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PREVIEW

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**Attitudes of high school personnel toward NCAA academic
integrity reform measures and proposals**

Newman, Richard Edward, Ed.D.

The University of Nebraska - Lincoln, 1994

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300 N. Zeeb Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

PREVIEW

ATTITUDES OF HIGH SCHOOL PERSONNEL TOWARD NCAA ACADEMIC
INTEGRITY REFORM MEASURES AND PROPOSALS

by

Richard E. Newman

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate College in The University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major: Interdepartmental Area of Community
and Human Resources

Under the Supervision of Professor Niel A. Edmunds

Lincoln, Nebraska

April, 1994

DISSERTATION TITLE

Attitudes of High School Personnel Toward NCAA

Academic Integrity Reform Measures and Proposals

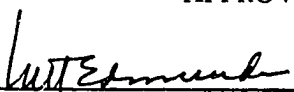
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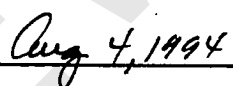
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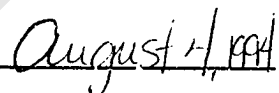
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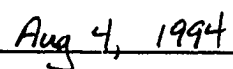
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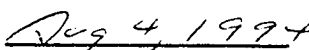
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GRADUATE COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

ATTITUDES OF HIGH SCHOOL PERSONNEL TOWARD NCAA ACADEMIC
INTEGRITY REFORM MEASURES AND PROPOSALS

Richard E. Newman, Ed.D.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1994

Advisor: Niel A. Edmunds

The purpose for conducting the study was to determine the perceptions held by high school personnel toward the National Collegiate Athletic Association's legislative efforts aimed at improving academic integrity in intercollegiate sports. A three-section, researcher-developed questionnaire was utilized to collect data during the 1992 academic year on the attitudes, ratings, and rankings held by randomly selected samples of 183 high school principals and 183 high school head football coaches toward the NCAA's four academic integrity reform measures. These measures include legislation aimed at core curriculum, the initial-eligibility index, criteria associated with satisfactory academic progress, and a disclosure of the admission/graduation rates of student-athletes in NCAA Division I and Division II athletic programs. A total of 191 ($n=191$) surveys were returned, representing an overall return rate of 52%.

Eighty-seven percent of the study's respondents were from public high schools. Institutions with an enrollment of 1,001 to 1,500 provided the largest number of respondents, and the majority of participating schools had produced fewer than five athletic scholarship recipients since 1986.

Analysis of the data showed positive, but not overwhelming, support for the NCAA's four academic integrity reform measures. The NCAA proposal that established regulations defining satisfactory academic progress clearly generated the most support as a means to enhance academic integrity in college sports.

In general, high school personnel favored academic integrity reform items directed toward satisfactory academic progress (SAP), supported maintenance of the present initial eligibility index (IEI), indicated opposition to altering the current core curriculum (CC) requirement, and displayed average support for proposal statements aimed at the disclosure of admission/graduation rates (AGR) of student-athletes. Analysis of Variance procedures yielded significant differences between the clustered, mean rating scores of high school principals and high school head football coaches on SAP and AGR reform measures. Chi-square tests of independence, however, revealed no significant differences among the ranking scores of the same two sample groups on any of the NCAA's four academic integrity reform initiatives.

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PREVIEW

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Context of the Problem

Events in the decade of the 1980's produced a heightened sensitivity regarding academic integrity and the role of athletic programs in higher education. Newspapers, magazines, and television were afforded countless opportunities to publicize the fraudulent acts of omission and commission in intercollegiate athletic programs committed by athletes, coaches, prominent boosters, and administrative officials (Brownlee & Linnon, 1990). Transgressions such as drug abuse, altered transcripts, false academic credits, numerous illegal recruiting practices, violence, abnormal social behaviors, boundless academic irregularities, and a general sense of greed, corruption, and cheating have all been identified, and in many cases exposed, in college sports (Hanford, 1979; Sage, 1990). Against this backdrop, the integrity, purpose, and place for intercollegiate athletics must be appropriately addressed in several contexts ranging from academic administrators, college professors, and those with input or dependence on intercollegiate athletic systems.

Football and men's basketball, considered the two major revenue producing programs in college sports, have been the biggest violators of rules related to academic integrity.

