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2017 Adjusted Graduation Gap Report: NCAA FBS Football

Adjusted Graduation Gaps of Power-5 Black Players 6.5 times greater than White Players

College Football Playoff Top 10 has aggregate AGG of -24.8

Columbia, SC – January 17, 2018... The College Sport Research Institute (CSRI) at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC, released its eighth-annual National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) Football Adjusted Graduation Gap (AGG) report today. The report provides an overview of the AGGs of Black and White FBS football players as well as a longitudinal view of "All AGGs" for FBS conferences sub-divided into "Power-5" and "Group-of-5."

The 2017 Power-5 Conference AGG mean is -17.4, while the Group-of-5's AGG average is -10.3. Both of these figures were slightly improved from 2016 (Power-5 = -18.4 and Group-of-5/Other

FBS = -11.9), but still indicate a significant discrepancy between FBS Football players' graduation rates and those of full-time male students.

Given the continuing and expanding economic exploitation of NCAA FBS players, several additional findings were concerning (See study highlights).

Of continued interest, Power-5 Black players' AGG (-23.0) increased to 6.5 times that of White players (-3.5). [1]

CSRI Research – Team Statement

The College Sport Research Institute's AGG analysis of NCAA FBS football players' graduation rates reveals that historically and systematically NCAA *FBS football players* do not graduate at rates comparable to those of full-time male students at their universities.

Study Highlights

(See tables and chart in appendix.)

❖ Power-5 AGGs continue to be very large: 17.4 percentage points lower than the full-time male student body at the 64 Power-5 schools.

❖ Power-5 Black-White AGG difference remains striking. The Black AGG is -23.0 compared to only -3.5 for the White AGG, almost 20 percentage points worse.

❖ Power-5 AGGs show a (weak) improving trend over the last four years (see graph below). The AGG has improved by 2.8 percentage points since 2013, 0.7 points per year. At this rate, 25 years must pass for the Power-5 AGG to disappear.

❖ The College Football Playoff (CFP) Top 10, all Power-5 schools, has an aggregate AGG of -24.8, 7.4 percentage points greater than the Power-5 average.

❖ The Group-of-5 AGG remains significant at -10.3, albeit 7.1 percentage points smaller than that of Power-5 conferences.

❖ The Group-of-5/Power-5 difference is caused solely by a difference in Black AGGs, as White AGGs are the same.

❖ The Group-of-5 also shows an improving trend since 2013. Its AGG is 4.4 percentage points smaller, or 1.1 points of average improvement per year.

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[1] In 2016, this AGG was approximately 5 times larger.

❖ For the 6th straight year, the Big 12 has the smallest Power-5 AGG at -10.8. The Big Ten has the largest AGG at -20.8.

CSRI Position on Graduation Rates

In 1990, Congress mandated full disclosure of graduation rates at schools that award athletically related aid and receive federal financial aid. The Federal Graduation Rate (FGR) reflects the percentage of students (athletes and non-athletes) who graduate within six years from the school where they initially enrolled as a full-time student. The FGR measures the extent to which colleges and universities retain and graduate recruited athletes, thus providing one measure of whether they are fulfilling the NCAA's mission of maintaining athletes as an integral part of their student body. The strength of the FGR is its focus on student retention.

Another useful graduation rate measure, created by the NCAA to track athletes, is called the Graduation Success Rate (GSR). The GSR excludes from its calculation athletes—including transfers—who leave a particular school prior to graduating (i.e. early), but in good academic standing. The NCAA methodology also includes athletes who transfer into an institution in a program's GSR. However, a limitation of the GSR is that currently no comparable graduation rate exists for the general student body. In other words, the GSR and FGR measures are not comparable.

The AGG was developed to address FGR and GSR limitations. It is not intended to replace either metric. The FGR focuses on an institution's ability to retain students it admits, while the GSR attempts to account for athletes who leave a school that initially admitted them. The AGG compares an adjusted FGR for full-time students and the reported FGR for college athletes (who must all be full-time students) from the following NCAA Division-I sports: FBS football, D-I men's and women's basketball, and D-I softball and baseball. Reports regarding each sport are released at various times throughout the year.

Historically, standard evaluations of NCAA athlete graduation rates have involved comparisons with general student body rates. However, many schools' general student body includes a significant number of part-time students. Since all NCAA athletes must be "full-time" it is appropriate that a reported athlete federal graduation rate should be compared to a full-time

student graduation rate. The downward "part-timer bias" in unadjusted student-body FGRs distorts any non-adjusted comparison, since part-time students take longer to graduate and "drop out" more often than full-time students. Consequently, a school's FGR is highly correlated to its percent of part-time students. The more part-time students, the lower a school's FGR. CSRI's AGG methodology addresses this "part-timer bias" using regression-based adjustments for the percentage of part-time students enrolled at an institution. This allows for an "apples to apples" comparison of full-time student and FBS football player graduation rates.[2]

CSRI

The College Sport Research Institute (CSRI) is housed within the Department of Sport and Entertainment Management at the University of South Carolina – Columbia. CSRI is dedicated to conducting and supporting independent data collection and analysis related to college-sport issues.

Along with conducting and disseminating in-house research on college athletes' graduation rates, post-athletic transition issues, and oscillating migration patterns, CSRI hosts the annual CSRI Conference on College Sport in Columbia, SC. This conference provides a forum for research of current college-sport issues and possible solutions to these challenges. CSRI also publishes a peer-reviewed scholarly journal entitled: *Journal of Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics (JIIA)*, which provides an additional outlet for research related to college-sport issues.

This is the eighth annual installment of the CSRI's AGG FBS Football Report. We hope this information encourages continuing research and discussion regarding both graduation rates and the quality and type of educational opportunities offered college athletes.

