undergraduate research, and tend to major fields that steer them into better-paying jobs. Although women do many of the things that researchers have identified as positive influences on a college experience, they also report higher levels of stress and lower levels of confidence than men.”

**Looking Ahead**

Despite these challenges and others, it is imperative that students care about their experience when they are in college, know how their behavior can affect their peers and value the positive opportunities they have during this time in their lives. Therefore, the Residence Education team is charged with connecting all that we do during the 2012 – 2013 academic year to the tenants of REP ODU and the Monarch Citizenship campaign. As a staff, we have a responsibility to intentionally expand this campaign into our program, recognizing the importance of engaging our students with one other and the ODU community in a positive manner.

We are all proud to be Monarchs – this should be evident on a daily basis! We look forward to greater success as our efforts continue to take root and provide meaningful experiences for our residential students.

**References**


The Impact of Intercollegiate Athletics in Higher Education

Eric T. Vanover and Michael M. DeBowes

The place of athletics in American higher education has been defended and criticized for well over one hundred years (Camp, 1893). Having become such a popular cultural attraction and tradition, as well as a potential method of generating revenue, the role of college athletics has broadened beyond a student-oriented activity. This article reviews the different ways intercollegiate athletics influences the reputation, operation, and quality of higher education.

Keywords: athletics spending, intercollegiate athletics, higher education National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)

Athletics in American higher education has created an historic tradition in American culture pre-dating the American Revolution. The evolution of collegiate athletics from colonial intramural activities focused on maintaining physical fitness into the multi-billion dollar intercollegiate enterprise that exists today (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2009) did not occur without changing institutional perceptions and some controversy. Indeed, the same questions asked today about the place of intercollegiate athletics were of concern to previous generations. The tradition of American collegiate athletics has always been coupled with defining how their incorporation impacts the academic mission of an institution. The commercialization of intercollegiate athletics began in the mid-19th Century and has grown exponentially into a matter of great debate for leaders of higher education institutions (Flowers, 2009; Zimbalist, 1999).

American higher education during the 19th Century centered on two major cultural attributes: the ideology of competition as a pathway for socio-political and financial success in American society and the rise of the voluntary tradition to attend college as the duty of the educated citizen under republican values (Mattingly, 2007). Camp (1893) promoted the incorporation of track athletics at the college level to both allow America to ascend to the level
of competition in England and as a beneficial pursuit for creating the well-rounded, educated gentleman. The latter half of the 19th Century witnessed the rise of intercollegiate competition, first, between the Harvard and Yale rowing organizations in 1852, a baseball series in 1868, and football games between years 1872-73. As intramural competition progressed into intercollegiate competitions involving community support and identity, as well as a new method of student recruitment, organizing and regulating athletics became less the responsibility of the students and moved into the hands of alumni, faculty, and administration (Flowers, 2009; Thwing, 1906).

The public popularity of these intercollegiate athletic events introduced the commercialization of college sports. Much as is the official attitude today, the athletes were expected to be detached from any profit and compete for the pureness of sport between gentlemen. Walter Camp wrote in 1893, “A gentleman does not make his living, however, from his athletic prowess. He does not earn anything by his victories except glory and satisfaction” (p. 2). Even in the 1850s, however, business leaders and marketers realized that the public attraction to intercollegiate competition could provide a great deal of advertisement and income (Flowers, 2009). At the first meeting between the Harvard and Yale rowing teams in 1852, one thousand people attended the event. Only seven years later, in 1859, some twenty thousand spectators gathered to enjoy the competition (Flowers, 2009; Thwing, 1906). Flowers (2009) pointed out that the commercial potential for these competitions did not remain unnoticed for long. Sponsorship, promotion, and advertisement soon made their way into intercollegiate athletics.

The student, institution, community benefits, and consequences consume the discussion of intercollegiate athletics today in light of the popularity growth, cultural change, and
technological advances; but the topics of concern have changed little. Duderstadt (2000), President Emeritus at the University of Michigan, suggested that college sports provide the athlete and the spectator with important life skills such as teamwork, persistence, and discipline. They also provide a sense of unity and pride for the students, the university, and the community.

The author pointed out several areas of tremendous concern such as the quasi-professional nature of intercollegiate sports, exploitation of student-athletes, hindrances to the academic mission, tolerance of low graduation rates, cheating and scandal (Duderstadt, 2000).

