

THE STUDENT-ATHLETE EXPERIENCE: AN EXAMINATION OF CAREER MATURITY AND TRANSITION AT A DIVISION II INSTITUTION

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Abstract

Student-athletes' busy schedules often prevent them from engaging in career development activities that can impact their career maturity and transition into the world of work, further making their experiences as students and athletes complex. Therefore, sustainable change is needed to increase student-athletes' career maturity and aid their transition from athletics. This presentation reports findings from a study and serves as a platform to promote such a change within Division II institutions. Combining Bandura's (1977) Self-Efficacy and Schlossberg's (1984) Transition Theories, the researcher conceptually framed a study to examine the problem's complexity. An action research methodology, focus groups, and Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE) self-assessment tool were utilized to measure student-athletes' career maturity levels. Data collected from the self-assessment tool and focus group formed the foundation to build career development interventions for student-athletes that the Student-Athlete Development Office could adopt at a Division II institution. Findings and analysis from student-athletes' experiences suggest that student-athletes are experiencing lower self-efficacy around career decision-making and are not prepared for the transition from student-athletes to the world of work. Implications exist for collegiate athletic practitioners who work with student-athletes daily.