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2021-22 Adjusted Graduation Gap Report: NCAA Division I Basketball

Men's Division I Basketball average AGG is -24.9

Women's Division I Basketball average AGG is -17.0

Columbia, SC – February 10, 2022... The College Sport Research Institute (CSRI) at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC, released its twelfth-annual National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I men's and women's basketball Adjusted Graduation Gap (AGG) report today. For the twelfth consecutive year, athlete graduation rates continue to be significantly below adjusted full-time student body graduation rates. The DI men's basketball overall AGG is -24.9, indicating that the average rate among DI conferences is 24.9 percentage points below the adjusted men's full-time student body rate. Similarly, the woman's overall AGG of -17.0 indicates a 17.0 percentage point deficiency relative to the women's full-time student body rate. Among the 31 DI basketball conferences, all men's AGGs are negative.

Concurrently, only one DI women's basketball conference has a positive AGG (Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference [MEAC]). Additionally, Major conferences continue to perform significantly worse than Mid-Major conferences (See Tables 1 & 2.).

The AGG trends (See Charts 5 & 6.) continue to be especially troubling for Black men's basketball players in Major conferences. The gap between Black (-36.9) and White (-25.1) men's basketball players in Major conferences has grown by 4.3 percentage points in the past year. Conversely, the gap between Black (-20.5) and White (-20.1) men's basketball players in Mid-Major conferences decreased for the eighth consecutive year. While the overall DI women's basketball AGG grew by 1.9 percentage points, the gap between Black (-17.0) and White (-16.5) DI women's basketball players decreased for the second consecutive year (See Charts 3 & 4.).

Among all DI conferences, the MEAC continues to be the best performer in both men's (-2.6) and women's basketball (+1.7). The MEAC is comprised of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Among DI men's basketball Major conferences, the Southeastern Conference (SEC) experienced the largest year-to-year change in AGG, growing by 6.9 percentage points. For the first time in the twelve-year history of AGG, the SEC (-44.0) is now the worst performing conference in all of DI men's basketball. In DI women's basketball, the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) AGG grew for the fourth consecutive year. For the first time in the twelve-year history of AGG, the ACC (-31.0) is now the worst performing conference in all of DI women's basketball.

It is worth noting the possible impact of both the global pandemic and transfer portal on graduation rates. The current 4-class cohort includes the post-pandemic 2020-2021 graduating class that may have been significantly impacted by pandemic disruptions within higher education and collegiate athletics. Additionally, the transfer portal has contributed to an influx of athletes seeking to transfer since Fall 2018. The Federal Graduation Rate (FGR) retains transfers as part of a school's cohort and FGR is a variable in calculating AGG.

While the gap between DI men's and women's basketball players graduation rates and those of full-time male and female students has been consistently large in the twelve-year history of the

AGG, more research is needed to determine the effects of the transfer portal and pandemic disruptions on DI men's and women's basketball AGG.

Study Highlights

(See tables and charts in appendix for additional information.)

DI Women's Basketball AGG Summary

- The overall DI women's basketball AGG is sizable at -17.0 percentage points.
- DI women's basketball AGG is 7.9 points better than DI men's basketball AGG (-17.0 and -24.9, respectfully).
- The DI women's basketball Major conferences AGG of -22.4 percentage points is 7.9 points worse than the Mid-Major AGG of -14.5 points.
- DI women's basketball Black players' AGG of -17.0 is only slightly worse than the White players' AGG (-16.5), in sharp contrast to DI men's basketball where Black AGGs are much worse.
- Among DI women's basketball Major conferences, the best performers are the Big East (-16.2) and Pacific-12 (-16.8).
- Among all DI women's basketball conferences, the best performers are the MEAC (+1.7) and the Patriot League (-4.5).
- Among all DI conferences, the worst performers are the ACC (-31.0) and the American (-29.4).
- Only one of the 31 DI women's basketball conferences has a positive AGG (MEAC [+1.7]).