Almost one hundred years earlier, Thwing (1906) reported a similar duality in the perspectives of college presidents regarding intercollegiate athletics, particularly concerning the rise in the popularity of American football. The author quoted the president of Harvard University, who expressed concern for the “‘extreme publicity, [and] large proportion of injuries…[t]he crude and vociferous criticism, blame, and praise which fall to the lot of the football player…[and] [t]he distraction from proper collegiate pursuits of multitudes of undergraduates during football season’” (Charles W. Eliot, as quoted in Thwing, 1906, pp. 386-387). Other presidents of the era commended intercollegiate athletics, again football in particular, arguing that sports provide leadership qualities that could not be found in books. The president of Colgate University argued, “…the general attention to healthful exercise and even to the severe work in track athletics, baseball, and basketball is beneficial to mental work” (Charles W. Eliot, as quoted in Thwing, 1906, p. 388). The differing perceptions of the value of intercollegiate athletics are just as much a part of the history as the sports themselves.

With the popularity of intercollegiate athletics growing in the public eye, as well as the concern for college football integrity and safety, higher education administrations endeavored to legitimate and codify college sports. The Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United
States, now known as the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), formed in 1906. Flowers (2009) argued that this organization allowed for the commercialization of intercollegiate athletics to flourish, assured the amateur status of college athletes, and “loosely coupled” (p. 358) academics and athletics as the focus of the academic mission. Indeed, the regulation of televised football games and the governing of bowl games were organized through the NCAA. Division level expansion in the 1970s and the inclusion of women’s athletics in the 1980s were also structured in the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2010b).

The exponential growth in popularity and financial value of intercollegiate athletics has not been without the presence of academic and financial corruption. The Southern Methodist University football team was banned from competition for one year in 1987 for NCAA infractions such as the payment of players and other prohibited incentives. More recently, the MacMurray College’s NCAA Division III men’s tennis team was given the “death penalty” for providing illegitimate scholarships to athletes in 2005 (Suggs, 2005). The MacMurray case marked only the second time the NCAA implemented its most severe punishment.

After the Southern Methodist University football scandal in 1986 resulted in the NCAA handing down the first “death penalty,” the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics formed in 1989 to recommend new and reformed strategies for preserving the academic integrity of higher education institutions with intercollegiate athletics teams. The model initiated by the Knight Commission, reported in Keeping Faith with the Student-Athlete, suggested that presidential control should regulate academic integrity, fiscal integrity, and a plan for maintaining certification and compliance with the NCAA (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, n.d.).
The NCAA currently lists among its core values supporting “the collegiate model of athletics in which students participate as an avocation, balancing their academic, social and athletics experiences” (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2010a, para. 2). The issue of whether or not intercollegiate athletics provides such a balancing act for college athletes and guards against their corruption and exploitation that commercialization threatens, remains under debate. As throughout the history of intercollegiate athletics in America, the assessment of their value to the academic goals and experiences of higher education must be re-evaluated by each generation. This article endeavors to review the current evaluation on the topic.

**Impact on Academics**

The relationship between academics and college athletics has traditionally been a point of contention in higher education. Some have argued that intercollegiate athletics complements and supports the academic missions of higher education. Others have suggested that the commercialization, exploitation, and distractions that have grown out of intercollegiate athletics are detrimental to higher education. Recent research, however, has suggested the inclusion of college athletics benefits the academic missions of higher education institutions (Franklin, 2006; Umbach, Palmer, Kuh, & Hannah, 2006).

Brand (2006) outlined a common view of collegiate athletics held many faculty and administrators in higher education. Through what the author labeled the “Standard View,” (Brand, 2006, p. 9) intercollegiate athletics are underappreciated by higher education institutions in so much that athletics are considered extracurricular activities only. The opinion holds that athletics could be absent from an institution without negatively affecting the educational and academic integrity of the school and may remove unnecessary distractions from the academic missions (Brand, 2006). Bowen and Levin (2003) criticized intercollegiate sports not as a
negative aspect of the educational mission of higher education institutions, but for the transformation of intercollegiate athletics, especially Division I competition, into a commercialized and publicly exposed distraction and obstruction to students, athletes, and higher education values.