Graduation rates serve as the primary example, as Sanoff (1990) reported, "fewer than 30% of football and basketball players graduate" (p. 50). An example of one of the worst isolated cases of questionable academic integrity occurred between 1973 and 1983 in the basketball program at Memphis State University where only 6 out of 58 basketball players graduated (Sanoff, 1990).

Academic integrity has been cited as one of the benchmark elements underlying current reform efforts in intercollegiate athletics (Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 1991; 1992; 1993). Academic integrity is a complex issue which implies that student-athletes are students as well as athletes from the time of their matriculation to the point of their departure from campus. Inherent in academic integrity is the belief that it must apply to admission policies, to satisfactory academic progress, and to graduation rates.

The importance of academic integrity was aptly depicted by the level of emphasis it received in the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics' model of reform, "One-Plus-Three" (Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, 1991). Academic integrity was recognized as an integral part of the model because "intercollegiate athletics must reflect the values of the university" (p. 11). Athletic participants must be students, first and foremost, and the entire issue of the

athletic reform movement is the "fundamental issue of grounding the regulatory process in the primacy of academic values" (p. 11).

In order to foster the concept of academic integrity in intercollegiate athletics, the Knight Foundation's Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics (1991) proposed a set of recommendations geared toward the enhancement of academic integrity in college sports. The Commission's guidelines addressed proposals related to satisfactory progress in degree requirements, grade point average, units completed during the regular academic year, and initial eligibility requirements. Following the lead of the Knight Foundation's Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) enacted stringent academic legislation during its 1992 convention focusing on measures associated with satisfactory academic progress, core curriculum, and the initial-eligibility index of student-athletes. Combined with a byproduct of Congressman Tom McMillen's (1992) federal Student Right to Know Act, these four legislative measures comprised the NCAA's academic integrity reform measures and proposals that served as the foundation for the current investigation. The Student Right to Know Act was designed to provide college bound student-athletes with pertinent data on the annual admission and graduation rates found in NCAA Division I institutions.

The process of putting academic integrity reform principles into action requires the assistance and cooperation of many actors, including high school officials. To this end, the Knight Foundation's Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics (1991) stated that high school officials are strategically positioned to aid and abet the current reform movement in several ways. They can encourage high school athletes "to spend as much time preparing themselves academically as they do preparing themselves athletically" (p. 29). Secondly, high school officials can direct college bound student-athletes "toward institutions that will put their welfare as students and their maturation as young adults ahead of their performance as athletes" (p. 29). Finally, high school personnel can create an awareness of the importance of student-athletes to attend institutions that are sincere in adopting and implementing active reform actions.

In terms of specific contributions to the process of academic integrity reform, high school head football coaches and principals maintain unique, influential positions that enable them to support and to advance the ideals associated with academic integrity. Snyder (1972) proposed that coaches "are influential reference persons in athletes' future educational and occupational plans" (p. 323). Coakley (1990) expressed a similar view by suggesting that coaches can influence the decision-making processes of

student-athletes by their potential role as "significant others." Research of others (Hanks, 1979; McElroy, 1979) has supported the works of Snyder and Coakley, indicating that the coach-athlete relationship is a crucial factor in shaping the athlete's attitude toward and quest of education.

Ruffin (1982) suggested that principals are instrumental in maintaining a harmonious balance between the academic and athletic performances of student-athletes. In addition, principals assume an inherent responsibility, either directly or through their coaching staffs, to assist student-athletes who are being recruited by colleges and universities. This duty ranges from generic counseling of athletes and parents to possible implementation of step by step guidelines suggested for the heavily recruited athlete by "The Center for Athlete's Rights and Education." The end result of these administrative actions is a thorough screening of and directed focus toward institutions of higher education that match the academic, career, athletic, and social needs of the student-athlete.

High school coaches and administrators are in the ideal position to play a key role in college academic integrity reform efforts promoted by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (Schwartz, 1990). Coaches and administrators alike have access to college bound student-athletes during the student's formative years. The student-athlete's

formative years are critical because they represent a period when the importance of scholastic preparation and achievement for academic success can be established and continuously nurtured (Ruffin, 1982; West, 1992).