DI Women's Basketball AGG Trends

- The DI women's basketball AGGs continue to show negative trends, similar to DI men's basketball (i.e., the gaps between athletes and the full-time student body are steadily getting worse).
- AGG results contrast sharply with the NCAA's narrative of steadily increasing athlete graduation rates.

DI Men's Basketball AGG Summary

- The overall DI men's basketball AGG remains large at -24.9 percentage points (i.e., the men's basketball graduation rate is 24.9 points below the adjusted general male student body rate).
- The DI men's basketball Major conferences AGG of -35.0 percentage points is much larger than the Mid-Major conferences AGG of -20.0 points.[1]
- The DI men's basketball Major conference Black AGG of -36.9 percentage points is 11.8 points worse than the White AGG of -25.1. In contrast, the Mid-Major Black-White gap is only 0.4 points.
- Among DI men's basketball Major conferences, the best performers are the Atlantic 10 (-20.6) and the Big Ten (-31.7).
- Among all DI men's basketball conferences, the best performers are the MEAC (-2.6) and the Patriot League (-2.8).
- None of the 31 DI men's basketball conferences have a positive AGG.

  Among all DI men's basketball conferences, the worst performers are the SEC (-44.0) and Big West (-41.3).
- For the Power-5 conferences, the average men's basketball AGG of -37.1 is almost twice the football AGG of -19.1, a difference of 18.0 percentage points.[2]

DI Men's Basketball AGG Trends

- DI men's basketball AGGs continue to show a gradual but statistically significant negative trend over the twelve-years of the AGG Report (i.e., the gaps between DI men's basketball and the full-time student body graduation rates are steadily getting worse).
- AGG results contrast sharply with the NCAA's narrative of steadily increasing athlete graduation rates.

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

[1] Major and Mid-Major designations follow those on collegeinsider.com.
[2] See the 2021-2022 Adjusted Graduation Gap Report: NCAA FBS Football.

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), while in good academic standing. The NCAA methodology also includes athletes who transfer into an institution in a program's GSR. The GSR recognizes college athletes may take a different path to graduation than other full-time students. 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 NCAA created the GSR to correct the FGR's tendency to underestimate graduation rates by treating all college transfers as non-graduate dropouts. Unfortunately, the GSR correction causes it to *overestimate* athlete graduation rates. In effect, it treats all athletes meeting minimal eligibility requirements who leave college before graduation as transfers who graduate, ignoring that many departing athletes drop out and never graduate.

The AGG was developed to partly address FGR and GSR limitations. The AGG compares an adjusted FGR for full-time students and the reported FGR for college athletes. Reports for each sport are released at various times during the year.

CSRI believes in the full disclosure of all measures pertaining to college athlete graduation, including the FGR, GSR, and AGG since one measure is not "better" or somehow "fairer" than the others as each measure different things. The FGR focuses on an institution's ability to retain and graduate students it admits, while the GSR attempts to account for athletes who leave a school that initially admitted them.

Historically, standard evaluations of NCAA athlete graduation rates have involved comparisons with general student body rates presumed to pertain to full-time students. However, many schools' general student body rates include a significant number of part- time students. This is problematic because all NCAA athletes must be "full-time" and should therefore be compared

with other full-time students. The downward "part-timer bias" in the student-body FGR distorts this comparison. Because part-time students take longer to graduate, this significantly reduces the measured general student-body FGR, making the relative rate of college athletes at many schools and conferences appear more favorable. CSRI's Adjusted Graduation Gap methodology addresses this "part-timer bias" using regression-based adjustments for the percentage of part-time students enrolled at an institution.[3] The adjustments also account for the aggregate influence of school-specific factors such as location and student demographics. These estimates then become the basis for the AGG comparison.

CSRI

The College Sport Research Institute (CSRI) is housed within the Department of Sport & 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, oscillating migration patterns, and college-sport broadcast content, CSRI hosts the annual CSRI Conference on College Sport in Columbia, SC, which provides a forum for dissemination of research on 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 twelfth-annual installment of the CSRI's DI basketball AGG 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.

[3] For details, see Eckard, E. W. (2010). NCAA athlete graduation rates: Less than meets the eye. *Journal of Sport Management, 24*(1), 45-59.