Recent discussion about the impact of intercollegiate athletics on higher education academic integrity has focused on the impact on students, faculty roles in college athletics, and their function within higher education institutions. Umbach, Palmer, Kuh, and Hannah (2006) explored the perceived differences in student engagement and experience between student-athletes and non-athletes. The authors suggested that student-athletes are engaged in educational activities as much other students and experience academic challenges on similar levels. Moreover, the authors reported that the effect of participating in college athletics is relatively similar in all institutions of higher education (Umbach et al., 2006). Student engagement provides an important function for retention of both athletes and non-athletes but may be of additional benefit for collegiate athletes. Franklin (2006) suggested that student-athletes that do not complete twenty-four credited hours of course work in their freshmen year are less likely to complete a degree program.

A common opinion of intercollegiate athletics is that, overall, student-athletes excel at similar levels, if not higher levels, than non-athlete students (Franklin, 2006; Gayles & Hu, 2009; Umbach et al., 2006). However, Gayles and Hu (2009) further proposed that sport profile, or commercial popularity, may impact student engagement and academic outcomes more so than low profile sport student-athlete. While student-athletes graduate at higher rates in overall comparison to the student population (National Collegiate Athletic Association, 2011a), student-athletes who participate in NCAA men’s football and basketball graduate below the average
levels (Franklin, 2006). While some have advocated the value of college sports in promoting
discipline and cognitive skills, the benefits of student-engagement such as identity formation,
learning processes, and communication skills may be negatively impacted by participation in
high-profile intercollegiate athletics (Duderstadt, 2000; Gayles & Hu, 2009).

The majority of recent research that focuses on the effects of intercollegiate athletics for
students explores the relationship for the student-athlete. Intercollegiate athletics, however, also
affects non-athlete students in both positive and negative manners (Bowen & Levin, 2003;
Duderstadt, 2000; J.H. Lawrence, 2009). Mixon and Trevino (2005) explored the effects of
intercollegiate football programs on the institution’s graduation rates. The authors suggested that
athletic success augments the educational missions of higher education institutions.
Furthermore, successful football programs benefit student recruitment, retention rates, and social
development. Mixon and Trevino (2005) argued that successful football programs, rather than
providing academic distraction through football fever provided assistance in the social and
psychological adjustment of leaving home that reflects into the classroom as well. The authors
coined the term “‘football chicken soup’” (Mixon & Trevino, 2005, p. 99) to describe this effect.
Results from the authors’ study supported their hypothesis that successful football programs
positively influenced graduation rates at institutions of higher education (Mixon & Trevino,
2005).

Lindo, Swensen, and Waddell (in press) analyzed 29,737 academic transcripts of student
non-athletes who attended the University of Oregon between 1999 to 2007. The authors
examined course grades earned during the nine fall semesters to explore the impact of football
wins on non-athletes. Lindo et al. (in press) found an inverse relationship between football
success and academic success, concluding “male grades fall significantly with the success of the
football team, both in absolute terms and relative to females” (p. 15). The impact was greatest among males from low-income backgrounds, non-Whites, and students with low academic ability. The authors also surveyed current students and found that males were “more likely to increase alcohol consumption, decrease studying, and increase partying around the success of the football team” (Lindo et al., in press, p. 16).

Since the 1991 Knight’s Commission advocated more faculty involvement in reforming intercollegiate athletics and promoting an effective balance between athletics and academics, faculty have assumed a more prominent role in governing intercollegiate athletics (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, n.d.; Lawrence, Mullin, & Horton, 2009). Lawrence et al. (2009) suggested that the majority of faculty felt removed from intercollegiate athletics reform and assessment and perceived intercollegiate sports as a separate enterprise managed by administrators. The authors reported that 35% of faculty members believe intercollegiate administrators do not provide necessary information for faculty committees to effectively develop valuable student-athlete educational plans. Lack of communication between administrators and faculty concerning intercollegiate athletics suggests to faculty that athletics holds a privileged position in higher education institutions (Lawrence et al., 2009).

In addressing these issues, Lawrence, Ott and Hendricks (2009) organized the reform discussion by organizations such as the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and Coalition of Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) into three major topics including “academic oversight, faculty governance, and fiscal oversight” (p 73). It is in these three areas intercollegiate athletics have negatively impacted higher education and are in need of reform, according to these faculty-oriented organizations. Brand (2006) recognized that not all faculty members opposed intercollegiate athletics, but the author implied that faculty tended to regard
intellectual capability higher than athletic ability. However, faculty perceived the opposite was true of institution administrations citing discontent with the financial favor that athletic departments, especially high profile sports, receive over educational facets in the institution (Brand, 2006).

