

Academic Athletic Journal
Fall, 2005 – Volume 18, Number 1

Retiring from Intercollegiate Athletics: A Phenomenological Investigation

Douglas J. Muccio, M.S., Mark A. Hector, Ph.D., University of Tennessee

ABSTRACT

The major objective of this research was to explore the experience of retiring from sport following a career in college athletics. The phenomenological method was used to interview five retired athletes and gather data. A clearer understanding of the experience of the participant is established by the unstructured interview style inherent within the phenomenological method, allowing the participant to control the interview and be the expert of his or her own experience. Following these interviews, a research group analyzed the transcripts looking for themes that existed for all five participants. Four main themes with sub-themes emerged from this analysis, including Identity, with the sub-themes of Void, Emotion, and Life Shift/Redirection; The Game, with the sub-themes of Stories of Past History, Difference between Levels of Sport, Contentment in Reminiscing, and Retirement as a Process; Body, with the sub-themes of Fitness/Being in Shape, Injury, and Speed; and Others, with the sub-themes of The Team (Coaches/Teammates) and The Community (Family/Friends). It is the hope of the author that this research will provide a clearer understanding of the experience of retiring from sport so that coaches, parents, counselors, and the athletes themselves can take steps toward having a successful and constructive retirement.

Academic Stereotypes of African American Female Student Athletes: A Qualitative Study

Jennifer E. Bruening, Ph.D., University of Connecticut

ABSTRACT

Greendorfer (1993) described stereotypes as “extremely powerful and potent” forms of discrimination (p. 5). This study examined how stereotypes affected twelve African American female collegiate student-athletes at a large Midwestern university. Data were collected through both focus group and individual interviews during the 1998-1999 academic year. One of the central themes identified by the participants was academic stereotypes and within theme, two sub-themes emerged. The first sub-theme was labeled overlooking and lowered expectations (Perlmutter, 2003) and further defined as “attending college only because of athletics.” The second sub-theme was labeled isolation and further defined as “being the only African American in your classes” with additional isolating effects of gender and racial stereotypes also discussed. N.B. The terms African American and Black were used interchangeably as descriptors for the participants in this study.

Counseling College Student Athletes: A Working Alliance Model Approach

Daniel B. Kissinger, Ph.D., University of Arkansas – Fayetteville, Joshua C. Watson, Ph.D., Mississippi State University – Meridian

ABSTRACT

Student-athletes often represent a highly visible, yet decidedly misunderstood population on college and university campuses. In the general student population, the combination of multiple stressors often leads students to seek professional counseling services. Unfortunately, student-athletes, who are often faced with a multitude of psychosocial stressors germane to balancing athletic and academic responsibilities, seldom seek out professional counseling services. However, when they do seek services, the authors posit that an understanding of the construct of the therapeutic working alliance and the application of the working alliance model (Bordin, 1979) offers a useful template for fostering positive counseling outcomes with student-athletes. In this article, the major elements of this construct and model are presented along with a discussion and implications for its application to a college or university student-athlete population.

Playing to Win: Improving Support Services for Student Athletes with Learning Disabilities in Institutions of Higher Learning

Marilyn S. Kaff, Ph.D., Adrienne Leslie Toogood, Ph.D., Teresa L. Miller, Kansas State University

ABSTRACT

Although much has been written about the impact of learning disabilities on the performance of students of school age, only recently has the emphasis shifted to students of college age. University services and supports for these students have not kept pace with the dramatic influx of students with special needs, often because instructors and counselors are unfamiliar with their needs and requirements (Lock & Layton, 2001). Student athletes with learning disabilities may experience a multitude of difficulties throughout their academic careers. Academic advisors and faculty need to focus on addressing both the meta-cognitive and affective needs of student athletes with learning disabilities. The authors propose a combined approach of strategy instruction and self-advocacy which allows student athletes to not only understand their learning needs but to request the supports that will allow them to be more successful learners. This multi-faceted approach can assist students in reaching their potential.