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Appendix

Table 1 – 2022 NCAA DI Major and Mid-Major (MM) Summary

Women: Major vs. Mid-Major

	Overall Mean	Black Mean	White Mean
All DI	-17.0	-17.0	-16.5
Major	-22.4	-22.9	-21.3
MM	-14.5	-14.2	-13.9
Major - MM =	-7.9	-8.7	-7.4

Women: Black vs. White

	Overall Mean	Major Mean	MM Mean
Black AGG Mean	-17.0	-22.9	-14.2
White AGG Mean	-16.5	-21.3	-13.9
Black – White =	-0.5	-1.6	-0.3

Men: Major vs. Mid-Major

	Overall Mean	Black Mean	White Mean
All DI	-24.9	-25.8	-21.8
Major	-35.0	-36.9	-25.1
MM	-20.0	-20.5	-20.1
Major - MM =	-15.0	-16.4	-5.

Men: Black vs. White

	Overall Mean	Major Mean	MM Mean
Black AGG Mean	-25.8	-36.9	-20.5
White AGG Mean	-21.8	-25.1	-20.1
Black – White =	-4.0	-11.8	-0.4

Table 2 – 2022 NCAA DI Conference Average AGGs

Women's DI Conferences

	Overall Mean	Black Mean	White Mean
MAJOR			
Big East	-16.2	-16.0	-22.5
Pac-12	-16.8	-23.1	-12.1
Big 12	-18.0	-14.0	-24.4
Atlantic 10	-20.1	-22.6	-8.4
Southeastern	-20.8	-23.4	-21.5
Big Ten	-23.8	-30.3	-26.8
Conference USA	-23.8	-21.2	-12.8
Mountain West	-24.5	-19.6	-26.4
American Athletic	-29.4	-24.7	-43.2
Atlantic Coast	-31.0	-34.3	-14.9
MAJOR AVERAGE	**-22.4**	**-22.9**	**-21.3**
MID-MAJOR			
Mid-Eastern	+1.7	+9.2	N/A
Patriot League	-4.5	-2.3	+0.2
Metro Atlantic	-6.1	-6.2	-7.3
West Coast	-6.4	+1.1	-2.3
Southwestern	-9.1	-0.4	N/A
Northeast	-10.4	-4.1	-5.0
Big South	-11.0	-2.8	-15.3
Southern	-11.5	-10.2	-15.9
Mid-American	-12.1	-13.1	-16.0
Horizon League	-15.0	-15.3	-11.0
Atlantic Sun	-16.4	-14.7	-17.1
Southland	-16.9	-15.7	-19.1
Missouri Valley	-17.8	-29.8	-11.5
Western Athletic	-18.2	-24.7	-0.8
Colonial	-19.3	-13.7	-8.6
Summit League	-19.4	-35.7	-16.9
America East	-20.8	-16.6	-19.2
Big Sky	-21.6	-37.1	-24.5
Sun Belt	-22.2	-17.9	-16.6
Big West	-22.4	-26.4	-28.5
Ohio Valley	-24.4	-22.5	-29.4
MID-MAJOR AVERAGE	**-14.5**	**-14.2**	**-13.9**
DIVISION I AVERAGE	**-17.0**	**-17.0**	**-16.5**