**Multiculturalism in Intercollegiate Athletics**

Constructing racially and culturally diverse educational environments provides beneficial social and learning developments in higher education (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2011). Intercollegiate athletics offers one method of creating such an environment. Hirko (2009) proposed that athletes perceive their involvement in intercollegiate athletics as quality interracial interaction which benefits their experience and education. While this suggestion implies these quality interactions occur between teammates, there is a possibility that because intercollegiate athletics influence institutions of higher education on many levels the same could be related to the student body. Athletics provide a sense of community for the student body and those affiliated with the institution and large numbers of non-athlete student experience racial diversity through intramural athletics (Brand, 2006; Fisher, 2009; Lawrence et al., 2009; Mixon & Trevino, 2005).

**Community College Athletics**

The impact of intercollegiate athletics in the community college has been as unique as the community college mission in the world of higher education. With a focus on open enrollment, affordability, and diverse curricula, the community college has historically endeavored to encompass and meet the vast needs of as many students as possible (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). In embracing such a mission, it is a matter of inevitability that the issue of intercollegiate athletics
has become a point of discussion for the community college. Diverse opinions exist concerning the place of intercollegiate sports in higher education, but as Cohen and Brawer (2008) suggested, community colleges in the past have prospered in their activities because of the lack of precedents, traditions, and hierarchies of accountability that allow them to rapidly evolve. The intermittent and diverse nature of community college athletics in the present again suggests that community college leaders are faced with assessing, formulating, and implementing the inclusion of athletics on their campuses without a particular model of reference or past tradition (Williams, Byrd, & Pennington, 2008; Williams & Pennington, 2006). Emulating the four-year university approach to intercollegiate athletics presents peculiar problems for community college administrators due to the mission of the community college and budgetary confinements, but community colleges are presented with the same controversial issues as are faced by four year institutions (Lawrence et al., 2009; Williams et al., 2008; Williams & Pennington, 2006).

Bush, Casteñeda, Hardy, and Kastinas (2009) explored the demographics of students who participate in intercollegiate athletics at the community college level. The authors reported that 59% of community colleges across the United States fielded athletic teams in 2002-04. The majority of these athletic programs existed at rural community colleges with a noticeable trend of smaller schools being more likely to have athletic programs. Of the 567 community colleges that reported sponsoring athletic teams in 2002-03 academic year, the community colleges reported a slightly higher number of men’s teams (565) than women’s teams (558) (Bush et al., 2009). Recent literature has pointed to several reasons for the inclusion of athletics at the community college level. The most common of these reasons is the idea that athletics, as in four-universities, assists in maintaining enrollment growth. Bush et al. (2009) implied that the critical need for sustaining enrollment growth may provide an explanation for the high number of
athletic programs at rural community colleges. In addition, the presence of intercollegiate athletics promotes student involvement, provides a method of community outreach, and is often considered an important part of the overall collegiate experience (Bush et al., 2009; Williams et al., 2008; Williams & Pennington, 2006).

Since the 1991 report by the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics presented foundational ideas and values geared to the reformation of intercollegiate athletics, an emphasis has been placed on the role of the president of institutions of higher education (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, n.d.). Williams and Pennington (2006) explored the perceptions about intercollegiate athletics of community college presidents. In disagreement with the idea that most believe community college athletic programs to not reflect the same benefits as those at four year colleges and universities, the authors reported that an overall majority of leaders with existing athletic programs believed athletics inspire pride in the student body and throughout the community (Williams & Pennington, 2006). Thus, intercollegiate athletics at the community college level could serve as a community outreach program and result in an enrollment growth.

Several studies have suggested that initiating intercollegiate athletics at the community college level faces challenges including financing these programs and the effects these programs would have on the community college mission (Bush et al., 2009; Lawrence et al., 2009; Williams et al., 2008; Williams & Pennington, 2006). Indeed, Williams and Pennington (2006) reported that funding presented an issue for 79% of community college presidents included in the study and only 26% implied that community college leaders understood the process of incorporating new athletic programs. Lawrence et al. (2009) argued that while it is unlikely that local and state funding support would deter the focus on the financial burden of community
college athletic programs, the community college’s reputation for being business-oriented and adaptive could benefit fundraising for athletic programs. The author suggested that soliciting corporate sponsorships and community partnerships could be a fundraising opportunity for community colleges (Lawrence et al., 2009). Both Lawrence et al. (2009) and Williams et al. (2008) agreed that caution should be taken toward any approach that would raise the cost of attending community college as such a measure directly opposes the mission of providing assessable and affordable education.