Statement of the Purpose

The presence of athletic programs in higher education has been scrutinized more critically now than at any other time in history. Public polls, for example, have revealed that 78% of the American people believed college athletics were out of control (Sherman, 1992), while 86% of college presidents felt the pressures associated with successful athletic programs "interfere with the primary educational mission of America's schools" (Brownlee & Linnon, 1990, p. 51). Cost containment, revenue sharing and disbursement processes, time demands on student-athletes, academic achievement, graduation rates, and academic integrity have all emerged as the subject of debate and reform in recent National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) annual meetings.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association's 1990 meeting issued a challenge to member institutions for a 'new model' of college sports (Schultz, 1990). The new model included the formulation of academic integrity standards applicable to NCAA Division I and Division II athletic programs. Notably, the implications of this legislation on

the higher and secondary education communities warranted examination.

The purpose of conducting this study was to determine the perceptions held by high school principals and head football coaches toward the National Collegiate Athletic Association's legislative efforts aimed at improving academic integrity in intercollegiate sports. Specifically, the study was designed to examine the attitudes of high school personnel toward the NCAA's 1992 legislative measures aimed at core curriculum requirements, the initial-eligibility index, standards associated with satisfactory academic progress, and the disclosure of admission and graduation rates of student-athletes in NCAA Division I and Division II athletic programs. The NCAA legislative efforts aimed at improving academic integrity in college sports included both measures that were operational at the time of the study, and other proposals that were scheduled for future implementation.

The study utilized a stratified random sample of high school principals and high school head football coaches selected from institutions listed in The National Directory of High School Coaches (1991-1992).

Statement of Research Questions

The present study was designed to examine the attitudes of high school principals and head football coaches toward National Collegiate Athletic Association academic integrity

reform efforts, particularly the potential of the NCAA's legislative measures and proposals to improve the quality of academic integrity in college athletics. As such, the study specifically addressed three research questions:

1. What attitude patterns were expressed by high school personnel toward NCAA legislative efforts aimed at improving academic integrity in college sports?

A. How did high school principals perceive NCAA legislative efforts aimed at improving academic integrity in college athletics?

B. How did high school head football coaches perceive NCAA legislative efforts aimed at improving academic integrity in college athletics?

2. Were there differences between the rated perceptions held by high school principals and the rated perceptions held by high school head football coaches toward NCAA legislative efforts aimed at improving academic integrity in college sports?

A. Was there a difference between the ratings of perceptions held by high school principals and high school head football coaches toward the potential of core curriculum requirements to improve academic integrity in college sports?

B. Was there a difference between the ratings of perceptions held by high school principals and high school head football coaches toward the potential of an initial-

eligibility index to improve academic integrity in college sports?

C. Was there a difference between the ratings of perceptions held by high school principals and high school head football coaches toward the potential of satisfactory academic progress standards to improve academic integrity in college sports?

D. Was there a difference between the ratings of perceptions held by high school principals and high school head football coaches toward the potential of a disclosure of admission and graduation rates of student-athletes in NCAA Division I and Division II member institutions to improve academic integrity in college sports?

3. Were there differences between the rankings of perceptions held by high school principals and the rankings of perceptions held by high school head football coaches toward NCAA legislative efforts aimed at improving academic integrity in college sports?

A. Was there a difference between the rankings of perceptions held by high school principals and high school head football coaches toward the potential of core curriculum requirements to improve academic integrity in college sports?

B. Was there a difference between the rankings of perceptions held by high school principals and high school head football coaches toward the potential of an initial-

eligibility index to improve academic integrity in college sports?

C. Was there a difference between the rankings of perceptions held by high school principals and high school head football coaches toward the potential of satisfactory academic progress standards to improve academic integrity in college sports?

D. Was there a difference between the ranking of perceptions held by high school principals and high school head football coaches toward the potential of a disclosure of admission and graduation rates of student-athletes in NCAA Division I and Division II member institutions to improve academic integrity in college sports?

Definition of Terms

To provide for a better understanding of this study and the procedures utilized, the following terms were operationally defined:

Academic Integrity: The legitimate and ethical quest of academic skills and educational processes inherent within the goals and mission of higher education. The term implies that student-athletes have met or exceeded all of the admission standards of their respective institutions, are enrolled in courses leading to an academic major, and have maintained satisfactory academic progress toward a degree and graduation.