Men's DI Conferences

	Overall Mean	Black Mean	White AGG
MAJOR			
Atlantic 10	-20.6	-14.2	-31.6
Big Ten	-31.7	-37.0	-26.9
Big East	-32.2	-34.0	-5.3
Big 12	-34.3	-36.2	-34.1
Pac-12	-35.1	-41.0	-4.0
Conference USA	-35.2	-41.4	-29.6
Mountain West	-37.1	-42.1	-30.9
American Athletic	-39.6	-33.5	-31.0
Atlantic Coast	-40.6	-43.1	-43.2
Southeastern	-44.0	-46.4	-14.3
MAJOR AVERAGE	**-35.0**	**-36.9**	**-25.1**
MID-MAJOR			
Mid-Eastern	-2.6	-7.2	N/A
Patriot League	-2.8	-9.0	+4.6
Southwestern	-8.7	-6.7	N/A
Big South	-10.7	-6.1	-11.5
Western Athletic	-14.8	-21.1	-11.8
Southland	-15.1	-15.5	-31.9
Colonial Athletic	-15.3	-18.3	-2.0
Missouri Valley	-15.6	-16.7	-13.8
Southern	-16.3	-7.2	-19.3
Northeast	-18.9	-18.4	-30.7
Horizon League	-21.0	-20.9	-13.3
Atlantic Sun	-21.1	-21.1	-20.4
West Coast	-22.5	-37.3	-18.1
Mid-American	-23.1	-14.9	-14.0
Big Sky	-23.6	-25.6	-18.0
Metro Atlantic	-26.0	-16.6	-11.7
America East	-26.8	-25.3	-25.2
Sun Belt	-27.5	-27.3	-22.6
Summit League	-32.5	-42.1	-30.1
Ohio Valley	-33.9	-32.1	-55.1
Big West	-41.3	-40.5	-37.0
MID-MAJOR AVERAGE	**-20.0**	**-20.5**	**-20.1**
DIVISION I AVERAGE	**-24.9**	**-25.8**	**-21.8**