Bush et al. (2009) argued that community college athletics potentially faced similar issues as four-year universities. The authors suggested “access, gender equality, financial stability, and recruitment” (p. 12) were probable areas of apprehension. Williams et al. (2008) advocated that community colleges wishing to establish intercollegiate athletic programs should consider joining the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCCA) and work with other district community colleges to develop statewide initiatives for implementing and monitoring community college athletic programs.

University Rankings

Higher education institutions traditionally have accepted institutional rankings as method to gain prestige and to lure students to attend. The third party ranking systems through organizations such as the U.S. News and World Report (USNWR) have developed into a multi-million dollar venture (Fisher, 2009). Fisher (2009) investigated the relationship between successful intercollegiate athletic programs and the USNWR rankings of higher education institutions. The author found that there exists little statistical correlation between athletic program success and institutional rankings overall. However, private schools that dominate the highest rankings fared better over time if the institution maintained a Division I football
program. The author suggested that athletic programs may be of more benefit to public institutions who rank in the middle grade in attracting students (Fisher, 2009).

**Finances in Intercollegiate Athletics**

Spending in athletics is a topic of considerable discussion and has been described as both an arms race (Orszag & Israel, 2009; Tsitsos & Nixon, 2012) and a “runaway train” (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2009, p. 26). According to a Knight Commission public opinion poll, 78% of the public seems to believe that college sports are profitable (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2006). However, expenditures consistently outpace revenues in the multi-billion dollar enterprise of intercollegiate athletics (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2009).

For example, the NCAA examined revenues and expenditures among Division I athletic programs between 2004-2009 and found that the increase in expenses during this six year period was greater than the associated increase in revenues generated by athletics programs (Fulks, 2010). Among the top ten public institutions that spend the most on athletics, the average operating budget for the athletics program increased more than 42% from $69 million to $98 million between 2005 and 2009 with the projected average to increase to $254 million by 2020 (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2010). In 2010, only 22 of the 227 Division I public schools had more revenue than expenditures according to a *USA Today* analysis (Berkowitz & Upton, 2012, May 15). Institutional spending on athletics has lead Hacker and Dreifus (2010) to assert, “the athletics incubus has overtaken academic pursuits, compromised the moral authority of educators, and gobbled up resources that should have gone to their basic missions” (p. 156).
Many athletic programs justify their increasing budgets on the premise that athletics programs enhance the institution’s profile, encourage private giving, and increase the quality and quantity of student applicant pools, although research does not consistently support a link between these variables (Frank, 2004). With regard to academic quality, the most recent analysis by the NCAA shows that there is no statistically significant relationship between increased operating expenditures in athletics and higher ACT or SAT scores of the student body (Orszag & Israel, 2009). Further, there is no correlation between increased spending on athletics and winning (Litan, Orszag, & Orszag, 2003), which raises important questions regarding the contemporary spending frenzy in intercollegiate athletics. As one observer notes, “The common arguments frequently made to justify committing large resources to college athletics – that they directly or indirectly support the school’s educational mission or its finances – do not stand up to empirical scrutiny” (Zimbalist, 1999, p. 171).

Still, many institutions impose mandatory student fees, provide an annual subsidy, and/or receive state support to supplement revenue streams generated by athletics programs in order to balance the athletics budget (Suggs, 2009). A USA Today analysis of financial data available through open-records laws revealed “[m]ore than $800 million in student fees and university subsidies are propping up athletic programs at the nation’s top sports colleges, including hundreds of millions in the richest conferences” (Gillium, Upton, & Berkowitz, 2010, para. 1). In one of the most flagrant examples, USA Today found that Rutgers University subsidized its athletic budget with more than $26 million in 2010 while negotiated raises for employees were suspended in an effort to save $30 million due to reduced state funds (Berkowitz & Upton, 2011). USA Today reported that Rutgers spent in excess of $115 million to subsidize its athletics budget between 2006 and 2010. The 2010 subsidy to the athletic department occurred
at a time when Rutgers raised student tuition and fees and implemented cost containment
measures in academic departments while the head coaches of men’s football and women’s
basketball each earned bonuses without leading their respective teams to a championship
(Eichelberger & Staley, 2011).

