



Research Shows Stockton College Athletes Outpace Other Students in Graduation Rates

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Galloway, NJ - Athletes at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey are graduating at a higher rate than non-athletes, and female athletes are doing exceptionally well, according to a report the Office of Athletics & Recreation submitted to the NCAA as part of a voluntary program for Division III.

Linda Yost, associate director of Intercollegiate Athletics, worked with Donna Wanat, assistant to the vice president, and Alice Sikora, professional services specialist 4 in the Office of Institutional Research, to create a report that examined graduation rates for student-athletes versus non-athletes and also compared to the overall student population.

The study examined Fall 2006 first-time, full-time freshmen and compared graduation rates over four, five and six-year spans. The results showed that Stockton student-athletes, who comprised more than 10.5 percent of the 791 incoming freshmen, graduated at a higher rate than the non-athletes.

The data showed graduation rates for student-athletes of 56 percent (four years or less), 72.6 percent (five years or less) and 77.4 percent (six years or less). By contrast, the numbers for non-athletes were 39.3 percent (four years or less), 59.4 percent (five years or less) and 63.9 percent (six years or less). The graduation rates for the freshman class of 2006 overall were at 41.1 percent (four years or less), 60.8 percent (five years or less) and 65.4 percent (six years or less).

When broken down by gender, the data indicated that Stockton's female student-athletes fared exceptionally well. The 47 female student-athletes from the Fall 2006 freshman class earned diplomas at rates of 68.1 percent in four years or less, 85.1 percent in five years or less and 87.2 percent in six years or less for the highest numbers of any group in the study.

With rates of 40.5 percent, 56.8 percent and 64.9 percent, the 37 male student-athletes topped the non-athletes in the four years or less and six years or less categories as well.

"The collaboration between our faculty and intercollegiate athletics is a win-win," said Director of Athletics and Recreation Lonnie Folks. "Our staff works to ensure that (athletes')

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class absences are at a minimum by noting class modules when scheduling contests and finding the best times. Additionally, most all of our sports have study halls set up for first-time students and/or students with documented academic challenges. Our office also reaches out to faculty at the beginning of the semester to seek their support in identifying student-athletes in their respective classes who are near danger.”

“As a result,” Folks said, “we find that our student-athletes are not only aware of our intervention, but more focused on performing well in the classroom so that their opportunities on the field are not jeopardized.”

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