Chart 1 – AGG Trends: DI Women's Basketball

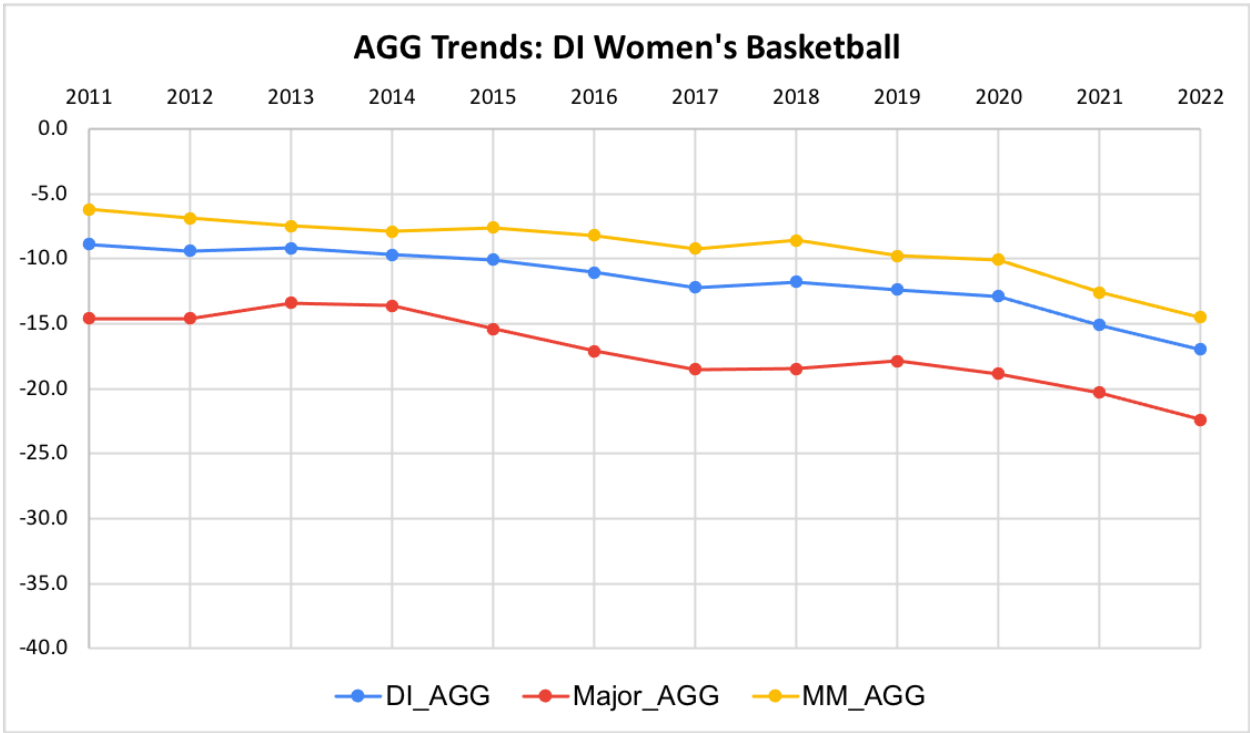

Chart 2 – AGG Trends: DI Men's Basketball

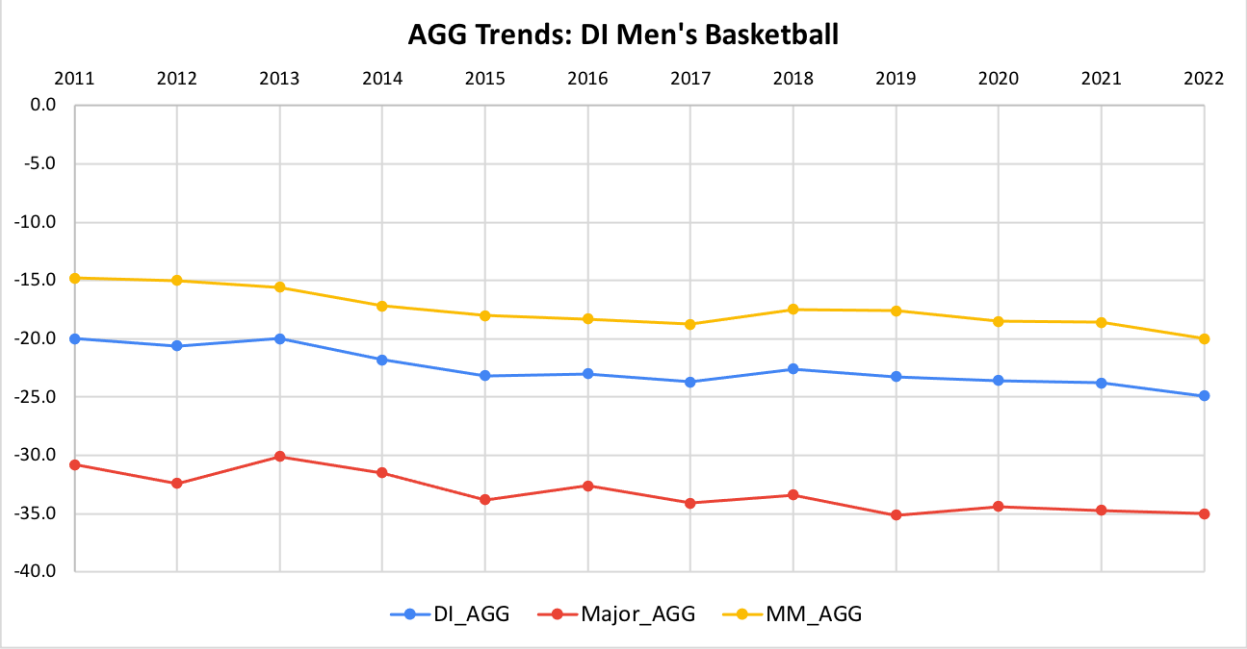