To help distinguish among revenue types in its reporting, the NCAA now differentiates
between generated revenue from ticket sales, concessions, media deals, NCAA payouts,
corporate sponsorships, private giving, etc. and allocated revenue including direct transfers from
the institution’s general fund, indirect support such as utilities payments not charged to athletics,
mandatory student fees, and local and state government contributions (Fulks, 2010). The most
recent analysis of revenues and expenditures among Division I schools was conducted by the
NCAA in 2010. The analysis affirmed that institutional allocations to athletics increased in all
Division I subdivisions between 2004 and 2009 (Fulks, 2010). The amount of money derived
from mandatory student fees appears to be growing as well. The Center for College
Affordability found that between the 2004-2005 and 2008-2009 academic years, the average
subsidy to athletics in the form of student fees per FTE increased 28.1% (Denhart & Vedder,
2010).

With the significant amount of funds entwined in intercollegiate athletics, the line
between amateurism and professionalism is increasingly blurred. The NCAA vigorously defends
the position that “A basic purpose of this Association is to…retain a clear line of demarcation
between intercollegiate athletics and professional sports” (National Collegiate Athletic
Association, 2011b, p. 1). However, the NCAA has been criticized for enabling lucrative
television contracts to permeate Division I intercollegiate athletics. The NCAA is perhaps the
largest benefactor of such arrangements – in 2010, the NCAA signed a 14-year, $10.8 billion
deal with CBS/Turner for coverage of the March Madness tournament ("CBS, Turner...", 2010, April 22). Television revenues and marketing dollars for intercollegiate athletics “are the largest paths to sizable revenue” according to the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics (2009, p. 21) and television revenues have been described as “the goose that lays the golden eggs for intercollegiate athletics” (Duderstadt, 2000, p. 129).

In exploring the effects of money on commercialism, Sheehan (2000) used regression analysis to analyze publicly-available revenues and expenditures in intercollegiate athletics. The results of Sheehan’s analysis indicated that men’s football and basketball programs are properly classified as fitting a professional, rather than amateur, model due to the tendency of these programs to be profitable. While some of these programs are profitable, the Knight Commission warns that:

…reported operating surpluses from the two marquee sports [of football and men’s basketball] were not enough to cover the costs of an athletic department’s other sports offerings, whether it be 14 or 24 squads. The myth of the business model – that football and men’s basketball cover their own expenses and fully support non-revenue sports – is put to rest by an NCAA study finding that 93 institutions ran a deficit for the 2007-08 school year, averaging losses of $9.9 million. (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2009, p. 11)

Clearly, overreliance on an institution’s football or men’s basketball program as revenue-generating sports can have a detrimental financial impact on an athletic department’s overall balance sheet.

Spending on athletics is often scrutinized by making comparisons against institutional spending on other educational expenses. An analysis of spending among Football Bowl
Subdivision (FBS) conferences (the most prestigious football conference among NCAA Division I schools) shows that, on average, the median athletics spending per student-athlete is 6.3 times greater than the median academic spending per student (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2010). The most lopsided spending occurs in the Southeastern Conference at a rate 10.8 times that of per-student expenditures (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2010).

The phenomenon is not limited to FBS schools. Between 2006-2010, the Chronicle of Higher Education (Chronicle) found that one-third of Football Championship Series (FCS) schools increased their athletics spending more than 40%, and the data did not include capital spending (Sander & Fuller, 2011). According to the Chronicle’s analysis, only ten FCS schools reduced their athletics spending during this period (Fuller, 2011). The Knight Commission’s most updated financial data also found that spending per student-athlete and the institutional subsidy to athletics each outpaced academic spending in the FBS and FCS between 2004-2009 (Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 2011a, 2011b).

In examining differences between institutional subsidies to athletic programs and overall library expenditures among 64 public research university members of the Association of Research Libraries, Lombardi (2012) found that subsidies to athletics ranged from 0 to 1.52 times the overall spending on libraries. Half of the 64 schools included in the analysis allocated less than 33% of total library expenditures. Lombardi opined that “we might expect [NCAA Division I] programs to limit their institutional subsidies to less than a third of their library budget. That may, however, be asking too much” (2012, para. 17).