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[2] Technical details can be found in E. Woodrow Eckard, "NCAA Athlete Graduation Rates: Less than Meets the Eye," *Journal of Sport Management*, January 2010, pp. 45---58.

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Appendix

Power-5 Conference	B+W Mean	Black Mean	White Mean
Big 12	-10.8	-16.5	4.1
Atlantic Coast	-17.1	-20.9	-9.1
Southeastern	-19.0	-24.8	0.8
PAC-12	-19.3	-23.5	-8.2
Big Ten	-20.8	-29.1	-5.3
Average	-17.4	-23.0	-3.5

Group-of-5 Conference	B+W Mean	Black Mean	White Mean
Sun Belt	-7.4	-9.4	-3.0
Mountain West	-8.7	-14.1	-0.5
Conference-USA	-9.3	-12.6	-1.4
Mid-American	-10.5	-19.2	-5.8
American	-15.6	-19.6	-7.0
Average	-10.3	-15.0	-3.5

Notes:

- ❖ Power-5
    - o Notre Dame excluded - Independent in FB
- ❖ Other FBS
    - o Georgia State, UNC Charlotte and Coastal Carolina excluded - No FB FGRs
    - o Air Force and Navy excluded - Data not comparable to civilian schools

TABLE 2 – Eight-YEAR AVERAGE OF FBS "POWER-5" AGGS

Conference	2010 AGG	2011 AGG	2012 AGG	2013 AGG	2014 AGG	2015 AGG	2016 AGG	2017 AGG	8-year Average
Big XII	-16	-18	-14	-16	-18	-15	-14	-11	-15
SEC	-19	-18	-18	-18	-18	-19	-18	-19	-18
ACC	-20	-20	-22	-21	-21	-20	-18	-17	-20
Big Ten	-23	-21	-20	-21	-21	-20	-21	-21	-21
Pac-12	-30	-26	-27	-28	-23	-22	-22	-19	-25
Mean	**-22**	**-21**	**-20**	**-21**	**-20**	**-19**	**-18**	**-17**	**-20**

* Yearly conference realignment may affect these numbers. Conference means for each year are based on conference membership for that year.
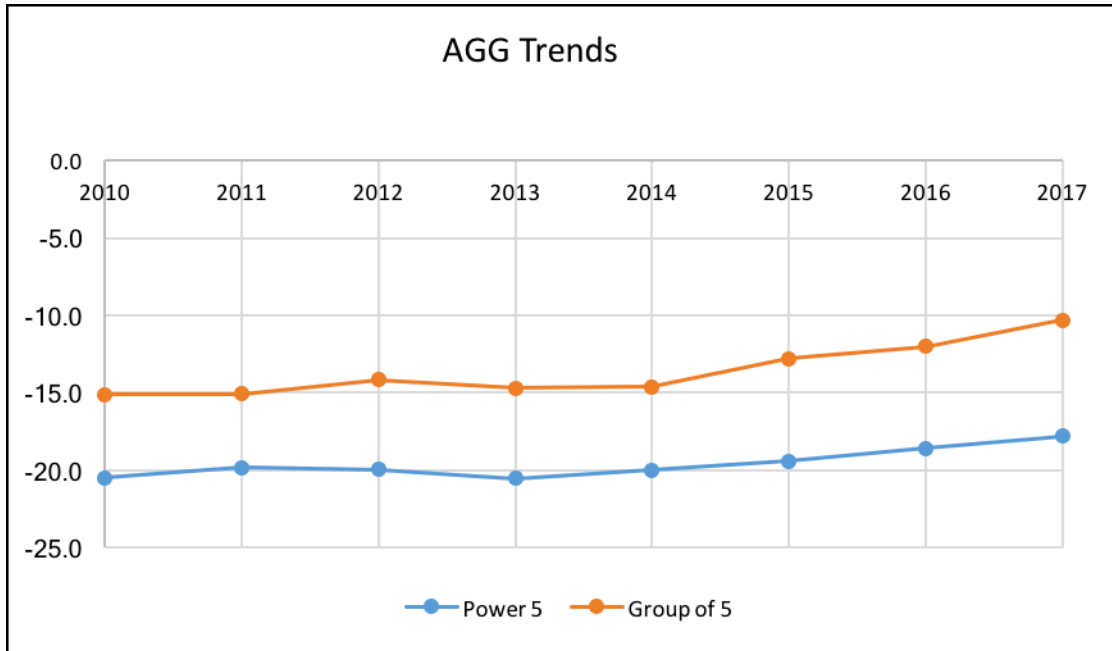
TABLE 3 – Eight‑YEAR AVERAGE OF "GROUP-of-5" AGGS

Conference	2010 AGG	2011 AGG	2012 AGG	2013 AGG	2014 AGG	2015 AGG	2016 AGG	2017 AGG	8-year Average
MWC	-26	-15	-13	-12	-11	-10	-10	-9	-13
C-USA	-15	-14	-13	-15	-14	-11	-10	-9	-12
Sun Belt	-15	-15	-15	-13	-14	-12	-11	-7	-13
MAC	-10	-14	-14	-15	-15	-12	-11	-11	-13
Big East/ AAC	-12	-14	-15	-17	-19	-18	-18	-16	-16
Mean	**-16**	**-14**	**-14**	**-14**	**-15**	**-13**	**-12**	**-10**	**-14**

* Yearly conference realignment may affect these numbers. Conference means for each year are based on conference membership for that year.

CHART 1 Eight‑YEAR TREND‑LINES: "POWER-5" AND "GROUP-of-5" AGGS

* "AGG Trends" means are based on individual school AGGs, not conference mean AGGs.
Consequently, means may differ slightly from "Conference Summary" means.