Chart 3 – AGG Trends: Women's Basketball Major Black AGG vs. White AGG

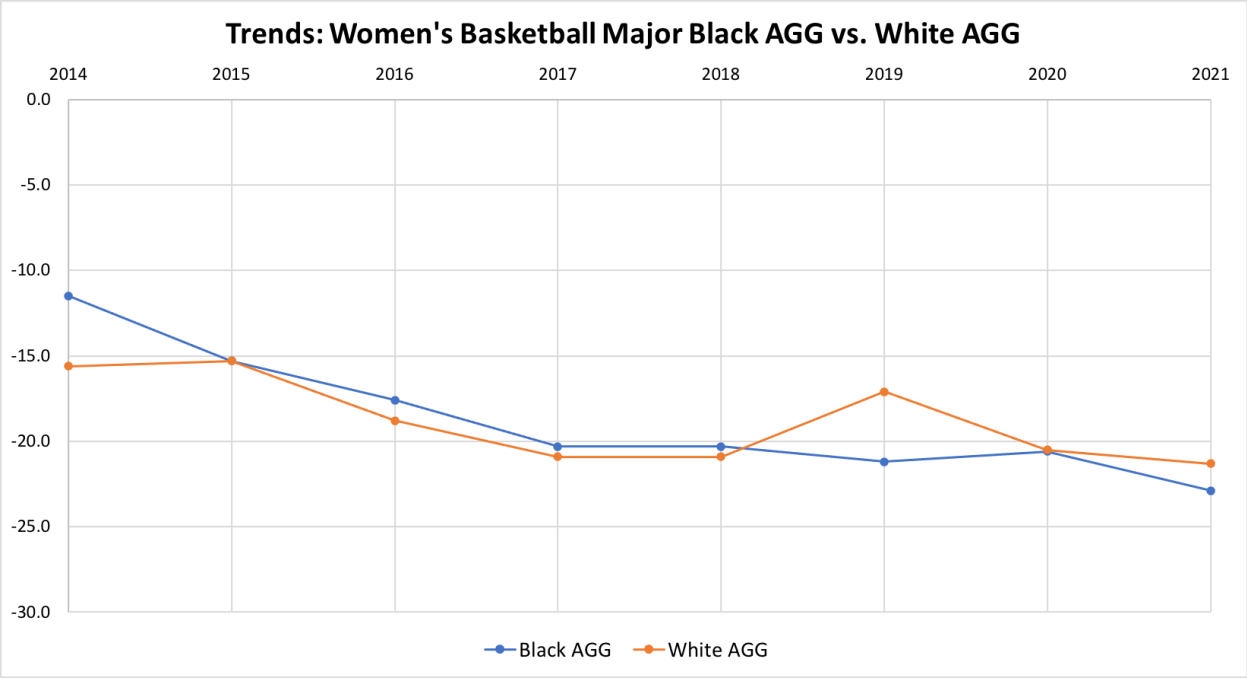

Chart 4 – AGG Trends: Women's Basketball Mid-Major Black AGG vs. White AGG

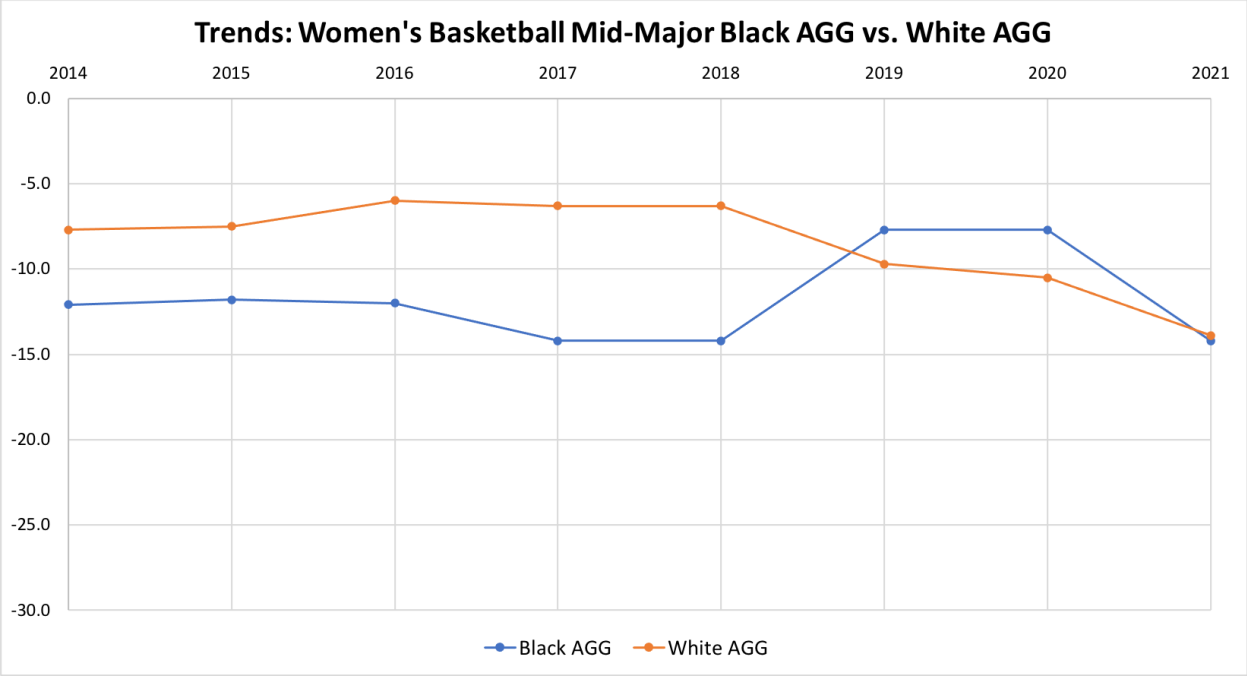