Most athletics programs are not self-sufficient and cannot balance their budgets (Clotfelter, 2011; Duderstadt, 2000). While this conclusion is widely accepted, it remains
difficult to make meaningful institutional comparisons between athletics programs because of the variance in accounting practices and the challenges in accessing this information (Goff, 2000; Zimbalist, 1999). All athletics programs must submit annual reports to the United States Department of Education pursuant to the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act of 1994 (20 U.S.C. § 1092(e) (1994)) , and these reports include aggregated data regarding expenses and revenues (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). However, because the data are reported in aggregate form, the data reflect only total revenues and expenditures reported by the athletic program and do not permit robust comparisons between institutions.

The NCAA took steps to remedy inconsistent accounting practices in 2004 when it updated its procedures for how member institutions should report revenue and expenditures, although differences in accounting practices nonetheless persist (Hodge & Tanlu, 2009). Much of what is known about spending in athletics is due to NCAA reporting, Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act compliance reports, and media outlets making requests under state open records laws. Suggs (2009) observes, “Even after plugging away for three decades, economists still have no way of saying how much sports truly cost their institutions, much less what their opportunity costs might be” (p. 29). The Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics (2010) has recently called for greater transparency regarding spending in college sports, including more streamlined ways of comparing athletic spending and education spending at NCAA institutions.

Coaches’ salaries – particularly men’s Division I basketball and men’s football coaches – remain central to increased scrutiny of spending in athletics. A recent analysis of university-based salaries of men’s basketball and football coaches in Top 25 programs since 2003 lends weak support for the prevailing belief that higher coaches’ salaries are related to sustained athletic success (Tsitsos & Nixon, 2012). This same study observed that coaches’ salaries
increased, particularly among public institutions, during a period of time in which many universities were faced with budget cuts.

Coaches’ salaries have been scrutinized in terms of their relative position to senior faculty and administrators as well as through examination of how winning is incentivized as contrasted against academic performance of student-athletes. Adjusting for inflation, Clotfelter (2011) determined that the average compensation of full professors, presidents, and football coaches increased 30%, 90%, and 652%, respectively, from the 1985/1986 academic year to the 2009/2010 academic year at 44 public universities for which data were available. In another analysis of incentive pay for 11 football coaches at big-time athletics programs, Clotfelter (2011) revealed that performance-based incentives for winning exceeded bonuses for student-athlete academic performance by more than 12 times. The growing gap between athletics spending versus academics spending has inspired many calls for reform, including one scholar (Pine, 2010) who has called upon institutions of higher education to replace their institutional athletics subsidy with tuition waivers for student-athletes (and nothing more) to enhance the nexus between academics and athletics (Pine, 2010). It does not appear that institutions will heed this call or reform anytime in the near future.

**Future Discussion and Implications**

Research about the impact of intercollegiate athletics on higher education remains relatively limited in comparison to the heated debate that surrounds the topic. In reviewing the literature on the issues concerning intercollegiate athletics, it is apparent that college athletics affects the major aspect of higher education institutions including students, academic integrity, financial aspects, and institutional reputation. The research on intercollegiate athletics has focused on the implications of intercollegiate athletics as a separate entity that influences higher
education. Future research concerning the impact of intercollegiate athletics on higher education may require a different approach. Franklin (2006) suggested that understanding the relationship between intercollegiate athletics and the higher education mission required viewing college athletics “as central to…the…academic enterprise” (p. 23). Brand (2006) advocated a similar approach arguing that athletic programs should be incorporated into the mission of higher education institutions. The author emphasized the perspective that the physical and skilled aspect of higher education must be valued in the same manner as the intellectual processes of academe. In other words, the harmony between mind and body should carry over into the mission of higher education (Brand, 2006).

Considering the amount of money that flows in and out of intercollegiate athletics budgets, it will continue to be important to scrupulously and consistently record and report expenditures and revenues of individual programs so that meaningful trends and benchmarking can occur. Considering the inconsistent literature regarding athletics’ impact on private giving, institutional presence, and other potential benefits of athletics to institutions, research efforts should continue to better determine the true impact – including the opportunity costs associated with subsidizing athletics (Getz & Siegfried, 2012). Further, adherence to the Knight Commission’s recommendations to enhance transparency regarding athletic finances, especially with regard to monitoring growth rates of academic versus athletic spending – will help institutions make important decisions regarding alignment of limited fiscal resources with institutional priorities.

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