Chart 5 – AGG Trends: Men’s Basketball Major Black AGG vs. White AGG

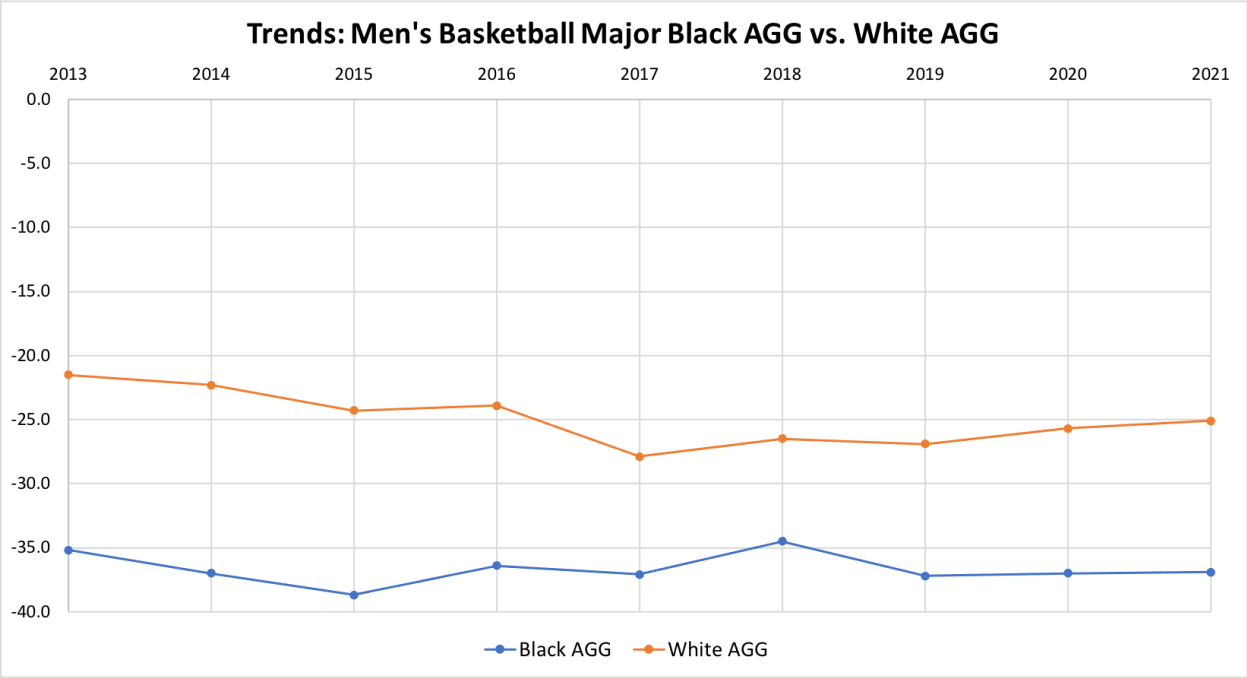

Chart 6 – AGG Trends: Men’s Basketball Mid-Major Black AGG vs. White AGG